



Getting Things Done

ADVANCING RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY IN EDUCATION



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Our nation is emerging from a devastating and deadly crisis after enduring nearly a year-and-a-half of the COVID-19 pandemic, and today, we stand on the precipice of healing and progress. As more people are getting vaccinated, life for some Americans is starting to return to normal. There is a burgeoning sense of hope and expectation for the future, even as we press for greater vaccine access for families of color and those from low-income backgrounds, who are still disproportionately less likely to receive the vaccine.

It is in this spirit of hope and this update's theme of "getting things done" that I begin by noting our leadership transition at The Education Trust. In April, [Denise Forte](#) — who served as our senior vice president for partnerships and engagement — was unanimously named by our Board of Directors as EdTrust's interim CEO. Denise is an experienced executive and a leader in using unflinching data analysis and fierce advocacy to advance policies and practices that expand excellence and equity across the spectrum of education, from preschool through college. As her decades of experience on Capitol Hill and in the nonprofit and government sectors show, Denise knows how to advance smart policies and programs that prioritize educational equity and how to get things done for students and families. I have the utmost faith in her leadership, and, as president of Ed Trust, I look forward to supporting Denise in her transition to this new and expanded role.

Looking ahead, [the American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#) is bringing much-needed relief to states, businesses, and schools. And we, at Ed Trust, are hopeful that the American Families Plan will boost households and fortify our education system as the country recovers.

Now that more school districts are returning to in-person learning, we have a unique opportunity to serve students of color and students from low-income backgrounds with equity, determination, and grace. For the better part of a year, the reports about the effects of interrupted learning have been grim. Some parents are [holding their kids back](#). We need to figure out how to help students catch up and accelerate their [unfinished learning](#). At Ed Trust, we've focused our efforts on what can be done to better serve our students. And now, with ARP funds being distributed, it's time to put the rubber to the road.

I'm buoyed by the bipartisan coalition that reintroduced the [Corps Act](#), which will mobilize many young people to serve as tutors and mentors, as well as address hunger, homelessness, and more. I'm encouraged to see pushback against efforts to deny an accurate telling of American history. Our students need to understand and grapple with the racism woven into the fabric of this country so that they learn from our mistakes and can work toward forming "a more perfect union."

As a nation, we just recognized the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Massacre, a stain on American history to which we cannot turn a blind eye, especially as children of color are still witnessing the murders of innocent Black men and women by law enforcement at an alarming rate. The conviction of Derek Chauvin for killing George Floyd was the rare exception, not the rule, which means the fight for justice continues.

As I close this update, I want to pay tribute to our former Ed Trust colleague and chief operating officer, Cathy Daniels, whom we lost in May. She was a dedicated and strong advocate for educational justice. Cathy's energy was infectious and her critical behind-the-scenes work not only helped to shape the organization but ensured that our entire team could continue to get the job done, especially amid COVID-19. Her memory will be a blessing to all who knew and loved her, and we will miss her dearly.

Together, as always, in the fight to advance racial justice and equity in education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John B. King Jr." in a cursive style.

John B. King Jr.

President of The Education Trust |  [@JohnBKing](#)

DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD, 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.

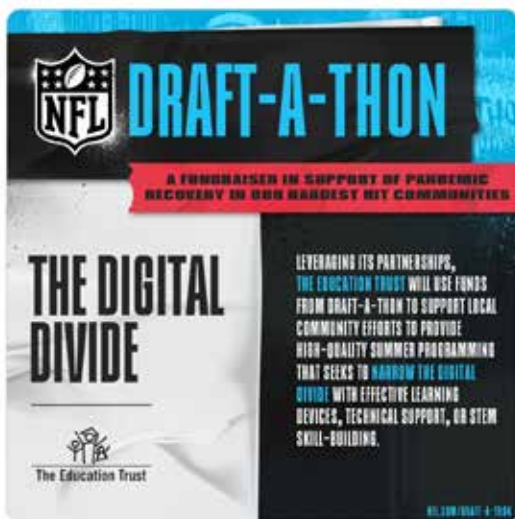
Getting Things Done: Advancing Racial Justice and Equity in Education

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently [reported that half of American adults are fully vaccinated](#) and [relaxed its mask guidance](#). The future is getting brighter. The country is beginning to “return to normal,” as some people reunite with their families and friends in person, and students across the country slowly return to school buildings. To be clear, going back to normal cannot be the goal. “Normal,” in this nation, means the existence of vast injustices and inequities.

[With billions of dollars for education in the latest stimulus packages](#), state, district, and university leaders can turn their attention to devising strategies and programs to get students on track academically. The Education Trust and our partners are pushing them to do so in a way that advances racial justice and equity for our nation’s most underserved students. The nation’s school systems cannot go back to the way things were pre-pandemic, when some students got the resources they needed to succeed, while others were denied. Now is the time “to get things done” and end glaring inequities in education. Now is the time for this nation to live up to its potential and truly become a “land of opportunity” for all.

During this reporting period:

We participated in this year’s NFL Draft-a-Thon, a virtual fundraiser held during the NFL Draft to provide relief for communities impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Ed Trust is using the funds to make 16 subgrants to community-based organizations in New York, Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Michigan, and California working to close the digital divide and provide high-quality summer programming.



We showcased Penny Christian – 16th District PTA President in Lexington, Kentucky, who was just recently named as a community member to the Herald-Leader Editorial Board, and who was also part of our inaugural cohort of The Education Trust Family Fellows – in a [“Profile in Education Equity”](#) blog post. Penny explains what motivated her to become an education advocate, how she advances education equity in Lexington, and what she considers the most pressing education issues of our time. She notes that one of “the most powerful ways to advance equity is to empower others, specifically families in traditionally underserved groups.”



We celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week this year by honoring the teachers who impacted our lives.

We continued to uplift teacher voice in our “Why I Teach, Where I Teach” blog series. This quarter, we featured [Priscilla Conerly](#), an educator in the Franklin Special School District and a member of the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance, who teaches so her students will “have the opportunity to define themselves” and “their own futures.”



EducationWeek®

In a recent [Education Week op-ed](#), we urged school district leaders to “get their financial houses in order now,” so they can deliver an equitable education to students long after the stimulus money runs out. The piece was co-written by Zahava Stadler, Ed Trust’s special assistant for state funding and policy, and Victoria Jackson, a former EdTruster who is now a senior policy analyst with the State Fiscal Policy team at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

We continued to advocate for fair and equitable discipline practices for all students, but particularly for girls of color. Our work was featured in [Principal Magazine’s March/April 2021 edition: Decoding Race, Gender, and Discipline](#).



We explained why annual statewide assessments are a necessary, albeit imperfect, tool to protect students’ civil rights, even during this pandemic. As Denise Forte, interim CEO, writes [in this blog post](#), “For Black and Latino students, this data [gleaned from assessments] shines a light on disparities in access to educational opportunity and provides civil rights advocates and other stakeholders in educational equity with data to garner additional support for their state’s most underserved students.”

