



Lost Opportunity:

A 50 State Report on the
Opportunity to Learn
In America

National Summary Report



FOREWORD



In 2008, *Given Half a Chance: The Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*, revealed that nationally, only 47 percent of America's Black males were graduating from high school. As the Schott Foundation moved beyond the surface level outcome data, we discovered even larger resource disparities which, in many respects, explained the large outcome disparities. These inequities extended far beyond just dollars; the students were also less likely to have access to highly effective teachers, early childhood education, and college preparatory curriculum. In the states where Black males were more likely to have access to those critical resources, they performed better. Likewise, in the places where White males were denied access to these same key resources, like in Detroit and Indianapolis, their outcomes also suffered severely. Simply put, what we witness today in the achievement gap is the silhouette of a larger opportunity gap that is identifiable both by race and socio-economic status. The achievement

gap is merely one of many symptoms of a larger systemic illness. To move beyond what Lani Guinier brands as the, "miner's canary" approach, we decided to go deeper and investigate at what level the states in the U.S. were providing every child a fair and substantive opportunity to learn. *Lost Opportunity: A 50 State Report on the Opportunity to Learn in America* is that deeper look.

The Schott Foundation and the philanthropic field are not new to this space. For years, we have been engaged with philanthropic partners at the Ford Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies, Open Society Institute, Lumina Foundation for Education, Rauch Foundation, the Donors Education Collaborative, Communities for Public Education Reform (CPER) and many others to address educational resource inequities. In New York our grantees call the effort The Campaign for Fiscal Equity. Our partners in New Jersey call it Abbott; in California, it's the William's case; in Massachusetts, it's Hancock; and in Ohio it's DeRolph. All of these are state-level campaigns where parents and community advocates seek to provide the necessary resources for their children to have an opportunity to learn. In the early 1990's, the President and Congress had a chance to address ensuring an opportunity to learn for all students but passed it to another administration to take on the political burden. Eighteen years later, as *Lost Opportunity* clearly reveals, our children are still in desperate need of an opportunity to learn. Not just to reach proficiency or graduate from high school but, as the Lumina Foundation advocates and the President has articulated, to achieve success in post-secondary education and in life.

Lost Opportunity is not merely a report, it's a platform for change. A galvanizing call for philanthropic partners, our grantees, and grassroots, grassstops and netroots advocates to organize to build a public will movement to strengthen our democracy, economy, communities and become better global citizens by guaranteeing that all students have a fair and substantive opportunity to learn.

John H. Jackson

President and CEO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its *Lost Opportunity* report, the Schott Foundation for Public Education establishes an “initial” metric for determining the Opportunity to Learn for students. The Schott Foundation provides a state-by-state comparison of both academic proficiency (as illustrated by the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient on the eighth grade National Assessment of Educational Progress - NAEP reading exam) and access to high-performing schools (as measured by the Schott Foundation’s Opportunity to Learn Index, or OTLI). Realizing if the U.S. is to provide every student a true opportunity to learn, the country must first ensure that all students, even the most disadvantaged, have access to the high-quality resources necessary for success. The Schott Foundation used resource models to identify the four core minimum resources that are necessary if a child – regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status – is to have a fair and substantive opportunity to learn:

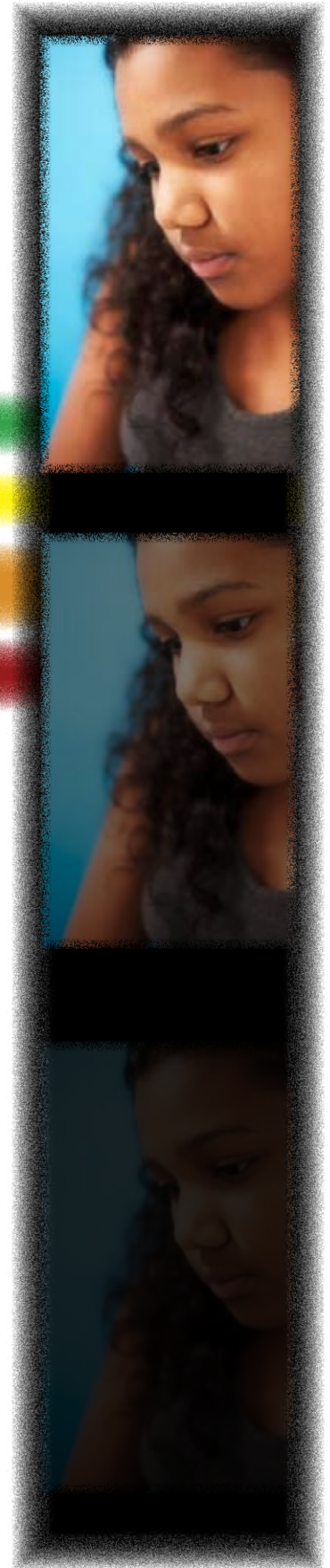
- 1. High-quality early childhood education;**
- 2. Highly qualified teachers and instructors in grades K-12;**
- 3. College preparatory curricula that will prepare all youth for college, work and community; and**
- 4. Equitable instructional resources.**

Opportunity to Learn, Nationally

The report’s data indicate that, nationally, students from historically disadvantaged groups have just a 51 percent Opportunity to Learn, when compared to White, non-Latino students, as measured by the OTLI. The effects of these inequities are disproportionately concentrated in a few states. California and New York each account for 15 percent of the nation’s Opportunity to Learn inequity impact. Texas accounts for an additional 12 percent. Illinois, Michigan and Pennsylvania account for 5 percent each. New York’s share of the economic effect of inequity is nearly three times its percentage of the national population

Opportunity to Learn, State-by-State

The interstate opportunity gap is stark. Looking at the 50 states and the District of Columbia, only eight states can be identified as providing both at least a moderately proficient and a high access education for all students. Sixteen states were found to provide a moderately proficient education for most students, but demonstrated low access when it came to providing that education to historically disadvantaged students. Disturbingly, 17 states were found to provide high-access, low-proficiency education to their students. While these states are to be recognized for breaking down the barriers between White students and Black and Latino students, and between high income students and low-income students, it cannot be missed that these states are doing so at the lowest common denominator. In many cases they provide an equal, yet very inferior education to students. Most disturbing are the nine states at the bottom, which show both low-proficiency and low-access public education ratings. Even with significant disparities in equity, these states are unable to provide even moderate quality education to any significant number of their students.



Moving Forward

The federal government must make access to a high-quality opportunity to learn a federally guaranteed right for every American. We cannot have equity without quality. And we cannot have true quality without real equity. The *Lost Opportunity* data should serve as an eye-opener for every federal, state and local policymaker and community advocate grappling with decisions on educational priorities.

The federal government should develop and implement a national opportunity to learn resource accountability system to track student access to core educational resources. To support this system, the following recommendations are presented:

- The federal government and community advocates should support, monitor and track states in the adoption and implementation of “Opportunity to Learn plans” for their states.
- The federal government and community advocates should take steps to use data systems to ensure that states and localities are achieving the highest return on investments from taxpayer dollars. With such data, policymakers, advocates and educators will be equipped with the information necessary to close the opportunity gap and improve public education for all students.
- A similar frame should be used to certify that charter and magnet schools are Opportunity to Learn schools; corporation and local businesses are opportunity to learn businesses; communities are building opportunity to learn environments; and families and parents are fostering opportunity to learn homes.
- Noting that President Obama has set a national goal for the United States to produce the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020, advocates called on the President to immediately establish a National Interagency Commission on the Opportunity to Learn to determine the necessary sustained investments, coordination and partnerships to ensure that students in all states have a fair and substantive opportunity to learn by 2020.
- The Federal Government should establish an Opportunity to Learn Education Trust Fund to provide resources to states to support the implementation of the state’ Opportunity to Learn Resource Equity Plans and stabilize the implementation of the plans during economic down times.

The nation now recognizes the strength of its public schools is directly and inextricably linked to its social, civic and economic strength. The U.S. will be a stronger nation and global citizen—economically and socially—with a better-educated citizenry when all Americans have access to the pathways of success and opportunity. If every child is to have an opportunity for success, every student **MUST** first receive a true Opportunity to Learn.

For further recommendations, see the *Opportunity to Learn Federal Recommendations* at www.schottfoundation.org.



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The federal government must make access to a high quality opportunity to learn a federally guaranteed right for every American.

More than 25 years ago, *A Nation at Risk* detailed the growing inequities and lack of opportunities in our public education system, highlighting the obstacles the United States would have to overcome if these problems were not immediately addressed. Yet, our achievement gap remains at disastrously high levels, as evidenced by the 2009 NAEP Long-Term Trend Data, which showed a 53-point gap in reading proficiency between Black and White 17-year-olds and a 33-point gap in math proficiency between Latino and White 17-year-olds. The United States is now paying a hefty price for its opportunity and achievement gap. McKinsey & Company recently estimated that closing the achievement gap between White students and their Black and Latino peers could increase the annual Gross Domestic Product by more than half a trillion dollars.

Collectively, policy makers have spent a great deal of time diagnosing the problem. While human resource and structural reforms are key components to closing the learning gap, just as important to the reform effort is accountability: the development and implementation of outcome and resource accountability standards which guarantee students the resources needed to have a fair and substantive opportunity to learn. Reform that is limited to terminating staff or restructuring individual schools may look like progress, but in a larger analysis only benefits a few. We are able to identify today individual high-poverty, high-minority schools where the students are performing well; however, we are not able to identify high-poverty, high-minority *districts* where students have access to high-quality educational opportunities. We need true reform that changes systems and affects all students, rather than approaches that save a few to make us feel better or allow us to “window dress” our systemic failures. Without access to real, system-wide, high-quality learning opportunities, we can never maximize the effectiveness of public education and achieve full participation in our democracy.

Under our current system, access to some of our nation’s districts or schools brings with it the virtual certainty of high school graduation and access to and success in postsecondary education. Access to other districts or schools within the same states, however, brings near certainty of an education that ends well short of a high school diploma, with little prospect for college or employment with livable wages and the near certain perpetuation of inter-generational poverty.

What is an Opportunity to Learn?

President Barack Obama has established a national goal that by 2020 the United States will be a global leader in post-secondary education. This is a forward-thinking goal. To achieve it, America must produce 16 million more postsecondary credentialed and degree attained students than we otherwise would at our current rate. Achieving this goal will require more than a school-based or systemic tweak. It is only attainable if we are able to improve the educational access and outcomes for those who have been historically disadvantaged because of their race/ethnicity or family income. Without true opportunity for all, particularly for those from historically disadvantaged groups, we can never have a level playing field for learning, achievement, and long-term success.

