

# Courageous

CONVERSATIONS



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



If we want to live in a more equitable and just America, we must all face hard truths about our history. That takes courage, which as Nelson Mandela explained, is “not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.” In our quest to change the public education system, the odds may seem stacked against us at times, but we must soldier on if we are to achieve equity for students who have been historically marginalized.

At The Education Trust, we’re proud to join a broad, diverse coalition of partners seeking a better future for the students we serve. We have listened and learned from those closest to the issues we care about and are working alongside them for change.

Recently, we released a report on advanced coursework and [talked with students](#) about the value they derived from it and how taking challenging courses can set students up for success later in life. We [called on states to increase access to quality early education for Black and Latino children](#) after listening to child care providers. We took a sobering look at the history of race and racism in higher education and [urged states and institutions to confront these issues head on at colleges and universities](#). We also joined the National Fair Housing Alliance [in speaking out about the link between federal housing policy and education while raising the alarm about the Trump administration’s attempts to roll back policies that deter discrimination](#).

In Massachusetts, we’re pleased to be part of a [coalition](#) fighting for more equitable, transparent funding that, with community input, helped pass [the Student Opportunity Act](#), landmark legislation that will give more students the chance to reach their full potential. During this legislative session in Maryland, [we’re actively pushing for more equitable funding and policies that can secure the future of Black and Latino students](#). In Tennessee, we’re lifting the voices of young people and working with advocates and community leaders [to expand education equity](#).

I am also personally reminded of the meaning of courage. Just a few short months ago, my family discovered an uncomfortable truth: [My great-grandfather was enslaved just 25 miles from where my family lives in Montgomery County, Maryland](#). The cabin where he and his family were enslaved still stands just feet away from the main house, and the direct descendants of the family who owned mine still own the property today. Among the enslaved people was my great-great Aunt Anne, who reported the plantation owner to authorities for conspiring with the Confederacy. As a result of Anne’s testimony, he was arrested and prosecuted in Baltimore for “giving aid” to a “known rebel officer.” A 15-year-old girl (about the same age as my eldest daughter is now) found the moral courage to speak out despite great risk to herself.

Slavery is, without question, at the foundation of today’s systems of injustice — including the lack of equitable resources in our public schools, the biased admissions policies of our colleges, as well as the wealth gap, mass incarceration, housing segregation, and beyond. When we look back on the movements for justice and civil rights throughout history, we often ask ourselves what we would’ve done *then*. However, the more urgent question is, What will we do *now*? Each of us must summon our own moral courage to act today on the issues that matter most to us.

As Black History Month draws to a close, ask yourself: What courageous conversations will you have?

**John B. King Jr.**

President and CEO of The Education Trust

M [@JohnBKing](#)

DURING THIS QUARTER, WE CONTINUED TO EXECUTE OUR THEORY OF CHANGE BY ENGAGING IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

## LISTEN:

Ed Trust serves as a vigilant watchdog. We monitor policy proposals and engage legislators, parent and family coalitions, educators, advocates, and students to better understand context and conditions to inform our advocacy.

## RESEARCH:

Tapping the power of quantitative and qualitative data, Ed Trust publications and materials focus on policy, practice, and community tools that are either effective in — or detrimental to — advancing equity. From teacher diversity to college completion, Ed Trust is a thought leader on key issues due to our extensive research and subject matter expertise.

## ENGAGE:

Ed Trust engages policymakers, practitioners, and advocates to build a diverse coalition of people from various sectors and backgrounds. This increases political and public will to bring meaningful change for the students we serve.

## SECURE:

All of our efforts should result in the adoption of meaningful changes in policy and practice, opening up opportunities for students of color and students from low-income families.

# Courageous Conversations

“The life of the nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful, and virtuous.” So said Frederick Douglass, who had the courage to be honest and truthful in a country bitterly divided by race, class, and politics.

Douglass’ words still resonate today. We are again living in times that require his kind of courage — the courage to state facts, no matter how uncomfortable, and to hold those responsible to account, no matter how difficult. As civil rights lawyer, advocate, legal scholar, and *The New Jim Crow* author, Michelle Alexander notes, our nation has “avoided in recent years talking openly and honestly about race out of fear that it will alienate and polarize. ... [I]t’s our refusal to deal openly and honestly with race that leads us to keep repeating these cycles of exclusion and division, and rebirthing a caste-like system that we claim we’ve left behind.”

This is why the work we do at [The Education Trust](#) — providing hard-hitting data that exposes injustices in our educational systems, pre-kindergarten through college; speaking truth to power through our research; holding decision-makers accountable for change; joining hands and voices with partners; and engaging in courageous conversations, often in the face of ferocious opposition — is so essential.

In a [New York Times op-ed](#), “[States Are Burying Damning Data About School Funding](#),” Ary Amerikaner, vice president for P-12 policy, practice, and research, explains why hidden funding disparities within school districts must be addressed if we are to achieve educational equity. “Far too often, districts use a one-size-fits-all approach, instead of spending according to student need. So higher-need schools must rely on roughly the same funding as lower-need schools in the tonier parts of the same district,” she says.

**“The student debt crisis is the defining issue of our generation.** There is this shared frustration that students are required to take on so much personal debt to achieve something that is basically required to access economic opportunity,” said Tiffany Jones, EdTrust’s director of higher education policy, in a [NowThis video](#). The news segment highlighted Wayne State University’s Warrior Way Back program, which re-engages students who dropped out on account of student debt.



**John B. King Jr. and Lisa Rice**, president and CEO of the National Fair Housing Alliance, co-wrote an [opinion piece for BET.com](#) on the insidious link between housing segregation and school segregation and the Trump administration’s efforts to chip away at “critical federal civil rights protections in the Fair Housing Act — specifically the disparate impact standard and the [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule](#).”

**The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** results, released this quarter, were worrisome, with little change in the academic performance of historically underserved youth. EdTrust hopes this will serve as a wake-up call for policymakers and push them to have courageous conversations and make bold choices to close the opportunity gaps that lead to achievement gaps.



- Denise Forte, senior vice president for partnership and engagement, joined forces with Jim Cowen, the executive director of the Collaborative for Student Success, in an [op-ed for The 74](#) in response to the dismal NAEP reading scores. “Solutions to this literacy crisis will require political courage, creativity, and commitment on the part of educators; a deep belief that all children are capable of achievement; and an understanding of the science on how youngsters learn to read,” they write.

- Ary Amerikaner, in a [statement](#), called for brave policy changes to improve the lives of students of color, noting that until decision-makers “adopt policies and make investments that center the needs of historically underserved students, including students from low-income families, Black students, and Latino students, it’s unrealistic to expect these gaps to close. While the NAEP results are disappointing, we’ve seen across states and districts that progress is possible.”



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**Hayley Margolis, an undergraduate at George Washington University** and a fall 2019 communications intern, wrote a blog for *The Equity Line* on “[Improving On-Campus Racial Climate](#).” In it, she describes efforts by her and fellow GW students to convince their administration to replace the university’s controversial moniker, The Colonial. She also touches on other colleges’ struggles to confront their own dappled histories of racism. “Many colleges and universities tout ‘diversity and inclusion,’ but less visible is the actual breaking down of barriers of institutionalized racial inequity imposed on achieving a diverse and inclusive campus,” she writes. Her message to predominantly White institutions? Do better.

## PRESIDENTIAL 2020 ELECTION

**Education advocates following the presidential debates** in recent months know that education issues have received scant mention, which is why we were thrilled that in November, nearly a dozen public education groups, including unions and civil rights organizations, hosted presidential candidates in Pittsburgh at the Public Education Forum 2020: Equity and Justice for All.

- Prior to that debate, Denise Forte [penned a blog](#) on what she hoped and expected to hear about key topics related to the current state of our education system.
- In an opinion piece for *The 74*, "[What Candidates Should Know About Teacher Pay](#)," Rachel Metz, our former teacher quality data and policy analyst, urged readers and presidential candidates to understand that teachers need much more than a good salary. "Clearly, money isn't enough. To attract strong teachers into the classroom — *and keep them there* — we need to ensure that they get the support they need to be successful. Doing so means investing in strong school leaders who can foster collaborative climates where strong teachers want to work and want to stay," she said.

