



Mind the Gap: Creating Meaningful Leadership Support for Black Educators who Aspire to Leadership in Urban Communities



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About the Author

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	5
Introduction.....	8
Organizational Context.....	12
Problem of Practice.....	16
Literature Review.....	19
The Historical and Current Educational Landscape for Black Educators.....	19
Barriers to Promotion.....	21
Impact of Networks.....	24
Racial Affinity-Based Leadership Development.....	25
Mentorship.....	28
Conceptual Framework.....	30
Leader and Leadership Development.....	30
Identity-based Leadership.....	31
Afrocentric Epistemology Framework.....	32
Research Questions.....	35
Project Design.....	37
Data Collection.....	37
Data Analysis.....	47
Findings.....	51
Finding 1.....	51
Finding 2.....	55

Meaningful Support for Aspiring Black Leaders -----4

Finding 3.....	58
Recommendations.....	61
Recommendation 1.....	62
Recommendation 2.....	63
Conclusion.....	66
References.....	68
Appendices.....	73

Executive Summary

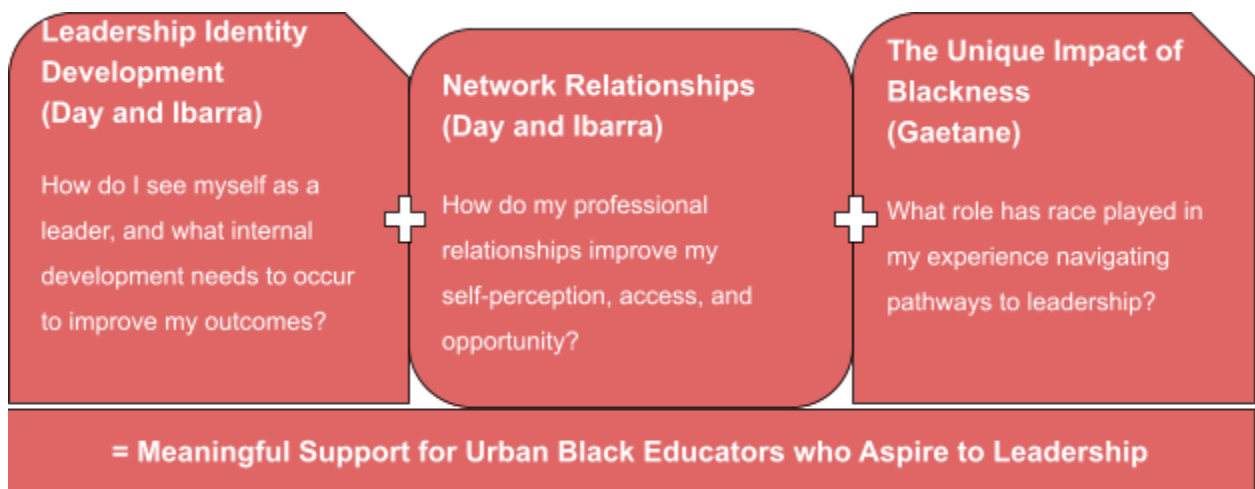
The opportunity gap, defined as the fact that arbitrary circumstances in which people are born, such as their race, ethnicity, zip code, and socioeconomic status, determine their opportunities in life, rather than all people having the chance to achieve to the best of their potential (Mooney, 2018) is an on-going battle for Black Americans that continues to limit success in various aspects of life such as education, employment, housing, and more. The color of one's skin continues to play a critical role in the experiences one encounters on the road to success. There have been many efforts to close the educational opportunity gap for Black students. One approach is, putting teachers that look like their students in classrooms, particularly in schools with significant Black student populations. However, are the same efforts to close this gap for students happening for teachers and school leaders? As urban environments are heavily populated by Black students, the teaching and school leadership force does not match the growing Black student population. Addressing the opportunity gap for Black Americans through school leadership is a critical approach that will significantly impact Black students, teachers, leaders, and Black Americans more broadly. To create greater access for Black educators it is critical to shift the educational landscape in the United States and beyond.

This capstone project aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators who aspire to leadership?
2. How might a non-profit educational organization support urban Black educators as they seek leadership opportunities?

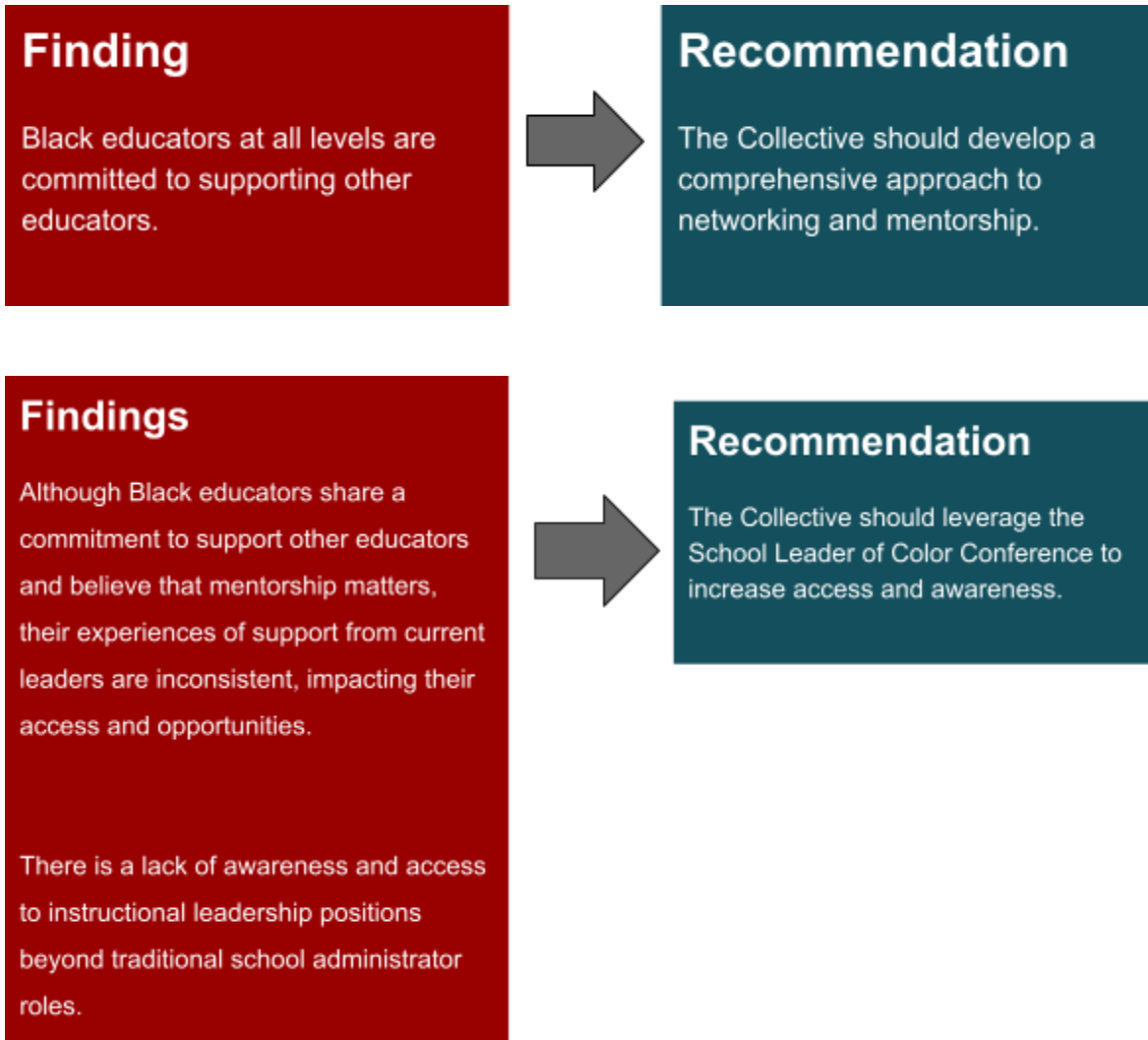
The focal site for this study was The Collective, Teach for America's national association for alumni who identify as Native, Indigenous, and people of color. The organization serves over 20,000 alumni of color and about 8,000 Black alumni. National support focuses on leadership development for current school leaders of color. In addition, the organization seeks to support aspiring Black leaders as current national efforts do not generally target this group.

The conceptual framework was created by synthesizing the following frameworks: leader and leadership development (Day, 2000), identity-based leadership (Ibarra, 2015 & Ibarra et al., 2008), and the Afrocentric Epistemology Framework (Gaetane, 2013) to help explain leadership development needs for urban Black educators who aspire to leadership.



Using a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, qualitative semi-structured interviews and quantitative surveys were collected concurrently and weighed equally to identify common themes to inform analysis and interpretation. This research intended to understand the perspectives and experiences of Black educators in order to assist a non-profit educational organization in their design of effective leadership development for the target group.

The findings indicated below can help The Collective and other similar non-profit organizations design effective leadership development for aspiring leaders.



Although this quality improvement capstone aimed to have research findings that could provide recommendations for creating meaningful support to aspiring Black leaders in urban communities, the findings will also have a broader impact by adding to the academic conversation about leadership development in the non-profit educational field.

Introduction

The purpose of this capstone study is to shed light on the experiences and perspectives of Black educators and to offer guidance on how a non-profit educational organization can provide meaningful support to Black educators who aspire to leadership, particularly in an urban context. The unit of analysis is The Collective, the national association for Native, Indigenous, and people of color within Teach for America, a non-profit educational organization.

Black students represent 15% of the national public school population, and over 50% of Black students attend urban schools—educational institutions located in a densely populated area of a principal city with over 50,000 people. (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2021; Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017; United States Census Bureau, 2020). However, while Black student representation is significant in urban schools, one cannot say the same about Black teacher and leader presence. Many Black students may never experience having a teacher or school leader that looks like them, as Black teachers represent 12% of the urban teaching force and Black principals and assistant principals represent 23% of urban leadership (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2021).

Pairing Black students with at least one Black teacher in their elementary career significantly improves their educational and behavioral outcomes (Bartanen & Grissom, 2019). A 2017 study by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that having one Black teacher by 3rd grade can improve Black students' likelihood of enrolling in college by 13%. Having two Black teachers increases students' likelihood of pursuing postsecondary education by 32%. Additionally, low-income Black males who have a Black teacher in third, fourth, or fifth grade are 39% less likely to drop out of high school (Gershenson et al., 2017).

The impact of Black educators extends beyond the teaching force. Black principals can improve the proportion of Black teachers within a school through hiring and retention, which increases the likelihood of a Black student having a Black teacher (Bartanen & Grissom, 2019). These researchers also note that leaders tend to draw on their professional networks when making hiring decisions. Black principals are seven times more likely to hire Black teachers as Black and White principals are more likely to hire individuals who share their racial identities. Additionally, Black teachers are 2-5% less likely to transfer schools when a Black principal is present (Bartanen & Grissom, 2019). This research suggests that Black school leadership can have positive effects on student outcomes. However, black school leadership in urban communities is not representative of the growing Black student population. The underrepresentation of Black school leaders impacts role attainment and retention. Race is one of the most significant reasons for limited access and opportunities for this group. Black teachers are often overlooked for formal leadership roles and experience longer wait times to promotion, limiting the leadership pipeline for Black educators (Bailes and Guthery, 2020; Mosely, 2018).

Within The Collective, over 8,000 alumni identify as Black, over 2,000 of these alumni identify as teachers, and almost 1,000 identify as mid-level and senior-level school leaders such as assistant principals, instructional coaches, principals, and heads of schools. Teach for America has worked to retain Black teachers beyond their corps years, and The Collective national has focused its effort on supporting current school leaders. To address the need for more Black school leaders, the pathway from teacher to leader is important. It is critical to understand what support aspiring leaders need to attain leadership roles. Focusing on aspiring leader development has the potential to grow the Black school leadership pool. Therefore, gathering sample data

from The Collective's Black school-based alumni may benefit other non-profit educational organizations with similar demographics. The research findings in this study seek to provide insight into the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators who aspire to leadership, providing further guidance into the types of support The Collective and other non-profit educational organizations should offer.

The research aim of this capstone project was to produce findings that would inform The Collective's national leadership team on short and long-term leadership development strategies to improve access, attainment, and retention of leadership roles for urban Black educators. The research design focused on answering the following questions: What are the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators who aspire to leadership? How might a non-profit educational organization support urban Black educators as they seek leadership opportunities?

The research indicates an exploration of teacher and school leader development from numerous perspectives; however, much of the research focuses on the transition to assistant principal and principal. There is a lack of research on Black educators' access, attainment, and success in other school-based leadership roles such as instructional coaches, deans of students, content directors, and similar positions (Ogunbawo, 2012). With the growing population of Black students in urban schools and the underrepresentation of Black teachers and leaders in these spaces, non-profit organizations could benefit from understanding what limits Black educators' access and opportunity and what supports could help this group of educators. Teacher and school leader retention are often contingent upon opportunities for development and career progression (Bailes and Guthery, 2020; Bartanen & Grissom, 2019). Therefore, non-profit

educational organizations need to provide meaningful support to their members to support their continued growth and development.

Organizational Context

The Collective, TFA's national association for alumni who identify as Native, Indigenous, and people of color, was founded in 2011 by a 1995 Teach for America (TFA) Alumna, Melinda Wright. With over 20,000 alumni of color, The Collective works to answer the question, *How can we unleash the potential of our alumni who identify as Native, Indigenous, and people of color to advance our mission faster and stronger?* (Teach for America, n.d.). Through three strategic pillars: 1) Leadership Development, 2) Community and Network Building, and 3) Collective Action, The Collective supports alumni of color in growing their leadership capacity and strengthening their communities while increasing access to various opportunities to improve student and community outcomes (Teach for America, n.d.).

