



# RECRUITING AND RETAINING EDUCATORS OF COLOR

A Guide for Policy and Advocacy Leaders



»» EQUITY IN EDUCATION  
PLAYBOOK 1 OF 5

# INTRODUCTION

In every industry and business sector, securing a skilled, diverse, ready-to-work-and-lead talent pipeline is vital for short-term success and long-term sustainability. That challenge cannot be solved without transforming our education system to truly prepare all students to succeed. America Succeeds' Equity in Education platform pursues five systemic changes to ensure every student has equitable access to quality education, and businesses have diverse talent and leadership pipelines for generations to come. Our work is focused on five pillars:

- Advancing equity in STEM
- Strengthening equity through social-emotional learning
- Recruiting and retaining educators of color
- Expanding equity in course access and options
- Achieving funding equity

We gathered BIPOC leaders, advocacy partners, policy experts, and businesses to develop a set of promising policies and practices emerging from across the country to improve equitable outcomes for students. Tapping into our partnership ecosystem's wide breadth of expertise allowed us to amplify leading voices in the conversation, build consensus, and identify impactful solutions to accelerate change and address these challenges.

At America Succeeds, we believe business is a powerful voice in crafting solutions that will dramatically improve the future talent pipeline. Our goal is to ensure business leaders have a seat at the table and can thoughtfully contribute to systemic change alongside other key stakeholders. There are multiple levers businesses can engage in to improve equity and this guide will focus specifically on recruiting and retaining educators of color.



# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## The Problem

Finding great educators to fill classroom vacancies is a difficult, ongoing struggle for many districts across the country, especially in schools serving high numbers of disadvantaged students. Numerous studies have pointed to having access to quality teachers as the most important school-related factor to influence student achievement, and schools are missing out when they can't draw from a pipeline of well-prepared teachers ready to lead.

The underrepresentation of teachers of color only compounds the problem. Research shows that students are more likely to experience higher academic achievement and higher graduation rates when they have teachers who share similar backgrounds and experiences (known as a 'demographic match'). Yet, recruiting and retaining educators continues to be a major challenge in nearly every district. If we want to help all students succeed and equip students of color to achieve at the same levels as their white peers, we need to solve this problem.

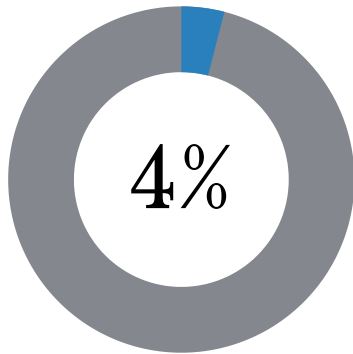
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*When students of color have teachers of color, they're more likely to have higher attendance, higher test scores ... more access to rigorous courses like AP or honors courses, and less likely to be expelled or referred for discipline.*

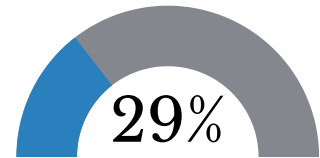
*- Sharif El-Mekki, CEO of The Center for Black Educator Development*

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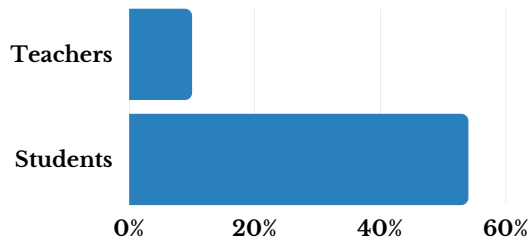
# FACTS & FIGURES



Did you know that of the 28 percent of Black people and 20 percent of Hispanic people pursuing college degrees, only **four percent** are education majors?



Having at least one Black teacher reduces a Black student's likelihood of dropping out of school by up to 29 percent.



Currently, only 19 percent of teachers are individuals of color, while 54 percent of the public K-12 student population identifies as non-white.

