Diversity Education, Practicum Experience for Preservice Teachers

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Abstract

Between 1995 and 2005, the minority population in American public schools increased by almost 1,000,000 students and 8% of the total student population. By the year 2023, minority students are projected to account for more than 55% of the public school total populous within the United States. This upsurge of minority students has raised concerns with researchers and teacher educators about efficaciously preparing preservice teachers while increasing teacher retention. Education professionals and researchers suggest participation in a diverse practicum experience as a viable solution to address this concern. This research paper investigates the effects of preservice teacher's participation in practicum experiences, diversity education, and cultural immersion. It also provides statistical data in regards to student and teacher demographics with the U.S public schools.

Keywords: Preservice - Practicum –Diversity.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the preparation of prospective educators for teaching in multiple classroom scenarios with diversely populated students. Researchers and policymakers have examined practices to produce the most effective teaching experience while retaining quality educators. As debates continue to emerge between researchers and policymakers about methods of producing high quality preservice teachers, both are in agreement that effective K-12 education is primarily reliant upon the successful output of proficient educators (Ronfeldt, 2012). One approach to effective preservice teacher evolution is through the practicum experience. As defined by New Oxford American Dictionary (2015), the practicum is "a practical section of a course of study" ("practicum," 2015). Many researchers have described the practicum experience as indispensable in regards to the preservice teacher evolvement. This theory is supported by Cohen (Sayag), Hoz, & Kaplan (2013) in their study regarding the education of prospective educators:

[The] practicum in preservice teacher education programs, whether in the form of field experience, student teaching, clinical teaching, or mentoring programs, typically constitutes the longest and most intensive exposure to the teaching profession experienced by prospective teachers. In the practicum, preservice teachers act relatively independently under the guidance of a mentor, supervisory teachers or supervisors from a university/college of education. (2013, p 345).

Additionally, Guyton & McIntyre (1990), provided consistent reports from teachers suggesting that this (the field experience) is the most viable factor in their teacher preparation. Meaning, this is the most vital learning experience a preservice teacher can obtain prior to subsequent teaching assignments. Guyton &McIntyre (1990) also reported 99% of the United States teacher education programs mandate participation of preservice teachers in field service activities prior to student teaching. Despite convincing evidence supporting practicum participation, several factors must be considered before selecting a suitable practicum. Deciding where, meaning the types of school environments is equally important as why in regards to preservice teacher placement. Placement in low socioeconomic (SES) versus high socioeconomic (SES), diverse communities versus culturally homogeneous communities, "easier to staff and less underserved" versus "difficult to staff and underserved", (Ronfeldt, 2012, p. 3), are considerations for determining the most suitable field experience. The author will analyze the advantages and disadvantages of practicum placement in less dynamic, (homogenous) easier to staff settings to more diverse,(heterogeneous) difficult to staff climates. Although polemics can be made supporting participation in both environments (easy to staff or difficult to staff schools), this study will provide evidence supporting the latter.

Additionally, the author will provide statistical data depicting the teacher and student demographics along with projections for the future. Lastly, the author will address the upward trend in minority students and strategies to better prepare preservice teachers for potentially diverse climates.

Statistical Demographics

According to the National Center for Education Information (NCEI), Profile *of Teachers in the U.S.2011 (*Figure 1), White teachers accounted for 84 % of the teacher population, Black teachers were 7%, Hispanic teachers 6 % and other 4% (Feistritzer, 2011, p 11). Similarly, the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (Figure 2) reported teacher demographics as follows: White81.9%, Black6.8%, Hispanic7.8%, Other3.5% (NCES, 2013, Table 209.10). In both cases, the White teacher population was in excess of 80% and substantially larger than all other demographics combined. However, the NCES(2013) also documented student enrollment in public schools for 2011 (Figure 3)as: Whites 51.7%, Blacks 15.8%, Hispanic 23.7%, and Asian Pacific 5.1%. This equates to approximately 50% likelihood that a White teacher will be placed in a diversely populated teaching environment. With the current upsurge of minority citizens (largely Hispanic descendants), NCES(2013) projects the student population for the United States in 2023* (Figure 3) to resemble White 45%, Black15%, Hispanic 30%, Pacific/Islander5%, American Indian1%, and 2 or more races 4%. Based on these calculations, minorities will account for more than 55% of the student population while White teachers will remain close to 80% of the teacher population for 2023* (NCES, 2013). Based on these prognostications, the likelihood of a White teacher working in a diverse heterogeneous milieu will increase from 50% to approximately 60% within the next decade.

