



engage^{ny}

Our Students. Their Moment.

New York State Board of Regents Research Work Group

Integration, Equity and Diversity
The Equity Imperative

May 6, 2019

Statement of Purpose

- Adopt a policy that requires school systems to provide all students, regardless of zip code, access to fully resourced, culturally responsive-sustaining educational environments, instruction, support services that prepare them for lifelong learning, college, careers, and civic engagement.
- Identify impediments that deny low-performing students equitable access to learning opportunities. That includes examining political, fiscal, and legal challenges the Board of Regents must confront to ensure equity defines our educational systems.

Our Challenge

High School Diploma – Traditions may be honored but they cannot bind us to the past. Current High School Diploma requirements, introduced in 1862, have undergone transitional changes that are not keeping pace with growing demands for still more knowledge, skill and continuous learning in the face of increasing global competition. All students regardless of home zip code, must be prepared to successfully compete in a global economy.

We face a great divide in educational opportunity and achievement along lines of income, race and ethnicity, language, and disability.

There are a growing number of racially and economically segregated schools that make NYS one of the most segregated school systems in the country.

Defining Equity

Equity means the learning needs of every student are supported and met in an environment where all students are valued, respected, and see themselves in culturally responsive-sustaining curriculum and instructional materials while experiencing academic success without regard to differences in age, gender, socio-economic status, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, native language, national origin, or citizenship status.

We believe that every child (**must**), (**shall**), (**should**) (*a decision is needed*) have equitable access to learning opportunities. There can be no educational excellence without educational equity.

Intended Outcomes

- A. Identify the opportunity-to-learn disparities that appear to be based on race, ethnicity, family income, fiscal resources, language barriers, and citizenship status.
- B. Identify the social, political, policy and legal obstacles the NYS Board of Regents must confront to address these disparities to ensure all students have equitable opportunities to prepare for college, careers, and civic engagement.
- C. Disseminate previously-published studies that present research-based policies and best practices regarding economic and racial/ethnic integration.
- D. Recommend policies that prioritize racial and economic integration, create a vision for school districts that encourage both schools and school districts to work together to create inter-school and inter-district solutions.
- E. Recommend to the Board of Regents and elected officials, legislative, and budgetary priorities that encourage educational institutions as well as other city and state agencies to consider integration, equity and diversity policies.

The Persistence of the Achievement Gap 65 Years After Brown vs. the Board of Education

If achievement gap disparities are a factor of opportunity-to-learn disparities that appear to be based on race, ethnicity, family income, fiscal resources, home zip code, language barriers, and citizenship status, what social, political, policy, and legal obstacles must the Board of Regents confront to ensure all students have equitable opportunities to prepare for college, careers and civic engagement? What leadership can the Board provide to remove these obstacles?

“The push toward socioeconomic and racial integration is perhaps the most important challenge facing American public schools. Segregation impedes the ability of children to prepare for an increasingly diverse workforce; to function tolerantly and enthusiastically in a globalized society; to lead, follow, and communicate with a wide variety of consumers, colleagues, and friends. The democratic principles of this nation are impossible to reach without universal access to a diverse, high quality, and engaging education.”

** Source: Potter, H., Quick, K., & Davies, E. (2016). A new wave of school integration: Districts and charters pursuing socioeconomic diversity. The Century Foundation*

