

Excellence with Equity: It's Everybody's Business

Findings and Recommendations from the Achievement Gap Study Group



July 2016



**PRICHARD COMMITTEE
FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

STUDY • INFORM • ENGAGE

Foreword

What an honor it has been to work alongside such a dedicated group of educators. Our focus has been on ensuring the highest quality of education for every child in the Commonwealth. We can close the achievement gap if we are willing to consistently implement strategies that are backed by empirical data starting with the removal of stereotypical barriers that inflict adults and affect our children. Frederick Douglass has sagaciously suggested that, “It is easier to build strong children than it is to repair broken adults” (paraphrased). For that reason, this committee has put great emphasis on early childhood education to establish essential building blocks as a solid foundation for the installation of interlocking levels of knowledge critical to assuring that our children can successfully navigate the educational maze that holds the key to their future and ours. If we as policymakers and power brokers are not intentional about the origination of the solution to the present educational devastation that is devouring us, we will not be successful in steering our children to an intellectual destination that will lift the next generation to the heights we collectively aspire.

This report rebukes the need for further study of what we should do and challenges all who are strategically positioned to make a difference by doing what we already know. All children achieve more when challenged at high levels. Let’s make those challenging opportunities available to every child in the Commonwealth, one child at a time, one school at a time, one district at a time, and see if our concerted efforts will not make a lasting difference for all time.

– Dr. C.B. Akins, Co-Chair

In 1990, the Kentucky General Assembly envisioned an education system in which ALL students had equitable opportunities to learn at higher levels, where income, skin color, first language, or learning differences did not determine the quality of education offered or a student’s academic progress. As a result, over the past 26 years student achievement, overall, has dramatically increased.

Sadly, however, an entire generation of students has come and gone since we began to talk about “achievement gaps” and, yet, the historic divides of poverty, race, heritage and learning differences continue to be fairly accurate predictors of student success or failure.

If we believe ALL students have the right to equitable opportunities to learn, then we must recommit ourselves to make this vision a reality. It’s not up to someone else; it’s up to each of us individually and to all of us collectively. These are OUR students, in OUR schools, and they are OUR future. Our students and our Commonwealth cannot afford for us to wait any longer!

– Helen Mountjoy, Co-Chair

Dedication

*This report is dedicated in memory of **Lynda Thomas**. A long-time Prichard Committee member and leader at Kentucky Educational Television, Lynda was a force for educational excellence with equity across Kentucky and a valued member of this study group. Our enduring hope is that Lynda’s highest aspirations for students in Kentucky will soon be realized through the courageous and persistent efforts of citizens, educators, and students.*

Excellence with Equity: It's Everybody's Business

Executive Summary

Education equals opportunity. But far too many Kentucky students are being denied that opportunity as a result of an education system that has failed to erase barriers due to race, income, language, and learning differences. Kentucky must take a giant leap – now – to close the gaps that are undermining the ability of individuals and the state as a whole to achieve **excellence with equity**.

Where we stand

Kentucky has made tremendous progress in educational achievement since the 1990s. But there is a glaring exception to this positive story: the achievement gaps that persist between different populations. Those most likely to be falling through the cracks include students:

- ▶ With low family incomes
- ▶ Who are learning English
- ▶ With learning differences
- ▶ Who are African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian/Native Alaskan or of two or more races

Nearly 70 percent of Kentucky students fit in one or more of these groups. While many students in these groups excel, these are also the groups that are less likely to have the opportunities they need to begin kindergarten ready for school, to become strong readers and solve math problems with confidence, to enter high school prepared for challenging courses, and to graduate high school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed as adults.



Over the last decade, our gaps have grown even as student results improved. For example, between 2005 and 2015, Kentucky's fourth grade reading proficiency on the National Assessment of Educational Progress increased:

- ▶ 8 percent for African American students and 11 percent for white students
- ▶ 7 percent for students receiving free or reduced price meals and 18 percent for students not receiving those meals
- ▶ 5 percent for students with identified disabilities and 12 percent for students without

All six groups improved, but closing gaps would have required faster improvement for African American students, students receiving free/reduced meals, and students with identified disabilities.



Why it is so important

The need to close these achievement gaps – to ensure excellence with equity for all students – has never been more critical. More than at any time in our history, the need to complete education or training after high school is essential, for both a student's livelihood and the economic future of our state. Economic success depends on equipping all students with essential knowledge and skills. According to recent research by Eric Hanushek, if Kentucky were to bring all students up to the "basic" level of performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the return would amount to **\$335 billion** in additional economic growth over the expected lifespan of a child born today.



What needs to be done

Recognizing the urgent need to focus on these challenges, the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence convened the Achievement Gap Study Group in the fall of 2015 to analyze data, review research, learn from Kentuckians' experiences, and develop findings and recommendations for achieving **excellence with equity** in Kentucky schools.

Our findings:

- ▶ Gaps are already visible at the start of kindergarten, making early childhood efforts essential.
- ▶ Most gaps expand from kindergarten to graduation, confirming that improvement is needed at all grade levels.
- ▶ Disciplinary consequences are much harsher for students of some races than for others.
- ▶ Identification of students with disabilities and gifted and talented students appears to lack equity.
- ▶ Kentucky's teaching force lacks sufficient racial diversity.

In addition, the study group found inconsistent access to culturally-responsive teaching and a lack of equitable distribution of teaching excellence and experience. The group found that families are not consistently engaged as partners in students' learning, that current laws and regulations that could be making a difference for students have not been implemented or evaluated, and that the state's current accountability system does not provide clear signals about excellence and equity.