We co-hosted two webinars with partners on the state of learning for students of color during the pandemic:

- On February 24, as Black History Month drew to a close, we, along with Khan Academy, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), The Center for Black Educator Development, and the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), hosted a webinar on “The State of Black Education During COVID-19.”

During this virtual roundtable, a panel of esteemed speakers discussed the many challenges and opportunities facing Black students, families, and educators. They considered what policy and practice change needs to happen to ensure that every child has equitable access to the resources, trusted mentors, and safe learning environments necessary to succeed when school buildings reopen. If you missed it, you can still [watch it here](#), or read about it in this news article in [The Washington Informer](#).

- On May 26, we co-hosted a companion webinar on “The State of Hispanic Education: The Impact of COVID-19 on Students and Families” with our partners at TeachPlus, UNIDOS US, Leadership for Education Equity (LEE), LULAC, and Khan Academy. Much of the discussion focused on the importance of ensuring that policymakers use the billions of dollars in stimulus to address unfinished learning and close opportunity gaps as we emerge from the pandemic. Wil Del Pilar, Ph.D., our vice president for higher education, talked about ways to target this funding to support students who are most underserved and highlighted the pressing need for intensive tutoring, expanded learning time, and stronger relationships with teachers. If you missed it, you can still [watch it here](#) or read about it in [Diverse: Issues in Higher Education](#).



Getting Things Done: Advancing Racial Justice and Equity in Education



Tanji Reed Marshall, Ph.D., director of P-12 practice, was a recent guest on [Citizen Stewart's web show, "UnPublic,"](#) where she underscored the need for schools to adapt to the needs of a diverse student population by changing the curriculum and pedagogy, which has been shown to improve student achievement for underserved student populations. Likewise, during a session at the [Education Writers Association's 74th National Seminar,](#) she challenged education reporters and public relations professionals to write and report on communities of color in ways that affirm the humanity of those populations and give them agency.

Marissa Alberty, Ph.D., a senior associate for national and state partnerships, explained in a timely Equity Line post why "[Family Engagement is Key for Student Success During the COVID-19 Recovery and Beyond.](#)" In it, she discussed her experience as a teacher and how home visits helped her establish authentic relationships with her students and their families and how that became one of the most effective strategies for academic success in her classroom: "When I later trained teachers in family engagement, countless teachers shared how family partnership influenced not just their classroom culture, but their students' academic success," she said.

May 25 marked the grim anniversary of the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police — an event that sparked protests around the globe by people calling for justice. In April, officer Derek Chauvin was convicted of murder, though the three other officers involved are still waiting to stand trial. But while his conviction counts as a small step toward progress, and people are talking more openly about racial issues, it has done little to truly advance educational justice. In her first [blog post](#) since being named interim CEO, Denise Forte outlines what it's going to take to undo the systemic racism in schools and colleges that allow educational inequities to persist.



On PBS NewsHour, John talked about President Biden's latest free college proposal. He said, "we know that investing in community college can help to spur economic recovery. We also know it improves people's life circumstances. Folks with a college degree earn more than a million dollars more over the course of their lifetime."



Lawmakers in at least fifteen states have passed or are considering bills to restrict how teachers discuss race and bias in the classroom. This disturbing trend threatens to undo the work of equity advocates, who have been pushing for a more culturally diverse curriculum and pedagogy that address the role of systemic racism in our country.

On [The Equity Line](#), Tanji Reed Marshall, Ph.D., notes that attempts to “disentangle who we are as a country from our racist roots to ensure students hold fast to the incomplete truth about America as the greatest country in history renders students ignorant about our truths.” America’s story is rich and complex, she adds, noting that it is “a story of strength, creativity, courage, and possibility,” but “also a story of unspeakable brutality and cruelty, hatred, forced enslavement, displacement, and designed economic disparity,” and we can’t ignore that.



We commemorated Women’s History Month by celebrating some little-known, but powerful women who inspire us to continue our fight for justice. This year we highlighted the work of [Duretti Ahmad](#), [Gloria Sweet-Love](#), [Malkia Devich-Cyril](#), [Jessica Dueñas](#), [Jazmin Ramirez](#), [Hailee Bryant Roye](#), among many others.

We advanced racial justice and equity in education in a series of Twitter chats.



#SecondChancesChat. On April 21, [@EdTrust](#) co-hosted a Twitter chat with [@ccf_ny](#), [@jamiisisterhood](#), & [@prison2pro](#), in recognition of Second Chance month. We spoke with participants about the barriers facing individuals who are currently incarcerated and the importance of ensuring that they have access to a high-quality higher education.

#ChildNutrition. On April 27, we joined [@hunger](#), [@FoodGatherers](#), [@fractweets](#), [@HoustonFoodBank](#), [@itsmeleighton](#), & [@NoKidHungry](#) for a Twitter chat on ways that advocates can support programs in the U.S. to end child hunger.

#UnfinishedLearningChat. On May 19, we co-hosted a Twitter chat with [@SchoolHouseConn](#) and [@NCLDorg](#) about how state and district leaders can use [#FederalStimulus](#) funds to advance equity and find solutions to address unfinished learning.



To read more of The Equity Line posts and sign up to have them sent directly to your email, please visit EdTrust.org/The-Equity-Line/.



SECURE



The Education Trust

Ed Trust on the Hill

In March, students and families scored a historic policy victory when the [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#) was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Joseph Biden. Ed Trust is proud to have had a hand in developing this essential legislation, which provides [critical resources](#) to our nation's education system to ensure the safe return of students and educators to in-person learning environments that support their social and emotional well-being.

Several provisions that we fought for were included in the final legislation, including the overall level of educational investment, which exceeds \$150 billion; hundreds of billions in crucial state and local aid; dedicated funds to address unfinished instruction and students' socio-emotional needs; [unprecedented safeguards](#) to ensure that states maintain their education funding levels and prevent states from redirecting public investment away from communities that have been historically under-resourced; dedicated funding to close the digital divide for millions of students from low-income backgrounds and students of color; [dedicated funding for early childhood education and child care providers; and significant investments in food security for both K-12 and college students](#). The final package was truly a landmark accomplishment that could transform our country's educational system.

But proper implementation will be key. Ed Trust is in constant contact with the Biden administration and, in collaboration with our partners, has [sent several sets](#) of recommendations to help ensure that states and districts equitably implement evidence-based solutions, such as [intensive tutoring and summer](#)

[enrichment](#) and [statewide assessments](#), to the educational challenges brought on by the pandemic. We welcomed the opportunity for [families](#), educators, and local leaders to get involved in determining how ARP funds are spent by their school districts and in their schools. To assist equity advocates across the country, we assembled a list of questions they can ask [state](#) and [district](#) leaders about how they are building their plans and how they will be used to advance equity.

Finally, as Congress moves forward with the annual appropriations process and begins drafting the [American Families Plan](#), Ed Trust will continue reaching out and working to help shape that process in the coming months. We recently [urged House appropriators](#) to raise funding for education programs that advance equity and increase opportunity for students who are underserved by [doubling the maximum Pell Grant](#), investing additional funds in programs serving a large percentage of underserved student populations, and supporting teachers and school leaders through investments in programs that bolster educator diversity and preparation.