EVIDENCE

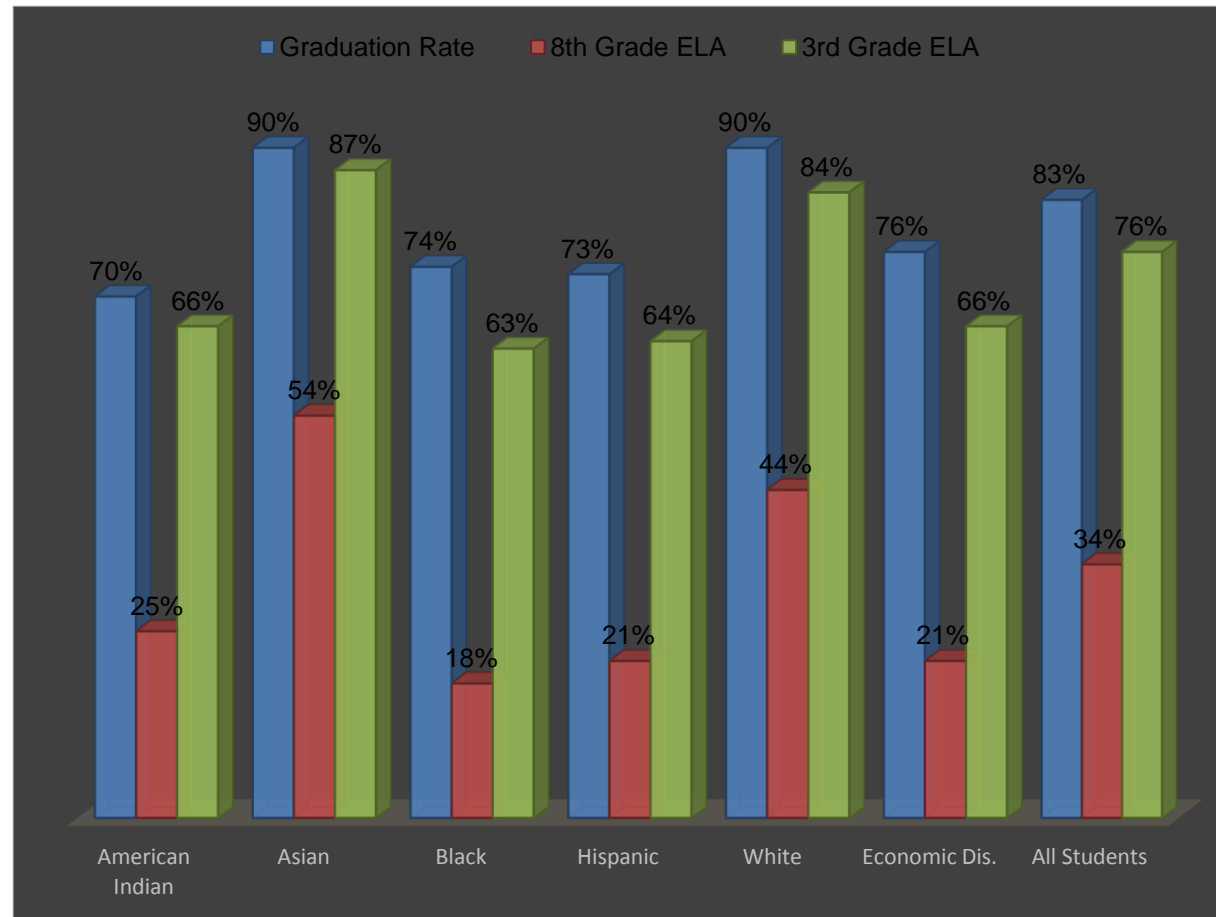
- The data appearing on the next two charts are presented as illustrations of the opportunity gap challenge. However, there are limitations to the data.
- We can't assume the cohorts, as they move thru the grades, remain intact. Transience is a characteristic of urban New Yorkers.
- The graduation data represent students who may have spent, 4, 5 or 6 years pursuing a diploma
- Under-resourced schools are included in this state compilation- we don't know how many students did not have access to advanced courses or, were denied access to advanced courses.
- Despite these limitations, there are troubling signs-students who gets access to rigorous courses are more likely to pursue the advanced Regents Diploma. The implications are profound for post-secondary education opportunities.

EVIDENCE (continued)

- The total failure to obtain a high school diploma severely limits life chances for career choices.
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- The data suggests these distinctions begin to appear in 3rd grade and the gap is never fully closed.
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- One conundrum- why do so many students pass the English Regents Exam - despite the data that suggests they did not rank as ELA proficient in earlier grades?
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- And finally, why do students in low need, well resourced, racially isolated schools score at higher levels of proficiency than poor students attending racially isolated schools.