To meet the challenges represented by these findings, our priority recommendations focus on the **BASICS**:

- ▶ **Bold leadership** at the state level and in every community
- ▶ **Accountability** to drive substantial improvement in the performance of each student and student group
- ▶ **School climate and culture** that welcome and support each student and family
- ▶ **Instruction** in the classroom that engages each student in deep, effective learning opportunities
- ▶ **Communities** that band together to demand and support excellence with equity
- ▶ **Sustainability** of reforms

We know improvement is possible. Kentucky has made nationally recognized progress from the bottom of educational rankings in the early 1980s to today's reality where the average Kentucky student performs on par with those across the nation on many measures, according to the Prichard Committee's latest Top 20 by 2020 report. Meeting this challenge will clearly require deliberate and sustained action from Kentuckians across our Commonwealth who are committed to **excellence with equity**.

Introduction

*“It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the **urgency** of the moment.*

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Lincoln Memorial, August 28, 1963

What was true in 1963 is just as true today. Across our nation and in our Commonwealth, we find ourselves in a moment of urgency to ensure that *everyone* has opportunity.

Education is the key to opportunity. Never before has the need to complete education or training after high school been more important – for each student’s livelihood, for the economic future of our state, and for all the endeavors that strengthen our communities. We must focus on preparing all students at every age for what comes next, on helping them catch up if they fall behind, and on correcting the systemic inequities that put some students at a disadvantage.

Today, however, far too many students are being denied opportunities to begin kindergarten ready for school, to become strong readers and solve math problems with confidence, to enter high school prepared for challenging courses, and to graduate high school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed as adults. That is because our education system has failed to erase barriers to their educational progress that have developed due to race, income, language, and learning differences.

Kentucky is far from alone in experiencing these disparities, but it is time for us to acknowledge them and focus our energies, resources, and creativity on eliminating them.

Kentucky students most likely to be falling through the cracks include:

- ▶ Students with low family incomes
- ▶ Students who are learning English
- ▶ Students with learning differences (including, but not exclusively, those who have Individualized Education Plans, or IEPs, under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- ▶ Students who are African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian/Native Alaskan, or of two or more races

Most Kentucky students – about 70 percent of them – fit in one or more of these groups. While many of these students excel, the ones in these groups are the least likely to have the opportunities they need.

The Prichard Committee’s Achievement Gap Study Group reached a fundamental conclusion following its months of work:

It is time for Kentuckians to embrace and act on a new commitment to excellence with equity.

Achieving excellence with equity will mean:

Excellence. Kentucky students of all backgrounds will learn at much higher levels. Evidence of this progress will be visible on meaningful indicators of academic achievement and educational attainment.

Equity. Students in the groups that have historically had less opportunity to excel – students with low family incomes, African American students, Hispanic and Latino students, Native American students, students with learning differences, and students learning English – will catch up with their peers.

This work is everybody’s business. Policy, education, business, community, and faith leaders across Kentucky must share the responsibility for expanding opportunities and lifting the performance of all students. The progress Kentucky’s education system has made in the last 25 years must now be reflected in the academic achievement of all students. Any option with promise should be on the table as the next few years offer a pivotal opportunity to come together with the urgency, creativity, and innovation needed to finally eliminate this intolerable inequity.

The Study Group’s work was guided by principles that the members recognized as essential (see page 6). Its findings are based on analysis of evidence, research, expert presentations, and the members’ collective years of experience in Kentucky education. Six recommendations focus on building excellence with equity and developing the full capacities of every Kentucky child.

The study group members hope the report will spur courageous and meaningful discussions that lead to action at the state level and across local communities.

Principles

Improvement is possible

Examples abound of districts and schools that are making dramatic progress in increasing student performance. Within a single decade, for example, Floyd County Schools shot from the bottom of state rankings (and a state takeover) to the 12th highest-scoring district in the state, thanks to a relentless focus on teacher professional growth, preparing students for advanced coursework, expanding early childhood opportunities, and embracing the community. Above all, the district has held high expectations for all of its students, 75 percent of whom qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Every year matters from birth through career

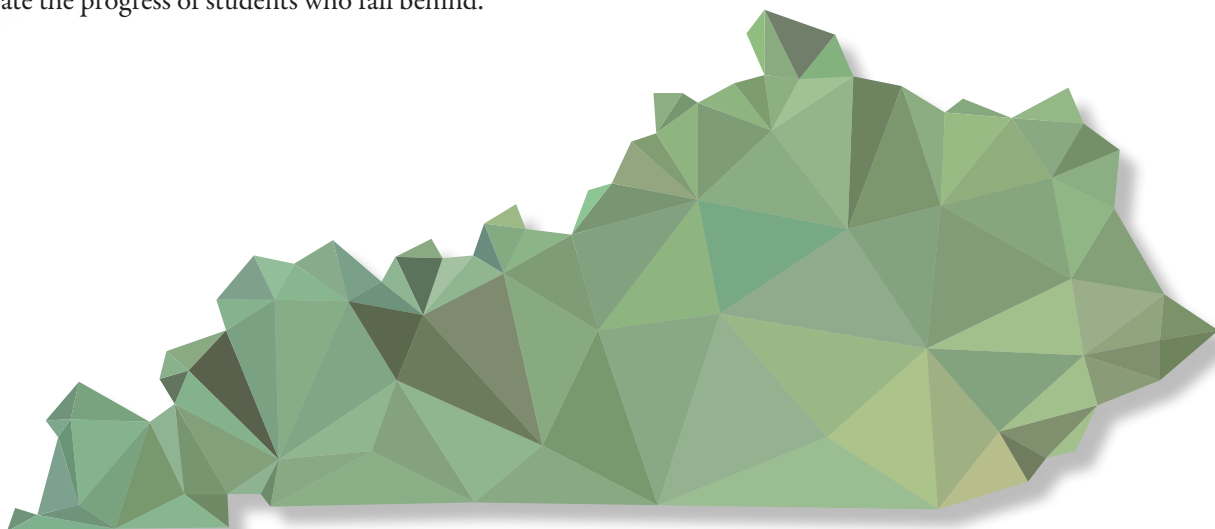
According to Dr. Ron Ferguson, cognitive skill gaps that may not be identified at age 1 begin to emerge by age 2 across race/ethnic groups. It is critical that strategies work to prevent these early gaps, but not stop there – each development phase of children and adolescents calls for unique strategies to address existing gaps and prevent new ones. The entire “cradle to career” pipeline is important. Strategies to address the achievement gap, such as intense early childhood supports, should focus on preventing gaps from opening. Such strategies should also focus on efforts, such as extra time and tutoring, to accelerate the progress of students who fall behind.

