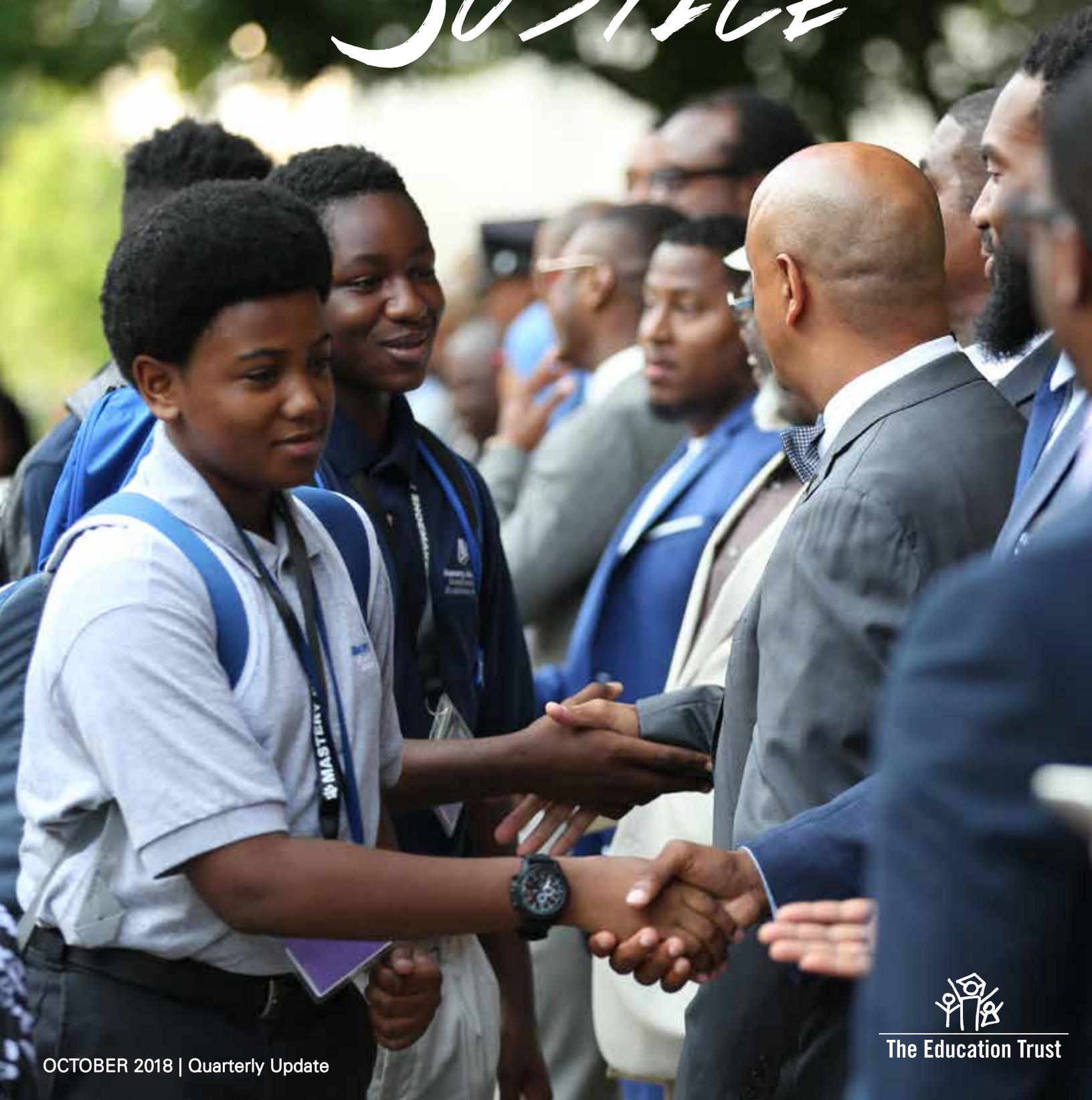


Building a Movement Toward

EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Dear Board Members,

When the academic year ends and the summer months begin, many Americans think of long, warm days, and the break that summer can provide from the usual busyness of other moments in the year. Those of us who devote our careers to education certainly appreciate the summer for the opportunity it offers for reflection. We also understand that summer is a chance for continued learning and growth, and for making additional progress toward the goal of expanding educational excellence and equity — particularly for students who are most underserved.

Putting this belief into practice, The Education Trust leveraged the summer months this year to create an online community of learning for advocates who, like us, seek to advance evidence-based policies and practices that can help schools better serve all students, particularly students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. I also wrote in [The Afro](#) about the critical need to ensure that the most vulnerable young people have access to enrichment and learning experiences over the summer that can put them on a path to succeed in school and in life.

At The Education Trust, we view educational equity as providing students with the supports that they need in order to access opportunity.

We recognize that advancing equity requires the dismantling of historic and present-day systems of injustice that disadvantage students of color and students living in poverty. And we believe that our research and advocacy should help to create the conditions that allow for more just policies and practices that help underserved students thrive.

This work cannot be done alone. That's why we seek to build a movement of fellow advocates, educators, business and community leaders, civil rights groups, and families who can join the effort.

In the next few pages, you'll read about how we launched the inaugural Ed Trust Family Fellowship to support parents and families in more effectively engaging in policy conversations that can improve outcomes for students in their communities.

