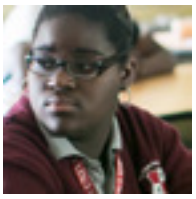
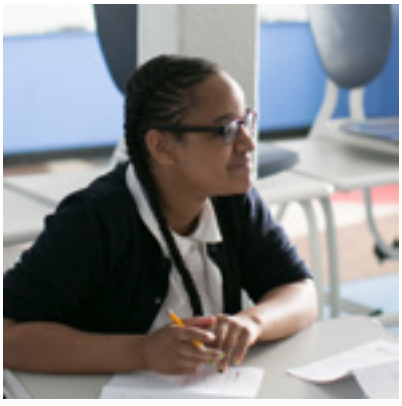
THE STATE OF EDUCATION IN BLACK AMERICA

2015





baeo

Black Alliance for Educational Options

OUR **MISSION**

The mission of the Black Alliance for Educational Options is to increase access to high-quality education options for Black children by actively supporting transformational education-reform initiatives and parental-choice policies that empower low-income and working-class Black families.

OUR **VISION**

Low-income and working-class Black families are empowered to choose a high-quality primary and secondary education for their children that enables them to pursue the college or career path of their choice, become economically independent adults and engage in the practice of freedom.

OUR CORE VALUES

IT'S ALL ABOUT OUR CHILDREN

We are passionate about improving the futures of Black children. This passion motivates our work.

BLACK CHILDREN ARE INHERENTLY INTELLIGENT AND TALENTED

We are unwavering in our belief that when provided access to equitable and adequate resources and when engaged daily by caring and committed adults, Black children can and will achieve at the highest academic levels.

URGENCY

Black families and students cannot wait for schools to improve. Families, leaders and policymakers must act now to provide families with access to high-quality educational options, using all available means, including traditional public, private or charter schools, home schooling, and other options.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Equal access to high-quality education options is essential to realize our nation's unmet promise of justice and equality, and to enable Black children to fully participate in and benefit from economic and civic freedom. Wealthy families have always had choice in education. Low- and moderate-income families deserve the same choices.

UNAPOLOGETIC

We are unapologetic in our belief that the changes we seek require engagement and/or leadership by the Black community on behalf of the Black community.

DIVERSITY THROUGH A NARROW STRIP OF UNITY

Common commitment to high-quality educational options for Black children allows BAEO to encompass gender, generational, partisan and ideological diversity.

RESPECTFUL AND CARING RELATIONSHIPS

We treat our colleagues and members with commitment, honesty, transparency and respect.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

In March 1999, the Institute for the Transformation of Learning (ITL) at Marquette University convened the first annual symposium, a meeting of 150 Black people in Milwaukee, Wis., to discuss parental choice and the educational challenges facing disadvantaged Black families in America.

At that time, the charter school movement was growing, and parental choice was gaining currency among progressive policymakers and at the grass roots. Symposium participants focused on the need for greater choice and better options within the Black community, and agreed that a national organization of Black America for Black America would best advance this cause.

Consequently on Dec. 3-5, 1999, 50 dedicated Black leaders gathered in Washington, D.C., for the founding meeting of the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO). The founders adopted the name of the organization, the mission statement and BAEO's general principles.

The second annual symposium, hosted again by ITL, drew approximately 350 attendees, 90 of whom met subsequently to continue organizing BAEO. At this organizing meeting of BAEO, participants reviewed the first draft of the organization's bylaws and elected Dr. Howard Fuller as president of the board (the title was later changed to chair of the board). He was given the authority to select individuals to serve on the Board. A 29-member Board was formed and met for the first time on June 17, 2000. The organization officially launched with a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 24, 2000.

Fifteen years later, BAEO remains the only national education reform advocacy organization with a clear focus on representing the interests of Black people, and is often the only Black organization positioned to broker conversations among education-reform advocates, policymakers and representatives of various sectors of the Black community, particularly the parents and students most affected by the reforms. This unique role has enabled BAEO to support and drive some of the most important victories in the education-reform movement:

- In Alabama in March 2015, BAEO helped pass the Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act, a historic bill that paves the way for the creation of charter schools in the state;

- In Mississippi, BAEO was a major factor in passing the Mississippi Public Charter Schools Act of 2013 that establishes a single statewide Charter School Authorizer Board to approve a set number of charters annually;

- In Washington, D.C., BAEO helped secure funding for the Opportunity Scholarship

Program, which has allowed thousands of low-income children to leave failing schools to attend high-performing private ones;

- In Louisiana, BAEO has been instrumental in supporting the charter school movement in the state, and its work was critical to the 2008 establishment (and, in 2014, subsequent protection of) the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program – which allows low-income children in New Orleans to attend private schools; and

- In Ohio, BAEO's impact was felt most through its efforts in influencing and supporting the passage of the Ohio Educational Choice Scholarship Program, "EdChoice," as well as the Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program.

In addition to its accomplishments at the state level, BAEO has been instrumental in impacting national policy as well. BAEO played a critical leadership role in promoting the media and communications campaign in support of the Cleveland, voucher program in the U.S. Supreme Court case, Zellman v Simmons-Harris.

Despite these and other successes over the past decade, BAEO and the education-reform and the parental choice movements in the United States stand at a critical juncture. These two interrelated movements have made significant progress toward expanding low-income and working-class families' capacity to choose better education options for their children, strengthening standards and accountability for school performance, creating legal and regulatory environments that allow new governance and financial arrangements for non-traditional public schools, and raising standards for teacher quality.

