

# Midwest Achievement Gap Research Alliance (MAGRA)



The alliance examines efforts to increase educational outcomes among Black students. The primary focus is on Wisconsin. A community of practice connects key stakeholders across the region.



## Alliance goals

MAGRA brings together practitioners, policymakers, advocates, and researchers from the Midwest to:

- Increase the region's capacity to access, conduct, interpret, and make sense of research on significantly and meaningfully increasing educational outcomes among Black students.
- Support the use of this research in decisionmaking at the state and local levels to significantly and meaningfully increase educational outcomes among Black students.



## Alliance members

### Primary members

- Tony Chambers, Wisconsin Collaborative Education Research Network
- Andreal Davis, Wisconsin Response to Intervention Center
- Allison DeGraaf, School District of Janesville
- Carl Frederick, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI)
- Eric Grodsky, Wisconsin Center for Education Research
- Madeline Hafner, Minority Student Achievement Network
- Julia Hartwig, Wisconsin DPI
- Frank Humphrey, Wisconsin NAACP
- Jerlando Jackson, Wisconsin's Equity and Inclusion Laboratory
- Kurt Kiefer, Wisconsin DPI
- John Odom, Wisconsin NAACP

- Brad Saron, Sun Prairie Area School District
- Seena Makeeba Skelton, Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center
- Brianna Stenson, School District of Janesville
- Chrishirella Sutton, Racine Unified School District
- Karen Wendorf-Heldt, CESA 9
- Katherine Womack, School District of Janesville
- Jonas Zuckerman, Wisconsin DPI

### Community of practice

- Carolyn Cobb, Iowa Department of Education
- Greg Keith, Minnesota Department of Education
- Shannon Stackhouse, Michigan Department of Education



### Partnership facilitator

Kyle Fagan  
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### Research liaison

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<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/default.aspx>

# MAGRA RESEARCH AGENDA



To work toward its goals, the Midwest Achievement Gap Research Alliance developed a shared research agenda to guide current and future projects and the direction of the alliance. This research agenda serves as a **roadmap for alliance work** to help ensure that projects directly address alliance members' needs, supply research that informs policy and practice, and increase members' capacity to conduct and use research.

Alliance members have identified the following topics as areas of focus for their work.

 <b>Topics</b>	 <b>Research questions</b>	 <b>Projects</b>	 <b>Timing</b>
<b>Culturally Responsive Practice (CRP)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. According to research, what components of CRP are effective at increasing Black student achievement? According to research, what other outcomes, in addition to academic achievement, result from CRP?</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Applied research and engagement: <i>Evidence-Supported Interventions Associated with Black Students' Educational Outcomes: Findings from a Systematic Review of Research</i> (<a href="#">report</a> and <a href="#">infographic</a>)</li><li>▪ Engagement: <i>Supporting Black Students' Excellence: Connecting Research to Practice</i> (<a href="#">video</a>)</li></ul>	May 2017– February 2018  June 2018





## Topics

**Professional Learning**



## Research questions

1. What does the research literature say about linkages (causal or other) between attitudes and beliefs of individuals and progress toward increasing educational outcomes among Black students?
2. What impact does implementation coaching have on teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward increasing educational outcomes among Black students? On student outcomes broadly?
3. What is the relationship between Wisconsin's model of CRP professional development and student and school outcomes?
4. What valid and reliable measurement techniques can be identified in the research literature or developed to recognize practices that are effective in changing teaching and learning conditions in ways that can increase Black student achievement?



## Projects

- Applied research:  
*Examining Culturally Responsive Professional Development Training in Wisconsin* (proposed)



## Timing

March 2019–  
April 2020



## Topics

**Teacher Preparation, Recruitment, and Retention**



## Research questions

1. To what extent does Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, through its teacher preparation program approval process, prioritize the cultural capital of Black parents and families?
2. What policies have been implemented in Wisconsin and other states to build preservice teachers' experience and competency in building relationships with Black parents, families, and students? What evidence exists regarding the connection between teacher preparation or training and cultural competency?
3. What are the most effective recruitment and retention strategies for:
  - a. Teachers of color?
  - b. Teachers who are culturally competent?
4. What methods do districts use to recruit and retain teachers of color? How are districts measuring the effectiveness of these strategies?



## Projects

We are determining projects that align with these research questions.



## Timing



## Topics

**Family Engagement**



## Research questions

1. What can we learn by engaging Black families in a decisionmaking process (i.e., district strategic planning, policymaking, continuous improvement planning) that acknowledges, values, and uses their cultural capital to address inequitable practices that marginalize Black students?
2. How does engagement among Black families in school decisionmaking predict specific outcomes, as perceived by members of school systems or captured in administrative records or research reports (e.g., school climate, student achievement)?



## Projects

We are determining projects that align with these research questions.



## Timing