



The Education Trust–West

The Power of Now

Policy Agenda 2023–2024



The millions of students in our state’s schools, college campuses, and communities are California’s present – and future. Our students’ dreams should be respected, nurtured, celebrated and, perhaps most notably in a state as resource-rich and allegedly progressive as California, supported through equitable resource allocation, policies, and practices. Instead, far too many of these students and their families face an unnecessary uphill battle, forced to navigate the inconsistencies and inequities of education systems marred by barriers decisionmakers create and perpetuate.

As advocates, we not only believe it is possible to take bold action, we know it is. We’ve seen, along with millions of people around the state, nation, and world, how California made bold decisions at warp speed during the pandemic, putting in place policies and practices that had for years been dismissed as too fast, too bold, too much. This policy agenda calls for that same bold energy to be leveraged to advance racial equity in education. The priorities we outline here are community-driven, research-backed, and reflect our statewide priorities and regional advocacy efforts. This agenda delves deeper into long-standing focus areas for Ed Trust–West and centers new priorities in response to the educational landscape of our state. We look forward to engaging with fellow advocates and leaders throughout California to achieve these targeted, strategic, and bold actions for Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American students and their families.



As elected officials, state agencies, boards, commissions, district leaders, and school boards identify top priorities for the coming year, we urge them to draw from these priorities to ensure their own policy and practice agendas are equity-minded and center students of color and multilingual learners.

TK-12 Education



Provide funding to teacher preparation programs to prepare qualified, racially and linguistically diverse educators to lead transitional kindergarten classrooms



Ensure the successful scaling of ethnic studies by providing resources and guidance on program design, instructional strategies, and materials to local instructional leaders



Support rigorous and affirming math instruction by approving criteria for high-quality instructional materials aligned with the new California Math Framework and targeting funding for professional development opportunities for educators teaching math in classrooms with students learning English



Hold legislative hearings to surface ongoing challenges to equity with the Local Control Funding Formula and commit to solutions that address transparency in spending and provide resources to groups currently left out of the funding model



Require local education agencies to communicate services and spending for the most under supported students and schools explicitly and transparently in Local Control and Accountability Plans



Commit to consistently and expeditiously making demographic data on teachers and other educators publicly available



Higher Education



Incentivize colleges to support more students of color to enroll in and complete credit-bearing, transfer-level coursework



Provide strong guidance to schools, districts, and colleges on prioritizing access to dual enrollment for students of color



Commit to publicly sharing financial aid application completion data for community college students



Hold local education agencies accountable for implementing the requirement for all twelfth-grade students to complete a financial aid application and guarantee that state aid is available to all students from low-income backgrounds who apply



Increase mental health supports on college and university campuses and establish policies and programs that enable easy and ample access to mental health services



Mandate that colleges and universities collect and use data about pregnant and parenting students

Cross-cutting



Develop community-informed Cradle-to-Career Data System tools that provide clear, accessible, and timely information