Cities like the District of Columbia, New Orleans and Memphis are beginning to illustrate what is possible when families are empowered to make choices and policymakers and communities are emboldened to stand up for policies that advance what is best for children. Progress has indeed been made — but there is still tremendous work yet to be done by BAEO and its education-reform allies.

In pushing these movements forward, BAEO has focused on working with Black communities and making sure that Black people's voices are a part of the broader discussion and debate. In doing so, BAEO has witnessed not only opposition by established organizations and individuals outside its community who see these movements as threats to their entrenched economic and political interests; the organization has also seen opposition within the Black community itself.

There has been significant backlash from some sectors of the Black community who feel the reforms are being done "to them as opposed to with them." Opposition to school closures and charters, calls for a moratorium on implementation of the Common Core State Standards, and lawsuits against teacher-evaluation systems undermine recent progress and, in some cases, even threaten to reverse the successes of reform efforts to date.

While BAEO supports many of these reforms, we understand some of the concerns being expressed about the manner in which some of these reforms are being implemented. BAEO must be in a position to help change some of these implementation strategies while making the case to the Black community about the value of some of these reforms to improving academic achievement for the children from low-income and working-class families.

BAEO advocates on behalf of Black communities — which are often most impacted by reform — and strives to ensure that the broader education reform movement pays real attention to the need to engage Black families, communities and educators by building deep relationships with these communities. Simultaneously, BAEO engages Black parents, communities and teachers and makes the case for reform.

This work falls into four broad categories of activity:

I. ADVOCACY

BAEO has been and will continue to be an advocacy organization. BAEO not only advocates for the creation of quality education options that have an immediate impact on low-income and working-class Black families, but also seeks to expand parental choice for low-income and working-class Black families to ensure that they have the power to choose the best high-quality option for their children.

BAEO also works to equip Black parents with the skills they need to better advocate for themselves and their children and to demand reform initiatives that will benefit them. Much of BAEO's advocacy work is executed in partnership with education reform advocacy organizations with similar objectives.

To strengthen its current advocacy efforts, BAEO has created a 501(c)(4) — the BAEO Action Fund — to allow direct engagement in lobbying and provide indirect political support for Black elected officials who support its mission and vision.

II. EDUCATING AND INFORMING

BAEO seeks to educate and inform various segments of the Black community about the importance of quality educational experiences, how to define quality, the reality of the Black experience in communities today and the means by which families can pursue better options for their children.

III. CONVENING

Among BAEO's most important functions is convening Black parents, students, elected officials, clergy, educators, and community activists for discussion, debate, planning and action around parental choice and other education-reform initiatives.

IV. DEVELOPING NEW LEADERS

Developing New Leaders: BAEO's Bailey-Sullivan Leadership Institute (BSLI) helps identify, cultivate and prepare a new generation of Black leaders committed to ensuring that all children have access to a quality education. The institute fellows participate in a yearlong program that gives them the skills to serve as advocates for change in education.

These activities are designed to collectively accomplish BAEO's intended impact: to engage Black families and leaders at all levels to design, enact, protect and expand well-designed education-reform and parent-choice programs in order to double, by 2023, the number of Black children from low-income and working-class families living in states and communities where the policy and political context supports their ability to access high-quality education options.

Success will yield an identifiable constituency of Black leaders, parents, and students who visibly and actively support key education reform efforts in every city and state where BAEO operates.

For more information on BAEO, please visit the following Web pages:

WEBSITE
http://www.baeo.org

FACEBOOK
https://www.facebook.com/BAEO.org

TWITTER
https://twitter.com/ntlBAEO

LINKEDIN
https://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=3500405

YOUTUBE
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GERARD ROBINSON

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND INTERIM PRESIDENT

We are excited to report dynamic progress on the road to parental choice and high-quality education for America's Black families and children, most particularly those in low-income and working-class households. Foremost in BAEO's commitment to improve the capacity of our children to engage in the practice of freedom – the transformation of their world – is by making sure their parents are informed and empowered to make the best decisions and gain access to the best education options for their children. It is worth noting that BAEO from Day One has always supported transformational options — those within and outside the public school system.

By empowering Black low-income and working-class families and children to become informed and effective participants in their pre-K-12 academic journey, we make graduation from high school, access to excellent colleges and great decisions about careers attainable.

By helping to provide low-income and working-class Black families with the knowledge and the power to gain greater access to high-quality education options at the primary and secondary level, we also safeguard our children's participation in a knowledge economy. This economy of today rewards being smart, creative and civically engaged.

Far too few of our children have access the type of education that will ensure they gain these critical skills. Fortunately, we have the power to change this unacceptable reality. BAEO believes education reform and parental choice are about more than just policy directions or imperatives. These two issues are about saving our children's lives. These issues impact not just their future, but also their lives today.

For 15 years, we have been in the vanguard of the struggle to shape local, state, and national policies that empower low-income and working-class Black families to have access to high-quality education options and the power to take advantage of those opportunities.

Our desire for publishing the State of Education in Black America 2015 is to provide convenient access to evidence about parent choice and education reform in action. With this information, parents, educators, lawmakers and philanthropists can make better decisions about how parental choice and transformational education reform fits into our educational strategies of today and tomorrow. The struggle continues!

GERARD ROBINSON
Board Chair

JACQUELINE COOPER
Interim President

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of BAEO's State of Black Education Report 2015 is to inform the American public about the contributions high-quality education options and parental-choice polices make to low-income and working-class Black families. Today, many Black schoolchildren enrolled in public and private choice programs experience academic gains in English language arts, math and science; participate in civic activities; and enroll annually in and graduate from postsecondary institutions — often becoming the first in their family to do so.