Ed Trust also [asked lawmakers to provide additional funding](#) to boost access to and availability of critical nutrition assistance and child nutrition programs, including Summer EBT and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), in the wake of COVID-19. As the American Families Plan takes shape, we are also working to ensure that key proposals in that package, like [universal pre-K](#), are included in the final legislative version. Ed Trust is thrilled about the hard-won victories we have achieved thus far in 2021, but we are equally excited to keep pushing for transformational change.





New Federal Funding to Support Students

With the American Rescue Plan Act funneling over \$125 billion into the U.S. K-12 education system, advocates and practitioners must utilize this moment to ensure that states and districts implement plans that center equity. To assist, Ed Trust released “[5 Questions to Ask Districts About How They Will Use New Federal Funding to Support Students](#),” a tool for advocates to hold their districts accountable for ensuring equity amid the COVID-19 recovery. Additionally, we released “[Recommendations for State Leaders to Advance Equity Using Funds from the American Rescue Plan](#)” — a state-level guide co-created by Ed Trust and eight partners to give state leaders guidance on spending ARP funds in ways that best support districts in advancing equity.

STRATEGIES TO SOLVE Unfinished Learning



Unfinished Learning

Since their release in March, the “[Strategies to Solve Unfinished Learning](#)” briefs have become valuable tools for advocates and practitioners at both the state and local levels. Ed Trust has given multiple external presentations to groups, including [The Black and Brown Coalition](#), in Montgomery County, Maryland; [The Redding Consortium](#), in Delaware; and a coalition of national organizations focused on family and community engagement. Additionally, Ed Trust rounded out the month with an [#UnfinishedLearningChat](#) on Twitter. The team has surpassed its organizational goals for outreach and engagement with the briefs. As states and districts still grapple with how best to use federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief I, II, and ARP funds, Ed Trust will continue to push leaders to utilize the guardrails and guidelines provided in the briefs around tutoring, expanded learning time, and building relationships to help catch kids up in the new school year. This work was covered in [District Administration](#), [The New York Times](#), [Vox](#), and [NPR](#), among other places.



LISTEN

The ExtraOrdinary Districts Podcast

Our "[ExtraOrdinary Districts](#)" [podcast](#) wrapped up its [fourth season](#), which began with episodes featuring school and district leaders, teachers, and students talking about operating and attending schools amid the pandemic. Co-hosts Karin Chenoweth, Ed Trust's writer-in-residence, and Tanji Reed Marshall, Ph.D., director of P-12 practice, led conversations about the challenges of fully remote, hybrid, and mostly in-person learning; they also talked with a district leader and a principal preparing to open a school. Then they shifted gears and hosted a series of conversations prompted by the Council of Chief State School Officers' call to state superintendents of education to focus their resources on improving reading instruction in their states.

Over 20 episodes, Karin and Tanji interviewed experts around the country — including Tim Shanahan, Nell Duke, Carol Jago, David Liben, Mark Rosenbaum — as well as Massachusetts assistant commissioner of education and former Ed Trustee, Heather Peske. Karin also interviewed Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski III, Ph.D., president of the University of Maryland Baltimore County, which graduated immunologist Kizzmekia Corbett, Ph.D., who is one of the scientists who helped develop the mRNA vaccines ("[What kind of school produces hundreds of top African American scientists?](#)").

A top official in a large urban school district said this to Karin,

"Thank you does not begin to cover the gratitude of my team. We have been absolutely riveted and enamored with your work— which IS our work. Every time we listen we feel seen, validated, and sometimes just pointed in the right direction."

"You have captured the essence of what successful systems change looks like in an unvarnished manner that we recognize as our day to day. If no one has told you lately, please know that you are a part of the systemic shift in education by providing the insight we cannot capture or collaborate on with other divisions due to the breakneck pace required to move a struggling division. You have provided the best ongoing professional development I've had to date."

"We have built systems based on the advice of the players in the podcast that are doing the work."

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Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (SEAD)

During this reporting period, we continued to promote the messages that students of color aren't broken, systems, practices, and policies are; and that to fix systems, social-emotional and academic development must be addressed through a race-equity lens. In an [article in the University of California, Berkeley's Greater Good Magazine](#), Nancy Duchesneau, a senior P-12 research associate, made six recommendations to help schools and districts create equitable learning environments that support the social, emotional, and academic growth of all students.

This quarter, Nancy also participated in an [L.A. Education Virtual Town Hall](#) in early March on how public charter schools are addressing pressing issues, such as: ensuring that students are prepared for college, equitably meeting the needs of students who are underserved, and meeting the social and emotional needs of students and their families.

We continued to promote our SEAD work by landing a cover story in School Counselor, [the magazine of the American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\)](#). Likewise, our work was featured in this article on "[SEL, Excellence, and Equity](#)" in Principal, the magazine of The National Association of Elementary School Principals.





Districts That Succeed: Breaking the Correlation Between Race, Poverty, and Achievement

On May 25, Karin Chenoweth's latest book, "[Districts That Succeed: Breaking the Correlation Between Race, Poverty, and Achievement](#)," was published by Harvard Education Press. This edition is the latest in a series of books that she has written as a writer-in-residence at Ed Trust. In it, she profiles five school districts that serve significant populations of children of color and children from low-income backgrounds who are either high-achieving or improving.

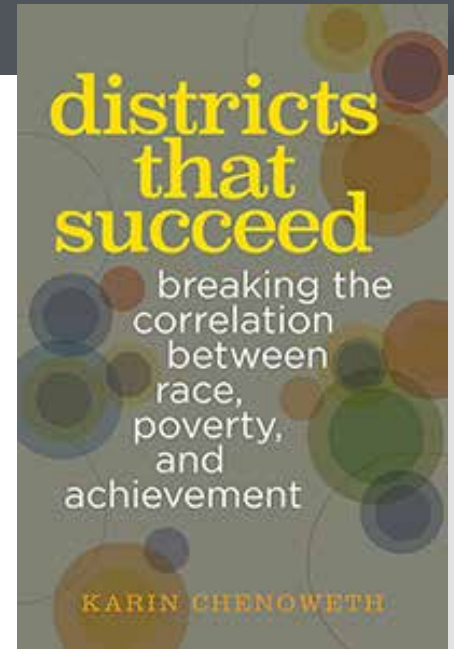
Karin used the database developed by Sean Reardon, a professor of poverty and inequality in education at Stanford University, to select five very different districts:

- Chicago, Illinois
- Lane, Oklahoma
- Seaford, Delaware
- Steubenville, Ohio
- Valley Stream 30, New York

She visited each district, interviewing superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, students, researchers, and philanthropists to try to understand what made them successful. The resulting book is a lively description of educators who not only believe deeply in the capacity of all students to learn, but work tirelessly to ensure that students are able to do so. The book is also deeply grounded in the research literature and should resonate with educators around the country. In writing it, Karin followed the advice of researcher Ronald Edmonds, who said, in 1982, "First you identify schools that produce the outcomes you're interested in. Then you watch them and try to figure out what makes them different from ineffective schools."

