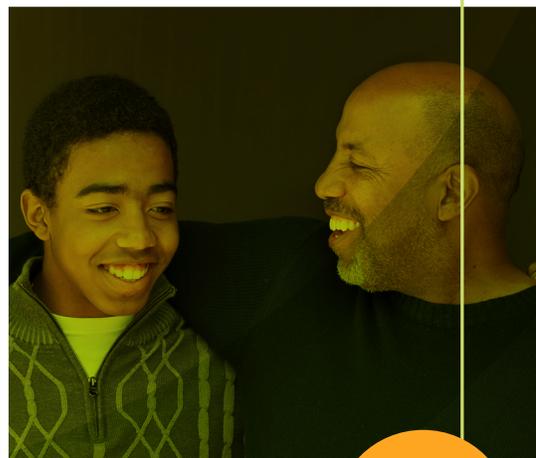


CENTERING COMMUNITIES TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE



UPDATE 10/22



LETTER FROM JOHN AND DENISE



“Define your priorities, know your values, and believe in your purpose. Only then can you effectively share yourself with others.”
—LES BROWN

TO KNOW YOURSELF — TO REALLY KNOW YOURSELF — is an evolutionary process that requires a mix of introspection, retrospection, and even some exasperation.

Over the past year, the national team at The Education Trust embarked on a journey of self-discovery to better understand the organization’s priorities, values, and purpose. We took time to reflect on our past and the current state of education equity, not only to lay claim to the next mountain to climb, but — as fierce advocates leading the way — it also needed to be a hill that would give us an unflinching view of potential challenges on the horizon.

Moving forward, we will lean on our more than 25 years of advocacy experience to promote:

- an internal culture in which every Ed Trust staffer is meaningfully engaged and empowered to do great work and make tough decisions, and
- an external environment that increases political and public will for dismantling the racial and economic barriers embedded in our education system so we can improve student access, opportunity, and outcomes.

In the coming months, we will continue to advocate for increased support for the emotional recovery and accelerated learning of students who are perpetually underserved, particularly those who have fallen further behind because of the pandemic.

We will also build on our recent successes. During the past three months, the nation has seen the value of our advocacy efforts on key issues:

- We have long voiced the concerns of **student loan** borrowers, particularly Black borrowers who are disproportionately burdened by student debt. Our advocacy played a crucial role in moving the Biden-Harris administration to put forth a new student debt relief plan, which is projected to eliminate the debt of nearly 20 million borrowers and lighten the load for an additional 40 million more.
- We have continued to sound the alarm about COVID’s effect on **unfinished learning**, confirmed in the latest NAEP math and reading assessments administered by the National Center for Education Statistics. Scores fell sharply amid the pandemic, particularly among students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. We will continue to elevate promising evidence-based practices and monitor how new and existing federal funding is used to provide necessary resources to students who are underserved.
- We have denounced the recent rise of **extremist rhetoric** and **divisive legislation** and pushed to advance policies and practices that address our nation’s long history of systemic racism and protect our fundamental freedom to discuss these shortcomings openly and honestly.

Central to moving our advocacy efforts forward is establishing a clear national asset-based narrative

focused on the excellence of students of color and students from low-income backgrounds and elevating the voices of those students and their communities. We will use sound data and deft storytelling to shift the focus of education conversations from the supposed deficits of the underserved to the aspirations of all students to achieve the American Dream.

As we push for a more equitable education system that serves all students, there will be wins and setbacks, times when we communicate

effectively with others and move them to act, and times when we realize we could have done a better job.

But we will forge ahead, knowing our priorities, values, and purpose. We will approach each day understanding that — as long as we are doing the right things for the right reasons — every day is a new opportunity to make a difference, a new opportunity to advocate for the change we wish to see, and a new opportunity to impact the students we serve.

John B. King Jr.
President of The Education Trust

[@JohnBKing](https://twitter.com/JohnBKing)

Denise Forte
Interim CEO of The Education Trust

[@dm_forte](https://twitter.com/dm_forte)

During this reporting period, and as part of the strategic planning process, we updated our theory of change to better center the needs of the communities we represent in the current climate.

Communicates the excellence of students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.

Forms partnerships and supports coalitions to amplify views of equity-focused organizations and supplement our expertise.



