NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

Education

2010 Program Toolkit

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Education Strategy Statement

Mission Statement: The NAACP works to ensure that every disadvantaged student and student of color graduates ready for college or a career by ensuring access to great teaching, fair discipline, equitable resources and challenging curriculum.

The NAACP is dedicated to eliminating the severe racial inequities that continue to plague our education system. Our ultimate goal is that every student of color receives a quality public education that prepares him or her to be a contributing member of a democracy.

To achieve these goals, the Education Committee of the national board, in concert with education chairs and leaders from across the Association, have settled upon a four-prong strategy to improve educational achievement for disadvantaged students:
- Increasing Resource Equity: Target funds to neediest kids
- Ensuring College & Career Readiness : A path to success after graduation for all students
- Improving Teaching: Growing our own great teachers now in underserved communities
- Improving Discipline: Eliminate zero tolerance; keep kids in school
    * All applied to turnaround schools

We think that advocating for improvements in these four issue areas will enable communities to substantially improve the academic achievement of their disadvantaged students. By no means are these the only issues that must be addressed. And we understand that local issues will arise that claim a branch's attention. However, we're asking **each branch to be a part of the national campaign for educational excellence by choosing to work on at least one of these issues using one of our suggested strategies and targeting their efforts to reforming turnaround schools (identified in each state as the bottom 5% in terms of test scores) or high schools with a graduation rate below 60%.**

Our strategies for reforming these areas of education are based in the latest and most comprehensive educational research available. For each issue area, we have a recommended series of strategies that branches can choose to implement:

Teaching: Growing our own great teachers now in underserved communities
- Stronger, More Diverse Pipeline (improving and diversifying preparation)
- More Mentoring & Coaching (slows turnover so teachers gain experience; improves classroom practice)

- More teachers with Advanced Certification (improves ability to teach content knowledge)

Resources: Advocacy at every level for targeting funds to neediest kids
- Federal reforms to make Title I more targeted
- Reforms for states to target extra funds to low-wealth school districts
- Reforms within districts so schools serving neediest students are targeted for increased funds based on individual students' needs.

Discipline: Working to eliminate zero tolerance and keep kids in school
- Advocating for reforms to include issues of discipline in ESEA, the main federal law governing education of the disadvantaged
- Working to change state laws so zero tolerance isn't a default or requirement for districts
- Advocating at district level for policies that don't remove students from school and that ensure access to challenging curriculum for disciplined students

College & Career Readiness: Blazing a path to success after graduation for all students
- Advocating for the creation of early warning and benchmarking systems that keep students on a path to college-ready high school graduation.
- Advocating for innovative whole-school reform models that can improve academic achievement at lowest performing schools.
- Helping local districts and turnaround schools address issues of school climate, extended learning time and connecting students with social service and academic supports to graduate ready for success in college or work.

We ultimately aim to make learning so engaging, teaching so effective and schools so well resourced that each student is appropriately supported and the need for discipline will be a rare occurrence. By harnessing the advocacy skills which the NAACP has perfected over the last 101 years, we can rekindle the fire for strong public education in our communities and ensure that disadvantaged and students of color receive a world-class education.

Turnaround Schools Primer

Originally authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ESEA) in 2002, the school improvement program did not receive funding until fiscal year 2007. The new administration has determined that one reason this program has not had much effect in turning around low-performing schools is that the vast majority of these chronically underperforming schools have adopted the least rigorous restructuring intervention option required by the ESEA. To change that dynamic, the Administration has determined that grants to states will still flow under formulas driven by population, but grants to local education agencies (LEAs) must be made on a competitive basis. In FY 2009, the Obama Administration allocated $3.546 billion for school improvement grants (a huge increase over previous years), which now represents an unprecedented opportunity for states and districts to implement significant reforms to transform chronically low-performing schools. Obama's 2011 budget proposal includes $900 million for School Turnaround Grants. This represents an enormous and timely opportunity for the NAACP to influence this new resource, as well as the rules under which it flows, and the implementation of this program at the local level.

Under new rules, recipients of Federal school improvement grants will be limited to the following options or models:

Intervention	Federal Race to the Top/School Improvement Grants (SIG)
Turnaround Model	A turnaround model is one in which a local education agency (LEA) – usually a school district, must replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff, and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to implement fully a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student outcomes.
Restart Model	A restart model is one in which a local district converts a school or closes and reopens a school under a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO), or an education management organization (EMO) that has been selected through a rigorous review process.
School Closure	School closure occurs when an LEA closes a school and enrolls the students who attended that school in other schools in the LEA that are higher achieving. These other schools should be within reasonable proximity to the closed school and may include, but are not limited to, charter schools or new schools.

Transformation Model	The transformation model is the only option that allows for the retention of existing school staff (other than the principal). Districts must assure implementation of each of the following strategies and "transforming" schools: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness; (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms; (3) increase learning time and create community-oriented schools; and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support. A school district with more than nine Tier I and Tier II low-performing schools may not implement the transformation model in more than 50 percent of these schools. This model also encourages the use of federal resources to partner with community-based organizations.

Unlike the Race to the Top grants, which will roll out to a limited number of pilot states first, the SIG grants will continue to go to all states, although they will be competitive with respect to local schools and districts. Thus, the competitive nature of these funds, the size of the federal allocations, and the deep effects of a depressed economy, all have combined to garner a great deal of attention to the requirements and incentives for comprehensive reform in schools with large black student enrollments. What remains to be ironed out, particularly as the Administration seeks Congressional approval to include these provisions into the ESEA reauthorization, is how restrictive the policies will be (particularly for large urban districts) and how limited or productive will be the local options and incentives. These debates will take place in the next 18 months and so the opportunity is now for involvement by the Association.

Second, it is clear that a focus on turn-around schools will also give the Association leverage to address curriculum quality and in these schools. The NAACP has long sought improvements in curriculum quality in schools with large black enrollments, but there has not, in the last decade been a significant public revenue stream to leverage toward that equity goal. Today, not only will the new federal funding stream affect attention to student access to a college ready curriculum, but also may create pressure for schools to improve the academic content of career and technical programs in low-performing secondary schools.

Finally, this new resource stream will affect low-performing schools within the jurisdiction of almost

every Branch of the NAACP, opening the door for wide-ranging local participation in school plan-ning in ways that touches on high quality teaching, curriculum improvement, testing and assessment, curricular supports, and school discipline policies.

Turn-around council – A Post-secondary preparedness strategy

Form a panel of experts and community members drawing from the local PTA, partner organizations such as the NUL and ACORN, a local university and retired educators.

Approach a sympathetic school board member to get a regular place on the agenda for reports from the committee.

Focus discussions on the schools identified for turnaround under the School Improvement Grant program, local schools identified as "dropout factories" which graduate fewer than 60% of their students, or schools identified by your state as the bottom 5%. The goal should be to actively participate in the selection and implementation of methods to improve turnaround or low performing schools.

Approach the principal and teacher leaders in these schools. Invite them to speak with your group. Ask questions such as:
- What would it take to implement extended learning time or an early college high school program here?
- How could we get an instructional coach for teachers?
- How can we support you in winning time for teachers to work together to plan students' lessons?
- How could we set up a system where each student has an advisor that helps them plan and prepare for life after high school?
- How can we help reconnect students with school?
- How can we establish a system that identifies students who are at risk of dropping out? What services do these students need?

You can also survey the students in these schools about their needs and experiences. This is especially useful for high school students.

Use the attached reporting instrument to regularly update the national education department. Reports should include members and coalition partners, a summary of your plan to participate in the turnaround process for the year, and records of conducting at least two meetings annually with the district and state education department leadership.

These councils or bodies should pay particular attention to whether turnaround plans impact the school district's de-segregation status, and to the formation of charter schools and proposals to close schools in communities of color, but may choose to expand their mission and function beyond these items to other educational matters of interest such as teacher distribution, discipline and resource equity.

Quality Teaching

On most measures of academic achievement, average statistics for African-American students lag behind their non-Black peers. No factor researchers have studied makes more of an impact on student learning than the teacher and nothing makes more difference than what that teacher does in the classroom. So it is a natural outgrowth of the NAACP's commitment to educational excellence and opportunity to look for ways to ensure that struggling students and students of color have great teachers. Unfortunately, trends today are going in the opposite direction: Schools that serve large numbers of minority, low-performing and poor students often have the least experienced teachers and the largest numbers teaching outside the field they studied.

However, there is hope for reversing this tide. Researchers have found that teachers who close achievement gaps have some experiences in common:
1.   They are fully prepared when they enter teaching.
2.   They have usually taught for more than two years.
3.   They are certified in their field and/or National Board Certified
Having a teacher with most of these characteristics, versus having a teacher with just one or a few has a greater impact on student achievement than race and parental education combined. **That means a teacher with most of these characteristics can generate enough learning to close the test score gap between the white son of two college professors and the black son of a high-school dropout.**

Recognizing the power and potential of increasing the numbers of these effective teachers who serve students of color, the Association looked for ways to make these characteristics more common among teachers in high-minority, high-needs schools.

The Facts

According to the Educational Testing Service, teaching practices and techniques used in the class-room have a larger impact on student achievement than any other measure of teacher quality -- 7 to 10 times more than class size.

Students whose teachers majored or minored in the subject they are teaching outperform their peers by about 40 percent of a grade level in math and science.

The difference between the most effective and least effective teachers can be up to a year's difference in learning growth for students.

On average, students with a teacher in the top 25 percent of the talent pool achieve at levels corresponding to an additional two or three months of instruction per year, compared with peers who have a teacher in the bottom quartile. This quality differential represents over a third of the "achievement gap" between students from low-income families and those from families with higher incomes.

New teachers, not just those in hard-to-staff schools, face such challenging working conditions that nearly half leave the profession within their first 5 years, 1/3 leave within their first 3 years, and 14 percent leave by the end of their first year.

The rate of attrition is roughly 50 percent higher in poor schools than in wealthier ones.

A report by the Alliance for Excellent Education estimated that the cost of replacing public school teachers who have dropped out of the profession is $2,600,000,000 per year.

Comprehensive induction cuts attrition rates in half, and helps to develop novice teachers into high-quality professionals who improve student achievement.

Research has demonstrated that comprehensive, multi-year induction--such as that provided by the New Teacher Center at University of California, Santa Cruz--provides a return on investment ($1.66 for every $1 spent); increases the new teacher retention rate (to 88 percent after 6 years in some California districts); and strengthens beginning teacher effectiveness to such an extent that their students demonstrate learning gains similar to those students of their more veteran counterparts.

Take Action to ensure that needy students get excellent teachers

What you can do:
1. Form a committee (see the handbook for guidelines about forming a turnaround schools council) or activate your standing education committee
2. Target your efforts to a turnaround school or dropout factory (see the appendix for a state-by state list)
3. Decide which of the following actions (or a combination of them) will be most effective in ensuring the development and fair distribution of great teachers.

Institute Instructional Coaching – a method whereby effective teachers are freed from some classroom duties to observe, coach and team-teach with their peers. Such a system commits a school and/or district to a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and allows for career ladders which can decrease teacher turnover and attrition.

National Board fundraising or promotion – using the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process to help teachers improve their classroom practice, either by seeking individual certification, becoming certified as a cohort, or participating in the school-wide teaching improvement process called Take 1. A CBO might sponsor a cohort of teachers, or advocate for the district to spend its professional development dollars on such efforts.

Targeted Scholarships to TEACH grants – encourage minority students to become teachers by promoting the federal TEACH scholarship process, aiding students in the process and making up the difference between the winners' stipends and the state average for a public college or university (TEACH grants are $4,000 while the national average is about $7,000). This leverages an unlimited federal program with relatively small grants and guarantees students will teach for four years after school in a high-needs field or setting.

Teacher Residency or Professional Development School – a partnership between the school district and a local university teacher education program to place teacher candidates in a year-long apprenticeship with a "master teacher," preferably one with demonstrated success with disadvantaged populations. Concurrent coursework support allows students to draw on faculty and research expertise while improving their practice. Pre-service teachers also gain cultural sensitivity by volunteering with community-based partner organizations engaged in tutoring, mentoring or other educational activities.

Resource Equity

The Problem

Because most school spending is allocated based on property taxes, the more wealthy people live in a district, the more money it can potentially spend to educate its children. Since people of color on average earn less and own fewer homes than their white counterparts, and since neighborhoods are often segregated, that means that communities of color tend to have fewer property tax resources to spend on schools. The problem is compounded when local political decisions cluster more experienced and expensive teachers at some schools – typically those where few poor students and students of color attend. In a vicious cycle, many teachers who can choose avoid schools serving poor and minority kids since they often have poorer facilities, weaker leadership and less effective organization.

The states and federal government recognized the unfairness of basing school spending on local property tax and local political decisions. Some states tried to make up – in part - for some of the differences in spending between wealthy and poor districts. The Federal government tried to step in with extra money for schools and districts serving large number of poor or special needs students. States and the federal government passed laws to make districts even out differences in local spending. Those laws say states and districts have to spend the same amount of money on each student. But there are loopholes in these laws that allow inequity to continue. Moreover, state and federal supplements to make up for differences in local spending don't fully fill in the gaps between wealthy and poor neighborhoods.

All told, these circumstances lead to stark differences in spending between schools in the same state and district – even though officially, states spend the same on all students.

"It looks like the school board is having another back to basics drive."

Facts:

➢ Students of color disproportionately get less experienced and less expensive teachers.

➢ Research shows that at every level of governance money flows to the least disadvantaged schools when that should be just the opposite

➢ Federal investment for disadvantaged students has never been fully funded and is under threat from
- distribution formulas that don't adjust enough for student needs,
- lack of targeting to neediest students,
- Local under-investment in schools serving poor and minority students, and
- reporting rules that allow districts to hide actual spending.

Researchers estimate that it costs about $22,000 per year to provide supports both in and out of school to help disadvantaged kids substantially close achievement gaps. The national average spending per student in 2009-2010 school year is about $10,000.

