

# Los Angeles Male Teachers of Color Network

by John Reveles, Ph.D.

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In 2018, the FEDCO Foundation funded a three-year (2018-2021) grant entitled: *The Compton Male Teachers of Color Network (CMTCN)*. During this grant, Dr. John Reveles, a CSUN professor in Elementary Education, collaborated with Dr. Travis J. Bristol, a nationally recognized professor at University of California, Berkeley. Together, they developed a West Coast model of the work Bristol had previously pioneered to help retain male teachers of color on the East Coast of the United States in New York and Boston. This project has led to systemic change.

## **LAMTCN Enacting Systemic Change in LAUSD**

Most recently, the CMTCN proof-of-concept model resulted in the additional funding of a two-year scaled-up version of the project by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation entitled: the *Los Angeles Male Teachers of Color Network (LAMTCN)*. Dr. Reveles is currently leading this grant as the Grant Director. This work is shining a bright light on the systemic changes that needs to be enacted to create more opportunities for the *recruitment* and *retention* of male teachers of color and teachers of color within the education profession. Thus far, the LAMTCN project has successfully implemented professional development (PD) to over 120 teacher induction mentors (each of whom mentors approximately 10 new teachers) and 75 LAUSD administrators who work across the district.

Communities across the U.S. are demanding systemic change. Reveles & Bristol believe systemic change is required to create equitable practices that directly influence current and future generations. This project is enacting change within two systems – the nation's second largest school district (Los Angeles Unified School District) and the nation's largest public university system – the 23-campus California State University system (CSU 2020 Fact Book). Together, these two systems impact the fabric of Los Angeles and California society in myriad ways. LAUSD hired 305 CSUN graduates in 2020 alone, and LAUSD's teachers are preparing students who will become the next generation of citizenry.

### **LAUSD Affinity Groups Implementation**

Recently, affinity spaces have been appropriated as "Affinity Groups" in educational contexts and can therefore be understood synonymously (Warren-Grice, 2021). Hence, *Affinity Groups* are spaces where teachers can: (a) informally talk about their experiences as new and veteran educators, (b) support one another in both professional and personal ways, and (c) learn about school/district resources and services that are beneficial to their teaching practice. Together, LAMTCN/LAUSD team members have begun implementing Affinity Groups designed to support new and veteran Male Teachers of Color (MToC). As the second largest school district in the U.S., LAUSD can be a daunting place for a teacher to navigate. For MToC, this fact is exacerbated by core reasons male teachers of color tend to leave the teaching profession: (a) isolation based on their under-representation in the workforce; (b) being positioned to serve as school disciplinarians first, and teachers second; (c) limited opportunities to improve their practice alongside a school-based administrator; and (d) a lack of information regarding strategies for future leadership positions.

Initial findings from this effort show that because of participating in these groups, teachers are staying in the profession, choosing to return to work at the same schools, and developing pedagogical and leadership skills to change policies and lead change efforts. This is the kind of change we need!



# RELATED RESOURCES

Check out these articles for more information:

- https://www.k12dive.com/news/male-teachers-of-color-expand-leadership-opportunities/594345/
- https://abc7.com/compton-schools-dominguez-high-school-black-students-african-american-studentachievement/5957966/

#### References

Gee, J. P. (2018). Affinity spaces: How young people live and learn on line and out of school. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 99(6), 8-13.

Warren-Grice (2021). A space to be whole: A landscape analysis of education-based racial affinity groups in the U.S. https:// www.blackteacherproject.org/research

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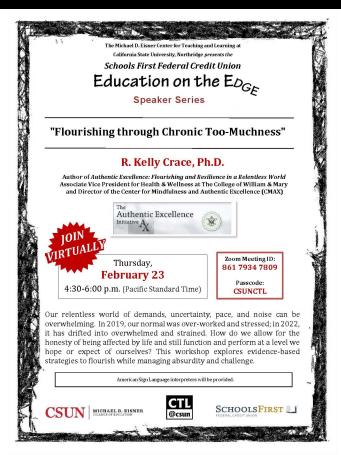
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