The Education Trust

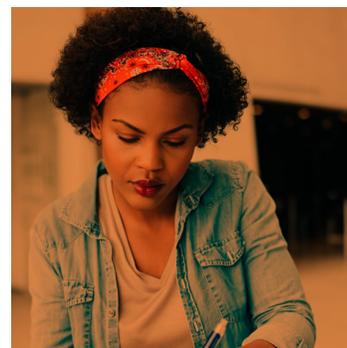
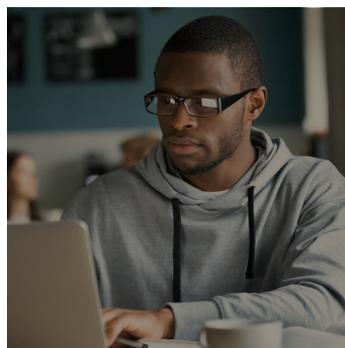
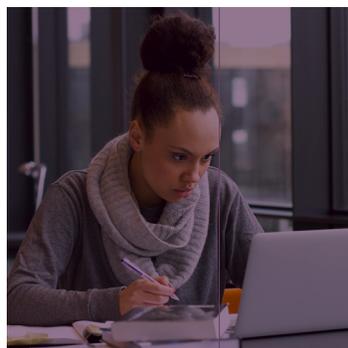
Advances policies and practices to dismantle the racial and economic barriers embedded in the American education system.

Conducts research on best practices and uses data to increase accountability and transparency.

Elevates the voices of students, parents, families, and educators to ensure those most affected are driving policies.

SECURING POLICY AND NARRATIVE CHANGE WINS FOR STUDENT BORROWERS

*The Education Trust has been busy advocating for equitable learning opportunities pre-K through college. In this update, we highlight one significant and historic win for students: **student loan cancellation.***



AFTER YEARS OF ADVOCACY, Ed Trust, our partners, and communities of color, secured a major policy win this summer for millions of borrowers who are suffering under the oppressive weight of \$1.7 trillion in student loan debt. In August, the Biden-Harris administration issued an executive order to cancel up to \$20,000 in student debt for Pell recipients, and \$10,000 for all other eligible borrowers who make under \$125,000 annually.

In a [statement](#), Interim CEO Denise Forte called this move a welcome “start” that will free millions of borrowers from debt they are struggling to repay and reduce the burden for many millions more. The administration also announced a final extension of the student loan payment pause through December 31, as well as a new borrower repayment plan that will reduce future monthly payments on undergraduate loans.

Ed Trust applauded these actions, while stressing that more relief is needed. In [her statement](#), Denise urged the administration to consider additional actions to address college affordability and reduce racial inequities going forward, noting that “limiting the relief to these amounts represents a missed opportunity” to “close the racial wealth gap, alleviate default rates, and prevent millions more borrowers from being burdened with decades-long debt payments that they are unlikely to ever pay off.”

We, along with our partners and borrowers from impacted communities, continue to advocate for cancellation of at least \$50,000 per borrower across the board, which would expand the positive effects of debt cancellation and create a pathway to financial stability for so many millions more, including many Black borrowers, who hold the highest amount of student loan debt and have been disproportionately harmed by the student debt crisis due to the racial wealth gap.

We are calling on the Biden-Harris administration to provide additional student loan relief while the opportunity exists and to work with Congress to deliver bold action to make college more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans by doubling the maximum Pell Grant.

As a result of our steadfast advocacy on the issue of student debt, particularly around Black borrowers, and Black women, EdTrust was cited in a slew of news articles on how this administration's plan is likely to impact these borrowers. Here is a snapshot of the coverage:

- [Black women, burdened by student debt, say Biden's student loan policy doesn't go far enough](#), Good Morning America, also in 75+Media Markets
- [Biden's Plan on Student Loan Forgiveness](#), CNN also in 100+Media Markets
- [Biden's student debt forgiveness won't close America's Black wealth gap, but it's a start](#), Yahoo Finance
- [The impact of Biden's student loan forgiveness on America's Black wealth gap](#), Fortune
- [For students of color, debt forgiveness doesn't go far enough](#), The Hill
- [A Look at Biden's Student Loan Debt Relief Announcement](#), WNYC, Hosted by Dr. Melissa Harris-Perry
- [Biden's Student Loan Plan Still Leaves Millions With Debt](#), TIME
- [President Biden announces student loan forgiveness](#), ABC
- [Biden's \\$10,000 in student-loan forgiveness is not enough: NAACP, other advocates](#), Business Insider
- ['That's The Point': Why student loan debt cancellation is about racial justice](#), The Grio
- [Twitter says Biden's student loan forgiveness plan isn't enough](#), Fortune



To help secure this policy and narrative change win, Ed Trust made various advocacy pushes in the months before and after the announcement.