Discipline

The Problem

Nationwide, students of color experience rates of punishments in school - ranging from office referrals to corporal punishment, suspension, and expulsion – that far exceed their numbers in the school population or the share of offenses they commit. When school districts adopt a "zero tolerance" policy that relies heavily on exclusion from the classroom as a discipline strategy, such policies often have a disproportionate impact on students of color. In the short term, expulsions and suspensions typically results in missed instructional time and, for some students, only speed up a cycle of academic failure, disengagement, and escalating rule breaking. Long term, repeated suspensions and expulsions have been linked with lower academic achievement, dropping out and delayed high school graduation. When discipline incidents are referred to school officers or juvenile justice officials, it is often a gateway to repeated involvement with the criminal justice system, perpetuating a school to prison pipeline
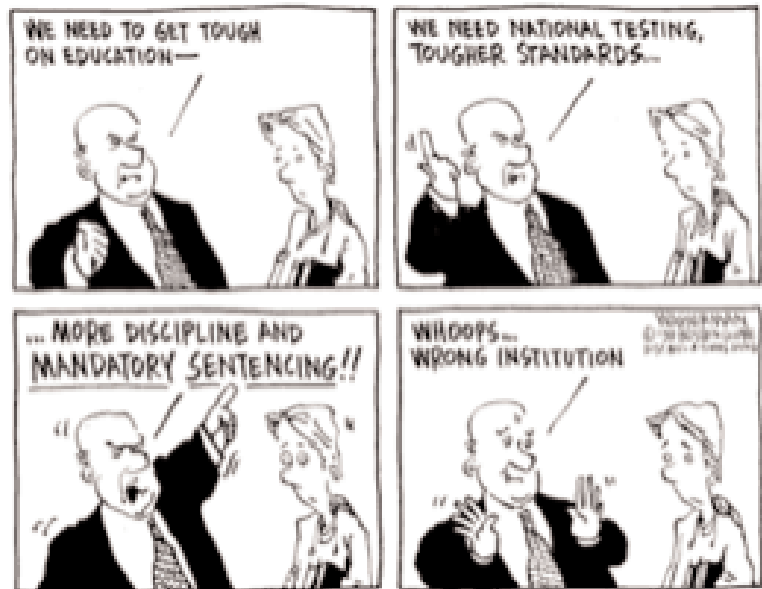
This toolkit can help advocates disrupt that pipeline to prison and change school discipline policies by working to eliminate zero tolerance policies and reduce the use of punishments that take students out of the classroom, denying them opportunity to learn.

The facts

•   Nationwide, **African Americans are arrested at 2.1 times the rate of white youth**. For violent crimes, African Americans are arrested at 3.5 times the rate of white youth.

•   Largely as a result of zero tolerance policies, African American public school students are suspended **three times more** than their white counterparts.

•   Students who have been suspended from school are **three times more likely** to drop out than those who have never been suspended.

•   Students who drop out of school are three times more likely to be incarcerated.

•   There is **no evidence that zero tolerance policies have been effective** in changing behavior or making schools safer. Out of school suspensions have not proven to be a deterrent, and in some cases seem to increase the likelihood that students will encounter law enforcement

Take Action to Eliminate Zero Tolerance and Exclusionary Discipline

What you can do:

1. Form a committee (see the handbook for guidelines about forming a turnaround schools council) or activate your standing education committee

2. Target your efforts to a turnaround school or dropout factory (see the appendix for a state-by state list)

3. Decide which of the following actions (or a combination of them)will be most effective in disrupting the school to prison pipeline by eliminating zero tolerance policies that push kids out of schools.

School Leader Interventions – strategies to educate and sensitize principals individually or collectively to the impacts of discipline policies and make them aware of alternative discipline methods that don't exclude students from school

Policy Review – forming a commission of stakeholders (parents, university researchers, students, teachers etc) to review a school or district's discipline policy – especially if it is a zero-tolerance policy – and compare it to more beneficial policies from around the country

Disparities Report – putting together a report that highlights the disparate impact of discipline policies on students of color and poor students in a school or district.

"So much for the presumption of innocence."

Note: Discipline, school climate and school safety are issues that are particularly ripe for youth involvement. Our youth members and their peers experience the results of discipline practices daily, while our college chapters can remember vividly the climate and practices in their elementary and secondary schools. Youth members, with the backing of other Association members, committees and units, can work to establish honor courts and school governance structures where students use peer pressure to positively influence the behavior of others, learn to settle disputes peacefully and practice mediation and conflict resolution skills. Research has shown that schools where students play a central role in rule-making increase their chances of a orderly, safe school campus where everyone can learn.
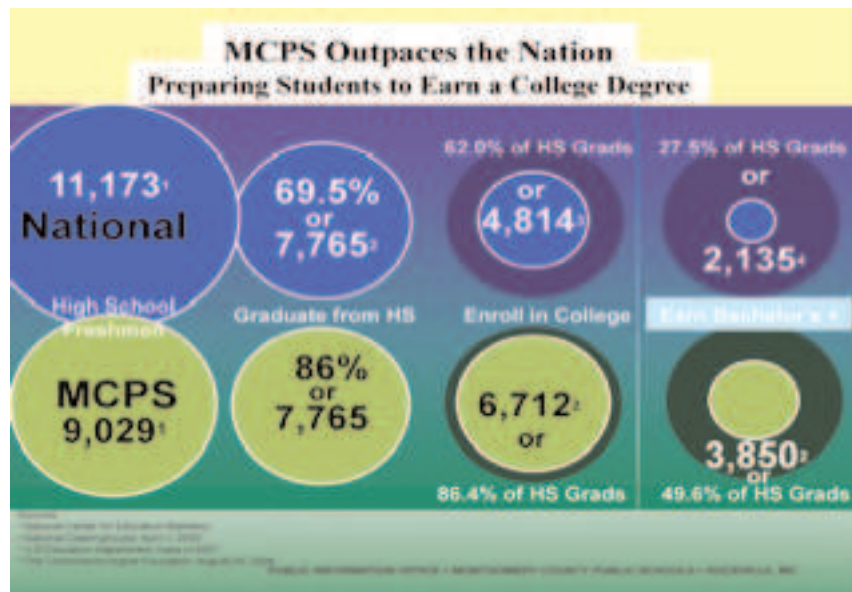
College & Career Readiness

The Problem

Far too many students of color fail to graduate from high school. Among high school graduates, an even smaller percentage of students is prepared for credit-bearing college work, meaning that few students of color manage to graduate with a four-year college degree. Communities can advocate for changes starting in elementary and middle schools, that, if they are well-designed, supported and sustained, can increase the likelihood that students of color will leave high school ready to take on challenges in the workplace, as citizens and in higher education.

Montgomery County MD outpaced national rates of high school graduation, college enrollment and degree completion by put in place a series of benchmarks to track their students' readiness for college. The graphic below shows outcomes for the class of 2001.

This toolkit will help communities concerned about college- and career-readiness identify benchmarks on the path to student success and advocate for changes that help students meet those goals, increasing their chances for success in life and society.
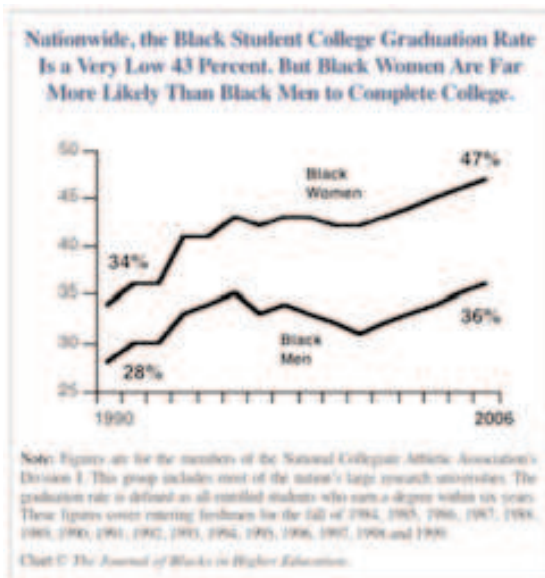
The Facts

Nationally, about 71 percent of all students graduate from high school on time with a regular diploma, but barely half of African American and Hispanic students earn diplomas with their peers.

In many states the difference between white and minority graduation rates is stunning; in several cases there is a gap of as many as 40 or 50 percentage points.

A sixteen- to twenty-four-year-old coming from the highest 25% of family income earners is about seven times as likely to have completed high school as a sixteen- to twenty-four-year-old coming from the bottom 25% in family income.

Over the course of his or her lifetime, a high school dropout earns, on average, about $260,000 less than a high school graduate.13

If U.S. high schools and colleges raise the graduation rates of Hispanic, African American, and Native American students to the levels of white students by 2020, the potential increase in personal income would add more than $310 billion to the U.S. economy.

Nationwide, the Black Student College Graduation Rate Is a Very Low 43 Percent. But Black Women Are Far More Likely Than Black Men to Complete College.

Six years after enrolling, college graduation rate for black students stands at an appallingly low rate of 43 percent. This figure is 20 percentage points below the 63 percentage rate for white students. Intervention

Take Action to prevent dropping out and prepare students for success

What you can do:

1. Form a committee (see the handbook for guidelines about forming a turnaround schools council)

2. Target your efforts to a turnaround school or dropout factory (see the appendix for a state-by state list)

3. Decide which of the following actions is necessary to keep students on track for college-and-career-ready graduation.

Data mining initiative/Equity Audit – a strategy that leverages the data systems states are being required to build, to flag early warning signs for students at risk of dropping out or failing academically, identify disparities along racial and class lines in achievement, discipline or access to rich curricula, and to track the distribution of resources such as counselors and strong school leaders.

Whole school reform – a strategy that seeks to reorganize a school to improve teaching and better meet student (and often community) needs. There are numerous models of success at building capacity for effective instruction that tend to involve parental outreach, efforts to improve teaching and leadership, additional resources and support personnel and innovative ways of accessing a challenging curriculum.

Extended learning time proposal – a strategy that seeks to use time differently to increase student learning, allowing for lengthier school days or years during which students can access enrichment opportunities, tutoring, service learning and project-based instruction or teachers can plan together, evaluate student work and data to adjust instruction and work to improve practice.

School Climate Survey – a strategy that combines surveys, interviews and focus groups of students, parents and school personnel with an examination of data such as teacher attrition, absences and turnover, student absences and discipline referrals, class size and course offerings to design a tailored set of interventions for that school.

Note: Youth and college students have a particular interest in this element of the education plan. They can act as advisors, helping to devise early warning systems and identify the responses needed to place students back on track. They can also serve as school climate investigators who are more likely to be trusted since they are closer in age to the students commenting on climate.

Instructional Coaching FAQs

What is instructional coaching?
A system where more experienced teachers help new teachers become better and where all teachers help each other to continue improving throughout their careers. It is sometimes called a lead teacher program or a mentor teacher program.

Why are coaching & mentoring important?
Research shows that a great teacher is the most important element for student learning. But often, schools that serve poor and minority kids have the least skilled teachers. Coaching and mentoring helps develop those teachers into stronger teachers. Without a support system to help them grow, new teachers come into high-needs schools, struggle by themselves then give up and leave after a year or two. Meanwhile, students suffer during those years because no one helped their teacher with on the job training. And those teachers never got to develop into skilled teachers who could help later classes of students.

What are the effects of coaching and mentoring?
Helping teachers with a system of on-the-job learning and support makes it more likely that they will stay longer than two or three years. Research shows that it takes that long for teachers to become really skilled at running a classroom. This keeps students from suffering under a revolving door of new, struggling teachers year after year, which has been shown to hurt their achievement.

A system where teachers learn from each other can even help veteran teachers do their jobs better and keep learning new skills to help their students. It also lets teachers work together to meet individual students' learning needs.

Finally, a coaching and mentoring plan lets teachers develop and share expertise, so they remain interested in their job and engaged with their schools. This makes it less likely that veteran teachers will change schools or leave the classroom to take other education jobs. Instead, they will help more students by learning new skills and sharing them with other teachers, whose students benefit in turn.

What is needed to place coaches in a school?
Teachers who become coaches first need the support of their principal and faculty members. They need to be relived of some (but not all) teaching duties and they need training in ways to help their

peers. Coaches also need time and access to classrooms to observe other teachers and demonstrate model lessons. All teachers will need time to try new teaching methods and put the coaches' advice into practice and receive feedback. Ideally, the school day and year should be reorganized so all teachers can help each other and work together to meet student needs, rather than placing the burden solely on coaches.

Some schools and districts will decide to give bonuses or salary incentives for coaches. They must decide on a system everyone views as fair for selecting and promoting coaches in each school. Depending on your local district, an individual school might be able to start a coaching program or might need permission from the district (especially if their plan involves new hiring or a starting an outside program that works with clusters of schools or districts only).

Where are some examples of instructional coaching in action?

The following programs focus on coaching for new teachers, but the principles can extend to teachers at any stage of their career:

Connecticut BEST: New teachers in this program receive coaching over two to three years, Then they present portfolios documenting their teaching in order to earn a provisional license to continue teaching. Teachers are supported with well-trained mentors, content-specific seminars, and, in some districts, "senior advisors" who are released from their normal teaching duties to work intensely with three to five new teachers.

Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP) at the University of California at Santa Cruz: The New Teacher Center provides coaching support services to every beginning teacher in the Santa Cruz school district through the University of California at Santa Cruz. The program has expanded to include other districts across the nation. SCNTP carefully selects and trains mentors to support new teachers as undergraduates in education programs, as fifth-year "residents" after receiving a bachelor's degree, and as beginning teachers for their first two years in the Santa Cruz school district. Mentors also administer assessments to new teachers to evaluate their work.

Tangipahoa FIRST: Every new teacher in Louisiana is assigned a mentor who guides them through their first years of teaching and prepares them for a state assessment. This program is called LaTAAP (Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program). A separate program for beginning teachers, Louisiana FIRST (Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers), provides a variety

of supports to new teachers in school districts that apply for and receive state grant money. Tangipahoa Parish, a rural district in Louisiana, has experience with both programs.

The Toledo Plan: The Toledo (Ohio) Plan is a joint project between the Toledo schools and the Toledo Federation of Teachers. New teachers are considered interns, and are supported by mentors and reviewed for effectiveness at the end of their first year. At the end of the year, a Board of Review, composed of administrators and teacher leaders, examines the progress of each teacher and decides whether or not to renew their contracts. The Toledo Plan also identifies poorly performing teachers and provides them mentored support.

A more complete look at these four case studies, as well as additional examples of successful comprehensive induction programs, is available in the complete report at http://all4ed.org/publication_material/reports/tapping_potential

Where can we learn more about instructional coaching?

There are resources on the NAACP website in the coaching section about the Teacher Advancement Project, a system of coaching that clusters of schools or districts can implement, and about the Take I process, where an entire school works together to help teachers learn new skills. You can also look at other schools and districts with similar programs on our website.

You can learn more about TAP here: http://www.talentedteachers.org/.

You can learn more about the Take I program here:
http://www.nbpts.org/help_and_faqs/take_one#2588

Learn more about teacher residencies – programs that offer college students and recent graduates extended practice teaching with an experienced teacher – here.

What Is National Board Certification?

National Board Certification is an advanced teaching credential. It complements, but does not replace, a state's teacher license. It is valid for 10 years, and renewal candidates must begin the renewal process during their eighth or ninth years as NBCTs.

National Board Certification is achieved upon successful completion of a voluntary assessment program designed to recognize effective and accomplished teachers who meet high standards based on what teachers should know and be able to do. National Board Certification is available nationwide for most preK–12 teachers.