Full inclusion of Black people into the social and economic mainstream is important to BAEO. The same is true for other national organizations focused on the prosperity of our community. For example, the National Urban League's annual State of Black America Report chronicles the challenges of economic inequalities in America and provides solutions to reduce poverty in our cities. The Schott Foundation for Public Education's 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males remains a valuable reminder of Black men's contributions to strengthening the fabric of American life — as fathers, husbands, friends, coworkers and citizens — and the promissory note yet to be cashed owing to dismal high school graduation rates.

The same is true for our daughters, sisters, mothers and future leaders. In Unlocking Opportunity for African American Girls (2014), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense and Educational Fund coauthored a report about the dangers of racial and gender stereotypes in our schools and society, and the pathways we can take to improve achievement and economic self-sufficiency.

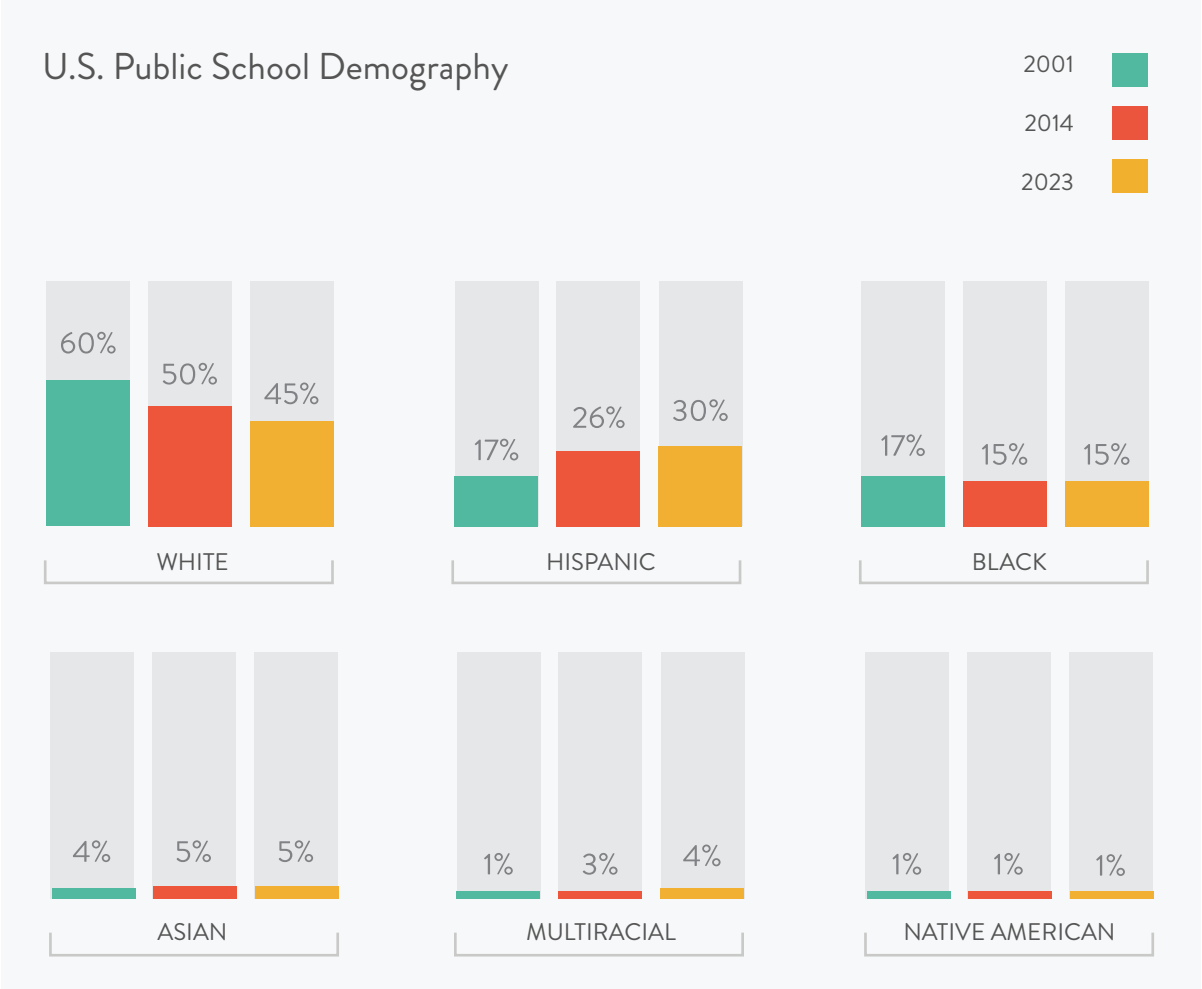
At the local and state levels, members of the National Alliance of Black School Educators work to improve educational outcomes for all the nation's schoolchildren, especially those of African descent. BAEO applauds their work and welcomes an opportunity to collaborate on issues where we find common ground.

Our collective groups' desire to reduce the Black-White gap in education, income and human capital productivity requires a plan of action. Education will be one of its driving forces. Any plan of action requires equitable funding, effective teachers and leaders, community improvement and measurable results. While we work individually, or collectively, to design a plan of action to close the gaps, let us remain mindful of the educational options that exist for low-income and working-class Black families and children right now.

This report will fill the knowledge gap regarding the role of parental choice as part of this plan of action. Doing so will affirm the belief that Black children can and will achieve the highest academic levels when enrolled in supportive learning environments; promote why and how high-quality education options work; and encourage the expansion and enactment of new parental-choice programs.

