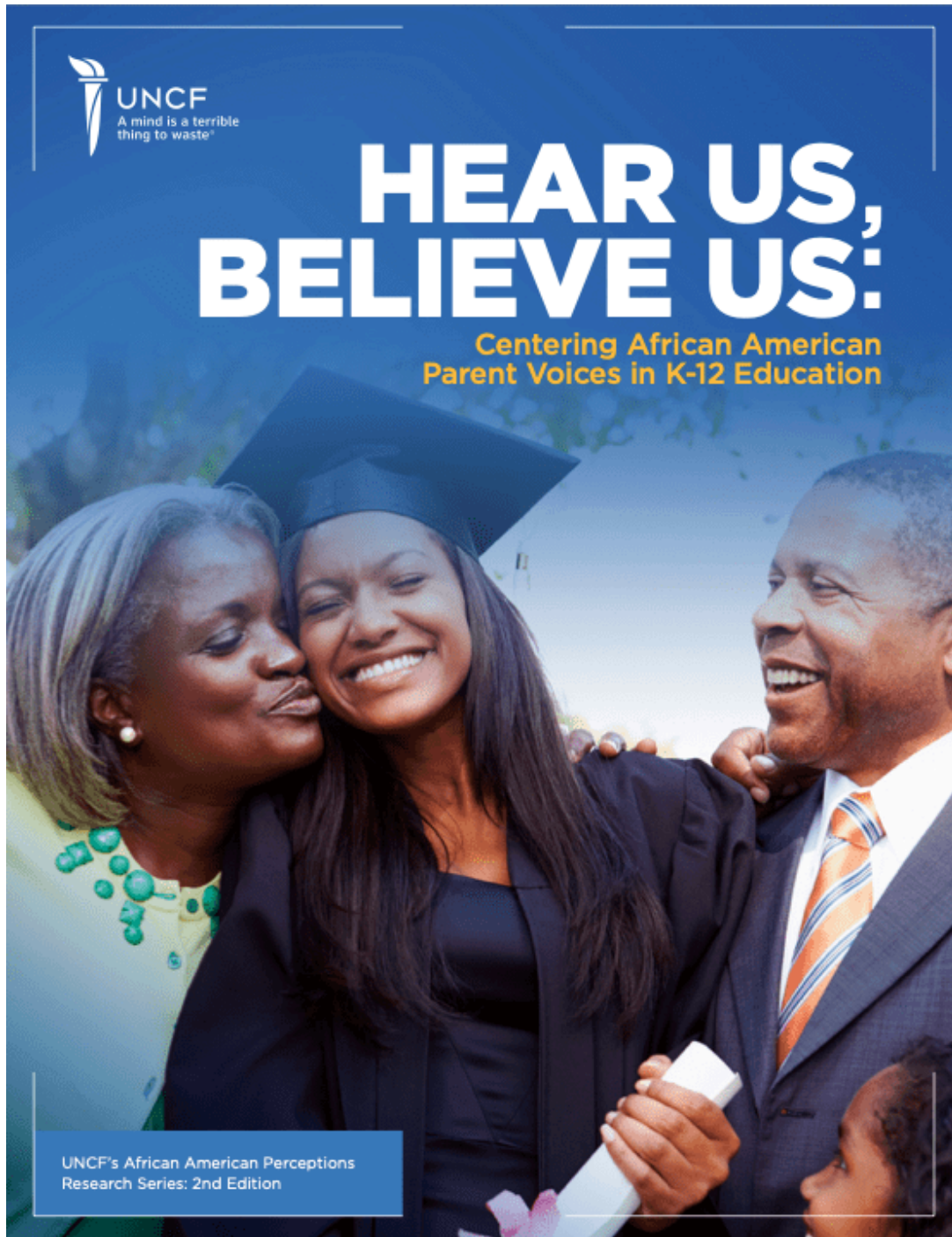


**IMPACT**

# Groundbreaking UNCF Study Highlights Importance of Black Teachers



UNCF'S REPORT, "HEAR US, BELIEVE US: CENTERING AFRICAN AMERICAN PARENT VOICES IN K-12 EDUCATION", OFFERS A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND ASPIRATIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PARENTS IN RELATION TO RACE, COLLEGE READINESS, PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT AND MORE.

