



The Education Trust—New York



OUR ANNUAL REPORT 2019: Growing



OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

The Education Trust—New York is a statewide education policy and advocacy organization focused first and foremost on doing right by New York's children. We advocate for students, especially those whose needs and potential are often overlooked. Our third year was one of significant growth. Our team. Our body of work. Our leadership on critical education equity issues. Standing on the foundation of work we built in our first two years, this year we were able to grow our reach and impact on the movement focused on education equity for all of New York's students.

OUR WORK EQUITY-DRIVEN | DATA-CENTERED | STUDENT-FOCUSED

In 2018-19, we advanced critical equity issues through a series of reports and online data-driven projects. Here are some of the highlights:

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ADVANCED COURSES

New York State's 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. The New



York Equity Coalition continued advocating for its 5x25 Agenda, calling on New York's leaders to fulfill 5 Commitments to every student in the Graduating Class of 2025, the cohort of students who entered sixth grade in fall 2018. In October, the coalition released the results of a poll that found just one in three New York public high school recent graduates report that they felt "significantly challenged" in high school, and roughly half of those who went on to college report having to take at least one remedial course. This year, the Governor included one of the "5x25" commitments in his State of the State agenda, and the State Education Department incorporated our recommendations for college, career, and civic readiness into the state's new accountability system.



3 STEPS

TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS COMPLETE THE FAFSA

NY FAFSA Challenge
The Education Trust-New York

80% of high school seniors who complete the FAFSA go to college immediately after graduation — compared to just 55% of seniors who do not complete the FAFSA. And New Yorkers are missing out on an estimated \$150 million in federal financial aid by not filling out the form — plus state TAP grants and Excelsior Scholarships. We know what works to help low-income and first-generation college hopefuls complete the FAFSA and get the financial aid they need. High schools can make a big difference.

HERE ARE 3 STEPS EVERY HIGH SCHOOL CAN TAKE:

- 1. HELP YOUR SENIORS MAKE A PLAN TO COMPLETE THE FAFSA**
Set aside time in the school day to help every eligible senior make a plan to complete the FAFSA. It's important to break down the process into simple steps and remind students when deadlines are coming up. Schools should provide students with clear reminders. School counselors can be a critical resource.
- 2. HOLD A FAFSA COMPLETION EVENT**
Hold a FAFSA completion event at a time and place that eligible parents and students can attend in order to provide individual assistance filling out the form. Here is a guide to help you get started: <https://financialaidtools.org/get/fafsa-completion-event-plan>. You can also make a calendar of other local FAFSA completion events. It is important to follow up with each student to make sure they submit the FAFSA in case they do not finish it at the event. To request free support with the hosting of a FAFSA completion event at your school or organization, visit www.ny.gov/fafsa-event.
- 3. SET TARGETS AND TRACK THE DATA**
Visit www.edtrust.org/FAFSA for monthly updates on the number of FAFSA applications completed by your seniors. For even more up-to-date student-level data, join the NY FAFSA Completion Initiative data access program organized by the state's Higher Education Services Corporation: <https://www.hes.ny.gov/programs/ny-high-school-completion-initiative-fafsa-completion-project>.

NEED SOME HELP? CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES:

- **INDIVIDUAL, WORKING, AND NEW SOLUTIONS:** A guide of "nudges" strategies to help get students to and through college: <https://nysed.org/ny-fafsa>
- **DATA INSIGHT PARTNERS:** National data and great resources for schools: <https://nationaldatapartners.com/schoolresources>
- **BETTER BASIC RESOURCES:** A free toolkit to provide personalized support to students: <https://www.betterbasicschool.org/ny-fafsa>
- **CAFES SUPPORT:** See how one partnership designed to provide one-on-one help works: <http://www.nyed.org/ny-fafsa-completion-project>

GET MORE AT WWW.NYFAFSACHALLENGE.ORG

We are grateful for the generous support of:

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 2018

COMMITMENT 2

All students and families will have the information and support to pursue rigorous college- and career-prep pathways

