



Education Equity Initiative

The Need for Education Equity in Louisiana

Louisiana has a longstanding history of racial inequities in public education. Recent data show that disparities in academic achievement still exist at every stage of the education pipeline.

- In 3rd Grade Language Arts, African American students score lowest in Mastery and have the highest percentage of students scoring Unsatisfactory . . . nearly three times the failure rate of White students.
- In 8th Grade Mathematics, African American students score lowest in Mastery and considerably lower in Mastery than other major racial and ethnic groups. African American students have the highest percentage (4 out of 10) scoring Unsatisfactory . . . nearly three times the failure rate of White students.
- A disproportionately considerable number of African American students are subject to in-school and out-of-school suspension.
- African American students have the lowest ACT Composite Score.
- African American students have the lowest percentage of Cohorts Earning Advanced Credential in high school.
- African American students have the lowest Four-Year Graduation Rate and the lowest Retention Rate in Four-Year Higher Education.
- African American students have the lowest graduation rate and the lowest Retention Rate in Community and Technical Colleges.

Goal and Strategic Approach to Closing Educational Equity Gaps

The goal of the Education Equity Initiative is to ensure that all children, regardless of race or economic status, are given an excellent education that prepares them for success beyond school. We are committed to achieving equity by removing barriers to high academic achievement and by ensuring the creation of systems of opportunity by which ALL students have the necessary resources to reach their fullest potential. We employ four strategies to reach this goal:

- (1) Development of **Education Equity Reports** of selected school districts that present and analyze data on key metrics of equity and make policy recommendations to close equity gaps.
- (2) **Stakeholder Convenings** in which we partner with selected school districts and key stakeholders in those communities to build and foster relationships and develop shared goals toward closing equity gaps. During Stakeholder Convenings:
 - We present district-level data on key metrics of educational equity and engage stakeholders in conversations around causes, barriers, and policy solutions.
 - We seek commitments from district leaders to develop scorecards of equity indicators to track and report outcomes and to work toward the continuous improvement of outcomes.
- (3) A statewide **Education Equity Marketing Campaign** to (a) communicate the meaning of educational equity, (b) communicate data that shines a bright light on inequity through a broad mix of messaging tools and mediums, and (c) elicit input from stakeholders on what is needed to close equity gaps.
- (4) A statewide **Listening and Learning Tour** that we undertake at the beginning of our annual policy cycle to gather input from citizens before formulating policy priorities.