As Teach for America primarily serves Native, Indigenous, and communities of color, it is crucial to acknowledge the negative impact of systemic oppression on students and alumni from these groups. Native, Indigenous, and alumni of color develop distinctive leadership skills and mindsets as they navigate these inequitable systems. Teach for America's ability to leverage alumni's strength, innovation, tenacity, and power is a requisite step on the path toward educational equity.

With over forty chapters across the country, the association's regional chapters focus on elevating the voices of Native, Indigenous, and other alumni of color to address regional needs and community-specific issues aligned to their strategic pillars. Individual chapters work to engage alumni in opportunities that grow their professional networks; build skills as school and system leaders; pursue policy roles; mentor current corps members of color, and impact their communities. Regional need, staffing, resources, and funding heavily influence the level of

support and variety of alumni opportunities. Regional staff sponsors and alumni board members lead these chapters.

Coupled with regional support, The Collective national offers the School Leader of Color Conference (SLOC) yearly to alumni of color who identify as school and school system leaders. The conference's design elevates alumni's voices and unique experiences by creating opportunities for leaders to increase their knowledge and skills around issues of equity, system-level dilemmas, resilience, and the role of identity in their work. In addition, participants have opportunities to engage with leaders at all levels through various communication channels such as panels, coffee chats, development sessions, and less formal settings such as happy hours. To further support alumni's ability to maximize their potential, SLOC includes an opportunity fair that provides access to full-time, part-time, volunteer and fellowship experiences. As a result, the Collective has seen exponential growth in attendance each year.

Working to uplift the voices of alumni at all levels, The Collective provides alumni with opportunities to serve as alumni representatives and regional and national board members. Alumni of color compose The Collective's National Advisory Board. These alumni draw on their expertise in board service, educational leadership, public policy, and social entrepreneurship. The advisory board works to amplify the voices and impact of the broader Collective community by providing strategic guidance to The Collective's national leaders and TFA at large. Research suggests that representation at all levels makes a difference (Bartanen & Grissom, 2019; Gershenson et al., 2017). Leveraging the voices of alumni who represent the overwhelming number of communities TFA serves puts The Collective in a position to create meaningful outcomes for alumni, students, and communities.

In 2020, TFA's 10-year plan noted "Cultivating Leadership" as a principal value driver. TFA states, "We will provide alumni, corps members, and staff with world-class leadership and learning experiences, skill-building, and career support to change education systems" (The Collective, personal communication, 2020). In alignment with this goal, The Collective chose "Cultivating our Distinctive Leadership" as the primary focus of the association's two-year strategic plan. The specific notation of "Distinctive Leadership" acknowledges Native, Indigenous, and alumni of color's ability to transform the educational system by leveraging skills and mindsets developed out of shared experiences of systemic oppression and educational inequity. To foster Distinctive Leadership, The Collective aims to create leadership development opportunities that positively contribute to participants' growth as leaders.

The national team consists of four staff members working across the national initiatives under the pillars of 1) Leadership Development, 2) Community and Network Building, and 3) Collective Action. They also work with regional Collective sponsors to understand how regions enact initiatives connected to the three strategic pillars alongside regional priorities. The Vice President of the association was the primary point of contact throughout each phase of the project.

As The Collective works to create meaningful leadership opportunities for alumni, engaging aspiring leaders is critical. The association tailors current leadership development offerings to alumni who identify as school and system leaders, evident in national programming efforts such as SLOC. The Collective wants to expand the number of alumni who lead in urban schools and realize that creating a leadership pipeline is necessary in order to make expansion possible. The Black Educators Promise Grant (BEP) is a TFA initiative launched in 2020 that

intends to support efforts toward increasing the retention of third and fourth-year Black teachers in the classroom. TFA believes it is vital for students to see educators who look like them and share their life experiences and utilize this funding to focus on recruitment, preparation and certification, and retention to increase the number of Black educators in the field. TFA's National Development Team has partnered with The Collective to enact this initiative.

In efforts to improve the leadership pipeline for Black educators, understanding the experiences and perspectives of Black educators is imperative. Therefore, this capstone involved 20 peer-reviewed literature sources, as well as a comprehensive review of the historical and current education landscape for Black educators, barriers to promotion, identity-based leadership development, the impact of networks, and mentorship to offer guidance on how a non-profit educational organization can provide meaningful support to Black educators who aspire to leadership. Additionally, analyzing previous research on various theoretical models helped identify conceptual frameworks aligned with this research study.

Based on the organizational context, literature review, and findings from this study, The Collective will receive a list of recommendations. Using these recommendations, the association can craft targeted programming for Black educators who aspire to leadership as there is a desire to support this unique group of educators. While the recommendations of this study do not include a program evaluation, one could be conducted in the future to ensure the association uses the recommendations to provide support that improves the school leader pipeline for Black educators.

Problem of Practice

With the under-representation of Black teachers and leaders across the United States, specifically in urban communities, The Collective believes it is vital for students to experience teachers and leaders that represent their racial and cultural backgrounds. The Collective sees itself as a critical contributor to the growth and development of people of color across the urban educational landscape in the United States as 90% of regions Teach for America works in serve urban communities. As of June 2020, 14%-approximately 8,140 Teach for America Alumni identify as Black. Of those alumni, 2280 self-identify as teachers, 575 as mid-level school leaders, and 256 as school leaders.

National efforts are focused on retaining Black teachers and the development of existing school and system leaders. Programming such as the Corps Member of Color Summit, School Leader of Color Conference, and previous programming such as the Black Corps Member Summit heavily focus on the role of identity in the context of corps members and alumni's current roles as teachers and leaders. As teachers look to transition into leadership roles, many face a knowledge and skill gap as not all skills are not transferable from the classroom, and many new leadership skills are needed (Day, 2000; McNamara et al., 2009). Additionally, teachers experience a lack of access to potential roles and struggle to find and open the door to leadership (Bailes and Guthery, 2020; Davis et al., 2017). There is a gap in support for those who aspire to leadership. Current efforts disproportionately focus on growing teachers' capacity for the classroom and leaders' capacity for the multifaceted role of a school leader, but what happens to those alumni who are currently teachers but interested in leadership roles? How do these aspiring leaders acquire the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to support them in their pursuit, attainment,

and success in various school leadership roles? The Collective has missed the opportunity to provide programming specifically designed to support Black educators' entry into school leadership positions.

In 2021, The Collective opened SLOC attendance to aspiring leaders, but most programming was still tailored to current school and systems leaders. There was one session specifically designed for aspiring leaders, The Conversation Corner: Aspiring Leader Conversation. To expand and tailor their reach, the organization is interested in learning more about urban Black educators' perspectives on leadership to guide their leadership development support for this group, creating a pipeline to leadership. For the purposes of this capstone, I will consider leadership development as "expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes" (McCauley et al., 1998).

The purpose of this study is two-fold. First, this study aims to understand the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators and the under-representation of Black leaders in the field, particularly in urban communities. Secondly, this study seeks to provide The Collective with strategies to support these urban Black educators' development as they aspire to leadership roles, thereby creating a pipeline to leadership.

This research is significant because it will potentially increase the representation of urban Black leaders in education. Furthermore, increasing the number of urban Black educational leaders could provide more role models for Black teachers looking to go into leadership positions, potentially leading to a more significant number of Black teachers in urban communities. The increase in urban Black teachers and leadership can positively signal students

about who they are, their abilities, and potential. Images are important. If students see it, they can be it (Gershenson, 2017; Smith and Lenmasters, 2010).

If this problem of practice is not addressed, The Collective will continue to notice a gap in alumni need, retention, and potential career and organizational satisfaction. Without intentional leadership development, the leadership pipeline for Black educators will remain thin on a broader scale. The lack of access and opportunity will impact Black educators' self-perception, role attainment, and ability to reach their greatest potential. The lack of access and opportunity permeates the educational space as disproportionate rates of Black teachers and leaders can negatively impact student outcomes, influencing their ability to experience success in K-12, college, and beyond. The impact is multifaceted and addressing needs is necessary to create an educational world in which equity and liberation are a reality for all.

Literature Review

The literature offers support in understanding developmental needs for urban Black teachers who aspire to leadership. This literature review will examine the following areas: the historical and current educational landscape for Black educators, barriers to promotion, identity-based leadership development, the impact of networks, and mentorship. It should be noted that there is a lack of research on the racial demographics of teachers who transition into instructional school leadership roles outside of principal and assistant principal. According to Bush et al. (2005), "there is limited data about the number of minority school leaders, partly because it is not always easy to identify who is a 'leader'" (p. 3). Black leaders serving as instructional coaches, curriculum developers, dean of students, and other similar leadership roles are not accounted for in the current literature; therefore, ensuring that study participants reflected these roles was critical.

The Historical and Current Educational Landscape for Black Educators

The U.S Supreme Court's *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1955) and *Green vs. the County School Board* (1968) decisions changed the teaching and leadership landscape for Black educators (Peters, 2019; Smith and Lenmasters, 2010). The call for integration by *Brown vs. Board of Education* was not truly implemented until *Green vs. the County School Board*, as schools were required to take steps that guaranteed integration (Peters, 2019). However, the integration of schools did not mean the integration of Black educators. "Approximately 38,000 African American teachers and administrators in 17 states lost their positions between 1954 and 1965" (Milner & Howard, 2004, p. 286). Black educators were seen as inferior to White educators. This mindset led to desegregation through Black school closures, the firing of Black

educators, and the placement of Black students in all-White schools. Before desegregation, in 1954, it is estimated that approximately 82,000 Black teachers taught 2 million Black students (Smith and Lenmasters, 2010). Desegregation led to a shift in the Black student experience. Black students were no longer taught by Black teachers or led by Black school leaders (Peters, 2019). The highest percentage drop in Black principals occurred when desegregation was at its peak in 1969 (Butler, 1974). The impact on Black school leaders, particularly in the south, was immense.

During this time, Black leaders were no longer connected to Black schools as they were fired, demoted, or placed in larger school districts (Smith and Lenmasters, 2010). Schools used former Black leaders as disciplinarians, minor administrators, and errand runners (Butler, 1974; Milner & Howard, 2004; Smith and Lenmasters, 2010). There were no situations of Black school leaders supervising White school staff (Haney, 1978). Furthermore, when White students were placed in predominantly Black schools, policies required a White assistant principal to be on staff as Black educators were seen as incompetent (Butler, 1974). However, when Black students entered majority White schools, Black school leaders were not mandated. This practice led to the whitening of the principal pipeline in urban Black schools (Butler, 1974). The impact of displacement caused career loss for many Black leaders and the disappearance of role models in the Black community. Since this time, Black people have entered the teaching force at decreasing rates, thinning the leadership pipeline for Black educators (Smith and Lenmasters, 2010).

In recent decades, the resegregation of public schools has led to a high concentration of Black students, particularly in urban communities. Resegregation has caused a more significant gap between the number of school leaders of color and students of color. (Hansen and Quintero,

2018; Orfield & Jarvie, 2020). "The prevalence of Black principals relative to the number of students never recovered to the pre-Brown state" (Peters, 2019, p. 524). Today, Black teachers are overwhelmingly employed in public schools within urban communities serving relatively high proportions of students of color (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). While teachers of color have greater representation in urban schools, high poverty schools tend to have higher teacher turnover rates, causing low retention rates for teachers of color. High turnover rates directly impact the leadership pipeline in urban schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). While the percentage of White principals has steadily decreased since 1993-94, most of the growth in principal diversity is due to an increase in the proportion of Hispanic/Latinx principals. The percent of African American principals has remained flat" (National Education Association, 2019, p.2). As Teach for America focuses efforts on retaining Black teachers, it is critical to support these educators on their journey to leadership. With many urban schools serving a predominantly BIPOC student population, the decline of Black leadership and the impact on students must be addressed.

Barriers to Promotion

As Black educators pursue leadership roles, they encounter various barriers as current promotional practices in the educational field are inconsistent, unstructured, and context-dependent; race, gender, and systemic bias influence processes. (Bailes and Guthery, 2020; Davis et al., 2017). The research offers insight into barriers that Black educators may encounter as they seek various leadership roles, including the following: lack of role models and mentors, exclusion from informal networks, lack of visibility, lack of significant or challenging experiences and assignments, lack of support, and lack of constructive feedback (Bailes and

Guthery, 2020; Bush et al. 2006; McCarty Killian, 2009; Wyatt and Silvester, 2015; Ogunbawo, 2012). These obstacles can lead to low self-esteem and loss of confidence, impacting the continued pursuit of leadership roles by Black educators (Singh, 2002; as cited by Ogunbawo, 2012).

Black educators make up 22% of the national teaching force and 14% of the total workforce (U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2010; as cited by Bailes & Guthery, 2020). Based on their proportion to the teaching workforce, people of color are more likely to pursue school leadership roles than White peers. However, a recent Texas study found that Black educators were 18% less likely to be promoted to principalship than equally qualified White educators. Out of the 690 Black candidates, 65% of the pool was not promoted (Bailes & Guthery, 2020). The lack of promotion of Black educators is not due to a lack of knowledge or skills. McCreith et al. (2002) found that while Black teachers were less likely to hold positions of power, 45% of these educators had a teaching certificate indicating qualified teaching status. However, only 4% were promoted to various teacher leadership roles (as cited by Ogunbawo, 2012).