For many readers, the surprise district might be Chicago, which has been improving for more than two decades without a lot of national notice. Once called the "worst district" in the country by U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett, it now outperforms many urban districts. Karin calls it the "work of a generation."

Delaware's Secretary of Education Susan Bunting, Ed.D., called Karin's latest book, "[i]nspirational yet practical," noting that it "reflects lessons gleaned from the field that debunk a relationship between background and achievement." *Districts That Succeed* highlights an award-winning recipe for quality learning experiences that yield both academic and social/emotional success for all students.



Making Learning Equitable for Babies and Toddlers

While early intervention is the key to setting children with delays and disabilities on a path to long-term success, a new report, “[Our Youngest Learners – Impact of COVID-19 on Early Intervention: Survey of States](#),” from [The Education Trust, ZERO TO THREE](#), and the [National Center for Learning Disabilities \(NCLD\)](#) shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated equity and access issues for Black and Latino youngsters and those from low-income backgrounds and calls for state policymakers to leverage American Rescue Plan Act funding to close gaps.

Our report highlights results from a national survey of state coordinators of early intervention services. The survey features responses from early intervention coordinators in 29 states and identifies ways that COVID-19 is affecting early intervention services, including the following trends:

- Referral rates for early intervention services dropped during the pandemic.
- Wait times for services increased during the pandemic.
- Overall, fewer children received early intervention services during the pandemic.
- In many states, the available data is inadequate for monitoring equity in early intervention.

The survey responses shine a light on how the global health crisis has affected screening and service delivery and underscore the importance of addressing equity gaps that predate the pandemic. Early intervention screening and services provide the families of children who are not hitting key developmental milestones on time with crucial support and resources. Under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), federal law mandates that all children from birth to 3 years old are entitled to these services. But available data on early intervention access and services tells us that children of color and children from low-income backgrounds face inequities in accessing these services.

The existing data shows the following inequities:

- Black and Latino children tend to be identified as eligible for these vital services later than their White peers. Too often, students of color do not receive the evaluations and services for which they qualify, according to studies conducted in cities and states across the country.

- While rates varied from state to state, ZERO TO THREE’s “2020 State of Babies Yearbook” found that babies in families above low income were 26% more likely to have a developmental screening than babies from low-income backgrounds.
- Compared to their White peers with developmental delays, Black children with developmental delays are 44% less likely to be identified as such and receive services; Latino children with developmental delays are 78% less likely to be recognized as such and receive services.

Delays in screening and services during the pandemic also mean states should expect an increase in referral rates over the coming months and years.

The report calls on state policymakers to do the following:

- Improve data collection and use.
- Strengthen the implementation of Child Find, the federal legal requirement that all states identify children who are eligible for early intervention services.
- Issue guidance on reaching and delivering services in a pandemic to families that speak a language other than English at home.



Learn more at: <https://edtrust.org/increasing-equity-in-early-intervention/>



[In this Equity Line blog post](#), Carrie Gillispie, Ed.D., a senior P-12 research associate at EdTrust, discusses President Biden’s call for universal pre-K in the American Families Plan, noting that the plan makes the case for more equitable early childhood education by [citing](#) our “Young Learners” report. Carrie outlines 10 essential requirements states should meet to ensure that universal pre-K is equity focused. She notes that “our ability to build a stronger future” depends on giving “all our young learners a strong start — especially children who face the most injustices.” She also notes that this time around, “there is a mountain of brain science, economic and education research, and a national call for racial justice,” behind the current push for universal pre-K.





Re-Imagining Outcomes-Based Funding

Could paying colleges for boosting student success advance equity in higher education? Yes – but only if states get it right, and most of them don't. That's the big takeaway from our report, "[Re-Imagining Outcomes-Based Funding](#)," which was published in April and builds on a [2017 blog series](#).

The report analyzes the degree to which statewide higher education funding formulas support college access and success for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds and offers recommendations for designing or redesigning these formulas to advance racial, ethnic, and economic equity.

While more than 30 states have adopted some form of outcomes-based funding for public colleges and universities, extreme disparities remain in institutional funding and college student success. Metrics that could drive the enrollment and graduation of students of color and students from low-income backgrounds are often optional, missing, or underfunded in state formulas.

The report identifies five equity-focused metrics states should use in outcomes-based funding policies and offers 10 steps for design, including making equity metrics mandatory, penalizing colleges that game the system by reducing access for certain groups of students, and investing a significant portion of state funds in the equity-focused formula.

Kayla C. Elliott, Ph.D., director of higher education policy, previewed findings from the report for public officials in Tennessee, who are considering improvements to the state's funding formula for public colleges and universities. Tennessee is one of three states — Illinois and Ohio being the other two — that received extra attention in the report, which featured deep analyses and tailored recommendations. [Inside Higher Ed](#) and [Diverse: Issues in Higher Education](#) provided in-depth coverage of the report.

"Ed Trust is calling on states to embrace funding models that advance higher education equity, and I couldn't agree more," said Ted Mitchell, Ph.D., president of the American Council on Education, an association of more than 1,700 colleges and universities that educate two-thirds of U.S. college students. "This is indeed the time for state leaders to act boldly to bring us out of the pandemic better than before. With the right incentives and sufficient support, all public colleges can fulfill their promise to be effective engines of upward mobility for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds."





JUSTICE FELLOWS

POLICY PROGRAM

For the past few years, Ed Trust made [lifting the ban on Pell Grants for students who are incarcerated](#) one of our top federal advocacy priorities. We teamed up with partner organizations to share data and lift the voices of people who pursued or were denied a higher education in prison to convince policymakers that reinstating Pell Grants was the right thing to do. At the end of last year, Congress finally lifted the ban put in place in 1994. While we celebrated this huge victory, we recognize there is much more work to do to advance higher education opportunities for students affected by the criminal legal system.

Enter: *Justice Fellows*.

In April, after a rigorous review of over 400 applications, we welcomed eight inaugural Fellows in the [Justice Fellows Policy Program](#). Justice Fellows are emerging leaders committed to breaking down barriers on the path to higher education for students who are in prison, who have been released from prison, or otherwise have been affected by the criminal legal system. For one year, they will help Ed Trust identify federal and state advocacy opportunities and lend their voices on this critical issue. Their first project under the leadership of Satra Taylor, manager of higher education justice initiatives, is conducting a scan of state policies at the intersection of higher education and criminal justice that may get in the way of students pursuing education beyond high school.

We could not have created the Justice Fellows Policy Program without an extraordinary Advisory Board, which is a who's who in the field of education for justice impacted people. Please take a moment to get to know the Fellows and Advisory Board members [here](#).

As a woman who has experienced the trauma of incarceration while pregnant, I am extremely passionate about creating pathways to higher ed for women who are expecting a child and for those who are already mothers and or caregivers within their respective families. – Mary Baxter, Justice Fellow

I look forward to garnering the skills necessary to write policy, as well as learning how to implement that policy successfully, [and] to understand better how to help those who are incarcerated take full advantage of the Pell Grant reinstatement. – Patrick Rodriguez, Justice Fellow

I have interest in working with youth who have been impacted by the system in recognizing their potential and tying academic success to a future they may have never imagined for themselves. I want to help products of the school-to-prison pipeline enter the prison-to-college pipeline. – Omari Amili, Justice Fellow





Accolades for equity-focused look at “professional judgment” in college financial aid.