# SPOTLIGHTS

## The Black Male Teachers College: Attracting Black Males to a Teaching Career

The Black Male Teachers College is a program to attract Black high school males to a teaching career. Nationally, Black males account for only two percent of the teaching workforce. This program at Bowie State University (an HBCU) provides high school students with an opportunity to participate in workshops, programs, activities, and networking events related to pursuing a career in teaching. It focuses on strategies to help Black men succeed in the classroom, examines Black history and culture, and provides college preparation assistance.

## Texas: Providing Comprehensive Supports for New Teachers of Color

The Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) is a system of comprehensive supports for teachers of color in their first year. The induction program provides mentorship opportunities with veteran teachers, coaching and feedback, seminars, and activities. Studies show that first-year teachers who receive this level of support are twice as likely to stay in the teaching profession as those who did not have early-career support.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO



Support the creation of state policies that help educator preparation programs recruit qualified individuals from diverse backgrounds to enter the teaching profession through:

- Creation of a task force or advisory group focused on ensuring that programs serve a diverse corps of teacher candidates
- Development of targeted recruitment strategies
- Financial supports like grants or scholarships



Increase investments in educator preparation programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).



Establish and prioritize goals for recruiting candidates of color into educator preparation programs.



Increase data collection on many sources of diversity, equity, and inclusion to measure progress across the field.



Incentivize and support district-level policies and programs that support the success of educators of color, such as professional development programs, mentorship opportunities, and financial incentives.



# LEARN MORE

The following organizations are leading the charge to recruit and retain educators of color:



**BranchED** is dedicated to strengthening, growing, & amplifying the impact of educator preparation at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), with the longer-range goals of both diversifying the teaching profession & intentionally addressing critical issues of educational equity for all students.



**The Center for Black Educator Development** addresses educational inequities to improve academic and social outcomes for all students through increased teacher diversity.



**TNTP** works to end the injustice of educational inequality by providing excellent teachers to the students who need them most and by advancing policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom.

Leading research and resources on recruiting and retaining educators of color:

- Learning Policy Institute's report ["Diversifying the Teaching Profession"](#)
- Teach Plus's report ["Why Teachers of Color Leave and How to Disrupt Teacher Turnover"](#)
- New School Venture Fund's resource bank ["Effects of Diverse Teachers on Student Outcomes"](#)
- Brookings Institute report ["High Hopes and Harsh Realities: The Real Challenges to Building a Diverse Workforce"](#)
- National Center for Education Statistics data collection summary ["Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools"](#)

## ABOUT US

America Succeeds is a 501(c)(3) non-profit education advocacy organization committed to improving educational opportunities, outcomes, and equity by harnessing the influence and acumen of the business community in accelerating systems change.