As part of the certification process, candidates complete 10 assessments that are reviewed by trained teachers in their certificate areas. The assessments include four portfolio entries that feature teaching practice and six constructed response exercises that assess content knowledge.

What are the benefits of National Board Certification?

• **Strengthens practice.** Research shows candidates demonstrate significant improvement in their teaching practice. Teachers who achieve certification have been assessed against the nation's highest advanced teaching standards.

• **Helps students succeed.** Research documents that students taught by NBCTs make higher gains on achievement tests than students taught by non-NBCTs.

• **Demonstrates leadership skills.** In a 2007 study, 80 percent of NBCTs say other educators look to them for leadership, mentoring and coaching.

• **Helps expand influence and expertise**. Research reports that many NBCTs positively impact curricular decisions, chair departments and serve as faculty voices to policymakers and other stakeholders.

• **Advances careers.** Certification provides routes for NBCTs to advance as master teachers, school leaders and mentors without leaving the classroom.

• **Provides portability.** Many states recognize National Board Certification as sufficient proof for state licensure, allowing movement from state to state.

• **Offers higher salary potential.** Many states and hundreds of local districts offer salary incentives for teachers who certify.

Why Standards for Accomplished Teaching?

Every child deserves an accomplished teacher — one who is qualified to equip students with the skills to succeed in the 21st century global community. NBPTS Standards and National Board Certification give teachers and schools the tools to define and measure teaching excellence. NBPTS Standards are based on the Five Core Propositions that form the foundation for what all accomplished teachers should know and be able to do and provide a reference that helps educators link teaching standards to teaching practice.

What Is Take One!, and How Does It Relate to National Board Certification?

Take One! is a program that can be used by licensed teachers as an initial step in becoming a candidate for National Board Certification or as stand-alone professional development by any educator. A participant can prepare and submit one pre-selected video portfolio entry from any of the 25 certificate areas of National Board Certification and later transfer the score if he or she pursues National Board Certification. Take One! is available to all teachers as well as induction or pre-service teachers, principals, administrators, college professors and those who support National Board Certification candidates.

Why Take One!?

• Provides participants with the opportunity to reflect on their classroom instructional practices within the context of national teaching standards;

• Helps participants plan and achieve specific learning outcomes and adapt their teaching practices to the needs of individual students; and

• Offers participants the opportunity to form professional learning communities with a common language about teaching and learning and a commitment to student improvement and achieve-

ment.

"Asks" for Policymakers

• Policymakers should craft policy around specific goals, such as offering incentives and time for NBCTs to spread their instructional expertise to a wide range of colleagues, rather than focusing on simply producing more National Board Certified Teachers.

• Policymakers, who have already made significant investments in National Board Certification in many jurisdictions, should advocate for the expansion of leadership opportunities for all NBCTs and emphasize programs that increase the population of NBCTs who are teachers of color.

• To increase the population of NBCTs working in high-needs schools, policymakers will need to support policies and practices that improve working conditions for teachers in these schools, so they will be confident of support from school and system leaders during the National Board process.

• Policies that promote high quality professional development directly aligned with National Board Standards can produce rapid improvements in the teaching quality of a school. These policies would create incentives for teachers and administrators to jointly restructure the school day to provide time for collaboration, roles for leadership, and opportunities for teachers to pursue National Board Certification.

• Policymakers should support "hybrid" teaching roles for NBCTs so they may teach students part of the day and also assist with professional development, curriculum revision, mentoring, and teacher education. Such policy approaches will maximize the value of teachers who have been identified as effective by allowing them to serve as agents for quality teaching for all students.

• We support the use of multiple sources of data to evaluate individual teachers and assess the effects of individual educators on student progress. We also call on policymakers to exercise caution in relying on value-added methodology to make these individual judgments. Few standardized tests are designed and scaled so individual teachers can be assessed fairly on how much they help students learn content in the same subject area over time.

Sample Instructional Coaching Model

(Fairfax County, VA)

Mission

The mission of Instructional Coaching is to build adult learners' capacity to advance the achievement of all students and to close achievement gaps.

Vision

Instructional coaches are integral members of professional learning communities where:

* Professional learning is directly tied to daily ongoing work
* Student learning is the shared focus at all times
* Best practices are valued and consistently implemented
* Data is analyzed continuously to inform instructional decisions
* Success is celebrated frequently
* Collaboration is a way of being

Values

Instructional Coaching Values

Collaborating With Teacher Teams

The instructional coach program is designed to assist teachers so high levels of effective teaching will impact on and continuously improve student learning and achievement.

The instructional coaches follow a specific plan of action in working with teachers in their schools. This action model cycle specifies how the coaches do their work and mirrors how teachers work with students. For example, coaches first must build relationships with others, just as teachers work to build relationships with students. And at any given point, coaches are able to identify how they are working on the continuous cycle.

The instructional coaches work mainly with teams of teachers performing the coaching work. The coaching work, whether with a new teacher, a veteran teacher or a group of teachers will always center on the bottom line: reading, math, and closing the gap in a culture of collaboration. If possible and given specific school conditions, instructional coaches in FCPS are asked to allocate their time so they spend 10 percent in their own professional development, 30 percent working with individual teachers, and 60 percent working with teams of teachers.

Expectations for Coaching

A critical component of the instructional coaching program involves the coach's confidential relationship with school staffs. Coaches are not evaluators nor do they act as administrators. Coaches are professional teacher colleagues who work on instructional issues in a collegial and confidential atmosphere with their peers. As teacher leaders, coaches are required to meet specified expectations in their work at their schools and within the system-wide program.

Roles

- **Data Coach:** Compiles classroom, school-wide, or county data in user-friendly, clearly structured formats to help teachers more easily interpret the results. Facilitates conversations to develop an action plan and assists teachers in learning how to compile and manipulate the data on their own for additional instructional benefit. This data-analysis heightens awareness of existing achievement gaps.
- **Curriculum Specialist:** Provides teachers with support as they implement the adopted curriculum. Plans staff development sessions to deepen teachers' content knowledge, fa-

cilitates curriculum mapping and dissection of the standards, and utilizes the pacing guides to focus on the standards being learned and assessed.

- **Instructional Specialist:** Assists teachers with planning and pacing of units, the development of differentiated lessons, and the selection of best practices to meet the needs of their students.
- **Learning Facilitator:** Develops staff members' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors through a variety of professional development topics and techniques.
- **Change Agent:** Acts as a catalyst for change by asking questions to heighten teachers' awareness of their decision making for students' learning.
- **Resource Provider:** Assists in finding resources to support planning, often providing access to resources with which teachers may not have been familiar.
- **Classroom Supporter:** Models lessons or best practices for teachers. Co-teaches or informally observes a lesson and provides feedback for a teacher's professional growth.

Instructional coaches challenge the status quo and push teachers, leaders, and themselves to improve student achievement. By wearing these many hats every day, instructional coaches provide opportunities for the school to explore enhancements and innovations to current practice. Working to implement and see results from more effective practices positively impacts achievement gaps. In addition, building capacity within the teachers and teams creates a culture of teacher leaders who are comfortable with data analysis, collaboration, and facilitating professional development.

Sample Letter to the Editor on instructional coaching

Dear Editor,

Research has shown time and time again that the most important factor in a student's educational success is his or her teacher. Specifically, what makes the most difference is not a teacher's credentials, but that teacher's classroom skill. Just like becoming a master violinist or surgeon, developing classroom skill takes guided practice.

We can give our teachers the support to improve today – not in a year when they start a turnaround plan, not in five years when graduation rates are so low and teachers are so demoralized that they flee to other schools – but today. Teachers in our most challenging schools need our support to better help students starting right now.

That's why the NAACP wants to work with the [board, lawmakers, governor] on a teaching skill-building system in schools that serve our neediest students. We want successful teachers in high-needs schools to have the time, tools and support to share and perfect their strategies with peers. We want every teacher to have time to review each students work with colleagues and plan to solve students' unique problems together. We want students to walk into classrooms every day for lessons their teachers have had time to practice and perfect. Rather than dreading another standardized bubble sheet test, we want students to be able to demonstrate what they learned through experiences their teachers designed to prepare them for success after high school.

Every student deserves an education that will lead to 21st Century success. That kind of learning only comes with skilled teachers. Our lead teacher plan can help ensure that such education is not reserved for the wealthy or the lucky, but that all teachers will teach all kids to the very highest levels. We've seen it work from Boston and the Bronx to Bakersfield and Belleville. We hope the [school board, state lawmakers, superintendent] will work with us to establish and support a lead teacher program at each of our lowest performing schools. A system that helps teachers improve can improve academic achievement at our schools too, if we'll only give it a chance.

Sincerely,

TEACH-Grant Bootcamp

When advertising the bootcamp distribute printed copies of the following:
- TEACH Grant Description:
http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/attachments/siteresources/4807Teach_FactSheet_v3.pdf
- FAFSA ready sheet: http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/before003.htm
- Your state's teacher shortage areas:
http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.doc

What you'll need for the workshop:
- access to a classroom with enough computers for each participant and internet access
- projection system capable of projecting what's on the presenter's computer screen, or copies of screenshots for all participants
- a separate area for lunch and a speaker

Agenda for Saturday Bootcamp

Session I: Intro and overview of the day (30 minutes)

- Congratulate students in their expressed interest to become teachers.
- Circulate a sign-in sheet that collects each student's email address.
- Stress that today's goal is to get them familiar with the process of financial aid that will pay up to $4,000 of their college tuition each year if they agree to complete 4 years as teachers after graduation.
- If your branch or unit has supplemental funds available, tell the students about those also.
- Review the basic requirements of the TEACH grants and conversions to loans
- Point out local schools on the high-needs list that are in your area using this website: https://www.tcli.ed.gov/CBSWebApp/tcli/TCLIPubSchoolSearch.jsp. Students will likely react by sharing the "reputation" of these schools. Explain that one reason these schools might have a bad reputation is that they need to attract great teachers who can help students learn. Participants in this program will help turn these schools with a negative reputation around by becoming well-prepared and committed to serving in these communities.

Q & A

Break

Session II: Don't Fear the FAFSA! (30 minutes)

Presentation on federal student aid form – guidance counselor, admissions counselor (30 minutes)
- Briefly explain the 3 sections of the website
- Stress that students must complete the FAFSA even though TEACH grants are not need-based
- Make sure students get their PIN via email (they'll need it to access parts of the TEACH grant website later)

Q & A

Exploring the FAFSA website – (1 hour)

- Let students begin the process.
    - Stress that it's ok if they don't have all the documentation. They can always come back later.
    - Students should at least apply for and receive the PIN to make signatures easier on the FAFSA and the TEACH grant application

Break for Lunch
- Lunch should incorporate members from the local youth and college chapter to discuss majors, coursework requirements and study skills that high school students can perfect now to make college easier.

- A keynote speaker could poll the audience on how many teachers of color they may have had and why it's important that we have more.

Session III: The TEACH process

- Share video overview from local university if possible (see resources list)

- Explore the TEACH website with the group: https://teach-ats.ed.gov/ats/index.action
    - Point out the major segments on the left
    - Highlight the agreement to serve – perhaps with a student who has already begun the process and can use his or her PIN to open the agreement section

- Let students go through the initial counseling session and/or their school's application if they have already selected a school
- Have volunteers circulate to answer individual questions and point out common questions to the group
    - use youth and college members, admissions counselors or guidance counselors;
    - appoint an Association member to keep a log of questions that can't be answered onsite and the which students need which answers
- Commit verbally to get students answers via email within two weeks.

Serve snack

- Adjourn with announcement of next steps (follow-up emails, Q & A session with an expert, next branch meeting etc)
- Debrief the questions with the expert volunteers after the meeting and make a plan to find answers and forward them to the students.

Resources:

FAFSA Website: http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/

TEACH Grant website: https://teach-ats.ed.gov/ats/index.action

Benchmarking & Early Warning Systems 101

Background:

While there is no single reason that students drop out, research indicates that difficult transitions to high school, deficient basic skills, and a lack of engagement serve as prominent barriers to graduation.

Most dropouts are already on the path to failure in the middle grades and engage in behaviors that strongly correlate to dropping out in high school. Various researchers have identified specific risk factors, such as low attendance or a failing grade, which can identify future dropouts—in some cases as early as sixth grade.[7]

Ninth grade serves as a bottleneck for many students who begin their freshman year only to find that their academic skills are insufficient for high school-level work. Up to 40 percent of ninth grade students in cities with the highest dropout rates repeat ninth grade; only 10 to 15 percent of those repeaters go on to graduate.[8]

Academic success in ninth grade course work is highly predictive of eventual graduation; it is even more telling than demographic characteristics or prior academic achievement.[9] Unfortunately, many students are not given the extra support they need to successfully make the transition to high school. As a result, over one third of all dropouts are lost in ninth grade.[10]

The six million secondary students who comprise the lowest 25 percent of achievement are twenty times more likely to drop out of high school than students in the top-performing quartile.[11]
Both academic and social engagement are integral components of successfully navigating the education pipeline. Research shows that a lack of student engagement is predictive of dropping out, even after controlling for academic achievement and student background.

Hitting Benchmarks for College- &- Career Readiness

➢ Ask about and explore your state or school system's use of ACT's College Readiness System, a series of tests called EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT, created by testing company researchers working backward from the skills colleges said they desired then matching score levels to those of successful college students. These tests measure whether students

are on target for college and career readiness (as measured by the ACT college admission test) at 8th and 10th grades respectively.

Explore the use of Work Keys, another ACT assessment that maps skills desired by employers back into standards for what students should know.

➢ Work with your state or school system to design a set of benchmarks like those in Montgomery County MD's 7 Keys then share those with parents and community members.
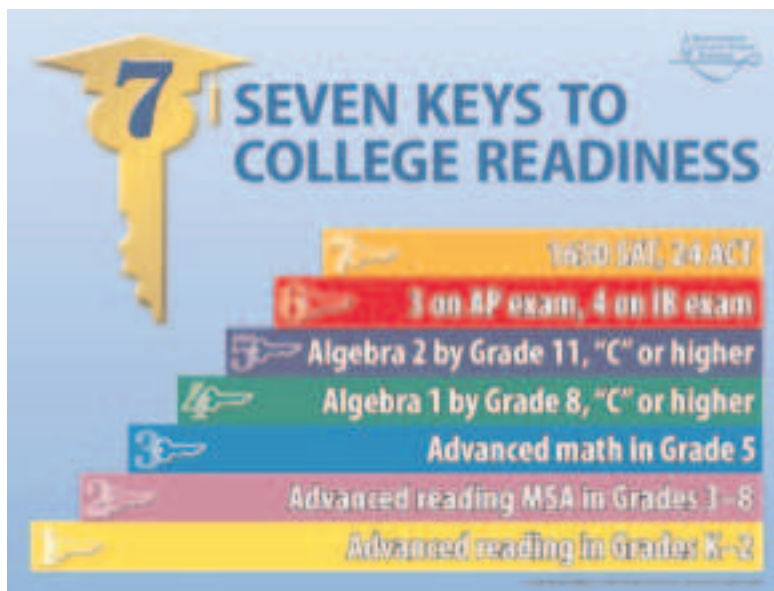
➢ Local units and branch committees can work with your state, school system or local school to design an early warning and tracking system that will alert school officials and community groups when a student has excessive absences, a string of discipline problems or a sudden dip in grades.

