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A PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERSHIP FOR BLACK COMMUNITIES

Education **BLACK FACTS**





Education: Black Facts

42 PERCENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS ATTEND POORLY-RESOURCED, LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS COMPARED TO ONLY 15 PERCENT OF WHITE STUDENTS.

(SCHOTT FOUNDATION 2012)

AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED THEIR LITERACY RATES.

Educational Overview

African Americans have managed to orchestrate one of the most impressive and unprecedented successful educational campaigns in modern day history. Since the historical and landmark case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education* in 1955, African Americans have managed to significantly increase their literacy rates, high school graduate rates, and college attainment rates. These historical accomplishments, coupled with the 1965 passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which mandated and provided equal funding to poorly-resourced schools by the federal government, African Americans were poised to succeed educationally in the United States.

Even though African Americans have made incredible educational strides in the last 60 years, there is still much work needed to create an equal playing field for African American children. The consequences of failing to ensure educational success and equity are far-reaching. The adverse impact is long term, and reflected in future employment prospects, poverty and incarceration rates, as well as limited capacity to productively participate in the global economy. Historically, African Americans have used education as a mechanism to improve their circumstances in America. Therefore, without equal educational opportunities, there will be a large segment of the African American population left behind.

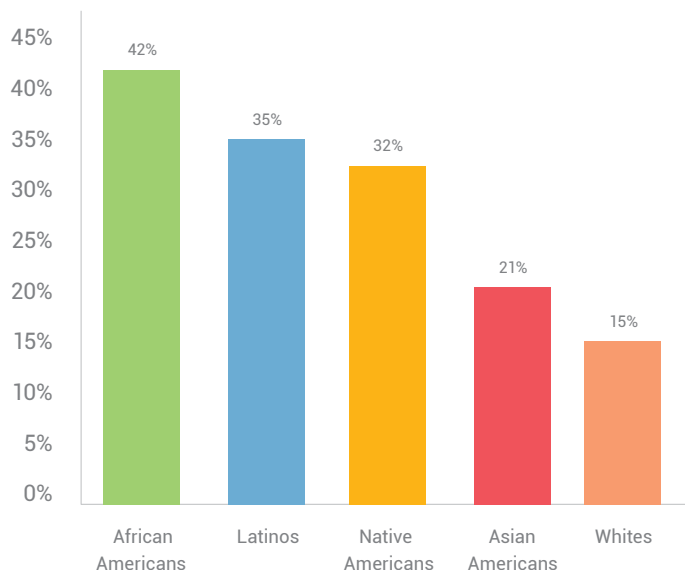
STUDENTS IN POORLY RESOURCED, LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Embedded racial and structural inequities produce unequal opportunities for school success. Systematic policies, practices, and stereotypes work against children and youth of color and negatively affect their opportunity for achieving educational success. We need to understand the consequences of these inequities, how disparities are produced, and how they can be eliminated to ensure that all children and youth have equal opportunity for academic achievement and consequently social and economic mobility.

Barriers to Equal Opportunities

Racial segregation

Public schools in the United States are becoming more racially segregated and the trend is likely to continue. Close to 50 percent of public school students are children of color and 60 percent of them attend schools with families that are below or near the poverty line. School segregation is reflective of the racial make up of neighborhoods, and these neighborhoods are extremely stratified along class and racial lines. For example, 75 percent of African Americans live in only 16 Census Block Groups (CBG) in the United States (there are over 211,000 (CBG) in the United States). Highly segregated schools lead to higher levels of concentrated poverty. They are least likely to attract highly qualified teachers and administrators, and often administer inferior and stale curricula to students.



Statistics as of June 30, 2004 from Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2004, Tables 1, 14 and 15 and U.S. Census.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES ARE BECOMING MORE RACIALLY SEGREGATED.

Unequal school resources

Public school funding in America comes from local property taxes. This economic model generates large funding disparities between wealthy and high poverty schools. Because neighborhood segregation and local school revenue are intricately tied, students in high poverty, racially segregated schools are less likely to achieve academically due to lower levels of tax revenue. Latino and Black students comprise approximately 80 percent of the student population in extremely low-income schools. Better funded schools are often able to attract highly trained and qualified teachers and administrators, improve school aesthetics, invest in curriculum and technology, and generate overall better achievement among students.