You'll also hear about our back-to-school tour, which was designed so we could hear about the experiences of equity-focused educators and their students, who are engaged in their own advocacy and activism at schools and on college campuses.

Over the summer and into the fall, our staff raised their voices against injustices on our blog, in prominent news outlets, and on television. We spoke out against federal rollbacks to key civil rights protections for our students, and I was honored to speak on [David Axelrod's podcast](#) about the harmful consequences that these rollbacks can have on underserved communities. We continued our coalition building efforts in states, and our state offices brought advocates together on issues ranging from strengthening children's literacy to ensuring that all students have access to critical coursework.

Building a movement toward educational equity and justice entails digging into data and evidence, and standing up for the most vulnerable.

Our [research](#) this quarter shined a light on the unacceptable fact that Black and Latino adults are less likely to hold a college degree today than White adults were about a quarter century ago. And we gained considerable coverage for our [examination](#) of "free college" programs, making the necessary point that too many of these current or proposed initiatives do not serve the students who are most in need. We also joined a community of advocates who believe in the transformational power of education and second chances, and who seek to lift the ban on Pell Grants for individuals who are incarcerated.

With a productive summer behind us, and students all across America back to school, we rededicate ourselves to the movement to which we are called — a movement to ensure that all students in this country with dreams and determination can fulfill their potential.



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:

THEORY OF CHANGE



Building a Movement Toward Educational Justice

October marks the end of the back-to-school season — students are settled into their routines, Back-to-School nights have taken place, and first-year college students are well aware of where each academic building lies. At Ed Trust, we embraced this promising season by focusing on “building a movement toward educational justice.” Over the past three months, we visited college campuses, listened to and learned from students and families, joined with partners to call out injustices, hosted meetings and training sessions, and, as always, disseminated solid research to highlight ways that our federal and state policymakers, school leaders, and communities can better serve students of color and students from low-income families. Our intention was to unite communities around the goal of pushing toward educational justice.

To document the problems **Puerto Rico** still faces a year after Hurricane Maria, [PBS News Hour aired a series on Puerto Rico’s beleaguered education system](#). Nearly 300 schools have closed, a third of the students have fled to the mainland, and many schools are still in utter disrepair. John B. King Jr., who has a personal connection to the island, said the federal government should be doing much more than it is doing to rebuild Puerto Rico. “All of us want great things for our own children. But if we want to live in a great society and a great country, we have to want that for all children.”

Ed Trust launched our back-to-school tour, where we visited schools across the education continuum.

In August, we visited [Mastery Charter School Shoemaker Campus](#) in Philadelphia, where we learned how educators and school leaders are engaging communities and families in the movement for social justice.

Next, we visited [Prince George’s Community College](#), right outside of our nation’s capital, where we learned about how the college is partnering with the local school district to provide college-level learning opportunities for high school students and how it is working alongside employers in the local hospitality and health care industries to provide opportunities for college students after they graduate.

Finally, we visited the high-achieving [Laurel School District](#) in rural Delaware, where we learned how an entire community, including educators, families, and the local university, come together to focus on the individual needs and success of every student. In turn, they’ve experienced some of the largest growth in Delaware for academic performance.



We continued to showcase advocates in our **Profiles in Education Equity** blog series. This quarter, we featured [Ohio State Sen. Peggy Lehner](#), director of policy and government relations at League of Education Voters [Daniel Zavala](#), and executive director of the Prichard Committee [Brigitte Blom Ramsey](#). The work of these advocates show what it takes to work toward educational justice.

After watching what happened to **Serena Williams** at the US Open, Kayla Patrick, P-12 policy analyst, wrote a passionate blog post for *The Equity Line* connecting the systemic and institutional racism that Williams faced on the court that day with what happens to Black girls in U.S. schools every day, [Serena Williams and the Audacity to be a Black Woman or Girl with a Voice](#).



Wil Del Pilar, vice president of higher education, and **Tiffany Jones**, director of higher education policy, were both quoted in a story in *Inside Higher Ed*, speaking firsthand about the challenges first-generation college students face. “First-generation students feel it is such a privilege to go to college,” Tiffany said. “It’s why they’re more engaged. They want to chart and clear a path for those coming behind them.”

We used our **Equity Line** platform to feature the work of those who are calling for justice from their unique standpoints including:

Antonio Duran and David Pérez II, Ph.D., who are challenging existing policies on the national, state, and institutional levels so that [queer students of color on college campuses](#) can be better served.

Activist and teacher Sharif El-Mekki, the principal of Mastery Charter School Shoemaker Campus, challenged all those who claim to “care” about the education of students of color to step up. In his post, [Educational Justice: Which Are You — an Advocate, Ally, or Activist?](#), he writes, “We need less self-proclaimed advocates and allies and more collaborators on the front lines who view activism as inseparable from advocacy.”



Ivy Ellis, Ed Trust executive assistant, also wrote for *The Equity Line*. In her post, [Parent to Educators: Stop Labeling Our Kids](#), she detailed the story of how her son was mislabeled by a first-year teacher in kindergarten. “After my son’s second week, we got a letter in the mail. It was the first communication from his school, requesting that we meet with his teacher, administrators, and the school psychologist to screen him for . . . special education.” This underscores the importance of the parent/family voice in our work — to tell the stories of the students we serve.

Ed Trust spoke out against a number of actual and proposed rollbacks by the Trump administration that threaten civil rights, including [gainful employment](#), [borrower’s defense](#), and [joint guidance from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education on diversity and integration](#). We also spoke out against the [U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling to uphold the travel ban](#) and the proposed use of [federal education dollars to purchase guns in school](#).