Then the goal should be to get those students re-engaged in school by matching their needs to services inside and outside school (designing those services if they don't already exist and advocating for their full funding where they aren't already funded to meet students' needs). Supports for these students might include tutoring, scheduling time with a teacher-advisor or counselor, referral to outside counseling or to community mentoring programs, social service agencies or afterschool enrichment.

ADDRESSING DISPARITIES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

A.   RIGHTS AND REMEDIES

1.   What is Special Education?

"Special education" consists of support and services that are provided by schools to help students with disabilities learn to their full potential. In theory, and often in practice, students who are eligible for special education get important help such as tutoring, extra teacher attention and specialized instruction by teachers with specific training. Special education means services for children; it is not a place where children are sent. Two laws in particular, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), give children and parents the right to services and provide legal protection against discrimination on account of disability.

2. Why is Special Education a Civil Rights Issue?

Unfortunately, special education has historically been used as a vehicle for discrimination against minorities. Soon after the Supreme Court's 1954 decision in Brown v. Board of Education, the nation witnessed an increase in placement of minority students in separate special education classrooms. Since 1954, special education has been used by some—in place of more blatant racial segregation—to segregate students of color. Furthermore, individuals with disabilities are often confronted with fear, prejudice and stigmatization. Minority children with disabilities are in double jeopardy of being discriminated against on the grounds of both race and disability. Fortunately, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits both blatant and subtle forms of ethnic and racial discrimination perpetrated by public schools and institutions receiving federal funds. Moreover, Section 504 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act protects against discrimination on the basis of disability in public schools. **A school system that fails to provide a free and appropriate public education to meet the needs of students with disabilities violates the civil rights of those students.**

One especially grave concern in special education is the overrepresentation of African-American males in disability categories such as "educationally mentally retarded" (EMR), or emotionally or behaviorally disordered" (BED). Some mislabeled students need no special education services whatsoever. In fact, numerous successful African-American scholars report being labeled as educationally mentally retarded when they were children.

The misdiagnosis problem persists today, but there are additional concerns as well. Some minority children do need special education support, but they are removed from regular education classrooms and put into resource rooms, substantially separate classes or separate schools, where they commonly receive low-quality services. The wrongful classification, segregation, and poor servicing of minorities through special education denies equality of opportunity and has devastating results in communities throughout the nation.

3. What Can Be Done?

There are two kinds of actions that concerned citizens can take:

First, minority parents can exercise their rights under disability law to stop misdiagnosis and gain high-quality services for those children who need special education. For example, parents can challenge a decision to evaluate their child for special education by refusing to consent to the evaluation.

Second, parents and community groups can organize to fight systemic failures and discriminatory educational practices.

Parents have powerful legal rights under disability law. But, minority and economically disadvantaged parents, historically, have not taken fun advantage of these rights compared with affluent White parents.

This guidance will help parents and community activists:
• Understand the problem, and the existing rights and legal protections;
• Identify problems in their school, district or state;
• Use parental fights under disability law to fight discrimination and generate effective school reform for all children;
• Gain access to the resources needed to combat systemic discriminatory policies and practices;
• Take action to improve special education services for minority children, teacher training, and regular education teaching and instruction.

4. Why are Minorities Overrepresented in Special Education?

• Historical discrimination along race, ethnicity and gender lines is reflected in the decisions of school authorities, in biased tests, and in the structure of the special education system;
• Learning problems are more prevalent among the poor;
• Poor quality "regular" instruction causes low achievement and misbehavior, triggering more re-

ferrals to special education;

• Lack of funding for professional development yields poorly trained teachers and diagnosticians who do not account for cultural factors that may affect referrals and assessment; and

• Schools lacking adequate resources use special education as a form of discipline.

5. What Power Do Parents Really Have Against School Districts?
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act are critical tools, giving parents the legal fights and power to fight discrimination against their children on an individual basis.

IDEA was created to protect the rights of students with disabilities who have historically been excluded from mainstream society. The IDEA also combats the problem of overrepresentation—particularly of African American males—in special education, and explicitly identifies the underservicing of minorities in education as an issue.

Section 504 provides similar protections, but also covers students who have disabilities that don't impair their ability to learn. For example, the law guarantees access to schooling for a student who must use a wheelchair. Section 504 can also be used to ensure that state and local education authorities do not adopt policies that violate the IDEA.

A.) The IDEA is a Powerful Anti-segregation Tool: The IDEA requires that students with disabilities attend classes with regular education students to the "maximum extent appropriate," according to the needs of the special education students. This ensures exposure to the same curriculum and the same high social and academic standards that the regular education students access. The shorthand version of this concept is described by two acronyms used in special education law:

> **1. FAPE** - Full Appropriate Public Education; and
> **2. LRE** - Least Restrictive Environment.

This IDEA goal of desegregation is rooted in research showing that most students with disabilities learn more if they are held to high expectations and receive some services in a regular education classroom rather than a special education-only environment. FAPE also means that schools are expected to teach students well. If children with disabilities do not make
real achievement gains, they are not likely getting a Full Appropriate Public Education. Every state has its own set of regulations pursuant to IDEA and some may have even stronger laws. However, no state may weaken these protections.

B.) IDEA Requires that All Students Be Treated As Individuals. IDEA stresses that schools must address the individual needs of each child eligible for special education. The identification of civil rights violations in special education is complicated by the fact many students do benefit from services and some even benefit from separate placements. All placements should be made on an individual basis and only after a comprehensive evaluation of a student's specific needs. The IDEA requires that important procedural and substantive steps be taken before a substantially separate placement is made and yet these steps are too often skipped.

6. What About Laws that Prohibit Discrimination Based on Race and Ethnicity?
When minority students are inappropriately placed in special education and/or given inadequate services, such practices may violate the rights of students under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Title VI). Title VI prohibits discrimination by public schools on the basis of students' race, color or ethnic origin. Title IX of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits
discrimination based on gender, may also be important; the overrepresentation of boys, especially African-American boys, may reflect unlawful gender discrimination as well as race discrimination.

> **A.)** **How Does Title VI Protect Minority Children?** Title VI prohibits treating minority students differently from White students. When a school appears to use a different set of criteria for making special education decisions about minority students compared to Whites, such a practice is called different treatment. For example, putting African-American boys in separate classrooms for special education, while providing White boys with similar disabilities services in the regular education classroom, would be unlawful different treatment.
>
> **B.)** **What If Minority Children Seem to be Overrepresented in Special Education?** Title VI also may prohibit a school from using a policy that uses identical criteria for Whites and minorities when that policy causes racial or ethnic segregation to increase significantly, or results in certain ethnic or racial groups receiving fewer benefits. For example, if an apparently fair evaluation process results in the placement of a disproportionate number of African-American boys in classrooms for students with behavioral disorders, this practice may have a "disparate impact" on African Americans. Overrepresentation does not violate the law automatically, but it does signal a possible violation and the need for further investigation.

7. Who Has the Right to Act?
Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 each allow concerned citizens to challenge discrimination in education, wherever they suspect discrimination, by filing an administrative complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR). As long as a complaint is rooted in specific

facts about an identifiable school, school district or state, one need not be a parent or guardian of a child attending school to take action. More stringent legal requirements apply to individuals wishing to file lawsuits in court. IDEA is structured differently and is most often used by parents of individual students to redress special education concerns with state authorities. Using the rights afforded by IDEA, minority parents can prevent a good deal of misdiagnosis and subsequent overrepresentation in substantially separate special education programs. Also, organizations with affected members in the defendant school district can file complaints in court on behalf of members.

8. How Can Citizens Identify Special Education Problems?
The following patterns of bad practices may indicate unlawful discrimination against students of color and students with disabilities:

• Skipping procedural steps required through IDEA by, for instance:
> 1. not sending parents a "rights brochure," detailing parental legal rights and timelines in a language that parents understand;
> 2. not telling parents about the right to an independent evaluation;
> 3. not arranging a re-evaluation every three years;
> 4. not holding a hearing within 10 days of suspending a student with, or suspected of having, a disability;
> 5. not reporting student progress to parents of special education students on a regular basis.

Other signs of bad special education practice are present where:
> • "Individualized education plans" (IEPs) don't describe a student's specific progress from one year to the next;
> • Frequent decisions by school personnel separate minority children from the mainstream without first trying other strategies in the regular education classroom;
> • School, district, or state policy ignores individual needs, and automatically places students in mental retardation or emotional or behavior disorder categories, without regard to individualized needs;
> • Over reliance on IQ test scores to determine special education eligibility and placement.

B. DIRECT ACTION FOR MINORITY PARENTS

1. What Can Parents Do to Prevent Misdiagnosis?
The best way to prevent a potentially discriminatory diagnosis of special needs is by refusing to consent to the initial evaluation. Parents should first urge the school to try a variety of teaching strategies, and should attempt to work with their child's teachers to address misbehavior and boost achievement. In most cases, many alternative strategies should be tried before a child is tested for special education eligibility. Unfortunately, parents rarely know their rights, or are reluctant to challenge the opinion of school officials, and usually don't request the use of these "pre-referral strategies" in the classroom.

Parents should find out all they can about their rights under two federal laws, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Parents may have even stronger rights under state law.

2. Can Parents Get a Second Opinion?
Yes. When both parties want an evaluation, parents may choose their own independent evaluator. The school will often have to pay for this second opinion if the parents consented to a school evaluation and disagreed with the school's findings. In this case, the school must either agree to pay for the parent's independent evaluation or seek a denial of the parent's request
through a hearing before a state authority. Finding a good independent evaluator is critical. Parents should seek recommendations from experienced advocates, attorneys and health professionals.

3. Can a School Change a Child's Program Without Permission?
Parental permission is necessary in most circumstances. In general, a parent must give unformed consent" to an evaluation or change in placement before school authorities can move a child out of a regular education class for all or part of the day. If the child has an individualized education plan ("IEP"), the plan cannot be changed without such
permission.

4. What If a School Changes My Child's Placement for Disciplinary Reasons?
A school may change a child's educational placement without parental consent in the following rare circumstances:
1. if the school officially determines that a child is an immediate danger to herself or

others;

2. if the child was found bringing drugs or a weapon to school; or

3. if the school has prevailed at an administrative hearing presided over by a state-appointed hearing officer. Under the "stay put" doctrine, if a parent appeals the decision of a special education team, school official or reviewing officer, the child "stays put" until the appeal process has been exhausted.

5. What If I Suspect a Child Has Already Been Misdiagnosed?

It is rarely too late to act. Parents who suspect a misdiagnosis, or seek higher quality services, may take back their consent at any time. The parents then have a right to a hearing. Even if the school does not agree to an immediate change, revoking consent will trigger a "due process" hearing with a state authority. At this hearing, parents may introduce any independent evaluations they have obtained and may present expert testimony. Parents can use the state hearing system either to undo a misdiagnosis or require the school to provide services in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

However, allegations of racial discrimination do not generally fall within the jurisdiction of such a hearing. Complaints of racial or ethnic discrimination should not be made in an IDEA complaint. Complaints of racial discrimination have strict time limits for filing. If the school system loses at the hearing, they may also be required to pay the parent's legal expenses.

The specific procedures and requirements for hearings differ from state to state and should be carefully reviewed.

6. When Should Parents Consent to Special Education?

When a child is evaluated properly, special education can provide extremely important benefits. The dearest example is where the diagnosis of a biological disability, such as a hearing impairment, entities a student to resources she needs to learn at the same rate as a regular education student. In such cases, the issue is getting the school to provide the full services that the student is entitled to by law. Additionally, some minority students do have learning or behavior related disabilities. If assessed properly, they are entitled to receive highly effective special education support. For example, a student with dyslexia will benefit from specialized reading instruction. The same tools parents should use to prevent misdiagnosis will also help them ensure that their children get the right services if they need them.

7. What If My Child Attends a Charter School or Private School?

All the legal protections and rights to services in this guidance are available to students in public

charter schools. The law is not clear about private schools—even those that receive vouchers from public funds. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects children in any public school against disability discrimination regardless of whether the school receives public funding. Title VI only applies to schools receiving federal funding but, depending on the facts, other civil rights statutes can apply. Furthermore, if a public school sends a child to a private school because the public school could not meet her special education needs, the IDEA still applies and the public school can be held accountable.

8. How Can Parents Challenge Schools to Make Accurate Assessments and Provide Appropriate Services?

The IDEA and corresponding state regulations are filled with substantive and procedural processes. Filing complaints and lawsuits can be useful in challenging misdiagnosis and inadequate services. Also, schools will often change their recommendations if seriously challenged. Many complaints are settled to the parent's satisfaction without having to have a full hearing.

• **Bring in Experts:** Parents can bring an expert of their choosing to independent evaluator you select to give a second opinion can become an important expert at the team meeting.

• **Question the credentials of the school's evaluators:** Special education placements based on tests administered by school personnel can be challenged as invalid if the tester was unqualified to give the tests.

• **Bring a Parent Advocate or Lawyer to Meetings About Your Child:** Schools often do not respect parental input and parents often do not understand their rights. By bringing an attorney or advocate, the parent can diminish pressure from the school to simply "trust the school experts."

• **Use Parental Information Centers:** There are information centers in every state that educate parents about the IDEA and state regulations.

• **Ask Specific Questions:** For example, if a child is struggling academically, ask whether the school has provided extra supports in the classroom. Who provided the help? How often? What result?

• **Insist on Detailed Progress Reports:** Parents of students receiving special education services have the right to be well informed. If a child has been evaluated, and it has been determined that special education services would be helpful, parents can request more frequent progress reports and more regular communication about their child's progress. At any time during the year, parents are legally entitled to call a meeting with their child's teachers and special
education instructors to discuss their child's progress and the school must soon thereafter hold a meeting that includes the parents, teachers, and other relevant school personnel.

NOTE: The IDEA Aims at Reducing the Segregation of Students with Disabilities—When concerned

parents get organized, they can exert a great deal of influence over school and district policies. Parents can assert their individual rights, but advocacy groups can also challenge a district or state failure to implement IDEAs, FAPE, and LRE requirements.

Challenges can take the form of reports to board meetings, meetings with superintendents and reporting to the media through press releases. Lawsuits have also been very effective. Advocates in a recent class action suit were successful against both the Board of Education for the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois. On behalf of predominantly minority children, the plaintiffs argued that both defendants were systematically discriminating against all students with disabilities by not providing the "least restrictive environment" for each student.

