



Brothers Teaching

Learning Exchange Summary Brief

This summary report was developed by:

- Ceily Moore | Brothers Teaching Research Assistant
- Duane Davis | PhD Post-doctoral Researcher
- Jeniece Morrison | Brothers Teaching Coordinator
- Valentina Alpuin | Research Assistant
- Decoteau Irby | PhD Brothers Teaching Initiative Director

2024 | 2025

Brother Teaching

Learning Exchange Summary Brief

Brothers Teaching works to increase the number of licensed male teachers of color who work in Illinois schools by providing professional development, mentoring, technical assistance, and networking opportunities that support the recruitment, preparation, and retention of Black and Brown male teachers across the K-12 career pipeline.

This academic year, UIC's Brothers Teaching Initiative hosted its first Learning Exchanges. The Learning Exchanges bring together teacher education professionals to share best practices, build community, and explore opportunities and strategies to grow the number of Black and Brown male teachers who matriculate through Illinois universities to become licensed teachers. The Learning Exchanges are part of a multi-pronged effort, funded by the state of Illinois, to replicate and scale Brothers Teaching throughout the state of Illinois.

For the first learning exchanges, stakeholders visited University of Illinois at Chicago to learn about the inner workings of UIC's Brothers Teaching Initiative. Over a full day, UIC faculty and staff shared what and how we have gone about the process of recruiting, supporting, and graduating three cohorts of Brothers. The first Learning Exchange took place on December 3, 2024 and the audience included Chicago-based universities and teacher pipeline partners. For the second Learning Exchange, which took place on January 28, 2025, the target audience was expanded to include state-wide universities and school district partners.

Across both learning exchanges, representatives from the following organizations were in attendance:

- Chicago Public Education Fund
- Chicago Public Schools
- Chicago State University
- Distinctive Schools
- Governors State University
- Grow Your Own
- Illinois State University
- National Louis University
- Northeastern Illinois University (ENLACE Leadership Institute)
- Northern Illinois University
- Northwestern University
- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- Springfield School District 186
- Teach Chicago Tomorrow
- Truman College/S.E.E.D Scholarship Program
- University of Illinois, Council on Teacher Education
- University of Illinois Springfield

Each session opened with introductions and a brief overview of UIC’s Brothers Teaching Initiatives. The remainder of the day was broken into the sections and topics outlined in Table 1. Learning Exchange Agenda below.

Support	Focus	Presented by
Academic Success	Classroom and student teaching interactions with students and how their interactions with Brothers Teaching staff have supported their work.	Urban Education Program Faculty: Arthi Rao, Edward Potsiadlik, and Lori Redding
Student Success	Recruitment, advising, and other student service supports, interactions with Brothers Teaching Initiative Program Coordinator.	Office of Student Success staff: Dr. Maria Luna-Duarte, Dominique Thomas-Green, Valerie Williams, and Jennifer Delago
Life Success	Brothers sharing why they decided to go into the teaching field and their general experiences at college, including obstacles they’ve encountered and the supports that helped them navigate them challenges	Brothers Teaching Students





After the sessions, participants reflected, individually via a google document and as a group about what they learned, what they were interested in learning more about, and information they'd like to take back to their campus. Some examples of responses are below:

“The strength of the bonds that the Brothers make and feel collectively is the heart of the initiative.”

“I'd like to use the evidence in this program to justify why we need to change how we're doing things.”

“Collaboration of [a] learning exchange is powerful.”

“Please keep hosting these! This was a career affirming experience, and I look forward to attending more!”

“Relationships #1, also seeing themselves in faculty is important and not visible at many universities.”

“How can we collectively work together in community to make it successful for all and not work in a silos?”

Participant reflections were often organic and gave space for participants to express concerns, ask questions, and bring forth new ideas. We closed the day by facilitating a guided reflection and distributing a satisfaction survey. During the guided reflection, participants shared practices and programs at their institutions and questions that came up for them throughout the day.

Overall, our Learning Exchange exit survey revealed the following:

91% of participants (n=10) agreed that the Learning Exchange was informative and 82% of participants (n=9) agreed that they'd be able to use the information presented today to better support programs at their institutions.

In the survey, participants shared in their open-ended responses that they enjoyed the opportunity to connect and learn from others across various institutions. Participants were also excited about the work happening across institutions to support Black and Brown males in education. For future sessions, participants suggested that the Brothers Teaching Initiative team share more about the content and topics covered in the Brothers Teaching weekly meetings. In addition, they expressed a desire to connect more regularly with more institutions across Illinois, including district partners.

This year's Learning Exchanges will culminate with the release of guidance documents and a conference to support the recruitment, preparation, and retention of Black and Brown males in teacher education programs. Moving forward, Brothers Teaching faculty and staff welcome the opportunity to visit participating universities to exchange insights about best practices and continue to build a statewide coalition to advance its mission and vision of a future where every student in Illinois will have a male teacher of color at some point in their K-12 school years.