In July, Ed Trust researchers published a brief on "[How Student Debt Harms Black Borrowers' Mental Health.](#)"

This paper highlighted the pressure that Black borrowers are under — noting that they are more likely to borrow and struggle with repayment than their peers because they have fewer resources to pay for college, due to the generational and ongoing effects of structural racism — not to mention the devastating and far-reaching financial and mental toll that student debt often takes on these borrowers.

This brief was well received by the media and was covered by: [NewsOne](#), [Yahoo News](#), [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#), [Inside Higher Education](#), and [Word in Black](#), among many others.



THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Also in July, we — along with Black Girls Vote, Higher Heights, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) — hosted a virtual event to explore why Black people have more student debt, what it means for the Black community, how it impacts mental health, and what advocates and policymakers can do to reform a system that has left Americans with nearly \$2 trillion in student loan debt. [Watch the event here](#) and [read our summary on the Equity Line](#). The event was covered by [Diverse: Issues In Higher Education](#) and in this piece by the [National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators \(NASFAA\)](#).



Following the announcement, and in response to a swirl of questions on social media about who would be eligible for cancellation, Wil Del Pilar, Ph.D., vice president of higher education policy and practice, published an [explainer blog](#) on “What You Need to Know About Student Debt Cancellation” on [The Equity Line](#).

In August, [US News and World Report published an op-ed](#) by Denise Forte explaining why the federal government should cancel college student loan debt.

Earlier this year, we released several other reports and briefs tied to student debt, which can be found in [previous Ed Trust updates](#).

While student debt relief is beginning to be addressed at the federal level, child-care affordability and access have, once again, fallen by the wayside in congressional negotiations. While rising college costs are on the minds of most college students, the students who are parents have been hit hardest as the nation struggles to cope with child-care facility scarcities, child-care worker shortages, and skyrocketing child-care costs. In fact, the average cost of child care is an eye-popping [\\$10,000 per year, per child](#). To address this issue, in August, Ed Trust and our partner, Generation Hope, released a report titled, “[For Student Parents, The Biggest Hurdles to A Higher Education Are Costs and Finding Child Care](#).”



The report shows that student parents from a low-income background need to work a whopping 52 hours per week, on average, to cover the cost of child care and tuition at a four-year public college or university, and that’s after grants, scholarships, and earnings from working 10 hours per week at the state minimum wage are applied.

This is a particularly salient issue for many of the groups we serve, given that student parents are disproportionately single, students of color, and from low-income backgrounds, the report notes. It goes on to explain that they face a slew of obstacles to graduating from college with a valuable degree in hand and must often juggle work, school, and family responsibilities while going to school. Many are also struggling to find child care and meet basic needs, especially now, amid a still-ongoing pandemic and when basic necessities are at a premium. Our report offers several policy solutions at the federal, state, and institutional levels to address this burgeoning crisis.

The report received excellent media coverage and was featured in the following publications: [Diverse Issues in Higher Education](#), [Forbes](#), [Yahoo News](#), [Inside Higher Ed](#), [KUT 90.5 \(Austin’s NPR station\)](#), [Al Día News](#), [Higher Ed Dive](#), and [EdSource](#).

In the coming months, we will continue to center communities of color and press for the change students of color and students from low-income backgrounds need to live a life of their choosing. We will explore faculty diversity, income-based repayment plans, Parent Plus loans, the plight of undocumented students, and the need to improve the culture on our campuses.

At a Glance

During the dog days of summer, The Education Trust was busy working alongside partners and community members to grow a movement toward educational justice.

Last month, The White House held its Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, which was intended to be a catalyst for action to end student hunger. We were pleased to see that many of the [recommendations](#) that Ed Trust had put forward were included in the administration's National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, its plan of action to address food insecurity and improve health outcomes. [Read our statement here.](#)



A child's health and educational development begin with healthy eating at home and school. To drive this point home, this summer, we launched the [Child and Student Nutrition Alliance](#), a coalition of organizations dedicated to elevating the importance and urgency of a robust federal investment in the highest quality nutritional standards and fully funded programs to eliminate children and student hunger. The coalition is led by First Focus on Children and The Education Trust. Learn more at www.ChildandStudentNutritionAlliance.org.