Guides for Implementing Education Components

A.   Data Collection and Developing Report Cards

To effectively monitor and hold an educational agency accountable, NAACP units should have access to up-to-date and credible data. The data requested should serve as the foundation for the development of the unit's Annual Education Action Plan. Consequently, each unit shall collect and report on data in identified areas of the national education agenda. While some units may choose to collect data in all of the areas identified in the

national education agenda, all units are expected to collect data on the agenda items on which their unit is actively engaged.

The State Conference and Adult Branch National Data Priority Areas are:

1. Resource Equity
2. Teacher Quality
3. Suspension and Expulsion
4. Access to Challenging, College- and Career-Ready Curriculum

The secondary priority areas for data collection are:

5. Class Size
6. Resegregation
7. Dropouts
8. High Stakes Testing
9. Parental Involvement
10. Placement in Special Education
11. Curriculum

The four (4) College Chapter National Data Priority Areas are:

1. Admissions
2. Retention
3. Access to Financial Aid
4. Access to Minority Faculty and Administrators

There are specific indicators that should be used to collect the data (See page 101 for   "Indicators for Data Collection and Report Card Development"). The data requested can be   col-lected from your state or local educational agency by submitting a Freedom of

Information Act (FOIA) request to the educational agency requesting the relevant data (S e e page ___ for sample FOIA request).

Once a NAACP unit acquires the relevant data, members of the Educational Committee   should analyze it and identify the priority areas. Once the priority areas have been   identified, one priority area shall be identified as the annual action item. The NAACP unit shall then develop an Education Action Plan to address that item in the upcoming year. The Education Action Plan should be submitted to the Regional Director as a part of the unit's 4th Quarter Educational Excellence Report (College Chapters shall submit their plans as a part of their 2nd Quarter Reports).

B. Organizing a State Education Summit or Town Hall Meeting

NAACP State Conference Education Committees shall annually organize a one-day State Education Summit, while Branch Education Committees and College Chapter Education Committees should organize Town Hall meetings. Youth Council Education Committees should host discussions of significant civil rights educational events with a video component or special guest speakers.

These meetings should convene NAACP members and partners in education. The goal of the meetings should be:

1. To identify an issue for the Annual Education Action Plan and share supporting data
2. To invite state and local partners to share in the shaping of an implementation strategy for the Annual Education Action Plan
3. To invite representatives from the state or local educational agency to present to members
4. To outline key issues in the state
5. To reach a consensus of support on the issue

The ultimate goal is to leave the Summit or the Town Hall meeting with a clear plan of action for the NAACP units and our partners.

C. Quarterly Reports

It is imperative for each Education Committee to complete and submit quarterly reports. The information you provide keeps the national and regional offices aware of your activities. This information also assists the National Education Department to secure funds to support the National Education Advocacy Agenda. The special items listed below should be included in your report for each respective quarter (See "Annual Education Committee Calendar" on page ___; the Quarterly Report

form is on page ___.):
- List of updated Education Chairs
- Policy Research Presentation
- Back To School Rally Schedules (where previously established)
- Schedules for Education Summits/Town Hall Meetings
- Education Action Plans

State, Branch and Youth units should adhere to the quarters listed below:
- Quarter One: January-March
- Quarter Two: April-June
- Quarter Three: July-September
- Quarter Four: October-December

College Chapters should adhere to the quarters listed below:
- Quarter One: July-September
- Quarter Two: October-December
- Quarter Three: January-March
- Quarter Four: April-June

D. Approaching School Boards

One of the most effective ways to address discriminatory practices in school discipline is to address your school board. Organized presentations can have an immediate impact, and can have great influence if covered by the local media. The following are tips that may be helpful when addressing school boards.

1. **Do background research on the School Board's policy, procedures and membership.**
   - Call the School Board and find out the time and location of their meetings, and if you need to get on the agenda ahead of time.
   - Determine if there are any special procedures for addressing the School Board.
   - Find out if you have allies on the school board.
   - Request the minutes of prior meetings to determine which issues the School Board has recently discussed.
2. **Bring evidence and supporters.**
   - Gather evidence about issues in the schools.

- Talk to other parents and other possible supporters; encourage them to attend the meeting.
- Collect stories from children and parents about policies that have impacted them.
- Stress both data and real examples of children who are harmed by the policy to ensure that the focus remains on actual children and the effects of a discriminatory policies and practices.

3.   Contact the media.
- Before you seek media coverage think carefully about what you want the media to do and choose a spokesperson.
- Send a press release to the media about your upcoming school board presentation. Include facts about the discriminatory policy (see _____ for information on writing press releases).
- Make sure your message is focused on a few major points and "stay on" your message in all your media relations.
- Be sure to provide contact information for your organization as well as for others in the area that support your message.

E. Complaint Resolution Process

1. Receive complaint and have complainant complete complaint form (see _____ for "Complaint of Discrimination in Education" form).
2. Once complaint form is reviewed, schedule an investigatory meeting with complainant within 14 days.
3. After meeting with complainant, write a letter to the accused agency on behalf of the complainant within 14 days of the meeting.
4. If there is no response from the accused agency within 14 days, request a meeting on behalf of the complainant.
5. If the accused agency is unwilling to meet, file a complaint with your State or Federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR). In conjunction, notify your State Conference Education Chair/Regional Director of the complaint. (OCR resolutions can take up to 180 days; see page 24 for "Filing a Complaint with the Office of Civil Rights")
6. If OCR has not responded within 180 days, submit complaint and a recommendation for action to the NAACP National Office through your Regional Director.

NOTE: If the National Office receives a complaint directly from a complainant, it will be forwarded to the appropriate local education chair. If a local unit does not have an education chair, the com-

plaint will be submitted to the State Conference Education Chair.

F. Filing a Complaint with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR)

1. Who can file a complaint? What does it cost?

Anyone who believes there has been an act of discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, against any person or group, in a program or activity that receives federal education financial assistance (virtually all public schools). You do not need to be a parent or guardian of a child in a school to file a complaint, and any person or organization can file on behalf of another person or group. Filing a complaint with OCR is free.

2. What should I do if I think my child or another child has been discriminated against?

a.   Two legal claims can be filed to protect minority students from unfair discipline. The first, called "different treatment," makes it unlawful for school authorities to punish a minority student differently from a white student for the same type and degree of misconduct. The second, called "disparate impact," makes it unlawful, in some cases, for a school to enforce a discipline code that has a significantly greater negative impact on a particular minority group than it has on white students. It is often harder to prove "different treatment" because you must show that there was intent to discriminate.

Parents and advocates should seriously consider filing both types of claims whenever they feel a school authority has discriminated in meting out punishment, especially when a discipline policy is unnecessarily harsh.

b.   What do I have to prove to win?

Different treatment: Different treatment claims compare the way in which a minority student was punished with the way a white student was punished. To prevail, the complainant must show two basic things:

(1) that the minority student was given a harsher punishment for substantially similar misconduct; and
(2) evidence of intentional discrimination - i.e., that the student was purposefully treated in a different way because of race, national origin or color. Racial slurs by school

employees, as well as other evidence of racial hostility, can help support this claim.

Disparate impact: Disparate impact claims do not require proof of discriminatory intent, but there must be a disparate impact (a policy or practice that harms one ethnic or racial group more than it harms another group). The disparity is usually demonstrated by comparing statistics. OCR looks at the following:

(1) First, it must be established that the students that were disciplined are members of a protected racial or ethnic group.
(2) Next, it must be established that a district or school policy has a negative effect on the identifiable ethnic or racial group, and that the disparity is great enough that it is   unlikely to have occurred by chance. In other words, based on the statistical evidence, an inference can be drawn that decisions were influenced by race and/or ethnicity.
(3) Once the first two elements are satisfied, the burden shifts to the school district to show that the policy is an "educational necessity" (a policy or action so essential to the educational process that the discriminatory effect is outweighed by the educational benefit and there is no less discriminative method to yield the same educational benefit).
(4) If school offers such a justification, parents and advocates may challenge it and/or show that a less discriminatory alternative could achieve the same purpose.

3. What kind of additional information would strengthen a complaint? Is other information required?

The basic complaint is all that is required. However, the initial complaint is your best chance to convince the OCR investigator and the school that you have a strong case. These first impressions matter. The more individual stories of unfair treatment and useful enrollment information you can provide, the more likely it is that your complaint will be investigated thoroughly. If the information is sparse, the school district may be able to limit the investigation.

For example, imagine a parent who alleges that her African American, Latino or Asian son was punished more harshly than a white student who had committed the same misdeed. Imagine her son was suspended for defiance of authority, but the white student was not. The school might provide the OCR investigator with evidence that the minority student had a record of prior misconduct and that the white student did not. Without more information, the investigator might decide to close the case.

Suppose, however, that before filing a complaint, the parent had learned that the district suspended African American, Latino, and Asian students for defiance of authority at three times the rate it suspended white students for this offense.

What if students of all races stated that they believed that school authorities generally punished minority students more severely? This additional information might not prove a different treatment case, but it would improve the chance that OCR would keep the case ppen for investigation. Furthermore, if a disparate impact claim had also been raised, an OCR investigator would be more likely to look closely at the statistics.

4. How can a basic complaint be made more persuasive?

At the filing stage, parents and advocates don't need to produce all the evidence they need to win their case; they only need enough information to spark an investigation. However, submitting statistical information that points to widespread discrimination will also help prompt a full-scale investigation.

> **a. Find out about the experiences of other students**. Any complaint can be made stronger by raising all claims for which there is a basis, by providing a lot of supporting evidence and by preparing answers for the school's likely defenses ahead of time. For example, had the parent in the above example considered the prior misconduct defense, she might have requested data on the suspension of all students, identified by race. Perhaps the data would have revealed that similarly misbehaving white students, with track records as bad as her son's, had not been suspended. Or, perhaps she would have learned of a minority student without this sort of record who had been suspended. Such evidence would suggest that the prior misconduct defense was a pretext for discrimination and not a factor that was routinely considered in placement decisions.

> **b. Narrow your complaint to address specific disciplinary policies**. Adding a disparate impact allegation is more likely to trigger a thorough OCR review of suspensions and expulsions in the district. Information on suspensions and expulsions for offenses that rely heavily on subjective evaluations or judgments of teachers and principals, such as "insubordination," "defiance," "disrespect" and "disorderly conduct," and for those offenses where exclusion makes little sense as a deterrent, such as truancy and tardiness, will be especially useful.

> **c. Seek expert testimony.** There may be school psychologists who will testify that harsh discipline for only moderately defiant behavior is less likely to foster a calm classroom than providing teachers with conflict resolution training and encouraging more frequent communication with parents about behavioral concerns.
>
> **d. Compare discipline statistics for schools within the same district.** In some districts there may be some schools that suspend and expel far fewer children, and/or have less disparity by race/ethnicity than other schools. In these districts the defendant will be hard pressed to show that there are no less discriminatory alternatives available.

5.   Adding discrimination against others to the individual complaint.

It is perfectly reasonable to complain on behalf of others. If you believe that what happened to your complainant is not an isolated event, but rather is part of a larger pattern of discrimination, then others should be included in the complaint. Your complaint will be stronger if it is filed by a group of parents rather than one individual parent.

6.   How can I gather more information for the complaint?

Information can be obtained either by talking to other parents, or by requesting statistics directly from the school district or from OCR. Parents and advocates can request this information through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. If the government agency already has the information requested, the agency must provide it to the parent; however, agencies do not need to conduct new research or surveys in order to respond to FOIA requests. Sample FOIA requests are included on page ___.

When you are requesting information from a school district or another type of government agency, it is helpful to remember that many states have their own Freedom of Information laws. The shorter, simpler FOIA sample (found on page ___) can be adapted for use in any state, and is intended as a model FOIA request submitted to a government agency. The longer letter is intended as a more detailed example of the sort of information that a FOIA request can include and serves as an example of a request submitted directly to a school district.

You can learn more about the U.S. Freedom of Information Act, as well as Freedom of Information laws in your own state, by visiting the National Freedom of Information

Coalition's website. This site includes information and useful links to Freedom of Information sources in every state. The website's address is http://www.nfoic.org/web/index.htm.

Other organizations can help coordinate the efforts of parents with similar concerns. A newspaper article can help attract the attention of parents with similar concerns. Section F of this procedural manual contains tips for writing a press release, along with a sample press release that you can modify and send to news outlets in your area.

1.   Find out if the district is already under a court order or an OCR agreement that requires fair and non-discriminatory practices.

Districts that are under a court order requiring desegregation of its schools may also be under specific requirements to have non-discriminatory disciplinary policies. To find out whether there is a desegregation court order for cases in which the United States is a party to the case, you can contact the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, at 202-514-4092. The United States is a party to cases in some school districts in these states:

To find out if your school district is operating pursuant to an OCR agreement [also called a 441(b) plan], you should contact the OCR office that serves your state (see _____ for OCR listings). Private, non-governmental parties may also have obtained a court order covering your district, but there is no central place to find out about such orders, except through the school districts themselves.

8. Organize!

Perhaps the most effective thing a parent or advocate can do is to organize parents who share concerns about abusive discipline. If four or five parents can join together, they should request that an OCR investigator meet with them even before they file a complaint, in order to discuss their concerns. This simple meeting can help attract OCR's attention to the problem and create a stronger complaint—one that will be more likely to trigger a full-scale investigation.

Finally, if you have already filed a lawsuit, you can contact the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division to find out if they have any interest in joining in the case. You should contact the Educational Opportunities Section at 202-514-4092.

Sample Detailed OCR Complaint

Your Name
Address
Phone #

Date

Office for Civil Rights - U.S. Department of Education
Region _____
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Officer:

My name is Joan Ruiz. My daughter and I are Latino. My daughter, Enid, is a junior at the Wallace High School in Dallas, Texas. She was suspended on Tuesday, April 6, 2000 for a combination of truancy, loitering and disrespect. She was suspended for 10 school days and has failed most of her classes since. They said that she had been absent for 3 days, received 5 detentions for skipping class, and made sarcastic remarks to the principal when he threatened to suspend her. They also said she had a prior history of misconduct for her behavior in French class. I think the school's discipline policy discriminates against Latino students and African
American students.

A month ago, my daughter was angry with her French teacher, Mr. Bete (who is white) because he made fun of her Spanish accent. She sat frowning and staring at her teacher and refused to answer when called upon. Finally, she left the room though he ordered her to stay seated. Enid
told me that teachers treat white students with more respect. She said that this teacher has never reported a white student to the principal. My daughter also says that when white students are sent to the principal they rarely get suspended. Enid's friends tell me that minority students are
punished more harshly, especially for offenses like disrespect. Attached to this complaint are six more complaints from parents of Latino students who were suspended for truancy, loitering, disrespect or some combination of these offenses.