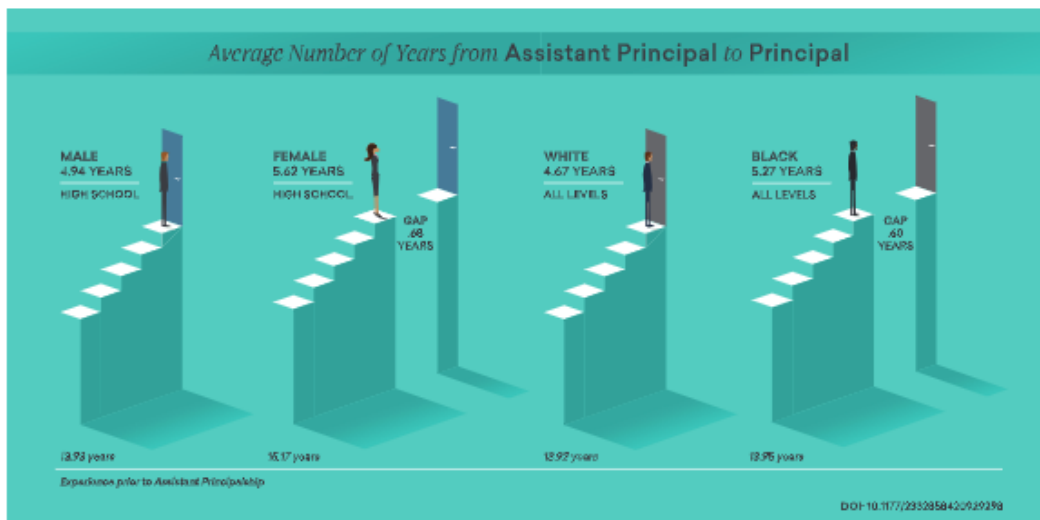
A Texas study employed two forms of survival analysis, the Kaplan-Meier method, and the Cox hazard method, to track 4,700 assistant principals seeking principalship. 690 of these assistant principals were Black. All candidates had master's degrees and state certifications, qualifying them to be principals. Of the 2,000 assistant principals promoted, only 240 or 35% of Black candidates were selected. The likelihood for promotion was much higher for the 2,800 White candidates, as 45% of them became principals (Bailes and Guthery, 2020). Teach for America's efforts to retain Black teachers in the classroom has the potential to increase the

applicant pool for various leadership roles, but supporting the transition to leadership is critical as Black teachers are more likely to stay in the classroom as compared to White peers (Bush et al., 2005; Bush et al., 2006; Ogunbawo, 2012). As national efforts are focused on Black teacher retention, Teach for America’s focus on keeping Black educators in the classroom seems to be at odds with The Collective’s interest in getting Black educators into leadership. Aspiring leaders need the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for leadership roles of interest.

Furthermore, Black teachers often spend time in informal leadership roles less focused on instruction, such as liaisons to students of color families and disciplinarians. They are not compensated for their time and are often overlooked for more formal leadership roles (Mosely, 2018). In addition to a limited number of promotions, Bailes & Guthery (2020) state that Black assistant principals had to wait longer to be promoted, waiting 5.27 years, seven months longer than their white peers. The underrepresentation of Black leaders will continue until there are sound and consistent efforts to support aspiring Black leaders as the first steps toward leadership attainment are the steepest (Bailes and Guthery, 2020).

Figure 1

Average number of years from assistant principal to principal



Adapted from Bailes L.P. & Guthery S. (2020). Held Down and Held Back: Systematically Delayed Principal Promotions by Race and Gender.

Impact of Networks

Wyatt and Silvester (2015) offered another explanation for delayed promotions. Using semi-structured interviews and attribution theory, these researchers examined how 20 Black and 20 White senior government managers made sense of significant career incidents on their leadership journeys. Black employees often depended on formal processes to gain promotion, potentially delaying their timeline for pursuing or attaining leadership positions. Based on these findings, Black educators need increased access to informal networks, in addition to formal processes. These relationships can accelerate the timeframe to promotion through access to new networks, predetermined candidacy, temporary promotion, and self-promotion, but tapping into these networks can be incredibly challenging for Black educators. Wyatt and Silvester suggest that formal processes are often a draw for Black employees seeking leadership roles. These processes often focus on transparency, consistency, communication, and implementation, which can be challenging to monitor in informal networks. In contrast, informal networks focus on interpersonal relationships, group norms, and managerial values to drive decision-making (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015).

Black employees often experience unfairness and exclusion from informal networks, leading to feelings of isolation and lack of acceptance, creating an internal battle for many Black employees (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). Black employees feel like they have to be better than their white peers to gain leadership roles or downplay various parts of their cultural identity to fit into these networks and increase their visibility (Bush et al., 2006; McCarthy Kilian et al., 2005;

Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). Research suggests that Black educators need to gain access to networks that support their career mobility while affirming their identities. Finding Black leaders and leaders more broadly through informal channels could offer aspiring Black leaders meaningful career assistance and guidance (Bush et al., 2006; McNamara et al., 2009; Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). As Black educators encounter various barriers to leadership, providing support to increase persistence, awareness of progress, and understanding of what different leadership roles entail can be powerful in Black educators' pursuit and attainment of diverse leadership roles (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015).

Racial Affinity-Based Leadership Development

Examining the role of identity in leadership development is critical as who an individual is defines their purpose and influences their actions (Day, 2000). Based on survey findings of 556 minority teachers, including 201 Black teachers, McNamara et al. (2009) found that aspiring leaders experience three issues related to identity: perception of oneself as a leader, sense of beliefs in their abilities, and reflection on how their proposed leadership impacts themselves and others. Thus, identity plays a significant role in aspiring Black leaders' development, as these educators have distinctive perspectives and experiences that influence their work at all levels.

As educators transition into leadership roles, the perception of oneself shifts from teacher to leader, sometimes causing an identity crisis. Identities are rooted in personal and work-related relationships, experiences, and histories, which can often cause a clash between the professional identity of teacher and leader (McNamara et al., 2009). Furthermore, interactions with others profoundly influence perception (McNamara et al., 2009). When seeking out leadership roles, aspiring leaders often second guess their abilities and need to be convinced that they have "what

it takes to be a leader" (McNamara et al., 2009, p. 16). Moreover, aspiring leaders need a space to reflect on their proposed leadership and the impact on themselves and others (McNamara et al., 2009). Communities rooted in commonality can offer this (Ogunbawo, 2012).

Racial affinity-based leadership development provides an opportunity to customize support in ways that acknowledges the perspectives, experiences, and needs of a specific demographic (Diversity Best Practices, 2017). This approach to development, rooted in culturally responsive practices, offers influential support to Black educators who aspire to leadership. This group shares unique experiences impacted by systemic racism and educational inequity (Ogunbawo, 2012; Mosely, 2018). These specialized programs offer more meaningful support than generic programs as they increase motivation and confidence, working to combat various internal and external barriers to promotion (Ogunbawo, 2012). In an explanatory mixed-methods study conducted by Ogunbawo (2012), 100% of the 52 participants noted that the Equal Access to Promotion (EAP) leadership program was a value add. The EAP is a nationwide leadership program based in the United Kingdom that seeks to help minority teachers overcome barriers to promotion and support progress toward attaining school leadership roles. This program increased knowledge of leadership opportunities and developed authentic self-understanding by creating a safe space for shared reflection and evaluation of progress toward leadership roles among those with similar cultural backgrounds.

Utilizing culture and community to create meaningful opportunities for aspiring Black leaders can continue to foster positive beliefs about one's identity and the connection to leadership (Mosely, 2018). Forging a safe learning environment in which Black educators can be their authentic selves builds ties, decreasing feelings of self-doubt or isolation (McCarty Kilian et

al., 2005; Mosely, 2018). In a participatory action research study, Mosely found that participants of the Black Teacher Project, a teacher professional development program, stated that having a space to be a community and share experiences of marginalization and resilience was valuable. Learning skills to combat various barriers Black educators may face based on identity can increase access to leadership roles (Mosely, 2018).

Racial affinity-based programs can also increase the leadership pipeline by growing and retaining Black educators. For example, in an identity-based program for aspiring leaders at Goldman Sachs, the organization found that by focusing on relationships, they were able to support the career development of aspiring leaders and their managers by determining short and long-term goals, providing networking opportunities, and facilitating sponsor-led discussions. These opportunities increased the pathways to promotion for aspiring Black leaders (Diversity Best Practice, 2017).

Each program noted includes reflection, discussions, mentorship, and networking (Diversity Best Practice, 2016; McCarty Kilian et al., 2005; Mosely, 2018; Ogunbawo, 2012). Leveraging the knowledge and skills of current Black leaders in these programming components can create a mirror for aspiring Black leaders, increasing self-perception and decreasing isolation, and other barriers through collective power (Diversity Best Practice, 2017; McCarty Kilian et al., 2005; Mosely, 2018; Ogunbawo, 2012). Black educators need to acknowledge, celebrate, and see their identity as an asset, rather than a deficit, to their leadership. This acknowledgment can be particularly challenging based on the various internal and external barriers Black educators face on the road to leadership. Racial affinity-based programs have the opportunity to change Black educators' perception of the connection between their identity and

leadership (Diversity Best Practice, 2017; McCarty Kilian et al., 2005; Mosely, 2018; Ogunbawo, 2012).

Mentorship

Bush et al.'s (2005) empirical research study of 64 minority leaders, which included 34 Black leaders, and Bush et al.'s (2006) thorough review of the literature, found that many leaders of color see themselves as role models for teachers, students, and communities of color. Therefore, it is crucial to leverage current Black leaders to develop aspiring Black leaders. Thus, educators of color's ability to denote a key person or people who encouraged them into leadership through mentorship or sponsorship can improve the Black leadership pipeline. These relationships are recognized as a critical variable in facilitating Black leaders' progression toward various leadership positions, but lack of access to these role models can be a barrier (Bush et al., 2005; Bush et al., 2006).

Black employees tend to form ties with other Black employees at the lower levels within organizations but struggle to gain access to career assistance from senior members, as there are a limited number of Black leaders (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). Formal and informal mentorship can improve social support for aspiring Black educators by providing role models that reflect the same racial identity. This type of mentorship can encourage Black educators to pursue leadership roles and remain in the profession, becoming role models for other educators in the future (Bush et al., 2006). Current leaders often demonstrate that positions are more attainable and can weaken assumptions and stereotypes (Hannum et al., 2015). As aspiring Black leaders confront barriers to leadership and work to address self-perception issues, learning from current Black leaders can help develop their leadership identity (Hannum et al., 2015; Ogunbawo, 2012).

Conclusion

While the research heavily focuses on the barriers to school leadership, particularly for the roles of assistant principals and principals, there is little information on how and when educators transition into these roles (Davis et al., 2017). As The Collective seeks to support aspiring school leaders beyond assistant principals and principalship, it is essential to understand what experiences are beneficial and necessary to increase self-perception, access, and attainment of various leadership positions. Understanding the historical and current educational landscape for Black educators can help determine ways to acknowledge barriers that aspiring leaders may encounter. Focusing on empowerment rather than deficits exclusively can support Black educators in working against various power imbalances that impact their leadership pursuit. Utilizing current Black leaders to help aspiring Black leaders navigate roadblocks to leadership can provide worthwhile support by creating a cycle of development for current and future leaders. This type of development will build the Black leadership pipeline over time.

As Black leaders are more likely to work in urban schools, they have the ability to positively impact teacher hiring and retention and student outcomes in urban communities (Bailey and Guthery, 2020; Bartenen & Grissom, 2019). The focus on aspiring urban Black leaders' development is critical in dismantling systemic obstacles that significantly impact the urban educational landscape in particular. Diversifying the educational workforce at all levels is essential in the progression towards educational equity.

Conceptual Framework

With a focus on improving development for urban Black educators who aspire to leadership, the explored research draws attention to the internal and external barriers to Black educators' leadership pursuit, attainment, and retention, while focusing on identity in terms of race and self-perception. For this study, the following frameworks were combined to develop an inquiry that provides further support in understanding leadership development as it relates to Black educators: leader and leadership development (Day, 2000), identity-based leadership development (Ibarra, 2015 & Ibarra et al., 2008), and Afrocentric Epistemological Framework (Gaetane, 2013). This capstone references these conceptual perspectives as contributing factors toward the design of meaningful support for Black educators who aspire to leadership within the context of a non-profit educational organization.

Leader and Leadership Development

Day (2000), a seminal researcher in this field, emphasized the difference between “leader” and “leadership development” in his contextual review as *leader development* focuses on intrapersonal competence and *leadership development* is focused on interpersonal competence. Day reported that leader development focuses on building intrapersonal competence to improve personal knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with various leadership roles. Building self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation skills are critical components of this approach. Leadership development emphasizes fostering networked relationships in efforts to improve commitments, trust, and respect. Essential elements of leadership development include social awareness and social skills. The development of intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies is pivotal for aspiring leaders.

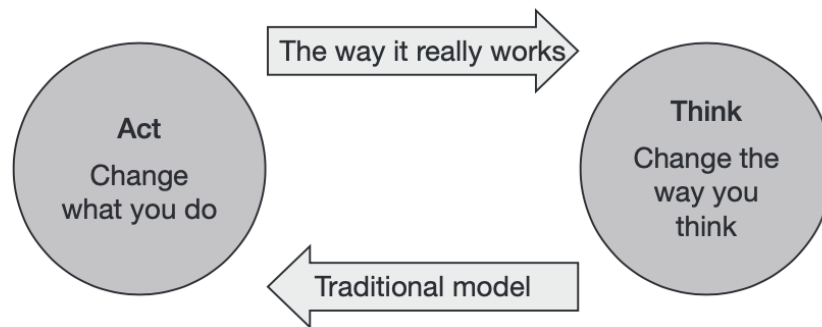
Identity-based Leadership

Identity-based leadership is based on "how people come to see and define themselves as leaders" (Ibarra, 2015, p.14). Ibarra suggests that one becomes a leader by doing leadership work. Leadership work, experiential learning is foundational in demonstrating the interconnectedness of two processes, external and internal. The external process includes new situations and people that create a window in one's leadership potential and competency, significantly changing how one sees themselves. Relationships with others over time foster the internal process of reflection, self-introspection, thinking, and the development of mental models, impacting one's inner motivation and self-definition. As individuals transition into various professional roles, their identity evolves (Editor- I – Global Intelligence for Digital Leaders, 2016; Ibarra et al., 2010). For one to think like a leader, one must first act like a leader. Traditional leadership development models are focused on thinking about who you are and what kind of leader you want to be, therefore reflecting your way into being. However, identity-based leadership is contrary to traditional thinking about leadership as it focuses on shifting one's mindset through new experiences. In this framework, both insight, the focus on internal process and oversight, the focus on external process, work together to help build leaders' skillset as their leadership context evolves.