Over the summer, we were instrumental in organizing and working with partners to submit recommendations to government agencies on how best to use resources allocated by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. And last month, we successfully convinced the U.S. Department of Education to focus on mitigating potential harm from school hardening practices and use evidence-based metrics when determining need. [Read our statement here.](#)



The National Assessment Governing Board released the [2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress \(NAEP\) Long-Term Trend](#) results for 9-year-olds. The results weren't good; they showed some of the largest declines in learning in the half-century since the assessment was first conducted. While most people blamed the declines on the COVID-19 pandemic, Denise Forte, interim CEO of Ed Trust, was quick to [emphasize](#) their systemic origins: "Due to inequitable and unjust school systems, students who are the most underserved

continue to struggle academically," as they did before the pandemic. "And while there are decision-makers that are rightly pushing for equity and justice in schools, they are far too often met with fierce opposition from those who want to maintain the status quo."

The full 2022 NAEP results will be released in late October.

Take the #ForeverATeacher Campaign Pledge



Ed Trust in Louisiana

launched its “Forever a Teacher” [campaign](#) to address teacher shortages and the lack of teacher diversity by spotlighting and

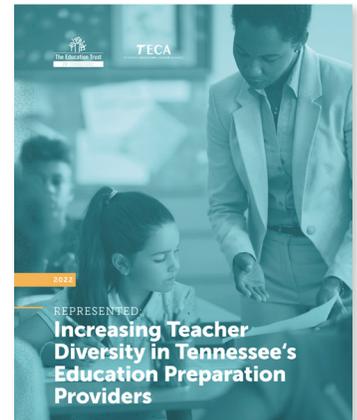
showcasing the voices of Louisiana teachers of color who have stayed in the classroom and are inspiring the next generation of teaching professionals. The campaign aims to build awareness, advocacy, and action around teacher diversity across the state and mobilize teachers to push for policy solutions created by them and for them. The #ForeverATeacher campaign officially launched with a social media campaign and a [#ForeverATeacher Social Mixer kickoff event](#).

Also in September, input from members of Ed Trust Texas’ [Student Advisory Council](#) was recognized and incorporated into recommendations issued by the Texas Commission on Community College Finance. If adopted by the legislature, these changes would transform the state’s outcomes-based-funding model and expand need-based financial aid programs to improve resource equity and student success.



The Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership (MEEP) released [“There Is No Excellence Without Equity: A Path Forward for Education in Massachusetts,”](#) a call to action for state leaders to tackle long-standing disparities in opportunity and outcomes from early education through postsecondary education. The report has generated a significant amount of buzz and has already been covered by [The Boston Globe](#), [NBC Boston](#), [Telemundo Nueva Inglaterra](#), [MassLive](#), and [WBUR](#).

Meanwhile, The Education Trust in Tennessee, in partnership with the [Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance](#), released a new report in September titled, [“Represented: Increasing Teacher Diversity in Tennessee’s Education Provider Programs.”](#) This report



offers recommendations on ways that state policymakers and educator preparation providers can increase teacher diversity, and ultimately, improve student experiences and fill teaching vacancies across Tennessee.

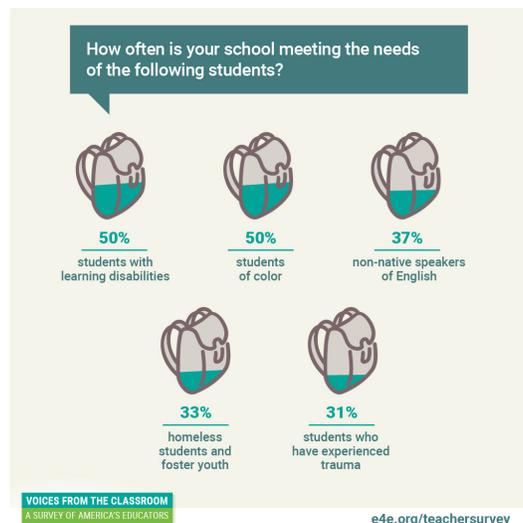
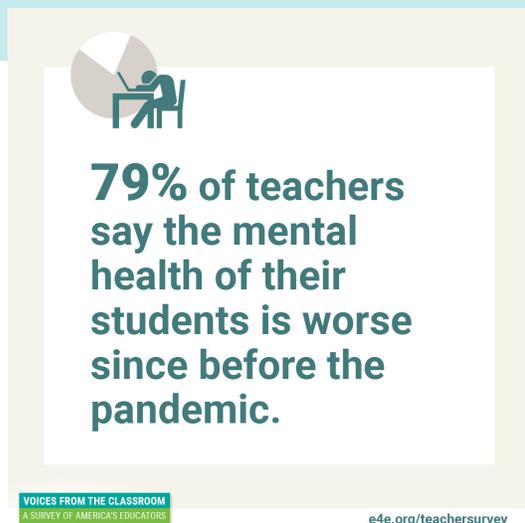
[The Tennessee Coalition for Truth in Classrooms](#), led by The Education Trust in Tennessee, is a group of students, education advocates, and community leaders who believe in promoting the teaching of accurate history in our schools and honoring and valuing the diversity of our students, staff, and institutions. In September, the coalition [sent feedback to the Tennessee State Board of Education on the new social studies recommendations](#).