We continued to push for a more diversified educator workforce. In a piece in [Education Post](#), Letisha Marrero, senior editor/writer and a mother of a 13-year-old Black and Latina girl, responded to the recent PDK poll that found that, for the first time in 50 years, a majority of parents don’t want their children to become teachers. She explains why she wants her daughter to enter the workforce and asks the question, “If we don’t encourage our kids to be educators, who will?” And Davis Dixon, P-12 research associate, explained why school districts need to recruit, retain, and better support Black and Latino teachers who are leaving the field at higher rates than their White peers. In a [Baltimore Sun](#) piece, Davis said, “Teachers of color get pigeonholed into a role that ends up placing an extra burden on what they do in the school.”



We also continued advocating for resource equity. Tanji Reed Marshall, senior practice associate for P-12 literacy, appeared on the [Scripps Media series, The Race](#), where she spoke on the state of education nationally, including issues related to resource equity and funding gaps. The program premiered on more than 30 local TV channels across the country. And Ary Amerikaner, Ed Trust’s newly named vice president for P-12 education, powerfully argued for schools and districts to allocate resources in an evidence-based, equitable way in an op-ed published in [Ed Week](#). She also breaks down ways in which advocates and others can engage in new school-level reporting required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

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

Civil Rights Community Urges States To Unleash the Full Potential of ESSA



Too many state leaders are failing to put students' civil rights in their ESSA plans. To change this, Ed Trust, National Urban League, and UnidosUS hosted an event in June, calling on state leaders to keep equity front and center in their implementation of ESSA. *New York Times* education reporter Erica Green moderated the event, which featured a panel discussion with John, National Urban League President Marc H. Morial, UnidosUS President Janet Murguía, and Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education. The panelists talked candidly about ESSA, highlighting both areas of concern and promising practices. The groups also co-released an [ESSA guiding principles document](#) to assist educators, families, and activists with their advocacy efforts. [Ed Week](#) covered the event and quoted John: "What we see in ESSA is a responsibility for states to protect students. It is a civil rights law with the obligation for states to protect students' educational interests and their safety and well-being."



EQUITY MATTERS



Equity Matters Summer Webinar Series

This summer, Ed Trust hosted a series of webinars on evidence-based practices and policies that can drive improvement in struggling schools using the equity levers found in ESSA. Advocates gained valuable knowledge from the following sessions:

- [School Improvement Under ESSA: What You Need to Know to Engage](#)
- [Keeping Kids on Track: Early Warning and Intervention Systems](#)
- [Ensuring Rigorous Learning for All Students](#)
- [Expanding Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Programs](#)
- [Recruiting, Assigning, and Retaining Strong Educators](#)
- [Preparing, Hiring, and Supporting Strong Leaders for School Improvement](#)
- [Establishing a Safe and Supportive School Climate](#)
- [Finding the Money for School Improvement: ESSA's Resource Allocation Reviews](#)

Advocates to Congress: Lift the Ban on Pell Access for Incarcerated Students

Ed Trust is actively pushing for Congress to lift the ban on Pell Grants for justice-impacted students. On October 1, Ed Trust co-hosted a Hill event, “The Faces of Women Imprisoned: A Push for Second Chances,” in partnership with FREE AMERICA fellow Topeka K. Sam and her organization Ladies of Hope Ministries, as well as actress Allison Williams (GIRLS, GET OUT). The event centered a conversation with formerly incarcerated women on the transformative power of a high-quality education and the barriers incarcerated students face while pursuing educational programs in prison. Other dynamic speakers included:

- **Susan Rosenberg**, human rights and prisoners’ rights advocate, adjunct lecturer, communications consultant, award-winning writer, and public speaker;
- **Yraida Leonides Guanipa**, president and founder of Y.G. Institute and currently pursuing a Ph.D. in business management with a specialization in leadership;
- **Michelle Jones**, board chairwoman of Constructing Our Future and doctoral student in the American Studies program at New York University; and,
- **Syrita Steib-Martin**, founder and executive director of Operation Restoration and nationally certified and licensed clinical laboratory scientist.

[NowThis](#), in their coverage of the event, included an inspirational interview with Topeka K. Sam who explained why she is fighting for justice for formerly incarcerated women: “I was incarcerated in federal prison for three years. I met brilliant, bold, courageous, resilient woman and girls who wanted access to a college education but could not have it. Instead, we were given courses like knitting and crochet. And so I knew that we needed to push the faces of women in prison out to the public so that we can make the recommendations as needed in order to change and transform our lives.” Watch [here](#).



The [Washington Post](#) also covered the event and included a powerful quote from Allison Williams on her privilege,

“I have to admit that my life has been the kind of life where I kind of have permanent second chances ... And for the most part, the people in charge of this country are also the people who automatically got, and still get, second chances. I always figured that if those in power could understand that they’ve always had [second chances], then they would appreciate that it’s our responsibility to extend that opportunity to everyone.”

“Every day we spend not fixing [our broken prison system] is a day we decided we’re okay with it. These women are special because they came through this horrible system, and they succeeded despite it, thanks to their access to Pell Grants.”