Congratulations to Ed Trust higher education policy analyst [Jaime Ramirez-Mendoza](#) and former senior director of higher education policy [Tiffany Jones, Ph.D.](#) – and to [Gabriela Montell](#) Ed Trust’s senior editor and writer – for receiving the [2021 Golden Quill Award](#) from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) for their brief, “[Using Professional Judgment in Financial Aid to Advance Racial Justice & Equity](#)”

They will be recognized at a virtual event on June 24. The brief examines the ways financial aid professionals on college campuses can use their authority to ensure that students of color and students from low-income backgrounds get access to all the financial aid they need and deserve, including adjustments to Pell Grant eligibility after students experience unplanned financial hardship, as many did this past year. The authors offer recommendations for financial aid staff, college leaders, and federal policymakers on ensuring that “professional judgment” in financial aid determinations advances racial equity. A [condensed version](#) of the brief also appeared in Inside Higher Ed.

The current economic downturn [resulting from COVID-19] may not only impact how much Black and Latino families can pay for college, but how much aid they will be awarded for the upcoming year.

How financial aid officers use professional judgment and their discretion could well determine whether underrepresented students of color and those from families with limited financial resources can access a higher education and go on to finish their degree, or become one of the estimated 36 million or more who drop out and miss out on the social mobility that a degree can offer.



Make College Debt-Free: One of 40 Ways to Build a More Equitable America

A May 2021 TIME Magazine roundup of “[40 Ways to Build a More Equitable America](#)” includes a contribution from Wil Del Pilar, Ph.D., vice president of higher education, on making college debt-free. He writes,

Colleges are engines of upward mobility, but the path to a degree is blocked for too many. Black, Latino and Native American adults are less likely to hold a college degree today than white adults were in 1990. Low-income students are [less likely to finish college](#). Among the biggest hurdles? [Colleges’ rising costs](#) and [the student debt crisis](#). One solution: [double the Pell Grant](#) for low-income students and create a new partnership between states and the federal government to pay for higher education. It’s time to make college [debt-free](#).

As we work behind the scenes to educate lawmakers and policy officials about making college truly affordable, we will continue to build demand for debt-free college among the broader public.





College degree attainment by race and gender

Three years ago, Ed Trust published reports on [college degree attainment among Black and Latino adults](#). The findings were stark. Nationally, we found deep disparities in who has a degree and who doesn't: While nearly half of White adults hold an associate degree or higher, only about a third of Black adults and a quarter of Latino adults have a college degree. In some states, such as California, Colorado, and Connecticut, racial/ethnic disparities in the share of adults with a college degree are particularly extreme. We concluded that states must eliminate these disparities if they are to meet [their goal](#) of having a highly educated workforce to remain competitive in an increasingly knowledge-based economy.

But what do we know about how men and women in these groups differ in terms of their likelihood of holding a college degree? This spring, we published two new pieces on our [Higher Ed Equity Lens blog](#) that attempt to answer that question. What we learned is that while more than 1 in 4 (27%) Latinas (women) holds an associate degree or higher, [only 1 in 5 \(21%\) Latinos \(men\) do](#). Meanwhile, [Black women are nearly 10 percentage points more likely to hold a college degree](#) than Black men (36% vs. 27%). These findings confirm the need for targeted efforts to increase college access and success among Black and Latino men, such as the [Project MALES](#) initiative in Texas.



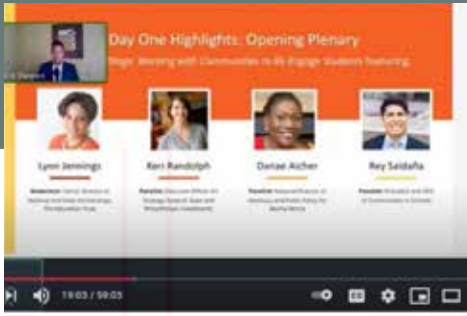


Beyond dollars and cents: the value of postsecondary education

What's the value of higher education to today's students? That was the broad question that animated the work of the Postsecondary Value Commission, convened by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Commission published its report in May 2021 with a call for the higher education sector to do more to [promote economic mobility](#). Kayla Elliott Ph.D., and her predecessor, Tiffany Jones, Ph.D., contributed to the report and penned an op-ed for Inside Higher Ed – "[Beyond Dollars and Cents](#)" – that argues that colleges must work to advance racial justice to provide value to students and the public. Ed Trust will continue working to ensure that statements of support for racial justice from college leaders are matched by real reforms.

If colleges fail to give their graduates the intellectual tools they need to break down barriers, transform racist, classist social systems into more equitable ones, and make the world a better place, then what is the college degree really worth?





Plenary: Welcome: It Takes a Village – Working With Communities to Re-Engage Students



Breakout session: Unfinished Learning: A Crisis With a Solution



Breakout session: Food Security as a Means of Realizing Education Equity

BOOTCAMP – Equity Matters: Facing the Future Together

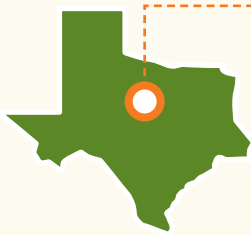


The Education Trust held a virtual bootcamp, “**Equity Matters: Facing the Future Together**,” on April 14-15 that was attended by more than 330 people and featured 12 breakout sessions on higher education, K-12, early childhood education, communication skills, and other policy areas. The most highly attended sessions included: 1) Unfinished Learning: A Crisis with a Solution (108 attendees), 2) Federal Education Policy & Advocacy Opportunities (81 attendees), 3) Dismantling Systemic Racism in Early Care and Education (68 attendees) and Asset-Based SEAD Policies and Practices to Support Students Returning to In-Person Learning (68 attendees). Video of the breakout sessions can be viewed [here](#).

According to our post-event survey results, 98% of respondents said they would attend future bootcamps. Most respondents were “very satisfied” with breakout session speakers, and almost 80% said the bootcamp helped them to identify future advocacy targets and strategies. The next Ed Trust virtual bootcamp will be held October 13-14.



Ed Trust WORKING IN THE STATES



The Education Trust in Texas

Throughout the state's 140-day biennial legislative session, The Education Trust in Texas has worked tirelessly to establish our voice as a reliable, fierce bridge-builder for education equity. Leveraging our federal policy expertise, we released this [brief video](#) and [data dashboard](#) to help advocates and lawmakers understand what the [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#) means for Texas. In close coordination with multiple statewide coalitions, we offered valuable testimony at the Texas Capitol on multiple bills aligned to our [policy priorities](#) in the areas of learning recovery, safe and supportive school climate, and college readiness and success.

Finally, we played a critical role in growing public awareness and [opposition to HB 3979](#), a bill that seeks to silence the voices and restrict the work of teachers and students to confront bias, racism, and sexism in schools. Along with thousands of individuals, [more than 75 entities from across Texas](#) — including civil rights and business entities and organizations representing school leaders and teachers — have joined in public opposition.

