

# Educator Impact on K-12 Learning & Development

## *Partnering to Prepare Future Educators in High Need Districts*

In Fall 2017, Avila University launched a “Grow Your Own” program for high school seniors interested in pursuing careers in education. Students in partner schools complete two college credit-bearing courses during the academic year. These courses are designed to introduce high school students to the teaching profession and to help them navigate the college admission process to reach their professional goals. Avila employs faculty on site at the partner school to teach the courses.

In the 2017-2018 academic year the program partnered with one high school partner, Ruskin High School in the Hickman Mills School District. Ruskin High School is a diverse urban Title I high school located in Jackson county Missouri, where 100% of students are free-lunch eligible. The district’s current strategic plan identifies the attraction, retention, and development of highly qualified teachers committed to increasing student achievement as one of five strategic priorities.

In Fall 2018, this program expanded to include Turner High School located in the Turner-Kansas City Public School District in Wyandotte County Kansas. Turner High School is a diverse urban Title I High school where 72% of students are free- or reduced-lunch eligible and 40% of the student population identifies as Hispanic.

The following chart illustrates the Grow Your Own Program enrollment during the first four academic years.

Grow Your Own Enrollment	2017 – 2022	
	Ruskin	Turner
ED 105: Intro to Education and the Teaching Profession	29	31
ED 287: Multicultural Foundations of Education	27	29

This program impacts the current high school learners that are engaged in the courses, but also has the ability to impact future K-12 learners served by these developing educators. Over the course of the program to date, respondents provided the following insights into the impact of this experience on their own learning:

- 96% (n=80) rated agree or somewhat agree to the following prompt: *This course significantly contributed to my understanding of this subject.*
- 90% (n=80) rated agree or somewhat agree to the prompt: *My thinking skills have improved as a result of this course.*
- 84% (n=80) agree or somewhat agree to the prompt: *I used instructor and/or peer feedback to improve my learning.*

In addition to the *Grow Your Own* program partners, the School of Education continues to partner with community agencies to help meet school district needs in our community. During the 2021-2022 academic year a partnership was initiated with the LatinX Education Collaborative to develop a pipeline for adult degree completers interested in becoming K-12 educators. A \$20,000 grant from the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education will provide start-up funds and student scholarships.

Additionally, the School of Education partnered with the

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## *Principal's Reported Impact for First-Year Teachers*

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Each Spring a survey is sent to the Principal's employing Avila prepared first-year teachers. Among many questions relevant to specific aspects of the curriculum, participating principals are asked respond to the following prompt: *Teacher significantly impacts and enhances student learning.* Respondents are provided with the following five-point rating scale: 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. This prompt was added to the survey during the Spring 2017 administration. Forty-seven principals have responded to this item since its inception. Ninety-one percent (91%) of respondents indicated that they Strongly Agreed (51%) or Agreed (40%) with this statement with a mean score of **4.43**.

On the Missouri administered survey of Principals of First-Year Teachers, principals are asked to respond the following prompt: *Based upon the performance-based evaluation of this first-year teacher, how would you rate his/her impact upon students?* On a scale of Ineffective (1) to Highly Effective (4) a mean score of **3.13** was reported during the 2019 through 2021 administrations from the employers of Avila program completers. The statewide mean for this same question during the same reporting period is **3.16**.

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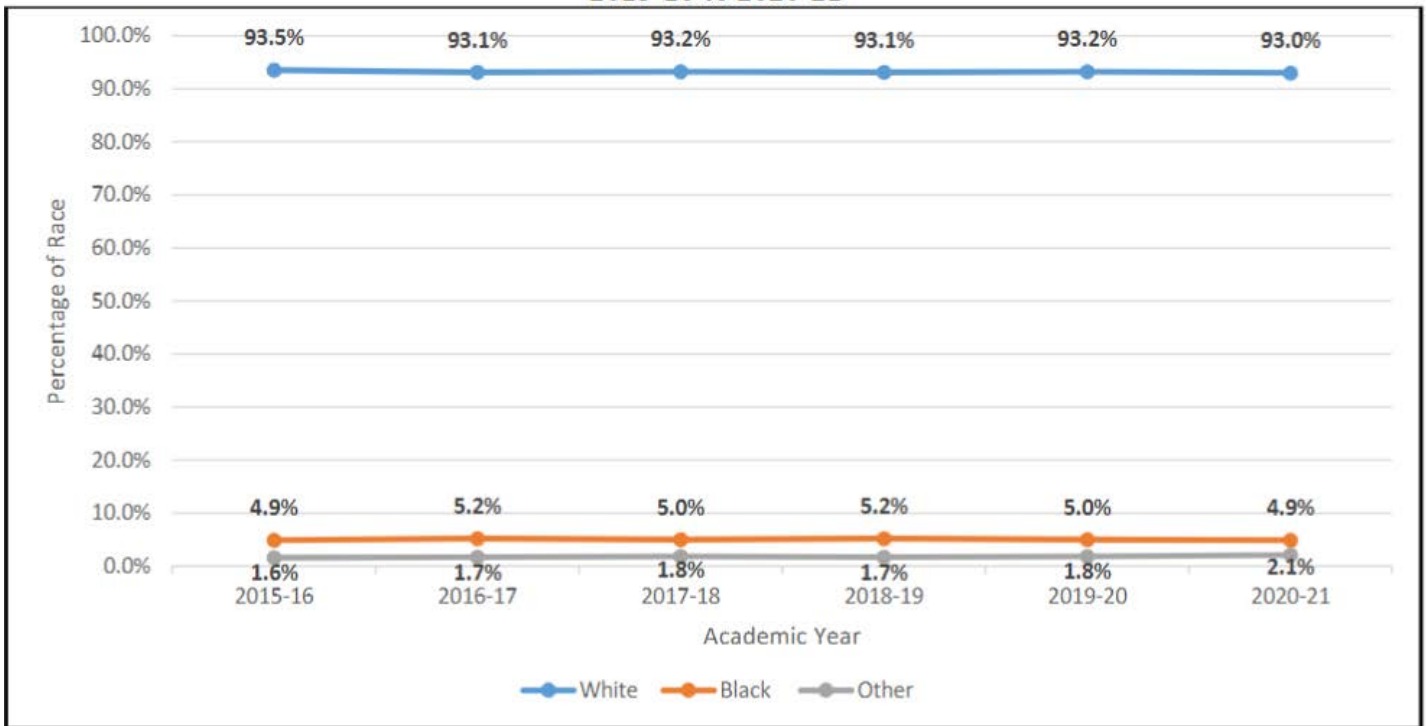
## *Expanding Diverse Teacher Representation in Missouri Public Schools*