I have always told my children that school is critical to their futures. I am a working single mother

and don't get home until after 5 p.m. most evenings. This suspension is the first time I have heard of a problem with my daughter.

The school's zero tolerance discipline code has a disparate impact on all Latino and African American students at Wallace High School on the basis of race, including my daughter. I want the school to erase the suspension from my daughter's school records and to use a discipline code that is fair and reasonable—one that doesn't result in significantly disproportionate numbers of children of color being suspended and expelled.
As part of the solution, I believe that the school district should train teachers better in classroom and behavior management and multicultural sensitivity. Please contact me at 555-555-5555 (work). Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

Joan Ruiz

Sample Basic OCR Complaint

Your Name
Address
Phone #
Date

Office for Civil Rights - U.S. Department of Education
Region _____
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Officer:

My name is Mary Johnson. My daughter and I are African American. My daughter, Carol, was suspended on Tuesday, June 6, 2000 for what the school called "defiant and insubordinate behavior." She was suspended for 15 school days. All she did was chew gum in class and refuse to answer the teacher's questions. She is a junior at the Wallace High School in Dallas, Texas. A white student—Jane Doe—who did the same things as my daughter received no suspension.
My daughter says the school always lets white students off with lighter punishments or none at all. She said she knows of at least five other stories just like hers. She also said that since they started the new "zero tolerance" code, minority students get suspended much more than before and more often than white students.

The Dallas public schools are also responsible for this discrimination because they made no efforts to address the problem when I complained. I spoke with the superintendent, Ms. Hardtack. She said that they do everything by the book and that there was no reason to change; that the school system treats all students the same, so if minority students get suspended more often there was nothing she could do about it; and that the schools had to get tough to get rid of the bad apples that ruined it for everyone else. She also said that the school would continue to suspend students to make it safe for those who want to be there. That upset me because my daughter has never caused trouble in school. I told Ms. Hardtack that the school should be calling me if my daughter is absent, not preventing her from going to school by suspending her. Ms. Hardtack replied these problems wouldn't exist if parents like me taught their children
better behavior.

I recently saw some 1998 statistics on Wallace High School from the Texas Department of Education's School Report Card. The suspension numbers at Wallace High School showed that 72 out of 325 Latino students were suspended last year, while only 35 out of 400 white students were. The numbers look worse for African American students, and I think the numbers are probably even worse this year, although the school won't give them to me.

I want to file two claims of discrimination against Wallace High School and the Unified Dallas Public School District:
(1) My daughter was discriminated against and received a harsher punishment because   of her race.
(2) The school's zero tolerance discipline code has a disparate impact on my daughter   and all Latino and African American students at Wallace High School on the basis of   race.

Wallace just started a new "zero tolerance" approach last year and, as a result, Latino kids are getting suspended more and more. White students also are getting suspended more often but almost never for "disrespect," loitering or truancy. We believe that other high schools have discipline polices that are less discriminatory. For example, another local high school has far fewer suspensions than Wallace. One parent told me that they do all kinds of conflict resolution training with the students there. Another said that their school never suspends students for truancy or loitering.

I want the school to erase the suspension from my daughter's records and to use a discipline code that is fair and reasonable—one that doesn't result in significantly disproportionate numbers of children of color being suspended and expelled. As part of the solution, I believe that the school district should train teachers in classroom and behavior management and multicultural sensitivity. Please contact me at 555-555-5555 (work). Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

Mary Johnson

G. How to Write a Press Release

You should follow the standard format for writing press releases to increase the chances that your story will be picked up by the media. The format is very easy to learn, and a sample press release that you can modify and use is included in _____.

H. The Role of Youth Council Education Committees

The Youth Council Education Committees serve as the primary advocacy training components of the Youth Councils. The Education Committee should present a list of training activities in their Annual Education Action Plan. Over the course of the year, the Youth Council Education committee shall host activities that work to improve the members in five areas:

1. History of the NAACP and the civil rights movement;
2. Conducting research on education issues (see section below);
3. Developing components of an effective oral presentation;
4. Writing a persuasive letter; and
5. Employing effective advocacy methods.

Conducting Policy Research

1. Identify the topic (State Conference Annual Issue).
2. Identify key definitions.
3. Conduct background research on topic (key information includes, the definition and history of the topic? What impact does it make at the local, state and national level?).
4. Identify the NAACP's position on the issue.
5. What is the goal of the State initiative through the Annual Education Action Plan?
6. What does the local data say? If there is no data, how can we collect some the necessary data?
7. Write a persuasive letter to the legislator advocating for the NAACP's position.
8. Prepare a presentation to discuss issues with others.

I. Organizing a Back To School Rally

1. Objectives of the Back To School Rally
- To plan a specific "kick-off" event to begin the school year with a renewed enthusiasm for learning.
- To inspire children, families, and community members to support children and education locally.
- To inspire families and community members to take an active role in supporting pub-

lic education.

•   To establish high visibility for the NAACP and its education initiatives.

•   To promote self-esteem among local children in an effort to rejuvenate them, and their families, for the new school year.

•   To use the Back to School Rally to build collaborative relationships between the Education Committee, local school districts and community organizations.

•   To use the Back to School Rally as an opportunity to strengthen the capacity of the Education Committee and promote the NAACP's Education Advocacy Agenda.

2.   Executing a Successful Back to School Rally

A.   NAACP Education Committees should closely follow this series of recommendations for implementing a Back To School/Stay In School Rally:

•   Send a letter of invitation to school board officials and the Superintendent of the school district.

•   Ask the school Superintendent to provide remarks or to give a speech.

•   Send a letter of invitation to the Mayor and other elected officials. Especially invite those who used education as a key issue within their election platforms prior to the election. This is the perfect time for them to keep their promises.

•   Ask the Mayor to give a welcome statement and to present the proclamation to the NAACP in recognition of the Back to School Rally and the NAACP's "Partners In Education" Initiative. "Partner's in Education" includes those organizations that played a key role in planning, sponsoring and publicizing the event (e.g., media outlet, NEA, PTA, Mayor's Council on Youth and Family, etc.).

•   Select a well liked and popular Mistress or Master of Ceremony to host the rally.

•   Schedule entertainers, such as athletes, recording artists, dancers, etc., that can serve as role models for youth.

•   Always serve food and refreshments. Studies reveal that people are friendlier and feel most comfortable at events where food is served.

•   Designate a section of the program for recognizing the accomplishments of youth organizations and individual young people.

•   Recognize each school in the district with a roll call process to increase student and faculty morale.

•   Incorporate an incentive plan for participation among the schools.

•   Use co-sponsorship and underwriters to minimize out-of pocket expenses.

•   Hold the event in a centrally located place where public transportation is accessible. Make special arrangements for transportation, if possible (yellow bus, church bus, coach, etc.).

•   Provide many free NAACP Back to School Rally give-aways.

•   Suggest that a local radio station broadcast live from the event.

•   Select a powerful speaker to call for a commitment from the community to support youth through educational empowerment all year long.

•   Keep the event between 2-4 hours long and on schedule. Public officials and children have busy schedules.

•   Take pictures and video images for archival purposes.

B.   Coordinating with the Media

All media including local radio stations, newspapers, community newsletters, church bulletins, television stations, local magazines, etc., should be used to promote the rally.   Your   committee should actively use local African-American community organizations and Greek-letter organizations to assist with publicizing the event. When working with   media outlets, the following steps should be taken:

•   Request that a representative from the press sit on the Education Committee while planning the rally.

•   Have all events covered by at least one media outlet (e.g., television, radio and/or newspaper).

•   Invite popular radio stations (those that the children listen to) to co-sponsor the event.

•   Have the radio station send a guest Disc Jockey (DJ) and provide free give-a-ways to children and families.

•   Establish a means for disseminating information about the event as soon as possible and regularly until the event occurs (1-800 number, flyers, church announcements,

•   public access television, etc.).

•   Create and send out press releases for all related events.

•   Develop a listing of the addresses and telephone fax numbers of all media outlets of interest. Include the name, telephone, E-mail address, and fax numbers of all education reporters and news directors.

•   Secure a segment on a local radio and/or television station to discuss the purpose of the rally and to gain additional community support before and after the event. (Support and funding for next year is needed).

- Be aware of station deadlines when submitting press releases, public service announcements and media advisories.
- Type and double-space all materials submitted. Be concise.
- Include the name, phone number and e-mail address of the NAACP contact person.

Education Advocacy Reporting Tool

Please answer the following brief questions to inform the National office and other units and branches of the great local work in which you are engaged! You can attach it in an email to tbethglenn@naacpnet.org, visit our website to use the regularly updated online version at www.naacp.org or mail it to the education department at 4805 Mt. Hope Drive, Baltimore, MD, 21215-3297.

Thanks for your time and all you do. Should you have any questions, please contact Beth Glenn, National Education Director, at tbethglenn@naacpnet.org or 410.580.5104.

1. My unit or branch is working on which of the following education issues (Please select all that apply.)
❐ Teaching Quality
❐ Resource Equity
❐ Discipline
❐ College and Career Readiness
❐ Other

2. For which teaching quality strategies are you advocating? (Please select all that apply.)
  Future Teacher ID Program with NABSE
❐ TEACH Grants
❐ National Board
❐ Teacher Residencies
❐ Lead Teacher/Instructional Coaching Programs
❐ Teacher Mentoring Programs
❐ New Teacher Supports
❐ Performance based state licensing
❐ Other

3. For which discipline strategies are you advocating? (Please select all that apply)
❐ School Leader Interventions
❐ School Policy Review
❐ Disparities Report
❐ Other

4. For which college & career readiness strategies are you advocating? (Please select all that apply).

❒ Data Mining/Equity Audit

❒ Whole School Reform Advocacy

❒ Extended Learning Time

❒ School Climate Survey

❒ Other

5. For which resource equity strategies are you advocating? (Please select all that apply).

❒ Reforms to make Title I more targeted

❒ Reforms for states to target extra funds to low-wealth school districts

❒ Reforms within districts so schools serving neediest students are targeted for increased funds based on individual students' needs.

❒ Other

6. If you chose "other" for any question above, please indicate the issue (teaching, discipline, college & career readiness, resources, other) under which your activities fall and describe them briefly below.

Education Committee Duties

○ The Committee on Education shall:
  - Seek to eliminate segregation and other discriminatory practices in public education;
  - Study local educational conditions affecting minority groups;
  - Investigate the public school system and school zoning;
  - Familiarize itself with textbook material there from which is racially derogatory;
  - Seek to stimulate school attendance;
  - Keep informed of school conditions and strive to correct abuses where found;
  - Investigate the effects of standardized and high stakes testing practices;
  - Teacher certification;
  - Promote parental involvement in education; and
  - Aim to be a center of popular education on the race question and on the work of the Association.

Collaboration with other standing committees

- **The Communications Committee can:**
  o help with letters to the editor, setting up meetings and interviews with local media, inviting media to events, and generating publicity for events.
- **The Health Committee can:**
  o work together with education on efforts to include physical activity and more nutritious meals in local schools to combat childhood obesity.
  o be involved advocating for health education and screening to prevent HIV/AIDS in schools.
- **Legal Redress can:**
  o help evaluate and prepare legal claims, Title VI complaints, requests to join lawsuits or file friend of the court briefs.
  o help interpret and describe the constitutional and civil rights dimensions of education issues
- **The Membership Committee can:**
  o attend all education events, encourage community attendees to become members and give them the opportunity to sign up or renew on the spot.
- The Political Action Committee can
  o attend school board meetings in support of education committee members
  o help keep units informed of laws, rules and budget decisions impacting schools
  o advocate for more favorable laws, rules and budget decisions impacting schools

- **The Religious Affairs Committee can:**
  - o spread the word in the faith community about education initiatives
  - o help with interpreting and describing the moral and ethical dimensions of education decisions
- **The Economic Development committee can**
  - o help get local business sponsorship for education initiatives (internships, National Board certification assistance)
  - o encourage businesses to support schools directly and advocate for changes that benefit students of color
- **The Young Adult Committee can:**
  - o coordinate its mentorship efforts with education's
  - o help identify students to talk about schools and participate in education campaigns

General Procedures for Operating an Active Education Committee

I. Organizing an Active Committee

> A. Appoint a Chairperson that has knowledge about educational matters (e.g., parents, teachers, principals, etc.).
>
> B. Select a person who is willing to serve, has the time to serve and who is effectively able to discuss educational issues of concern in a public forum.
>
> C. Select a minimum of six (6) dependable members to serve on the committee.
>
> D. Meet at regular intervals at a mutually agreed upon time—no less than once a month for branches, college chapters and youth councils.
>
> E. Submit the Education Committee Registration Form to the National Education Department (see "Education Committee Registration Form").

II. Members of the Education Committee

A.   Each Education Committee should include the following individuals as primary committee members:

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Legislative Coordinator
- Parent Liaison
- Community Partnership Coordinator
- Higher Education Coordinator
- Early Childhood Coordinator (optional)
- Public Schools Coordinator (optional)
- Elementary School Coordinator (optional)
- Secondary School Coordinator (optional)

B.   Position Descriptions for NAACP Education Committee

Chair
The Chair is responsible for developing an Annual Education Action Plan with the national agenda as a guide. The Chair will coordinate meetings with key entities including the school district superintendent, the school board president, etc. The Chair must design a schedule for NAACP Education Committee members. The schedule should facilitate regular representations at school board meetings and other educational events. The committee chair is responsible for initiating contact and fostering positive relations with education leaders and key community partners. The Chair should also maintain regular contact with the State Conference Education Chair and the National Education Department to receive updates on trainings, national programs, initiatives, etc.

Vice-Chair
The Vice Chair in responsible for the unit's education advocacy program development and the effective implementation of state and national initiatives. This position is imperative to the development of collaborative networks and community partnerships.

Legislative Coordinator
The Legislative Coordinator monitors the state and local educational legislative agenda, and supports the Association's resolutions and national education legislative agenda. The Legislative Coordinator must be familiar with the NAACP national agenda and be prepared to mobilize the committee and branch on educational issues that are legislative in nature. This individual must prepare and plan for community action in
partnership with the committee chair. This individual must understand educational policy and the legislative process.

Parent Involvement Coordinator
The Parent Involvement Coordinator is responsible for reaching out to parents and families in order to gain support for children who attend public schools. The individual must spearhead efforts to promote the Parent Involvement Component of the Back to School/Stay in School program if applicable. The Parent Involvement Coordinator must have strong community links and be able to rally community support for initiatives developed and supported by the Education Committee. This individual will organize parent/volunteer recruitment and retention efforts.

Community Partnership Coordinator

The Community Partnership Coordinator must establish strong relationships with governmental agencies, community agencies, and corporations, in an effort to gain additional tangible resources for NAACP education programs and initiatives.

Higher Education Coordinator
The Higher Education Coordinator is responsible for monitoring, supporting, developing a n d implementing initiatives related to college/university minority admissions, recruiting, financial aid, and retention.