*Ed Trust is a 501c3 nonprofit, nonpartisan organization*

### We hosted courageous conversations via a series of monthly Twitter chats:



In October, we partnered with TeachPlus for a discussion on how to retain teachers of color. Follow [#DisruptTurnover](#) to read and participate in this ongoing conversation. And read our joint report, "[If You Listen; We Will Stay](#)," in which teachers talk about what will keep them in the classroom.



In December, we partnered with National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for a chat on why all three-to-four-year-olds, especially Black and Latino youngsters, need high-quality learning experiences. Follow [#YoungLearners](#) to read the conversation and add your voice. For more information on this important topic, read our report, "[Young Learners, Missed Opportunities](#)."



In January, we talked about why race-conscious policies in higher education are necessary. We shared data that shows why a focus on income alone will not close gaps in opportunity and outcomes for students of color. Follow [#RaceConsciousChat](#) to join the conversation, read "[Hard Truths: Why Only Race-Conscious Policies Can Fix Racism in Higher Education](#)," and watch our explainer [video](#) for more information.

**We used our communication platforms to uplift the voices** of advocates across the nation who are working to increase opportunities and improve outcomes for historically underserved students, and of students who are struggling to get to and through college. This quarter, we featured:



The late [Annette "Polly" Williams](#), who was the longest-serving woman in the Wisconsin legislature, and whom many called "the Mother of School Choice." Polly dedicated her political career to empowering Black families from low-income and working-class incomes and to improving education for Black students. It

often meant bucking her political party and calling out injustice and inequities regardless of whom she might offend. Read more about Polly in this [think-piece in \*The 74\*](#), which was penned by Robin Harris, EdTrust managing editor and Polly's proud cousin.



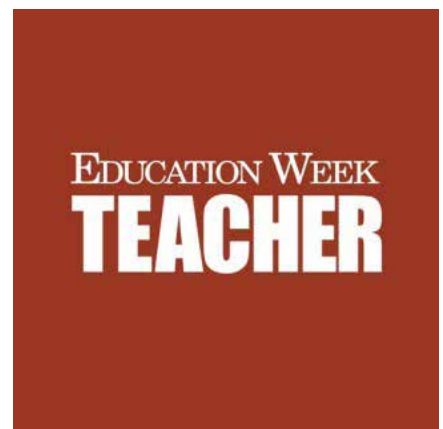
[Sancia Celestin](#), a senior at George Mason University, who was raised by her mother, a Haitian immigrant who works 12-hour shifts as a nursing assistant to support her two kids. In an *Equity Line* entry, Sancia says she is all too familiar with the challenges first-generation students face in pursuit of a college degree. She considers herself fortunate to have

come this far with less than \$20,000 in student loans, though the fear of debt was a driving factor in her decisions to attend George Mason and switch majors (from pre-med to psychology), and it may well determine whether she goes to graduate school.



[Caroline Sanchez Crozier](#), who served as the Illinois Education Chair for the League of United Latin American Citizens or LULAC, the oldest and largest civil rights national organization for Latinos, for more than 15 years. In this position, Caroline works arduously to represent the voices and needs of Latino students, educators, and parents. "Illinois, like many other states, is experiencing a fast-growing Latino population, and yet their representation is not reflective of student demographics," she says in this *Equity Line* post.

**In November**, EdTrust joined a dozen national education groups — including the National Urban League, the Alliance for Excellent Education, and many others — to call on policymakers and education officials to prioritize evidence-based instruction, content-rich curriculum, and teacher training. Read more in this *Ed Week* story, "[Schools Should Follow the 'Science of Reading.' Say National Education Groups.](#)"



**For a full review of all our media efforts this quarter, both traditional and social, [please click here.](#)**

# No State Provides Both High-Quality and High-Access State-Funded Preschool for Black and Latino 3- and 4-Year-Olds

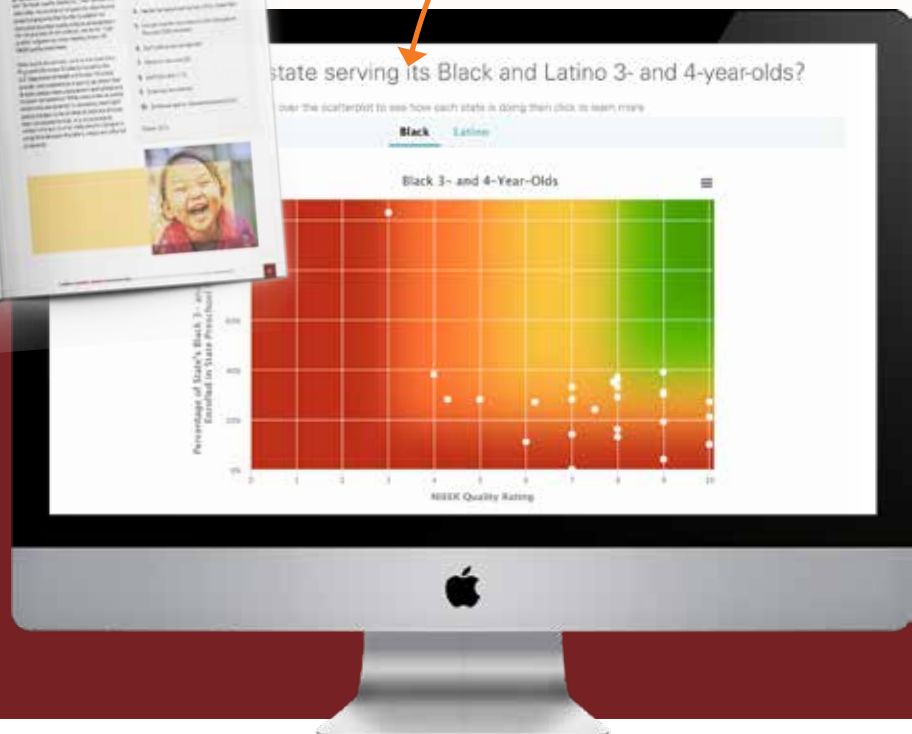
High-quality early childhood education (ECE) is important to the rapid development that happens in the first five years of a child's life. Research has proven that the effects of high-quality early childhood education have long-lasting benefits into adulthood. But many Black and Latino children do not have access to high-quality, state-funded ECE programs, according to our first-of-its-kind analysis released last November.

In "[Young Learners, Missed Opportunities: Ensuring That Black and Latino Children Have Access to High-Quality State-Funded Preschool](#)," we considered two questions:

- Do Black and Latino students have access to preschool programs?
- And are these programs high-quality?

The answers were appalling. Of the 26 states analyzed, not one provided both high-quality and high-access early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-old Black and Latino children during the 2017-2018 school year.

To learn more about how your state is performing, check out our interactive [state-by-state tool](#).





Join the conversation



with #YoungLearners  
12/18 3PM EST/12PM PST

With co-hosts @edtrust & @NAEYC

Q1

Welcome & thank you for joining our #YoungLearners chat today! To kick things off, sound off with who you are, where you're joining from, & what kind of early-childhood education program you participated in!

#YoungLearners

Q2

What are some of the life-long benefits of being enrolled in a high-quality early-childhood education program?

#YoungLearners

Q3

What are some barriers or policies that keep Black & Latino families from enrolling their children in high-quality early-childhood education programs?

