

Essay C contemporary education issue:

One issue in education today is the lack of diversity—both race and gender. This affects students because they cannot form a connection with their teacher, their teacher will not be able to understand what they are going through, and having a diverse group of teachers gives students new experiences.

“Researchers over the last two decades have increasingly gained access to data that shows students test scores are higher when the teacher is the same race as them.” (Phi Delta Kappan) When students do not feel represented they do not test as well. They need connections with their teachers in order to do well. In my Intro to Education Class we had our unity on diversity. My teacher would talk about how she can try to understand but never will. This stuck with me because my teachers never fully understood what I was going through when I was bullied for my skin color. There is one boy in my class and he only had one male teacher in his educational history. This also had me thinking how has never having a male teacher affected boys. Growing up I was never uncomfortable asking my teachers questions about the female body, with questions about periods and other things. But the boys in my class never had that luxury. Teaching is a career for everyone. Every student deserves to have someone to connect with. The Secretary of Education Richard Riley (1998) said that “Our teachers should look like America.” America is diverse and our teachers are not and that needs to change.

In public schools there are many children of color. In 2018 80% of teachers were white, 6.7% were black or African American, 9.3% were Hispanic, 2.1% were Asian, 0.2% were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 0.5% were Native American/ Alaska Native. These statistics show that there are many white teachers but not many teachers of color to match the fast-growing pace of students of color in public schools. Having a teacher with a different background as their students will give their students new perspectives.

When I talk about having more teachers of color lots of people do not agree with me. Especially adults with white children that think that adding teachers of color will somehow negatively affect their children and change them. When in reality that is not true it shows kids different experiences. It shows them different social issues. Having a teacher of color brings new perspectives. Many people think that having a non-binary teacher would make “their kids want to be gay” but that is not true. Like having a teacher of color, it would show new perspectives.

How? How do we get these teachers? How do we make for people of color and males and non-binary people want to teach. I am still unsure. I was brainstorming ideas with my teachers. We came up with job fairs, exposing high school kids to this and even doing a career day for middle school and high school students. The other idea is telling kids from a young age that they can do anything they want from a young age showing them people in history of all different races and genders.

Having diversity in teachers will benefit everyone. Everyone will learn something new, and it will give every student an opportunity to connect with someone.