**A**s the country celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week in fiscal year 2025, UNCF released a groundbreaking study that provides invaluable insights into the perspectives of African American parents on key issues in education and highlights the importance of Black teachers to Black families.

The report, entitled “Hear Us, Believe Us: Centering African American Parent Voices in K-12 Education,” offers a comprehensive analysis of the experiences, challenges and aspirations of African American parents in relation to race, college readiness, parental engagement and more.

Through the report, UNCF underscored the significant, positive influence that Black teachers have on students, families and communities. The report found that more than 90% of Black parents surveyed said they want more opportunities to be involved in their children’s education and to provide more input into education-related laws. UNCF conducted focus groups and implemented a national survey of 500 low- to moderate-income Black parents. Additionally, a subset of 1,200 Black parents was surveyed in Chicago, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Houston, Memphis and New Orleans to assess city-level trends.

“Across several indicators in the study, Black parents reported better experiences when their child attended schools with more Black teachers,” said Dr. Meredith Anderson, author of the report and director, K-12 research, UNCF. “While research abounds on the positive effects of Black teachers on students, this report emphasizes the parent voice in this important scholarship. This report substantiates what we have known for decades: Black teachers matter.”

The report, based on extensive national quantitative research and focus groups, highlights the crucial role that African American parents play in their children’s education. It underscores the importance of understanding their unique perspectives and incorporating them into education policies and practices.

Key findings from the report include:

1. Black parents report higher college aspirations for their children and lower instances of school suspensions when there are more Black teachers at their child’s school.

- For Black parents and caregivers whose children attended schools where many or most teachers were Black, the probability that their child received exclusionary

discipline is almost three times lower than if their child attended schools with fewer Black teachers.

- Black parents also felt more respected when their child attended schools with more Black teachers.

## 2. Black parents greatly value higher education and are deeply engaged and invested in their child's education.

- 84% of Black parents believe it is important for their child to attend and graduate college and over 80% check their child's homework and speak to their child's teacher on a regular basis.
- 93% of Black parents say they want more opportunities to be involved in their child's education and to provide input into education laws.

## 3. Black parents want to see more Black leaders in education.

- 70% of African American parents and caregivers believe the involvement of African American leaders and organizations will make school improvement efforts more effective.

## 4. School safety is a key concern for Black parents and caregivers.

- 80% of African American parents and caregivers rank safety as the most important factor for school selection.

“What we have known at UNCF for decades is that Black parents are deeply engaged in the educational lives of their children, yet far too often they are denigrated and deemed disengaged about their children's learning environment,” Anderson said. “Black parents are concerned about opportunity gaps and want better resources for their children. They want to see more Black education leaders and organizations in education; and they want more opportunities to be involved and have their voices heard.”

The report concludes with a series of recommendations aimed at addressing the concerns and aspirations of African American parents. These recommendations include a call to action:

### **Recommendations for the K-12 Sector**

- Invest unapologetically in Black teachers
- Create more intentional opportunities for parent involvement
- Create a learning environment that reflects African American history and culture
- Partner with local organizations to provide resources and services for families

- Value and prioritize support staff in school budgets
- Prioritize student safety

## **Recommendations for Higher Education**

- Make intentional efforts to expose students and families to college opportunities
- Create intentional pipelines with districts and charter management organizations to increase educator diversity
- Ensure teacher training programs include anti-racist, culturally relevant teaching practices
- Partner with K-12 schools and districts to provide financial literacy to students and families

UNCF is committed to utilizing the findings of this report to drive positive change in education. Through its programs, scholarships and advocacy efforts, UNCF will continue to work towards a future where every African American student has access to a quality education that prepares them for success. That commitment ensures better futures for all American students.

[Read the report.](#)