By measuring opportunities in a systematic way, we can have a clear understanding of the effective use of education resources in our communities. Based on existing research, we know we can provide all students a high-quality, high-access public education, or an “opportunity to learn,” when all children, regardless of skin color or socioeconomic status, have access to four core resources: **1) high-quality early education; 2) highly qualified teachers and instructors in grades K-12; 3) college preparatory curricula that will prepare all youth for college, work and community; and 4) equitable instructional resources.** If we are to provide every student a true opportunity to learn, we must first ensure that all students, even the most disadvantaged, have equal access to the high-quality resources necessary for success. Measuring access to these resources systemically and holding elected officials accountable to ensure all students an Opportunity to Learn is necessary to achieve true “sustainable” reform.

The enormous differences in the Opportunity to Learn for students are illustrated by Figure 1, which ranks the states according to the Opportunity to Learn for disadvantaged students. Figure 1 shows the quality of state educational systems as well as the system’s “Opportunity to Learn Index” or degree of access. Before we can say that all students have an equitable Opportunity to Learn, we must ensure that all students have access to the educational resources and public schools that are preparing the students for success in postsecondary education. Thus, to establish an initial resource access score or “Opportunity to Learn Index (OTLI),” the Schott Foundation defines access as the odds of historically disadvantaged students enrolling in a high school where nearly all students graduate on time and are college ready, when compared to the odds for students not historically disadvantaged.

Furthermore, since access only to poor performing educational systems and resources is equivalent to access denied, the Schott Foundation coupled the OTLI with a “quality” indicator, which is defined as the percentage of each state’s 13-year olds who score at the Proficient or Advanced level on the reading portion of NAEP, “the Nation’s Report Card.” The proficiency and access scores were combined and the states were ranked and placed accordingly into one of four groups:

1. Those states where a “moderate” number of all students achieve national proficiency or above and there is high access to the state’s best schools for students from historically disadvantaged groups (African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and low income students);
2. Those states where a moderate number of students achieve national proficiency or above and there is low access to the state’s best schools for students from disadvantaged groups;
3. Those states where a low number of students achieve national proficiency or above and there is high access to the state’s best schools for students from disadvantaged groups and;
4. Those states where a low number of students achieve national proficiency or above and there is low access to the state’s best schools for students from disadvantaged groups.

Considering that Massachusetts, at 43 percent, leads all states with the highest percentage of students achieving national proficiency or above, it is important to note that as a nation, our performance on measures such as high school graduation or eighth-grade reading are mediocre at best. Furthermore, considering that Louisiana, with a 100 percent OTL Index score, leads all states in access for disadvantaged students to the state's best performing schools, but only a mere 19 percent of Louisiana students in those schools achieve national proficiency or above, the data indicate as a whole that no state is winning the race toward opportunity for all. Even states identified in this report as "high access", suffer from extreme issues of segregation or challenges in the quality of education. A "high access" rating in *Lost Opportunity* is focused on the likelihood that a student from a historically disadvantage group would be enrolled in one of the high resource or best performing schools that state has to offer. However, we recognize that what is a high performing school in one state may fall far short of that measure in another.

This report intentionally notes these interstate inequities to highlight the need for federal action and support. It is a threat to our national interest and individual pursuits for the federal government to passively permit states like Louisiana, New Mexico, Mississippi, and California to cap the growth of its students by relegating them to an education system that, at best, would be substandard in most states and grossly inadequate by national and international measures. Equally egregious are states like New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Ohio where the educational proficiency is higher than most states, but historically disadvantaged rural and urban students are virtually locked out of those high resource schools and 21st century opportunities.

A review of NAEP data, in particular, shows we have done very little over the past 20 years to close the achievement gap, signifying a general inability for states "alone" to bring true equity to a high quality public educational system for all students. When compared to other industrialized countries on international benchmarks such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) or the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the United States ranks poorly on overall quality. *Lost Opportunity's* groupings of the states are comparative. As the U.S. Chamber of Commerce noted in 2007, there are state leaders and laggards with regard to public education in this country. Those states that are recognized for moderate proficiency or "high" access in *Lost Opportunity* have gained that recognition because they are "better" in comparison to our proficiency and equity measures as compared to other states across the country. If this data shows anything, it is that there is much room for improvement for every governor, state legislature, state superintendent, and state education agency. No state has found a comprehensive solution when it comes to providing a high-quality, high-access education to every student in the United States.



Figure 1

State OTL Rank		Percent Scoring at or Above National Proficient	Access: OTLI ¹	Proficiency Quartile	Access Quartile	Combined Score
Moderate Proficiency/High Access						
1.	Vermont	42%	93%	4	4	8
2.	Maine	37%	69%	4	4	8
3.	New Hampshire	37%	67%	4	4	8
4.	Minnesota	37%	56%	4	3	7
5.	Oregon	34%	93%	3	4	7
6.	Washington	34%	64%	3	4	7
7.	Idaho	32%	82%	3	4	7
8.	Virginia	34%	61%	3	3	6
Moderate Proficiency /Low Access						
9.	South Dakota	37%	40%	4	2	6
10.	Iowa	36%	39%	4	2	6
11.	Connecticut	37%	32%	4	1	5
12.	Massachusetts	43%	27%	4	1	5
13.	New Jersey	39%	35%	4	1	5
14.	Montana	39%	31%	4	1	5
15.	Pennsylvania	36%	35%	4	1	5
16.	Ohio	36%	26%	4	1	5
17.	Colorado	35%	45%	3	2	5
18.	Wisconsin	33%	45%	3	2	5
19.	Maryland	33%	40%	3	2	5
20.	Kansas	35%	33%	3	1	4
21.	Nebraska	35%	31%	3	1	4
22.	Wyoming	33%	36%	3	1	4
23.	North Dakota	32%	35%	3	1	4
24.	New York	32%	25%	3	1	4

¹OTLI compares the opportunity of students from disadvantaged groups to that of White, non-Latino students for access to those 25 percent of the schools in a state where nearly all students graduate on-time and college ready. For example, if 40 percent of a state's White, non-Latino students are enrolled in the top quartile of that state's schools, and 20 percent of students from disadvantaged groups are given the opportunity to study in such schools, the OTLI is 50 percent: disadvantaged students having half the Opportunity to Learn as White, non-Latino students in that state.

State OTL Rank	Percent Scoring at or Above National Proficient	Access: OTLI	Proficiency Quartile	Access Quartile	Combined
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Low Proficiency/High Access

25.	Delaware	31%	73%	2	4	6
26.	Utah	30%	64%	2	4	6
27.	Alaska	27%	93%	2	4	6
28.	Indiana	31%	61%	2	3	5
29.	North Carolina	28%	61%	2	3	5
30.	Kentucky	28%	60%	2	3	5
31.	Florida	28%	57%	2	3	5
32.	Oklahoma	26%	81%	1	4	5
33.	Hawaii	20%	77%	1	4	5
34.	Louisiana	19%	100%	1	4	5
35.	New Mexico	17%	68%	1	4	5
36.	Georgia	26%	56%	1	3	4
37.	Tennessee	26%	54%	1	3	4
38.	South Carolina	25%	58%	1	3	4
39.	Alabama	21%	59%	1	3	4
40.	California	21%	54%	1	3	4
41.	Mississippi	17%	58%	1	3	4

Low Proficiency/Low Access

42.	Missouri	31%	44%	2	2	4
43.	Texas	28%	39%	2	2	4
44.	Rhode Island	27%	47%	2	2	4
45.	Illinois	30%	37%	2	1	3
46.	Michigan	28%	25%	2	1	3
47.	Arkansas	25%	52%	1	2	3
48.	Arizona	24%	51%	1	2	3
49.	Nevada	22%	38%	1	2	3
50.	West Virginia	23%	40%	1	2	3
51.	District of Columbia	12%	29%	1	1	2



Lost Opportunity

Essentially, only eight states provide almost all of their students regardless of race, ethnicity or family income with an Opportunity to Learn in good schools. More disturbing are the 16 states that provide access to good public schools to some of their students, but essentially restrict other students—primarily Black, Latino, Native American and those from low-income families—to schools where they have little Opportunity to Learn. Most disturbing are the nine states and the District of Columbia that provide neither a moderately proficient school system nor equitable access to the systems best schools or resources.

Figure 2 indicates Native American, Black, and Latino students, taken together, have just over half of the Opportunity to Learn in the nation's best-supported, best-performing schools as the nation's White, non-Latino students. A low-income student, of any race or ethnicity, also has just over half of the Opportunity to Learn of the average White, non-Latino student. As our nation focuses its attention on student achievement and school improvement, half a chance is substantively no chance at all, particularly when we focus on reversing the education disparities that have affected historically disadvantaged groups.

Figure 2

National Summary Opportunity to Learn for Disadvantaged Students: 51%²	
Disadvantaged Student Group³	Opportunity to Learn (compared to White, non-Latino students)
Native American	61%
Asian American ⁴	97%
Black	47%
Latino	53%
Low-income (FARL ⁵)	53%

²The Schott 50 State Report on the Opportunity to Learn in America, The Schott Foundation for Public Education, May 2009

³Total enrollments (2005/6): Native American: 130,968; Asian American: 1,950,425; Black, non-Latino: 5,570,253; Latino: 5,066,273; White, non-Latino: 10,482,662; FARL: 10,260,933.

⁴Performance for sub-groups of the Asian American populations (Hmong, Cambodian, etc.) varies drastically. Further federal and state disaggregation of data is needed to more accurately speak to performance results of Asian Americans.