Figure 2

Becoming a leader: A visual representation of the comparison between Ibarra's leadership model and traditional leadership models

Becoming a leader: the traditional sequence (think, then act) versus the way it really works (act, then think)



Adapted from Ibarra, H. (2015). *Act like a leader, think like a leader*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

Afrocentric Epistemology Framework

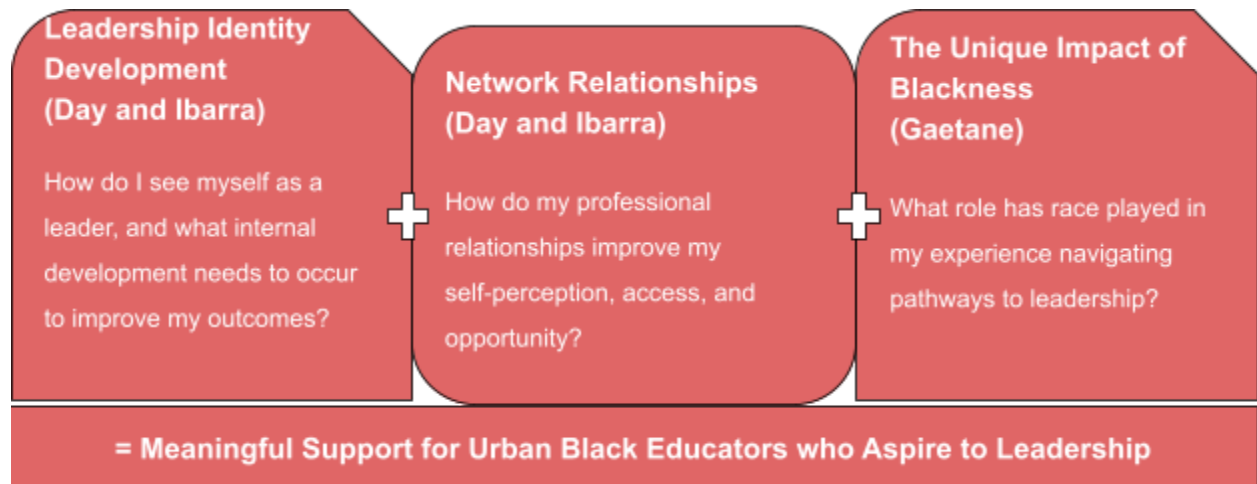
Urban Black educators navigate multiple identities and roles, both personal and professional, on their journey to leadership (Gaetane, 2013 and McNamara et al., 2009). "Epistemology refers to systems of knowledge that place at the center the lived experiences of people" (Bernal, 2002 and Harding, 1987; as cited by Gaetane, 2013, p. 617). The Afrocentric point of view explores how the intersection of race, class, gender, and other factors impact Black educators' experiences and influence their actions (Gaetane, 2013). Furthermore, it is critical to acknowledge how race and gender manifest in the barriers and successes Black educators experience on their professional journeys (Gaetane, 2013). The prejudice and marginalized

experiences Black people encounter provides a significant distinction to Black educators' experiences compared to other races.

In synthesizing key elements of leader and leadership development, identity-based leadership, and the Afrocentric Epistemology Framework, the following themes emerged: leadership identity development, network relationships, and the unique impact of Blackness on Black educators' professional journeys. These themes support an approach to understanding leadership development for urban Black educators who aspire to leadership by working to understand the perspectives and experiences of this group. The following questions emerged from the noted themes and emphasized critical areas of focus in understanding and addressing the problem of practice, forming the inquiry.

Table 1

Inquiry Model



This inquiry shaped the methodology of this study in efforts to construct meaningful leadership development opportunities for urban Black educators. This study aimed to understand

the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators who aspire to leadership to determine ways The Collective can support this group.

For this capstone, a leader is defined as an instructional school or system-based leader, such as but not limited to an instructional coach, academic director, department chair, content specialist, assistant principal, dean of students, principal, or head of school. While there is a lack of ample research on roles outside of assistant principal and principal, it was important to include these roles in this study's focus as principal is not the ultimate goal for every educator. As the scope of school and systems-level leadership continues to expand, it is vital to explore a breadth of roles under the umbrella of school leadership which could lead to senior-level school and system roles in a district or charter. Such positions may include chief academic officer, director of social-emotional learning, or executive director. Depending on the context, assistant principalship or principalship is not required for consideration for the roles indicated above.

Research Questions

Two research questions were used to investigate leadership development for aspiring Black leaders. The first question focused on the unique experiences of Black educators who aspire to leadership roles. To better understand the leadership development needs of Black educators, I examined the perspectives and experiences of future and current Black educational leaders. The focus on unique leadership development for Black educators was grounded in the key themes of the conceptual frameworks: leadership identity development, network relationships, and the unique impact of Blackness. Each element supported my inquiry into Black educators' self-definition on their pathway to leadership: the role relationships and social skills have on Black educators' beliefs about themselves, their access, and opportunity to engage in leadership experiences; and the critical role race has played in how Black educators experience and make sense of various encounters along their career pathways.

The second research question was informed by the conceptual framework and sought to understand what support a non-profit educational organization should offer urban Black educators as they pursue leadership roles. Both questions were explored through a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach with primary surveys, semi-structured interviews, and a detailed review of existing surveys and other organizational documents.

Research Questions:

1. **Main Research Question:** What are the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators who aspire to leadership roles?
2. **Subsequent Research Question:** How might a non-profit educational organization support these urban Black educators' as they seek leadership opportunities?

The findings associated with the first research question provided insight into aspiring and current Black leaders' professional journeys, particularly shedding light on the experiences that have made an imprint on their leadership development and beliefs that have emerged through these situations. The second question allowed The Collective to understand what types of support a non-profit educational organization should offer aspiring Black leaders, based on the needs of Black educators, illuminated in question one. These findings could potentially provide a new working model of leadership development for Black educators, designed to create a leadership pipeline that increases the number of Black leaders in urban communities. In addition, the research findings will help elevate Black educators' voices who have been marginalized and often silenced as they seek leadership roles in education and other fields within the United States and world. These findings make Black educators a part of the leadership development model not only as participants but creators.

Project Design

Data Collection

This study utilized a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies to address the two research questions. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently and weighed equally to identify common themes to inform analysis and interpretation (Creswell & Pablo-Clark, 2011; Fetters et al., 2013). Data collection occurred from December 2020 to May 2021. Qualitative data was gathered through primary semi-structured interviews and a thorough review of existing documents acquired from The Collective. Quantitative data was collected through primary surveys, and a detailed review of existing surveys received from The Collective. The research design was used to produce a more comprehensive understanding of the problem to help answer the research questions, and both methods offered equally valuable data. Furthermore, this approach offered support to counter the limited data collection timeframe and challenges associated with COVID-19, such as participant engagement.

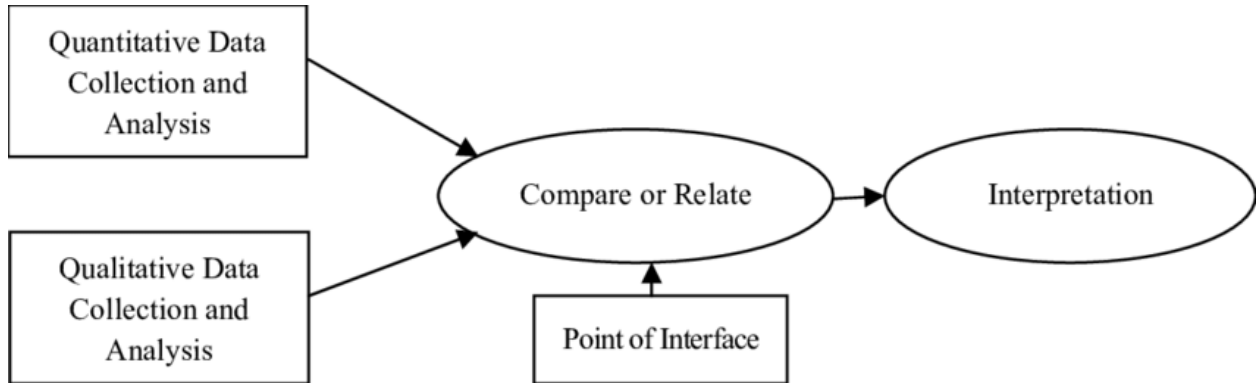
Figure 4 demonstrates the stages of the convergent parallel mixed-methods approach:

1. Quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed concurrently.
2. After analysis, qualitative and quantitative data are mixed at the point of interface, also known as the stage of integration. According to Creswell & Plano Clark (2011), mixing strategies include the following: 1) merging the two data sets, (2) connecting from the analysis of one set of data to the collection of the second set of data, (3) embedding of one form of data within a larger design or procedure, and (4) using a framework (theoretical or program) to bind together the data sets.

3. The merged results are summarized and interpreted.

Figure 3

Convergent Parallel Mixed-Methods Approach



Note. Adapted from Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2011) *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. 2nd Edition, Sage Publications, Los Angeles.

Participants

For this study, participants were selected for surveys and interviews based on the following criteria: 1) identify as a TFA alumnus 2) identify as Black, 3) identify as a current teacher interested in school leadership or identify as current school or systems leader, 4) placement region or current region is urban. The total population for this study included Black educators from the following groups within the TFA alumni pool: 2,280 Teachers, 575 Mid-Level Leaders, 256 School Leaders, and 86 School Systems Leaders. These numbers are based on the last role Black alumni self-reported to TFA.

Snowballing non-probability volunteer sampling was used to recruit participants for the surveys as participants self-selected into the surveys. The Collective shared the opportunity to engage in this study via their national and regional newsletters and Instagram account.

Additional outreach occurred through informal TFA networks via Groupme, text, email, and social media. Study participants were also asked to help identify other potential subjects. Black alumni within my network and study participants assisted by sharing the interest form on the noted virtual platforms and word of mouth. These methods were selected due to legal constraints as the organization could not require or formally ask alumni to participate in this study.

Potential participants were asked to fill out a form to determine if they were eligible for participation. In addition, the following information was requested: 1) Do you identify as Black?, 2) Do you identify as Afro-Latinx or Multi-Racial?, 3) Name, 4) Corps year and region, 5) Current TFA region you are living in, 6) Role, 7) Email Address, 8) Phone number. If participants met the criteria, they were emailed a request for participation asking them to complete a survey and sign up for an interview. Forty-seven emails were sent out. 14 teacher surveys, including responses from 2 teacher leaders and 19 leader surveys, were completed, and 9 teacher interviews, including 4 teacher-leaders and 11 leader interviews, were completed.

Data Gathering

The survey and semi-interview questions were self-created and informed by elements of the inquiry model and incorporated concepts from the literature review. The key aspects of leadership identity development, network relationships, and the unique impact of Blackness drove the investigation of the perspectives and experiences of Black educators who aspire to leadership and the support a non-profit educational organization should offer for this group. The use of these elements is explained below.

Leadership Identity Development questions probed into aspiring and current leaders' ideas of self through the lens of self-regulation, self-awareness, and self-motivation, which make

up internal competence/process. These questions sought to understand how educators see themselves and the experiences that impact this perception. The investigation of self-perception was critical as the research notes that it affects navigation of barriers, timing, and probability of role attainment, and overall pathways to leadership (Day, 2000; Ibarra, 2015; Singh, 2002; as cited by Ogunbawo, 2012)

Network Relationships questions sought to gain insight into educators' formal and informal network relationships. These relationships were crucial to explore as researchers noted that networks play a significant role in leaders' level of access and opportunities (Bush et al., 2006; McCarthy Kilian et al., 2005; Wyatt and Silvester, 2015. Additionally, the connection between network relationships and educators' understanding of their potential and competence was necessary based on external competence/process (Day, 2000 and Ibarra et al., 2008).

The Unique Impact of Blackness questions investigated the impact of race on black educators' leadership journey in terms of barriers, successes, networks, and self-perception. This investigation looked to understand what support a non-profit educational organization should offer to improve Black educators' networks and self-perception. These questions were embedded into leadership identity development and network relationship questions as these questions probed around educators' experiences and perspectives through the lens of a Black educator. The research notes that the Black educator experience is unique. Therefore, it is critical to examine experiences rooted in Blackness (Bailes and Guthery, 2020; Bush et al., 2005; Bush et al., 2006; Davis et al., 2017; Gaetane, 2013; Mosley, 2018; Ogunbawo, 2012; Wyatt and Silvester, 2015).

Quantitative Surveys

Two primary quantitative surveys were conducted: one for teachers, including teacher leaders, and one for current leaders. The teacher survey contained 30 questions, and the leader survey included 31 questions. The teacher survey contained:

- Four demographic open response questions included the following:
 - Corps Year
 - Placement Region
 - Current Region
 - Job Title
- 24 multiple choice questions including Likert scale and closed-ended
- Two open-response questions that allowed participants to provide recommendations to improve aspiring leaders' networks and, more broadly, Black educators' perception of themselves.