Maryland: The 2021 state legislative session, which ended in April, marked several significant victories for Ed Trust and its partners. In April, the state legislature's override of the governor's veto of the "Blueprint for Maryland's Future," [legislation supported by the Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education \(MAREE\)](#), of which Ed Trust is a member, paved the way for this bill to become a law. The Blueprint provides significantly more targeting and accountability to ensure that funds designated for students from low-income backgrounds, English learners, and students with disabilities are actually used to serve those students. We also worked to secure passage of [a \\$577 million settlement bill, which resolved a 15-year lawsuit](#) between Maryland's historically Black colleges and universities and the state. It was signed by the governor in March. The two bills will provide more than \$11 billion in new funding for K-12 and higher education in Maryland. Both bills also contain significant policy changes to promote equity in Maryland. The Education Trust also backed the creation of the [new Office of Statewide Broadband](#) to help close the digital divide.



The Education Trust in Louisiana

Our Louisiana team celebrated the state taking a significant step toward greater equity in its dual enrollment program. The Louisiana Board of Regents unanimously extended [an eligibility policy that removes ACT requirements](#) through 2023. This is a significant win for Louisiana students of color and a solid step toward making this policy permanent. For two years, the Ed Trust team in Louisiana has worked with high school students, parents, high school counselors, and advocates to include stakeholder voices in decisions made about increasing access to dual enrollment opportunities. Restrictive eligibility requirements were identified as the most significant barrier to access. Through the hard work of the Louisiana team and the national office's P-12 team, the voices of stakeholders were included in this crucial decision.



The Education Trust in Massachusetts:

As the state shifts from pandemic response to recovery, the Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership (MEEP) has been focused on helping make sure that equity remains front and center. More than 30 organizational leaders within MEEP met with staff at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to share input on DESE's application for ARP dollars. We have also continued to elevate the voices of families and educators through MEEP's Meet the Moment Massachusetts campaign.

On May 12, MEEP held our latest [#HearOurTruth event](#) in partnership with NBC Boston, which featured three phenomenal educators, including 2021 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Jennifer Hedrington. In a rich and powerful conversation facilitated by New England Cable News' Sue O'Connell, the panelists — all of whom are people of color, and all of whom are also parents — shared their reflections on the past year, thoughts on what education leaders need to focus on in coming months, and how our state and districts can increase educator diversity. Broadcast via [NBC Boston's Facebook Live](#), the event has been viewed more than 4,500 times.

Our Massachusetts team has also continued to partner with the MassINC polling group on efforts to survey families across the state about school experiences this year and perspectives on priorities for pandemic recovery. Results, released in March, were featured in the [Boston Globe](#) and on [NBC Boston](#). And the [latest poll findings](#) were released in May and were covered in a number of news outlets, including [NBC Boston](#) and the [Boston Globe](#).



Ed Trust WORKING IN THE STATES

The Education Trust in Tennessee



The Education Trust in Tennessee had a busy spring, with the state legislature wrapping up for the year in early May. We hosted opportunities for advocates to engage with legislators, ran a comprehensive [bill tracker](#) for partners, and weighed in on legislation moving through both chambers. We [released a statement](#) on the slate of bills passed in the special session that were designed to address the impact of COVID-19 on students and schools. We also [released a memo](#) on the state's ambitious "learning loss bill" and "third grade retention law," and we [sent a sign-on letter](#) to House leaders as they debated a bill on prohibiting discussions about racism and sexism in the classroom. We worked closely with the [Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance](#) to advocate for passage of an [educator diversity policy](#) by the State Board of Education, which [passed unanimously in January](#). We continue to host monthly "[Dollars and Sense](#)" sessions on school finance in Tennessee and collaborate with our [TN Alliance for Equity in Education](#) on a host of issues. Finally, our Student Voice Network will launch this summer, with students [applying now to serve as league leaders](#) in order to plan and drive the activities of the network.

Students representing partner organizations at The Education Trust–New York, The Education Trust–Midwest, and Ed Trust in Tennessee joined Miguel Cardona, U.S. Secretary of Education, for a conversation. Students had the opportunity to share their own experiences of learning during the pandemic and asked the Secretary questions about the policy changes they seek in their schools, districts, and communities. The conversation, which was co-hosted with Chalkbeat, will premiere on June 24 at 7:00 PM ET.

**In Their Voices:
Students Speak with
Secretary Cardona**

June 24 • 7pm ET

#InTheirVoices

PRESENTED BY **Chalkbeat** + **The Education Trust** SPONSORED BY **Lexia**





Delaware

Ed Trust's Delaware partners have been working hard to push for a more equitable school funding formula. In consultation with us, the [Education Equity Delaware](#) coalition launched a [School Funding 101 website](#) to support their campaign to make Delaware's funding formula equitable for students across the state. Delaware leaders have also focused on tackling unfinished learning through [statewide planning](#), and Ed Trust shared resources and guidance with advocates, policymakers, and practitioners on how best to accelerate learning using the latest influx of [federal relief dollars](#) for education.

Kentucky

Ed Trust worked with partners at the Prichard Committee on a [response](#) to the Kentucky Board of Education's (KBE) proposed regulatory amendment to increase the minimum number of students needed to form a student subgroup for accountability from 10 students per grade to 30 students per school. In April, the KBE opened the [public comment period](#) and held a public hearing on the proposed amendment, at which at least four members of the Kentucky Equity Coalition, including a representative from the Prichard Committee, presented letters and remarks that align with the messaging co-authored by Ed Trust and the Prichard Committee. The coalition is now working diligently to ensure that the current regulation is not amended.



The Education Trust—West

All in for Financial Aid

For nearly a decade, The Education Trust—West (ETW) has advocated for equitable access to financial aid — a key component to attaining a postsecondary degree for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. This year, we are close to achieving our policy goal of securing statewide action to ensure that every high school senior submits a financial aid application.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom's [proposal to include financial aid completion in the 2021-22 state budget](#) is an important first step toward equitable access. With over 60% of California's students residing in lower-income communities, college affordability is a major issue in the state. To ensure that this proposal becomes a reality, ETW is working to build momentum for the [#Allin4FinancialAid campaign](#) to ensure that the budget addresses the detrimental impact that the pandemic has had on financial aid completion. Our campaign is moving full speed ahead. We secured an [op-ed in EdSource](#) and were quoted in a [Wall Street Journal story](#) about recent legislative efforts to require high school seniors to complete federal or state financial-aid applications.

In April, we welcomed ETW's interim executive director, Christopher Nellum, Ph.D., to his new role and held our annual Advocacy Day. We mobilized nearly 100 education equity advocates, including [ETW's community partners](#), throughout the state to push for the proposal to require districts to confirm that all high school seniors complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application



(CADAA). Attendees included educators, parents and other family members, teachers and advocates, who virtually met with more than 60 legislators and their staff to explain why college affordability is critical to sustaining our state's democracy, building our future workforce, and achieving racial justice.