Relatedly, this quarter news broke that the Common App is considering dropping the question about a student’s criminal history — a move that could help a large number of low-income students of color, who are disproportionately more likely to have been convicted of a crime. Ed Trust’s own Tiffany Jones told [The Atlantic](#), “There’s growing ... consensus that education is the key to successful re-entry [into society for people with criminal records], and the policies we’ve had thus far that led to mass incarceration” (harsh punishment for nonviolent drug-related crimes, mandatory-minimum sentences, and the like) “just didn’t work.”



Pushing to Make Free College Truly Free For Low-Income Students



In many states, policymakers have proposed a wide variety of “free college” and “college promise” programs. But do these programs actually benefit students from low-income families who need it the most? Ed Trust’s report, [A Promise Fulfilled: A Framework for Equitable Free College Programs](#), explains that when designed with equity in mind, these programs have the potential to put college degrees within reach of all Americans who wish to pursue one, but most current or proposed free college programs fall short. For this report, Tiffany Jones and Katie Berger, senior policy analyst for higher education, examined 15 existing statewide programs and 16 proposed programs using an eight-part equity rubric and found that not a single program met all eight criteria.



The report was well received in the media. A provocative [NPR piece](#) highlighted the eight criteria and focused on what advocates should consider. “All of these choices represent trade-offs. There is no truly universal, college-is-completely-free-for-everyone-ever [program],” Katie told *NPR*. An article in [The Atlantic](#) discussed the origins of the free college movement and quoted Tiffany saying, “We’re at a really critical time, and we can get [free college] right at the beginning.” And in a [Pod Save the People podcast](#), activists DeRay McKesson, Brittany Packnett, and Clint Smith used our timely research to explore whether free college programs truly benefit students of color. To view all the great coverage, please [click here](#).



We also partnered with the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) to produce a short [animated video](#) explaining the many ways free college isn’t free for students with the greatest financial need.

With midterm elections on the horizon, free college is sure to be a hot topic for people all along the political spectrum. To make the case for why these programs must be strengthened, Katie penned a piece for *Forbes*, [How Free College Can Advance Equity in America](#). Also, Tiffany participated in a standing-room-only Hill briefing hosted by IHEP, where she addressed the political and funding realities states face as they look to implement free college programs. “When states are making choices, they should focus on the students facing the biggest financial challenges,” Tiffany told the audience of staffers and advocates.



Giving Families a Seat at the Table

Parents and family members are often not at the table when policy decisions are made concerning how their children will be educated. Moreover, members of the Black and Latino community often feel like school reform is being done to them and not with them. That is why we are excited to launch the Ed Trust Family Fellowship, which brings together 30 parent leaders from Kentucky, Maryland, New York, and North Carolina to grow their policy advocacy skills. Our goal is to facilitate and support the fellows' participation in state equity coalitions, so that the work of these coalitions is informed by the families with the most at stake.

At our kickoff event, fellows learned about key education decisions and at what level they're made, practiced telling their personal stories as a way of building relationships and credibility, participated in state specific Data Equity Walks, and worked with their state teams to identify key needs and an action plan to address them. Here's what some fellows had to say when asked what was the most useful thing they learned:

- "There are solutions. We cannot sit back and hope the issues solve themselves."
- "How to use my voice in rooms full of 'big' people and that I have the power to promote change."
- "This will help me to feel more empowered on how to connect with people, especially those whom I feel intimidated by."
- "Talk with John King helped me to fine tune the art of telling my story and also showed me that everything doesn't have to be perfect in your life to make a difference. Not only in your personal life but in the lives of others. Very impactful reflection for me. Thank you."



Going forward, fellows will meet regularly in state teams to dive deeper into key advocacy and policy issues and will take concrete actions to advance equity-focused policy in their states.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK WAS OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE:

Higher Education Advocates and Activists Receive Powerful Tools to Fight for Justice



In July, Ed Trust conducted a Higher Education Policy Workshop in Nashville with state and local advocates from nearly 30 racial and social justice organizations, think tanks, and education reform groups in Tennessee, Ohio, and Illinois. Kim Hunter-Reed, former head of higher education for the state of Colorado and newly appointed commissioner of higher education for Louisiana, shared specific steps she took to engage public colleges and universities in identifying and making progress toward degree attainment goals. Ed Trust shared our work on how to make college accessible and affordable for more students, and how to improve student success. Participants also learned how well their current state policies are addressing racial gaps in degree attainment and identified opportunities to advance higher education equity in their state.

"I have refined my thinking about racial equity as it relates to higher education policy based on my new understanding of the challenges with accessing data."

"Brought my thoughts into greater focus, especially as it pertains to advocacy."

"Excellent overall; well organized. Thank you, keep the conversation and good work going."

Working to Close Degree Attainment Gaps



Black and Latino adults are less likely to hold a college degree today than White adults were in 1990 — more than 25 years ago. Also, today Black adults are two-thirds as likely to hold a college degree as Whites, and Latinos are only half as likely. As population growth among people of color continues to outpace that of the White population, and older White employees exit the workforce, it is critically important for state leaders to increase the number of Black and Latinos with college degrees and close the racial degree attainment gaps to help reach their goals, according to [two briefs](#) we released this summer.

Authors Andrew H. Nichols, senior director of higher education research and data, and Oliver Schak, senior policy and research associate for higher education, used the latest U.S. Census data and assessed states on the following: 1) Black and Latino degree attainment; 2) Black and Latino attainment change since 2000; and 3) attainment gaps between Black and White adults and between Latino and White adults. They found that there is not a single state with a sizeable population of Black and Latino residents where either group has a degree attainment level equal to or higher than White adults. And while both Black and Latino adults have made progress since 2000 in having more people with college degrees, White attainment has grown faster.