Similarly, the leader survey included:

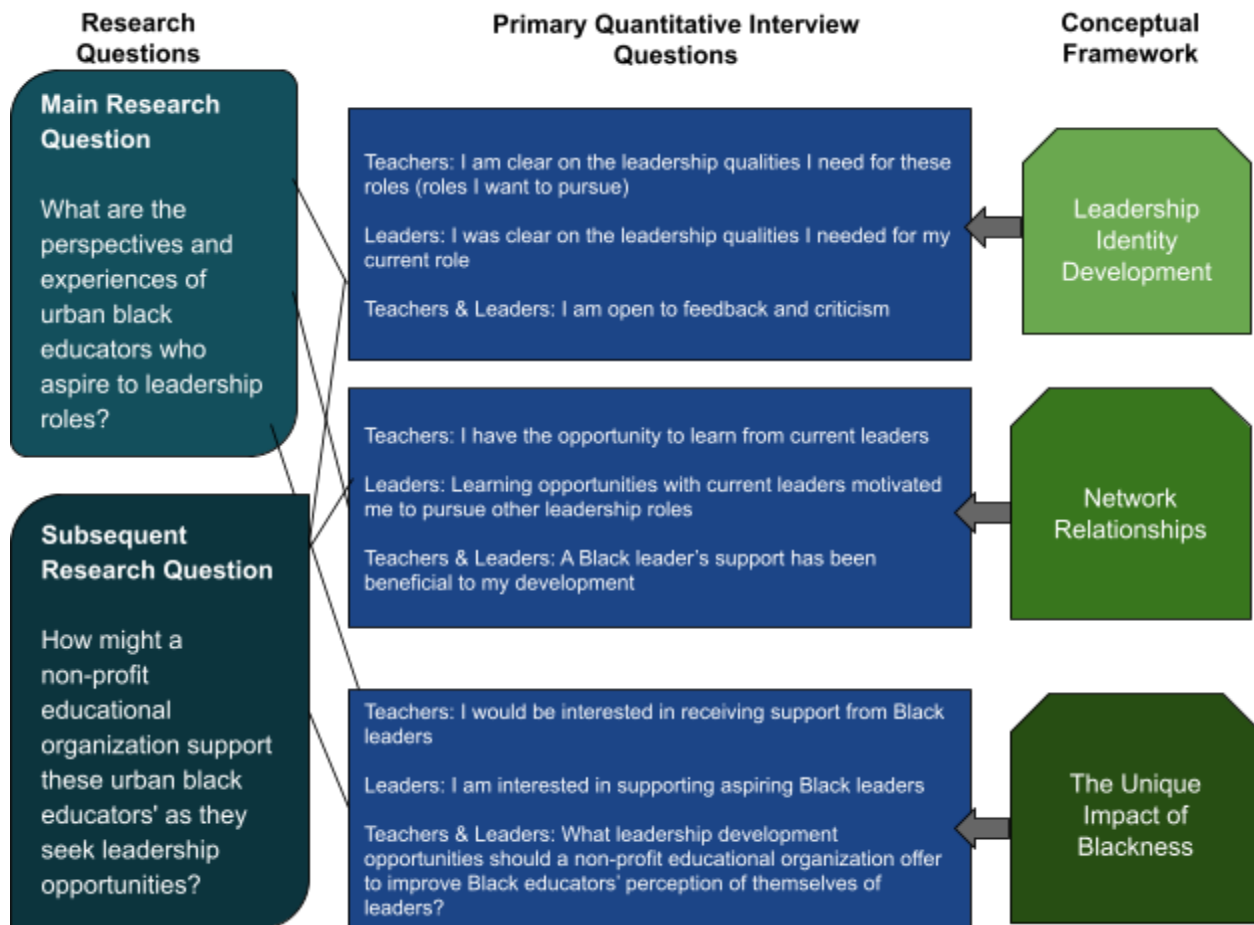
- Four demographic open response questions included the following:
 - Corps Year
 - Placement Region
 - Current Region
 - Job Title
- 25 multiple-choice questions including Likert scale and closed-ended

- Two open-response questions allowed participants to provide recommendations to improve aspiring leaders' networks and Black educators' perception of themselves more broadly.

Qualtrics was used to conduct the quantitative survey.

Table 2

Research Questions Alignment with Survey Questions and Conceptual Framework



Note: This is just a subset of the questions all teacher survey questions can be found in Appendix 1 and leader survey questions can be found in Appendix 2.

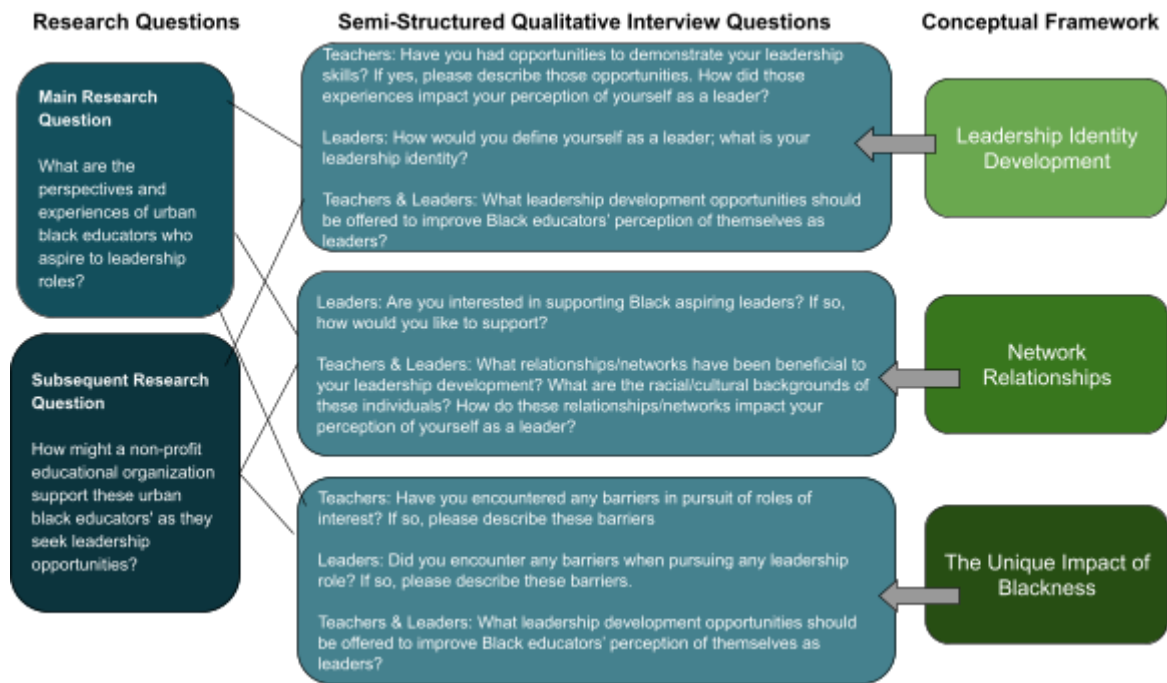
Qualitative Interviews

Two protocols were used for the semi-structured qualitative interviews: one for teachers, including teacher-leaders, and one for current leaders. An interview guide was used to direct the conversations with each educator to ensure consistency across the semi-structured interviews. Non-probability volunteer sampling was used to recruit participants for the interviews. The sample was obtained from those who responded yes to an interview via email or Calendly sign-up. Participants were notified that the interview would take between 30-45 mins via Zoom video conferencing. The length of time, lack of compensation, and impact of COVID may have impacted the number of “yes” respondents, resulting in a small interview pool. A sample of the interview protocols used can be found in table 3.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the research questions in ways that the surveys could not. Interviews included over 10 open-ended questions, which sought to provide a further understanding of the context, emotions, beliefs, and circumstances behind the experiences and perspectives of Black educators, allowing for deeper connections between responses and the inquiry model and literature review. Interviews were a necessary complement to quantitative survey data and review of existing data to provide solid recommendations to The Collective regarding the design of effective support for urban Black educators who aspire to leadership.

Table 3

Research Questions Alignment with Interview Questions and Conceptual Framework



Note: A subset of the questions all teacher interview questions can be found in Appendix 3 and leader interview questions can be found in Appendix 4.

Existing Data Sets

At the end of The Collective’s yearly conference, the School Leader of Color Conference (SLOC), The Collective asked participants to complete a survey to help them understand participants' experience regarding logistics, overall conference satisfaction, targeted conference outcomes, network/relationships, inclusivity, specific workshops, and coffee chats. For the purposes of this study, the following areas of SLOC data were reviewed for the years 2015 and 2017-2021: targeted conference outcomes, network relationships, inclusivity, and specific workshops. Table 4 provides insight into specific survey questions that were reviewed for the

categories of focus. Additionally, table 5 demonstrates the connection between the survey categories and focus questions and the research questions and conceptual framework. This survey data was used to help answer the first research question by offering insight into current Black educators' experiences at SLOC and their perspectives on what conference experiences are meaningful and require improvement. In addition, learning more about current leaders' experiences and perspectives can provide insight into the experience of current Black leaders, offering guidance in answering the second research question. In addition to survey data, SLOC programming documents were reviewed to gain insight into conference goals and specific session offerings.

Along with SLOC data, regional programming documents were reviewed to understand the difference between national and regional support and alumni needs. These documents provided further context into the organization's priorities, capacity, and mechanisms of support. Due to confidentiality agreements with the organization these documents are not included in this report.

Table 4

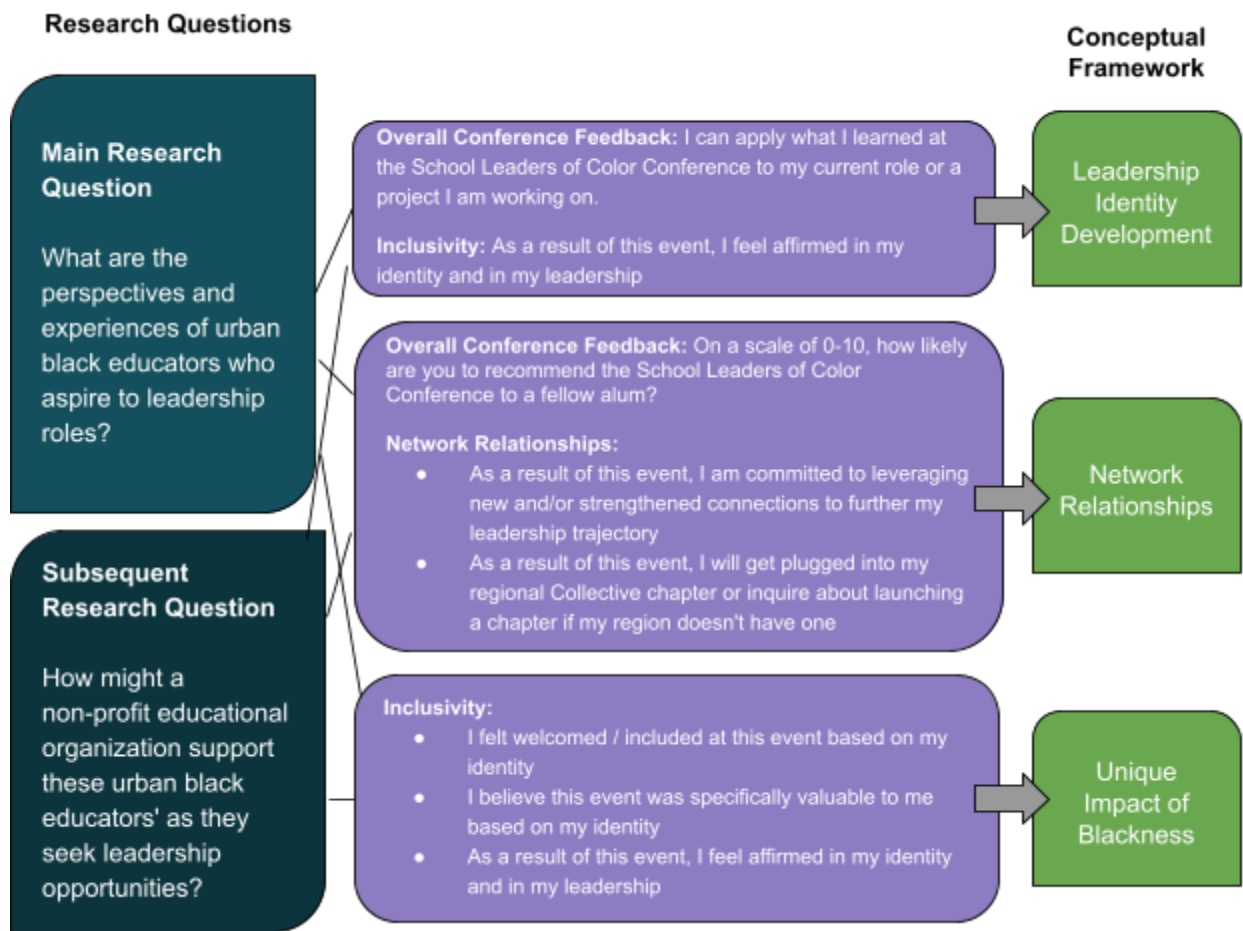
SLOC Survey Questions of Focus for the years of 2018-2021

OVERALL CONFERENCE FEEDBACK	On a scale of 0-10, how likely are you to recommend the School Leaders of Color Conference to a fellow alum?
	I can apply what I learned at the School Leaders of Color Conference to my current role or a project I am working on
NETWORKS / RELATIONSHIPS	As a result of this event, I am committed to leveraging new and/or strengthened connections to further my leadership trajectory
	As a result of this event, I will get plugged into my regional Collective chapter or inquire about launching a chapter if my region doesn't have one

INCLUSIVITY	I felt welcomed / included at this event based on my identity
	I believe this event was specifically valuable to me based on my identity
	As a result of this event, I feel affirmed in my identity and in my leadership.

Table 5

Research Questions Alignment with Existing Data Sets: SLOC and Conceptual Framework



Quantitative Analysis

Through the convergent parallel mixed-methods approach, quantitative data was analyzed independently from qualitative data and then interpreted together. When examining existing data sets, specific questions and responses were selected from the SLOC questionnaire administered to attendees. These questions offered insight into Black attendees' perspectives and experiences related to identity affirmation and value, the presence of networked relationships, their context, and their impact on continued leadership development. These insights remained salient conceptualizations underscoring this study's focus on the perspectives and experiences of Black educators to drive the design of effective support for this group as they pursue leadership.

