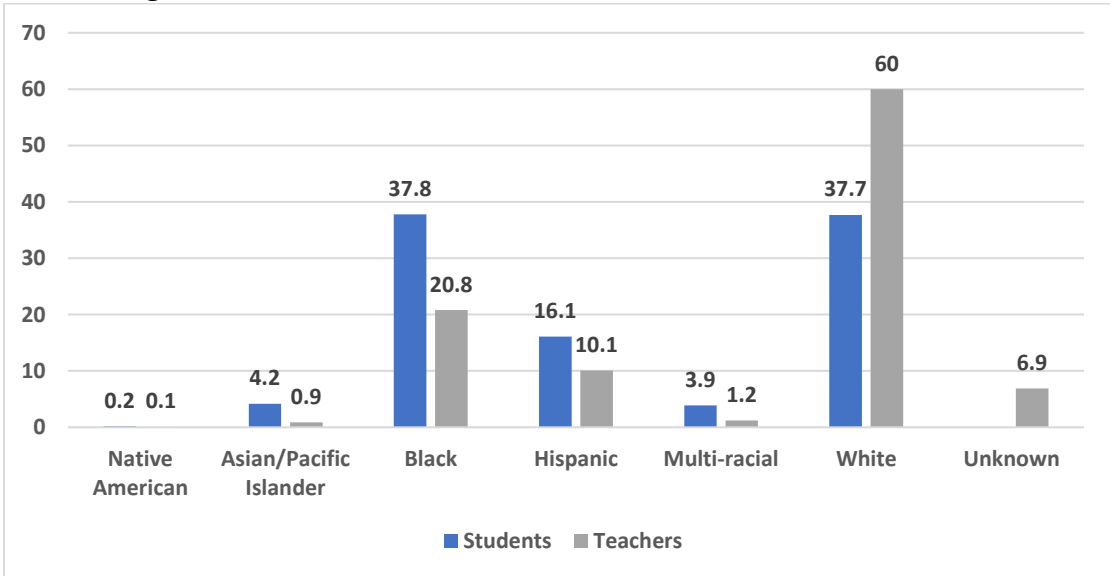


**Professional Association of Georgia Educators
Presentation Notes
Senate Study Committee on Educational Outcomes of African American Children in Georgia
November 7, 2019**

- PAGE is a non-union professional association of almost 98,000 educators across Georgia.
- PAGE is committed to and working to support the success of all students, including African-American students and their peers who have been historically marginalized.
- Previous experts testifying before this committee have highlighted the persistent achievement gap between African-American students and non-minority students. This gap extends to other students of color as well as low-income students.
- A particular focus that PAGE brings to this work is teacher retention. This is an issue for the entire teacher workforce but it is especially important for minority students and minority teachers.
- Minority students do better academically when their teachers are of the same race, particularly minority students whose academic performance is poor. The reasons for this are not definitive, though there is some evidence that teachers’ expectations of students differ by race as well as their assessment of students’ traits and behaviors.
- **Recruiting and retaining teachers of color is a critical component of closing the achievement gap, and that is what my presentation will focus on today.**
- What does Georgia’s teacher workforce look like? Does it reflect our student population?

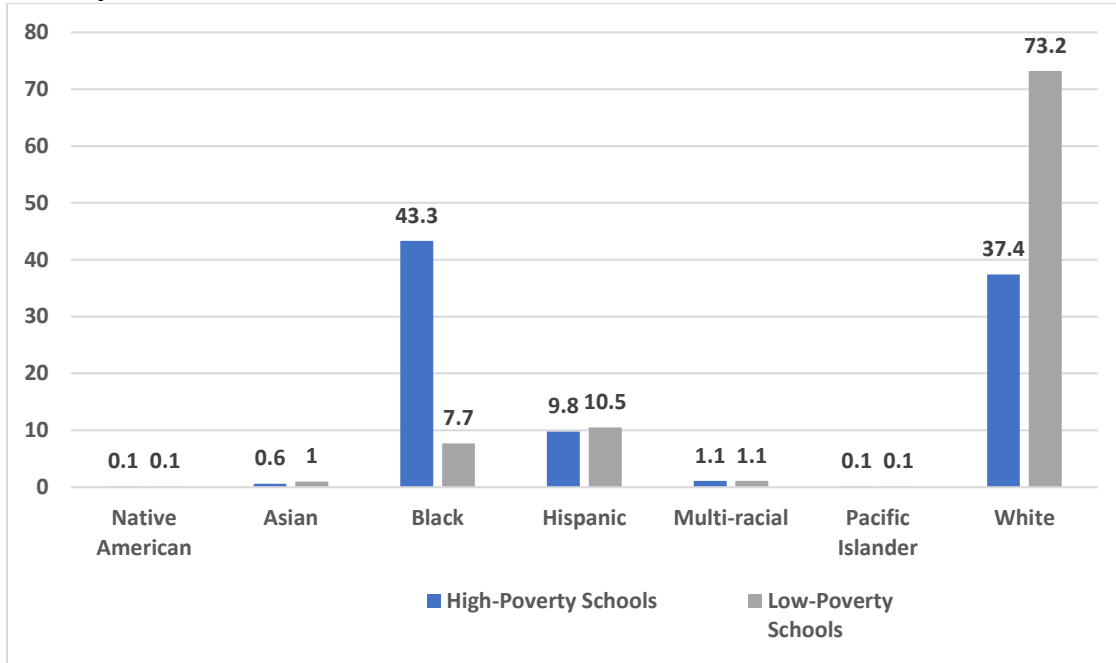
Most Georgia Teachers are White, Most Students Are Not