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 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 3

Every student will receive rich and rigorous instruction that prepares them for success after high school graduation

COMMITMENT 5

High school graduation requirements will match modern-day expectations for college, career, and civic readiness

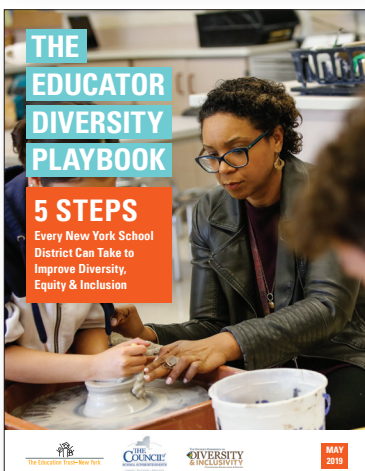
THE NEW YORK FAFSA COMPLETION PROJECT

While high school students who are low-income are more likely than their wealthier peers to attend schools with low rates of completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), dozens of New York high schools that serve large shares of seniors who are low-income are models of success for the rest of the state, according to our analysis as part of the New York FAFSA Completion Project. The project aims to build on this success by providing easily accessible resources including an interactive data tool that allows users to track the progress of New York high schools, resources for schools and educators on how they can assist more eligible students in completing the FAFSA, a compilation of stories highlighting strategies being used by schools across the state that are top-performers and that enroll a high share of low-income students, and The New York FAFSA Completion Challenge, which recognized schools for high FAFSA completion rates and for improvements in FAFSA completion rates.



NEW YORK STATE'S SUSPENSION CRISIS

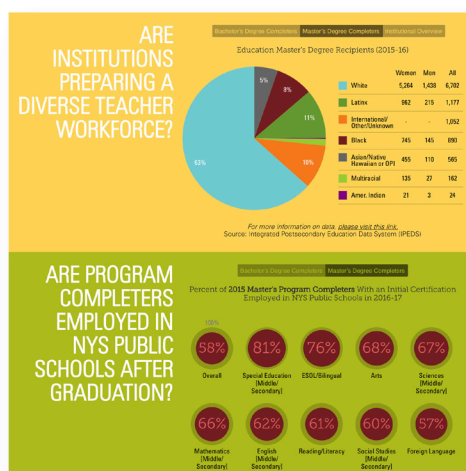
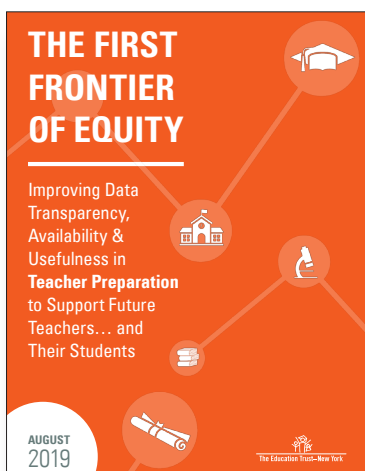
New York State's education system suspended Black students at more than four times the rate of White students outside of New York City and more than five times the rate of White students in New York City during the 2016-17 school year, according to a report released by The New York Equity Coalition in December. Using previously unpublished state data on the number of students on whom school districts imposed at least one out-of-school suspension in the 2016-17 school year, the coalition found a statewide crisis in the use of suspensions to exclude Black students from classroom instruction.



THE EDUCATOR DIVERSITY PLAYBOOK

We collaborated with The New York State Council of School Superintendents and the Council's Commission on Diversity & Inclusivity to produce the *Educator Diversity Playbook*, a tool for school district leaders to improve educator diversity, equity, and inclusion in their schools and central offices. Building on our 2017 report *See Our Truth*, the *Playbook* focuses on five practical steps that school districts can take to cultivate a more diverse workforce: encourage school boards to signal and embrace the importance of teacher and school leader diversity; collect and use data to examine school district recruitment, interview, and hiring practices; question and change recruitment practices to identify additional qualified applicants of color; improve the working environment for educators of color; and invest in mentorship and career ladders for current and aspiring teacher, school, and district leaders. For each of these steps, the *Playbook* briefly cites the research, offers a district policy checklist, recommends indicators to track, and

describes examples of New York school districts that are taking on this important work.