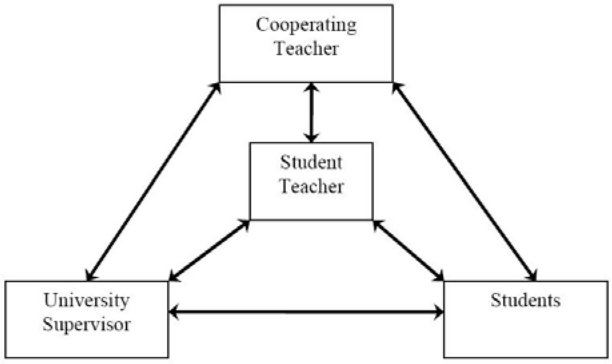
Choosing a Practicum

The development of highly qualified educators in a lengthy and rewarding experience embarking as a student and culminating as a teacher. Transitioning between student and teacher, aspiring scholars may elect to participate in a practicum experience to begin application of contextual knowledge gained as a student. The main objective of the practicum is to provide student teachers with authentic hands-on experience teaching. His is needed to develop their teaching skills and to start collecting experiences to enrich their professional wisdom. It is not enough to read about teaching or to observe others teach, something students have done for years. They have to practice themselves because practical knowledge and wisdom are held by the individual and cannot easily be transmitted from person to person. (Ulvik & Smith, 2011, p. 520). The practicum is vital to successful preparation of teachers, and, as such, part of the higher education's teacher preparation curriculum for 99% of universities/colleges. Determining the location and type of practicum experience, "easy to staff versus "difficult to staff" becomes the more pressing concern. The difficult to staff and underserved schools are defined as the more challenging teaching environment for the novice and seasoned educators (Ronfeldt, 2012).

Easy to staff, on the other hand, are more efficient working environments with greater support from staff and administration (Ronfeldt, 2012). Some teacher educators believe difficult to staff positions are considered the greater learning experience because of the many challenges (lack of administrative support, lack of resources, and increased ELL students)the preservice educator will encounter, thereby preparing them for any subsequent working environment. Conversely, other teacher educators believe preservice teachers are better suited for the easy to staff positions. These positions harvest more privileged students and depict a well-organized and efficient teaching experience which appears more enticing to future educators. Lingering debates support both arguments (difficult to staff and easy to staff positions), yet the evidence is superficial. Haberman and Post provide this interesting statement in regards to practicum education: [Teacher] training is most effective when it is offered in the worst schools under the worst conditions of work.

Traditional teacher education and state certification agencies make the reverse assumption. They create professional development centers engaged in best practices and then certify graduates universally. The naïve assumption is that graduates will be able to function in the worst school situations because they have observed good practices. (1998, p. 103). Haberman & Post (1998) believe true teaching knowledge can only be gained by experience. Part of the development and preparation for impending educators will be learned through the challenges, obstacles, and diverse circumstance by which they find themselves. There, preservice teachers truly practice their learned skills and strategies (through trial and error) in effort to become highly qualified. Regardless of the state issuant certification or the prestigious university seal bestowed upon the degree, these documents accompanied by a practicum embarked in a sterile environment, will be inadequate in their eyes.