#YoungLearners



The good news is, there are tangible steps that leaders can take to improve access to high-quality pre-school programs for all children, but particularly for Black and Latino children. EdTrust recommends state leaders do the following to:

### INCREASE ACCESS

- 1 Publish meaningful equity data and use it to track progress
- 2 Prioritize expansion in historically underserved communities
- 3 Spread the word to Black and Latino families
- 4 Make enrollment easy
- 5 Offer hours and locations that align with the schedules and commutes of working families

### IMPROVE QUALITY

- 1 Meet quality benchmarks, including making professional development meaningful for Black and Latino children and their families
- 2 Eliminate suspensions and expulsions
- 3 Support dual language learners
- 4 Support families
- 5 Diversify the workforce

This report received great press coverage in publications such as [Education Week](#), and [Hechinger](#), among others. *The 74* also highlighted the paper in [this article](#), which quoted Carrie Gillispie, senior analyst, and author of the report:

*"First and foremost, policymakers have to invite conversations with Black and Latino communities [and] listen to their needs," Gillispie said. "Invite them to the table before policies are changed or before policies are made so that Black and Latino communities are really informing policies."*

Often, when equity-focused advocates are engaged in these conversations, one of the first questions they are asked is, "Isn't lack of access to high-quality, ECE more about kids living in poverty and less about their race?" To prep our advocates to engage in courageous conversations, Carrie wrote an *Equity Line* blog on [The Importance of High-Quality Early Childhood Education \(ECE\) for Black and Latino Children](#)." In it, she explained that "the public discussions of the effects of ECE usually center on family income at the expense of a critical focal point: opportunity gaps for Black and Latino children and families, who go on to face race- and ethnicity-related systemic inequities throughout the K-12 system. While income-based disparities are certainly a dire problem in the education system, disparities related to race and ethnicity have important distinctions that require sustained attention."

We participated in a webinar hosted by the National Governors Association, presented our research at our boot camp for advocates, and presented at the NAEYC convention in Nashville. We gave presentations to California advocates at The Education Trust-West Equity Forum and to advocates at the annual conference of the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) in Chicago. John B. King Jr. also talked about the importance of high-quality ECE at the ASCD Education Leadership Conference, National Academy of Education Annual Meeting, and the Magnet Schools of America Policy Training Conference.

Learn more at [EdTrust.org/YoungLearners](#) and see our press coverage [here](#).



ENGAGE

## Talking With Early Childhood Educators of Color

In partnership with NAEYC, we talked with early childhood educators of color about what they want policymakers to know, and shared our findings in a new report, "[Increasing Qualifications, Centering Equity: Experience and Advice from Early Childhood Educators of Color](#)." The report provides policy recommendations based on the experiences and guidance of early childhood educators in response to three main questions:

1. How do early childhood educators of color perceive policies that raise the educational requirements they must meet in order to keep their jobs?
2. How has the implementation of these policies impacted the career trajectories of early childhood educators of color?
3. What advice do early childhood educators of color who have "lived through" these policy changes have for policymakers and leaders considering similar changes?

To view the recommendations, please read our *Equity Line* blog on the "[5 Things That Policymakers Can Do to Improve Early Childhood Education](#)."

# Learning How School Districts Get ExtraOrdinary Results

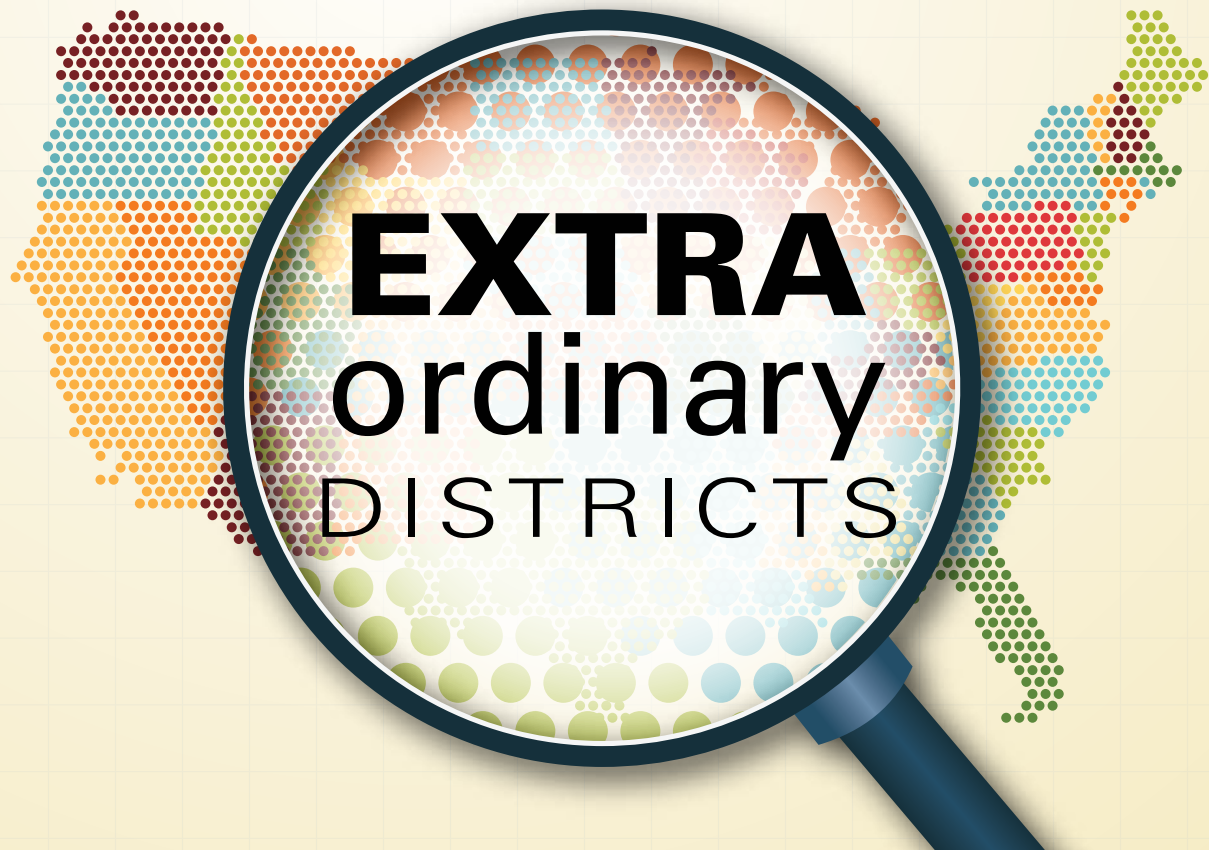


In season two of ExtraOrdinary Districts, released in November, former *Washington Post* columnist and EdTrust podcaster and writer-in-residence Karin Chenoweth, traveled to two rural districts (Lane, Oklahoma, and Seaford, Delaware) and one suburban district (Valley Stream 30, New York) to talk with thoughtful educators about the hard work they have put in to develop systems and ways of operating to continuously improve student learning. These districts were identified using analyses by Stanford University's [Sean Reardon](#).

The episodes, which feature the voices of superintendents, principals, teachers, and researchers, focused on reading instruction and the leadership needed for school and district improvement. They also touched on funding inequities, integration, early education, teacher collaboration, and many more topics. Each episode was followed by panel discussions with experts about the lessons we can draw from these districts. Panelists included reading expert, Timothy Shanahan; integration advocate, Richard D. Kahlenberg; and Baltimore Public School CEO (and former EdTrust vice president) Sonja Santelises. The season kicked off with a panel discussion in front of a live audience of graduate students, district principals, and central office administrators at the University of Illinois-Chicago with Chicago Public School CEO Janice Jackson, Harvard University's Ronald Ferguson, and University of Michigan's Nell Duke.

Subscribe wherever you listen to podcasts!

Learn more at [EdTrust.org/ExtraOrdinaryDistricts](https://EdTrust.org/ExtraOrdinaryDistricts).





## Working to Increase Access to Advanced Coursework

Black and Latino students across the country have unequal access to advanced coursework, which means they often miss out on vital learning opportunities that can set them up for success in college and careers. Our report, "[Inequities in Advanced Coursework: What's Driving Them and What Leaders Can Do](#)" and [state-by-state data tool](#) examine why these students are shut out, how widespread these practices are, and what policymakers at the state, district, and school levels can do to increase students' access to advanced learning.

Our researchers found that missed opportunities happen throughout the educational system in:

- **Elementary school:** Black students represent 16% of overall enrollment in elementary schools, but only 9% of enrollment in gifted and talented programs; Latino students are 28% of students enrolled in elementary schools, but only 18% of those in gifted and talented programs.
- **Middle school:** Black and Latino students are not adequately enrolled in eighth grade algebra. Black students make up 15% of eighth graders, but only 10% of students enrolled in eighth grade Algebra I. Similarly, Latino students make up 25% of eighth graders and just 18% of eighth graders in the course.
- **High school:** Black and Latino students are locked out of Advanced Placement (AP). Black students make up 15% of high schoolers nationwide, but only 9% of students enrolled in at least one AP course. Nearly a quarter of students are Latino, but only 21% of students enrolled in AP courses are Latino.