Source: Governor’s Office of Student Achievement. 2017 K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report; Georgia Department of Education, 2019 College and Career Ready Performance Index, State of Georgia

- National data reveals that minority teachers are more likely to teach in high poverty schools. GA’s data indicates the same is true in our state.

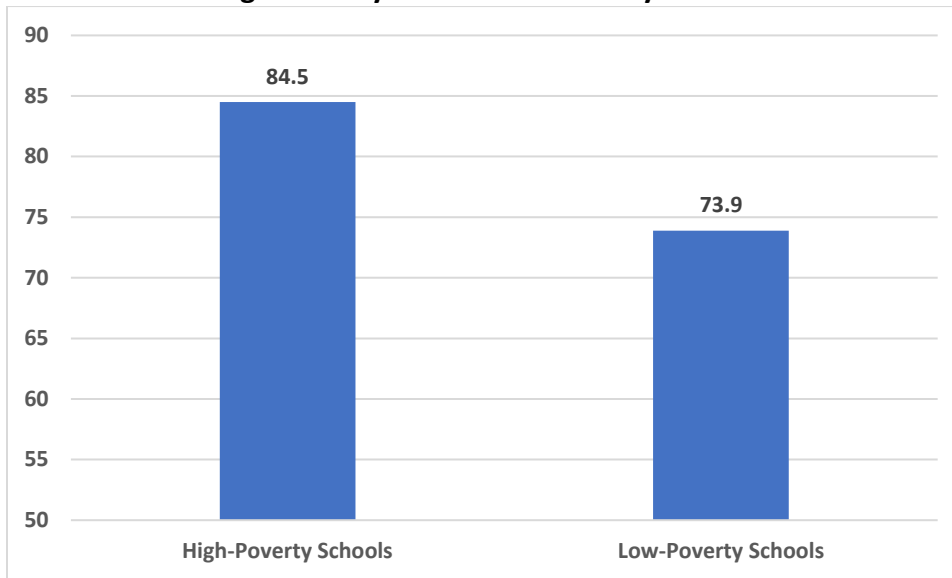
Most Teachers in High-Poverty Schools are Minorities: Teacher Workforce in High/Low-Poverty Schools



Source: Governor’s Office of Student Achievement. 2017 K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report

- 43.3 percent of teachers in high poverty schools are African American, but only 7.7 percent of teachers in low-poverty schools are.
- Nearly 75 percent of teachers in low-poverty schools are white while 37.4 percent of teachers in high-poverty schools are.
- High-poverty schools in Georgia are also more likely to have more new teachers than low-poverty schools. About 30 percent of teachers in high-poverty schools have five or fewer years of experience but only 23 percent of teacher in low-poverty schools fall into that category.
- Nationally, high-poverty schools have lower teacher retention rates. High-poverty schools in Georgia also have a harder time keeping teachers than low-poverty schools.

GA Teachers in High-Poverty Schools More Likely to Leave: Teacher Retention Rate 2016-2017



Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement. 2017 K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report

- Teachers in high-poverty schools also have higher mobility rates. This level of “churn” creates instability in schools, which can undermine student-teacher relationships.
- A snapshot of the retention rate of white teachers between 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years reveals that it's less than one percentage point higher than it is for African-American teachers. (Per GOSA report) It is not known how retention rates differ over time between teachers of different races in GA.
- National data indicates that teachers of color are more likely to leave than white teachers. It's not because they are more likely to teach in high-poverty schools. Researchers who've examined this issue have found that the biggest factor is working conditions.
- Minority teachers who have meaningful input into school-level decisions and greater autonomy in the classroom are more likely to stay than those who lack these.
- PAGE is looking at this issue more closely. We have added a question regarding race to our annual survey of teachers to gain a better understanding of the career trajectory of African-American teachers and determine if their experiences differ than those of other teachers.
- We look forward to sharing our findings with legislators when they're available and continuing to work on this critical issue.
- If GA is going to close the achievement gap, we need to do a better job of retaining the teachers we recruit.

Conclusions:

1. We must focus on keeping the great teachers we have in Georgia and recruiting and retaining more teachers of color.
2. Georgia must grow its own teachers and mentor new teachers. Teachers can attract future teachers, and efforts to do so must start early.

3. Georgia must give teachers autonomy and professional respect to prevent churn.
4. In order to do so, we must continue to move away from overly scripted curriculum and deemphasize standardized tests.