It is important to note that not all survey responses were not examined as some responses could not be disaggregated based on race which was necessary for this study. Therefore, reported results were derived from the data analysis conducted by The Collective. Data summaries show disaggregated data by race for specific questions and in the categories of interest noted above. While this data was disaggregated by race, it could not be disaggregated by race and role together. It should be noted that the majority of responses indicate current leaders, including middle and senior-level leaders rather than teachers, as this is not the intended group of focus for SLOC.

Furthermore, analysis was used to investigate teacher and leader survey data. A respondent summary can be found in Table 7. It is important to note that some questions in the instruments overlapped across stakeholders in terms of leadership identity development, network relationships, and unique experiences rooted in Blackness. Responses to these questions were compared across both groups to determine similarities and differences in perspectives and

experiences connected to participants' current roles. I then analyzed the results, paying close attention to the number of teachers and leaders that felt comfortable communicating with various stakeholders and the average rating of teachers and leaders who believe a Black leader's support has been beneficial to their development. This analysis was reported as percentages and means. This data provided additional insight into the perspectives and experiences of Black educators to guide the design of meaningful support for those who aspire to leadership.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data was collected concurrently with quantitative data but analyzed independently. Semi-structured qualitative interviews sought to explore the research questions further and help identify themes within the defined conceptual framework. This research method aimed to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions by corroborating results from both types of data. The qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and 2 open-ended survey questions on the teacher and leader survey were thematically coded using Delve, a software tool to analyze qualitative data. The following steps were used in the analysis process. 1) Collect the data, transfer Zoom transcripts to Delve, 3) create coding themes, 4) code in Delve, 5) review sorted data based on codes, 6) analyze the data. This approach offered an opportunity to identify themes patterned across responses. Similar to the surveys, some interview questions overlapped across stakeholders in regards to the key elements of the conceptual framework. Responses to these questions were also compared across both groups to determine similarities and differences of perspectives and experiences connected to participants' roles.

The conceptual frameworks primarily drove the themes. Thus, the majority of the deductive coding was connected to predefined concept themes from the critical elements of the

inquiry model: leadership identity development, network relationships, and the unique impact of Blackness. The qualitative coding thematic analysis in Table 6 shows the categorical codes used throughout the thematic analysis to align interview data provided by interviewees to the predefined themes of the frameworks. *The Qualitative Coding Thematic Analysis can be found in Appendix 5.*

Table 6

Qualitative Coding Thematic Analysis: Sample

Teacher- Elementary- T-ELEM	Leadership Identity- Self Awareness-Accurate Self-Image- LI-SA-ASM	Networked Relationships- Formal- NR-F
School Leader-Mid Level- Instructional Coach-SL-ML-IC	Leadership Identity- Self-motivation- Initiative- LI-SM-I	Networked Relationships- Informal- NR-I
School Leader-Senior Level-Principal- SL-SL-P	Leadership Identity Self Regulation- Adaptability-LI-SR-A	Unique impact of Blackness- Barrier- UIB-B

After analyzing quantitative and qualitative data independently, the data sets of results were merged by identifying content areas represented in both data types. The results were compared and synthesized in a discussion. The merged results were then interpreted by determining to what extent and in what ways the results of the data types converged, diverged, and relate to each other. The triangulated data produced a more complete understanding of the perspectives and experiences of Black educators to design effective support for this group as they aspire to leadership which informed the findings. It should be noted that the sample size compared to the total population will cause limitations in the generalizability of findings based

on analysis and interpretation. COVID-19 and the legal limitations of the organization impacted participant engagement.

Table 7

Quantitative and Qualitative Respondent Summary

	Surveys	Interviews	Corps Years Represented	Number of Regions Represented
Number of Teacher Respondents	14 teachers including 2 teacher-leaders	9 teachers including 4 teacher leaders	2009-2017	12
Number of Leader Respondents	19 leaders including 8 mid-level, 5 senior-level, and 6 system-level leaders	11 leaders including 5 mid-level, 4 senior-level, 1 system-level leaders	2004-2016	14

Findings

Three primary findings came out of this research and study design. The findings address the main research question: What are the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators who aspire to leadership roles? These findings ground the recommendations to answer the subsequent research question: How might a non-profit educational organization support these urban Black educators' as they seek leadership opportunities?

Finding 1: Black educators at all levels are committed to supporting other educators.

Black educators' motivation to make progress is demonstrated through their commitment to other educators. 3 (n=9) teachers and 9 (n=11) leaders indicated in interviews that they want to create opportunities for others that they did not have. The phrases "seat at the table" and "paying it forward" were commonly used to describe this desire. In addition, 9 (n=11) leaders specifically discussed their leadership regarding their desire and ability to build capacity in others. By fostering self-motivation and other leadership skills, leaders in this study hoped to expand the impact of Black educators through increased access.

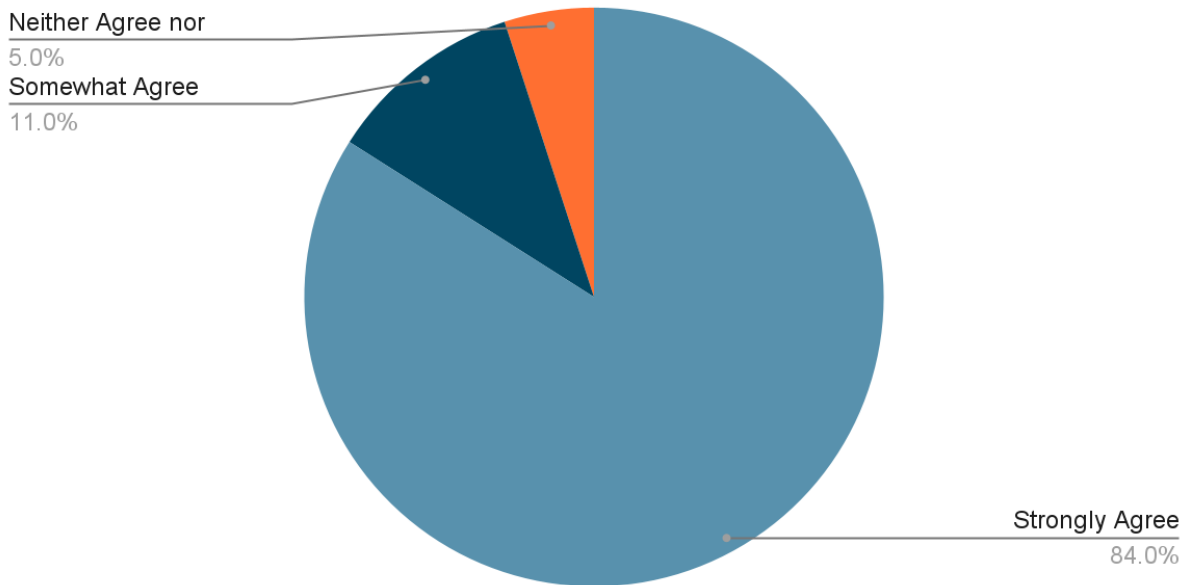
Survey results further indicate a desire to support Black educators. A survey question asked current Black leaders if they were interested in supporting aspiring Black leaders, and 16 out of the sample population of leaders (n=19) responded strongly agree on a 5 point Likert scale with a mean of 4.79 (s=.52). Additionally, a teacher survey question asked if they were interested in receiving support from Black leaders, and out of the sample population (n=14), 11 strongly agreed, 1 somewhat agreed, and 2 neither agreed nor disagreed on a 5 point Likert scale. This finding confirms the assumption that Black leaders want to support Black educators. The motivation to create better outcomes for educators upholds the research findings regarding Black

leaders' impact on their staff, particularly Black staff in terms of hiring and retention (Bartanen & Grissom, 2019; Gershenson, 2017). Based on these results, support and service emerged as primary drivers of Black educators' motivation to pursue leadership roles. Black educators demonstrated a shared commitment to supporting other educators. Furthermore, the inquiry model's elements converge as race influences participants' motivation to lead. The unique impact of Blackness plays a critical role in developing Black educators' leadership identity in terms of self-motivation.

Figure 4

Current Black Leaders Interest in Supporting Black Aspiring Leaders: Survey Responses

Current Black Leaders Interest in Supporting Black Aspiring Leaders: Survey Responses



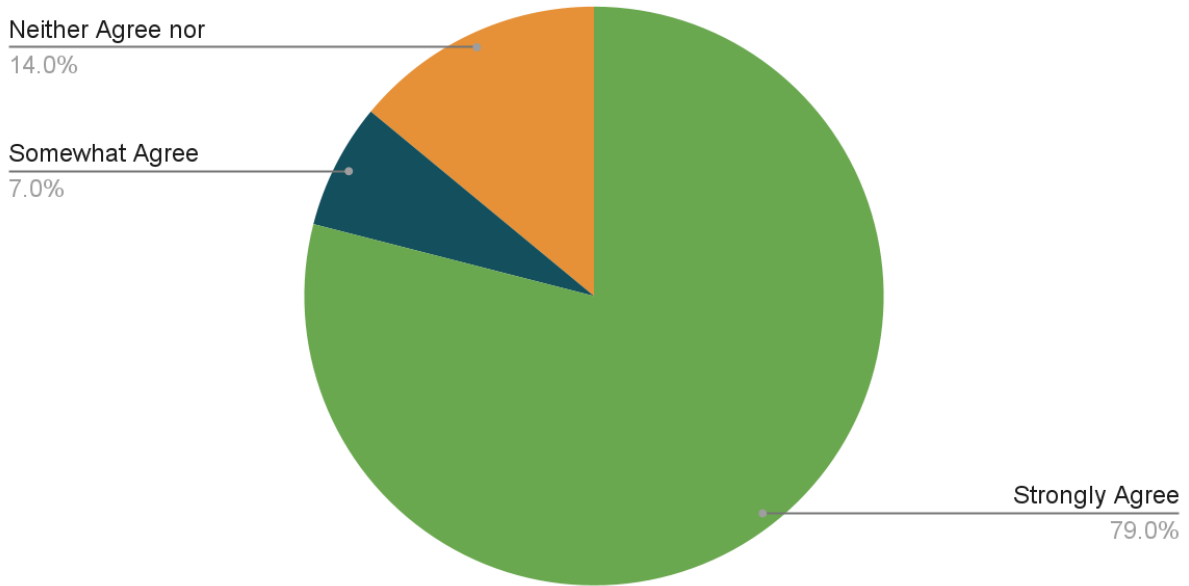
Note: This figure reflects the responses of 19 current leaders.

Figure 5

Black Aspiring Leaders Interest in Receiving Support from Current Black Leaders: Survey

Responses

Black Aspiring Leaders Interest in Receiving Support from Current Black Leaders: Survey Responses



Note: This figure reflects the responses of 14 teachers including teacher-leaders.

In addition to a shared commitment to support others, Black educators at all levels believe that mentorship matters. An open-response survey question and interview question asked participants what leadership development opportunities a non-profit educational organization should offer to improve Black aspiring leaders' networks? Survey results found that 8 teachers (n=11) and 8 leaders (n=16) noted some form of mentorship. In interviews, every participant, teachers (n=9), and leaders (n=11) discussed mentorship as a necessary support. Black educators

believe mentorship is a key component of leadership development as the presence or absence of mentorship has played a crucial role in their development, shaping the belief that it is necessary for aspiring leaders. A senior leader shared, "I think mentorship is critical. There have been Black women who have encouraged me along the way. They saw things in me that I didn't necessarily see initially." A teacher leader shared, "Teachers need someone who is continuously pushing them and promoting leadership opportunities." Another teacher-leader shared, "Mentorship should include apprenticeship; you actually need to do it. Hands-on versus just talking about it with a leader who is doing the work."

Mentorship can improve social support for aspiring leaders (Bush et al., 2005; Bush et al., 2006). When teachers and leaders discussed mentorship, they mentioned ongoing support aligned to interests, including shadowing, real-time experiences, meaningful conversations, and critical feedback. Leaders also emphasized the need for mentors outside of their current roles, potential roles, and current field to fill their leadership gaps especially connected to management. Teachers and leaders want the opportunity to learn alongside leaders and hear about their experiences and their pathway to leadership in ways that do not sugar coat their success, dilemmas, or questions. While Black educators are committed to supporting other educators and believe that mentorship is critical to aspiring leaders' development, participants experienced inconsistency with support from leaders throughout their professional journeys.

Finding 2: Although Black educators share a commitment to support other educators and believe that mentorship matters, their experiences of support from current leaders are inconsistent, impacting their access and opportunity.

Survey data found in Table 8 indicates that teachers and leaders had varying opportunities to learn from current leaders and Black leaders more specifically. Additionally, the availability, influence, and impact of Black leaders' support on current leaders' development demonstrate greater variation than teachers' experiences based on the standard deviation of the aligned survey items. It is interesting to note that current leaders in this study are committed to supporting other educators, although they may have encountered limited support or negative experiences with leaders along their journeys. Interview findings provide a deeper understanding of meaningful support from leaders and their impact on participants' leadership journeys. Based on these findings, leaders have the potential to positively impact Black educators as they seek entry into leadership.