BLACK STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

At the K-12 level, our nation's nearly 15,000 public school districts enrolled approximately 50 million students at the start of the 2014 school year. For the first time in American history, the school year opened with 51 percent of the students being non-White. In 2001, White students accounted for 60 percent of the public school population. There were 40 percent in 2014. Black student enrollment dropped from 17 percent to 15 percent during the same time. Hispanic enrollment, comparatively, rose from 17 to 30 percent. Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native American/Alaskan Native student populations remained steady during this time period at 4 percent to 5 percent. Students of multiracial status saw an increase from 1 percent to 4 percent. Demographic trends will mature for the coming years, so changes in public policy should reflect those trends. Naturally, shifts in demography and public policy will impact postsecondary options for Black students.



For the Black population age 25 or over, 12 percent had earned bachelor's degrees and 7 percent had earned graduate or professional degrees in 2013. For the gender degree gap, 22 percent of Black women and 17 percent of Black men, had earned a bachelor's degree or higher. Regarding enrollment in two- and four-year colleges, the figures challenge our assumption about where Black students enroll in college. For example, Black students accounted for only 15 percent of the public two-year college enrollment in 2013; comparatively, Black students accounted for 28 percent of the two-year private nonprofit and for-profit enrollment, respectively. A similar trend occurs at the four-year level: the majority of Black students do not enroll in public colleges and universities. For instance, only 12 percent of Blacks attended a public college; 13 percent attended a private nonprofit college; and 30 percent attended a for-profit college. By comparison, 62 percent of White students attended a public college, while only 15 percent of Hispanics and 3 percent of Asians attended a private for-profit college. Once in college, Black students are more likely than their peers to enroll in non-credit bearing remediation courses, take six years to graduate and accumulate a lot of college debt, at times without earning a degree, certificate or credential. In spite of these challenges, Blacks are enrolling in postsecondary institutions at improving rates, and in many instances are experience some success.

In 2013, at least 45 million Blacks lived in the U.S., accounting for 15.2 percent of the total population. The Black female/male figure is 52 percent and 48 percent, and one out of four Blacks is under 18 years of age. It is worth noting that approximately 3.8 million, or 9 percent of Blacks in the U.S., are immigrants. U.S.-born and foreign-born Blacks share similarities: Both are people of African descent and both have stories of tragedy, triumph and progress. Yet, their socioeconomic experiences in the U.S. are somewhat different. The following table tells the story of higher earnings and higher rates of degree attainment for foreign-born Blacks.

2013	U.S.-born Blacks	Foreign-born Blacks	All Immigrants	U.S. Population
Median Age	29	42	43	37
Median Household Income	$33,500	$43,800	$48,000	$52,000
College Degree (age 25+)	19%	26%	28%	30%
Poverty	28%	20%	19%	16%
Home Ownership	42%	40%	51%	64%
Married (age 18 +)	28%	48%	60%	50%
U.S. Citizen	100%	54%	47%	93%

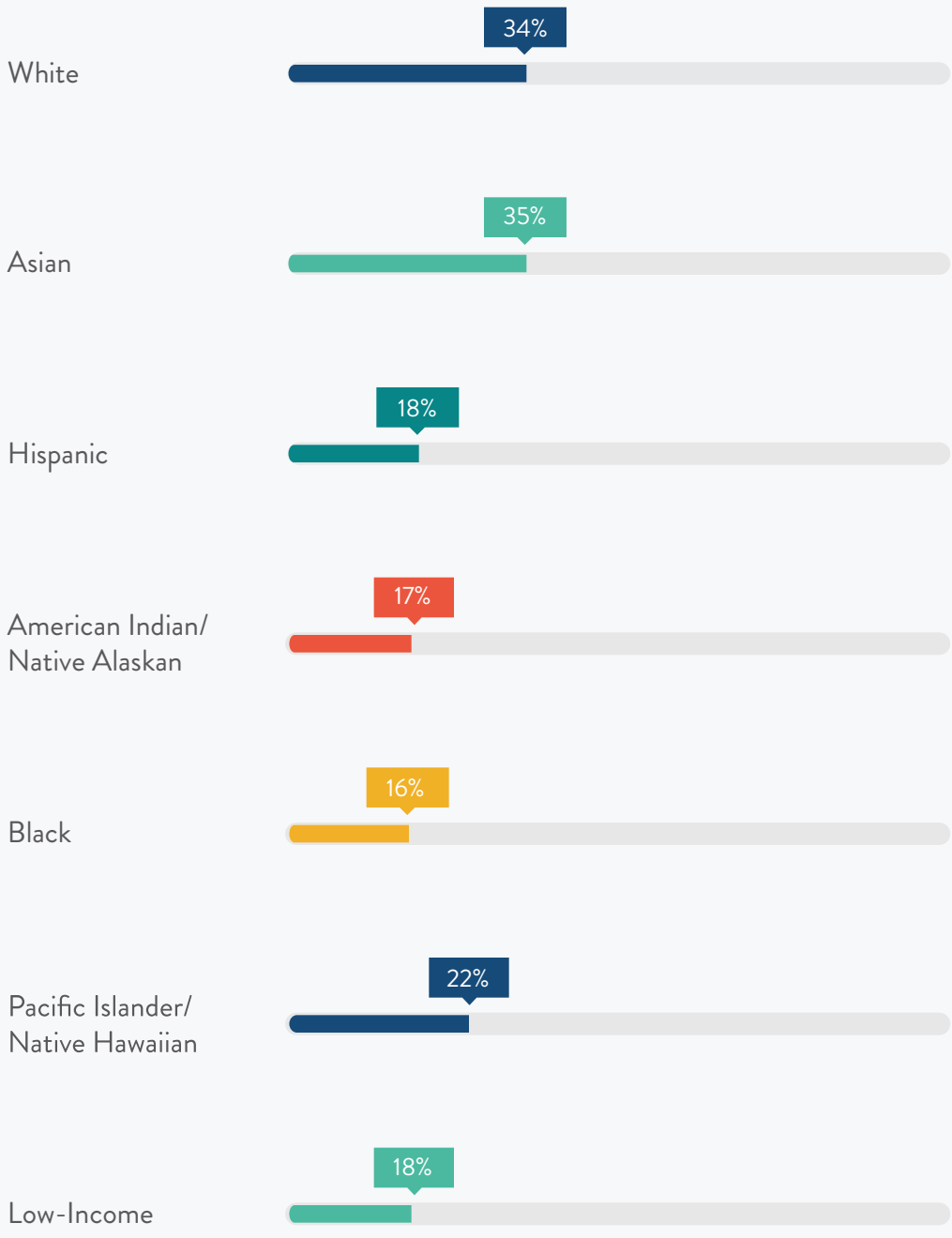
If we want to change Black students' outcomes in higher education, we must change what they learn in pre-K-12 education, particularly in reading, math and science. If we fail to do so, our students will be locked out of colleges and jobs that require higher-order thinking skills. We must not allow this happen.