*“Advanced coursework opportunities can place students on the path toward college and career success. Yet, too many Black and Latino students never receive the opportunity to enroll through no fault of their own,” ... “No student should forfeit future success because there were not enough seats in the class or because the seats were not available.”*

–Kayla Patrick,

P-12 data and policy analyst and lead author of the report

Our report shows that nationally, there are two drivers of these inequities: (1) schools that serve mostly Black and Latino students do not have as many seats in advanced classes as schools that serve fewer Black and Latino students; and (2) schools — especially racially diverse schools — deny Black and Latino students access to the seats that they do have. Additionally, fair access doesn’t mean sufficient access: Too many students attend schools that do not offer these opportunities at all.



### Key findings show:

- 1 Black and Latino students are successful in advanced courses when given the opportunity.
- 2 Black and Latino students are not fairly represented in advanced courses.
- 3 There are too few course offerings and limited availability.
  - a. Not enough courses are offered in schools across the country.
  - b. Not enough total seats are available in the schools serving the most Black and Latino students.
  - c. Among schools that offer advanced courses, Black and Latino students are often denied access to those courses. This is especially true in racially diverse schools.

*“Nationally, what we’ve found is that Black and Latino students can be successful in advanced courses when given the opportunity, but unfortunately, they are not fairly represented in advanced courses. The story gets more complicated when we dig deeper into state-by-state data to understand what is driving those national trends. The barriers to access and success in advanced coursework are different from one state to the next, and within states maybe be different for Black students than for Latino students,”*

– Ivy Smith-Morgan,

associate director of P-12 analytics and co-author of the report.



Ed Trust recommends five ways district and state policymakers can advance equity in access to and success in advanced coursework:

1. Set clear, measurable goals for advancing access to and success in advanced coursework and commit to publicly measuring state and district progress (disaggregated by race and income) toward those goals.
2. Use data to identify the barriers that prevent students of color and students from low-income backgrounds from enrolling in advanced courses.
3. Where schools serving the most Black and Latino students lack any or enough advanced courses, states should invest to expand advanced coursework opportunities in those schools — either through more courses or seats or both.
4. Where Black and Latino students do not have a fair chance to take advantage of advanced coursework opportunities already offered within their schools, states should require and support districts to expand eligibility and increase access to advanced courses.
5. Finally, states should provide sufficient support for students to prepare for advanced coursework and for their success once enrolled. States should also support districts by providing the resources necessary to prepare students for advanced coursework opportunities.

To illustrate the importance of access to advanced coursework and to lift student voices, Gabriela Montell, senior editor/writer, spoke with several high-school alumni with advanced coursework experience — all students of color and/or students from low-income backgrounds — about the value of such courses and how taking them has impacted their scholarly lives. These students discussed how taking high-level classes gave them a host of benefits, ranging from increased confidence, greater academic engagement and college readiness to the chance to explore subjects and get a head start on college coursework, potentially cutting college costs and time to degree. [Read their stories here.](#)





“The Inequities in Advanced Coursework” report saw some nice movements by our state partners, and received media coverage in several states, especially Kentucky. The day after its release, the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence sent a fact sheet to their equity coalition and other education advocacy groups outlining the problem and potential solutions in the state. As the result of our team’s outreach, the *Louisville Courier-Journal* ran a story, “[‘Racialized tracking’ is denying Kentucky’s Black students gifted and advanced classes](#),” which quoted Brigitte Blom Ramsey, Prichard’s executive director, as saying, “This report should be a call to action for all Kentucky citizens to engage in constructive dialogue about how our schools can overcome this shocking racial disparity.” Brigitte also appeared on central Kentucky’s NBC channel to talk about the data.

In Seattle, there is a contentious debate on whether to phase out the district’s highly inequitable gifted and talented program in favor of promoting more STEM programs. Our data was used in this [Seattle Times](#) story, to look at access to advanced courses throughout the state.

To promote our findings and engage with advocates pursuing equity, we met with the Equal Opportunity Schools and will present the paper to over 100 people at its symposium this March. We also shared our findings with The College Board, the Center for American Progress, and the Education Commission of the States. John B. King Jr. talked about this issue in front of diverse audiences from the National Career Development Summit, The College Board, The E3 Cohort Workshop, Spelman College Board of Trustees, Colorado Equity Coalition & Equity Day, and the Magnet Schools of America Policy Training Conference.

And we are consistently in contact with legislators at the federal, state, and district levels for feedback on upcoming bills.

Learn more at [EdTrust.org/AdvancedCoursework](https://EdTrust.org/AdvancedCoursework). And to view our press coverage, [click here](#).



# EQUITY MATTERS: ADVOCATES IN ACTION



## Advocates Pushing for Educational Justice

In November, 140 state and local advocates from 11 states attended our “Equity Matters: Advocates in Action” boot camp in San Antonio, Texas. The convening opened with “Let’s Talk: A Candid Conversation on the Immigrant and Refugee Crisis at the Border,” a plenary discussion on the harmful policies of the current administration [e.g., human rights violations at the border, the [public charge rule](#), and the attempt to rescind DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)] and the implications for our nation’s students. John B. King Jr. moderated the conversation, and panelists from [Texas AFL-CIO](#), [The Intercultural Development Research Association \(IDRA\)](#), [Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education](#), and [Texas Civil Rights Project](#) shared what their organizations are doing to help the immigrant and refugee community.

Advocates attended breakout sessions that explored policy issues, including: the barriers that lock Black and Latino students out of advanced coursework opportunities; why retention is just as important as recruitment in diversifying the educator workforce; and the funding formulas of states that are doing a good job of targeting resources to districts and schools that need the most. We were especially excited to offer skills-building sessions on tactics for grassroots mobilization, coalition maintenance, and effectively using social media to raise awareness of issues impacting student achievement. The closing plenary featured Autumn Arnett, author of [Let’s Stop Calling it an Achievement Gap](#), who discussed why the unspoken intersections between race and class matter in American education.



# Working to Eradicate the College Affordability Gap

The idea that students from low-income backgrounds can work their way through college with a minimum wage job without taking on debt is a myth from a bygone era. Late-night comedian Hasan Minhaj made the point in [congressional testimony](#) earlier this year, and our new report, "[How Affordable Are Public Colleges in Your State?](#)," issued in November, backs him up. We also released a [new data tool](#), so advocates and policymakers can know how their state stacks up.

## Findings include:

- The affordability gap facing first-year students from low-income backgrounds at public four-year colleges exceeds \$3,000 in nearly every state, and the state average is slightly more than \$6,500.
- In 47 of 50 states, students from low-income backgrounds need to work more than 15 hours per week to afford the net price at a public four-year college. Working more than 15 hours per week has a negative impact on college student success.
- In New Hampshire and Pennsylvania, students from low-income backgrounds would have to work over 40 hours per week at minimum wage to pay for public four-year college.

EdTrust recommends policymakers take the following steps to make college more affordable for students from low-income backgrounds:

1. Invest in need-based aid at the state and federal level.
2. Ensure that approaches to free college programs cover the full cost of attendance for students from low-income families.
3. Reinvest in higher education at the state level.

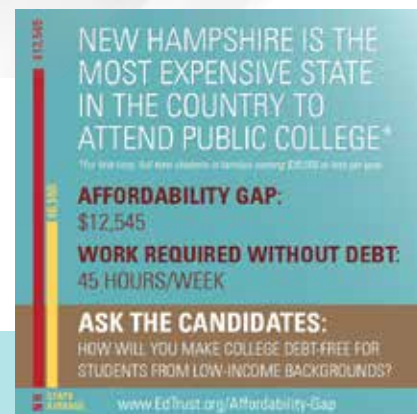
In a *Chronicle of Higher Education* story, "[How Long Must Students Work to Afford to Go to College?](#)," the author stated, "that it was rare for students to be able to work as few as 10 hours a week — the amount experts say doesn't interfere with academic success — and still earn enough to pay for tuition, other academic costs, and living expenses." The report was covered by [Diverse: Issues in Higher Education](#), [Education Dive](#), [Real Clear Education](#), and it was included in *Politico's Morning Education*.