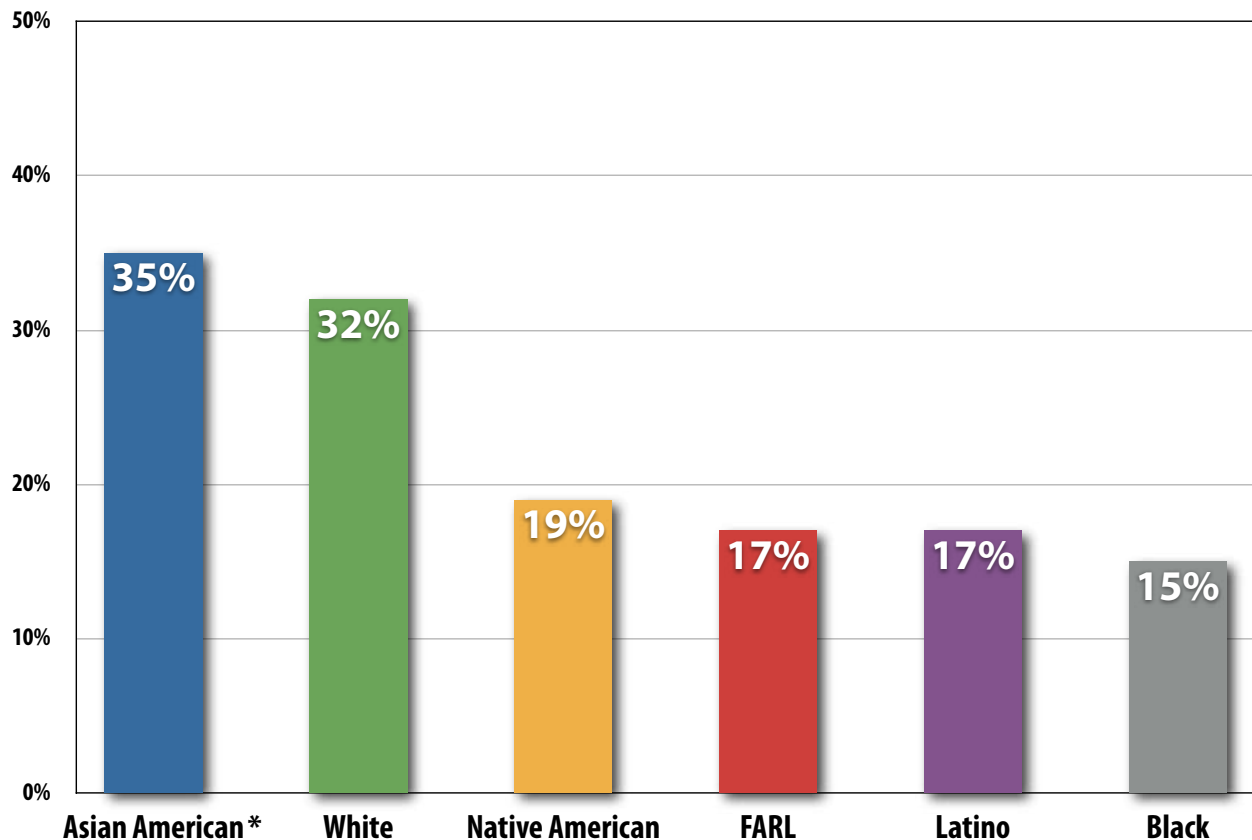
⁵Students eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch. This measure is similar to the percentage of children living in poverty: Native American (32%); Asian American (20%); Black, non-Latino (41%); Latino (34%); White, non-Latino (32%).

Opportunity for Success

Even within historically disadvantaged groups, the opportunity to learn varies. Figure 3 highlights the percentages of American students, by race, ethnicity and income, enrolled in the top quarter of high schools in each state. Nearly one-third of White, non-Latino students are in those schools, where nearly all students graduate and where nearly all students score well on state tests. Fewer than 20 percent of students from historically disadvantaged groups are enrolled in those well-resourced, high-performing schools.

Figure 3

Student Access to Well-Resourced, High-Performing Schools

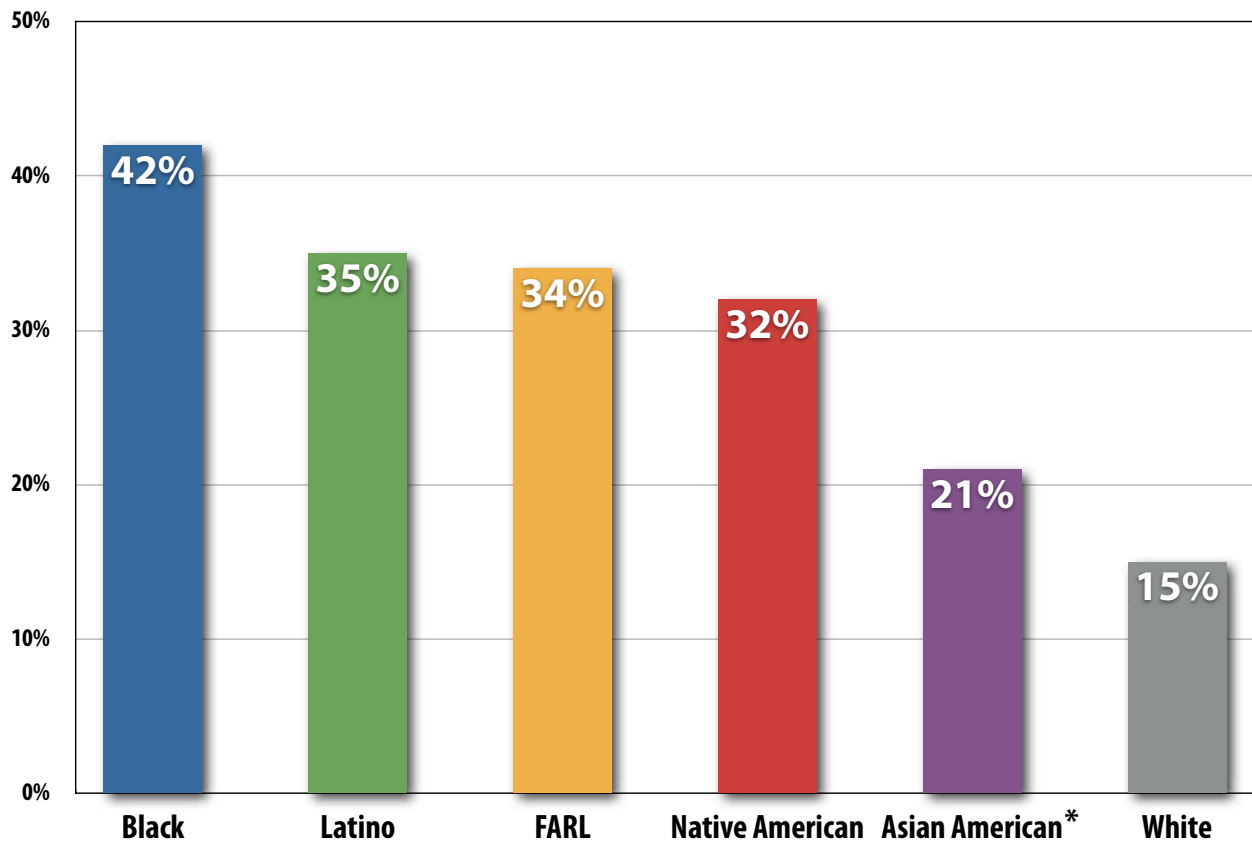


* Performance for sub-groups of the Asian American populations (Hmong, Cambodian, etc.) varies drastically. Further federal and state disaggregation of data is needed to more accurately speak to performance results of Asian Americans.

Native American, Asian American, Black, Latino and low-income students are more likely than White, non-Latino students to be disadvantaged by attending schools where they have little chance of demonstrating academic proficiency, graduating from high school, and attaining the postsecondary credentials that are becoming more and more essential in today's economy. While only 19 percent of Black students are in well-resourced, high-performing schools, 42 percent are in poorly-resourced, low-performing schools. The picture is similar for Native American, Latino and low-income students. On the other hand, the average White, non-Latino student is twice as likely to be in a well-resourced, high-performing school as in a poorly-resourced, low-performing school.

Figure 4

Students in Poorly-Resourced, Low-Performing Schools



* Performance for sub-groups of the Asian American populations (Hmong, Cambodian, etc.) varies drastically. Further federal and state disaggregation of data is needed to more accurately speak to performance results of Asian Americans.

As Figure 5 indicates, dividing the percentages of Native American, Asian American, Black, Latino and low-income students in what are often called “drop-out factories”—schools where most students do not graduate and those that do are not educated to high standards—by the percentage of White, non-Latino students in those schools gives us the *comparative disadvantage* of each group:

Figure 5

Group	Comparative Disadvantage*
Native American students	210%
Asian American students**	140%
Black, non-Latino students	280%
Latino students	230%
Low-income students (who may be in any racial/ethnic group)	230%
Comparison is to all White, non-Latino students	100%

* Higher numbers are worse: *more* of a disadvantage.

** Performance for sub-groups of the Asian American populations (Hmong, Cambodian, etc.) varies drastically. Further federal and state disaggregation of data is needed to more accurately speak to performance results of Asian Americans.



Consequences

Overall, gaps in the Opportunity to Learn resources have effects well beyond our educational institutions and secondary and postsecondary graduation rates. As Figures 6 and 7 display, such gaps have very real consequences for our nation's economy, health, and society as a whole. By closing the opportunity gap for minority and low-income students, we can realize a very real impact on the education, health and welfare of our nation.

Figure 6

Economic Consequences⁶

Total Annual Economic Burden to Taxpayers
Because of Inequity: **\$59.2 billion⁷**



Potential Return on School Improvement Investment: 250%



State Annual Total Lifetime Health Loss

\$11.6 billion



State Annual Crime Related Loss

\$7.6 billion



State Tax Losses

\$40 billion



Annual Lost Lifetime Earnings

(Difference attributable to high school graduation per annual cohort)

\$82.2 billion



Net Annual Potential Revenue Increase from Equity

(After deducting estimated cost of improving schools)

\$36.5 billion

We cannot afford to be satisfied with a 51 percent Opportunity rate. If these results were placed in a businesses frame, no company that loses 50 percent of its product would survive, let alone grow. As Figure 6 makes clear, not investing in addressing the Opportunity to Learn resource gaps has significant economic consequences. Maintaining the inequitable resource distributions places an economic burden on individuals, taxpayers and our overall nation and economy. At 250 percent, the return on these school improvement investments is remarkable.



⁶ Earnings and Revenue: See Levin, Henry. The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for All of America's Students. Columbia University, January 2007.







⁷ Amounts are rounded.

If we make the investments necessary to provide to all students the resources and educational methods that we know make an impact, including access to early childhood education, highly effective teachers, college preparatory curricula and equitable instructional resources, the social and civic benefits for American society will be great. Simply bringing high school graduation rates for disadvantaged students up to those now achieved by the average White, non-Latino student will, for example, more than double the expected college graduation rates for Black, Latino and Native American students. Employment rates will increase as these students complete high school in greater numbers, and will increase further as they complete college. Expected incomes will rise even more markedly, transforming communities. With more education and higher incomes, health risks will decline and longevity increase. Incarceration rates will fall, particularly in the Black community, where currently the lifetime chances of a young adult male without a high school diploma of serving more than two years in prison are 60 percent. And civic participation will increase, given better educated and healthier people in historically disadvantaged communities.

Figure 7

Social and Civic Consequences

Changes Attributable to Educational Equalization With White, non-Latino Students

	College Graduation ⁸ (25 years of age and older) Expected Increase Attributable to Equitable Access Black, Latino, Native American (total)	115%
	Employment ⁹ Expected Increase Attributable to Equitable Access With High School Diploma Further Increase with Bachelor's Degree	4% 3%
	Income ¹⁰ Expected Increase Attributable to Equitable Access With High School Diploma Further Increase with Bachelor's Degree	37% 63%
	Health Risk ¹¹ Expected increase in the percent of the population reported in good health White, non-Latino = 100% Black, non-Latino Latino	23% 37%
	Civic Engagement ¹² (National election participation) Expected Increase Attributable to Equitable Access	4%
	Incarceration ¹³ Expected Decrease Attributable to Equitable Access to Education Black, non-Latino Latino	83% 27%

⁸ U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS), 2006.

⁹ ACS.

¹⁰ ACS.