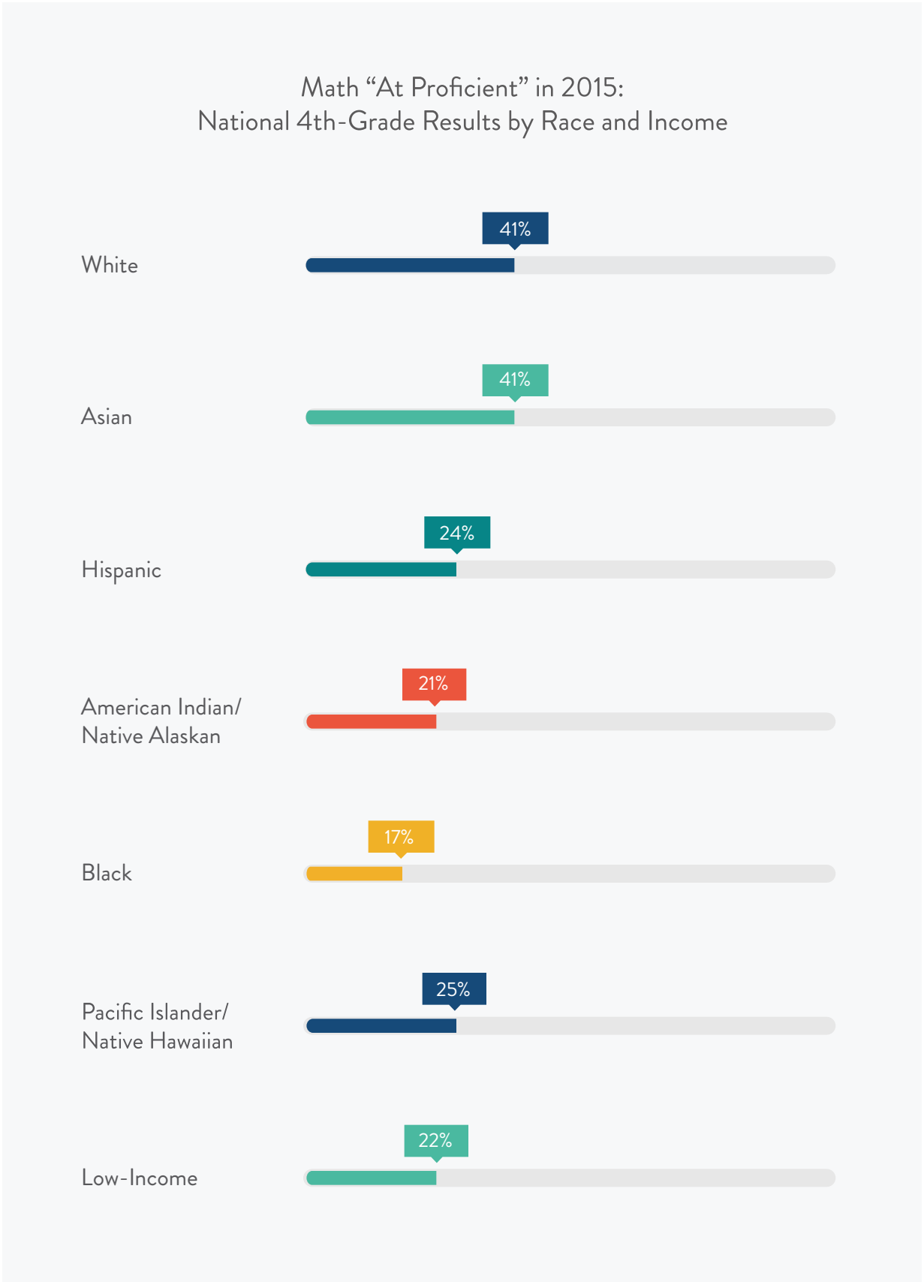
The best way for us to create a road map for Black and low-income children's future is to identify their performance today. Data from the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the Nation's Report Card, is a good gauge. NAEP is a test administered to a representative pool of students in several subjects, including math, reading and science. Based on the following Black and low-income NAEP results, we have room for improvement.