Table 8

Supporting Likert-Survey Data

Teacher Question	Mean	Standard Deviation	Responses per rating	Interpretation
I have the opportunity to learn from current leaders	4.21	.94	Strongly disagree=0 Somewhat disagree=1 Neither agree or disagree=2 Somewhat agree=4 Strongly agree=7	Somewhat Agree
I have the opportunity to learn from Black leaders	4.21	1.08	Strongly disagree=1 Somewhat disagree=0 Neither agree or disagree=1 Somewhat agree=5 Strongly agree=7	Somewhat Agree

A Black leader's support has been beneficial to my development	4.14	1.25	Strongly disagree=1 Somewhat disagree=1 Neither agree or disagree=1 Somewhat agree=3 Strongly agree=8	Somewhat Agree
Leader Question	Mean	Standard Deviation	Responses per rating	Interpretation
Learning opportunities with current leaders motivated me to pursue other leadership roles	3.42	1.46	Strongly disagree=2 Somewhat disagree=2 Neither agree or disagree=0 Somewhat agree=8 Strongly agree=7	Neutral
Learning opportunities with black leaders have been available throughout my development	3.21	1.54	Strongly disagree=4 Somewhat disagree=4 Neither agree or disagree=0 Somewhat agree=6 Strongly agree=5	Neutral
A Black leader's support has been beneficial to my development	3.95	1.57	Strongly disagree=3 Somewhat disagree=2 Neither agree or disagree=0 Somewhat agree=2 Strongly agree=12	Neutral

When discussing the role of leaders on participants' entry into leadership and continued development, many opportunities to lead began with a leader acknowledging a Black educators' competence and potential and giving them the ability to demonstrate and build on their skills through meaningful experiences. In interviews, 3 teacher-leaders (n=4) and 11 (n=11) leaders shared how someone along their journey provided them with an opportunity to lead. Participants noted formal relationships with the following types of leaders: 8 principals, 2 instructional coaches, 1 assistant principal, 2 district and charter leaders, and 3 TFA coaches were reported as key relationships that opened the door to leadership. For example, a teacher-leader shared, "I have a strong coach, and she has impacted me by putting me into positions where I felt like I

could excel." Another teacher-leader shared, "One of the biggest impacts on my perception of my leadership was my instructional coach. They put me in a position to lead professional development across the district, and I thought that that was really powerful and like, oh, you can really do this."

These results indicate that when a leader acknowledges a Black educators' potential and competence, it impacts their access to leadership roles while shaping a positive self-image and boosting self-confidence. Meaningful experiences have the power to transform Black educators' inner leadership identity development.

The real-time experiences offered by the noted leaders worked to develop Black educators' emotional awareness, self-image, and self-confidence. For example, a systems leader shared, "My leadership identity is grounded in emotional intelligence. I'm super self-aware, and the reason why I think that's important is because I think that it's the highest leverage tool that a leader should have." A principal stated, "You need to be real with yourself...That really flipped things for me. When I started being honest with myself, then I started to say sorry when I made a mistake." In interviews, 3 teacher-leaders (n=4) and 9 (n=11) current leaders expressed that they did not actively seek many of the roles they gained access to. Instead, a leader thought they would be a great fit or the noted opportunity would provide the perfect challenge to support their growth. "Let me say, I didn't go after these roles; I was voluntold," a principal shared.

However, not all educators had the same experiences. A teacher shared, "I just need someone to take a chance on me." Of the 4 (n=9) teacher interview participants that were actively seeking roles but did not attain a leadership role yet, not being selected to lead professional development, grade-level teams, different committees, and events/programs

impacted their perception of their potential and ability to be a leader within their school buildings and beyond. These teachers asked questions such as, "Well, am I not good enough?" "Why did they choose *x* over me?" "Am I too good, so they are just giving someone else a chance?" These teachers struggled to make sense of their abilities and look at the road ahead with great optimism. Based on these results, current leaders can often be the doorkeeper to leadership, opening the door for whom they see potential in.

Finding 3: There is a lack of awareness and access to instructional leadership positions beyond traditional school administrator roles.

As aspiring leaders seek new roles, there is a lack of awareness around a wide range of instructional school or systems-based roles. In interviews, 89% of teachers (n=9) shared that the principal role is not for them for several reasons. Teachers stated it was never their dream or that their experiences have led them to realize it is not a fit. When naming roles of interest, some shared typical roles such as instructional coach, assistant principal, and dean of students. However, they shared that these roles do not fully encompass everything they want in a leadership role.

Additionally, 4 teachers (n=9) shared that they just do not know if the positions they want currently exist. For example, 1 instructional coach, 1 content director, and 1 assistant principal shared that the goal is not to become principal, but they do not know what is next. One teacher-leader shared that their desire to be a principal decreased as their proximity to their principal increased. As they learned more about the duties and responsibilities of the principal role, they became disinterested. Survey data shown in Table 9 indicates that teachers and leaders believe they have the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to be great leaders. However, more clarity

about the leadership qualities needed for the various positions aspiring leaders want to pursue is necessary as the mean (4.00) for teachers and leaders indicates an average rating of somewhat agree. For leaders to succeed in their pursuit, attainment, and retention of leadership roles, they have to be clear on the criteria for success (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015).

Table 9

Supporting Likert Survey Data

Teacher Question	Mean	Standard Deviation	Responses per rating	Interpretation
I have the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to be a great leader keep this	4.64	.48	Strongly disagree=0 Somewhat disagree=0 Neither agree or disagree=0 Somewhat agree=5 Strongly agree=9	Agree/Strongly agree
I am clear on the leadership qualities I need for these roles keep this	4.00	.87	Strongly disagree=0 Somewhat disagree=1 Neither agree or disagree=3 Somewhat agree=7 Strongly agree=5	Somewhat Agree
Leader Question	Mean	Standard Deviation	Responses per rating	Interpretation
I have the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to be a great leader keep this	4.74	.44	Strongly disagree=0 Somewhat disagree=0 Neither agree or disagree=0 Somewhat agree=5 Strongly agree=9	Agree/Strongly agree
I was clear on the leadership qualities I needed for my current role keep this	4.00	.97	Strongly disagree=1 Somewhat disagree=0 Neither agree or disagree=3 Somewhat agree=9 Strongly agree=6	Somewhat Agree

Lack of awareness and clarity can impact Black aspiring leaders' attainment, success in the role, retention, and the types of support this group should engage in. Research supports these findings as promotional practices are inconsistent, unstructured, context-dependent, and influenced by race (Bailes and Guthery, 2020; Davis et al., 2017). Again, the limited representation of Black school leaders, high turnover rates, and low retention rates in urban schools impacts Black educators' access to mentorship and support that equips them with the leadership qualities necessary for various positions (Bartanen & Grissom, 2019; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2021). Increasing Black educators' awareness, access, and clarity can improve the leadership pipeline for this group by increasing the quantity and quality of Black educators who lead in urban schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and the connections to the elements of the inquiry model, the following are recommendations to support The Collective in providing meaningful leadership support to urban Black educators to improve the leadership pipeline for this group.

Recommendation 1: The Collective should develop a comprehensive approach to networking and mentorship.

Finding 1 suggests that Black educators at all levels are committed to supporting other educators and that they believe mentorship matters. As a result, The Collective should leverage current Black leaders in various fields to support Black educators as they pursue school leadership positions. Therefore, I recommend that The Collective develops a comprehensive approach to networking and mentorship to improve support for this group. The research indicates that network relationships impact Black educators' access, opportunities, retention, and leadership identity (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). As Black employees tend to form ties with other Black employees at lower levels within organizations, this often hinders their ability to gain meaningful support from senior members, which frequently delays promotion (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). Expanding Black educators' networks opens the door for meaningful mentorship, particularly from Black leaders. Additionally, these relationships can provide educators with role models, demonstrating that positions are more attainable while improving their knowledge and skills through real-time experiences (Bush et al., 2006; Hannum et al., 2015; Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). By offering formal and informal mentorship opportunities with current Black leaders, The Collective has the potential to improve Black aspiring leaders'

self-confidence and self-image through short and long term engagement strategies (Diversity Best Practice, 2017; McCarty Kilian et al., 2005; Mosely, 2018; Ogunbawo, 2012).

Research indicates that Black employees typically engage in formal processes to gain promotion because of the focus on transparency, consistency, communication, and implementation (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). Offering a nationwide formal mentorship program for Black aspiring school leaders would create the opportunity for these educators to engage with current Black school leaders roles across various regions and contexts for an extended amount of time to focus on the knowledge, skills, and mindsets needed for traditional school-based leadership roles such as assistant principal, instructional coach, and principal. By focusing on traditional roles in this program, The Collective can narrow its development focus to a core group of aspiring leaders who desire similar positions that share a similar scope of work. This program should offer the following types of support from current Black leaders during and after the program: 1) opportunities for deliberate practice and feedback connected to core functions of the role and 2) opportunities to share and listen to the experiences of other aspiring leaders and current leaders connected successes and challenges in pursuit or attainment of the leadership roles of focus.

In addition to formal mentorship, informal mentorship offers Black aspiring leaders the opportunity to build the knowledge, skills, and mindsets needed for roles across the school leadership spectrum in bite-sized short-term experiences. Creating opportunities for Black aspiring leaders to engage with current Black leaders in a variety of professional development sessions that focus on critical aspects of various school leadership roles such as creating a school budget, leading authentically through crisis, and designing a team vision can provide transferable

knowledge. Furthermore, offering opportunities for deliberate practice and feedback in these sessions allows aspiring leaders to network with current leaders in authentic ways. The Collective currently offers a variety of professional development sessions, so adding the elements of practice and feedback could enhance participants' experience.

Formal and informal mentorship honors Black educators' commitment to supporting other Black educators and allows them to engage in ways that work for them, increasing the likelihood of participation. As The Collective considers this recommendation, it is crucial to consider the timeline for designing and implementing a formal mentorship while determining the intended outcomes. Also, considering which team member would own this program and deciding how to incorporate regional support is critical.

Recommendation 2: The Collective should leverage the School Leader of Color Conference to increase access and awareness.

Finding 2 suggests that while Black educators share a commitment to support other educators and believe that mentorship matters, they have inconsistent experiences of support from current leaders, which impacts access and opportunities for this group. As a result, aspiring and current leaders need leadership development support. Current leaders need to know how to effectively support aspiring leaders in ways that promote emotional awareness, positive self-image, and self-confidence (McNamara et al., 2009). In addition, aspiring leaders must have positive interactions with current leaders as these experiences help shape their internal leadership identity (Day, 2000; Ibarra, 2015). Therefore, I recommend that The Collective continues to utilize the School Leaders of Color Conference to develop current leaders. In 2021, 432 Black educators attended SLOC. The latest SLOC data indicated that almost all Black attendees who

completed the survey would recommend SLOC to a fellow educator and that almost all believe that SLOC affirmed their identity and leadership. Based on this data and the noted research, SLOC provides current Black leaders with meaningful support to expand their capacity to support aspiring leaders.

As current Black leaders view SLOC as beneficial, this conference can provide similar outcomes for Black aspiring leaders. The Collective should create a specific strand of programming for aspiring leaders. Adding this strand of tailored support could increase aspiring leaders' interest and engagement. Current programming positively affects leaders' network relationships, leadership identity development, and attitudes about their racial identity. Therefore, aspiring leaders could benefit from attendance. This group's programming should include opportunities such as authentic leadership sessions through DEI development, real-time experiences-role-playing with current leaders, school visits, and roundtables to share and hear stories connected to barriers, current experiences, and leadership. These sessions are critical as aspiring leaders work to shift their perception of themselves from a teacher to a leader as they pursue new roles. The research indicated that sometimes educators experience an identity crisis when transitioning to leadership, so providing opportunities to listen to individuals in leadership positions and practice skills needed for various roles can increase aspiring leaders' competence, accurate self-image, emotional awareness, and self-confidence (McNamara et al., 2009). Additionally, a programmatic approach to mentorship can decrease inconsistency in support from current leaders, therefore improving access and opportunity for aspiring leaders (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015).

Furthermore, finding 3 indicates that there is a lack of awareness and access to instructional leadership positions beyond traditional school administrator roles. As SLOC attendees represent a variety of school-based leaders outside of the traditional scope, incorporating sessions where current leaders can share their leadership pathways, and experiences can create awareness about various positions. Through these conversations, Black aspiring leaders' can gain awareness of the knowledge, skills, and mindsets needed for roles of interest. The suggested opportunities are critical as information regarding non-traditional administrator roles may be challenging to find in the research as it is sometimes difficult to identify who a leader is (Bush et al., 2005). Additionally, increasing Black aspiring leaders' proximity to Black leaders in these various positions provides access to Black educators who can assist them in their pursuit and attainment to leadership positions (Wyatt and Silvester, 2015). Again, by leveraging current Black leaders at SLOC, The Collective can build up individuals within the association's community to continue the cycle of support as current leaders provide a mirror to aspiring leaders, demonstrating that leadership is possible (McNamara et al., 2009).

As The Collective considers this finding, determining if this strand can be implemented without compromising current programming is crucial. Delivering high-quality support to current leaders is vital as this is a key lever of The Collective national's priorities. Again, determining how to leverage regions in this new initiative could offer meaningful guidance as some regions offer aspiring leader fellowships. Additionally, considering the financial demands is also critical in determining the timeline for implementation.

Conclusion

The purpose of this capstone study was to shed light on the perspectives and experiences of Black educators to offer guidance on how a non-profit educational organization, The Collective, the national association for Native, Indigenous, and people of color within Teach for America, specifically, could provide meaningful support to Black educators who aspire to leadership, particularly in an urban context. The three findings suggest that Black educators at all levels are committed to supporting other Black educators and believe that mentorship matters. However, although Black educators share a commitment to support other educators and believe that mentorship matters, Black educators' have inconsistent experiences of support from current leaders, which impacts access and opportunities for this group. Lastly, there is a lack of awareness and access to instructional leadership positions beyond traditional school administrator roles.

The significance of these findings helped to design recommendations that will guide the development of meaningful leadership support for aspiring leaders. Additionally, this quality improvement study may impact how Black educators' voices are heard, acknowledged, and used to improve outcomes for this group. By understanding the perspectives and experiences of urban Black educators, The Collective can provide meaningful leadership development for Black educators who aspire to leadership. This meaningful support can create a leadership pipeline that increases the presence of effective Black leaders in urban communities. These recommendations will hopefully facilitate improvements that are impactful now and in the future.