DATA TRANSPARENCY IN TEACHER PREPARATION

Our Educator Equity Snapshot online data tool allows users for the first time to explore data that raises important questions about how school districts and higher education institutions are communicating their needs and priorities to each other and to future educators. Throughout more than two years of interviewing classroom teachers and analyzing previously unpublished data, we saw a common opportunity highlighted: improving transparency at each step of

the teacher preparation pipeline — and intentionally using that data to strengthen teacher preparation — can advance educational equity. The online tool and accompanying report *The First Frontier of Equity* is intended to spotlight the importance of greater data transparency, availability, and usefulness by posing five critical questions: Is New York State preparing a diverse future educator workforce? Are program completers employed in New York State public schools after graduation? Do program completers remain in New York State public schools? Where do program completers teach in New York State public schools? How well do program participants succeed in the classroom?

NEW YORK SCHOOL FUNDING TRANSPARENCY

Our first-of-its-kind online data tool allows users to explore data on school-level budgets, learning for the first time how schools and districts allocate resources and whether low-income students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners are receiving the resources they

need to succeed. An accompanying analysis found that large and mid-sized school districts often do not prioritize their highest-need schools for greater funding and experienced educators. And an online advocacy toolkit allowed parents to ask their local district officials to improve equity as they developed their budgets for the upcoming school year.

MY SCHOOL'S FUNDING:

IS MY CHILD'S SCHOOL GETTING THE FUNDING IT NEEDS TO HELP ALL STUDENTS BE SUCCESSFUL?

School funding is important for student success. We care about how much schools receive and how they use their resources.

For example, students should have access to strong educators. They should have the chance to enroll in advanced courses. And they should have modern textbooks and technology.

The students with the greatest needs should have the most resources. But we know their schools often don't receive the resources they need.

WHO DECIDES SCHOOL BUDGETS?

The school district's leadership develops the budget plan. The School Board is responsible for voting to approve the budget.

WHEN DOES THIS HAPPEN?

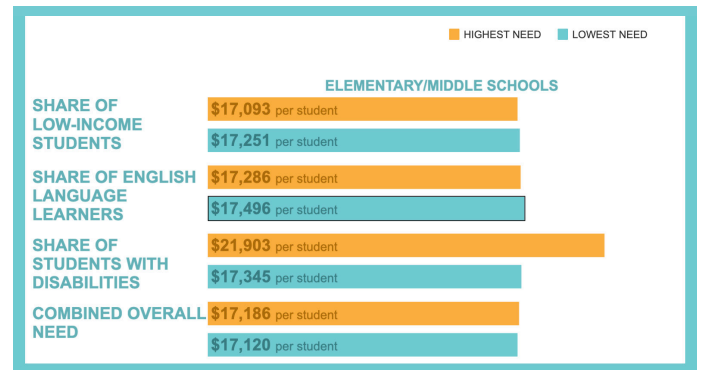
A school district's budget is usually finalized by Spring. But the real work starts as early as November. That can happen in School Board meetings and at public hearings. You can learn more about these meetings and how you can participate at www.NYSchoolFunding.org.

HOW CAN I HAVE MY VOICE HEARD?

You can help ensure your child's school is getting the funding it needs.

- **See how much funding your child's school is receiving and how it's being spent.** Visit www.NYSchoolFunding.org to see how much money is budgeted for your child's school. You can also see how it compares to other schools in the district.
- **Work with other equity-focused parents.** There is strength in numbers. Elected officials are more likely to pay attention to an issue when they hear from many people. Talk to other parents about the budget issues that affect your school, and advocate together.
- **Make your voice heard.** Many public officials are eager to hear from their constituents. As a parent and city resident, you have an important point of view. Reach out to the district leaders, your School Board members, and elected officials with questions and to tell them what you think. You can find out how to contact them at www.NYSchoolFunding.org.