¹¹ National Survey of Children's Health, Indicator 6.1. This report follows the practice of using the condition of health of White, non-Latinos as the baseline from which to measure the health of all groups. This is the meaning of the "100%," indicator. It does not mean that 100% of all White, non-Latinos are in good health. If the health of White, non-Latinos in a state were, in general, to improve (or deteriorate), the percentage indicators for historically disadvantaged groups would change proportionately.

¹² Potential Civic Engagement is represented by national voting rates by educational attainment applied to adult educational attainment of the state. U.S. Census Bureau. Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2004; American Community Survey, Educational Attainment Adult Population. 2004 Voting Turnout Rate from United States Election Project: http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2004G.html

¹³ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Special Report: Education and Correctional Populations*, January 2003.

Opportunity to Learn: State Comparisons



The Opportunity to Learn gap, and the educational and economic effects of that gap, are highly concentrated, and over-represented, in a handful of states. California and New York each account for 15 percent of the nation's nearly \$60 billion annual economic burden attributable to Opportunity to Learn inequity. Texas accounts for an additional 12 percent. The next three states—Illinois, Michigan and Pennsylvania—account for 5 percent each. New York's share of the economic effect of inequity is nearly three times its percentage of the national population.

Geographically, the interstate quality and access Opportunity to Learn disparities are vast. As the Figure 8 map indicates, with the exception of Virginia, the states where historically disadvantaged students have the most access to the nation's best schools are in places where they are the least likely to be found in critical mass. As the map indicates, southern and southwestern states that have large Latino and Black populations have essentially lowered the bar for all students and relegated their students to subpar educational systems. On average, the best schools that these states offer fall short of national and international standards. Northeastern and Midwestern states are achieving higher results but have policies or practices which essentially limit access to those districts and schools capable of producing high results to those who are not part of a historically disadvantaged group. Furthermore, the map also reveals the existence of an "opportunity denied belt" that runs from Michigan, to Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas, where the educational systems are subpar and disadvantaged students remain locked out of even their state's subpar systems' best schools." Federal support, state action and community advocacy are needed to assist these states to address the policy, practice and resources challenges that are maintaining these geographic trends.

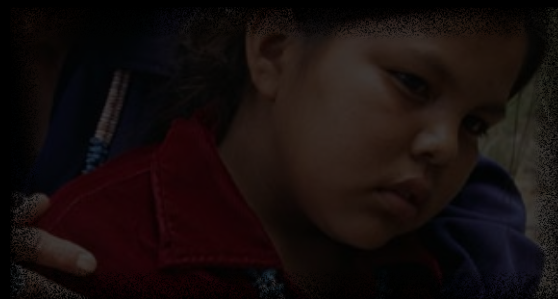
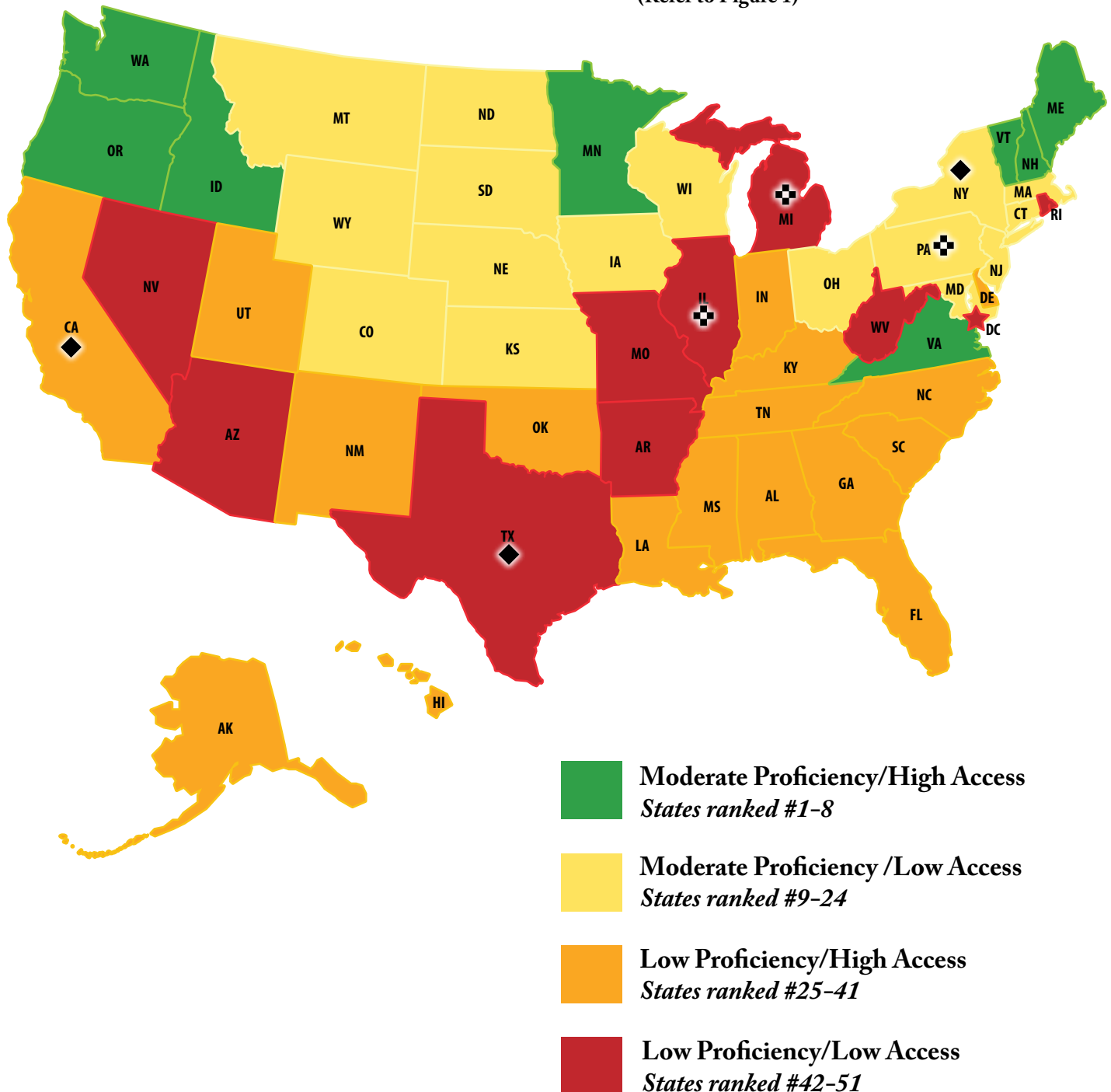


Figure 8

Geographic Distribution of Opportunity to Learn State Rankings (Refer to Figure 1)



◆ State is responsible for 12-15% of the nation's economic burden attributable to OTL inequities.

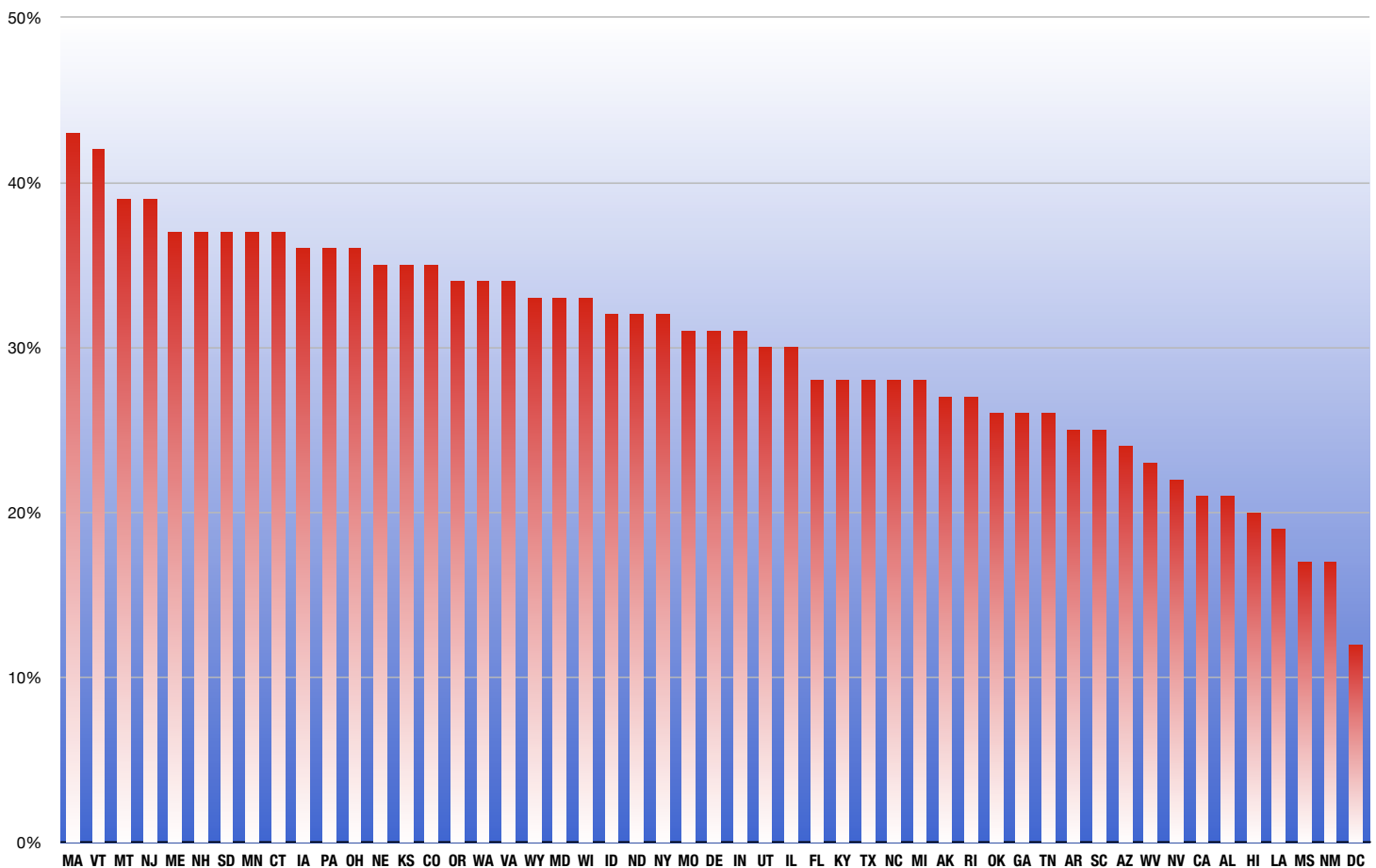
⊕ State is responsible for 5% of the nation's economic burden attributable to OTL inequities

Opportunity to Learn: State Proficiency Comparisons

Figure 9 highlights the educational quality disparities among states as measured by the states' student performance, at the proficient or above level, on the National Assessment for Education Progress 8th Grade Reading exam. As the data indicate, where a child is born definitely influences the child's educational possibilities. Students in states like Massachusetts, Vermont and New Jersey are clearly out pacing students in the District of Columbia and states like New Mexico, Louisiana, and Mississippi. This chart tells the tale of a union divided and unequal.