# ADVANCING EQUITY IN STEM

A Guide for Policy and Advocacy Leaders



▶▶ EQUITY IN EDUCATION  
PLAYBOOK 2 OF 5

# INTRODUCTION

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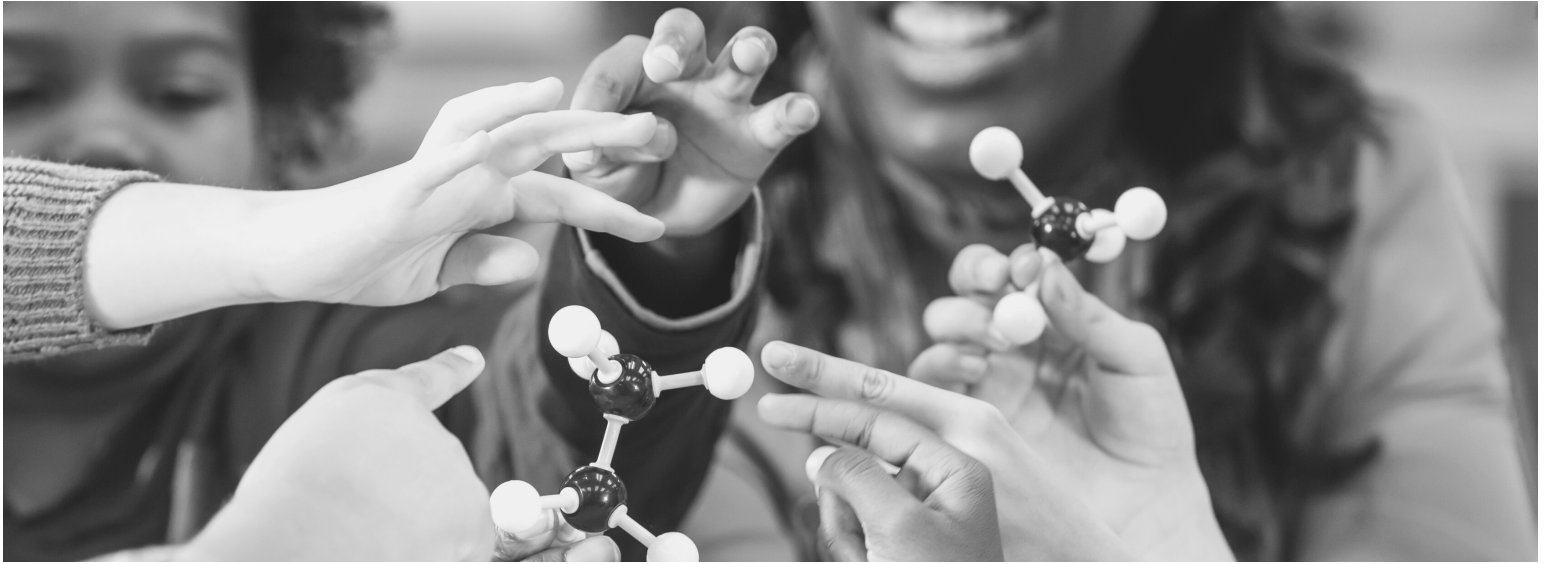
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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## The Problem

Year over year, innovation pushes the boundaries of technology to advance, impacting every facet of the economy and what we need from the workforce. STEM jobs are expanding rapidly to meet the demand. Our education system, however, is not producing an adequate number of students who possess competencies necessary to fill these jobs. Furthermore, the talent supply is also not keeping up with changing demographics, leaving enormous potential for production, innovation, and leadership on the sidelines. The gap between white and non-white workers in STEM fields is striking and demands attention if the United States is going to stay competitive with the rest of the world.

Addressing inequitable educational opportunities and resources in STEM subjects for underserved students is a key component to overcoming this growing and consequential issue. Maintaining a workforce that the economy relies on for innovation and progress is not sustainable when only a fraction of the population is prepared and encouraged to pursue STEM pathways. Our education system must do better.

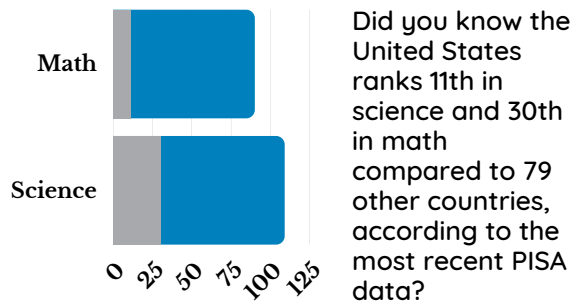
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*“There’s a huge gap in the opportunity and ability that students might have to engage in computer science in school.”*

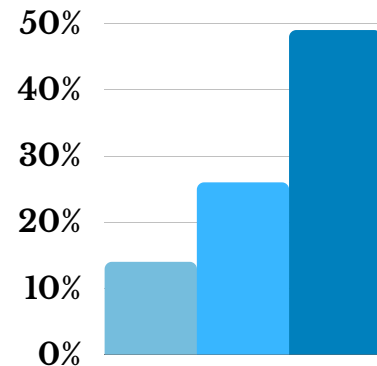
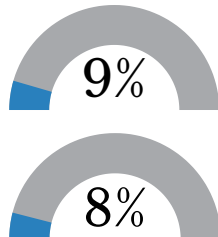
*- Dr. Katie Hendrickson,  
Chief of Staff at  
Code.org*

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# FACTS & FIGURES



Only 9% of the STEM field is Black and only 8% is Hispanic.



