

The gap between the number and percent of students of color and teachers of color in Oregon is large and unacceptable, 38.1 percent students and 10.4 percent teachers. I served on the committee that founded the Portland Teachers Program, PTP, more than thirty years ago. This program has been heralded as a model for recruiting, educating and placing, and supporting teachers of color in Portland and Beaverton public schools.

I don't believe more study or research is needed to know how to put in place more of these programs throughout the State. Rather, leadership and more funding is needed to support grow your own programs as collaborations of Oregon universities, community colleges and schools along with key community organizations in their geographic area. More teachers of color in our schools is essential for the greater success of students of color. They are essential as well for white students who stand to gain in a myriad of ways interacting with teachers of color.

If all that can be done this session is to fund more studies, okay. Maybe the studies would be focused on the GYO, Grow Your Own, programs being funded this year. But we know how to put successful programs in place, we have a model in PTP. We need to fund even more start up programs and provide consultants to work with those considering the development of future grants and provide support when the programs begin. I believe more teachers of color in our classrooms is one of the most effective long term ways to diminish racism in our country.

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