The report received solid media coverage including this piece in [The Atlantic](#), [The College-Graduation Problem All States Have](#), which carries our main message that policymakers need to pay attention to race-by-race attainment rates as overall rates hid how our higher education system underserves Black and Latino students. In an [Inside Higher Ed](#) article, [States Struggle to Close Degree-Attainment Gaps](#), Andrew makes it clear why states need to close these troublesome gaps. He said, “In no state did we see Black or Latino degree attainment surpass that of the White population, so the work is not done. The conversation often tends to be focused mostly on income or economic status, but there is a significant amount of research that shows socioeconomic mobility and gaps cannot be explained by just income. Race is a factor.”

The report is encouraging some state leaders to react. For example, the [Idaho Press](#) — Idaho ranked lowest on degree attainment rankings by state — quoted a spokesperson with the Idaho State Board of Education who said the board is committed to improving graduation rates for people who live in Idaho. “Staff is working with community leaders and others to better communicate with students and parents about the advantages of obtaining a higher education certificate or degree... and progress is being made to ensure that all students have access to programs intended to help students go-on from high school.” To view all the media coverage, [please click here](#).

To continue the conversation, we published three blogs on [The Equity Line](#) ([7 Key Takeaways on Degree Attainment for Black Adults: 3 Ways States Can Improve Degree Attainment for Blacks and Latinos](#); and [10 Key Takeaways on Degree Attainment for Latino Adults](#)). We also co-hosted an engaging Twitter Chat with Excelencia in Education and ThirdWay. And in [a forum hosted by Diverse Issues in Higher Education](#), the American Council on Education, and Educational Testing Service, John issued this charge to institutional leaders, “Our job as institutions is to figure out, given the challenges that our students face, what are we doing to do to help them succeed.”



“RACE IS A FACTOR”

– Andrew H. Nichols, Senior Director of Higher Education Research and Data Analytics



Announcing the Higher Ed Equity Lens

We launched [Higher Ed Equity Lens](#), a blog for higher ed wonks. While Ed Trust's main blog, *The Equity Line*, covers P-16 topics for a broad audience, this new blog is designed for folks who want to dig deeply into the higher ed data, research, and policy space. The first post is a look at college enrollment in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina, with some [lessons learned for Puerto Rico](#) a year after Hurricane Maria, written by Wil Del Pilar after visiting the island this summer.



Calling for Better Pell Data

About 60 percent of the 7.3 million Pell Grant recipients are students of color. Beyond this metric, little data on Pell students of color are available. In a [Washington Post op-ed](#), Andrew Nichols and Oliver Schak argue that a student-level data network combined with more data on Pell completion demographics by race and ethnicity could be revolutionary.

Deeper State Engagement

In **Louisiana**, we're thrilled to announce that [Erika McConduit](#) has joined us as our Louisiana director. In this role, Erika will work to grow the size and impact of the Louisiana equity coalition and build the infrastructure for an ongoing Ed Trust presence in Louisiana. She comes to Ed Trust from the Louisiana Urban League, where she served as president and CEO. Erika has already hit the ground running, engaging the equity coalition on a proposed change to the state ESSA plan and generating recommendations for how the Louisiana Department of Education should evaluate district proposals for school improvement funding. To learn more about Erika, [read this interview](#) on why she is passionate about educational justice.



In **Tennessee**, we provided strategic communications support for the Education Equity Coalition as they [pushed back](#) on a proposal to halt statewide assessment following a failure by the state test vendor.

We're excited to announce the launch of the **Massachusetts** Education Equity Partnership, a collection of 14 diverse organizations that have come together to raise attention to and prompt action on the glaring inequities in Massachusetts' education system. The partnership's first action was to release [Number One for Some](#), an analysis of opportunity and achievement for the Bay State's students of color and students from low-income families. Members of the partnership delivered the report to state policymakers and have engaged in the media, securing [broadcast](#) coverage and an [editorial in the Boston Globe](#).



In **Delaware**, the Education Equity Coalition celebrated the signing of a new law aimed at ensuring that the state implements ESSA's per pupil expenditure reporting requirement in a way that will provide advocates and policymakers with comparable data from one district to the next. Ed Trust provided significant technical assistance to coalition members as they worked on this bill.



In **Kentucky**, we provided technical assistance to the Equity Coalition as they [responded to](#) proposed changes to the state's high school graduation requirements. The coalition asked the State Board to delay voting on the proposal in order to allow for more analysis and information to be made public, including information on the likely impact on low-income students and students of color of removing Algebra II as a requirement and utilizing the 10th grade assessment as an exit exam.



The **Maryland** Alliance for Racial Equity in Education, a coalition that emerged from the ESSA Boot Camps and supported by Ed Trust, formally launched with the groups calling for more attention be paid to racial disparities in the state's school system — not just income disparities — by a statewide education commission (Kirwan Commission) charged with developing recommendations for rewriting the state's funding formula for public school and addressing other educational inequities.

The coalition includes the ACLU of Maryland, the Greater Baltimore Urban League, Advocates for Children and Youth, the Maryland State Conference of NAACP Branches, CASA de Maryland, Strong Schools Maryland, Faith Leaders for Excellent Schools, and Teach Plus.