## Proficiency

During the most recent NAEP assessment, only 14 percent of Black students and 26 percent of Hispanic students achieved proficiency in math compared to 49% of their white peers.

# SPOTLIGHTS

## South Carolina: Providing Computer Science for All

South Carolina was the first state to implement a computer science high school graduation requirement. The state developed it in response to its growing computer science sector and wanting to create further opportunities for growth in the industry. Because the course is required for graduation, South Carolina is leveling the playing field in terms of expectations and access for all students.

## Intel: Growing Diversity by Investing in Underrepresented Communities

Intel launched its “Diversity in Technology” initiative with the goal of becoming the first tech company in the U.S. to reach full representation of racial minorities and women. They have invested in scholarship initiatives for Latinos, Native American coding programs, and school district STEM curricula, among others, to make strides in preparing the next generation of STEM workers. It’s a bold commitment that highlights the great things that can happen when public/private partnerships are used to address inequities in the workplace.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO



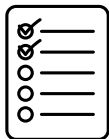
Include science measures in state-level accountability systems.



Invest in district-level professional development opportunities for STEM-subject educators focused on improving content knowledge and pedagogy.



Adopt computer science as a core high school graduation requirement.



Develop detailed statewide STEM education plans with annual report cards that document student data, equity disparities, progress, and opportunities for STEM education.



Create STEM pathways that bridge classes with work-based learning opportunities.



Invest in STEM-related supports for underserved students through tutoring, activities, and programs.



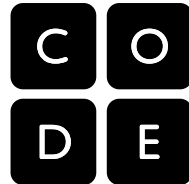
# LEARN MORE

The following organizations are leading the charge to advance equity in STEM education:



**Black Girls Code:**

Black Girls Code works to increase the number of women of color in the digital technology space by introducing them to computer science.



**Code.org:**

Code.org is dedicated to expanding access to computer science in schools and increasing participation by young women and students from other underrepresented groups.

**STEM EQUITY**  

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**INITIATIVE**

**STEM Equity Initiative:**

STEM Equity Initiative provides a new model for the educator to understand and enact efforts to increase access and success within academic programs, particularly for traditionally underrepresented or marginalized groups.

Leading research and resources on STEM education:

- UNESCO's report, "[Exploring STEM Competencies for the 21st Century](#)"
- Pew Research's [fact sheet](#) about America's STEM workforce
- The National Academy's guide "[Call to Action for Science Education: Building Opportunity for the Future](#)"
- Code.org's [policy recommendations](#) for advancing K-12 computer science education

## ABOUT US

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# **STRENGTHENING EQUITY THROUGH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

A Guide for Policy and Advocacy Leaders



**EQUITY IN EDUCATION  
PLAYBOOK 3 OF 5**

# INTRODUCTION

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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## The Problem

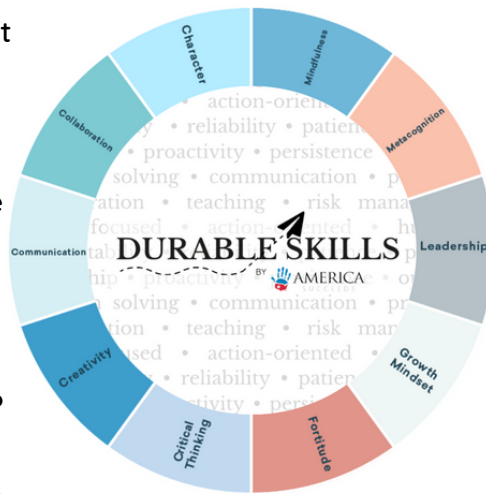
Social-emotional learning has gained increased attention over the last several years, supported by a strong research base demonstrating short- and long-term benefits for students. Studies show that SEL programs are associated with improved student behavior, improved economic mobility, and improved life outcomes. SEL is a key component of developing a strong talent pipeline as well; skills such as communicating effectively, showing empathy, being adaptable, problem-solving, and teamwork equip students for success in life and their careers.