#equalisnotequitable
NYSchoolFunding.org



FOR THE STUDENTS: WHO RUNS OUR SCHOOLS

In most New York school districts, elected school boards run our schools. Their members establish the district's values and determine the allocation of resources, including making the most important

human capital decisions. Their work can ensure that a child's zip code and circumstances do not have to determine her future, and build education systems with the transformative power to close opportunity and achievement gaps. Our work helped raise awareness of critical equity issues in two of New York's largest school districts — Buffalo and Rochester — and put all of the candidates running for office on the record for how they would address these issues. Working with our partners in these cities, we distributed more than 10,000 get out the vote postcards in Buffalo and published an insert in the Sunday Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle* that reached more than 150,000 people.

VOTE ON MAY 7

in the Buffalo school board elections.

LEARN about the candidates
SIGN UP for text and email updates
FIND RESOURCES for voters
COMMIT to vote

www.forthestudentsny.org/buffalo

Overview | **Issue: Resource Allocation** | Career Access | Graduation Pathways | School Discipline

School funding and student success

New York's 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. Part of the equation depends on how much funding the district receives from the state, and part depends on how the district chooses to allocate the resources it controls. For the 2018-19 school year, most school districts showed a relatively little difference in budgeted per-pupil funding levels between their schools that serve the smallest share of low-income students compared to their schools serving the highest share of low-income students. Schools that serve students with greater needs require significantly greater funding than other schools.

Issue: Educators

Access to strong, well-supported, and diverse educators

The most important resource decisions involve access to great teachers and school leaders. One-third of all New York schools had no Black or Latino teachers in the 2015-16 school year. As a result, more than 155,000 Latino and Black students were enrolled in schools without a single full-time same-race/ethnicity teacher, and nearly half of the states' White students attended schools without a single full-time Latino or Black

OUR WORK MOVEMENT-BUILDING

THE NEW YORK EQUITY COALITION

We and our partners have built a growing coalition of key civil rights, education, parent, and business organizations committed to education equity. The New York Equity Coalition originally came together in 2016 with a shared belief that the Every Student Succeeds Act presents a critical opportunity to improve New York's education system — a system riven by massive systemic inequities in access, opportunity, and performance, especially for students of color, students who are low-income, students with disabilities, and Multilingual Learners. It has since broadened its focus to include other education equity issues that contribute to the gaps in access and opportunity that hold too many students back from a bright future and from the state achieving its potential.



Members of the New York Equity Coalition discuss priorities for the coming year at the annual retreat.



EQUITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

We are committed to supporting parent and student-serving community-based organizations in their state-level advocacy on important equity issues. From Buffalo to the Bronx, our Equity Partnership Program helps these trusted partners take on issues such as course access, educator diversity, school improvement, and addressing disproportionate school discipline.



Buffalo's Breaking Barriers Young Men and Boys of Color Leadership Council, which participates in the Equity Partnership Program, traveled to Albany to ask state legislators to work to reduce disproportionality in suspensions.

COMMUNITY AND LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

We presented our work at a number of significant events, including the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus annual conference. In May, we hosted a town hall forum on educator diversity on Long Island in partnership with several education and civil rights organizations. And we continued our partnership with the New York State Education Department to amplify student voices during two social media campaigns.



The New York Equity Coalition presented its findings on course access at the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus.

PARENT LEADERSHIP

Parents play a key role in advocating for policies that promote and advance educational equity. But all too often, parents who are low-income and parents of color are under-represented in critical state policy conversations. Working with trusted partners, Ed Trust–NY is helping change that through the New York Parent Equity Fellowship program. Over the course of the fellowship, seven New York parents received training in a variety of topics to develop their advocacy skills and the opportunity to connect and collaborate with other parent leaders across the country. The fellowship covered topics including the education policy landscape, data interpretation and use, policy analysis, effective interaction with policymakers, and effective advocacy communications. In addition, fellows received tailored coaching focused on activities such as preparing for public hearing testimony, drafting op-eds, and meeting with policymakers.