After ascertaining the practicum locale, the next step in this process is to identify the parties involved. Within the practicum, there exists three important participants (practicum triad), namely the mentor-teacher, the preservice teacher, and the university supervisor. (Cohen (Sayag) et al., 2013). The mentor-teacher and preservice teacher roles within the practicum experience are defined as "complex social interactions in which mentor teachers and pre-service teachers construct and negotiate for various professional purposes and in response to contextual factors. Mentors and pre-service teachers can develop teaching expertise collaboratively while doing so in school environment." (Liu, Tsai & Huang, 2015, p. 163). Meanwhile, university supervisors supply the preservice teachers with strategies to demonstrate within the mentor's classroom settings. And, with the assistance of the teacher mentors, university supervisors conduct observations, debriefings, and provide necessary feedback to the preservice educator (Chin-Wen Chien, 2015). Roberts (2006), in his article about developing an effective cooperating teacher, provided this useful model to illustrate the practicum partnership between the preservice teachers, university supervisors, the cooperating teacher (mentor), and their respective students.



(Roberts, 2006, p. 2)

Meaning, the student teacher(s) will gain constructive feedback from each interested party throughout their practicum experience as well as gain valuable knowledge prior to acceptance of a teaching assignment. As priceless as the practicum may be, Cohen (Sayag) et al. (2013), also cautioned about three potential pitfalls that could possibly derail the experience namely; time, power struggle, and different obligations. Cooperative teachers are accustomed to managing all of the classroom time, lessons and objectives. However, during practicum's, preservice teachers (and university supervisors in some cases), must share time with the cooperative teacher (Cohen et al. 2013). This partition of time can, and in some cases does, lead to verbal disputes within the practicum experience between the education partnership (preservice teacher and mentor). Secondly, power struggles some time arise as a result of the cooperative teacher's desire to maintain control of her/his classroom while the student teacher craves independence. (Cohen et al., 2013). Lastly, conflicts may arise between the mentor teacher and the university supervisor due to difference in obligations. The primary goal of the mentor teacher is the classroom, the students therein, and the school curriculum. However, the university supervisor's primary focus is in the development of the preservice teacher and the university they represent. (Cohen et. al., 2013). When these two objectives collide, hostility may exist during the practicum experience.

Diversity Education

As defined by the National Education Association, diversity is the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. The dimensions of diversity include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, mental and physical ability, class, and immigrations status… The concept of diversity presents both extraordinary promise and daunting challenges for education employees. (n.d. para. 1). As the teacher population continues to remain majority homogenous, consisting primarily of Whitemiddle-class, while the student population becomes increasingly more diverse, the demand on teacher producing universities becomes equally challenging to prepare eventual pedagogues for educating diverse students. (Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000). Otherwise explained, colleges have an inherent responsibility to amalgamate diversity education within their prescribed curricula in order to certify their students (prospective educators) prior to subsequent teacher assignment. Abbate-Vaughn attested to the importance of this theory by saying: [One] of the assumptions that clearly justifies embedding expanded experiences in diverse settings into teacher education programs is that, by increasing prospective teachers' understanding of diverse learners' contexts, the quality of connections that teachers can make between curriculum and children's prior knowledge is maximized.

Another assumption is that fostering relationships between urban parents and students, community agencies, and prospective teachers enables the latter to become knowledgeable of an empathetic to the prevailing customs in the settings where their students are reared, while promoting involvement with the families served by those schools(2006, p. 42). Here, she discloses the importance of diversity education for presumable educators embedded in their learning curriculum in order to gain a better understanding of, not only the students, but their parents, and community alike. The goal of diversity education is to dispel discriminatory biases and beliefs which may hinder the learning environment. The New Oxford American Dictionary(2015) defines bias as "a prejudice in favor or against one thing, person, or group compared to another, usually in a way considered to be unfair." ("bias", 2015). Similarly, a belief is referred to as "something one accepts as true or real; a firmly held opinion or conviction: contrary to popular belief." ("belief", 2015). These definitions are imperative because they help clarify two types of beliefs or biases called "optimistic individualism" and naïve egalitarianism". (Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000, p. 33) Causey et al. (2000) defined optimistic individualism as "the inevitability of triumph over any obstacle through hard work and individual efforts." (p. 33). In their words, this belief causes aspiring educators to categorize all students identically, discarding any differences in regards to teaching practices.

