



Education Equity for Louisiana

When speaking about education outcomes in public schools, the word “equity” is a recent term. We have understood its meaning in the context of unwavering outcomes: African American students scoring lower on LEAP and ACT exams than other major racial and ethnic groups; African American students, particularly boys, graduating at rates lower than other subgroups; Black students being suspended from school at higher rates; and Black students experiencing lower rates of success in higher education. These disparities and others persist and have been the longstanding reality of public education in Louisiana, a state that has a long history of racial discrimination in education and sub-par academic achievement by African American students.

It is evident that these outcomes correlate with an equally dismal picture of the economic status of families and children in Louisiana, which has the second highest share of Black residents, the second highest family poverty rate, and the second highest child poverty rate in the nation. These outcomes also correlate with Louisiana having one of the highest rates of incarceration per 100,000 people.

We measure Education equity by outcomes, but to achieve equity in results there must be equity in policies and practices. African American children must be given high-quality early care and education, highly effective teachers, supports needed to overcome historic barriers to high academic achievement, and rigorous college-level coursework. Policies and practices must

be created to ensure that ALL children, regardless of race or economic status, are given the opportunity to succeed. The Urban League of Louisiana has launched its [Education Equity for Louisiana](#) awareness campaign to ensure these principles are established and activated to set our learning institutions up for sustainable success. We are partnering with selected school districts and community stakeholders state-wide to implement data informed strategies to increase equity in inputs and outcomes.

Judy Reese Morse
President & CEO
Urban League of Louisiana