At a Glance

August

Ed Trust and Educators for Excellence jointly released a report titled, "[2022 Voices from the Classroom](#)." The survey was conducted at the height of the Omicron variant surge in January. The findings reflect the perspectives we have heard in thousands of conversations with educators across the country as they have grappled with the ongoing challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued politicization of their classrooms.

The results showed that 86% of teachers nationally said they would spend their entire career as a classroom teacher, but that number dropped to 52% when looking only at responses from teachers of color. This report is a call to action for policymakers to make equity-based decisions to create the conditions to retain teachers of color. Word in Black, a wire service for Black Newspapers, published a article on the report titled, [Here's How We Recruit and Retain More Black Teachers](#).





Ed Trust brought teachers together from across the nation to discuss and identify ways to increase the diversity of the educator workforce. Today, more than 50% of U.S. public school students are children of color; yet, fewer than 20% of teachers are people of color — and that number hasn't budged in decades. At the convening, each of the state teacher teams in attendance drafted an advocacy strategy and committed to three actions to advance the policies they identified as high-leverage solutions based on the information included in their state educator diversity briefs. [Read more about this convening of educators in Chalkbeat.](#)

To support the teacher teams and kickstart conversations on teacher diversity, Ed Trust released [a series of state briefs](#), along with [an updated web tool](#), that provide data and a landscape analysis of policies and practices for advocates, educators, and decision-makers leading this work at the state level.



We were successful in pushing the Senate Appropriations Committee on Labor and Health and Human Services and Education to raise funding levels for some of our key priorities — including Pell Grants, ESSA Title I, the Augustus F. Hawkins Center of Excellence Program, and the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) Program — in the draft fiscal year 2023 funding bill. These proposed increases mirror those in the analogous House bill and the president's budget.



The Education Trust–Midwest



The Education Trust–Midwest and Partners Celebrate a Big Win for Students Who Are Underserved

The Education Trust–Midwest and partners have advocated tirelessly for years for changes to Michigan’s school funding system, so that schools can receive the resources needed to educate all Michigan students, including those who have been chronically underserved, at a high level.

In June, we and our partners celebrated a major victory with the passage of a \$19.6 billion budget — the largest school aid budget in state history. This budget represents a 15% increase over last year. We were pleased that this year’s budget prioritizes spending for traditionally underserved students and is the most equitable budget the state has passed in several years. While there’s much more work to be done, we are buoyed by the impact our collective efforts are having.

The budget:

- Ensures that students who are underserved receive an extra 11.5% in funding (\$1,052 per student)

- Eliminates the auto-cut language that allowed funding for underserved youth to be tapped when the state budget is in a deficit
- Increases funding for students with disabilities by \$312 million
- Increases funding for English learners by 5% to match increased base funding

[Read more about the budget here.](#)

Robust Public Engagement and Advocacy for 2023

This summer, we deepened our engagement with the [Michigan Partnership for Equity and Opportunity](#), a coalition we convened more than two years ago, just as the pandemic hit. Together, we are strengthening our knowledge and creating an action and advocacy plan around key issues that impact underserved students, including equitable funding, fiscal transparency, the need for honest information and data about our schools, and other priorities to ensure success for Michigan’s students.

Read more about our coalition’s recommendations for immediate and long-term opportunities in this [op-ed in Bridge Michigan](#) and learn more about the coalition’s priorities [here](#).



Raise Your Voice!
Tell Your Story.
Improve Michigan Literacy.

Dyslexia Advocates!
Join Us for a Day of
VIRTUAL ADVOCACY
for
Michigan's Dyslexia Bills
Online 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
September 28th, 2022

We need your voice! The bills must pass before the end of the year. Help us reach out to Michigan legislators about the importance of improving early screening & teacher training about dyslexia.