Access to quality pre-kindergarten programs

The years between pre-kindergarten and third grade are vital to creating the foundation for later school success. Providing quality pre-kindergarten services to 3 and 4 year olds has a tremendous impact in closing achievement gaps. Youth from low-income families who start kindergarten without first attending pre-kindergarten are 18 months behind their peers and many never catch up. Approximately 60 percent of African American preschoolers do not attend full-day pre-kindergarten or preschool programs.

Teacher training/quality

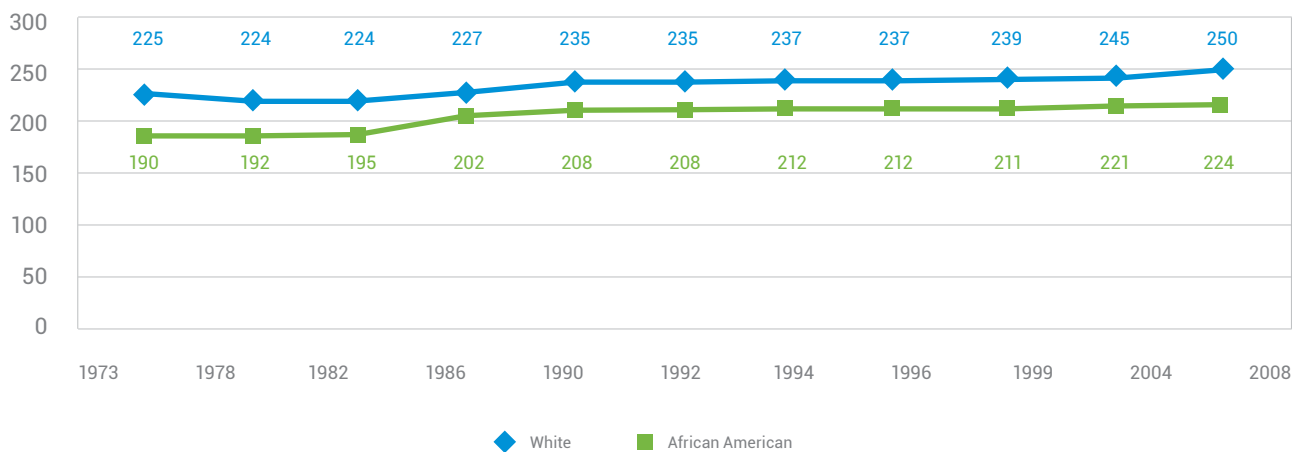
Research has shown that teachers are the most significant educational resource in a school district. If the most talented teachers were matched up with the most vulnerable students, schools could close the educational achievement gap. However, what we find is the opposite. Schools with the highest percentage of minority students are most likely to employ new-to-the-field teachers. Teachers who have received the best training, with the most innovative classroom strategies are more likely to be teaching in upper middle class schools, which tend to have very little, if any, African American students.

The Consequences of UnEqual Opportunity

Differential achievement levels

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, white students scored 26 points higher than Black students in Math and Reading assessment tests in 2009. This pattern has been pretty consistent over the last 30 years. These educational disparities lead to African American students being at least four years behind their white counterparts by the time they finish high school.