Language matters

Currently, language in use across the state does not communicate high expectations for all students. For instance, members suggested that a term such as “students with disabilities” should be shifted to a term such as “students with learning differences.” Language such as “at-risk students” and “gap kids” diminishes the emphasis on both their needs and their strengths – while using positive terms such as “students of promise” and “scholars” reinforces high expectations.

Resources matter, but not in isolation

Educating Kentucky’s rising generation cannot be done on a shoestring. The work requires skilled teachers, rich learning materials, advanced technology, and an array of services that can respond to each student’s strengths and distinctive needs. Adequate funding is required to attain these necessary prerequisites. That funding must be spent wisely on implementing sound strategies and refining them based on evidence. Money alone does not change results. Nevertheless, the changes that will deliver excellence with equity cannot be made without financial support.

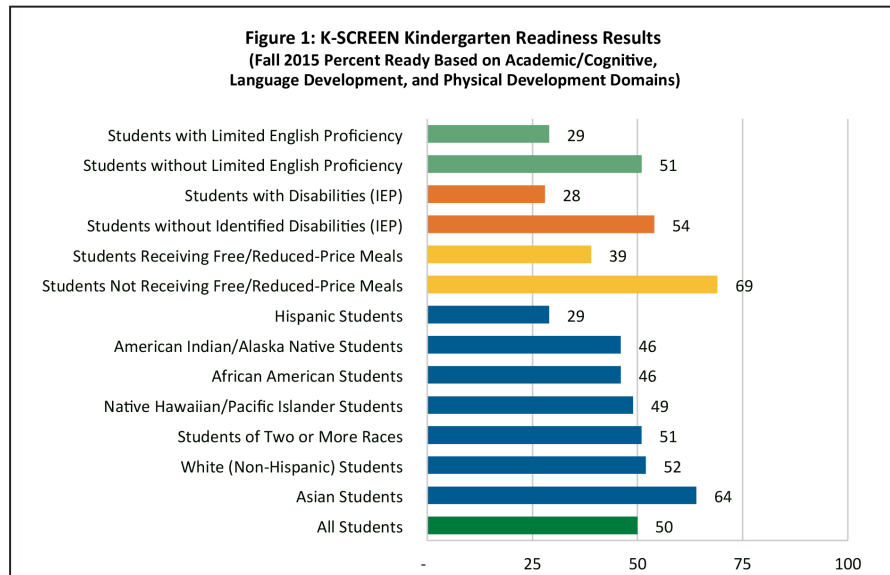


Findings

Finding 1:

Gaps are already visible at the start of kindergarten, making early childhood efforts essential.

When Kentucky children start kindergarten, they already vary in readiness levels. All public elementary schools use the Brigance screener (K-SCREEN) tool to learn about students' readiness for learning. Early and important differences are reflected in Figure 1.



Finding 2:

Most gaps expand from kindergarten to graduation, confirming that improvement is needed at all grade levels.

The Study Group chose three sets of test results to summarize Kentucky's achievement gaps: fourth grade reading, eighth grade mathematics, and college and career readiness of high school students. (Please see Figures 2, 3, and 4 in the Appendix.)

Too many students of all backgrounds fall short of the proficiency and readiness they need for adult success on all three indicators, showing that excellence must be central to Kentucky's efforts. But achieving excellence will require new commitment to equity, because all three indicators also show gaps of:

- ▶ **30 points or more** between students with and without limited English proficiency, including a 58 point readiness gap between those two groups at the end of high school
- ▶ **25 points or more** between African American and white students.
- ▶ **20 points or more** between students with and without identified learning differences, and between students with and without low family incomes.
- ▶ **10 points or more** between Hispanic and white students.

Compared to the kindergarten readiness results shown earlier, **most of the gaps are wider at the end of students' years in school than at the beginning.** The exceptions at the end of high school are smaller gaps between Hispanic students and white students, and smaller gaps between students with low family incomes and their more affluent peers.

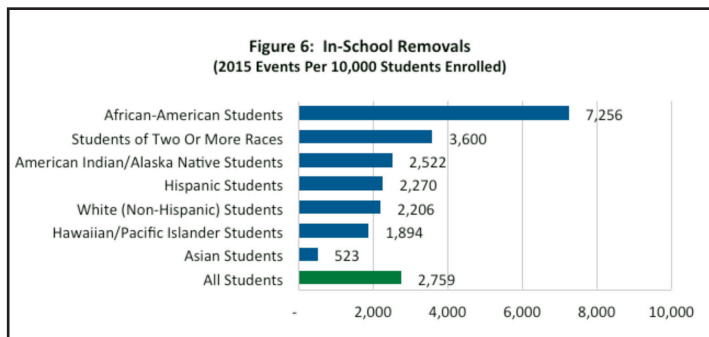
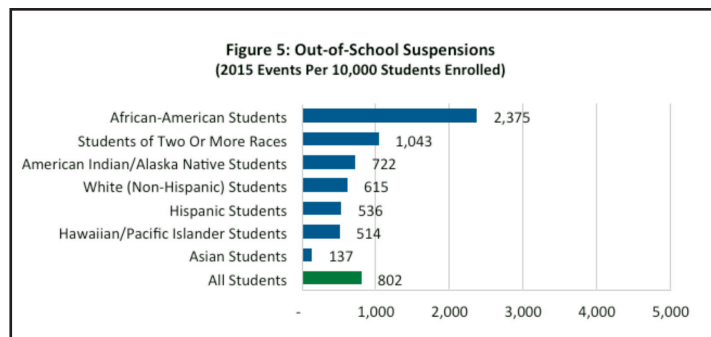
Finding 3:

Disciplinary consequences are much harsher for students of some races than for others.

Statewide data on school disciplinary actions can be found in the Kentucky Department of Education's online school report cards, and analysis shows disturbing patterns. In 2015:

- ▶ African American students were suspended *four times* more often than white students.
- ▶ African American students were removed from their classrooms (often called in-school suspension) *three times* more often than white students.
- ▶ Students of two or more races were subject to suspension and removal *twice as often* as white students.

These differences are large enough to have a significant impact on the excluded students' opportunities to learn. They are also large enough to affect other students' thinking about whether school is a place where they can expect to be welcomed and respected. (The Study Group recommends that school report cards also include discipline data for students with learning differences, limited English proficiency, and low family incomes, rather than considering race alone.)



Finding 4:

Identification of students with disabilities and gifted and talented students appears to lack equity.

Based on data provided by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics, apparent significant problems surfaced in identifying exceptional children and providing them with appropriately customized learning opportunities. (Please see Figures 7 and 8 in the Appendix.) Hispanic students and those with limited English proficiency are identified as having learning disabilities less often than their classmates. The data suggest African American students and students with low family incomes may also be identified too often.

Hispanic students and African American students are identified as gifted and talented less than half as often as white students. Students with low family incomes are identified one third as often as those who are better off economically, while students with limited English proficiency and learning differences are rarely identified.

Finding 5:

Kentucky's teaching force lacks sufficient racial diversity.

In Kentucky classrooms, more than 95 percent of teachers are white, while only 79 percent of students are. That disproportion means many students never learn from a teacher of color. It also means that many school faculties have no members who can contribute personal experience of cultures other than the dominant white one. To close this gap in teaching capacity, Kentucky would need to add: 2,950 African American teachers, 2,096 Hispanic teachers, and 1,836 teachers who are Asian, American Indian/Native Alaskan, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or of two or more races.

	Percent of Students	Percent of Classroom Teachers	Teachers Needed To Match Enrollment
African American	10.5	3.5	2,950
Hispanic	5.5	0.6	2,096
Asian	1.6	0.4	490
American Indian/American Native	0.1	0.1	27
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1	0.05	19
Two or More Races	3.1	Not Reported	1,300
Non-White Total	20.9	4.6	6,882
<i>Source: Kentucky Department of Education 2015 School Report Card and 2016 Classroom Teacher Ethnic-Gender Count data files</i>			

Policies to address achievement gaps in place, but impact minimal

Kentucky already has policies that could make an important difference in efforts to achieve excellence with equity. But the Study Group found little evidence of any impact. As a result, the Study Group urges more effective implementation of current policies rather than adoption of new ones.

- ▶ Schools must offer added learning time for students who might otherwise not reach Kentucky's learning goals (extended school services required since 1990).
- ▶ Schools must permit students to progress through an integrated curriculum according to their unique learning needs until they are ready for grade 4 (primary program critical attributes defined in 1992).
- ▶ A school board may allocate added dollars to school councils to address student needs shown in data on results for different groups of students (regulatory amendment adopted in 1996).
- ▶ School councils must set targets and plans to close substantive gaps between student groups. Superintendents get approval powers over those plans if targets are missed, and the Department of Education gets approval powers if targets are missed twice (achievement gap requirements set in 2002).
- ▶ Schools must offer accelerated learning opportunities for students with scores below needed levels on state assessments, ACT, or WorkKeys (legislation passed in 2006).
- ▶ Elementary schools must teach reading and mathematics by starting with a core program that will be effective for most students and adding supplemental support and then intensive intervention when evidence shows which students need different or additional support (response to intervention requirements set in 2013).

Recommendations

Given Kentucky's record of steady educational progress, the tremendous capacity of its educators, and the strong tradition in our communities that all children are "our kids," there is ample reason for optimism that the Commonwealth can be the first state to achieve excellence with equity.

It will take all of us as Kentuckians, working together with an urgent focus on these six priorities – the **BASICS**.

Bold leadership at the state and local levels and in every community

Accountability to drive substantial improvement in the performance of each student and student group

School climate and culture that welcome and support each student and family

Instruction in the classroom that engages each student in deep, effective learning opportunities

Communities that band together to demand and support excellence with equity

Sustainability of reforms

Recommendation 1

Bold leadership at the state and local levels and in every community

The Study Group recommends that Kentuckians of all backgrounds step into new leadership roles and along with current Kentucky leaders:

- 1.1** Work together to set ambitious and clear goals to achieve excellence with equity.
- 1.2** Adopt ambitious strategies for developing each student's full strengths and creating school systems and communities that nurture every learner. Strengthen, revise or replace strategies that fall short.
- 1.3** Share transparent evidence of results, using data to tell which efforts are moving Kentucky toward excellence with equity.
- 1.4** Allocate funds to implement sound strategies and refine them based on evidence. While money alone does not change results, sustainable changes that will deliver excellence with equity cannot be made without financial support.
- 1.5** Own the challenge of ensuring each child has a nurturing environment in the early years – working together across families, schools, businesses, health care, churches, and community organizations to recognize and support children birth through five years during the fastest growth of early brain development.