Please Share!

- Follow @MIDyslexiaLaws on Facebook & Twitter.
- Sign up for Action Alerts at MIDyslexiaLaws.com

Leveraging Policy Opportunities for Early Literacy

This fall, our network of partners and other coalition partners are ramping up support and advocacy for a package of bipartisan bills that are moving through the legislature. These pieces of legislation, which have already cleared the Senate and are awaiting a hearing in the House Education Committee, could be transformative for Michigan's youngest readers and would address one of the most common barriers to reading success: dyslexia.

On September 28, we worked alongside partners on a [virtual day of action and advocacy](#) to raise additional awareness about the need to pass these bills. This day built on recent advocacy efforts by coalition members, which included meetings with legislators, knowledge-building sessions, and an [op-ed in the Detroit Free Press](#). Additionally, our advocacy push to pass legislation that would require regular screenings for dyslexia and provide support for students with dyslexia has led Ed Trust–Midwest to expand our advocacy work into special education and deepen our work in literacy.

Building a Network of Equity Allies

Ed Trust–Midwest has been working over the past year with Teach Plus — a national organization that empowers excellent, experienced, and diverse teachers to take leadership on key policy and practice issues that affect their students' success — on the [Michigan Teacher Leadership Collaborative](#). In September, we announced that 20 equity-focused educators will serve together to share their expertise on equity-focused instructional practices, deepen their knowledge of education policy, and gain a voice in decisions that affect historically underserved students and members of the teaching profession. Learn more about the impact of the [first cohort](#) here and plans for the [second cohort here](#).

Building Our Team

Ed Trust–Midwest is building and strengthening our team. We brought on board a new director of policy and research, [Jen DeNeal](#), who has extensive expertise in education policy, teacher quality, and equity. Jen previously worked as a Leadership for Educational Equity Public Policy Fellow at the North Carolina State Board of Education, where she focused on writing and revising state education policy. She is joined by [Emily Hatch](#), our new senior data and policy analyst. Emily has a strong background in funding and policy and joins us from the House Fiscal Agency, where she worked as a fiscal analyst on the school aid and Michigan Department of Education budgets. We are excited about the work they are already undertaking in the areas of equitable funding and teacher quality.

For more information, please visit EdTrustMidwest.org

The Education Trust—West



Securing Key Legislative Wins for the Students We Serve

Every year, The Education Trust—West analyzes new legislation and state budget proposals to identify “The Equity 8” — that is, the top eight legislative opportunities to advance educational equity and justice in California. This year’s Equity 8 proposals included a major investment in math and science teacher professional development, strengthening and expanding access to dual enrollment courses for high school students, and a ban on preschool suspension and expulsion, to name a few.

Seven of Ed Trust—West’s Equity 8 proposals have been approved by the Legislature and governor and will soon impact the lives and futures of millions across the state. Three of the proposals were enacted as part of the 2022-23 state budget and will provide funding for dual enrollment, math and science teacher professional development, and Cal Grant Reform. AB 2832, which calls for the creation of a Whole Child Equity Framework and Whole Child Community Equity Screening Tool to advance educational equity and support for children eight and under, was signed on September 28. On

September 30, California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed AB 1705, AB 1868, and AB 2806, which focus, respectively, on community college student success by phasing out remedial course, disaggregating English-learner student data school accountability, and ending exclusionary practices in preschools. Read more about each Equity 8 legislative proposal [here](#).

New Educator Advisory Council Cohort for the 2022-23 School Year

In September, Ed Trust—West’s Educator Advisory Council welcomed five new members who will join six returning members of the council. The goal of the council is to give educators of color a say in the issues, policies, and politics of the state’s preschool through the higher education landscape. The council members offer feedback on Ed Trust—West’s current and future projects and policy and legislative positions, and advocate for educational justice in their respective communities. You can read about our accomplished council members [here](#).



Education Equity Forum in Los Angeles

On September 19 and 20, Ed Trust–West hosted its fourth Education Equity Forum in Los Angeles, where we were joined by over 300 education equity champions from across the state. Attendees heard a morning plenary conversation between Christopher J. Nellum, Ph.D., executive director of Ed Trust–West; Arun Ramanathan, a former executive director of Ed Trust–West; and Denise Forte, Ed Trust’s interim CEO. The conversation was moderated by Carol Hedgespeth, Ph.D, deputy director of Ed Trust–West, and touched on many topics, including the need to push past performative acts of equity and how to stay motivated as we work to deliver educational justice to students.