The Education Trust—West



We're excited that the work with our Higher Ed Equity Coalition includes briefing #CA gubernatorial candidates on key equity issues. Today's meeting was with @GavinNewsom! Looking forward to connecting with @TheRealJohnHCox next. #EdEquity #HigherEd #EduColor



Engaging Candidates for Governor, LT. Governor, and Superintendent of Public Instruction

In the run up to a crucial California election, The Education Trust—West (ETW) continues to engage with candidates for three offices with significant impact on our education systems — the governor, lieutenant governor, and state superintendent of Public Instruction. In August of this year, Elisha Smith Arrillaga, ETW's interim co-executive director, and the ETW team led a meeting with current lieutenant governor and frontrunner for governor, Gavin Newsom, bringing together key stakeholders in our Higher Education Equity Coalition to discuss the most pressing priorities for the next governor to address in the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California systems.

Additionally, ETW prepared a voter awareness-focused candidate questionnaire, asking major candidates for all three offices to provide their responses to a set of key education equity questions. One month before the election, these results will be released as part of our ongoing campaign to make education equity a must-discuss platform issue during this election cycle.

Recognizing the role California's lieutenant governor plays on the UC Board of Regents and the CSU Board of Trustees, ETW is also engaging the major

candidates for this role, Senator Ed Hernandez and former US Ambassador Eleni Kounlakakis. ETW is partnering with the Campaign for College Opportunity to hold two forums with lieutenant governor candidates, each featuring Christopher Nellum, ETW's senior director of higher education research and policy, as the closing speaker.

In anticipation of the election in November, we are preparing transition packets for newly elected officials. These packets will include our policy agenda, along with notes on equity considerations for appointments to education-related groups and boards.

Ed Equity Forum and Beyond — Reaching Practitioners, Education Leaders, and Other Advocates

This September, ETW hosted our second annual Ed Equity Forum, doubling in size and bringing together over 400 education practitioners, leaders, and other advocates from both K-12 and postsecondary systems. The forum is clearly meeting a need in the state, as it was sold out for the second year in a row. Participants benefited from networking time along with a fantastic lineup of panelists and presenters for the daylong event, including Sylvia Mendez, whose family was a plaintiff in the landmark civil rights case on school segregation in California, and an urgent call to action around "Equity, how?" from our closing plenary speaker, Shaun Harper, racial equity expert and executive director of the USC Race and Equity Center. During the forum, ETW awarded Chula Vista Elementary School District, Whittier Union High School District, and Pasadena City College with a "Bright Spot Honoree" award, celebrating their commitment to equity and the tangible results we saw in those districts.



Laying Out the Agenda for “What’s Next” in California Education Policy

In September, ETW released “[What’s Next: A Policy Agenda for Education Equity in California](#),” our first policy agenda to focus on both P-12 and higher education systems. The agenda lays out a roadmap of key priorities for California school, campus, district, system, and legislative leaders to follow around improving educational opportunity and achievement at all levels in California. The report is accompanied by a [series of one-pagers](#) that make the clear case for equity-driven solutions to pressing California education issues.

As part of looking to what’s next in California, ETW conducted a parent poll of 600 Latino, Black, and Asian Pacific Islander parents in the state. In October, we released [the results](#) and kicked off our campaign to highlight parents’ priorities and concerns around school improvement as we get closer to the election and to the next cohort of state leaders. Carrie Hahnel, ETW’s interim co-executive director, said “Clearly parents are offering feedback to their children’s schools, but unfortunately they don’t always feel their input is making a difference. Schools and districts must authentically engage parents as partners in improvement, and this is especially the case for schools serving primarily Black, Latino, and Asian Pacific Islander students whose parents are far too often ignored.”

And in a blog for [SpeakUP](#), Elisha said, “A lot of the research on parents and students doesn’t reflect the demographics of our state. We wanted to make sure this poll reflected the parents of students that are in California’s K-12 schools, and right now, seven out of 10 students in our K-12 schools are Black, Latino or Asian American/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.”

Moving forward, we will continue to weave together the policy agenda as presenting solutions that speak to parent perspectives that surfaced in the poll. As part of this approach, Elisha spoke to the *Los Angeles Times* and CALmatters on the release of California’s SBAC scores, citing the need for increased urgency from the next set of state leaders.

Policy Wins

During this quarter, ETW saw a number of important policy wins in the state. In higher education, the final California budget for fiscal year 2018-2019 included the Student Centered Funding Formula, moving community college funding to a more equitable, student success-based formula. We were brought to champion this approach to funding through our work, writing an Equity Alert and hosting our first [Advocacy Day](#) earlier this year that focused on the funding formula. We will continue to play a role in monitoring implementation of the formula moving forward.

On the K-12 side, our parent poll included focus groups with parents reviewing the California School Dashboard. The feedback gained from these focus groups was markedly impactful. We shared the feedback with the California Department of Education earlier this summer, and recently the department announced significant revisions to the dashboard based on that feedback.

In our first year of publicly focusing on a set of legislative priorities for equity, “[The Equity 8](#),” we saw more than half of those proposals signed into law. In addition to the funding formula for community colleges enacted in the state budget, we saw four bills we supported and championed signed into law, including bills focusing on undocumented students and on financial aid access.