Desired Optional Positions
• Early Childhood Coordinator: Monitors, supports, develops and implements advocacy initiatives for preschool aged children.
• Public School Coordinators (Elementary/Secondary School Coordinator): Monitors, supports, develops and implements advocacy initiatives for children in elementary and secondary grades.

III. NAACP Education Committee Operations
A. NAACP Education Committees should execute the following series of recommendations:
1. Follow the Annual Education Committee Calendar (see p).
2. Meet regularly to discuss educational issues including legislation, redistricting initiatives, local school board decisions, etc.
3. Conduct education workshops, town hall meetings and membership campaigns for parents, community members, and NAACP units regularly.
4. Collect requested data (see page 20).
5. Develop Annual Education Action Plan (see page 10).
6. Meet with members of state and local legislative education committees Senate/House/Board of Regents/School Board).
7. Actively recruit NAACP members as supporters of the education mission
8. Follow the consistent plan for receipt and response to educational complaints, including a procedure for reporting complaints to the National Office (see page 24).
9. Conduct periodic press conferences focusing on NAACP education accomplishments, initiatives and urgent issues, in order to develop and maintain a positive and productive media/public relationship with the community; submit letters and opinion pieces to newspaper editors and editorial boards regarding key educational issues (see page 35).
10. Submit quarterly reports (see page 21).

The Education Committee should establish consistent contact with the following partnering entities:

- Local teachers union affiliates
- Teachers, counselors, principals
- Students
- School board members
- Retired school personnel
- Office of Civil Rights representatives
- Elected officials, particularly from legislative bodies that fund and support public education
- Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) affiliates
- Local and state educational agencies
- Faith-based organizations
- Community businesses and corporations
- Social service agencies

B. Become well informed on the issues addressed in the national education agenda:
1. Resource Equity
2. Teacher Quality
3. Access to Challenging, College & Career Ready Curriculum
4. Harsh discipline such as suspension and expulsions

Be aware of specific issues that impact your community, such as:
5. Access to Early Childhood Programs
6. High Stakes Testing
7. High School Dropouts
8. Special Education and Overrepresentation and Underservicing of Minority Children
9. Resegregation Trends
10. Language assistance and Bilingual Education

Higher Education Issues:
1. College Preparation, Recruitment, Admissions & Financial Aid
2. Faculty Diversification in Higher Education
3. Retention and Graduation in Higher Education

IV. Developing an Annual Education Action Plan

Annual Education Action Plan

Each December, the State Conference, Adult Branch, and Youth Council Education Committees should submit their Annual Education Action Plan to their respective Regional Office and the National Education Department. College Chapters should submit their Education Plans in October.

The unit's plan should outline the one education-related issue on the national agenda that the unit will address in the upcoming year. For 2010, the education-related issue should be one of the first four listed above. The plan should also indicate the advocacy tool that the unit will be using to address the issue (legislation, litigation, negotiation, agitation, political campaign or media campaign). A description of the advocacy tools and the format for the Annual Education Action Plans are included in Appendix D.

The following steps should be taken to develop an Annual Education Plan.

    A. Review data collected on your state/local educational system (see "Data Collection and Report Card Development").

    B. Discuss data at state Education Summit or Town Hall meeting.

    C. Rank issues according to priority and arrive at a consensus on committee priorities.

    D. Identify one issue from the national agenda that state conference and NAACP unit will advocate for in the upcoming year.

    E. Divide the list, assigning persons to certain tasks or problems.

    F. Do a detailed analysis of the problems by using the Midwest Academy Strategy Chart and the chart of tactics by answering the questions there in addition to the following

    1. Who can make the decisions you need to make a change (your target)

    2. Who are your constituents, (people directly affected by the problem), and how do they perceive the problem?

    3. Who will be in favor of change and who will be against change?

    4. How engaged is your branch on this issue?

    5. Can you anticipate what steps will probably be taken to initiate the change?

    6. Which tactics (town halls, report cards, letters, rallies) are most likely to impact decision makers favorably on this particular issue (use Chart of Tactics by Levels of Engagement)?

    7. Does your campaign include all appropriate categories of tactics (media, education,

advocacy, direct action)?

8. What will be your public relations strategies?
9. What additional resources will be needed to mobilize and take action?
10. What will be the best time to take action?
11. Will you need additional financial support?
12. Does the branch have the necessary skills and resources to move forward alone or should you collaborate with others?
13. If you collaborate with others, what is the best way to involve them?
14. Is there any additional information that you need before taking action?
15. Are you clear about your objectives? Are they realistic, practical and timely?
16. What will your campaign do to increase membership and set up the next campaign?

G. Make a list of alternative strategies and then the probable consequences of each strategy's desirable and undesirable consequences.

H. Select a plan based on the best outcomes with the least negative consequences. Have a second plan available if the first one does not work.

I. Define goals and set clear timetables for reaching goals.

J. Determine whether unit leadership is committed to the proposed action strategy (President, Executive Committee, etc.).

K. List the tasks that need to be completed in the action plan, the individual or group responsible, and the schedule for completion (make sure the assigned responsibilities make the best use of resources and committee member abilities).

L. Submit plan to state conference/regional office.

M. Execute your plan.

Resources

Teacher Quality • Resources - General

A Community Action Guide to Teacher Quality, Public Education Network
http://www.publiceducation.org/pdf/Publications/Teacher_Quality/PEN_CommActionGuide.pdf

This guide contains information to help you develop the leadership, capacity, incentives, and opportunities needed for community change. The material is based on PEN's previous and ongoing work in teacher quality. As a national organization with members in 31 states and the District of Columbia, PEN has a broad base of teacher quality experience to share.

In 1999, PEN received funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement to award competitive grants in a two-phased process. In the first phase, the grantees planned their teacher quality initiatives and collected data using the data framework discussed in Chapter Two. In the second phase, they facilitated a community engagement process using the data collected in their locales. Eight communities won planning grants and five secured implementation grants. PEN drew from their experiences in creating this guide, and continues to provide them with technical assistance in their implementation efforts.

In all of its education reform work, PEN emphasizes the importance of engaging the public in determining and strengthening education policy. PEN believes that educational improvement efforts cannot be sustained unless community members, organized groups, and policymakers become actively involved. This guide is but one way PEN helps communities address teacher quality issues. Please visit PEN's website (www.PublicEducation.org) for more details.

What States Can Do to Improve Teacher Effectiveness, The Education Trust,
http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/TeacherEffectiveness_2.pdf

Educators and policymakers understand that tinkering around the edges won't improve teacher quality and that a concerted effort is essential to create systemic change. To succeed, states must make rapid progress in four areas: (1) defining teacher effectiveness, (2) building better systems to measure teacher effectiveness, (3) basing milestones in the teaching career on measured effectiveness, and (4) establishing and enforcing a policy of equitable access to effective teachers and align other reforms to support this effort.

The Real Value of Teachers: Using New Information about Teacher Effectiveness to Close the Achievement Gap, The Education Trust
http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/Spring04_0.pdf

This report lays out an ambitious policy agenda, premised on an exhaustive review of the existing research on teacher effectiveness—often referred to as "value-added."

The Value of Value-Added Data, The Education Trust
http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/ValueAdded_0.pdf

Value-added data give principals, educators, and parents a potent tool to assess both student achievement and teacher impact. This report shows how value-added data—which tracks growth in student learning—can improve decisions about course placements, individual interventions, and professional development designed to hone teachers' skills.

Fighting for Quality and Equality, Too, The Education Trust
http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/QualityEquity_4.pdf

If state leaders invest resources and energy wisely, they don't have to choose between excellence and equity. This paper outlines ten steps state policymakers and school district leaders can take now that hold the promise to make a difference in teacher quality and equitable access to the best teachers for low-income students and students of color.

Teaching Inequality: How Poor and Minority Students Are Shortchanged on Teacher Quality, The Education Trust
http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/QualityEquity_4.pdf

This report provides new information on the impact of teacher quality on student achievement and offers specific steps states should take to remedy the persistent practice of denying the best teachers to the children who need them the most.

Redesigning Schools: 10 Features of Effective Design, Linda Darling Hammond for School Redesign Network
http://www.srnleads.org/data/pdfs/10_features.pdf

Resources—Specific Strategies

Teachers

Teacher Residencies

Research on urban teacher residency (UTR) programs in Chicago and Boston finds that administrators rate the skills and competencies of UTR graduates highly and the vast majority (90-95%) are still in the classroom after three years.

Sources:

Miner, Barbara. Winter 2008/2009 Teaching's Revolving Door available at Rethinking Schools Online (http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/23_02/door232.shtml)

The Aspen Institute and Center for Teaching Quality. 2008. Creating and Sustaining Urban Teacher Residencies: A New Way to Recruit, Prepare, and Retain Effective Teachers in High-needs Districts.

National Board Certification

Research on National Board Certification has found that it improves student achievement and learning, develops effective teachers, makes a difference in high-need schools, retains teachers, and develops teacher leaders.

Sources

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.   National Board Certification: What the Research Says. Arlington, VA.

National Research Council. 2008. Assessing Accomplished Teaching: Advanced-Level Certification Programs   Committee on Evaluation of Teacher Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The National Academies Press.

Sato, M., Wei, R. C., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2008). Improving teachers' assessment practices through professional development: The case of National Board Certification. American Educational Research Journal, 45(3), 669-700.

Freund, Russell, Kavulic. 2008.   A Study of the Role of Mentoring in Achieving Certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. George Washington University

Instructional Coaching

Sources

Annenberg Institute for School Reform. (n.d.) **Instructional Coaching: Professional Development**

Strategies That Improve Instruction Available online at www.annenberginstitute.org/ images/InstructionalCoaching.pdf

The Education Alliance. 2006. **Instructional Coaching: Key Themes from the Literature.** Brown University.

Neufeld, B. & Roper, D. (2003). Coaching: **A strategy for developing instructional capacity, promises and practicalities**. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute. Available at: http://www.annenberginstitute.org/Products/Coaching.php

New Strategies for measuring Teacher Effectiveness
We are encouraged by the national conversation on teacher effectiveness that focuses on student achievement and gains, especially the conversation surrounding value-added models.   Research has shown that teacher (in)effectiveness displays itself within the first two years of teaching. The interest in value-added models is a step in the right direction as it focuses the lens on student learning and is preferable to evaluating ultimate levels of achievement or reaching thresholds.   Although there are data and methodological issues surrounding value-added models to be worked out, the ongoing work to [fix this] is encouraging.   In addition to value-added models, alternative pieces of information considered as part of the effective teacher evaluations.

  Sources:
National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. 2008. **Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Research Synthesis**   Chicago: Illinois

Center for American Progress. 2010. **From Qualifications to Results: Promoting Teacher Effectiveness Through Federal Policy.**   Washington, DC

The Brookings Institute. 2006. **Identifying Effective Teachers Using Performance on the Job**. Washington, DC

Educational Testing Service. 2005. Using Student Progress to Evaluate Teachers: A Primer on Value Added Models. Princeton: New Jersey.

Strategies for Improving Teacher Distribution Within Districts

Extensive research has shown that schools with high concentrations of poor and minority students tend to have higher of less-qualified teachers. Reasons for this include teacher preferences and mo-

bility, district hiring and assignment practices, and stakeholders' political power. States and school districts have implemented various policies to attract and retain teachers in high-need schools including offering financial incentives and induction programs, promoting ideal working conditions (class size, staff support, etc), alternative certifications and changing hiring practices. Very little research has been done to examine how effective these policies have been.

Sources

National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. 2009. **The Distribution of Highly-Qualified, Experienced Teachers: Challenges and Opportunities.** Chicago: Illinois

The Education Trust. 2006. **Teaching Inequality: How Poor and Minority Students Are Shortchanged on Teacher Quality.** Washington DC.

EdTrust West 2005. **California's Hidden Teacher Spending Gap: How State and District Budgeting Practices Shortchange Poor and Minority Students and Their Schools.**   Oakland, CA.

Also see resources available from TRP at: http://www.teacherpolicyresearch.org/

Teacher Policy Research(TRP) is a research partnership between the University at Albany, Stanford University and the University of Virginia that examines teachers, issues in teaching and teacher education to provide education policy makers with current, useful data to inform their policy decisions. The research is funded by organizations interested in evaluating current education policies and issues in education in order to effect change or implement new policies as needed. The research covers a broad range of issues in teacher education policy, including teacher preparation, teacher labor markets, how teachers are distributed across schools, and teacher retention, particularly in urban, low performing schools. The Teacher Pathways Project is a multi-year study of teachers and teacher preparation programs to examine characteristics of teacher education and pathways into teaching and identify attributes that impact student outcomes in New York City schools.

Governance

Surveys, Studies and Evaluations Related to Local School Boards, National School Boards Associ-

ation
http://www.nsba.org/MainMenu/ResourceCenter/SurveysStudiesandEvaluations.aspx

School Boards at the Dawn of the 21st Century: Conditions and Challenges of District Governance, National School Boards Association
**http://www.nsba.org/MainMenu/ResourceCenter/SurveysStudiesandEvaluations/SchoolBoard-
sattheDawnofthe21stCentury.aspx**

National Caucus of Black School Board Members
http://www.nsba.org/site/page.asp?TRACKID=&CID=1903&DID=38976

National Alliance for Black School Educators
http://www.nabse.org/publications.html

A Guide to Public Engagement and School Finance Litigation, Public Education Network
**http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/44/ec/16
.pdf**

Urban School Board Survey, Council of Great City Schools
**http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/36/25/05
.pdf**

Discipline

Mapping the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Action Kit, The Advancement Project

http://www.advancementproject.org/sites/default/files/publications/STJAK.pdf

The Schoolhouse to Jailhouse action kit is aimed at helping advocates organize campaigns against the over use of zero tolerance school discipline and the growing reliance on police and juvenile courts as disciplinarians. This action kit provides guidance on how to dissect the schoolhouse to jailhouse track by: Collecting information and data about school discipline policies and practices and analyzing and organizing the data.

Test, Punish and Push Out: How Zero Tolerance and High-Stakes Testing Funnel Youth Into the Schools to Prison Pipeline, The Advancement Project (January 2010)
http://www.advancementproject.org/sites/default/files/publications/01-EducationReport-2009v8-HiRes.pdf

Test, Punish, and Push Out provides an overview of zero-tolerance school discipline and high-stakes testing, how they relate to each other, how laws and policies such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) have made school discipline even more punitive, and the risk faced if these devastating policies are not reformed. The report explores:

• 	The common origins and ideological roots of zero tolerance and high-stakes testing;
• 	The current state of zero-tolerance school discipline across the country, including local, state, and national data;
• 	How high-stakes testing affects students, educators, and schools;
• 	How zero tolerance and high-stakes testing have become mutually reinforcing, combining to push huge numbers of students out of school; and
• 	Successful grassroots efforts to eliminate harmful discipline and testing practices.