John B. King Jr. and Wil Del Pilar, vice president of higher education policy and practice, presented the #AffordabilityGap work at the 10th annual Complete College America conference, and Andrew H. Nichols, senior director of higher education research and data analytics, and one of the report's co-authors, will present the findings and recommendations in an upcoming webinar hosted by The Hunt Institute. And Victoria Jackson, senior policy analyst for higher education, was invited by our partner, Policy Matters Ohio, to discuss this issue at an upcoming meeting on the state grant program.

EdTrust experts continued to speak out and engage in courageous conversations on related topics, including Kayla C. Elliott, senior policy analyst for higher education, in *The Washington Post* on HBCU funding; Victoria Jackson in *Inside Higher Ed* on changes to SNAP eligibility for college students; and Reid Setzer, director of government affairs, in *Inside Higher Ed* on a new proposal to provide college students in Virginia with extra financial support for basic needs.

Additionally, we cheered for Kayla C. Elliott as she received the 2020 AERA Division J Dissertation Award for her work "The Influence of State Performance-Based Funding on Public Historically Black Colleges and Universities: A Case Study of Race and Power," a qualitative study which explored the changes taking place within an HBCU, and between an HBCU and its state.

Learn more at [StateEquity.org](https://StateEquity.org).





## Uplifting #StudentVoice in Higher Education

At the end of January, Ed Trust again teamed up with the Institute for Higher Education Policy and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights for our penultimate Lunch and Learn event for civil rights and education equity advocates.

The day-long event focused on the importance of student voice and activism. Wil Del Pilar provided opening remarks, and scholar-activist Sy Stokes provided historical context on student activism in America. Student leaders from #NotAgainSU shared how they organized protests in reaction to recurring racist incidents at Syracuse University that made students question whether to return to campus after break. A panel of higher education practitioners shared lessons learned from grassroots work and discussed the power of student voice, ways to support undocumented students, and the issue of college affordability.



**#NOTAGAINSU**  
@notagain\_su

**#NotAgainSU** protesters inside Crouse Hinds Hall have just been told they will be suspended due to a code of conduct violation. Bring cardboard to stand on, blankets to cover yourself in, and bring your signs! Make noise and spread the word!

**PROTESTERS  
WERE TOLD  
THAT THEY WILL BE  
SUSPENDED.  
COME OUTSIDE  
OF CROUSE  
HINDS NOW!**

ENGAGE

# Advancing Race-Conscious Policies in Higher Education

In January, we released "[Hard Truths: Why Only Race-Conscious Policies Can Fix Racism in Higher Education](#)." In this paper, we reason that policymakers cannot achieve racial equity in higher education by focusing solely on income. An [animated video](#) breaks down the history, the argument, and the call to action in three brief, but powerful minutes.

Relying on historical analysis and trends in college opportunity and outcomes for Black students, "Hard Truths" builds on recent Ed Trust "[Broken Mirrors](#)" reports on underrepresentation of Black and Latino students and graduates in higher ed and offers education equity advocates tools to push policymakers to focus explicitly on race in higher education.

"Hard Truths" presents three complementary arguments:

1. Historically, higher education has used racist policies, such as providing unequal funding, to exclude students. Therefore, race-conscious policies are necessary to achieve racial justice.
2. Racial inequalities remain, and, in some cases, have worsened because public leaders eliminated race-conscious policies, curtailing their impact.
3. Policies that rely on proxies for race, such as income, have not improved opportunities or outcomes for students of color and are insufficient for making racial progress.

Startling racial disparities in student loan default rates have been tied to longstanding wealth gaps and discrimination in the workplace, and they suggest that a focus on income alone won't fix things. One in three Black students from upper-income families defaults on their student loans, a rate seven times greater than that of White students from the same income bracket. It is easy to see why this statistic has captured the attention of the higher education policy community.

"Hard Truths" concludes with 10 recommendations for federal, state, and institutional leaders to enact race-conscious policies for college admissions and degree attainment, higher education funding, student debt relief, and campus climate.



While the report and video were primarily intended as tools for equity-focused advocates on the ground, there has been a strong response from the media and the higher education community. Kimberly A. Griffin, associate professor of student affairs at the University of Maryland, College Park emailed, "I'm teaching a course on Social Justice in Student Affairs and Higher Education, and when the report came out, I immediately added it to my syllabus. It was exactly what I needed; integrating data and narrative to highlight the persistent equity gaps in college completion and debt load, coupled with specific guidance on what we should do about it."

"Hard Truths" was covered in [Inside Higher Ed](#), the [Atlanta Daily World](#), [The College Fix](#), and [Diverse: Issues in Higher Education](#). John B. King Jr. incorporated themes from *Hard Truths* in his keynote remarks at the College Board Colloquium. ACT and *Inside Higher Ed* invited the report's co-authors, Tiffany Jones and Andrew H. Nichols to contribute op-eds for their audiences. The report was used at higher ed professional development sessions at the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education and at Eastern Michigan University, and at convenings hosted by AASCU, Complete College America, and Yale. Wil Del Pilar pushed higher education leaders to use data to evaluate how well they are serving students of color, and he gave a keynote address at the Equity in Higher Education Summit in Missouri.

Learn more at [EdTrust.org/RaceConscious](https://EdTrust.org/RaceConscious). To view our press coverage, [click here](#).

RESEARCH



Ben Miller  
@EduBenM

This is a stunning chart from the important new @EdTrust paper on #raceconscious policies s3-us-east-2.amazonaws.com/edtrustmain/wp.

**TABLE 2** Twelve-Month Default Rates and Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) by Race/Ethnicity for Dependent Full-Time, First-Time Students at Four-Year Institutions

Family Income	Black Default Rates	White Default Rates	Black AGI	White AGI
Low	40%	23%	\$14,250	\$19,781
Lower middle	40%	16%	\$41,929	\$41,940
Upper middle	38%	9%	\$89,228	\$75,688
High	34%	9%	\$139,291	\$137,348
<b>Average</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>\$58,168</b>	<b>\$74,367</b>

Note: Family Income: Low (\$22,000), Lower middle (\$22,001 - \$40,000), Upper middle (\$40,001 - \$80,000), High (\$80,001 and above).  
Source: Ed Trust analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Postsecondary Persistence Database (ipedsdatacenter.ed.gov), accessed on 10/27/2019.



## Elevating Equity in an Increasingly Polarized Political Climate



In an increasingly polarized political climate, Ed Trust continues to break through the noise and add its voice to advance proposals on Capitol Hill that support what is best for students from low-income families and students of color. In October, we pushed Ed Trust’s key policy priorities as the [House Democrats’ higher education reauthorization bill](#), the College Affordability Act (H.R. 4674), made its way [through the House Education and Workforce Committee](#). [The bill included a key amendment](#) from Reps. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) and Frederica Wilson (D-FL) that would require the Government Accountability Office to study the equity gaps at four-year public colleges and universities that were highlighted in our [“Broken Mirrors” report](#).

In late 2019, students in higher education scored a large victory when Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) struck a deal — entitled the FUTURE Act (H.R. 5363) — to permanently fund historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other minority-serving institutions or MSIs and make much-needed improvements to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Ed Trust was a leading group in [advocating for this bill’s passage in Congress](#) and for the president to sign it into law. While this bipartisan bill was not the comprehensive higher education bill for which we’d hoped, [Ed Trust remains committed to](#) championing the student-centered reforms in 2020 and beyond — [including the restoration of Pell Grants to incarcerated students](#) — that the system so desperately needs.