Parents participating in the New York Parent Equity Fellowship program met with Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes.

LAUNCHING A BIRTH-TO-3 AGENDA

Raising NY is a new coalition of parent, early childhood, civil rights, business, and health organizations dedicated to helping more young children who are low-income and other groups that have been historically underserved be on track for school readiness.

New York has more than 700,000 children under the age of three, a period of life when 80% of a child's brain development occurs. But statewide, hundreds of thousands of families are prevented from accessing the high-quality programs, services, and opportunities they need to raise healthy and thriving children.

Raising NY is focused on advancing policies that support families of infants and toddlers during these first critical years of life. The coalition's priorities are improving access to health and developmental care, improving access to high-quality, affordable child care, helping more parents become financially secure, and developing a system that works together for families. Learn more at RaisingNY.org.

RAiSiNG NEW YORK

SUPPORTED FAMILIES. THRIVING CHILDREN. A STRONGER NEW YORK.

The first three years of a child's life are critical, a formative period that can lay the groundwork for a lifelong love of learning and the best possible outcomes throughout their lives.

Research shows that investing in high-quality early childhood programs leads to students being more likely to graduate from high school and college, makes communities safer, and stops the school-to-prison pipeline that keeps too many children and young adults from reaching their full potential.

But across New York State, hundreds of thousands of families are prevented from accessing the high-quality programs, services, and opportunities they need to raise healthy and thriving children.

Raising New York aims to change that.

Raising New York is a diverse statewide coalition of parent, early childhood, education, civil rights, business, and health organizations dedicated to increasing the number of children who are on track for school readiness.

Families of infants and toddlers care deeply about surrounding their children with the care and nurturing support they need to flourish. Investing in high-quality early childhood programs is a window to the brightest possible future for New York's children.

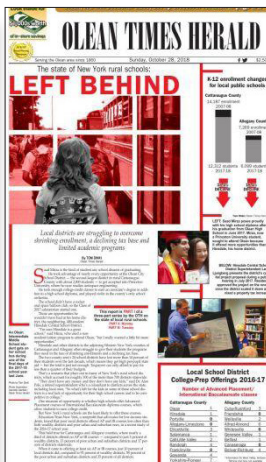
Together, we can make New York State the best place in the country to have and raise a child. Here's what it takes.

[READ THE PRESS RELEASE](#)

[READ THE POLL MATERIALS](#)

BUILDING THE EQUITY NARRATIVE

We continued developing relationships with media outlets across New York State and promoted our equity agenda through about 100 news articles, editorials, opinion pieces, and broadcast segments.



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

US | NEW YORK | SCHOOLS
New York Test Scores Highlight Gaps Among Students from Different Backgrounds

Public-school students' state test results showed wide disparities by racial and socioeconomic background, prompting calls for more urgent action



Survey: New York's high school grads feel unprepared
All agree that more attention on math is badly needed

POLITICO NEW YORK

New coalition to emphasize early childhood education and care



Education news. In context.

Low-income students don't always apply for financial aid for college. How this Queens school is trying to change that.

"THE EQUITY COALITION IS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT TO STAY ON TOP OF THE DISTRICT'S EFFORTS. AND, YES, IT IS ONLY A SMALL STEP TOWARD REPAIRING YEARS OF INEQUITY AND STRUCTURAL RACISM WITHIN THE SCHOOLS. AS THE GROUP UNDERSTANDS, CORRECTING THE ERRORS OF THE PAST TAKES TIME. SOONER MUST BE THE GOAL."

THE BUFFALO NEWS EDITORIAL BOARD

LOOKING AHEAD

Building on the momentum of our first three years, we will continue working alongside our partners across New York State to advocate for improved access and opportunities that will enable all students to be successful. Learn more about our work at edtrustny.org.

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