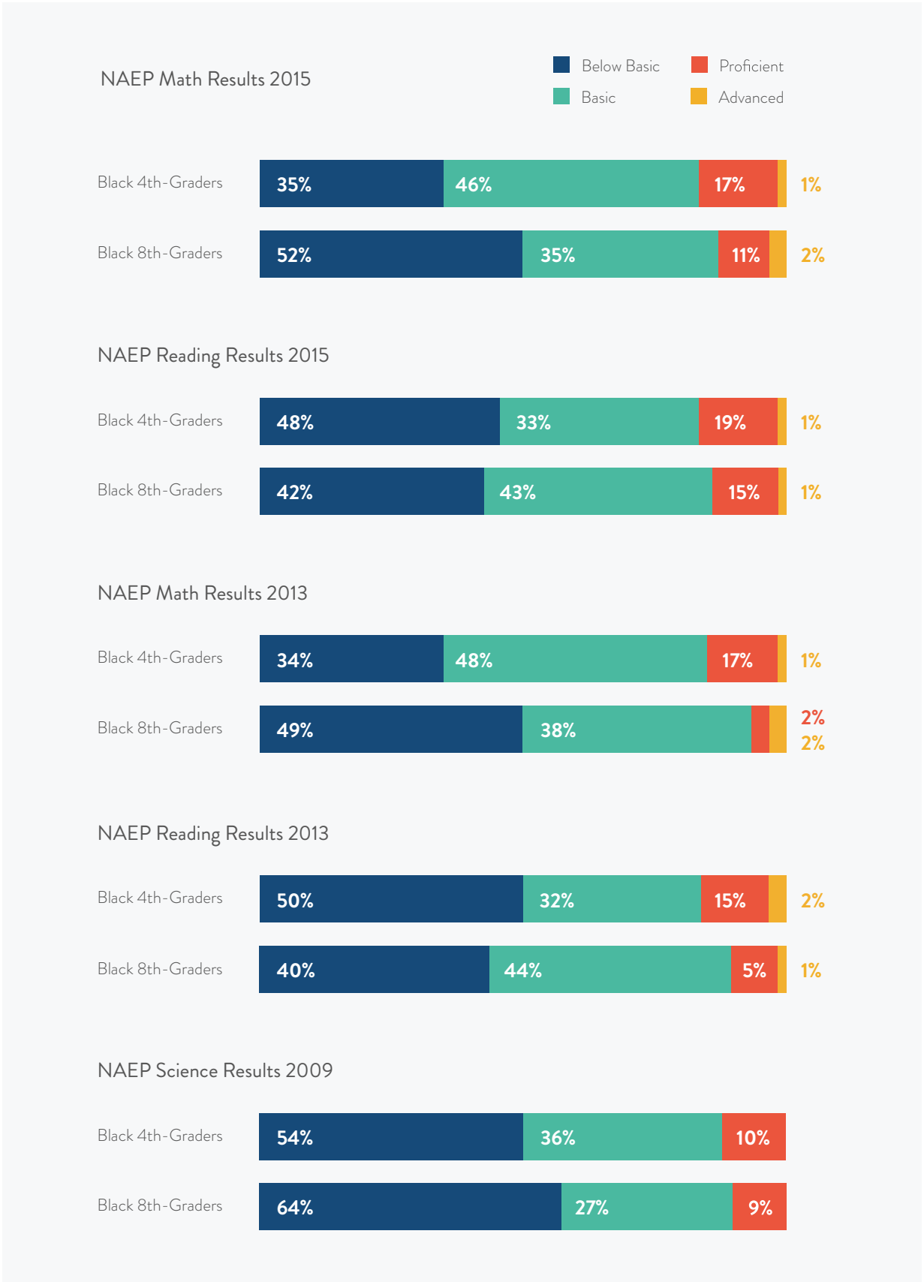
For instance, several graphs on the following pages highlight NAEP reading, math and science results for Black and low-income students. Sadly, the Black "at proficient" result in every academic category never surpassed 20 percent, regardless of grade level. In other words, more than 80 percent of Black fourth-graders in the U.S. were not reading "at proficient" level in 2013. For low-income students, the "at proficient" result in every academic category never surpassed 24 percent. The news worsens when Black and low-income NAEP scores are compared to national peers.