With naïve egalitarianism they (prospective educators) "believe each person is created equal, should have access to equal resources, and should be treated equally." (Causey et al., 2000, p. 34). This belief, as Causey et al. (2000) explained, presumes all people, majority and minority populous irrelevant, have equitable rights or privileges and discard discrimination. Besides dispelling biases, Causey et al. (2000) found it equally important during the diversity experience to capture the occurrence in some form of documented fashion. In their words, "it is very important during field experience in diverse settings to provide opportunities for reflection on new information and experiences."(Causey et al. 2000, p. 35). Similarly, Richardson (1990) eluded that awareness may be influenced through the field experience, yet the true learning is achieved through the reflections. She (Richardson) cautioned, preservice teachers would default to their previous beliefs and stereotypes (negative) during times of discomfort in diverse milieus if unsupervised and/or governed reflection opportunities didn't exist.

Community Immersion

Researchers have documented, effective teacher education must go beyond the boundaries of the classroom. "Immersion in a linguistically and culturally diverse urban community in combination with coursework that relies on process writing can help prospective teachers gain awareness and understanding of diverse communities**."** (Abbate-Vaughn, 1998, p. 41). Here, Abbate-Vaughn, concluded that diversity education goes far beyond the classroom experience. Analogously, Burant & Kirby wrote "developing relationships with parents and community members from diverse groups may also teach important lessons about the complex intersections of race, class, gender, and structural and material realities that impede family involvement in schools." (2001, p. 562). Understanding the environments, from which the students come, is crucial in establishing and building relationships with the students, their strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. Almost equally as important to developing relationships with the students is, creating parental allies. In order to create parental allies, preservice teachers must communicate effectively with parents. Immersion within an urban community can greatly increase the likelihood of prospective educators in fostering relationships between themselves, parents, students, and community agencies. (Abbate-Vaughn, 1998).

University Practicums

Several universities, such as Alverno College (located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin); Indiana University (of Bloomington, Indiana); and Bloomsburg University (located in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania) have embraced the challenges of preparing its student teachers for diversity experiences and amalgamated diversity education in its curriculum. Alverno College conducts field placement experiences within the inner city schools of Milwaukee for middle-class white female teacher candidates. (Murrell, 1992). Murrell further stated, "pre-service teachers' perceptions of what it means to be a teacher are profoundly shaped by their early field experiences as interpreted through their past experience as students in public schools." (1992, p. 16). While at Indiana University, teacher candidates participate in one of three field experiences consisting of Native American, Latino, and Black cultures (Gomez, 1993). At the Native American field experience, preservice teachers work and reside with Navajo and Hopi Indians at their respective reservations. At the Latino practicum, students immerse in Latino culture in towns on the border of Arizona, Mexico, and the Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

At the Black culture practicum, preservice teachers gain valuable knowledge while studying with low income, inner-city Black communities within the Indianapolis area. These field experiences extend approximately 16-17 weeks and require students to complete a pre-requisite course focused on the targeted cultural group. (Gomez, 1993). Likewise, Bloomsburg University conducts an urban practicum within the Bethlehem and Easton Area School Districts of Pennsylvania. To its credit, Bloomsburg University has provided an urban practicum and immersion experience for more than 460 students over the past 10 years in the Bethlehem District alone. During the practicum, students are aligned with cooperative teachers from various schools/grades to provide the most realistic teacher experience possible based on their desired teaching concentration. Congruently, students participate in community activities such as religious service attendance at a local church, charity events to raise monies for the local schools within the district, and conduct area beautification events to improve/maintain the local surroundings. Most importantly, these preservice teachers are encouraged (under the surveillance of the university supervisors) to foster relationships inside and outside of the classroom, with students, parents, and community leaders through dining events, mentor sessions, and general fellowship opportunities. By its conclusion, Bloomsburg University prospective teachers document in excess of 200 hours of diversity immersion and education; effectively raising cultural awareness amongst its student teacher participants.