Figure 9

States Sorted by 8th Grade NAEP Proficiency or Above



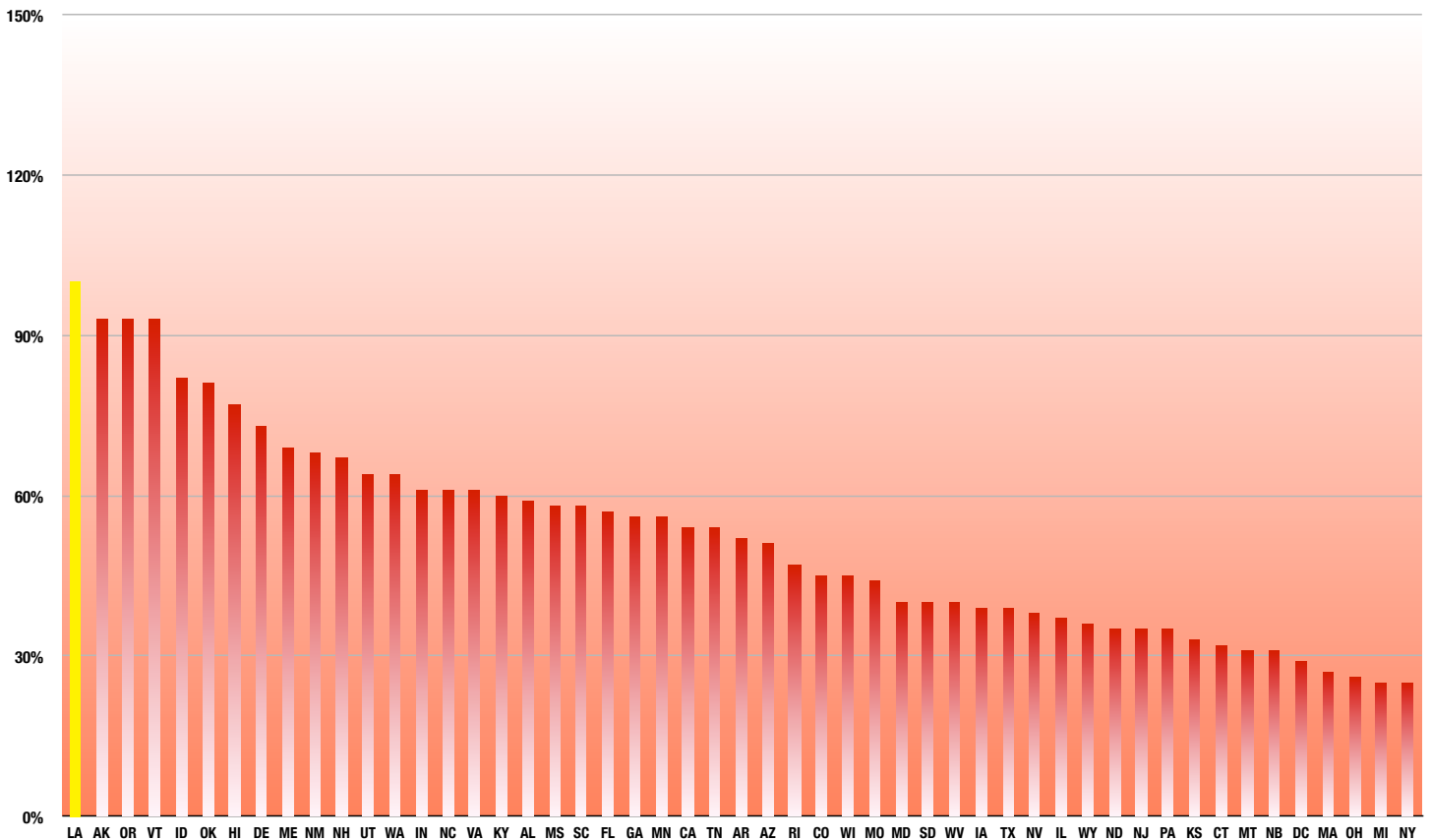
Opportunity to Learn: State Access Comparisons

Figure 10 combines the Opportunity to Learn probabilities for all disadvantaged groups for each state. We see that a student's Opportunity to Learn is best in states with small minority populations (with the exception of Louisiana) and worst in industrialized states with highly concentrated minority—predominately Black—populations.

Figure 10

All Disadvantaged Groups Opportunity To Learn Index Comparisons

All Disadvantaged Groups Opportunity to Learn



The stark inequities and absence of real Opportunity to Learn in states such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and Ohio (states that are traditionally known as educationally strong) are particularly striking. While these states have rich resources intended to offer a world-class education to all students, resources are currently allocated in such a way as to deny students from historically disadvantaged groups the opportunities to learn that always have, and continue to be, extended to their White, non-Latino peers.

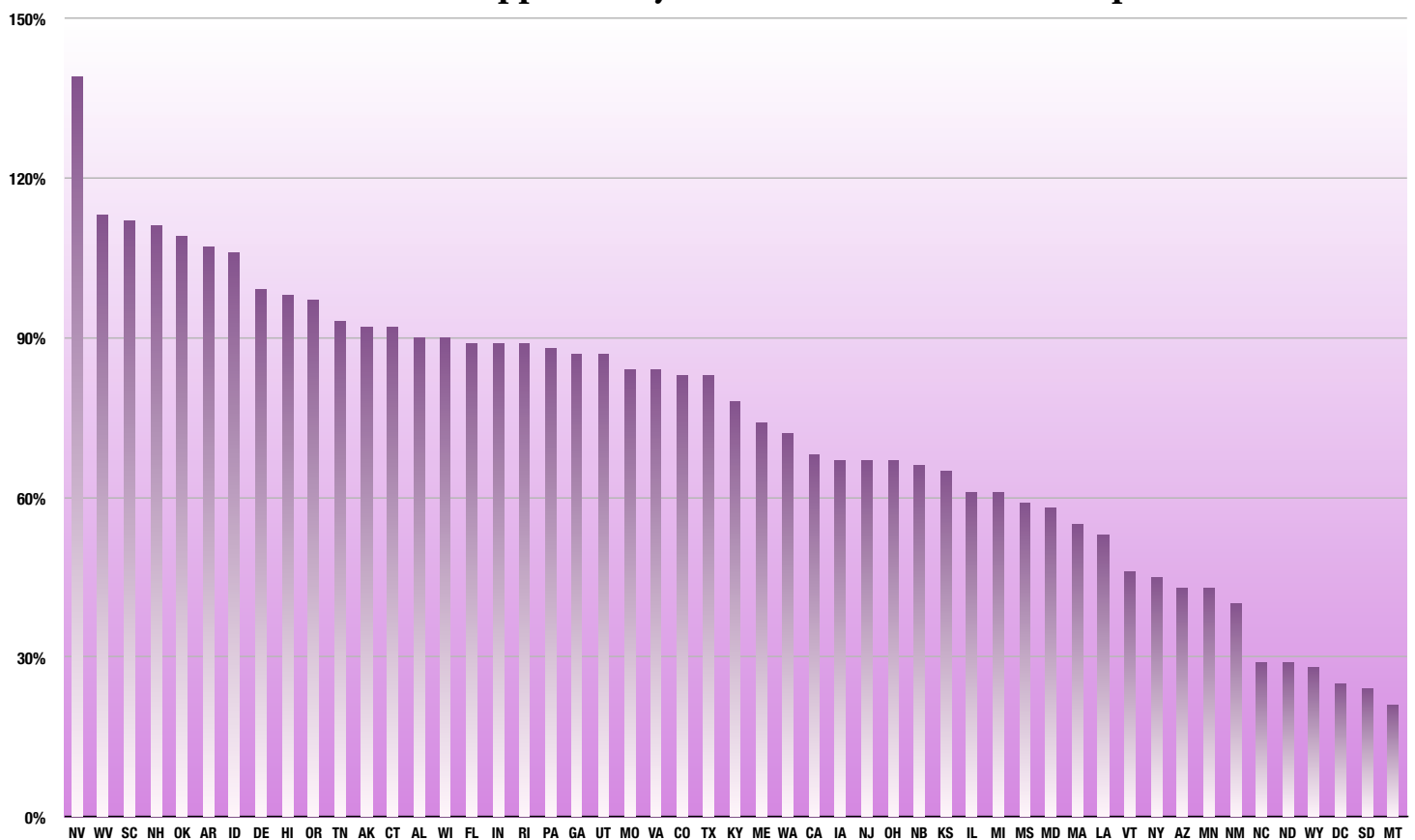
* Louisiana's population is disproportionately comprised of historically disadvantaged populations (low-income, Black, Latino, Native American). Louisiana's situation is further complicated by the tradition of middle class students attending non-public schools and, possibly, by effects from the Katrina displacements. Therefore, although the top quartile of schools in Louisiana enroll approximately 20,000 Black students, 1,000 Hispanic students, 28,000 White, non-Hispanic students and 24,000 low-income students, this high degree of equity in access is off-set by the academic deficiencies of those schools themselves.

Native American Opportunity to Learn State Comparisons

The Opportunity to Learn in a state's best schools varies for Native Americans from nearly equal or better than that of White, non-Latino students in 10 states to just 25 percent or less in six states.