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The Recruitment and Retention of Teachers in Missouri Public Schools report is released annually by the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) and illustrates the current status and the continuing need for public school teachers that represent that diversity of our PK-12 learners. As part of our continuous improvement plan in the School of Education we began working intentionally to help to diversify the teacher population in our local PK-12 partner schools. These efforts have included the *Grow Your Own* program discussed at the start of this document established in Fall 2017, the development of an adult undergraduate degree completion pathway that launched in Fall 2021, and the use of a DESE Teacher Recruitment Grant to develop a new partnership with the Latinx Education Collaborative to encourage Latinx community members to pursue teaching as a profession.

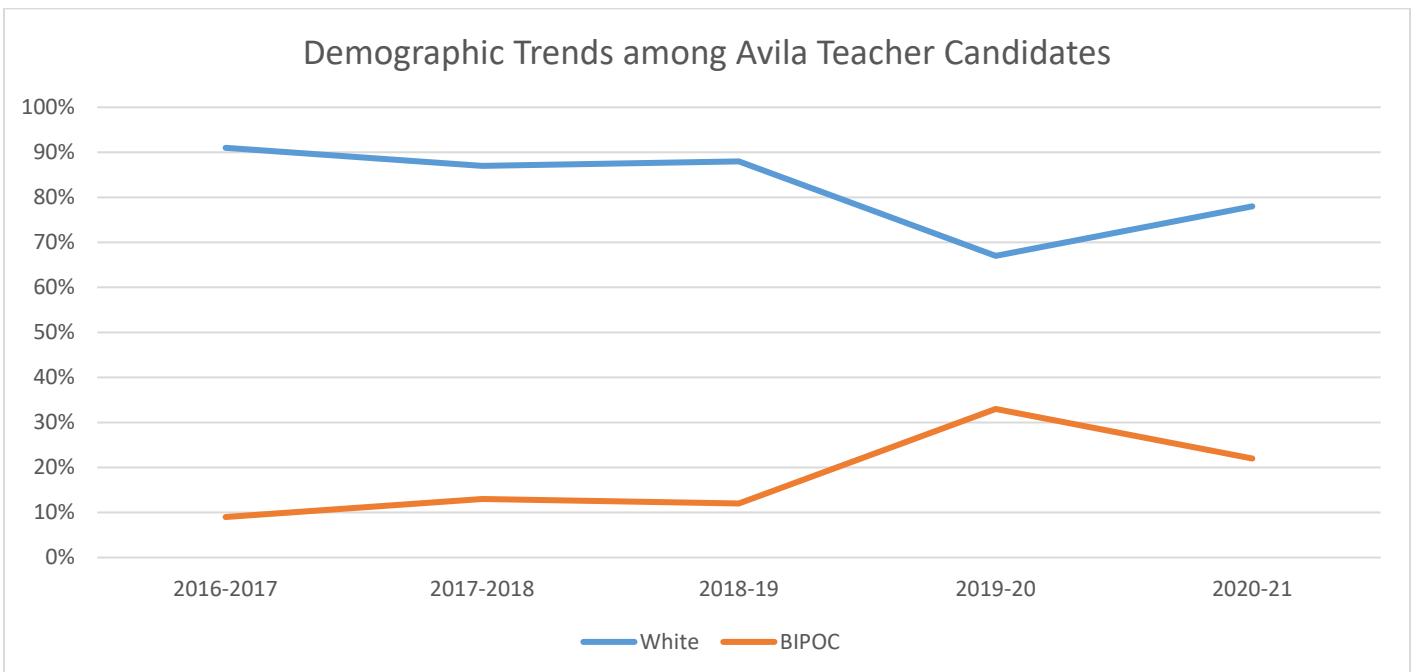
As shown below, since 2015-2016 the percentage of Missouri Public teachers representing varying race and ethnic demographics has remained relatively constant at approximately 5%.