Recommendation 2

Accountability to drive substantial improvement in the performance of each student and student group

The Study Group recommends that state leaders:

- 2.1** Establish goals that ensure meaningful, timely progress for every student and every student group – with more rapid progress for groups that start out farthest behind. The accountability system should be a major driver of excellence with equity in Kentucky.
- 2.2** Celebrate and learn from schools and districts where all student groups are making meaningful, timely progress.
- 2.3** Mobilize strong support for the schools that consistently deliver the weakest results for all students or for any subgroup, including appropriate funding, expertise, and community engagement.
- 2.4** Pay close attention to the measures used to report student performance and how well they evaluate the full range of knowledge and skills Kentucky students need for successful futures. For example, college and career readiness reporting should give both students and educators accurate information. Each readiness indicator should be checked regularly against Kentucky's longitudinal data system to be sure that it provides consistent, accurate evidence of students' preparation to succeed in higher education and on the job.

Listening to students

Recent research from the Gates Foundation's Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project has found that one of the most accurate ways to learn about how students are challenged in school is to ask them. Communities and schools that deeply involve students in the work of reaching excellence with equity, including listening through surveys, focus groups, and other means, will find that students serve as essential partners in efforts to close achievement gaps.

The time is now. The future of our nation depends on every student in every classroom receiving skillful teaching every day. This is a fundamental civil right of every child.

- Deborah Ball, Dean,
University of Michigan College of Education

Recommendation 3

School climate and culture that welcome and support each student and family

The Study Group recommends that school and district leaders:

- 3.1** Seek out independent assessments of school climate and culture informed by family, teacher, and student perspectives, giving high priority to addressing concerns that emerge from those assessments. Evidence that students of different backgrounds receive different learning opportunities, different disciplinary consequences, or different levels of respect must be addressed with frankness and energy.
- 3.2** Ensure that each student's strengths are noted and built upon, both across the curriculum and in consistent and accurate evaluation of possible gifts, talents, and learning differences that may require specialized services.
- 3.3** Offer every student access to rigorous assignments, advanced coursework, career pathways, and opportunities to achieve beyond proficiency.
- 3.4** Engage families as full collaborators in their children's learning, drawing on family understanding of each student's strengths and offering effective opportunities for families to tap into available supports and resources, including welcoming families' advocates. Adequate funding and support for Family Resource and Youth Services Centers can give each school the capacity to address particular student and family needs.

The problem is not that we don't know how to improve the lives of our children. The problem is that we're not doing it. Research has increasingly shown us what works, when it works, and where to focus our efforts.

- Jim Shelton, "We Already Know How to Close the Achievement Gap," Education Week, September 29, 2015

- 3.5** Engage students as active participants in their learning, ensuring that they take ownership of their own learning and contribute as equal partners in school and district decisions.
- 3.6** Offer the most vulnerable students robust support to allow them to focus on learning, integrating with state-level efforts for ongoing collaboration across child-serving agencies.

The Study Group recommends that state leaders:

- 3.7** Convene regularly across cabinets to take responsibility and accountability for seamless support for Kentucky's most vulnerable students.

Innovations and solutions that fit local needs

Although some of the recommendations in this report have statewide implications, the Study Group recognizes that there are many ways to reach desired outcomes across Kentucky – and we anticipate that communities will take different paths to reach the goal. We also anticipate that some communities will have the courage to carve new paths based on their unique needs and assets. Solutions to reach excellence with equity are not one-size-fits-all. We strongly encourage communities to share their stories, lessons, and data with others. We have much to learn from one another in the journey from excellence for some to excellence for all students.

Recommendation 4

Instruction in the classroom that engages each student in deep, effective learning opportunities

The study group recommends that educators:

- 4.1** Teach in culturally responsive ways that build on the strengths of all students.
- 4.2** Provide rigorous learning opportunities with high-quality classroom assignments to engage all students in the depth and breadth of Kentucky's academic standards.
- 4.3** Prioritize early literacy for all students, including taking roles as "interventionists" to ensure students with early reading challenges, such as those with dyslexia, are identified quickly and accurately for interventions and different approaches to learning.
- 4.4** Work together to develop new approaches to help students who are far from meeting standards to catch up.

To make educators' essential work possible, the study group recommends that school, district and state leaders:

- 4.5** Treat time as a core resource for teachers that is essential for analyzing student work, conferring with families about students' individual strengths, and planning challenging and responsive learning opportunities for each student. Innovative school schedules, changes in staffing patterns, and work to simplify or remove record-keeping and other competing requirements can all be important to this effort.
- 4.6** Take concrete steps through implementing personalized or competency-based learning to ensure that no one falls through the cracks – that all students meet all standards.
- 4.7** Provide the feedback, collaboration, and growth opportunities that will allow new teachers to become skilled in their craft and experienced teachers to deepen their skills every year.
- 4.8** Give culturally responsive teaching much deeper support in pre-professional teacher education, professional development, and engagement with each local community.

- 4.9** Make educator diversity a high priority, redoubling efforts to recruit educators with a full range of cultural experience and expertise.
- 4.10** Make equitable teacher assignment a firm policy, backed up by a commitment to provide the right resources and support for teachers who work in high-needs schools or focus on high-needs students.
- 4.11** Establish a professional credential for school turnaround specialists with proven track records to support rapid improvement in the highest-needs schools.