New York State Data

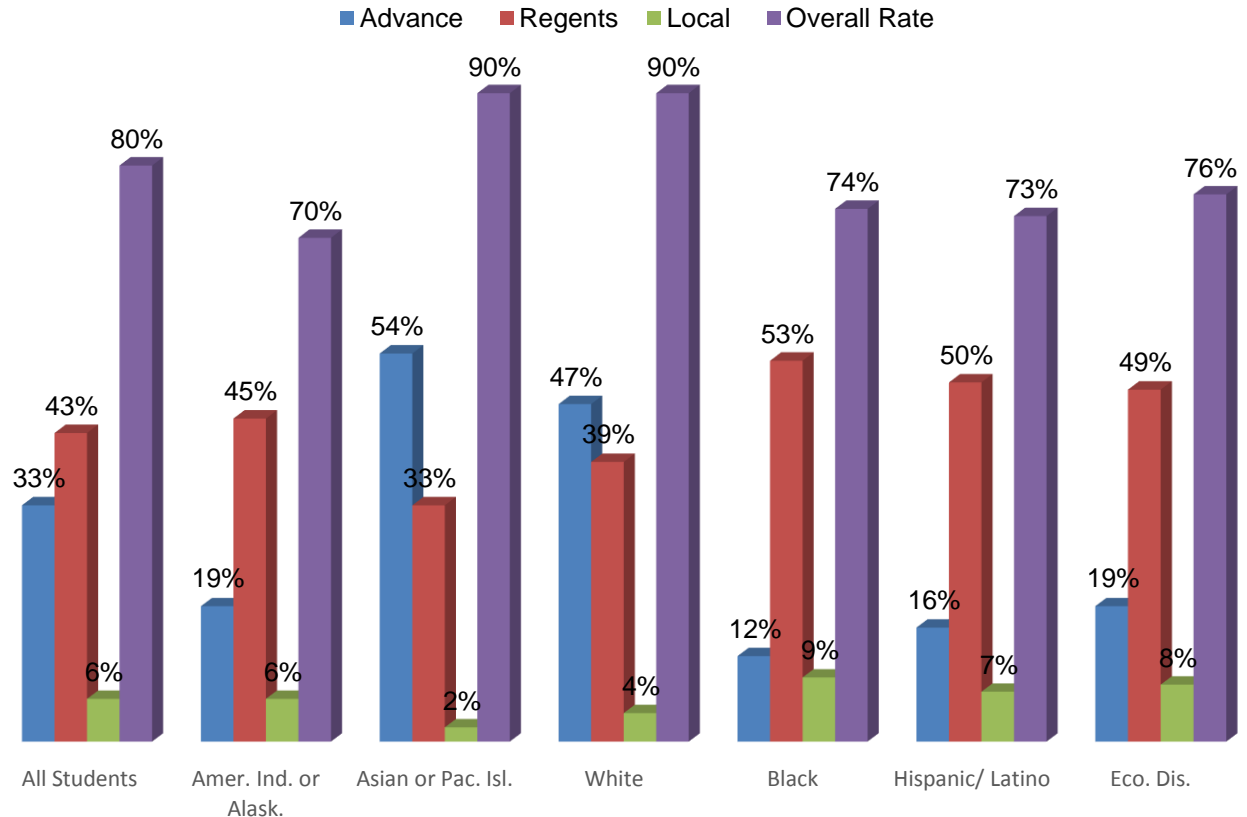
This data reflects 3rd Grade students who were proficient on the NYS ELA exam in 2009; 8th grade students who were proficient on the NYS ELA exam in 2014 and the 2018, August graduation rate.



NYSED Data Site. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://data.nysed.gov/>

NYS 2018 - 4 Year August Graduation Rate by Diploma Type

- The subgroups that received the highest rate of Advanced Regents' Diplomas were Asian (54%) and White (47%) students.
- The subgroup that received the least amount of Advance Regents' Diplomas were Black (12%).
- The subgroup that received the highest number of local diplomas were Black (9%) students.
- White (90%) and Asian (90%) had the highest graduation rates.
- American Indian/ Alaskan (70%) and Hispanic (73%) students were among the lowest graduation rates.



NYSED Data Site. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://data.nysed.gov/>

Voices from the Field - Dr. L. Oliver Robinson and David Wicks

"Be mindful of the narrative that dictates the presumption of truth, the rationalization of failure, the blaming of the victim and the preservation of unjust privilege. Be careful that the perpetuation of the status quo is not being cloaked in a facade of advocacy."

Source: unpublished paper "The Equity Imperative" by Dr. L. Oliver Robinson

Challenging Issues: Additional Voices from the Field

- "Financial Transparency" not enough.
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- Sources of funding in schools - Federal, state, local, private and earmarking.
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- How is money being spent in schools - teachers' salaries vs. materials vs. mental health supports.
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- Ongoing parent development - building new networks to exchange ideas in supporting school communities.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

- Draft, for public comment, an equity policy that reflects the Equity Position statement.
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- With College and Research Organizations Partners- draft, for public comment, high school graduation standards that reflect what students should know and be able to do to be positive contributors to our economy, our democracy, our communities and family life.
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- Support a legislative review of school funding formulas to examine alignment with the equity principles.
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- The Board of Regents has a moral and constitutional role to provide leadership in closing the achievement gap. What actions must we take?