Although all 50 states have adopted Pre-K social-emotional standards, comprehensive implementation across all grade levels is still lacking. The need for teaching SEL competencies in the classroom has only intensified as the COVID-19 pandemic brought on various levels of trauma and anxiety for many students throughout the country. Addressing students' emotional and mental needs as they have returned to the classroom has been a significant challenge that districts and states must address if students are going to progress. Luckily, many states are keyed into the fact that academic recovery is also dependent on student healing.

As states and schools begin their recovery process, implementing social-emotional learning into the curriculum will only benefit students, especially underserved students whose communities were most negatively impacted by the pandemic. States must get this right.

# FACTS & FIGURES

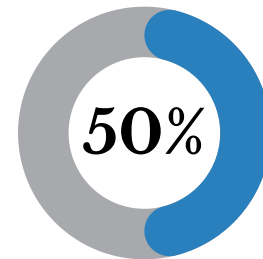
Did you know that social-emotional learning helps students develop in-demand skills for the workforce like adaptability, reliability, empathy, self-management, problem-solving, and goal-setting?



All 50 states have adopted Pre-K SEL competencies, yet less than half have developed and adopted competencies for grades K-12.

11%

SEL improves achievement scores by an average of 11 percentage points.



# SPOTLIGHTS

## Tulsa Public Schools: Aligning Core Values with SEL and Equity

Tulsa Public Schools has aligned its core values, commitments, and standards to align with SEL implementation and equity goals. The district has integrated school-level social and emotional learning and wellness initiatives, infused SEL into the district strategic plan, and formed innovative partnerships with leading SEL organizations. Tulsa is also strategically using its federal relief dollars to provide professional development opportunities for educators and further embed SEL into their work.

## Washington Office of Public Instruction: Leading SEL Standards

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction has made student social-emotional well-being a top priority of its reopening and planning guidelines. Equity has been central to the state's adoption of six SEL standards and 17 benchmarks. State policies clearly define SEL standards and set grade-level guidelines for districts to follow.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO



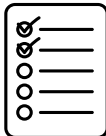
Integrate high-quality, research-based social-emotional learning practices into all aspects of teaching and learning throughout every grade level, accessible to every student.



Increase the focus through teacher preparation programs on developing teachers who have the skills needed to create culturally affirming environments, build relationships with and understand their students, and support all students' academic success.



Provide comprehensive professional development opportunities and supports for educators and school staff on culturally responsive teaching, positive classroom management, and reducing bias.



Reform school discipline policies that disproportionately affect students of color – such as 'zero tolerance' and exclusionary discipline policies – and keep them out of the classroom.



# LEARN MORE

The following organizations are leading the charge on advancing social-emotional learning:



**The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL):**

CASEL works to make evidenced-based social-emotional learning an integral part of education from preschool through high school.



**Committee for Children:**

Committee for Children champions the safety and well-being of kids through social-emotional learning to fulfill their vision of safe children thriving in a just and peaceful world.



**Education First:** Education First is a mission-driven strategy and policy organization dedicated to delivering experience-based solutions and results to all students – and particularly Black, indigenous, and other students living in low-income communities – so they are prepared for success in college, career, and life.

Leading research and resources on social-emotional learning:

- The largest study on the impact of social-emotional learning, **“The impact of enhancing students’ social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school based universal interventions”**
- The Collaborating States Initiative’s report, **“Preparing Youth for the Workforce of Tomorrow: Cultivating the Social and Emotional Skills Employers Demand”**
- The Education Trust’s report, **“Social, Emotional, and Academic Development Through an Equity Lens”**
- Committee for Children’s whitepaper, **“The Case for a Holistic Approach to Social-Emotional Learning”**

## ABOUT US

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# EXPANDING COURSE ACCESS AND OPTIONS

A Guide for Policy and Advocacy Leaders



**EQUITY IN EDUCATION  
PLAYBOOK 4 OF 5**

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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## The Problem

The lack of choice – being stuck with the limited opportunities available – is often at the root of educational inequity. It makes sense then that providing more options, like access to rigorous courses and additional schools that may better fit a child’s needs, can be an incredible lever for change.