Testing
	Fair Test Resources Regarding High Stakes Testing
http://www.fairtest.org/k-12/high+stakes

The materials selected for this page make the case against relying on test scores to make critical educational decisions about students or schools - or what is called high stakes testing. Common examples include retaining a child in grade or withholding a student's high-school diploma solely on the basis their score on a test, or relying on test scores to determine whether a teacher or school should be sanctioned or rewarded. A large body of evidence exists against using standardized tests
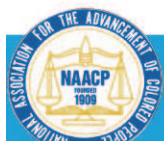
for such decisions. New evidence is being collected as states and district increasingly use tests for such purposes. This page presents the arguments and evidence to help you build a case against high-stakes testing in your own community.

Using Public Data on School Performance to Promote Advocacy

Sources
See USC Center for Urban Education Equity Model at
http://cue.usc.edu/equity_model/
See Evaluation Tools for Racial Equity at
http://www.evaluationtoolsforracialequity.org/index.htm

Post-secondary Readiness

General Resources

ACT: National and State College Readiness Report, 2009
http://www.act.org/news/data/09/index.html

Online Library at Pathways to College Network
http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/PCNLibrary/ListTopics.aspx?id=128

Better High School.org
http://www.betterhighschools.org/topics/TransitionOut.asp

The Forgotten Middle: Ensuring that All Students Are on Target for College and Career Readiness before High School, ACT
 http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/reports/ForgottenMiddle.html

The Path to Career Success: High School Achievement, Certainty of Career Choice, and College Readiness Make a Difference, ACT
How can future workers better prepare for career success? We examined three indicators of early career success: college degrees obtained in career field of interest, job attainment in career field of interest, and satisfaction in these jobs.
http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/PathCareerSuccess.pdf

Teaching for a New World: Preparing High School Educators to Deliver College- and Career-Ready Instruction, Alliance for Excellent Education
http://www.all4ed.org/files/TeachingForANewWorld.pdf

It is well established that teacher quality is one of the most significant school influences on student achievement. Unfortunately, it is less clear how teacher preparation programs can prepare and recruit effective educators for every classroom. As the global economy demands that all students are college and career ready after high school, teachers must be educated and supported to instruct to this higher standard. Despite pockets of excellence across the country in the ways teachers are prepared in both traditional and alternative routes, there is a need for a new, comprehensive vision. This brief offers a new conception for secondary teacher preparation that ensures candidates are able to prepare students for college and career success after high school, encourages a shift to the

skills, knowledge, and competencies candidates should have once they become classroom teachers of record, highlights the need for improved teacher performance assessments and data systems, and contemplates how federal policy can support the realization of these goals.

Reinventing the Federal Role in Education: Supporting the Goal of College and Career Readiness for All Students, Alliance for Excellent Education, July 10, 2009
http://www.all4ed.org/files/PolicyBriefReinventingFedRoleEd.pdf

It is a unique moment in education policy. From the highest levels of leadership--the president and the U.S. secretary of education--there is a call to action to address the high school crisis, focus on the lowest-performing schools, and graduate students college and career ready. Over the last few years, congressional leaders have developed legislative proposals based on research and best practice that demonstrate possible ways forward for federal policy. The recent infusion of new funds from the federal stimulus program has opened the nation's eyes to new opportunities and reinvigorated efforts to improve education. And the state-led movement to develop common standards and assessments offers the nation an opportunity to trade incremental changes for collaborative efforts with the power to truly transform American education. It is time to harness this progress and momentum, and convert commitment and proposals into a reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) strategically designed to address the high school crisis and move the nation toward the goal of all students graduating from high school ready for college and careers. This brief provides recommendations for an ESEA reauthorization that would help ensure federal policy not only maintains pace with the common standards initiative, but also serves as a leader and partner in helping bring the potential of this and other efforts to fruition.

Preparing Students for College and Career: California Multiple Pathways, Alliance for Excellent Education
June 30, 2009
http://www.all4ed.org/files/IssueBriefCAMultPathways.pdf

To prepare students for success in life, the twenty-first-century American high school needs to shift its focus from preparing for college or career to achieving college and career readiness for every student. One of the most comprehensive efforts towards this goal is the "multiple pathways" initiative in California, which is a reform model aimed at improving high schools by pairing a rigorous college preparatory curriculum with an industry theme while offering the supports and workplace exposure that can be critical to students' success. The initiative provides multiyear programs of study that are

rigorous, relevant, and directly connected to regional and state economic needs. This brief details the multiple pathways movement in California, developed in response to poor and inequitable student outcomes, as it continues to garner interest and develop a growing base of evidence. The discussion lays out the rationale for the approach and the implications of this California-based effort for stakeholders seeking to address the national dropout crisis.

Facts for Education Advocates: School Counseling, Access, and Persistence, Alliance for Excellent Education
April 15, 2009
http://www.all4ed.org/files/Facts_for_Education_Adv_April2009.pdf

Recognizing that no tool is more important than information to help educators and other advocates improve the country's educational system, the College Board and the Alliance for Excellent Education have formed a partnership to develop a series of fact sheets highlighting the state of American schools and their students. The multi-issue series debuted in May 2008 with an overview of education in the United States; after a summer hiatus, the series picked up again in September and will continue throughout the 2008-2009 school year, with the monthly release of additional fact sheets that address a range of education topics.

From No Child Left Behind to Every Child a Graduate , Alliance for Excellent Education
August 28, 2008
http://www.all4ed.org/files/ECAG.pdf

This report outlines the Alliance for Excellent Education's Framework for Action to Improve Secondary Schools, which reflects the consensus among educators, researchers, policymakers, and other authorities on the specific problems of secondary schools, as well as on the research- and best-practice-supported solutions to those problems. Taken together, the seven policy areas contained within the framework offer a comprehensive and systemic approach to secondary school reform.

A Plan for Success: Communities of Color Define Policy Priorities for High School Reform, Campaign for High School Equity

http://www.highschoolequity.org/images/stories/pdf/PlanforSuccess.pdf

Too often communities experience the tragic consequences of an unequal public education system that fails to provide high-quality education to students of color and youth from low-income neighborhoods. Nowhere is this crisis more acute than in America's high schools, where many high-poverty schools lack the funding and resources of wealthier schools and districts. Students of color and low-income students are also ill-served by low academic expectations. These challenges serve as barriers for districts and schools that struggle to improve their students' achievement. Every year, about 1.2 million students drop out of our nation's high schools. A disproportionate number of these dropouts are students of color. Dropouts are more likely than high school graduates to experience poverty, poor health, and incarceration. And the high cost of dropping out is borne not only by the individual but by all Americans, who pay an economic and social price when students leave high school without a diploma. The Campaign for High School Equity (CHSE) has created A Plan for Success, which outlines CHSE's collective sense of the policy priorities that must be addressed if our nation's high schools are to change so that all young people graduate from high school ready to work, ready for college, and ready to be knowledgeable citizens.

American Youth Policy Forum. 2009. **Success at Every Step: How 23 Programs Support Youth on the Path to College and Beyond.** Washington, DC.

Resources for Specific Strategies: College Career Ready

Student Mentoring and Supports
School-based mentoring has increased significantly in recent years. This type of mentoring program differs from traditional community-based mentoring programs in several ways that benefits students: the school site offers supervision and structure to the program (and in so doing, the staff are also mentors) and students are often selected for participation (thus high-need students are identified). Research on school-based mentoring programs finds that youth's peer relationships, school performance, attitudes and behavior improve.

Sources
Public/Private Ventures. 2006. **School-Based Mentoring: A Closer Look** Philadelphia: PA.

National Mentoring Partnership. 2007. **School-Based Mentoring Issue 6 in Research in Action Series.** Alexandria, Virginia.

School Turnaround/Redesign

"School turn around" is different than "school improvement" in one distinct way: there is dramatic improvement in 3 years after making changes in how a school and its classrooms operate. Although there is limited research on turnaround schools, a IES report summarized the results of 10 cases studies and found that strong leadership, a consistent focus on instruction improvement, and a staff committed to turnaround were keys in implementation.

Sources

Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Greene, J., Maynard, R., Redding, S., and Darwin, M. 2008) **Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools: A practice guide** (NCEE #2008- 4020). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

School Redesign Network & Justice Matters. 2007. High Schools for Equity Policy Supports for Student Learning in Communities of Color.

Career Technical Education

Advocates of rigorous career technical education (CTE) in high schools stress that CTE makes explicit the link between academic and applied knowledge, improves student outcomes for certain students, and can easily be incorporated in the growing movement toward providing multiple pathways to college and careers.

Sources

American Youth Policy Forum. 2008. **Supporting High Quality Career and Technical Education through Federal and State Policy.** Washington, DC.

American Youth Policy Forum. 2009. **Infusing Career and Technical Education into High School Reform – Lessons from California.** Washington, DC.

See also resources from ConnectED California at:
http://www.connectedcalifornia.org/

Early College High Schools

There are currently more than 200 Early College High Schools (ECHS) across the country. Evalu-

ations of ECHS have found that these schools serve the intended populations: student of color and first-generation college students constitute the majority of students enrolled.   ECHS attendance rates and grade-to-grade promotion rates average over 90 percent.   An analysis of 17 ECHSs showed that among the 900+ 2007 graduates, 65 percent were accepted to a four-year college, more than 85 percent graduated with substantial college credit, and more than 250 earned merit-based college scholarships.

Sources

AIR and SRI, International. 2007. **Evaluation of the Early College High School Initiative: Select Topics on Implementation.**   Report prepared for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/ECHSI_Synth%20Report2007.pdf
See the Early College High School Initiative at http://www.earlycolleges.org/

Extended Learning Time

Expanded-time schools are those that have either extended their days beyond six hours and/or their school years beyond the standard 180 days.   An analysis of over 650 expanded-time schools across 36 states found that these schools offer 25 percent more time than the national standard, typically in the form of extending the length of the school day. The majority (74%) of the schools are charter schools and they enroll higher proportions of minority and poor children than those found in the general school population. There is a positive relationship between expanded-time and 7th and 10th grade performance in math and language arts.

Sources

National Center on Time and Learning. 2009. **Tracking an Emerging Movement: A Report on Expanded-Time Schools in America.**
Also see: National Center on Time and Learning at **http://www.timeandlearning.org/**

Additional Related Citations
Ferguson, Ronald F., (2008) **"Toward Excellence with Equity: An Emerging Vision for Closing the Achievement Gap,"** (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).

Lucas, Samuel Roundfield, (1999) **"Tracking Inequality: Stratification and Mobility in American High Schools,"** (New York: Teachers College Press).

National Academy of Sciences, (2008) **"Common Standards for K-12 Education: Considering the Evidence,"** Washington DC: National Academy Press.

National Research Council (2002), **"Achieving High Standards for All,"** (Washington, DC: National Academy Press).

Oakes, Jeannie & Marisa Saunders, Eds., (2008) **"Beyond Tracking: Multiple Pathways to College, Career, and Civic Participation,"** (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).

Roles and Responsibilities of the Various NAACP Education Advocacy Components

National Board Education Committee
The National Board Education Committee provides the National Education Department with policy guidance toward the effective implementation of the Association's strategic plan objectives.

National Education Department
The National Education Department provides the national strategy and coordination for the implementation of the Association's strategic plan. The National Education Department provides assistance to units implementing the strategic plan through policy guidance, training, and programmatic support. The National Education Department should interface directly with the U.S. Department of Education.

State Conference Education Committee
The State Conference Education Committee advises the regional and national office concerning key initiatives and areas of concern in the state. The State Conference Education Committee also serves as the coordinating body for the education-related activities and initiatives for each of the units in the state. The State Conference Education Committee also coordinates efforts to host the State Education Summit and develop a State Annual Education Action Plan. The State Education Committee should interface with the state superintendent and state education agency, as well as the members of the state's legislative education committee and the governor.

Branch Education Committee
The Branch Education Committee should coordinate the branch's efforts to ensure access to a high-quality education for all students in their local school districts. The Branch Education Committee should represent the unit within the local school districts, process parent and
student complaints, host town hall meetings, and develop the branch's Annual Education Action Plan. The Branch Education Committee should interface with the superintendent and members of the local school board.

College Chapter Education Committee
The College Chapter Education Committee should coordinate the chapter's efforts to ensure access to and success in higher education at their local campus or state system of higher education. The College Chapter Education Committee should represent the chapter in all matters that impact the access to and success of minorities in the college/university. The College Chapter Education Committee should develop the chapter's Annual Education Action Plan. The College Chapter should in-

terface with the college/university president and/or board of trustees, and coordinate with the state conference education committee to interact with state officials that govern higher education.

Youth Council Education Committee
The Youth Council Education Committee should coordinate the unit's training and enrichment activities in five critical areas: (1) History of the NAACP and the civil rights movement; (2) Conducting research in education; (3) Developing components of an effective presentation; (4) Writing a persuasive letter; and (5) Effective methods of advocacy.

TIPS FOR NAACP UNITS ADDRESSING HIGH SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Here are some tips on addressing school district decisions to close buildings:

1.   What is the district's rationale, e.g., consistently poor academic achievement as measured by math & reading proficiency test scores, decreasing student population, poor facilities.

2.   Investigate the district's stated reason(s) for closing school. Are they accurate?

3.   Are there other schools that remain open in the district with the same or worse problem?

4.   If so, are these schools' student populations predominantly white?

5.   Is this school closing the latest in a series of school closings over the years?

6.   If so, were most of those schools that were closed predominantly black?

7.   If yes, what was the school board's rationale for closing the other schools?

8.   Were those rationales supportable by the facts?

9.   Does the burden of this school closing fall most heavily on black students, e.g., based on distance they will have to travel to new school, based on their average travel time on bus, will some have to walk through more dangerous streets to get to school, will some now have to forego extracurricular activities because there is no transportation home that late or, alternatively, pay more for a ride home?

10.   Same question for previous school closings.

11.   Is the school district currently under a court order to desegregate?

12.   If so, does the court order prohibit the school board from closing this school or does it at least require that the school board first seek and obtain permission of the Court before proceeding with the school closing?

13.   Putting sentimentality aside, would the black students be "better off" educationally in another school?

14.   What latitude does state law provide the school board in closing buildings?

15.   Can the NAACP unit marshal evidence to demonstrate that the school board has a racial double standard for closing buildings, comparing similarly situated schools?

16.   Can the NAACP unit demonstrate that the burden of the school closure is greater on black students than on their white counterparts?

17.   Affirmative answers to 3, 4, 15 and 16 could provide the basis for filing a racial discrimination administrative complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (OCR). School districts that receive federal financial assistance are prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act from discriminating on the basis of race or national origin.

18.   The OCR National Headquarters phone number is 1-800-421-3481