**CA PARENTS OF COLOR SAY
IMPROVING EDUCATION IS
TOP PRIORITY FOR NEXT
GOVERNOR**

 **UNIDDSUS**
The Education Trust West

Based on data from a new poll surveying California parents of color. For more info visit: www.edtrustwest.org/california-parents-poll

The Education Trust—Midwest

Fighting for Data Honesty and Transparency

In late summer, The Education Trust—Midwest (ETM), once again, acted as the go-to source for analysis for reporters and partner organizations on Michigan's most recent summative assessment data. ETM's focus on [educational equity](#) and the [need to better support](#) students of color and students from low-income families was [referenced throughout media coverage](#) of the score release.

We continue to monitor what we see as detrimental changes to Michigan's public reporting of state assessment data. For example, we raised concerns about the state's rollout of a new science assessment, which [precluded public score releases](#) for two years. And we advocated against a [plan to further change the summative assessment](#) during the current school year.

In September, we were [called to testify](#) against a proposal to significantly reduce the use of data in educator evaluations. The revision of a [hard-fought victory](#) for data-informed educator evaluations, feedback, and support systems from 2015 would see the use of student growth data reduce from a maximum 40 percent of an evaluation to a minimum 12.5 percent of an evaluation.

Ensuring Civil Rights and Civil Liberties in Public Education

For more than a year, the Michigan Department of Education worked to revise and seek input on new social studies standards. Earlier this summer, conservative advocates effectively sought revisions that minimized the struggle of women, African Americans, and the LGBTQ community for civil rights and liberties, while amplifying the impact of equality on people resisting these movements.

To call out this dangerous action, we [submitted public comment](#), calling for these changes to be undone. Our comment centered on the ideas that (1) students are best served through a full civil rights education; (2) that segregation and discrimination were not accidental; (3) governmental actions, reactions, and laws suppressing the rights of African Americans and others are essential for civil rights education; and (4) students deserve transparency of history, including points of pride and our darkest moments as a nation.

To really drive home this point, Brian Gutman, director of external relations and Lauren Hubbard 2018 Policy Fellow, penned this powerful opinion piece, "[Michigan social studies standards shouldn't sugarcoat history](#)," which ran in Bridge magazine. In this op-ed, they argue, ***"The fight for civil rights of African Americans is incomplete without talking about the roles of the NAACP and W.E.B. DuBois. The story of how women won the right to vote must include the impact of suffragettes like Jane Addams and Carrie Chapman Catt.***

And the importance of a free press for the expansion of rights hinges on teaching the history-making writings of Upton Sinclair and Ida Tarbell.

"History has a troubling tendency to repeat itself. When we fail to teach the struggles and lessons of the past, we are bound to repeat the errors of our ways. Only by being forthcoming about both points of pride and stains on our national consciousness, can we build toward a more free, fair and equitable future."

Strengthening Partnerships and Supporting Partners

The previously announced, cross-sector [Launch Michigan](#) coalition has formalized and begun to take shape. ETM is proud to serve as a member of the steering committee and act as the policy and research lead for work groups on early literacy, educator quality and support, and accountability. Staff from the office will also be a member of the school funding work group.

This summer, Gov. Rick Snyder (R) also invited ETM to sign onto a [public letter calling for civility](#) in public discourse. The original 200 signatories have grown to nearly 1,500.

The request for ETM to speak on educational equity and excellence has also continued to grow. Notable speaking engagements include an August keynote to students and graduates of the Davenport University College of Urban Education and a late September panel on Michigan's educational challenges for an audience of approximately 1,000 parents.

Prioritizing Equity and Data in State Budget

ETM's successful budget advocacy resulted in a new data reporting requirement on the effectiveness of early literacy interventions, maintaining an additional funding to support the educational needs of students from low-income families and other vulnerable student groups, and the single largest increase in per-pupil spending in 16 years.

To view all of ETM's media coverage for this quarter, [please click here](#).

ETM at Work in the Community



Parkview Elementary – Wyoming, MI (Photo: Rex Larson)



Parkview Elementary – Wyoming, MI (Photo: Rex Larson)

The Education Trust—New York

Within Our Reach: Ensuring All Students Graduate High School Ready for College, Careers, and Civic Life

Across New York State today, our education system denies students of color access to rigorous instruction in a range of courses that will prepare them for success in college, careers, and civic life. But it does not have to be this way.

That was the key message of [Within Our Reach: An agenda for ensuring all New York students are prepared for college, careers, and active citizenship](#), a report **The Education Trust—New York** (EdTrust—NY) released in partnership with The New York Equity Coalition of civil rights, education, family, and business organizations.

The coalition's policy brief identified striking gaps in access and opportunity for students of color. Statewide, New York schools enroll White students an average of two times more frequently than their Latino and Black peers in a range of key course offerings, and nearly three times more often in critical advanced courses like Advanced Placement math and science. The coalition also proposed a 5x25 agenda for student success, calling on state leaders to fulfill **5 Commitments** to help ensure every student in the **Graduating Class of 2025** leaves high school ready for college or the workforce.

As part of a campaign promoting the agenda, coalition members collected more than 500 petition signatures and letters of support from legislators, superintendents, and business leaders and submitted them to state education leaders.

Read the full report and learn more about this issue at [EquityInEdNY.org](#).