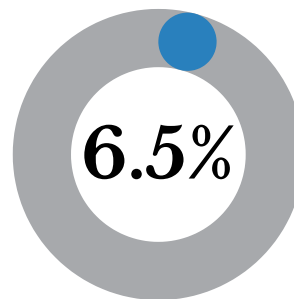
Too many students, particularly students of color, are tracked away from challenging coursework that will prepare them for postsecondary education. Likewise, most families are constrained to their neighborhood school, even if that school is underperforming or a poor fit for the child, and lack additional public options from which to choose.

Having well-prepared students ready to succeed in college is vital for the success of our economy. For this to occur, however, students need to be academically challenged in their courses in a high-quality learning environment that is supportive of their growth. Students who enter college ready to excel, without remediation, are more likely to persist and complete a degree. On the flipside, without access to rigorous courses and a quality school, many low-income students of color face difficulties entering and staying in college to completion. States need to do more to ensure that all students have access to challenging coursework in a school setting that suits their needs.

# FACTS & FIGURES



Did you know that, among high school students, only 9 percent of Black students and 21 percent of Latino students are enrolled in an AP course?



Charter schools make up only 6.5 percent of all public schools.



Research suggests that students who take advanced and college-level courses are more likely to graduate high school, attend college, and graduate with a degree.

# SPOTLIGHTS

## North Carolina: National Leader in Advanced Math Course Access

North Carolina is a national leader in ensuring all students have access to academically rigorous math coursework regardless of background. Since 2018, the state requires all students who score high on end-of-year testing to be automatically enrolled in an advanced math class the following year. In 2019, the state expanded the policy to apply to coursework in more grade levels. These policies have placed over 10,000 students who were previously systematically denied access in advanced classes.

## Colorado: The Charter-Friendly State

Colorado's charter-friendly laws support a wealth of additional public school options for families. The state does not cap public charter school growth, provides multiple authorizers for performance and monitoring, and provides autonomy and accountability to charter schools. The state also requires districts to share local levy dollars with charter schools, making Colorado one of the few states to attempt to fund charter school students fairly. As a result, the state has a robust charter ecosystem with more than 132,000 students enrolled across more than 250 schools.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO



Use data to identify and address barriers that have historically kept students of color from enrolling in advanced courses.



Implement student-centered funding that follows the student, regardless of where they choose to attend school.



Support underrepresented students in preparing for and achieving success in advanced courses by:

- Investing in early childhood learning opportunities
- Recruiting and developing qualified subject-matter teachers
- Providing ongoing tutoring supports



Incentivize districts to offer more advanced courses so that every eligible student has the opportunity to enroll in rigorous classes



Require districts to adopt open enrollment policies that ensure families are able to access the best schools for their children's needs, and include provisions for enrollment priorities, transportation, and allowing for full district funding to follow the student.



Expand access for all students to existing high-quality, in-demand schools through enrollment preferences and lottery systems.



# LEARN MORE

The following organizations are leading the charge on advancing course access and options:



**BEST NC:** BEST NC works to improve North Carolina's education system through policy and advocacy efforts while recognizing access and equity as the key components to ensuring every student reaches their full potential.



**The Education Trust:** The Education Trust works to close opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students of color and students from low-income families through research and advocacy efforts.



**The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (National Alliance):** National Alliance is the leading national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the public charter school movement.

Leading research and resources on course access and options:

- National knowledge database of charter school facts and figures, "[The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools Knowledge Base](#)"
- Brookings research paper on untapped talent, "[The Missing 'One-Offs': The Hidden Supply of High-Achieving, Low-Income Students](#)"
- Fordham Institute's report, "[Still Rising: Charter School Enrollment and Student Achievement at the Metropolitan Level](#)"
- The Education Trust's state advanced coursework data tool, "[Advanced Coursework in Your State](#)"

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# ACHIEVING FUNDING EQUITY

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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



## The Problem

Education funding is a complex system that is often misunderstood, outdated, and difficult to navigate. Yet, education funding policies are the foundation of the education system, impacting everything within it. Although each state has its own funding formula, there are general characteristics that nearly every state shares, such as deriving funding from locally controlled property taxes.