Even as we focused on higher education at the federal level, [Ed Trust commemorated the fourth anniversary of the Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#) in December and, [upon the release of 2019 NAEP data](#), called for, “national, state, and local leaders to take these data seriously, and to take bold action to address persistent inequities in access to strong and diverse educators, advanced coursework, high-quality early childhood education, school funding, and other essential supports provided inside and outside the classroom.” In addition, [we joined 22 other organizations in opposing the harmful cuts to the Civil Rights Data Collection \(CRDC\) that the Trump administration proposed](#) — cuts that would only make it harder for advocates to make the case for more equitable access to high-quality education for Black and Latino students.

In November, we also submitted [further comments](#) the U.S. Department of Education’s final report card guidance, suggesting the need for stronger reporting of civil rights data, data disaggregation, and per pupil expenditures, among other recommendations. Our advocacy around school spending will only increase going forward, as we plan to comment on the Education Department’s [upcoming study](#) of spending across 400 districts and to formally announce the Alliance for Resource Equity — a partnership with Education Research Strategies (ERS), [which will help advocates leverage ESSA’s school spending requirement for fair funding](#).



## Welcome Education Trust in Tennessee

We are excited to announce that [Gini Pupo-Walker](#) is our state director for Tennessee. Gini will continue the coalition-building efforts she has led for years with advocates, educators, students, and community partners seeking to increase educational opportunity and outcomes for Black and Latino students and students from low-income backgrounds. As our newest state director, Gini will provide our Tennessee partners with policy analysis, as well as research and advocacy opportunities in both P-12 and higher education.

# Ed Trust Working in the States



**Illinois:** We continued to push Illinois policymakers to increase their state's shares of Black and Latino adults with college credentials and degrees by supporting the Education Systems Center, which is working with policymakers to update the state attainment goal. Likewise, we participated in the Partnership for College Completion policy advisory group.

**Delaware:** Together with our partners at Education Resource Strategies (ERS), and through the Alliance for Resource Equity, we helped [the Vision Coalition of Delaware](#) bring together practitioners and advocates to (1) identify issues that hold the state back from funding reform, (2) find areas of agreement, and (3) learn from peers in other states. Tony Allen, then provost of Delaware State University, opened the event. Ary Amerikaner and Jonathan Travers, a partner at ERS, shared findings from a dozen interviews we conducted with district leaders and state advocates about their perspective on Delaware's funding system. They highlighted broad agreements around the importance of equity, stability, flexibility, and transparency. Betty Chang, a director at ERS, moderated two panels: one highlighting the perspective of leaders in Delaware (panelists included Alonna Berry, Teach for America; Mark Dufendach, retired superintendent of POLYTECH School District; Emily Falcon, chief financial officer of Colonial School District; Paul Herdman, president and CEO of Rodel; and Margie Lopez-Waite, head of school at Las Americas ASPIRE Academy) and

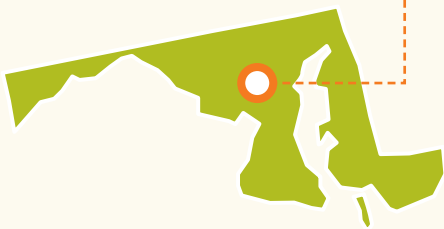
the other situating Delaware in the national context (panelists included Ary Amerikaner, Jonathan Travers, and Dan Curry, superintendent of Calvert County Public Schools in Maryland).

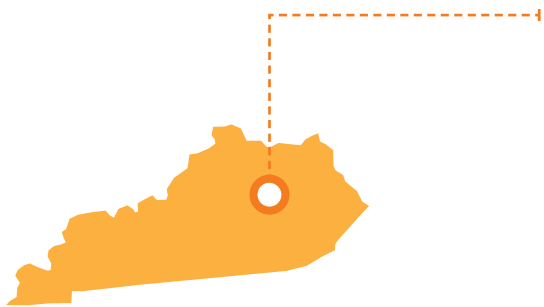
We support a [Rodel Foundation](#) initiative, the Education Funding Organizer program, which is designed to build advocates' knowledge about education funding and increase public awareness about inequities in the school system, as well as possible solutions to address them. In January, Rodel welcomed [10 fellows](#) to participate in three months of training. By the end of the program, participants will be able to work individually or in small groups to organize their community to act on an education funding issue.



**Maryland:** More than 20 organizations supported recommendations developed by the [Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education \(MAREE\)](#) to ensure racial equity remains central to the state's multiyear initiative to improve public education in Maryland. Our coalition insists that an increase in funding must be coupled with strong policies that address the racial disparities that limit Black and Latino students' success, and it has been meeting with state policymakers during the current legislative session to make this point. Bills are also being introduced that reflect the coalition's priorities, including access to advanced coursework.

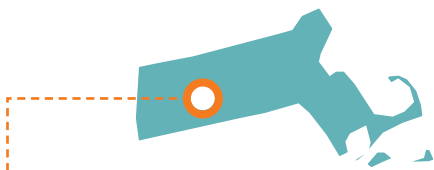
Ed Trust also launched a digital advertising campaign, featuring coalition members, students, educators, and business leaders explaining the importance of resource equity in Maryland, while John B. King Jr. penned an [op-ed in \*The Washington Post\*](#) highlighting the state's opportunity to be a national leader in closing opportunity gaps for its most underserved students. Ed Trust has also been backed by the Players Coalition in pushing for equitable investment in public education in Maryland. [On the Martin Luther King Day of Service, a former NFL player turned educator, Joel Gamble, joined John, Baltimore City Schools CEO Sonja Santelises, and a diverse group of students, educators, and elected officials to push for greater investment in students in Baltimore City and statewide.](#) John also joined Strong Schools Maryland, students, and other advocates for [the kickoff of the "Strong Schools Work" campaign](#) with Brit Kirwan, chairman of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education.





**Kentucky:** As referenced above, we diligently worked with the Prichard Committee to increase Black and Latino students' access to advanced coursework in Kentucky and advance policy solutions.

**Louisiana:** During this reporting period, The Education Trust in Louisiana, [Council for a Better Louisiana \(CABL\)](#) and [Stand for Children](#) developed a set of recommendations for improving access and equity in dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards opened the 2019 legislative session by pledging to ensure that all high school students will have access to dual enrollment opportunities at Louisiana colleges, including technical colleges. The state legislature responded by creating a task force to address this issue. Ed Trust and our partners shared vital information with the task force on ways the state can improve access — for example, by targeting dual enrollment funds for students from low-income families — and advance equity — for example, by rewarding districts that expand eligibility requirements and removing other barriers that hinder student success in these programs.



**Massachusetts:** Since last February, the members of the Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership (MEEP) [worked](#) to [secure](#) comprehensive school funding legislation that would update the state's 26-year-old funding formula. We were thrilled that the Student Opportunity Act (SOA), which Republican Gov. Charlie Baker signed into law on November 26<sup>th</sup>, aligned with many of our recommendations. In fact, the partnership was acknowledged by State Sen. Jason Lewis (D, 5<sup>th</sup> Middlesex district), chairman of the Joint Committee on Education, in his [opening remarks](#) at the Massachusetts Senate's debate on this legislation.

MEEP's advocacy helped ensure that the law included not only landmark investments in the state's highest-need districts and schools, but also strong requirements for action to address disparities in opportunity and achievement. As the bill made its way through the legislature, we [pushed back on efforts to undermine](#) the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) authority to oversee the quality of district spending and action plans. When the bill moved to the conference committee, John B. King Jr. co-wrote a [Boston Globe op-ed](#) with State Rep. Chynah

Tyler (D, 7<sup>th</sup> Suffolk district) — his former student — which urged lawmakers to ensure that Massachusetts' final school funding legislation would preserve the balance between local decision-making and strong state oversight. These efforts were successful: The final Student Opportunity Act maintains the state oversight authority we sought to protect.

As we celebrate this milestone, we are already shifting our focus to the law's implementation. In January, MEEP met with Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Jeffrey Riley to learn about and provide feedback regarding DESE's approach to SOA implementation. In the coming weeks, MEEP will release a report on how districts can leverage SOA dollars and requirements to improve learning experiences and outcomes for students. In addition, to help foster meaningful stakeholder engagement in district spending decisions, Ed Trust's Massachusetts team is providing pass-through grants to 10 community-based organizations that will gather family and community input and communicate those recommendations to their districts.