Recommendation 5

Communities that band together to demand and support excellence with equity

The Study Group recommends that every community, working through its businesses, government bodies, voluntary organizations, and faith-based institutions:

- 5.1** Ensure high quality early care and education are available to all and especially to children and families in greatest need.
- 5.2** Partner with school districts and schools to provide mentorship and tutoring targeted to students and schools in most urgent need.
- 5.3** Coordinate effective support to strengthen children and families, based on analysis of current and emerging local needs and committed to robust partnerships between voluntary organizations, state and local agencies, and all who are ready to work on strengthening the next generation.
- 5.4** Facilitate environments of trust within their communities to encourage courageous conversations about race, poverty, and learning differences.



Recommendation 6

Sustainability of reforms

The Study Group recommends that all Kentuckians, together:

- 6.1** Define excellence with equity as the central purpose of our schools and the central challenge our Commonwealth must meet in the years ahead, with sufficient investment of time and resources.
- 6.2** Ask more questions. Demand regular, clear evidence of improving student performance overall and specific progress for African American, American Indian/Native American and Hispanic students, for students of two or more races, and for students with learning differences, limited English proficiency, and low family incomes.
- 6.3** Commit to finding, implementing, monitoring, and improving the strategies that can ensure that every Kentucky student is equipped for individual success and important contributions to our shared future.

Conclusions

Enough is enough. Although Kentucky has shown that improvement in education is possible, the state's progress has not narrowed glaring achievement gaps among children based on race, income, language, and learning differences. These gaps and the negative outcomes they produce begin with lower educational achievement and attainment of high school and postsecondary degrees and translate into lost opportunities for individuals, families, and the state as a whole.

This inequity fragments our Commonwealth. It is unacceptable for these disparities to persist into the next generation of Kentucky citizens.

Today, Kentucky's students are all children of promise: scholars of great aptitude, ready to engage important ideas and succeed at challenging tasks. In the years to come, these same students will be the people who:

- ▶ Fill the job openings in our industries, stores, schools, and service organizations
- ▶ Invent products, services, enterprises, and employment possibilities we have not yet imagined
- ▶ Find powerful solutions to problems in science, medicine, and public affairs that have perplexed all past generations
- ▶ Bring us new art, new music, new adventure, and new laughter
- ▶ Become our neighbors, colleagues, friends and heroes

We cannot spare any of the tremendous capacities those students can contribute to our Commonwealth. Educational excellence with equity is the key to Kentucky's future, and it must be everybody's business.

How will it be your business?

What will you do to echo the call to action in your own community?

How will you use your leadership, networks, and know-how?

How will you communicate the urgency and demand solutions?

How will you celebrate the day when excellence with equity, in your community and across the Commonwealth, is achieved?

Resources

- Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, 2014. Top 20 by 2020 – 2014 update.
 - 15th 8th grade reading
 - 17th 4th grade reading
 - 25th AP college
 - 26th HS graduate
 - 20th 4th grade math
 - McKinsey and Company, 2010. How the World's Most Improved School Systems Keep Getting Better.
 - Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2015. Getting to Excellence with Equity: Ron Ferguson Talks About Opportunity, Achievement, and Raising the Bar for All Students.
 - McKinsey and Company, 2015. The Economic Cost of the U.S. Education Gap.
 - US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2015. The Path Forward.
 - Eric Hanushek, Jens Ruhose, and Ludger Woessman, 2015. Economic Gains for U.S. States from Educational Reform.
 - Jim Shelton, September 30, 2015. We Already Know How to Close the Achievement Gap, *Education Week*.
 - Cheryl Truman, October 12, 2015. Once the Scourge of Kentucky Education Reform, Floyd County Schools Now the Star. *Lexington Herald-Leader*.
 - Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University, 2008. Getting It Done: Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps in Whole School Systems.
 - The Boston Basics - <http://bostonbasics.org/>
 - Education Delivery Institute, 2016. Eyes on the Prize: Building the Capacity of Education Leaders to Use System-Wide Goals to Drive Student Success.
 - The Education Trust, 2014. Making Sure All Children Matter: Getting Accountability Signals Right.
 - Ronald Ferguson, 2015. The Influence of Teaching: Beyond Standardized Test Scores – Engagement, Mindsets, and Agency. The Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University.
 - Gloria Ladson-Billings, 1995. But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*.
 - Jonathan A. Plucker, Jacob Hardesty, and Nathan Burroughs, 2014. Talent on the Sidelines: The Excellence Gap and America's Persistent Talent Underclass. University of Connecticut Center for Education Policy Analysis.
 - Kentucky Department of Education, 2015. Equitable Access to Effective Educators Plan for Kentucky.
 - Veeko Lucas, 2016. In Class – Bored to Underachievement. TNTP
 - The Education Trust, 2015. Checking In: Do Classroom Assignments Reflect Today's Higher Standards?
 - Deans for Impact, 2016. The Science of Learning.
 - The Education Trust, 2013. Breaking the Glass Ceiling of Achievement for Low-Income Students and Students of Color.
- ### Previous Prichard Committee reports on the achievement gap
- *Progress and Next Steps for Early Childhood Education: Birth Through Third Grade*
 - *Strengthening the Teaching Profession in Kentucky*
 - *Inside the Black Box: High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools*

