

Diversity & Opportunity

#StrongerTogether

A growing body of research shows that diversity in schools and communities can be a powerful lever leading to positive outcomes in school and in life. Racial and socioeconomic diversity benefits communities, schools, and children from all backgrounds. Today's students need to be prepared to succeed with a more diverse and more global workforce than ever before. Research has shown that more diverse organizations make better decisions with better results. The effects of socioeconomic diversity can be especially powerful for students from low-income families, who, historically, often have not had equal access to the resources they need to succeed. Additionally, Congress recently highlighted the importance of this priority in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) through its inclusion of this priority particularly for Charter Management Organizations.

In light of this growing body of research on socioeconomic diversity, ED has undertaken new efforts to support this prioritization in a number of ways:

- The Department's [Investing in Innovation](https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-marks-success-investing-innovation-i3-and-launches-seventh-and-final-i3-competition) (<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-marks-success-investing-innovation-i3-and-launches-seventh-and-final-i3-competition>), [Opening Doors, Expanding Opportunities Program](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/odeo/index.html) (<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/odeo/index.html>), [Magnet Schools Assistance Program](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html) (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html>) and [Charter Schools Program](https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-launches-65-million-grant-competition-creating-expanding-high-quality-public-charter-schools) (<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-launches-65-million-grant-competition-creating-expanding-high-quality-public-charter-schools>) competitions each include a focus on fostering socioeconomic diversity in schools.
- The Department published a new supplemental priority for discretionary grant programs that support socioeconomic diversity strategies in the future, starting with fiscal year 2016.
- The Department has solicited feedback on supporting socioeconomic diversity as a strategy to turnaround low-performing schools through its [School Improvement Grants program](http://blog.ed.gov/2016/03/socioeconomic-diversity-as-a-school-turnaround-strategy/). (<http://blog.ed.gov/2016/03/socioeconomic-diversity-as-a-school-turnaround-strategy/>)
- Socioeconomic diversity is now a focus area of the Department's [Equity Assistance Centers](http://www.ed.gov/content/proposed-priority-and-requirement-equity-assistance-centers-formerly-desegregation-assistance-centers-dac). (<http://www.ed.gov/content/proposed-priority-and-requirement-equity-assistance-centers-formerly-desegregation-assistance-centers-dac>) These regional centers provide technical assistance to school districts to promote equal educational opportunities.
- These efforts build on President Obama's [Stronger Together proposal](http://www.ed.gov/content/equity-and-excellence-president%E2%80%99s-budget-education) (<http://www.ed.gov/content/equity-and-excellence-president%E2%80%99s-budget-education>)—a voluntary program to support the development, implementation, and expansion of community-driven strategies to increase socioeconomic diversity in America's public schools.
- The Department will significantly expand funding to a number of distressed communities across the nation through implementing comprehensive cradle-to-college-and-career [Promise Neighborhoods](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html) (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html>)

- The Department published [Improving Outcomes for All Students: Strategies and Considerations to Increase Student Diversity](https://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/improving-outcomes-diversity.pdf) (<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/improving-outcomes-diversity.pdf>), [PDF, 360KB], an action-oriented summary of considerations when embarking on efforts to increase student diversity, starting with possible steps to consider when conducting a diversity needs assessment and planning for implementation. Potential diversity strategies and a few examples from the field are included, as well as thoughts on efforts to sustain an inclusive environment once diversity strategies are being implemented.

Recognizing the cross-sector nature of this work, ED has also partnered with the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Transportation (DOT) to help state and local leaders increase diversity in their schools and communities, and narrow opportunity gaps:

- In a [joint letter](http://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/06032016-dear-colleagues-letter.pdf) (<http://www2.ed.gov/documents/press-releases/06032016-dear-colleagues-letter.pdf>), issued by all three agencies, state and local leaders are called to work together in community-led efforts to promote and support socioeconomic and racial diversity in ways that create real economic mobility and provide access to opportunities for every child in every community. Working together with local education, transportation, and housing and community development agencies, communities can help create and sustain access to high-quality educational opportunities; decent, safe and affordable housing; and well-connected public transportation networks and safer streets.
- The agencies also hosted an interagency listening session for education, housing, and transportation leaders at the U.S. Department of Education's headquarters in Washington, D.C. The session addresses the need for increased diversity in our schools and neighborhoods, and challenges and opportunities for creating this. <http://edstream.ed.gov/webcast/Play/afc380b8183d4d418b18af9fbd3ace8b1d> (<http://edstream.ed.gov/webcast/Play/afc380b8183d4d418b18af9fbd3ace8b1d>)

These recent efforts build on the series of steps to promote strong and diverse schools and early learning programs that ED has taken during the past several years, including:

- Investing in programs that support diverse schools ([Opening Doors, Expanding Opportunities Program](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/odeo/index.html) (<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/odeo/index.html>), [Magnet Schools Assistance Program](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html) (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html>), [Charter Schools Program](https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-launches-65-million-grant-competition-creating-expanding-high-quality-public-charter-schools) (<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-launches-65-million-grant-competition-creating-expanding-high-quality-public-charter-schools>), and [Preschool Development Grant program selection criteria](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/executivesummary-419b.pdf) (<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/executivesummary-419b.pdf>));
- Issuing [guidance](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.html) (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.html>) in conjunction with the Department of Justice explaining how K-12 educational institutions can lawfully pursue voluntary policies to achieve diversity or avoid racial isolation within the framework of Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and current case law; distributing [guidance](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201309.pdf) (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201309.pdf>), and a [letter](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201405-schuetter-guidance.pdf) (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201405-schuetter-guidance.pdf>) on the voluntary use of race to achieve diversity in higher education concerning the implementation of Fisher and Schuetter; a [letter](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/151231.html) (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/151231.html>) to educational leaders of institutions of higher education to eliminate discrimination based on race, religion or national origin and create safe learning environments; and [guidance](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-resourcecomp-201410.pdf) (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-resourcecomp-201410.pdf>) about ensuring students have equal access to educational resources without regard to race, color, or national origin.
- [Resolving complaints and compliance reviews](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/casesolutions/race-origin-cr.html) (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/casesolutions/race-origin-cr.html>) related to racial discrimination at the elementary, secondary and postsecondary levels through ED's Office for Civil Rights,

which has included reviewing university admissions plans for compliance with Title VI, as well as resolution agreements with school districts to increase equal access to criteria based schools.

How Do I Find...?

- Student loans, forgiveness (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grants-college.html?src=rn>)
- College accreditation (<http://www.ed.gov/accreditation?src=rn>)
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (<http://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>)
- FERPA (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html?src=rn>)
- FAFSA (<http://fafsa.ed.gov/?src=edgov-rn>)
- More... (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/top-tasks.html?src=rn>)

Information About...

- Transforming Teaching (<http://www.ed.gov/teaching?src=rn>)
- Family and Community Engagement (<http://www.ed.gov/family-and-community-engagement?src=rn>)
- Early Learning (<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/index.html?src=rn>)

Our mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Student Loans (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grants-college.html?src=ft>)

Repaying Loans (<http://studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans?src=ft>)

Defaulted Loans (<http://studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans/default?src=ft>)

Loan Forgiveness (<http://studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation?src=ft>)

Loan Servicers (<http://studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans/understand/servicers?src=ft#who-is-my-loan-servicer>)

Grants & Programs (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grants-apply.html?src=ft>)

Apply for Pell Grants (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/?src=ft>)

Grants Forecast (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html?src=ft>)

Apply for a Grant (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html?src=ft>)

Eligibility for Grants (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/find/elig/index.html?src=ft>)

Laws & Guidance (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/landing.jhtml?src=ft>)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (<http://www.ed.gov/essa?src=ft>)

FERPA (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html?src=ft>)

Civil Rights (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/know.html?src=ft>)

[New IDEA Website \(https://sites.ed.gov/idea/?src=ft\)](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/?src=ft)

[Data & Research \(http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/landing.jhtml?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/landing.jhtml?src=ft)

[Education Statistics \(http://nces.ed.gov/?src=ft\)](http://nces.ed.gov/?src=ft)

[Postsecondary Education Data \(http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/?src=ft\)](http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/?src=ft)

[ED Data Express \(http://eddataexpress.ed.gov/?src=ft\)](http://eddataexpress.ed.gov/?src=ft)

[Nation's Report Card \(http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/?src=ft\)](http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/?src=ft)

[What Works Clearinghouse \(http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/?src=ft\)](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/?src=ft)

[About Us \(http://www2.ed.gov/about/landing.jhtml?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/about/landing.jhtml?src=ft)

[Contact Us \(http://www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/gen/index.html?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/gen/index.html?src=ft)

[ED Offices \(http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/index.html?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/index.html?src=ft)

[Jobs \(http://www.ed.gov/jobs?src=ft\)](http://www.ed.gov/jobs?src=ft)

[Press Releases \(http://www.ed.gov/news/?src=ft\)](http://www.ed.gov/news/?src=ft)

[FAQs \(https://www.ed.gov/answers?src=ft\)](https://www.ed.gov/answers?src=ft)

[Recursos en español \(http://www2.ed.gov/espanol/bienvenidos/es/index.html?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/espanol/bienvenidos/es/index.html?src=ft)

[Budget, Performance \(http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/performance.html?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/performance.html?src=ft)

[Privacy Program \(https://www2.ed.gov/privacy?src=ft\)](https://www2.ed.gov/privacy?src=ft)

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[Security \(http://www2.ed.gov/notices/security/index.html?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/notices/security/index.html?src=ft)

[Information Quality \(http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/infoqualguide.html?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/infoqualguide.html?src=ft)

[Inspector General \(http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/index.html?src=ft\)](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/index.html?src=ft) [Whitehouse.gov \(http://www.whitehouse.gov/\)](http://www.whitehouse.gov/)

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