Conclusion

Preservice teachers have a myriad of requirements necessary to become state certified (requirements vary by state), and highly qualified teachers ready to inspire eager learners (Ronfeldt 2012).Many universities have adopted practicum experiences in their curriculum as part of the preservice teacher development. The practicum experience is exponentially increased when preservice teachers are placed within a diversely populated educational system and/or community. And, with the ever growing diversity population in the United States, teachers are more likely to encounter students of various cultural backgrounds during their teaching career. As such, placement in multicultural settings during the preservice experience, (practicum or student teaching) becomes increasingly more important (Grant & Secada 1990). Despite studies depicting positive evidence in the attitudes of preservice teachers, debates still exist as to placement locations (Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel, 2005). Generally speaking, placement in difficult to staff, multicultural school settings, tend to be more challenging.

These challenges range from lower economy, less support from the administrative with greater demands, less highly qualified educators, and increased English Language Learners (ELL). Yet, placement in such environments helps eliminate stereotypes by preservice teachers and provide opportunities for increased teaching strategies. This is said to lead to better preparation and enduring efforts according to Ronfeldt (2012). Whereas the contrary, preservice teaching assignments within easy to staff communities, are in high demand and largely sort after. In many cases, these schools tend to have greater resources, better performing students, and less faculty/teacher turnover. This, as stated by Johnson and Birkeland (2003), leads to greater success and longevity by teachers. Placement of preservice teachers in these environments can create more positive outlook by preservice teachers and their desire for continued practice. Valid arguments can be provided for placement in both, easy to staff and difficult to staff locations. Yet, only one can prepare preservice teachers for diverse student populations and the myriad of challenges that may accompany.

Figure 1:

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Teachers in the U.S.

	PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS				
	2011	2005	1996	1990	1986
N =	1,076	1,028	1,018	2,380	1,144
Age					
≤29	21	11	11	15	11
30-39	27	22	21	37	36
40-49	22	26	44	35	31
50+	31	42	24	13	22
Gender	%	%	%	%	%
Male	16	18	26	29	31
Female	84	82	74	71	69
Race					
White	84	85	89	92	91
Black	7	6	7	5	6
Hispanic	6	4	2	2	2
Other	4	5	2	1	0
Highest Degree Earned					
Bachelor's - Education	29	31			
Bachelor's - Other	15	11			
Master's - Education	43	47			
Master's - Other	12	10			
Doctorate - Education	1	1			
Years of experience					
1-5	26	18	12	16	8
6-9	16	14	18	18	16
10-14	16	16	13	21	24
15-24	23	25	37	33	37
25+	17	27	20	12	15

National Center for Education Information Profile of Teachers in the U.S. 2011 | 11

(Feistritzer, 2011, p 11)

FIGURE 2:

Table 209.10. Number and percentage distribution of teachers in public and private elementary and secondary schools, by selected teacher characteristics: Selected years, 1987-88 through 2011-12

[Standard errors appear in parentheses]