As the proposal moves through the state legislative budget process, our coalition of 65 organizations representing student groups, parents, racial justice organizers, local chambers of commerce, and school system leaders are ramping up advocacy efforts to ensure that this long-overdue proposal becomes a reality.

Additionally, our [Equity 8](#) priority proposals for early childhood education, K-12, and higher education have all made it through the Appropriations Committee, a critical procedural hurdle in the legislative process, and we will be going full steam ahead on our advocacy efforts to ensure that each proposal is included in the 2021-2022 budget that will be signed into law by the governor.

Data Systems

For over a decade, California's longitudinal data system has been the centerpiece of ETW's [#Data4ThePeople](#) campaign. When finished, the data system's public-facing tools will enable multiple stakeholders to use early childhood, K-12, higher education, and workforce data to advocate for equity-centered change. The project, known as [California's Cradle-to-Career Data System](#), has been carefully planned out over years by a cross-sector group of stakeholders including Christopher, who is a member of the Policy and Analytics Advisory Group. The governor's most recent budget proposal includes \$15 million for initial development; if passed, this investment would be a hard-won victory for ETW and a game-changer for any Californian who wants to better understand how well our systems unlock opportunity for infants, adults, and everyone in between.

To build public support during the last few months of budget negotiations, Christopher penned [an op-ed in CalMatters](#), arguing that the pandemic has only proven the vital role that data plays in navigating challenges, illuminating solutions, and tracking progress. It is his first byline as ETW's new interim executive director.



Reimagine & Rebuild: Restarting School With Equity at the Center

In April, ETW, along with partners, Californians for Justice and Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), developed "[Reimagine & Rebuild: Restarting School With Equity at the Center](#)," a research-based framework outlining a restorative restart for public schools in California, as students return to campus in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan is endorsed by 38 organizations, including the California Teachers Association, California School Boards Association, California State PTA, and Association of California School Administrators, along with statewide and local groups representing parents, educators, teachers, and students.

The framework outlines steps school districts and schools can take to recover and rebuild and to meet and support the social-emotional and academic needs of students while laying the groundwork for long-term systemic transformation. The plan highlights a set of restorative practices ranging from centering relationships among students, families, and educators and addressing the comprehensive needs of children, to strengthening staffing and partnerships, making teaching and learning rigorous and relevant, and empowering teams to reimagine and rebuild systems. It also lays out specific strategies for the implementation of these practices.

To lay the groundwork for this restorative work, ETW will focus its advocacy efforts on encouraging district and school leaders to



include the practices highlighted in the framework, as they plan for the full return of students to school. These include encouraging the districts to use their stimulus funding to equitably serve California's students, and for district leaders to take advantage of new policies designed to help districts recover from the pandemic. We are also pressing for school district leaders to prioritize the recruiting and hiring of more school-based staff; providing resources to address unfinished learning such as intensive tutoring and community engagement; investing in professional development, knowledge and capacity building; and planning for the purchase of new technology, supplies, and materials to support student-centered assessment, teaching, and learning. The framework also recommends the creation of new partnerships between school districts and community-based service providers and behavioral health providers. The work was covered by the [Associated Press](#), as well as [multiple stories](#) in [EdSource](#).

Gearing Up for California's Math Framework Revision

California is in the midst of revising its Math Framework. As such, ETW has embarked on an advocacy campaign to ensure that equity, particularly for multilingual learners, is centered in the revision. Over the last year, we have built an incredible coalition of advocates, who have reviewed and submitted recommendations and provided testimony to inform the revisions to the Math Framework.

As part of this work, we published a [blog post](#) highlighting the importance of connecting linguistic and academic development in the Math Framework. We also held a virtual convening called, "Building the Movement: Championing Math Equity for Multilingual Learners," featuring former ETW Executive Director Elisha Smith-Arrillaga and John B. King Jr. The convening, attended by over 80 people, was co-sponsored by Californians Together, Just Equations, Pivot Learning, and Partnership for LA Schools and centered on how best to move the math equity work forward.

We are excited that a majority of our recommendations have been included in the current draft of the Math Framework. Over the next few months, we will continue to monitor and organize partners to submit public comment to the Instructional Quality Commission, the body that approves the revision. The State Board of Education will hold a final vote on the Math Framework in November.

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



The Education Trust—Midwest



Securing Policy Wins to Advance Racial Justice and Equity

At a historic moment for students who are underserved in Michigan, and a critical time for the state, The Education Trust—Midwest (ETM) secured policy wins that address the devastating and disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on Michigan’s Black and Latino students, English learners, students with disabilities and children from low-income backgrounds.

- **Postsecondary Access** – ETM successfully advocated for \$5 million in proposed funding from the Michigan House of Representatives to provide no-cost postsecondary remediation at community colleges for Michigan students graduating high school in 2020 and 2021. Securing this proposed funding for underserved students is among many advocacy goals that ETM is working on now as part of our COVID-19 policy agenda. ETM also advanced legislation to ensure that the cancellation of state assessments in spring 2020, including the SAT, does not prevent students from qualifying for state scholarships and grants.
- **Equitable Funding and Stimulus** – Over the last three years, ETM has become a [leading voice and source for nonpartisan data and expertise](#) on equitable school funding in a state with one of the nation’s most regressive and inequitable school funding formulas. In spring 2021, ETM regularly convened a rapidly growing statewide coalition of equity advocates who are working to ensure that Michigan distributes discretionary federal stimulus dollars in an equitable manner – and to apply an equity lens to state budget dollars this year.
- **Honest Data to Inform Educational Recovery** – In partnership with business organizations, Michigan’s congressional representatives and our growing equity coalition, ETM ensured that benchmark assessments were included in Michigan’s school restart legislative package and that all districts have access to a high-quality assessment at the state’s expense. ETM continued [to advocate for honest and transparent data](#), which is critical to informing parents and educators about the needs of every child in schools and targeting educational recovery efforts through the next school year and beyond.

Expanding Our Powerful Table of Advocates and Partners on Equity

ETM is dramatically expanding efforts to build a durable and powerful cross-sector statewide coalition representing Michigan’s great diversity (regional, racial, socio-economic, sector). The team is convening a new, powerful leadership roundtable of respected business, civil rights, and civic leaders to serve as the planning and steering committee of the existing equity coalition.



Building Knowledge About Equity and Strategies for Educational Recovery

ETM continued to scale efforts to build knowledge about racial equity issues among advocates and the general public through intimate stakeholder webinars and public webinars and provide opportunities for leaders and the public to become more informed and connected to state-level policy conversations and decision-making.

ETM led stakeholder and coalition briefings on federal stimulus funding distribution, early literacy, assessments, the need for honest data, and more.

The team deepened its relationship with media partners across the state by co-hosting a public webinar in March with Detroit Free Press and Chalkbeat Detroit on “[What to do about Michigan’s missing students](#).” The webinar examined why tens of thousands of students didn’t show up to classes last fall amid the pandemic.

In May, ETM convened a public panel, “[Michigan’s Educational Recovery: What Now, What Next?](#)” to discuss lessons learned from other states that are leading on education, including Tennessee, Colorado, and Connecticut. A representative from Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s Student Recovery Advisory Council also joined the panel to discuss next steps for Michigan.