Achievement Gap Study Group

Chairs

Rev. C.B. Akins, D.Min. | Lexington
Helen Mountjoy | Utica

Members

Sonya Anglin | Stanford
Justin Bathon, Ph.D. | Lexington
Jessica Berry | Lexington
Mary Ann Blankenship | Midway
David Bolt | Morehead
Ron Chi, Ed.D | Frankfort
Bill Farmer | Lexington
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Kristine Frech | Covington
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Bill Garmer | Lexington
Tim Hanner | Lakeside Park
Dewey Hensley | Louisville
Paul Jolly | Louisville
Wayne Lewis, Ph.D. | Versailles
Roger Marcum | Bardstown
Sherri McPherson | Lexington
Joseph U. Meyer | Covington
Teresa Moss | Hopkinsville
Polly Lusk Page | Villa Hills
Dennis Pearce | Lexington
Hilma Prather | Somerset
Julia Roberts | Bowling Green
Jean Rosenberg | Prestonsburg
Julie Schmidt | Louisville
David Tachau | Louisville
Lois Weinberg | Hindman

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Susie Smith, Prichard Committee Student Voice Team
Jeff Stumbo, Floyd County Schools
Monica Tharp, Bullitt County Schools
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Consultants

Susan Perkins Weston
Diana Taylor

Prichard Committee Staff

Brigitte Blom Ramsey
Cory Curl
Cindy Baumert
Rachel Belin
Michelle Whitaker

Appendix

Figure 2: Grade 4 Reading Results
(2015 Percent Proficient or Distinguished on the K-PREP Assessment)

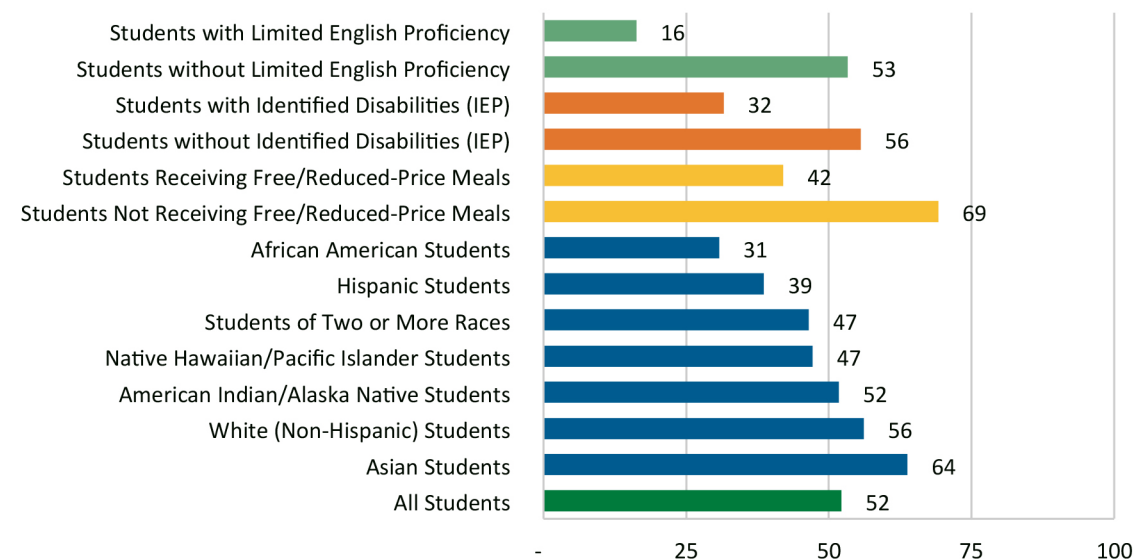


Figure 3: Grade 8 Mathematics Results
(2015 Percent Proficient or Distinguished on the K-PREP Assessment)

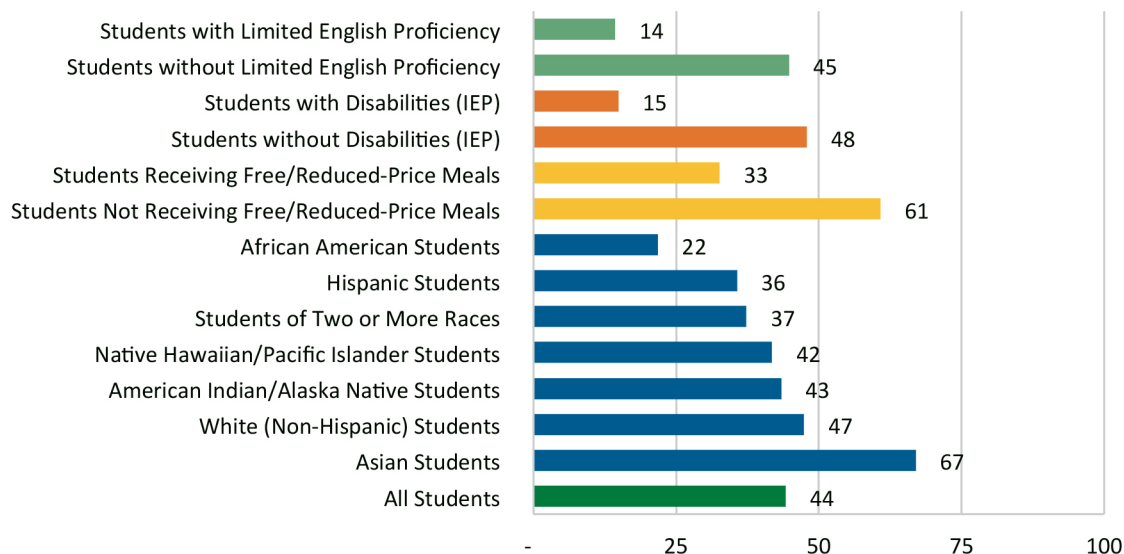


Figure 4: Ready Graduates as a Share of Entering Ninth-Graders
 (2015 College and/or Career Ready Graduates Per 100 Students Entering Grade 9 in 2011)