Figure 11

Native American Opportunity To Learn Index State Comparisons



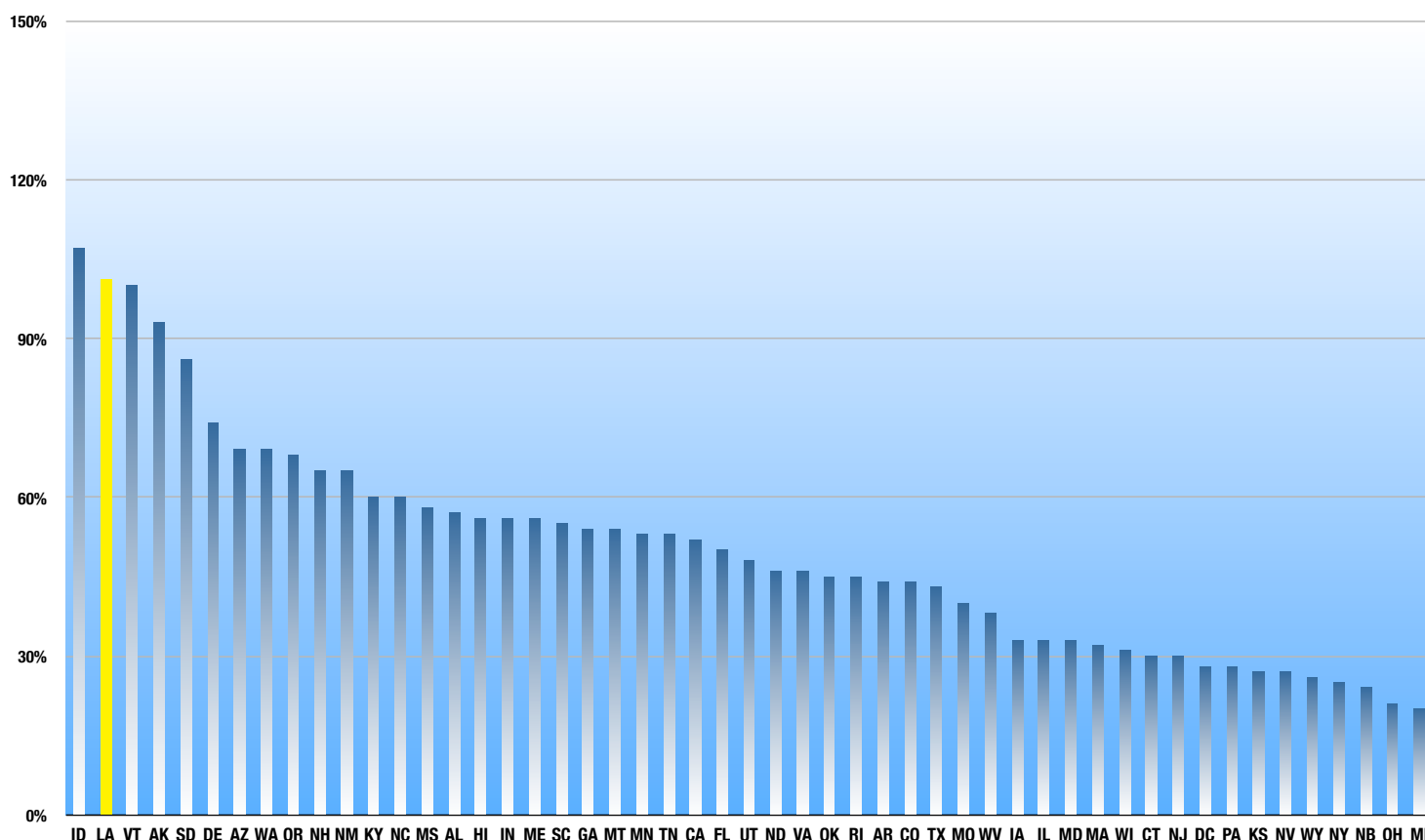
In general, those states offering Native American students the least Opportunity to Learn are those with the most Native American students. Oklahoma is a positive exception, offering slightly better Opportunity to Learn for Native American students than for White, non-Latino students, and the District of Columbia is a negative exception, where the few Native American students in that system have little Opportunity to Learn.

Black, Non-Latino Opportunity to Learn State Comparisons

Only a half a dozen states offer Black, non-Latino students an equal Opportunity to Learn in schools with good records of achievement and graduation, while most do not. Those where Black students have a good Opportunity to Learn are, with the exception of Louisiana, states where there are relatively few Black students and the quality of the schools quite high.

Figure 12

Black, Non-Latino Opportunity To Learn Index State Comparisons



The states where Black students have the least chance of attending good schools include some, such as New York, with large numbers of Black students and generally good schools for others. Nearly all the states offering the lowest Opportunity to Learn for Black students are outside the South.

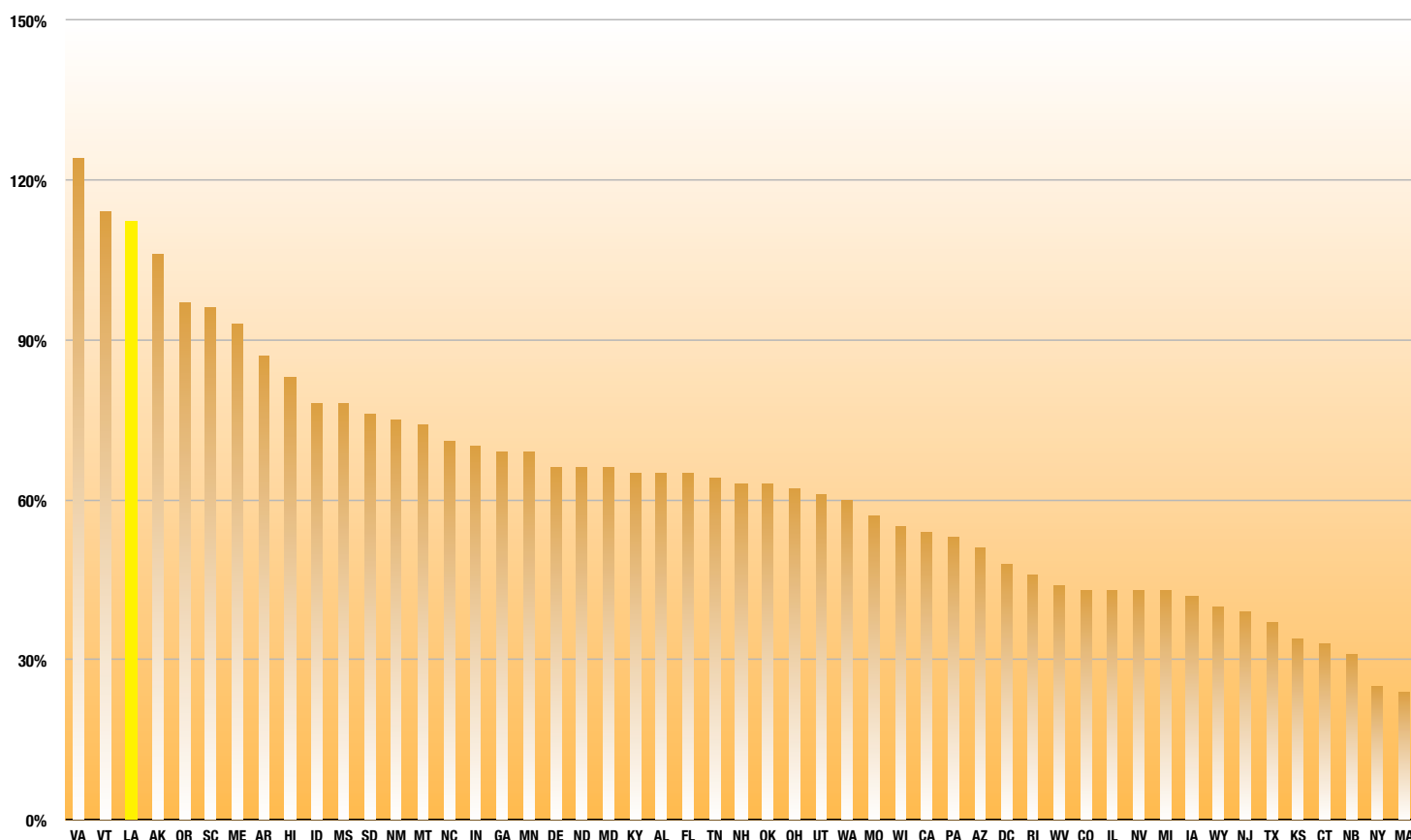
* Louisiana's population is disproportionately comprised of historically disadvantaged populations (low-income, Black, Latino, Native American). Louisiana's situation is further complicated by the tradition of middle class students attending non-public schools and, possibly, by effects from the Katrina displacements. Therefore, although the top quartile of schools in Louisiana enroll approximately 20,000 Black students, 1,000 Hispanic students, 28,000 White, non-Hispanic students and 24,000 low-income students, this high degree of equity in access is off-set by the academic deficiencies of those schools themselves.

Latino Opportunity to Learn State Comparisons

Ten states offer Latino students fairly good Opportunity to Learn in high performing schools. These states have comparatively few Latino students. For those states that have significant numbers of Latino students, the Opportunity to Learn is significantly lower.

Figure 13

Latino Opportunity To Learn Index State Comparisons



States offering Latino students the least Opportunity to Learn include those where most schools have good educational outcomes, such as those in the Northeast, as well as some Midwestern and Southwestern states. The latter is particularly disturbing because so many of these states have large Latino populations.

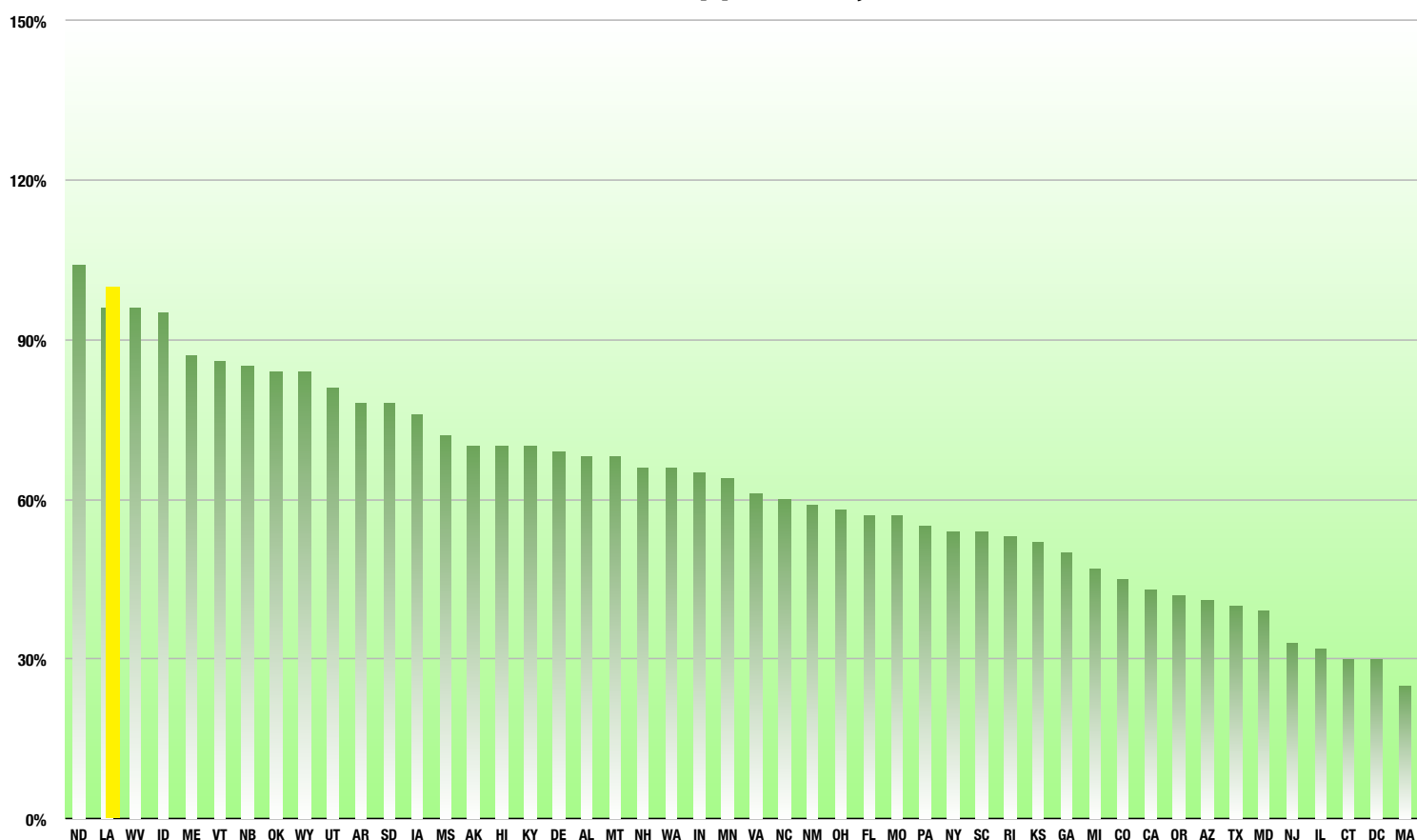
* Louisiana's population is disproportionately comprised of historically disadvantaged populations (low-income, Black, Latino, Native American). Louisiana's situation is further complicated by the tradition of middle class students attending non-public schools and, possibly, by effects from the Katrina displacements. Therefore, although the top quartile of schools in Louisiana enroll approximately 20,000 Black students, 1,000 Hispanic students, 28,000 White, non-Hispanic students and 24,000 low-income students, this high degree of equity in access is off-set by the academic deficiencies of those schools themselves.

