



Roy Betts
UNCF Communications
240.703.3384
roy.betts@uncf.org

Press Release

Teacher Appreciation Week Kicks Off With New UNCF Study Finding Black Parents and Caregivers Report Better Outcomes When There are More Black Teachers at School

Black parents and caregivers report higher college aspirations for their child and fewer school suspensions when there are more Black teachers at their child's school compared to schools with few or no Black teachers

WASHINGTON, DC (May 6, 2024)—As the country celebrates Teacher Appreciation Week, UNCF (United Negro College Fund) released a groundbreaking study that provides invaluable insights into the perspectives of African American parents on key issues in education and highlights the importance of Black teachers to Black families.

The report, titled "Hear Us, Believe Us: Centering African American Parent Voices in K-12 Education" offers a comprehensive analysis of the experiences, challenges and aspirations of African American parents in relation to race, college readiness, parental engagement and more.

Among the findings, more than 90% of Black parents surveyed said they want more opportunities to be involved in their children's education and more input into education laws. UNCF conducted focus groups and implemented a national survey of 500 low- to moderate-income Black parents. Additionally, a subset of 1,200 Black parents were surveyed in Chicago, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Houston, Memphis and New Orleans to assess some city-level trends.

During this Teacher Appreciation Week, UNCF seeks to underscore the significant, positive influence that Black teachers have on students, families and communities.

“Across several indicators in the study, Black parents reported better experiences when their child attended schools with more Black teachers. While the research abounds on the positive effects of Black teachers on students, this report emphasizes the parent voice in this important scholarship. This report substantiates what we have known for decades: Black teachers matter,” said Dr. Anderson.

The report, based on extensive national quantitative research and focus groups highlights the crucial role that African American parents play in their children's education. It underscores the importance of understanding their unique perspectives and incorporating them into education policies and practices.

Key findings from the report include:

1. Black parents report higher college aspirations for their child and lower instances of school suspensions when there are more Black teachers at their child's school.
 - For Black parents and caregivers whose children attended schools where many or most teachers were Black, the probability that their child received exclusionary discipline is almost three times lower than when their child attended schools with fewer Black teachers.
 - Black parents also felt more respected at school when their child attended schools with more Black teachers.
2. Black parents greatly value higher education and are deeply engaged and invested in their child's education.
 - 84% of Black parents believe it is important for their child to attend and graduate college and over 80% check their child's homework and speak to their child's teacher on a regular basis.
 - 93% of Black parents say they want more opportunities to be involved in their child's education and input into education laws.
3. Black parents want to see more Black leaders in education.

- 70% of African American parents and caregivers believe the involvement of African American leaders and organizations will make school improvement efforts more effective.

4. School safety is a key concern for Black parents and caregivers.

- 80 % of African American parents and caregivers rank safety as the most important factor for school selection.

“What we have known at UNCF for decades is that Black parents are deeply engaged in the educational lives of their children, yet far too often they are denigrated and deemed disengaged about their children’s learning environment,” said Dr. Meredith Anderson, director, K-12 Research, UNCF, and author of the report. “Black parents are concerned about opportunity gaps and want better resources for their children. They want to see more Black education leaders and organizations in education; and they want more opportunities to be involved and have their voices heard.

The report concludes with a [series of recommendations](#) aimed at addressing the concerns and aspirations of African American parents. These recommendations include a call to action:

Recommendations for the K-12 Sector

- Invest unapologetically in Black teachers.
- Create more intentional opportunities for parent involvement.
- Create a learning environment that reflects African American history and culture.
- Partner with local organizations to provide resources and services for families.
- Value and prioritize support staff in school budgets.
- Prioritize student safety.

Recommendations for Higher Education

- Make intentional efforts to expose students and families to college opportunities.
- Create intentional pipelines with districts and charter management organizations for increasing educator diversity.
- Ensure teacher training programs include anti-racist, culturally relevant teaching practices.
- Partner with K-12 schools and districts to provide financial and literacy to students and families.

UNCF is committed to utilizing the findings of this report to drive positive change in education. Through its programs, scholarships and advocacy efforts, UNCF will continue to work towards a future where every African American student has access to a quality education that prepares them for success.

Click [here](#) to access the full report.

###

About UNCF

UNCF (United Negro College Fund) is the nation's largest and most effective minority education organization. To serve youth, the community and the nation, UNCF supports students' education and development through scholarships and other programs, supports and strengthens its 37 member colleges and universities, and advocates for the importance of minority education and college readiness. While totaling only 3% of all colleges and universities, UNCF institutions and other historically Black colleges and universities are highly effective, awarding 15% of bachelor's degrees, 5% of master's degrees, 10% of doctoral degrees and 19% of all STEM degrees earned by Black students in higher education. UNCF administers more than 400 programs, including scholarship, internship and fellowship, mentoring, summer enrichment, and curriculum and faculty development programs. Today, UNCF supports more than 50,000 students at over 1,100 colleges and universities across the country. Its logo features the UNCF torch of leadership in education and its widely recognized trademark, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste."[®] Learn more at [UNCF.org](https://www.uncf.org) or for continuous updates and news, follow UNCF on X (formerly Twitter) at [@UNCF](https://twitter.com/UNCF).