# The Education Trust—West

## Major Education Equity Victory With the California State University

During the fall 2019, The Education Trust—West (ETW) continued to be a leading voice in urging the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees to reconsider a proposed admissions policy that would have required high school students to take a fourth year of quantitative reasoning. The proposal to add an additional year of math and science would have had the greatest impact on students of color and students from low-income backgrounds, who due to existing disparities in access to math and science coursework and a lack of qualified teachers in the state's K-12 schools, would have had a harder time meeting the additional requirement.

ETW worked in coalition with [over 100 leaders and organizations](#) to oppose the proposal, commissioned an [analysis](#), partnered with [state legislative leaders](#) to introduce a bill to increase oversight over admissions policy changes, helped [organize rallies](#), and generated [significant earned media](#) and [social media](#) attention.

As a result of ETW's efforts — in partnership with the Campaign for College Opportunity and Just Equations — the CSU Chancellor has [delayed the vote](#) on the quantitative reasoning admissions proposal until 2022.



Andy Wong  
@MisterAndyWong

Rain or shine, protest against @CalState proposal to change admission requirement continues to go strong. "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Admissions change has got to go!" #CSUAccessDenied



1:54 PM - Nov 20, 2019 - Twitter for Android

## Putting Forward Solutions to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color

Schools across California are facing a critical teacher shortage, and the shortfall is especially acute when it comes to teachers of color. While more than 3 out of 4 California students are students of color, just 1 in 3 of its teachers are teachers of color.

Last fall, ETW launched [Seen, Heard, and Reflected](#), a campaign to call attention to this shortage. The campaign centers on solutions around how best to prepare, recruit, and retain a more racially diverse pool of teachers across the state — especially male teachers of color, teachers of color in STEM, and women in STEM. ETW also convened its Educator Advisory Council over the fall to engage educators in our strategic planning process and have conversations on how educators can work with ETW to advance our equity work, and we provided media training on how to lift up the voices of educators of color.

The climate in California is ripe for meaningful conversations and solutions to the teacher shortage, especially with Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom making investments in teachers and education a central focus in his proposed [2020-2021 budget](#). In December, ETW held a STEM Teachers of Color convening with educators, advocates, and stakeholders on ways to boost the number of teachers of color in STEM fields and discuss what a possible STEM Equity Agenda would look like in California. ETW plans to hold a similar convening in Southern California in spring 2020.

### TEACHERS OF COLOR IN CALIFORNIA TK-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS\*



The Education Trust—West

Teachers of color are essential to the success of all students, and we need more of them. Did you know?

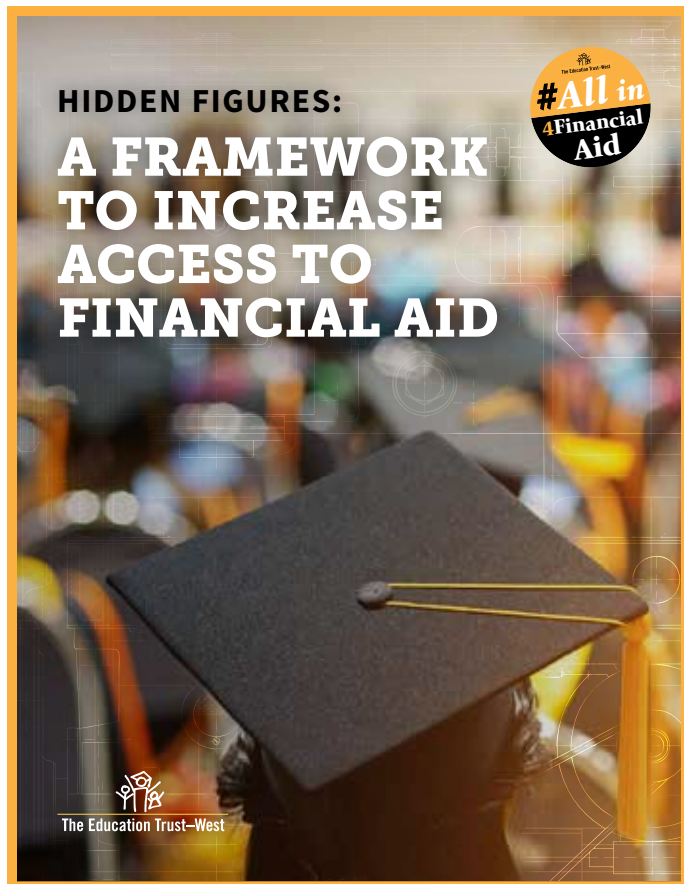
Join the conversation on social media: #SeenHeardReflected





## Moving the Conversation Forward on College Affordability

In California, thousands of students who may be eligible for financial aid attend high schools with some of the lowest financial aid application rates in the state. In fall 2019, ETW launched the “[All in for Financial Aid](#)” campaign, which called on policymakers to find ways to increase financial aid applications. As part of the campaign, ETW released a report and toolkit, “[Hidden Figures: A Toolbox for Increasing Access to Financial Aid](#),” to help schools and educators across the state increase financial aid access and awareness. Additionally, ETW co-hosted the [California College Affordability Summit](#), in partnership with the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC), California Department of Education, Riverside County Office of Education, and Riverside County Education Collaborative. Over 600 attendees convened around the need for a statewide policy solution and tangible practices to advance financial aid awareness and completion.



## Sustaining the Movement Toward Educational Justice

Our data advocacy work continued this fall with the launch of a [#Data4ThePeople webpage](#) and “[What’s Next: Designing a Cradle-to-Career Data System for an Equitable California](#)” infographic featuring five key principles to ensure California’s new data system is equitable and accessible for students of color from low-income backgrounds and their families. ETW’s deputy director of research and policy, Christopher Nellum, was appointed by the governor to serve in an advisory group that will inform the Cradle-to-Career Data System Workgroup’s discussions.

California has a vibrant community of multilingual students and families, which is why, in December, we released [resources in English and Spanish](#) to help families and other community members learn about California’s vision for educating English learners, start conversations with their schools, and understand English learners’ rights.

ETW continued to be a fierce advocate on the need to invest and improve academic outcomes for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. When the results of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress tests were released, Executive Director Elisha Smith Arrillaga was quoted in [CalMatters](#) and the [Sacramento Bee](#) on the urgent need for more teachers of color and underserved students’ need for a high-quality education. Elisha also spoke on this topic at the California Department of Education, Just Equations, and Lumina Foundation.

To help amplify the voices of educators of color in impacted communities, we offered them media training with Larsen Communications, a leading firm. It is our hope that reporting will draw attention to these educators’ experiences in the classroom and the practice and policy changes needed to keep them there.

To learn more, please visit [EdTrustWest.org](#).

# The Education Trust—Midwest



## Shaping the Equitable School Funding Conversation in Michigan

In January, we released a new report, "[Michigan's School Funding: Crisis and Opportunity](#)," which shows that the state's K-12 education funding system is neither adequate nor equitable — with the burden falling hardest on students who have special needs, those in low-income and isolated rural districts, and those who are learning English in school.

Our new report includes an in-depth analysis of the state's current funding system, as well as evidence-based principles based on leading state practices and research to inform Michigan's growing conversation about education funding.

These include:

- Funding according to student need
- Providing more funding to districts with greater needs

- Ensuring school districts are held accountable for additional funding to ensure it reaches the intended students and is spent on research-based best practices that improve student learning

A strong early reception includes coverage from [Bridge Magazine](#), [Michigan Public Radio](#), [Associated Press](#), and [Chalkbeat Detroit](#) — and overwhelmingly positive support from civil rights partners.

Additionally, as a part of the release, we asked Michiganders to sign the [Fair Funding Pledge](#), which, in the first 24 hours, generated more than 400 emails urging the governor and legislative leaders to prioritize equitable school funding.

## Michigan Governor's State of the State Highlights Key Education Priorities

During her speech in late January, Michigan's Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer lifted up education as an important priority in 2020 and spoke of the critical need to ensure that Michigan's students are prepared to learn as they enter school and ready for success as they graduate high school.

