



June 17, 2021

Stephanie Valentine  
PRA Coordinator, Strategic Collections and Clearance, Governance and Strategy Division  
Office of Chief Data Officer  
Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW 20202

Re: [Docket No. ED–2021–SCC–0035]

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comments on the Department of Education’s Agency Information Collection Activities regarding the follow-up surveys to the 2020-21 NTPS: 2021-22 Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS) and 2021-22 Principal Follow-Up Survey (PFS). These surveys are critical data tools for ensuring that students from low-income backgrounds and student of color have equitable access to strong and diverse teachers and school leaders.

Within this proposed request, we are encouraged to see a focus on collecting data on teacher and principal turnover to better understand “teacher supply and demand and the conditions that affect the balance between the two.” We agree that teacher and principal turnover data help “shift the debate from the issue of teacher quantity to teacher quality.” Given the importance of highly qualified teachers — including the evidence suggesting they are the [number one in-school factor of student success](#) — it is critical that we make every effort to collect data and examine how to retain teachers who are both effective and reflect the diversity of our nation’s student population.

As indicated in our [teacher diversity data and policy report](#), access to a racially and culturally diverse teacher workforce is beneficial for all students, and particularly for students of color, who often thrive in classrooms led by teachers who [share their racial and cultural background](#). Unfortunately, teachers of color often face unique challenges that lead them to move schools or leave the profession [more often](#) than their White peers.

We are encouraged to see the Department [collect](#) teacher race/ethnicity data on the 2020-21 NTPS survey. To better examine trends in the teaching workforce, and specifically why teacher of color may be exiting the profession, **we urge the department to ensure that data on “stayers,” “movers,” and “leavers,” as well as their reasons for leaving or moving, are reported by race and ethnicity, and can be reported by race and ethnicity for each administration of the teacher follow-up surveys.** The field, including practitioners, researchers, and advocates, would greatly benefit from this data to take meaningful and evidence-based steps to develop policies that recruit, support, and retain a high-quality and diverse educator workforce.

Additionally, a growing body of research points to the importance of school leader, namely principal, diversity. Research points to the effectiveness of a principal [being more important](#) for a school than the effectiveness of a single teacher, given their role in promoting high quality classroom instruction, creating a warm and inviting school climate, facilitating productive teacher collaboration, managing resources, and supporting student learning. Principals are particularly important given the role they play in fostering diverse schools. Research indicates that Black [principals are better able](#) to attract, hire, and retain Black teachers, contributing to a reduction in teacher turnover. Given their critical role in

fostering teacher diversity, we are pleased to see the Department [collect](#) principal race and ethnicity data on the 2020-21 NTPS survey. To better examine trends in the principal workforce, **we urge the department to ensure that data on “stayers,” “movers,” and “leavers,” as well as their reasons for leaving or moving, are reported by race and ethnicity, and can be reported by race and ethnicity for each administration of the principal follow-up surveys.**

Together, this data will equip federal, state, and local leaders to make policy decisions to ensure that all students, including students who are underserved, have equitable access to diverse and experienced teachers and to address gaps in diverse and experienced principals and create plans to intentionally support a more diverse school leader workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these critical data collection initiatives.

Warm regards,

Heather Rieman  
Director of P-12 Policy  
The Education Trust