White-Black Average Reading Scores, age 9

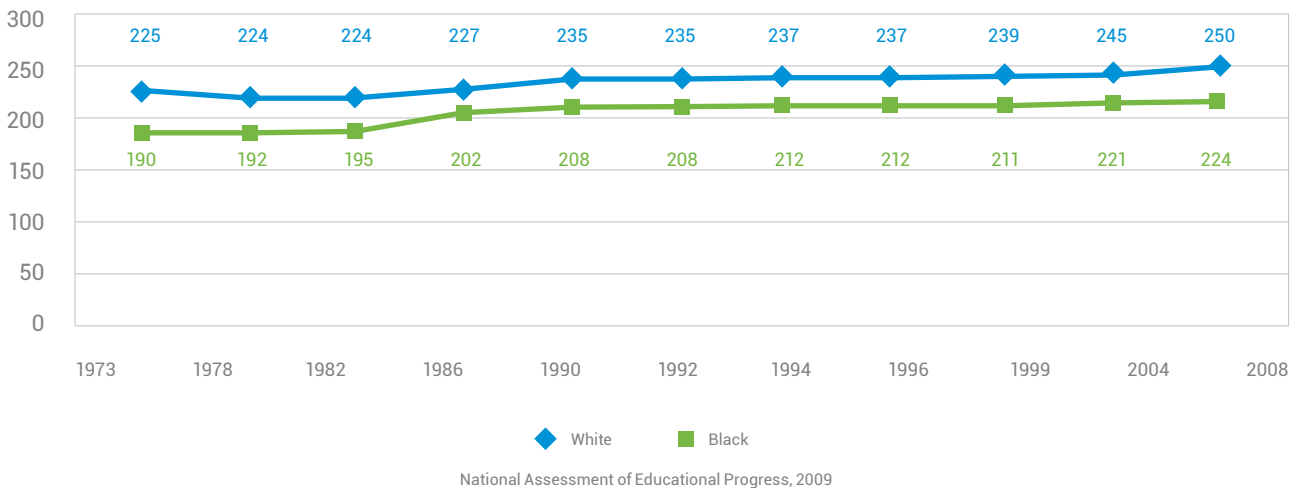


National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2009

Education: Black Facts

WHITE STUDENTS SCORED 26 POINTS HIGHER THAN BLACK STUDENTS IN MATH AND READING ASSESSMENT TESTS IN 2009.

White/Black Average Mathematics Scores, age 9



Differential high school completion rates

It's estimated that a high school graduate will earn \$450,000 more in their lifetime than a dropout, and that high school graduates will generate more than \$200,000 in higher tax revenues and savings in government expenditures over their lifetime. Moreover, according to the Schott Foundation, approximately 53 percent of African American males are dropping out of high school compared to 22 percent of white males. Black high school dropouts feed a growing black underclass of economically disadvantaged families, making it more difficult to break the cycle of poverty.

Differential access to higher education

In 2009, 19 percent of African Americans held a four-year bachelors degree compared to 30 percent of whites. Individuals with a college education earn approximately \$300,000 more over the course of their lifetime than high school graduates. College is even more elusive for those who are the most economically vulnerable. For example, high school is the highest level of education attained by 64.6 percent of students from the lowest quartile of the socioeconomic status. More specifically, African American rates of graduation from four-year institutions, over the past twenty years, have slowly declined.

Philanthropic Investment Strategies to Promote Equal Opportunity

Support Policy

Because of Philanthropy's neutral political position it can bring together policymakers from both sides of the aisle to honestly and frankly discuss the tough issues of education and develop innovative policy solutions. These convenings should happen at various levels of government, especially locally and regionally where many educational decisions are made.

Fund Innovative Projects

Philanthropy can play a key role in funding innovative educational projects that can be adopted by school systems. Innovative projects can include developing programs to attract and retain talented teachers and school administrators to partnering with large corporations to have them invest in public education's math and science programs.

Fund Educational Research

Data is incredibly important in shaping educational policy and Philanthropy is in a unique position to engage the academic community to produce and distribute quality research that can be used by policymakers, school administrators, teachers, community residents, and parents to better design and evaluate educational effectiveness.

Education: Black Facts

BETTER FUNDED SCHOOLS ARE OFTEN ABLE TO ATTRACT HIGHLY TRAINED AND QUALIFIED TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS.

Invest in schools

Disparity in school funding is a huge obstacle to student achievement. Philanthropic organizations can work with their donors to make strategic investments in public education. Moreover, foundations can help leverage both financial and human capital in improving failing schools.

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PRE-KINDERGARTEN AND
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CREATING THE
FOUNDATION
FOR LATER SCHOOL SUCCESS





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