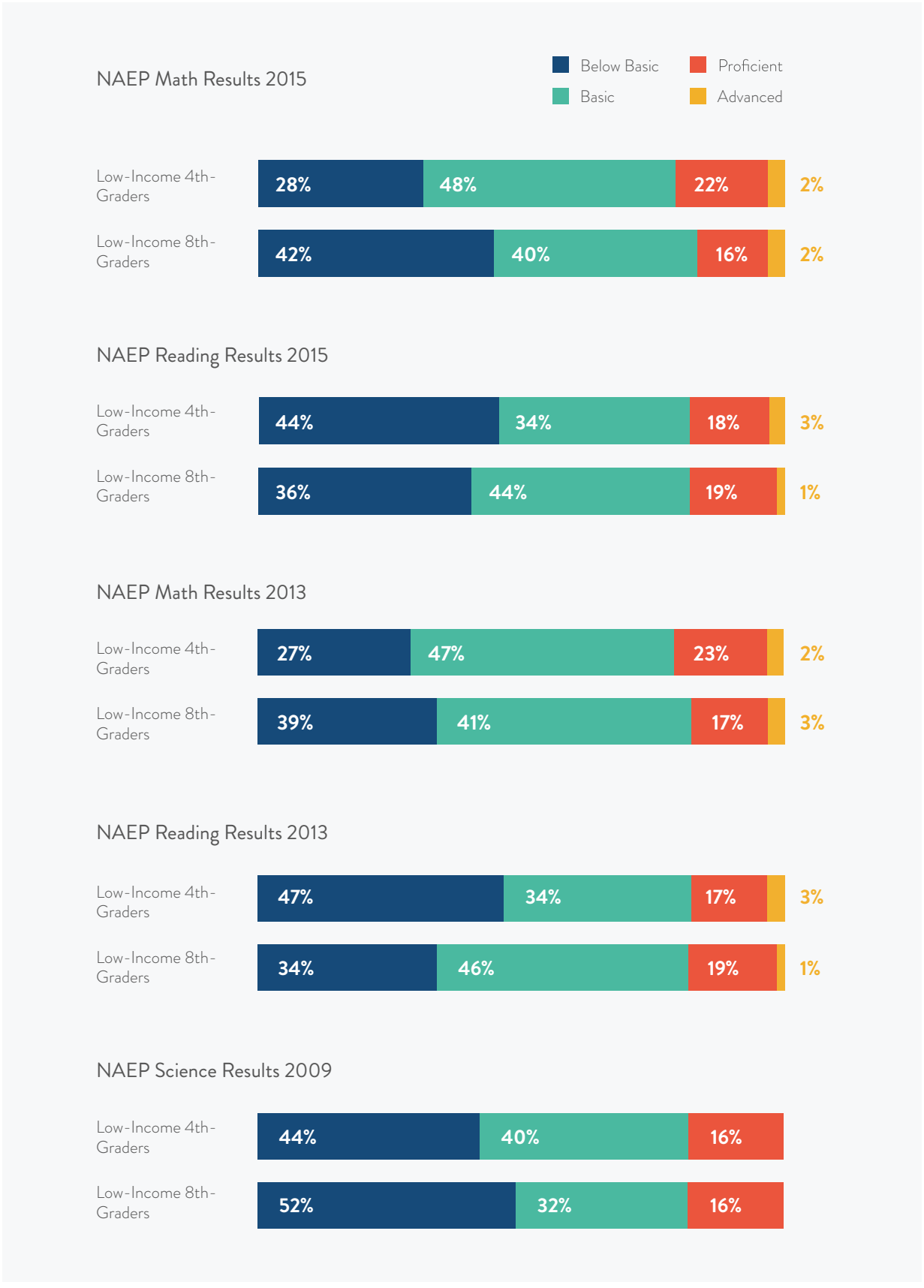
In 2013, Black and Black low-income fourth-grade NAEP reading scores were the lowest in the nation. Comparatively, 33 percent of white fourth graders scored "at proficient" in reading, and 25 percent of low-income Asian/Pacific Islanders scored "at proficient"— each score is a national high. Given these facts, the time is now for us to take action to educate Black and low-income children!