Despite huge investments made each year in public education, however, the system is not performing to its potential. This is due in part to the fact that public funds are not being allocated to where they'll have the most impact. Students with greater needs are often shortchanged, receiving insufficient resources to support their academic success. Schools and districts in underserved communities struggle to generate enough revenue to fund their schools while those in wealthier communities enjoy an abundance of resources to meet every need. In short, the way schools are currently funded has the effect of only providing sufficient resources for some students, limiting the impact of public investments overall to a smaller group of students. More often than not, students of color and students from low-income households bear the burden of this inequitable system, which ultimately leaves them underprepared for college and a career.

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*“Equity is an issue for the prosperity of the companies in our country.”*

*- Maurice Jones, OneTen*

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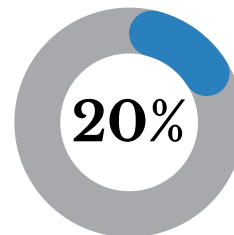
# FACTS & FIGURES

\$23,000,000,000

Did you know that a \$23 billion funding gap presently exists between predominately white and non-white school districts?



Even within the same school district, some wealthy schools get millions more than poor ones.



A study found that school reforms focused on allocating more money to low-income schools reduced achievement gaps by 20 percent on average.

## SPOTLIGHTS

### California: Building an Equitable Funding System

California is approaching school funding with the goal of building an equitable and excellent funding system. The state's Local Control Funding Formula plan shifts billions of dollars to districts serving high-needs students to provide all districts with the flexibility needed to spend based on local needs and priorities. The state's success will be dependent on new and continued investments for capacity-building across all levels, capitalizing on new resources, continuous improvement commitments, and community-based decision-making.

### Boston Public Schools: Transitioning to a Student-Based Allocation Formula

Boston Public Schools transitioned to a student-based allocation formula in 2011 that shifted 40 percent of its total budget toward student-based allocation. The district considers equity implications to determine additional weights for students who typically cost more to educate. These weights include English learners, students with disabilities, young students, and migrant students. Having a student-based formula allows the district to build on the Every Student Succeeds Act's transparency requirements to use financial resources for schools based on the needs of their student population.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO



Make transparent data on school expenditures and per-pupil spending readily accessible to the general public.



Ensure funds meant for supporting low-income students can be targeted toward schools with higher concentrations of students in poverty so that schools serving the most high-need students receive the greatest share of resources.



Ensure revenue sources are as stable as possible and collected at the highest level in order to reduce reliance on local property taxes and improve equity across districts.



Enact student-centered funding that follows the student wherever they choose to attend school.



# LEARN MORE

The following organizations are leading the charge on achieving funding equity:



**Bellwether Education Partners:** Bellwether Education Partners is focused on dramatically changing education and life outcomes for underserved children by helping education organizations accelerate their impact and by working to improve policy and practice.



**Edunomics Lab:** Edunomics Lab is a Georgetown University research center exploring and modeling complex education finance decisions to inform education policy and practice.



**Urban Institute:** Urban Institute provides original data and analysis on state and federal policies that can support equity and opportunity from early childhood through higher education.

Leading research and resources on school finance:

- EdBuild's comprehensive report on school finance, "[23 Billion](#)"
- Edunomics Lab compiled list of [datasets commonly used in education finance research and practice](#)
- EdBuild's interactive [data toolbox](#)
- Urban Institute's overview of funding formulas, "[How do school funding formulas work?](#)"

## ABOUT US

America Succeeds is a 501(c)(3) non-profit education advocacy organization committed to improving educational opportunities, outcomes, and equity by harnessing the influence and acumen of the business community in accelerating systems change.