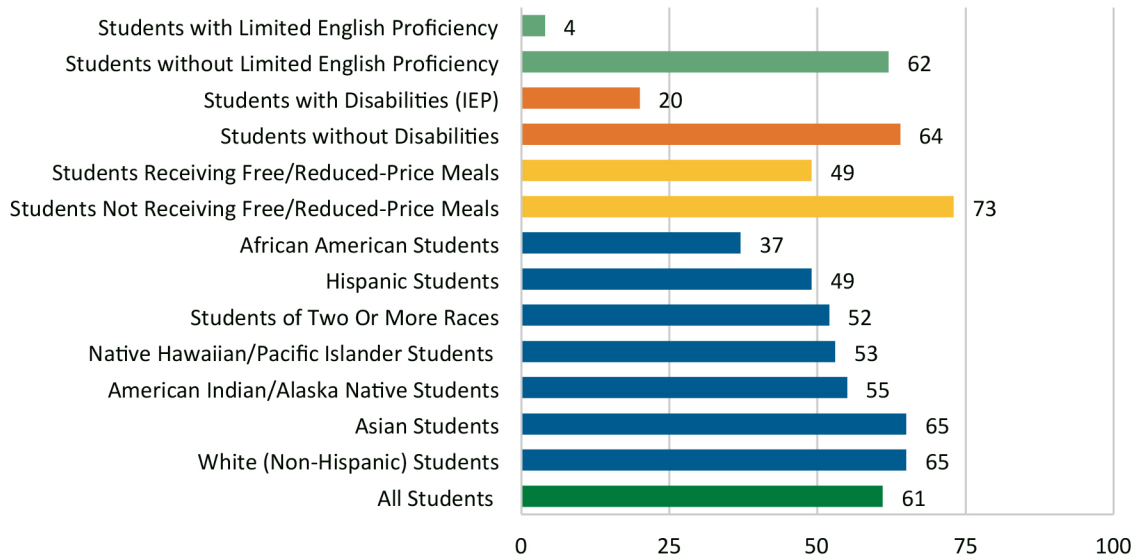


Figure 7: Students with Identified Disabilities
(2014 Students with Disabilities as Percent of Total Enrollment)

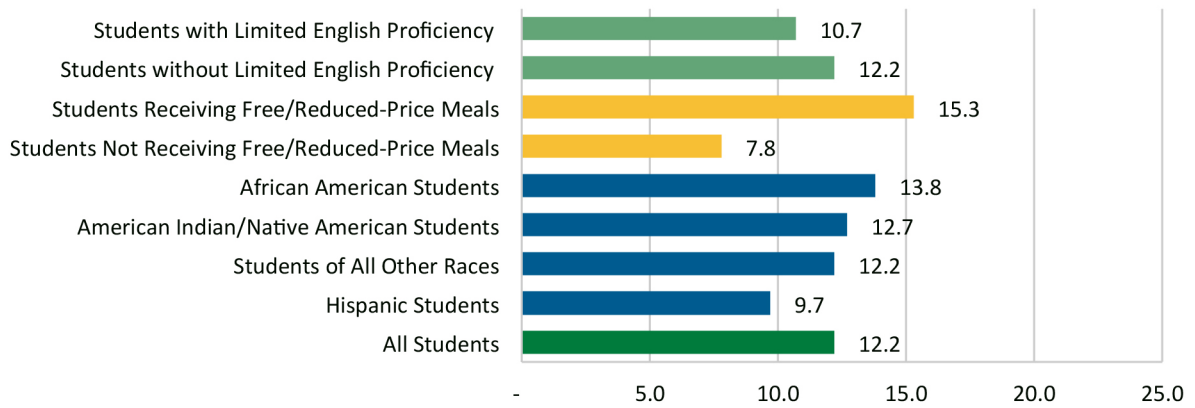
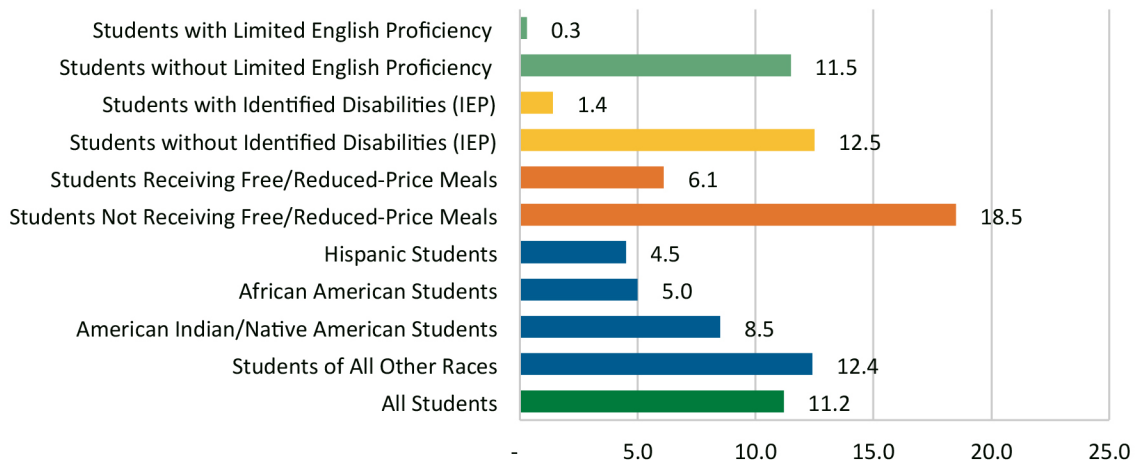


Figure 8: Students Identified as Gifted and Talented
(2014 Gifted and Talented Students as Percent of Total Enrollment)





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Security Trust Building
271 West Short Street, Suite 202
Lexington KY 40507
859-233-9849

admin@prichardcommittee.org
www.prichardcommittee.org