Shining a Spotlight on Talent Challenges and Virtual Learning Inequities in Underserved Districts

According to [a data analysis](#) by ETM, Michigan’s extended COVID-19 learning data for the first six months of the school year shows that Black students and students from low-income households were consistently more likely to be learning remotely, even as more districts provided in-person learning options.

And through ETM’s new talent brief, “[Talent Matters: Building Educator Talent to Support an Equitable Future in COVID-19 and Beyond](#),” ETM outlined how districts educating underserved students have confronted enduring challenges in recruiting, retaining, and compensating highly effective and diverse educators.

For more information, please visit EdTrustMidwest.org



The Education Trust—New York

Parents who expressed they are somewhat or very concerned

86%



Ensuring your child does not fall behind academically

84%



Ensuring your child is ready for the next grade level

83%



Ensuring your child is meeting state academic standards

83%



Ensuring your child feels safe and emotionally at ease during this time

Poll: One year into the coronavirus pandemic, academic concerns remain top of mind for New York parents

One year after the coronavirus pandemic forced school closures across New York State, the vast majority of parents remain concerned about whether the loss of instructional time in the classroom will have a long-term impact on their children, and those concerns are heightened among parents of color and parents from low-income households, according to a poll [released](#) by The Education Trust—New York (Ed Trust—NY).

The poll found that 83% of all parents are concerned about whether their child is meeting state academic standards, and that concern is intensified for parents of students who are underserved — with 59% of parents of color, 77% of Black parents, and 58% of parents from low-income households

saying they are very concerned, compared to 39% of White parents and 45% of higher-income parents.

Additionally, parents of students in grades 9 through 12 said that they are concerned about the long-term implications for their children, with 83% of all parents indicating they are concerned about whether their child will graduate from high school.

The poll, the fifth parent survey conducted by the Global Strategy Group for Ed Trust—NY amid the pandemic, elevates educational priorities that have been top of mind for New York families since school buildings closed one year ago.

As New York State and the nation look to return more students to traditional in-person instruction, it is crucial that state leaders and educators listen to the concerns of parents and act with great urgency to direct resources and support to the students and families who need them most.

Ed Trust—NY analysis finds high-need districts in regions across the state sought waivers of Regents exams

An Ed Trust—NY [analysis](#) found that across New York State, school districts serving the largest shares of students of color and students from low-income backgrounds were more likely to seek waivers of Regents exam diploma requirements, so high school seniors could graduate, highlighting the critical need for state and education leaders to take steps to ensure that these students are supported in their postsecondary transition.

Among the “Big 4” large urban districts, schools relied on exemptions to graduate 32% of seniors, more than 10 times as often as in low-need districts, where schools relied on exemptions to graduate just 3% of seniors.

Our analysis raises significant equity concerns about whether students of color and students from low-income households — who were already being tracked into less rigorous graduation pathways before the pandemic — are graduating from high school with the skills they need to succeed in college and the workforce.



Raising NY campaign aims to raise awareness of disproportionality in health outcomes for mothers of infants and toddlers

Every mom should have a healthy pregnancy and delivery. Every infant should have a healthy start to life — but New York state has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country. To address racial disparities in maternal health, the Raising NY coalition launched an advocacy campaign to ensure that New York does more to support new and expectant mothers.

For every 100,000 live births in New York state, there are 20 maternal deaths, compared to the national average of 17.4. In fact, the United States has unacceptably poor maternal health outcomes overall, especially among mothers of color and Black mothers specifically. A Black mom in the United States is 3 to 4

times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications, and much more likely to give birth to new babies with low birth weight.

Learn more about the maternal health crisis facing New York at RaisingNY.org/MaternalHealth.

How does this school's funding compare?



Online data tool highlights critical need for New York school districts to prioritize resources for the schools with the greatest needs

New York's largest school districts frequently fail to provide more resources to their highest-need schools, so that all students can receive the support they need, according to an online tool relaunched by EdTrust-NY.

The data tool — available at nyschoolfunding.org — allows users to see how schools and districts allocate resources, and whether students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners are receiving the resources they need to succeed.

The tool also comes as school districts across New York anticipate receiving an additional \$8.9 billion in funding through the [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](https://www.dhs.gov/eisact-16), money that is intended to supplement school budgets and support programs and services to help transition students back into schools in the coming months.

REACH NY analysis finds significant gaps in median earnings for graduates of postsecondary institutions

An [analysis](#) by the REACH NY network found that there are significant gaps in median earnings across institutions and fields of study, despite similar time investments, and that median earnings are higher at institutions that serve the smallest shares of Pell-eligible students and American Indian, Black, and Latino students than at institutions that serve the largest shares of said students.

At the associate degree level, the highest median earnings were more than five times greater than the lowest median earnings. Even greater inequities were seen across fields of study for bachelor's degrees, with the highest median earnings being more than nine times greater than the lowest median earnings.

For instance, students completing their bachelor's degree in Computer Science at Cornell University had median earnings of \$122,485 — the highest median earnings across all four-year fields of study. However, students completing a bachelor's degree in Graphics Communication at The School of Visual Arts had median earnings of \$13,132, which is not only the lowest median earnings across all four-year fields of study, it is also nearly \$1,500 lower than the lowest median earnings for associate degrees.

The findings highlight the need to provide additional academic and career support to students attending institutions with lower median earnings and to improve access — especially access for Pell-eligible and American Indian, Black, and Latino students — to institutions with higher median earnings.

To learn more about all of our efforts in New York, please visit, EdTrustNY.org



This EdTrust update is dedicated to the memory of Cathy Daniels.
She was a fierce advocate for educational justice and equity,
and her legacy lives on.



*Those who
touch our lives*
STAY IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER

Cathy Daniels



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 backgrounds from prekindergarten through college. As the nation continues to go through this health pandemic, generous gifts from donors such as these provide the financial and moral support needed to continue to build a movement toward educational justice. We are forever thankful for your support. **Thank you!**

The Education Trust

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The Education Trust

West

Ballmer Group
BelleJar Foundation
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
The Buck Family Fund of Marin Community Foundation
California Community Foundation
The California Endowment
The California Wellness Foundation
Chinese for Affirmative Action
College Futures Foundation
Community Partners
The David & Lucille Packard Foundation
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Hellman Foundation
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Tides Center
Tipping Point Community
Verizon Foundation
Walter & Elise Haas Fund
The Walton Family Foundation
The Weingart Foundation
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Yellow Chair Foundation

The Education Trust

New York

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Carnegie Corporation of New York
The Carson Family Charitable Trust
Cullen Foundation
The Heckscher Foundation for Children
The John R. Oishei Foundation
Lumina Foundation
The New York Community Trust
Overdeck Family Foundation
Pritzker Children's Initiative
Robin Hood
The Walton Family Foundation

The Education Trust

Midwest

Ballmer Group
Bosch Community Fund
Sobrato Philanthropies
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Co.act Detroit
DTE Energy Foundation
Grand Rapids Community Foundation
The Kresge Foundation
Steelcase Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation





The Education Trust

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.



EdTrust.org