She emphasized the need to improve early literacy rates in Michigan, which has long been a top priority of The Education Trust–Midwest (ETM), as our 2018 report, "[Top Ten for Education: Not By Chance](#)," shows. We are pleased to see this focus echoed in her State of the State address, along with her announcement of a collaborative initiative with key philanthropic partners across the state to improve parents' understanding of Michigan's "Read by Grade 3" law, which puts an estimated 5,000 third graders at risk for retention this school year. Since late 2018, we have worked together with the [Detroit Parent Network](#), and with the support of the [Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation](#) — one of the philanthropic leaders

participating in Whitmer's new initiative — to [help parents](#) better understand their rights under Michigan's third grade reading law.

Gov. Whitmer also echoed our call for a more equitable funding system, which was the topic of ETM's most recent [report](#).

Additionally, she focused on the importance of increasing FAFSA completion rates, which is a critical first step toward ensuring that Michigan students are well-informed about the financial aid options available to pay for a postsecondary education. Whitmer discussed the statewide "Governor's FAFSA Challenge" announced in December 2019, which includes student incentives and awards to high schools for high FAFSA completion rates. While ETM's ultimate goal is ensuring that every high school graduate either completes the FAFSA or "no-reason parent waiver," innovative strategies to further incentivize FAFSA completion are an important first step.

For more information, please visit [EdTrustMidWest.org](#).



# The Education Trust—New York

## **Proficient and Passed Over: Across New York, even meeting state learning standards does not lead to fair representation in advanced math courses for students who are from low-income backgrounds and/or students of color**

Even when these students scored proficient on the state math assessment in seventh grade, students who are from low-income backgrounds and/or students of color were less likely than their more affluent and White peers to be enrolled in an advanced math class in grade 9, according to [data released for the first time by The New York Equity Coalition](#).

Enrollment in advanced math was 22% higher for students who are not low income than for students from low-income backgrounds who were also proficient, 16% higher for White students compared with their Black peers who were also proficient, and 20% higher for White students compared with their Latino peers who were also proficient.

In addition, updating its previously published analysis on course access disparities from the 2016-17 school year, the coalition

found that in 2018-19, high school students across New York State who were White and not low income were approximately twice as likely to be enrolled in a range of key advanced courses like physics, calculus, computer science, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, music, and advanced foreign languages than their low-income and Black and Latino peers.





This new data — available at [EquityInEdNY.org/PassedOver](https://EquityInEdNY.org/PassedOver) — underscores a persistent crisis, first identified in the coalition's 2018 "[Within Our Reach](#)" report, with two basic features: Students who are from low-income backgrounds and students of color are less likely than their peers to attend schools where advanced courses are offered. And even when they do attend schools that offer these courses, they are less likely to be given access.

To see how this impacts New York students, please watch this [video](#). Since the launch of the coalition's course access initiative, there have been important policy wins. In November, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) released new guidance representing an important step toward ensuring that all students can participate and succeed in advanced coursework that will prepare them for college, careers, and active citizenship.



## THERE IS MUCH MORE TO BE DONE

### WE CALL ON STATE LEADERS TO:

-  **Improve access to advanced courses**
-  **Support parents and students**
-  **Eliminate barriers to enrollment**
-  **Eliminate enrollment disparities**

The groundbreaking policy guidance from NYSED sets out five key principles to “assist school districts in their efforts to provide course access equity” and, among other important provisions, clearly states that:

- “An equitable course enrollment policy is rooted in the understanding that students can succeed in advanced courses when they are well-prepared with the appropriate foundation and provided with appropriate supports.”
- “Districts should carefully consider the use of practices that may have a negative impact on access to advanced coursework for underserved students, including rigid tracking and Honors programs that limit advanced course access to a select group of students without ongoing opportunities for all students to enroll in advanced coursework and required prerequisites. Districts should also consider the impact of any other policies or practices that result in disproportionate under-enrollment in advanced coursework for students of color, students who are low-income, and/or other historically underserved groups of students.”
- “An equitable course enrollment policy uses multiple measures to identify students for advanced coursework so that no single measure excludes their participation. Districts should carefully consider the use of practices that may have a negative impact on access to advanced coursework for underserved students.”

- “An equitable course enrollment policy may include encouraging students to pursue a wide range of gatekeeper and advanced coursework throughout their academic careers and communicating the benefits of advanced coursework and enrollment information in a language their families can understand. Positive practices include creating a variety of inclusive materials for students and their families, all available in multiple languages or in a language that families understand.”
- “School districts should ensure that, starting in the early grades, all students are provided with opportunities to access the courses and curriculum that will prepare them for a range of rigorous courses by the time they reach high school.”

The Board of Regents also adopted a statewide accountability system that strongly incorporates “College, Career, and Civic Readiness.” And last year Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo set a goal that “every student can graduate high school with college credit, a skilled credential, or meaningful work experience by 2025.” New York also included additional funding in the state budget for AP, IB, and dual enrollment courses.

Building on important policy wins for students, the coalition calls on state leaders to enact four new policies this year:

- **Improve access to advanced courses:** The state should continue to significantly increase investment in AP, IB, and dual enrollment courses in high-need school districts — including planning time for teachers, support for students, and implementation of equity-driven course enrollment policies — and expand access to school counselors who are culturally responsive.
- **Support parents and students:** The state should require school districts to provide clear and concise information to every elementary school family with a child in later grades, in a language they can understand, about the courses their child can take in middle and high school to prepare for college, careers, and active citizenship — the benefits of enrolling in advanced courses, and the support available to their child.

# The Education Trust—New York

- **Eliminate barriers to enrollment:** The state should consider automatically enrolling students in the next available advanced course if they demonstrate readiness using one of multiple measures such as scoring proficient or advanced on a statewide assessment. Families would always have the right to decline this automatic enrollment. States like North Carolina, Washington, and Colorado have enacted similar legislation.
- **Eliminate enrollment disparities:** The state should ensure that any school or school district that has disparities in advanced course enrollment implements an action plan to improve equity with parent, educator, and student input.



## Raising NY findings on child care capacity highlight urgent need for New York to invest in high-quality infant and toddler care

The estimated number of infant and toddler child care slots decreased in nearly every region of the state between 2009 and 2018, and many providers report that they are running on a deficit, according to new resources released by [Raising NY](#), a statewide coalition dedicated to increasing the number of children on track for school readiness.

Research shows that investing in high-quality early childhood programs makes students more likely to graduate from high school and college, makes communities safer, improves economic security and children's well-being, and disrupts the school-to-prison pipeline that keeps too many children and young adults from reaching their full potential. Access to affordable, high-quality, safe, and culturally responsive child care supported by a universal, transparent quality rating and improvement system is a critical component.

Learn more at [RaisingNY.org/CapacityCrisis](#).

To learn more about all of our efforts in New York, please visit, [EdTrustNY.org](#)

# WITH GRATITUDE

The Education Trust would like to express our deepest gratitude for the support of our mission to expand excellence and equity in education for students of color and those from low-income families from pre-kindergarten through college. Generous gifts from donors such as these provide the financial and moral support needed to continue to build a movement toward educational justice. **Thank you!**

## The Education Trust

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Baltimore Community Foundation  
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## The Education Trust

### *West*

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California Community Foundation  
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Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
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Carnegie Corporation of New York  
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Cullen Foundation  
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The John R. Oishei Foundation  
Overdeck Family Foundation  
Pritzker Children's Initiative  
The Walton Family Foundation

## The Education Trust

### *Midwest*

Ballmer Group  
Bosch Community Fund  
The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
Consumers Energy Foundation  
Frey Foundation  
Grand Rapids Community Foundation  
Max M. & Marjory S. Fisher Foundation  
The Skillman Foundation  
Steelcase Foundation  
The W.K. Kellogg Foundation



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# The Education Trust

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## Our Mission

The Education Trust is a national nonprofit that works to close opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students of color and students from low-income families. Through our research and advocacy, EdTrust supports efforts that expand excellence and equity in education from preschool through college; increase college access and completion, particularly for historically underserved students; engage diverse communities dedicated to education equity; and increase political and public will to act on equity issues.

To view this copy online, please visit [EdTrust.org/ed-trust-updates](https://www.EdTrust.org/ed-trust-updates).



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