During the lunch plenary, Christopher was joined on stage by [Anna Malaika Tubbs](#), Ph.D., a New York Times bestselling author of *The Three Mothers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin Shaped a Nation*. The two discussed the influence that these mothers had on the work of their sons, who became major civil rights leaders. There was also a conversation about intersectionality

in education equity issues and how it affects teacher diversity and legislation.

As in past years, the forum featured three rounds of learning sessions and 25 sessions covering critical topics and issues related to education equity in California. And for the first time ever, attendees had an opportunity to attend four implementation institutes on how to move from statewide policy change to on-the-ground implementation during the post-pandemic recovery.

Nurturing the Next Generation of Education Advocates

This summer, Ed Trust–West welcomed six Russlynn Ali Fellows, who worked on projects to advance educational equity across the state of California. This year’s cohort consisted of educators, researchers, and advocates who spent eight weeks working on issues ranging from educator diversity to student-parent advocacy, among many other topics. You can read about our summer 2022 Ali Fellows cohort [here](#).

For more information, please visit EdTrustWest.org

The Education Trust—New York

Online data tool allows users to explore how New York school districts are investing resources

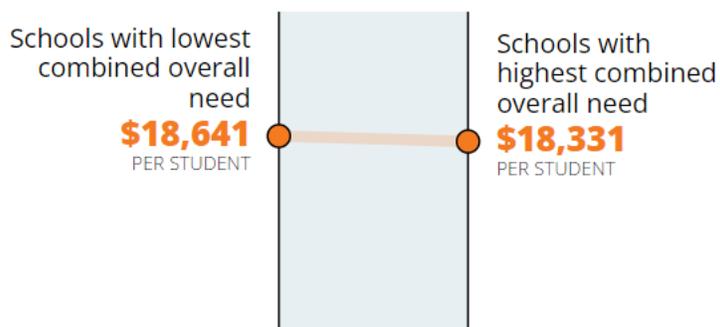
The Education Trust—New York relaunched its New York School Funding online data tool —

nyschoolfunding.org — which allows users to explore whether school districts across the state are equitably distributing resources to support students who are most underserved.

Using publicly available data from a state law that requires all 673 New York school districts receiving foundation aid to report their 2021-22 school-level budgets, the data tool lets users see how schools and districts allocate resources, and whether students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners are receiving the resources they need to succeed.

The tool comes as school districts across New York are receiving an additional \$8.9 billion in funding through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, money that is intended to supplement school budgets and support programs and services to help students whose academic progress and emotional well-being have been affected by the pandemic.

School leaders can use the information in the tool to see how districts are already investing resources and identifying areas of need that warrant additional funding.



New York Equity Coalition analysis highlights school districts' reliance on Regents exemptions to graduate students

An [analysis](#) released by the New York Equity Coalition found that while the state's graduation rate has steadily risen in recent years, a reliance on exemptions from Regents exams and regulatory changes designed to give flexibility during the pandemic may have inflated the increases.

Since 2016, New York's graduation rate has risen 9.4 percentage points, with double-digit increases in Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse. The class of 2021 continued this upward trend, with an 86.1% graduation rate — a 1.3% increase from the previous year.

Yet recent changes to state graduation requirements make it difficult to know if graduation rate improvements accurately reflect how well schools are preparing students — especially those who have been historically underserved by the education system — for future success. For the past three years, the COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted regular administration of high school Regents exams, and the New York State Education Department has made additional regulatory changes that make it easier for students to graduate from high school.

As the Board of Regents considers changes to the state's graduation requirements, the coalition will be actively advocating to protect standards that ensure that all students graduate high school prepared for their future.



Despite significant child poverty, New York lags behind other states in providing tax credit relief to families of young children

As New York continues its economic recovery amid the ongoing pandemic, the Raising NY [coalition calls on state leaders](#) to expand the Empire State Child Credit to help reduce the number of children living in poverty and expand coverage to children under 4.

New York was among the first states in the nation to offer a child tax credit and once led the country in its generous, fully refundable family tax credits — the Empire State Child Credit perhaps most notable among them. But New York has quickly fallen behind as other states have instituted more generous credits in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The state's slide has been happening even as New York's largest cities post some of the highest child poverty rates in the nation. Statewide, nearly one in five children (18%) lived in poverty in 2020 just prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. That rate is even higher for Black children (28%) and Latino children (25%).

