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TEACH FOR AMERICA LAUNCHES *BLACK EDUCATORS PROMISE* INITIATIVE WITH INAUGURAL COHORT OF OVER 850 EDUCATORS

850+ Leaders First to Participate in Five-Year Initiative Aimed at Increasing the Number of Black Teachers Serving in the Field

NEW YORK, November 10, 2020—Teach For America (TFA), one of the country’s largest sources of Black teachers to low-income schools and communities of color in America, today announced a new 5-year initiative funded by Ballmer Group aimed at recruiting and retaining Black educators: the Black Educators Promise Initiative.

The Black Educators Promise Initiative (BEP) is designed to increase TFA’s and the sector’s understanding of what resources are needed, and when, to best support Black teachers and increase the number of Black educators in the field. Supports include new and enhanced recruitment activities at historically Black colleges and universities, stipends for all incoming Black corps members and for Black 3rd-year teachers who continue to teach at a school in a predominantly low-income community, and additional financial supports for Black corps members in 11 regions, including funds to help cover the costs of certification and testing.

Teach For America is launching the BEP Initiative with an inaugural cohort of over 850 Black educators, which includes first-year Teach For America educators, known as corps members, and alumni of the TFA program who elected to teach a third year at a school in a low-income community.

“The Black Educators Promise Initiative is critical to combatting educational inequity,” said Tamila Gresham, senior managing director of Black Community Alliances at Teach For America. “We know that centuries of systemic anti-Black racism and oppression have created and strengthened barriers to Black people’s ability to attain an equitable education and all of the opportunities for self-determination that result from a quality education. We also know that Black teachers can be critical disruptors to our historically inequitable educational system and powerful role models and advocates for Black students and for all students. The BEP Initiative is helping ensure that Black students, and every student, can benefit from the unique value of having a Black teacher.”

Teach For America and Ballmer Group believe, and research supports, that a teacher workforce that reflects the racial and socio-economic background of the country’s children is crucial to improving student outcomes. For students of color, having educators that share their identity can lead to increased test scores, raise graduation rates, and improve students’ chances of success in college. There is also immense power for students in seeing adults in leadership positions who share their background and lived experiences. Despite this reality, only 21% of public school teachers identify as people of color, compared to a student population that is over [50% students of color](#); within that 21%, only 7% of public school educators are Black. By contrast, over 50% of Teach For America corps members identify as a person of color, with 18% self-identifying as Black; this is the result of Teach For America’s long-term focus on increasing the diversity of its teaching corps.

As TFA celebrates and recognizes the leadership of BEP’s first cohort, the organization has also begun recruitment and engagement of next year’s Black Educators Promise Initiative participants.

About Teach For America

Teach For America works in partnership with urban and rural communities in more than 50 regions across the country to expand educational opportunity for children. Founded in 1990, Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding leaders to make an initial two-year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to end educational inequity. Today Teach For America is a force of nearly 60,000

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alumni and corps members committed to profound systemic change. From classrooms to districts to state houses across America, they're reimagining education to realize the day when every child has an equal opportunity to learn, to grow, to influence and to lead. Teach For America is a proud member of the AmeriCorps national service network. For more information, visit www.teachforamerica.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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