Selected teacher characteristic	Percentage distribution of teachers													
	1987-88		1990-91		1993-94		1999-2000		2003-04		2007-08		2011-12	
1	9		10		11		12		13		14		15	
Public schools														
Total	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**
Sex														
Male	29.5	(0.22)	28.1	(0.31)	27.1	(0.36)	25.1	(0.30)	25.0	(0.32)	24.1	(0.47)	23.7	(0.49)
Female	70.5	(0.22)	71.9	(0.31)	72.9	(0.36)	74.9	(0.30)	75.0	(0.32)	75.9	(0.47)	76.3	(0.49)
Race/ethnicity														
White\1\	86.9	(0.24)	86.5	(0.29)	86.5	(0.33)	84.3	(0.30)	83.1	(0.53)	83.1	(0.53)	81.9	(0.53)
Black\1\	8.2	(0.19)	8.3	(0.25)	7.4	(0.21)	7.6	(0.19)	7.9	(0.34)	7.0	(0.45)	6.8	(0.31)
Hispanic\1\	3.0	(0.11)	3.4	(0.17)	4.2	(0.23)	5.6	(0.20)	6.2	(0.34)	7.1	(0.46)	7.8	(0.37)
Asian\1,2\	0.9	(0.05)	1.0	(0.06)	1.1	(0.05)	1.6	(0.09)	1.3	(0.08)	1.2	(0.21)	1.8	(0.21)
Pacific Islander	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	0.2	(0.03)	0.2	(0.04)	0.1	(0.04)
American Indian/ Alaska Native\1\	1.0	(0.06)	0.8	(0.05)	0.8	(0.06)	0.9	(0.06)	0.5	(0.04)	0.5	(0.06)	0.5	(0.08)
Two or more races	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	0.7	(0.07)	0.9	(0.09)	1.0	(0.11)
Age														
Under 30	13.5	(0.19)	10.0	(0.23)	10.9	(0.16)	17.0	(0.28)	16.6	(0.84)	18.0	(0.61)	15.3	(0.44)
30 to 39	35.4	(0.30)	26.7	(0.35)	22.4	(0.30)	22.0	(0.29)	24.5	(0.38)	26.4	(0.39)	28.9	(0.53)
40 to 49	32.8	(0.25)	40.4	(0.37)	41.8	(0.33)	31.8	(0.32)	25.9	(0.38)	23.7	(0.47)	25.1	(0.51)
50 to 59	15.4	(0.23)	18.7	(0.29)	21.1	(0.29)	26.2	(0.35)	29.0	(0.74)	25.8	(0.51)	23.1	(0.49)
60 and over	2.9	(0.11)	4.2	(0.16)	3.8	(0.14)	3.1	(0.13)	4.0	(0.14)	6.1	(0.29)	7.6	(0.34)
Highest degree earned														
Less than bachelor's	0.7	(0.04)	0.7	(0.05)	0.7	(0.06)	0.7	(0.04)	1.1	(0.08)	0.8	(0.06)	3.8	(0.24)
Bachelor's	52.3	(0.28)	51.9	(0.31)	52.0	(0.33)	52.0	(0.40)	50.8	(0.56)	47.4	(0.59)	39.9	(0.52)
Master's	40.1	(0.30)	42.1	(0.34)	42.0	(0.33)	41.9	(0.38)	40.9	(0.56)	44.5	(0.55)	47.7	(0.57)
Education specialist\3\	6.3	(0.14)	4.6	(0.20)	4.6	(0.14)	4.7	(0.17)	6.0	(0.19)	6.4	(0.25)	7.6	(0.27)
Doctor's	0.7	(0.05)	0.8	(0.07)	0.7	(0.07)	0.7	(0.06)	1.2	(0.11)	0.9	(0.08)	1.1	(0.11)
Years of full-time teaching experience														
Less than 3	8.1	(0.15)	8.7	(0.19)	9.7	(0.20)	12.9	(0.27)	12.2	(1.23)	13.4	(0.59)	9.0	(0.29)