Understanding the unique perspectives and experiences of this group acknowledges the critical role race plays in leadership. These findings integrate Black educators into the leadership

development model as creators, facilitators, and participants. Integration is particularly vital as there is a lack of research regarding the perspectives and experiences of Black school leaders outside of the traditional roles of assistant principal and principal. Further research on this topic will provide significant contributions that will guide the understanding of the leadership development needs of this subset of school leaders. This research will continue to provide The Collective and other non-profit educational organizations with the tools to support a variety of school leaders beyond traditional school administrators, which is critical as the roles and responsibilities of school leaders continue to evolve across the educational landscape. The literature on Black educators' experiences with leadership pursuit, attainment, and retention pave the way for this group's leadership development improvement. The findings add to the current literature by offering insight into how non-profit educational organizations can elevate Black educators' voices who have been marginalized and often silenced as they seek to design effective leadership support for this group. The presence of Black people in leadership roles matters, particularly in schools, as it impacts student outcomes. By supporting Black aspiring leaders in urban communities, The Collective has the ability to show what distinctive leadership looks like for students and other Black educators—leveraging the power of one another to reach individual and collective goals.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Primary Teacher Survey Questions

Conceptual Framework Component	Elements	Categories	Subcategories	Questions
<p>Leadership Identity Development</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Intrapersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Internal and External Process (Ibarra)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Self-Regulation (Day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-Control ● Trustworthiness ● Personal Responsibility ● Adaptability 	<p>Trust, Knowledge, Personal Power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I track my progress toward a goal ● I give myself a reasonable amount of time to complete tasks ● I change strategies when I don't make progress while learning ● I am open to feedback and criticism ● When I fail at something, I try to learn from my mistake ● I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job ● I take accountability when I make a mistake

		<p>Self-Awareness (Day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional Awareness ● Self-Confidence ● Accurate Self-Image 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I want to pursue leadership roles ● I am clear on the leadership qualities I need for these roles ● I feel comfortable communicating with various stakeholders ● I am open to feedback and criticism ● When I fail at something, I try to learn from my mistake ● I take accountability when I make a mistake ● I have the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to be a great leader ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve Black educators' perception of themselves of leaders?
		<p>Self-motivation (Day & Ibarra)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I want to pursue leadership roles

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiative ● Commitment 		
<p>Network Relationships</p> <p>+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p>+</p> <p>External Process (Ibarra)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Opportunities to develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential ● Competency 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I have the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to be a great leader ● I engage in leadership development opportunities ● Leader development opportunities have been helpful in my pursuit of a leadership role ● I have the opportunity to learn from current leaders ● I have the opportunity to learn from Black leaders ● A Black leader’s support has been beneficial to my development ● I would be interested in receiving support from Black leaders ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization

				offer to improve Black educators' perception of themselves of leaders?
<p>Network Relationships</p> <p>+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Internal Process (Ibarra)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Networked Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal ● Informal ● Mentorship 	<p>Commitments of trust and respect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I have the opportunity to learn from current leaders ● I have the opportunity to learn from Black leaders ● A Black leader's support has been beneficial to my development ● I have a professional network that can support my pursuit and obtainment of a leadership role ● I would be interested in receiving support from Black leaders ● It is important for me to participate in leadership development opportunities tailored to Black educators ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization

				offer to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks?
Unique Impact of Blackness	Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barriers ● Successes ● Networks (embedded) ● Self-perception (embedded) 	Influence on actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I have the opportunity to learn from Black leaders ● A Black leader's support has been beneficial to my development ● I would be interested in receiving support from Black leaders ● It is important for me to participate in leadership development opportunities tailored to Black educators ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks? ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve Black

				educators' perception of themselves of leaders?
General Questions				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select Alternative Teacher Training Program ● Corps Year ● Placement Region ● Current Region ● Do you identify as Black? ● Do you identify as Afro-Latinx or Multi-Racial ● To which gender do you most identify ● Job Title ● How many years have you been in your current role?

Appendix 2

Primary Leader Survey Questions

Conceptual Framework Component	Elements	Categories	Subcategories	Questions
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<p>Leadership Identity Development</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Intrapersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Internal and External Process (Ibarra)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Self-Regulation (Day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-Control ● Trustworthiness ● Personal Responsibility ● Adaptability 	<p>Trust, Knowledge, Personal Power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I track my progress toward a goal ● I give myself a reasonable amount of time to complete tasks ● I change my approach toward a project or goal when progress is limited ● I am open to feedback and criticism ● When I fail at something, I try to learn from my mistake ● I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my job ● I take accountability when I make a mistake ● Others trust me to get the job done
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		<p>Self-Awareness (Day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional Awareness ● Self-Confidence ● Accurate Self-Image 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I feel comfortable making critical decisions ● I was clear on the leadership qualities I needed for my current role ● I feel comfortable communicating with various stakeholders ● I am open to feedback and criticism ● When I fail at something, I try to learn from my mistake ● I take accountability when I make a mistake ● I have the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to be a great leader ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve Black educators' perception of themselves of leaders?
		<p>Self-motivation (Day & Ibarra)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning opportunities with current leaders motivated me

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiative ● Commitment 		to pursue other leadership roles
<p>Network Relationships</p> <p>+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p>+</p> <p>External Process (Ibarra)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Opportunities to develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential ● Competency 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I have the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to be a great leader ● I was clear on the leadership qualities I needed for my current role ● Learning opportunities with Black leaders have been available throughout my development ● I engage in leadership development opportunities ● Leader development opportunities have been helpful in my pursuit of a leadership role ● In pursuing my current role, I had the opportunity to learn from current leaders ● A Black leader's support has been beneficial to my development

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I am interested in supporting aspiring Black leaders ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve Black educators' perception of themselves as leaders?
<p>Network Relationships</p> <p>+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Internal Process (Ibarra)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Networked Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal ● Informal ● Mentorship 	<p>Commitments of trust and respect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In pursuing my current role, I had the opportunity to learn from current leaders ● Learning opportunities with current leaders motivated me to pursue other leadership roles ● Learning opportunities with Black leaders have been available throughout my development ● A Black leader's support has been beneficial to my development ● I have a professional network that can support my

				<p>pursuit and obtainment of future leadership roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I am interested in supporting aspiring Black leaders ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks?
<p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barriers ● Successes ● Networks (embedded) ● Self-perception (embedded) 	<p>Influence on actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning opportunities with Black leaders have been available throughout my development ● A Black leader's support has been beneficial to my development ● I am interested in supporting aspiring Black leaders ● What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks?

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What leadership development opportunities should a non-profit educational organization offer to improve Black educators' perception of themselves of leaders?
General Questions				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Alternative Teacher Training Program • Corps Year • Placement Region • Current Region • Do you identify as Black? • Do you identify as Afro-Latinx or Multi-Racial • To which gender do you most identify • Job Title • How many years have you been in your current role? • Who do you support in your role? • What is your level of management

Appendix 3

Semi-Structured Teacher Interview Questions

Conceptual Framework Component	Elements	Categories	Subcategories	Questions
Leadership Identity Development + Unique Impact of Blackness	Intrapersonal Competence (Day) + Internal and External Process (Ibarra)	Self-Regulation (Day) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-Control ● Trustworthiness ● Personal Responsibility ● Adaptability 	Trust, Knowledge, Personal Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How would you define yourself as an educator, what is your professional identity? ● What motivates you to pursue these roles?
	+ Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)	Self-Awareness (Day) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional Awareness ● Self-Confidence ● Accurate Self-Image 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How would you define yourself as an educator, what is your professional identity? ● Have you had opportunities to demonstrate your leadership skills? If yes, please describe those opportunities. How did those experiences impact your perception of yourself as a leader?

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What relationships/networks have been beneficial to your leadership development? What are the racial/cultural backgrounds of these individuals? How do these relationships/networks impact your perception of yourself as a leader? • What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve Black educators' perception of themselves as leaders?
		<p>Self-motivation (Day & Ibarra)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative • Commitment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What motivates you to pursue these roles? • How would you define yourself as an educator, what is your professional identity?
<p>Network Relationships</p> <p>+</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day)</p>	<p>Opportunities to develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential • Competency 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you had opportunities to demonstrate your

<p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>+ External Process (Ibarra) + Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>			<p>leadership skills? If yes, please describe those opportunities. How did those experiences impact your perception of yourself as a leader?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are some of the formal and informal development opportunities that you have participated in the pursuit of roles of interest? ● How do you select leadership development opportunities? ● What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve Black educators' perception of themselves as leaders? ● What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks?
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<p>Network Relationships + Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day) + Internal Process (Ibarra) + Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Networked Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal ● Informal ● Mentorship 	<p>Commitments of trust and respect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What relationships/networks have been beneficial to your leadership development? What are the racial/cultural backgrounds of these individuals? How do these relationships/networks impact your perception of yourself as a leader? ● What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks?
<p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barriers ● Successes ● Networks (embedded) ● Self-perception (embedded) 	<p>Influence on actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have you encountered any barriers in pursuit of these roles? If so, please describe these barriers. ● What relationships/networks have been beneficial to your leadership development? What are the racial/cultural

				<p>backgrounds of these individuals? How do these relationships/networks impact your perception of yourself as a leader?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks? • What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve Black educators' perception of themselves as leaders?
General Questions				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role do you currently hold? How many years have you been in that role? • What leadership roles interest you? • How would you define leadership development?

Appendix 4

Semi-Structured Leader Interview Questions

Conceptual Framework Component	Elements	Categories	Subcategories	Questions
<p>Leadership Identity Development</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Intrapersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Internal and External Process (Ibarra)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Self-Regulation (Day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-Control ● Trustworthiness ● Personal Responsibility ● Adaptability <hr/> <p>Self-Awareness (Day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional Awareness ● Self-Confidence ● Accurate Self-Image 	<p>Trust, Knowledge, Personal Power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How would you define yourself as a leader; what is your leadership identity? ● What motivates you to make progress? <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How would you define yourself as a leader; what is your leadership identity? ● What do you think was most impactful in obtaining your current role? ● What relationships/networks have been beneficial to your leadership development? What are the racial/cultural backgrounds of these individuals? How do these relationships/networks

				<p>impact your perception of yourself as a leader?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve Black educators' perception of themselves as leaders?
		<p>Self-motivation (Day & Ibarra)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiative ● Commitment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What motivates you to make progress? ● How would you define yourself as a leader; what is your leadership identity?
<p>Network Relationships</p> <p>+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p>+</p> <p>External Process (Ibarra)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<p>Opportunities to develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential ● Competency 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you think was most impactful in obtaining your current role? ● What opportunities have been most useful in your development as a leader, what made these experiences meaningful? ● What are some of the formal and informal leadership development opportunities that you have

				<p>participated in? From these experiences, which ones have been most impactful to your development and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you interested in supporting Black aspiring leaders? If so, how would you like to support? • What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve Black educators' perception of themselves as leaders? • What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks?
<p>Network Relationships</p> <p>+</p> <p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Interpersonal Competence (Day)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Internal Process (Ibarra)</p>	<p>Networked Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal • Informal • Mentorship 	<p>Commitments of trust and respect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think was most impactful in obtaining your current role? • What relationships/networks have been beneficial to

	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>			<p>your leadership development? What are the racial/cultural backgrounds of these individuals? How do these relationships/networks impact your perception of yourself as a leader?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are you interested in supporting Black aspiring leaders? If so, how would you like to support? ● What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks?
<p>Unique Impact of Blackness</p>	<p>Knowledge gained through lived experiences based on race (Gaetane)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barriers ● Successes ● Networks (embedded) ● Self-perception (embedded) 	<p>Influence on actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you think was most impactful in obtaining your current role? ● Did you encounter any barriers when pursuing any leadership role? If so, please describe these barriers.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What relationships/networks have been beneficial to your leadership development? What are the racial/cultural backgrounds of these individuals? How do these relationships/networks impact your perception of yourself as a leader? • What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve aspiring Black leaders' networks? • What leadership development opportunities should be offered to improve Black educators' perception of themselves as leaders?
General Questions				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role do you currently hold? How many years have you been in that role?

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What leadership roles interest you? • How would you define leadership development?
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Appendix 5

Qualitative Coding Thematic Analysis

Teacher- Elementary- T-ELEM	Leadership Identity- Self Regulation-Self Control-LI-SR-SC	Networked Relationships- Formal- NR-F
Teacher- Middle School T-MS	Leadership Identity- Self Regulation-Trustworthiness-LI-SR-T	Networked Relationships- Informal- NR-I
Teacher- High School- T-HS	Leadership Identity-Self Regulation-Personal Responsibility-LI-SR-PR	Networked Relationships-Mentorship-NR-M
Teacher + Teacher leader- T=TL	Leadership Identity Self Regulation-Adaptability-LI-SR-A	Unique impact of Blackness- Barrier-UIB-B
School Leader-Mid Level-Assistant Principal-SL-ML-AP	Leadership Identity- Self Awareness-Emotional Awareness-LI-SA-EA	Unique impact of Blackness-Network-UIB-N
School Leader-Mid Level- Instructional Coach-SL-ML-IC	Leadership Identity - Self Awareness-Self-confidence- LI-SA-SC	Unique impact of Blackness-Other- UIB-O
School Leader-Mid Level- Culture Leader-SL-ML-CL	Leadership Identity- Self Awareness-Accurate Self-Image-	

	LI-SA-ASM	
School Leader-Mid Level- Other-SL-ML-O	Leadership Identity- Self-motivation- Initiative- LI-SM-I	
School Leader-Senior Level-Principal-SL-SL-P	Leadership Identity- Self-motivation- Commitment- LI-SM-C	
School Leader-Senior Level-Other-SL-SL-O	Leadership Identity- Potential- LIE-P	