### Race/Ethnicity Trends 2015-16 to 2020-21

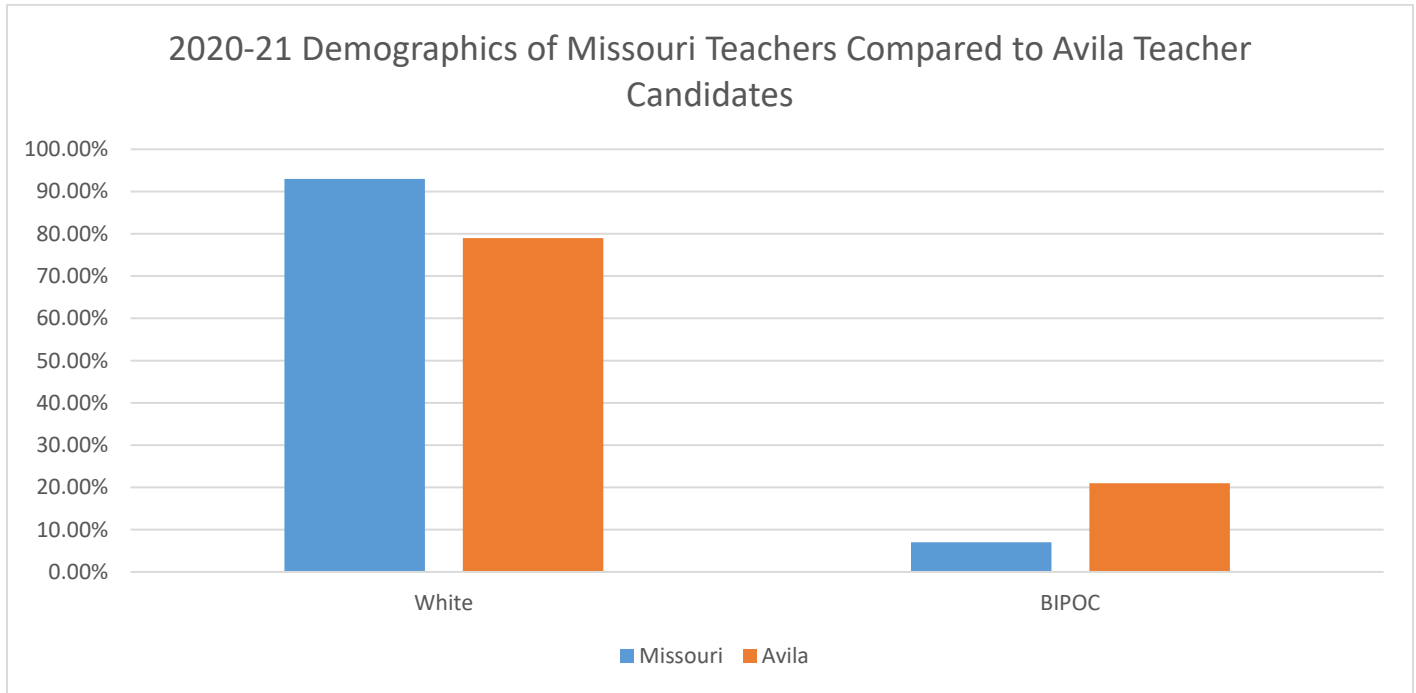


Missouri Data provided by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2021, December). *Recruitment and retention of Teachers in Missouri Public Schools*. Recruitment and Retention Report | Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Retrieved February 16, 2022, from <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/recruitment-and-retention-report>

During that same time the Avila University Teacher Candidate population has experienced a notable demographic shift as depicted in the chart below. A teacher candidate at Avila is defined as a student that has been formally advanced to teacher candidacy. For our undergraduate candidates this generally occurs in the sophomore or junior year. For our post-baccalaureate candidates this generally occurs in their second semester of education coursework.



The 2020-2021 Missouri Public Teachers Compared to Avila Teacher Candidates bar graph below shows the current demographic make-up both populations. Most notably, of the 157 Avila completers (from 2010 through 2020) currently reported on our Missouri teacher placement report, 13% identify as BIPOC and 87% identify as white. Of the 62 Avila completers (from 2010 through 2020) that have been teaching in Missouri public schools for at least five years, 10% identify as BIPOC and 90% identify as white. Given that the demographic shift noted above for our teacher candidate population does not fall within this five-year teaching window, we are extremely proud of the impact made possible by the continuity of all Avila prepared completers.



Missouri Data provided by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2021, December). *Recruitment and retention of Teachers in Missouri Public Schools*. Recruitment and Retention Report | Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Retrieved February 16, 2022, from <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/recruitment-and-retention-report>