Communities already impacted by significant child poverty rates continue to be disproportionately impacted by recent economic changes, especially communities of color. Now more than ever, families of infants and toddlers need resources and support from our state leaders, and expanding the Empire State Child Credit is a crucial first step.

Analysis sheds light on how New York's child-care providers utilized federal and state pandemic relief dollars

An [analysis](#) of how child-care providers utilized federal and state pandemic relief funding sheds new light on which providers were able to access the money, how it was spent, and how New York can improve its systems to ensure that future funding streams are equitably distributed.

The historic levels of federal funding in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and American Rescue Plan Act combined with the state's Child Care Stabilization Grant, enabled New York to award millions of dollars to child-care providers in an effort to keep programs open during the early years of the coronavirus pandemic. Over the past two years, the New York State Office of Children and Family (OCFS) Services distributed more than \$1 billion from these funding streams combined.

It is possible that stabilization grants or a similar funding mechanism will be a part of the child-care ecosystem for several years, and it is crucial for the state to ensure that any future grants to support child-care providers are designed so that the providers that can benefit most have clear and easy access to resources.



For more information, please visit EdTrustNY.org

WITH GRATITUDE

The Education Trust would like to express our deepest gratitude for the support of our mission to advance policies and practices to overcome the racial and economic barriers embedded in the American education system. As the nation continues to go through troubling times, generous gifts from donors such as these provide the financial and moral support needed to continue to press for educational equity and justice. We are continually thankful for your support.

Thank you!

The Education Trust

National Office

Amgen Foundation
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Anonymous
Arnold Ventures
Ascendium Education Philanthropy
Ballmer Group
Baptist Community Ministries
Barr Foundation
Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Bezos Family Foundation
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Bloomberg Philanthropies
Carina Initiatives, Inc.
Carnegie Corporation of New York
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative
Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
The Chicago Community Foundation
Community Foundation of Northern Nevada
Crown Family Philanthropies
Dan and Margaret Maddox Fund
Education Law Center
Edwin Gould Foundation
Greater Texas Foundation
Heising-Simons Foundation
Houston Endowment
Imaginable Futures
The Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation
The Joyce Foundation
The Kresge Foundation
Laughing Gull Foundation
Lumina Foundation
Margulf Foundation
McElhattan Foundation
Mellon Foundation
Memphis Education Fund
Nellie Mae Education Foundation
Oak Foundation
Overdeck Family Foundation
The Powell Foundation
Public Welfare Foundation
Raikes Foundation
Rainwater Charitable Foundation
Resource Equity Funders Collaborative
Salesforce Foundation
Scarlett Family Foundation
Seattle Foundation
Share Our Strength
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Spencer Foundation
Trellis Foundation
Tides Foundation
W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation
The Wallace Foundation
Walmart Foundation
Walton Family Foundation
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
William T. Grant Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

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Midwest

Ballmer Group
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
DTE Energy Foundation
Grand Rapids Community Foundation
The Kresge Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Zingerman's Community of Businesses

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New York

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Carnegie Corporation of New York
The Carson Family Charitable Trust
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
Cullen Foundation
Early Childhood Partners, NYC in the New York Community Trust
The Fund for the City of New York
Heckscher Foundation for Children
John R. Oishei Foundation
Overdeck Family Foundation
Pritzker Children's Initiative
Robin Hood Foundation
United Way of New York City
W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation
Walton Family Foundation

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West

Alliance for a Better Community
Anonymous
Ballmer Group
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
The Buck Family Fund of Marin Community Foundation
California Community Foundation
The California Endowment
The California Wellness Foundation
Californians for Justice
College Futures Foundation
David & Lucille Packard Foundation
The Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation
Evelyn & Walter Haas Jr. Fund
Heising-Simons Foundation
Hellman Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Silver Giving Foundation
Sobrato Philanthropies
Stuart Foundation
Stupski Foundation
Tides Center
Tipping Point Community
Walter & Elise Haas Fund
Walton Family Foundation
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Yellow Chair Foundation



The Education Trust

Our Mission

The Education Trust is committed to advancing policies and practices to dismantle the racial and economic barriers embedded in the American education system. Through our research and advocacy, EdTrust improves equity in education from preschool through college, engages diverse communities dedicated to education equity and justice, and increases political and public will to build an education system where students will thrive.

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