3 to 9	26.0	(0.20)	24.8	(0.31)	25.5	(0.32)	28.8	(0.36)	32.9	(0.34)	33.6	(0.52)	33.3	(0.52)
10 to 20	44.5	(0.25)	40.0	(0.35)	35.0	(0.33)	28.5	(0.33)	28.4	(0.59)	29.3	(0.55)	36.4	(0.51)
Over 20	21.4	(0.21)	26.5	(0.30)	29.8	(0.32)	29.8	(0.34)	26.5	(0.77)	23.7	(0.60)	21.3	(0.54)
Private schools														
Total	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**	**100.0**	**(†)**
Sex														
Male	21.8	(0.86)	22.9	(0.74)	24.6	(0.43)	23.9	(0.48)	23.6	(1.93)	26.0	(0.78)	25.2	(1.33)
Female	78.2	(0.86)	77.1	(0.74)	75.4	(0.43)	76.1	(0.48)	76.4	(1.93)	74.0	(0.78)	74.8	(1.33)
Race/ethnicity														
White\1\	92.8	(0.50)	92.2	(0.46)	91.9	(0.41)	89.5	(0.42)	88.0	(0.99)	86.4	(0.80)	88.3	(0.69)
Black\1\	2.3	(0.27)	2.7	(0.28)	3.1	(0.27)	3.7	(0.29)	4.0	(0.65)	4.0	(0.44)	3.6	(0.54)
Hispanic\1\	2.8	(0.36)	3.3	(0.26)	3.2	(0.26)	4.7	(0.30)	4.8	(0.71)	5.9	(0.38)	5.2	(0.51)
Asian\1,2\	1.2	(0.26)	1.5	(0.18)	1.4	(0.16)	1.6	(0.14)	1.8	(0.20)	2.2	(0.29)	1.8	(0.31)
Pacific Islander	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	0.2!	(0.07)	0.3!	(0.14)	‡	(†)
American Indian/ Alaska Native\1\	0.9	(0.12)	0.4	(0.09)	0.4	(0.07)	0.6	(0.08)	‡	(†)	‡	(†)	‡	(†)
Two or more races	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	---	(†)	0.6!	(0.28)	0.7	(0.12)	0.8	(0.19)
Age														
Under 30	21.8	(0.77)	16.7	(0.61)	17.2	(0.39)	19.3	(0.43)	18.9	(0.78)	16.3	(0.67)	16.7	(1.48)
30 to 39	34.5	(0.81)	28.1	(0.78)	24.8	(0.48)	22.4	(0.50)	22.0	(1.36)	22.3	(0.91)	24.0	(1.07)
40 to 49	27.4	(0.78)	33.9	(0.74)	34.8	(0.60)	29.2	(0.62)	25.4	(1.41)	23.8	(0.65)	23.8	(1.06)
50 to 59	11.1	(0.57)	14.8	(0.55)	17.4	(0.48)	23.5	(0.46)	25.8	(2.07)	26.2	(0.87)	21.3	(1.06)
60 and over	5.3	(0.49)	6.4	(0.41)	5.8	(0.27)	5.7	(0.24)	8.0	(0.99)	11.5	(0.62)	14.2	(1.05)
Highest degree earned														
Less than bachelor's	4.4	(0.42)	6.4	(0.45)	6.7	(0.46)	7.3	(0.46)	9.2!	(4.41)	8.1	(0.58)	8.4	(1.07)
Bachelor's	61.4	(0.75)	61.9	(0.90)	59.0	(0.63)	57.5	(0.64)	55.5	(2.90)	53.9	(0.95)	48.5	(1.37)
Master's	29.8	(0.73)	27.0	(0.71)	29.8	(0.69)	30.3	(0.58)	29.5	(1.35)	32.8	(0.84)	35.8	(1.16)
Education specialist\3\	3.0	(0.30)	2.9	(0.24)	2.9	(0.19)	3.1	(0.19)	3.6	(0.54)	2.8	(0.25)	5.0	(0.48)
Doctor's	1.5	(0.23)	1.8	(0.22)	1.7	(0.15)	1.8	(0.16)	2.2	(0.26)	2.4	(0.38)	2.3	(0.41)