THE 5x25
COMMITMENT TO NEW YORK

WE CALL ON STATE LEADERS TO FULFILL THESE 5 COMMITMENTS TO THE CLASS OF 2025 — THE STUDENTS ENTERING SIXTH GRADE IN FALL

- COMMITMENT 1**
All students, families, and educators will have accurate and timely information, support, and help to access a rich and robust course experience in their school.
- COMMITMENT 2**
All students and families will have the information and support to pursue rigorous college- and career- prep pathways.
- COMMITMENT 3**
Every student will receive rich and rigorous instruction that prepares them for success after high school graduation.
- COMMITMENT 4**
Every student will be able to earn college credit and/or participate in work based learning opportunities before they graduate from high school.
- COMMITMENT 5**
High school graduation requirements will match modern-day expectations for college, career, and civic readiness.

School Funding: Equal Is Not the Same as Equitable

The level of school funding and how those resources are invested play an important role in student success — helping to determine whether students have access to strong educators, enroll in higher-level and advanced courses, are taught using modern textbooks and technology, and have the support of guidance counselors, librarians, and art and music teachers.

Yet, New York's largest school districts are frequently failing to provide their highest-need schools with significantly greater levels of resources so that all students receive the support they need to succeed, according to a new online tool, [nyschoolfunding.org](#), launched by EdTrust—NY. Using publicly available preliminary data from a new state law that requires 76 school districts to report their school-level budgets for the 2018-19 school year, the tool allows families, policymakers, and the public to learn, for the first time, how schools and districts allocate resources and whether low-income students, students with disabilities, and English learners are receiving the resources they need to succeed.

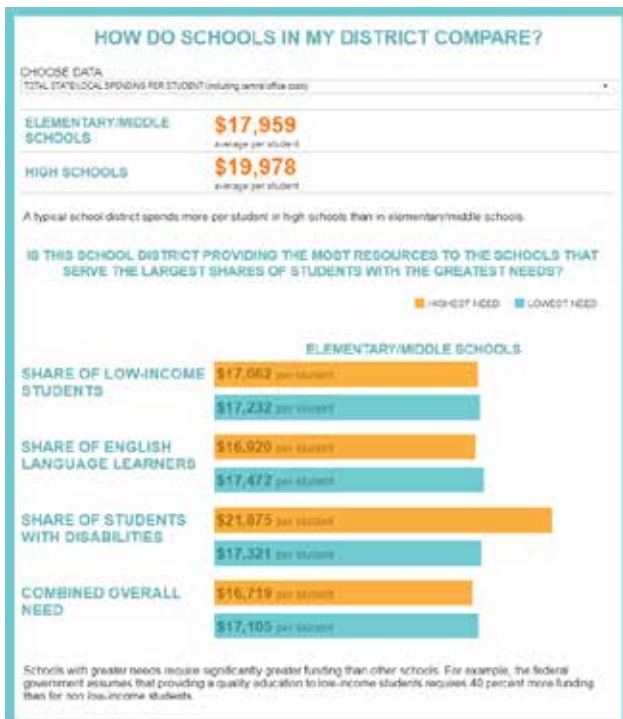


An analysis by EdTrust—NY of how the state's Big 5 school districts are distributing state and local funding between the elementary/middle schools that serve the smallest share of low-income students compared with the elementary/middle schools serving the highest share of low-income students in each district found that:

- For every \$100 per student invested by Yonkers in its lowest-need schools, they are budgeting an average of **\$1 per student less** in their highest-need schools.
- For every \$100 per student invested by Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse in their lowest-need schools, they are budgeting an average of **just \$4 per student more** in their highest-need schools.

- For every \$100 per student invested by New York City in its lowest-need district-run schools, they are budgeting an average of **\$15 per student more** in their highest-need schools. While more than the other Big 5 school districts, this amount does not adequately reflect the needs of students attending the city's highest-need schools — where the percent of low-income students is more than double the rate in the lowest-need schools.

EdTrust–NY plans to use the tool to support and empower parents and families in their advocacy on budget issues in their local district. The tool could also be used as a model for how other states report the school-level funding information that districts will soon be required to report under ESSA. Learn more and explore the data at nyschoolfunding.org.



Equity Coalition Influences New York’s ESSA Regulations

Ed Trust–NY continues to collaborate with and support a growing group of organizations committed to working for more education equity for all New York students.

In July, EdTrust–NY brought together members of The New York Equity Coalition to reflect on the past year’s work and discuss policy goals for the new school year. The coalition, originally formed to seize the equity opportunities in ESSA, is now rooted in broader equity priorities that contribute to the gaps in access and opportunity that hold too many students back from a bright future. Members of the coalition submitted public comments encouraging state leaders to update the regulations pertaining to parent involvement, school discipline, and dual enrollment — among other issues.

As a result of the coalition’s advocacy, the state education department revised the regulations to make clear that it will reject comprehensive support and improvement plans that “do not demonstrate meaningful participation from parents.”

It also established a clear timeline for incorporating the out-of-school suspension rate into the accountability system.

EdTrust–NY and its coalition partners will continue closely monitoring how New York implements the federal law.

Read the public comment EdTrust–NY submitted about New York’s ESSA regulations at EdTrustNY.org.





The Education Trust

Our Mission

The Education Trust is a nonprofit organization that promotes closing opportunity gaps by expanding excellence and equity in education for students of color and those from low-income families from pre-kindergarten through college. Through research and advocacy, the organization builds and engages diverse communities that care about education equity, increases political and public will to act on equity issues, and increases college access and completion for historically underserved students.

To view this copy online, please visit EdTrust.org/QuarterlyReport.



www.EdTrust.org