Opportunity to Learn for Low-Income Students

Compared to other historically disadvantaged groups, low-income students, or those eligible for free or reduced price lunch, have the best chance for an Opportunity to Learn, equal to that of White, non-Latino students. This is particularly true in those states where most low-income children are themselves White, non-Latinos. While these statistics offer general promise for low-income students, they further illustrate the growing opportunity disparity between White, non-Latino students and students of color.

Figure 14

Low-income Opportunity To Learn Index State Comparisons



The Opportunity to Learn gaps for low-income students are most prevalent in those states where the low-income population is comprised primarily of children who are Black or Latino. Those states with large low-income, White, non-Latino populations generally do a better job at addressing equity and opportunity issues.

* Louisiana's population is disproportionately comprised of historically disadvantaged populations (low-income, Black, Latino, Native American). Louisiana's situation is further complicated by the tradition of middle class students attending non-public schools and, possibly, by effects from the Katrina displacements. Therefore, although the top quartile of schools in Louisiana enroll approximately 20,000 Black students, 1,000 Hispanic students, 28,000 White, non-Hispanic students and 24,000 low-income students, this high degree of equity in access is off-set by the academic deficiencies of those schools themselves.

CONCLUSION

We cannot have equity without quality. And we cannot have true quality without real equity. All children, regardless of skin color, ethnicity or socioeconomic status, deserve access to high-quality education and a fair and substantive Opportunity to Learn. They deserve access to: 1) high-quality early education; 2) highly qualified and skilled teachers and instructors in grades K-12; 3) college preparatory curricula that will prepare them for college, work and community; and 4) equitable instructional resources. And yet today, disadvantaged students—Black, Latino, Native American and low-income—have half the Opportunity to Learn as their White, non-Latino fellow students.

Moving forward, it should be the responsibility of every state to adopt Opportunity to Learn resource accountability plans and annual benchmarks. The federal government and philanthropic partners should play a significant role in supporting and monitoring the states in the implementation of these OTL Plans. And it should be our national goal to define true educational quality as more than just moderate proficiency on NAEP but as a higher goal of success in postsecondary education

As a nation, we must recognize that the strength of our public schools is directly and unbreakably bound to our social, civic and economic strength. Access to a high-quality public education should be a guaranteed right that every American enjoys, regardless of his or her race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or zip code.

In 1973, the U. S. Supreme Court in *San Antonio v. Rodriguez* was asked if education is a federally protected right and the court responded, “no”; leaving it to the states to protect the opportunity to learn for America’s children. Since that point, in over 40 states parents and advocates have spent millions of dollars and hours filing suits and leading campaigns to achieve equitable access to resources with little state-level legal, legislative or executive redress. When a group of parents from Ohio sought relief from the federal courts they were locked out. Why? Because education is not a federally protected right.

The federal government should develop and implement a national opportunity to learn resource accountability system to track student access to core educational resources. To support this system, the following recommendations are presented:

- The federal government and community advocates should support, monitor and track states in the adoption and implementation of “Opportunity to Learn plans” for their states.
- The federal government and community advocates should take steps to use data systems to ensure that states and localities are achieving the highest return on investments from taxpayer dollars. With such data, policymakers, advocates and educators will be equipped with the information necessary to close the opportunity gap and improve public education for all students.
- A similar frame should be used to certify that charter and magnet schools are Opportunity to Learn schools; corporation and local businesses are opportunity to learn businesses; communities are building opportunity to learn environments; and families and parents are fostering opportunity to learn homes.
- Noting that President Obama has set a national goal for the United States to produce the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020, advocates called on the President to immediately establish a National Interagency Commission on the Opportunity to Learn to determine the necessary sustained investments, coordination and partnerships to ensure that students in all states have a fair and substantive opportunity to learn by 2020.
- The Federal Government should establish an Opportunity to Learn Education Trust Fund to provide resources to states to support the implementation of the state’ Opportunity to Learn Resource Equity Plans and stabilize the implementation of the plans during economic down times.



Over 30 years of intrastate and interstate inequities and millions of lost children in our schools should have taught us that providing a fair and substantive opportunity to learn is a national interest. We cannot achieve President Obama's goal of producing the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020 if we do not afford every child a high-quality Opportunity to Learn in K-12. We will be a stronger nation—economically and socially—when we have a better-educated citizenry, when all Americans have access to the pathways of success and opportunity. America's greatest asset is found in the opportunities possible for each American. The ground that we lose globally and within each state is directly related to our ability to decrease the number of lost opportunities and make significant investments towards actualizing the individual value and innovation that every citizen brings to families, communities, the labor market, our democracy and nation. Simply stated, the success of our communities, democracy, economy and nation depends on the depth of federal, state, and local investments and partnerships to destroy the flowing American pipeline of lost opportunities. The federal government and states must take advantage of the present opportunity to reverse these trends before America's opportunity is lost.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1

States Sorted by 8th Grade NAEP Proficiency (Percentage of all students at or above proficient)

Jurisdictions	All Students at or above Proficient	Jurisdictions	All Students at or above Proficient
National Public	29%	25 Delaware	31%
1 Massachusetts	43%	25 Indiana	31%
2 Vermont	42%	28 Utah	30%
3 Montana	39%	28 Illinois	30%
3 New Jersey	39%	30 Florida	28%
5 Maine	37%	30 Kentucky	28%
5 New Hampshire	37%	30 Texas	28%
5 South Dakota	37%	30 North Carolina	28%
5 Minnesota	37%	30 Michigan	28%
5 Connecticut	37%	35 Alaska	27%
10 Iowa	36%	35 Rhode Island	27%
10 Pennsylvania	36%	37 Oklahoma	26%
10 Ohio	36%	37 Georgia	26%
13 Nebraska	35%	37 Tennessee	26%
13 Kansas	35%	40 Arkansas	25%
13 Colorado	35%	40 South Carolina	25%
16 Oregon	34%	42 Arizona	24%
16 Washington	34%	43 West Virginia	23%
16 Virginia	34%	44 Nevada	22%
19 Wyoming	33%	45 California	21%
19 Maryland	33%	45 Alabama	21%
19 Wisconsin	33%	47 Hawaii	20%
22 Idaho	32%	48 Louisiana	19%
22 North Dakota	32%	49 Mississippi	17%
22 New York	32%	49 New Mexico	17%
25 Missouri	31%	51 District of Columbia	12%

Appendix 2

States Sorted by Opportunity to Learn Index

State	Native American	Black	Latino	FARL	OTLI
1. Louisiana *	53%	101%	112%	96%	100%
2. Alaska	92%	93%	106%	70%	93%
3. Oregon	97%	68%	97%	42%	93%
4. Vermont	46%	1%	114%	86%	93%
5. Idaho	106%	107%	78%	95%	82%
5. Oklahoma	109%	45%	63%	84%	81%
7. Hawaii	98%	56%	83%	70%	77%
8. Delaware	99%	74%	66%	69%	73%
9. Maine	74%	56%	93%	87%	69%
10. New Mexico	40%	65%	75%	59%	68%
11. New Hampshire	111%	105%	63%	66%	67%
12. Utah	87%	48%	61%	81%	64%
12. Washington	72%	69%	60%	66%	64%
14. Indiana	89%	56%	70%	65%	61%
14. North Carolina	29%	60%	71%	60%	61%
14. Virginia	84%	46%	124%	61%	61%
17. Kentucky	78%	60%	65%	70%	60%
18. Alabama	91%	57%	65%	68%	59%
19. Mississippi	59%	58%	78%	72%	58%
19. South Carolina	112%	55%	96%	54%	58%
21. Florida	89%	50%	65%	57%	57%
22. Georgia	87%	54%	69%	50%	56%

* Louisiana's population is disproportionately comprised of historically disadvantaged populations (low-income, Black, Latino, Native American). Louisiana's situation is further complicated by the tradition of middle class students attending non-public schools and, possibly, by effects from the Katrina displacements. Therefore, although the top quartile of schools in Louisiana enroll approximately 20,000 Black students, 1,000 Hispanic students, 28,000 White, non-Hispanic students and 24,000 low-income students, this high degree of equity in access is off-set by the academic deficiencies of those schools themselves.

States Sorted by Opportunity to Learn Index

22. Minnesota	43%	53%	69%	64%	56%
24. California	68%	52%	54%	43%	54%
24. Tennessee	93%	53%	64%	No data	54%
26. Arkansas	107%	44%	87%	78%	52%
27. Arizona	43%	69%	51%	41%	51%
28. Rhode Island	89%	45%	46%	53%	47%
29. Colorado	82%	44%	43%	45%	45%
29. Wisconsin	90%	31%	55%	No data	45%
31. Missouri	84%	40%	57%	57%	44%
32. Maryland	58%	33%	66%	39%	40%
32. South Dakota	24%	86%	76%	78%	40%
32. West Virginia	113%	38%	44%	96%	40%
35. Iowa	67%	33%	42%	76%	39%
36. Texas	83%	43%	37%	40%	39%
37. Nevada	139%	27%	43%	No data	38%
38. Illinois	61%	33%	43%	32%	37%
39. Wyoming	28%	26%	40%	84%	36%
40. New Jersey	67%	30%	39%	33%	35%
40. North Dakota	29%	46%	66%	104%	35%
40. Pennsylvania	88%	28%	53%	55%	35%
43. Kansas	65%	27%	34%	52%	33%
44. Connecticut	92%	33%	30%	30%	32%
45. Montana	21%	54%	74%	68%	31%
45. Nebraska	66%	24%	31%	85%	31%
47. District of Columbia	25%	28%	48%	30%	29%
48. Massachusetts	55%	32%	24%	25%	27%
49. Ohio	67%	21%	62%	58%	26%
50. Michigan	61%	20%	43%	47%	25%
51. New York	45%	25%	25%	54%	25%

Appendix 3

The key Opportunity to Learn four core resources are access to: 1) high-quality early childhood education; 2) highly effective teachers; 3) a college preparatory curriculum; and 4) equitable instructional materials. At a minimum, all students must have equitable access to these key educational resources if they are to have a fair and substantive opportunities to learn and opportunity for success. The following chart provides the rank among the states and the District of Columbia for each of these four resources. Further data systems and analysis are needed to develop a universal index for determining the access and quality of the resources provided in each state.