(NCES, 2013, Table 209.10)

FIGURE 3:

Table 203.50. Enrollment and percentage distribution of enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity and region: Selected years, fall 1995 through fall 2023

	Enrollment (in thousands)							Percentage distribution						
Region and year	Total	White	Black	His-panic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Two or more races	Total	White	Black	His-panic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Two or more races
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
United States														
1995	44,840	29,044	7,551	6,072	1,668	505	---	100.0	64.8	16.8	13.5	3.7	1.1	†
2000	47,204	28,878	8,100	7,726	1,950	550	---	100.0	61.2	17.2	16.4	4.1	1.2	†
2001	47,672	28,735	8,177	8,169	2,028	564	---	100.0	60.3	17.2	17.1	4.3	1.2	†
2002	48,183	28,618	8,299	8,594	2,088	583	---	100.0	59.4	17.2	17.8	4.3	1.2	†
2003	48,540	28,442	8,349	9,011	2,145	593	---	100.0	58.6	17.2	18.6	4.4	1.2	†
2004	48,795	28,318	8,386	9,317	2,183	591	---	100.0	58.0	17.2	19.1	4.5	1.2	†
2005	49,113	28,005	8,445	9,787	2,279	598	---	100.0	57.0	17.2	19.9	4.6	1.2	†
2006	49,316	27,801	8,422	10,166	2,332	595	---	100.0	56.4	17.1	20.6	4.7	1.2	†
2007	49,293	27,456	8,392	10,454	2,396	594	---	100.0	55.7	17.0	21.2	4.9	1.2	†
2008	49,266	27,057	8,358	10,563	2,451	589	247 \1\	100.0	54.9	17.0	21.4	5.0	1.2	0.5 \1\
2009	49,361	26,702	8,245	10,991	2,484	601	338 \1\	100.0	54.1	16.7	22.3	5.0	1.2	0.7 \1\
2010	49,484	25,933	7,917	11,439	2,466	566	1,164	100.0	52.4	16.0	23.1	5.0	1.1	2.4
2011	49,522	25,602	7,827	11,759	2,513	547	1,272	100.0	51.7	15.8	23.7	5.1	1.1	2.6
2012\2\	49,652	25,334	7,775	12,157	2,532	539	1,315	100.0	51.0	15.7	24.5	5.1	1.1	2.6
2013\2\	49,750	25,066	7,728	12,510	2,553	533	1,360	100.0	50.4	15.5	25.1	5.1	1.1	2.7
2014\2\	49,751	24,766	7,675	12,814	2,565	526	1,405	100.0	49.8	15.4	25.8	5.2	1.1	2.8
2015\2\	49,839	24,497	7,638	13,148	2,587	522	1,448	100.0	49.2	15.3	26.4	5.2	1.0	2.9
2016\2\	49,951	24,250	7,597	13,481	2,613	516	1,494	100.0	48.5	15.2	27.0	5.2	1.0	3.0
2017\2\	50,280	24,108	7,611	13,854	2,651	513	1,543	100.0	47.9	15.1	27.6	5.3	1.0	3.1
2018\2\	50,543	23,952	7,618	14,188	2,681	511	1,592	100.0	47.4	15.1	28.1	5.3	1.0	3.2
2019\2\	50,834	23,818	7,642	14,506	2,717	510	1,643	100.0	46.9	15.0	28.5	5.3	1.0	3.2
2020\2\	51,165	23,719	7,682	14,806	2,754	510	1,694	100.0	46.4	15.0	28.9	5.4	1.0	3.3
2021\2\	51,485	23,622	7,734	15,086	2,788	511	1,744	100.0	45.9	15.0	29.3	5.4	1.0	3.4
2022\2\	51,804	23,539	7,791	15,346	2,824	513	1,791	100.0	45.4	15.0	29.6	5.5	1.0	3.5
2023\2\	52,113	23,477	7,845	15,572	2,865	515	1,838	100.0	45.1	15.1	29.9	5.5	1.0	3.5

---Not available.

†Not applicable.

\1\For this year, data on students of two or more races were reported by only a small number of states. Therefore, the data are not comparable to figures for 2010 and later years.

\2\Projected.

NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Enrollment data for students not reported by race/ethnicity were prorated by state and grade to match state totals. Prior to 2008, data on students of two or more races were not collected. Some data have been revised from previously published figures. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary and Secondary Education," 1995-96 through 2011-12; and National Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Projection Model, 1972 through 2023. (This table was prepared December 2013.)

(NCES, 2013, Table 203.50)

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