



The Teachers Institute Approach

Partnership

Bringing university resources to bear on improving teaching in public schools

Content Knowledge

Improving teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach strengthens teaching in the classroom

Collegiality

Sharing the common ground of being teachers, faculty and Fellows engage as colleagues with each bringing their knowledge and experience to seminars

Professionalism

Reinvigorating teachers' sense of their own professionalism helps make them more confident and effective in the classroom



YALE AND DC PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUPPORTING K-12 TEACHERS



2025 Yale National Fellows from DC Public Schools

The Yale National Initiative supports the creation of Teachers Institutes in high-need school districts based on the model developed by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute since 1978.

Since 2015, teachers from the District of Columbia Public Schools have participated in the Yale National Initiative, which promotes the establishment of new Teachers Institutes based on a partnership between a high-need school district and a local college or university to improve teachers' content knowledge. Teachers Institutes offer collegial, content-based seminars in the humanities and STEM led by university faculty for public school teachers. Each teacher writes a curriculum unit on a subject related to their seminar topic using a university's resources. Faculty who serve as seminar leaders embrace the challenge of bringing their expertise to a new audience and report benefits to their scholarship and teaching.

Teachers...

- increase content knowledge
- create curricula for their students
- enhance sense of professionalism and enthusiasm for teaching
- receive a stipend upon completion

Faculty....

- support engaged teachers
- contribute to the community and its public schools
- communicate scholarship to a broader audience

Creating a Teachers Institute for DC

Since 2016, the Yale National Initiative to strengthen teaching in public schools® has worked with teachers, school officials, and university administrators to help build and grow the capacity for a Teachers Institute in DC. Teachers from DC serving as National Fellows participate in a seminar led by Yale faculty, including our two-week Intensive Session on campus.

Backed by rigorous evaluations over more than three decades, Teachers Institutes strengthen teaching, student engagement, and teacher retention. Of the 24 National Fellows from DC over the last ten years, 21 are presently employed by DCPS with 19 still teaching in the district. In addition, several DCPS officials and 8 faculty and administrators have participated in our programs at Yale. Three DCPS students have also presented at our Annual Conference at Yale.



“The Yale National Initiative is an amazing, collaborative opportunity to support teachers and improve education. Exchange between Howard University faculty and a national collection of faculty from participating universities, tribal nations, and public schools creates a valuable opportunity to build new professional relationships and envision and manifest something new.”

e. christi cunningham

Professor of Law

Director of Educational Right Center

Howard University



“The Initiative offers professional development that helps teachers grow—and when teachers grow, students thrive. Teachers’ expertise is valued, ensuring the creation of rigorous, meaningful lessons they are passionate about delivering. I am fortunate to be part of a national community dedicated to promoting the value of educators in shaping the future.”

Sandy Alvarez

First-Grade Teacher

Bancroft Elementary School, District of Columbia



“YNI is a breath of fresh air because I’m given the opportunity to deepen my content knowledge and leave with a thoroughly vetted curricular unit I’ve written and feel connected to.”

Perrine Punwani

Eighth-Grade English Teacher

MacFarland Middle School, District of Columbia

Attend our Program for Visiting Faculty at Yale

As part of our 2026 Intensive Session at Yale, the Program for Visiting Faculty runs from July 6 through July 9. It is designed for university faculty members in the humanities and STEM fields from communities that already have or are planning to establish a Teachers Institute. The Initiative provides travel to and from New Haven, lodging for five nights, and meals on the Yale campus.

Participants will observe two national seminars led by Yale faculty members and meet with the seminar leaders to discuss their observations. Participants learn about the Teachers Institute approach to curriculum and professional development and meet with the Fellows as a team to discuss their work locally and nationally.

For more information about participating in our Program for Visiting Faculty at Yale during the 2026 Intensive Session, please contact Sen Chiao at: sen.chiao@howard.edu.

BY THE NUMBERS

Since 2015, **24** DCPS teachers have written **35** curriculum units that are published on our website at teachers.yale.edu.