Opportunity to Learn Core Resource Rankings				
State	High-Quality Early Childhood Education	Highly Effective Teachers	Well-Funded Instructional Materials	College Preparatory Curriculum
Alabama	27	26	46	19
Alaska	No Program	2	11	23
Arizona	35	10	50	48
Arkansas	7	1	33	1
California	23	25	29	43
Colorado	32	13	37	10
Connecticut	4	34	3	34
Delaware	11	48	9	37
District of Col.	No Program	2	5	51
Florida	17	21	44	20
Georgia	3	35	25	31
Hawaii	No Program	8	18	16
Idaho	No Program	36	47	22
Illinois	14	46	24	42
Indiana	No Program	49	21	29
Iowa	33	15	28	11
Kansas	27	33	31	7
Kentucky	8	22	42	44
Louisiana	4	30	34	46
Maine	31	16	8	12
Maryland	21	32	13	35

Opportunity to Learn Core Resource Rankings

State	Early Childhood Education	Highly Effective Teachers	Well-Funded Instructional Materials	College Preparatory Curriculum
Massachusetts	23	28	5	15
Michigan	8	50	22	38
Minnesota	23	39	16	17
Mississippi	No Program	40	48	28
Missouri	35	42	30	26
Montana	No Program	4	27	27
Nebraska	38	31	17	36
Nevada	33	23	45	39
New Hampshire	No Program	44	10	6
New Jersey	1	37	2	49
New Mexico	29	7	39	4
New York	8	43	1	41
North Carolina	11	3	38	32
North Dakota	No Program	5	26	40
Ohio	37	41	23	5
Oklahoma	4	6	49	30
Oregon	No Program	24	32	18
Pennsylvania	17	45	12	33
Rhode Island	No Program	9	7	45
South Carolina	26	27	36	50
South Dakota	No Program	14	41	8
Tennessee	14	18	40	25
Texas	14	11	43	24
Utah	No Program	20	50	14
Vermont	17	17	4	2
Virginia	22	29	20	21
Washington	17	38	35	13
West Virginia	2	12	19	47
Wisconsin	11	47	14	3
Wyoming	No Program	19	15	9

Appendix 4

Opportunity to Learn Index, Sorted by State

State	Native American	Black	Latino	FARL	OTLI
Alabama	91%	57%	65%	68%	59%
Alaska	92%	93%	106%	70%	93%
Arizona	43%	69%	51%	41%	51%
Arkansas	107%	44%	87%	78%	52%
California	68%	52%	54%	43%	54%
Colorado	82%	44%	43%	45%	45%
Connecticut	92%	33%	30%	30%	32%
Delaware	99%	74%	66%	69%	73%
District of Columbia	25%	28%	48%	30%	29%
Florida	89%	50%	65%	57%	57%
Georgia	87%	54%	69%	50%	56%
Hawaii	98%	56%	83%	70%	77%
Idaho	106%	107%	78%	95%	82%
Illinois	61%	33%	43%	32%	37%
Indiana	89%	56%	70%	65%	61%
Iowa	67%	33%	42%	76%	39%
Kansas	65%	27%	34%	52%	33%
Kentucky	78%	60%	65%	70%	60%
Louisiana	53%	101%	112%	96%	100%
Maine	74%	56%	93%	87%	69%
Maryland	58%	33%	66%	39%	40%
Massachusetts	55%	32%	24%	25%	27%
Michigan	61%	20%	43%	47%	25%
Minnesota	43%	53%	69%	64%	56%

Opportunity to Learn Index, Sorted by State

State	Native American	Black	Latino	FARL	OTLI
Mississippi	59%	58%	78%	72%	58%
Missouri	84%	40%	57%	57%	44%
Montana	21%	54%	74%	68%	31%
Nebraska	66%	24%	31%	85%	31%
Nevada	139%	27%	43%	No data	38%
New Hampshire	111%	105%	63%	66%	67%
New Jersey	67%	30%	39%	33%	35%
New Mexico	40%	65%	75%	59%	68%
New York	45%	25%	25%	54%	25%
North Carolina	29%	60%	71%	60%	61%
North Dakota	29%	46%	66%	104%	35%
Ohio	67%	21%	62%	58%	26%
Oklahoma	109%	45%	63%	84%	81%
Oregon	97%	68%	97%	42%	93%
Pennsylvania	88%	28%	53%	55%	35%
Rhode Island	89%	45%	46%	53%	47%
South Carolina	112%	55%	96%	54%	58%
South Dakota	24%	86%	76%	78%	40%
Tennessee	93%	53%	64%	No data	54%
Texas	83%	43%	37%	40%	39%
Utah	87%	48%	61%	81%	64%
Vermont	46%	1%	114%	86%	93%
Virginia	84%	46%	124%	61%	61%
Washington	72%	69%	60%	66%	64%
West Virginia	113%	38%	44%	96%	40%
Wisconsin	90%	31%	55%	No data	45%
Wyoming	28%	26%	40%	84%	36%

Methodology

The Combined Opportunity to Learn State Ranking ranks U.S. states based on access of historically disadvantaged students to the states' best schools where students have the opportunity to achieve academic proficiency or above.

State public education systems in which students achieve at least a moderate level of academic proficiency are defined as those where the National Assessment for Education Progress percentages for 8th grade Reading at the proficient or above levels are 32 percent or above.

The opportunity to learn for students from historically disadvantaged students, the Opportunity to Learn Index (OTLI), compares the percentage of White, non-Latino students who are in schools where nearly all students do well to the percentages of students from historically disadvantaged groups who are in those schools. If, for example, 30 percent of a state's White, non-Latino students are in the top quarter of the state's schools and 15 percent of Latino students are in such schools, the Latino OTLI would be 50 percent ($15\% \div 30\%$). An OTLI of 1.0 means that the percentage of disadvantaged groups enrolled in the top quartile of schools is equal to that for White, non-Latino students.

In order to produce the combined OTL state rankings, the states were sorted twice: by the NAEP percentages and by the OTLI percentages. Each of these was then divided into four groups with approximately equal numbers of states (quartiles), designated 1 (lowest) through 4 (highest)*. The states in the NAEP groupings 3 and 4 were designated as "Moderate Proficiency." Those states had 32% or more of their students reaching proficiency or above. The states in the OTLI groupings 3 and 4 were those with 54% or higher OTLI scores; these were designated as "High Access." Each state's two quartile groups were added together to reach a combined score ranging from 2 to 8. The states were then ranked, from highest combined score numerical value to lowest, within each sub-group (e.g., Moderate Proficiency/Low Access). Where two states' combined OTL score within a group were the same, the state with the higher proficiency percentage was ranked higher. Where the combined OTL score within a group was the same, and the proficiency percentage was the same, the state with the higher OTLI score was ranked higher. Each state and the District Columbia was then ranked from 1-51 according to their positions within the sub-groups in this order:

- 1) Moderate proficiency and high access;**
- 2) Moderate proficiency and low access;**
- 3) Low proficiency and high access, and**
- 4) Low proficiency and low access.**

* NAEP groups: 1= 12% to 26%, 2= 27% to 31%, 3= 32% to 35%, 4= 36% to 43%; OTLI groups: 1= 25% to 37%, 2= 38% to 52%, 3= 53% to 61%, 4= 62% and higher.

Notes on Data

Resource Access: *High Quality Early Childhood Education*: From National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers Graduate School of Education. *Access to Highly Effective Teachers*: Ratio of disadvantaged to advantaged student access: “State Consolidated Performance Reports for School Year 2004/5” in Peske, Heather G. and Kati Haycock: *Teaching Inequality: How Poor and Minority Students are Shortchanged on Teacher Quality*. The Education Trust, June 2006. *Per Pupil Instructional Expenditure*: U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics. *Access to College Preparatory Curriculum*: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Ratio of percentage of Native American, Black and Latino enrollment to Asian and White enrollment in Advanced Placement Mathematics.

Earnings and Revenue: Increase in Average Earnings: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2006. Individuals who are not high school graduates can expect a deficit in lifetime earnings, while the costs to society for each student who does not graduate from high school are substantial, including increases in social service costs and decreases in tax revenue. The difference in lifetime earnings between those with a high school degree and those without is, on average, approximately \$200,000. Professor Henry Levin and his associates find that net lifetime increased contributions to society associated with high school graduation can be estimated at \$127,000 per student.¹⁴

Current Probability of College Graduation: Based on state educational attainment, bachelor’s degree or graduate degree, U.S. Census.

Potential Civic Engagement is represented by national voting rates by educational attainment applied to adult educational attainment of each state.¹⁵

Health: Current Health Status: Ratio of percentages answering “health is excellent or very good” (Indicator 6.1: Health of Mother/Other Caregiver), National Survey of Children’s Health.

Incarceration: Including only annual crime-related savings for the state.¹⁶ National Incarceration Rate Differentials, state prison inmates Incarcerated (General Population):¹⁷ No High School Diploma 65 percent (18%); High School Diploma 22 percent (33%) College Degree or more 2 percent (22%).

¹⁴ Levin, Henry. The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for All of America’s Students. Columbia University, January 2007, p. 1; 6.

¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2004; American Community Survey, Educational Attainment Adult Population. 2004 Voting Turnout Rate from United States Election Project: elections.gmu.edu/Voter_Turnout_2004.htm

¹⁶ Alliance for Excellent Education: Saving Futures, Saving Dollars: The Impact of Education on Crime Reduction and Earnings, Issue Brief, August 2006.

¹⁷ Bureau of Justice Statistics, Special Report: Education and Correctional Populations, January 2003.

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For the full Opportunity To Learn report
and more information on your state's performance, go to

www.OTLstatereport.org

This online database is designed to provide policymakers, school officials, community-based organizations and philanthropic partners with access to the critical data, including individual state profiles, needed to lead reform efforts as part of a national movement to provide all children with a fair and substantive opportunity to learn.

Lost Opportunity:

A 50 State Report on the
Opportunity to Learn
In America

Full Report available at
www.OTLstatereport.org

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