Reading "At Proficient" in 2015: National 4th-Grade Results by Race and Income

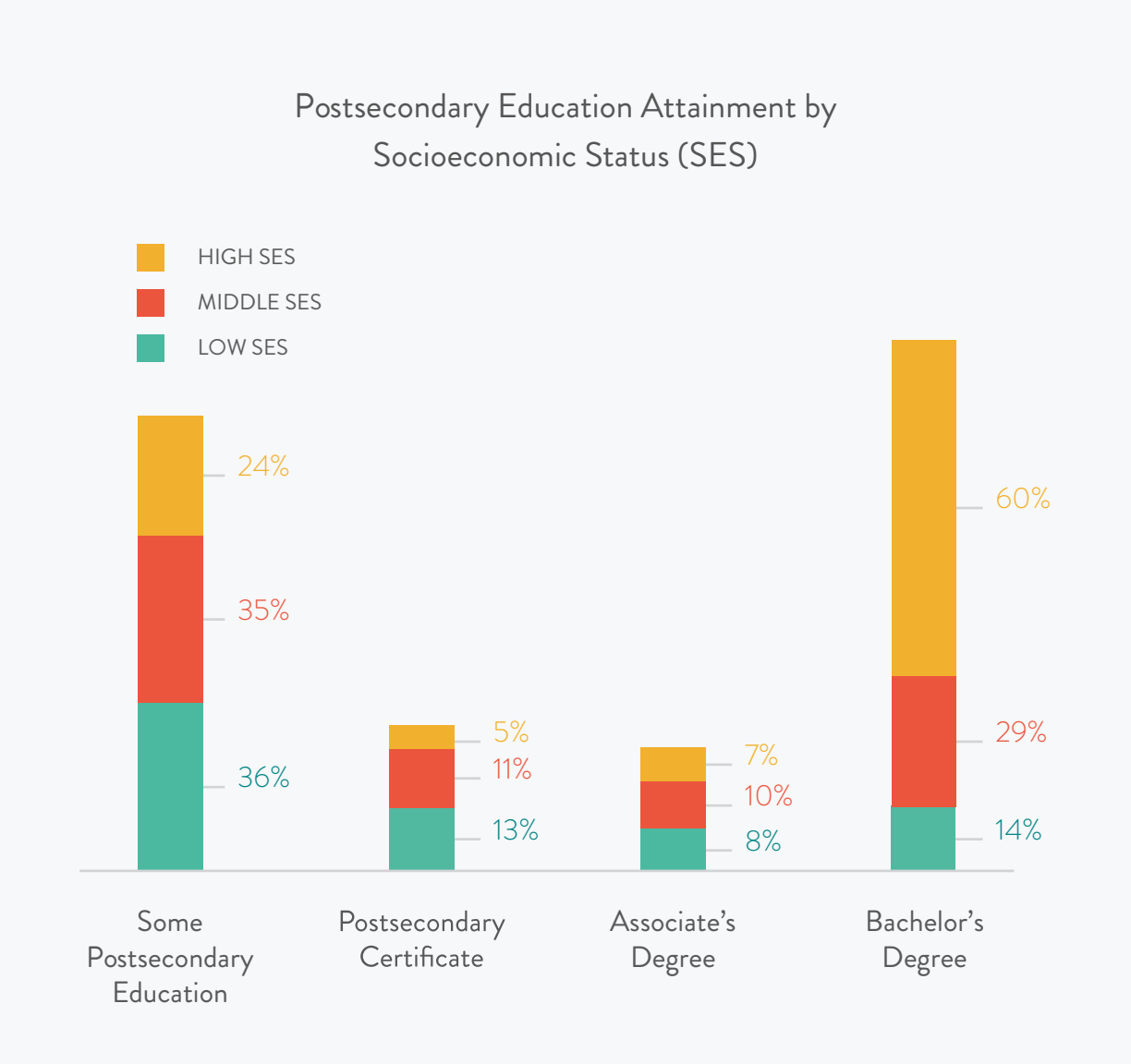



Math "At Proficient" in 2015:
National 4th-Grade Results by Race and Income
White
41%
Asian
41%
Hispanic
24%
American Indian/
Native Alaskan
21%
Black
17%
Pacific Islander/
Native Hawaiian
25%
Low-Income
22%

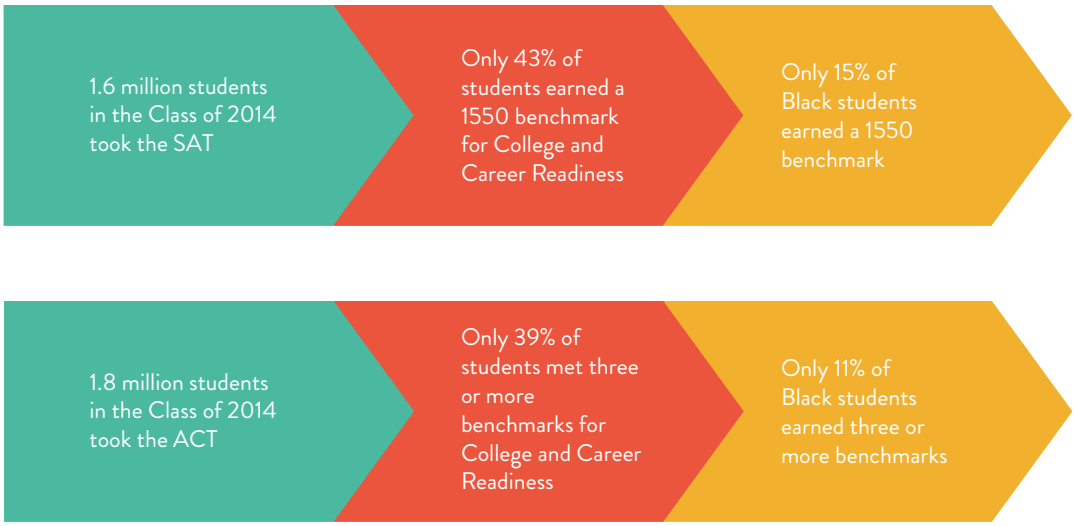

NAEP Math Results 2015
Below Basic
Proficient
Basic
Advanced
Black 4th-Graders
35%
46%
17%
1%
Black 8th-Graders
52%
35%
11%
2%
NAEP Reading Results 2015
Black 4th-Graders
48%
33%
19%
1%
Black 8th-Graders
42%
43%
15%
1%
NAEP Math Results 2013
Black 4th-Graders
34%
48%
17%
1%
Black 8th-Graders
49%
38%
2%
2%
NAEP Reading Results 2013
Black 4th-Graders
50%
32%
15%
2%
Black 8th-Graders
40%
44%
5%
1%
NAEP Science Results 2009
Black 4th-Graders
54%
36%
10%
Black 8th-Graders
64%
27%
9%


NAEP Math Results 2015
Below Basic
Basic
Proficient
Advanced
Low-Income 4th-Graders
28%
48%
22%
2%
Low-Income 8th-Graders
42%
40%
16%
2%
NAEP Reading Results 2015
Low-Income 4th-Graders
44%
34%
18%
3%
Low-Income 8th-Graders
36%
44%
19%
1%
NAEP Math Results 2013
Low-Income 4th-Graders
27%
47%
23%
2%
Low-Income 8th-Graders
39%
41%
17%
3%
NAEP Reading Results 2013
Low-Income 4th-Graders
47%
34%
17%
3%
Low-Income 8th-Graders
34%
46%
19%
1%
NAEP Science Results 2009
Low-Income 4th-Graders
44%
40%
16%
Low-Income 8th-Graders
52%
32%
16%

News about low-income high school graduates' degree attainment in various postsecondary institutions shows room for growth. For example, although low-income students are more likely to earn a certificate or an associates degree than higher socioeconomic peers, they only one-fourth as likely than higher socioeconomic peers to earn a bachelor's degree.



News about Black high school graduates' college and career readiness benchmark scores also shows room for growth.



We all can agree that the results of Black and low-income education in the public school system is less than desirable. We can also agree that education is a major pathway to change our economic, social, and political outcomes, and we must work diligently to provide the resources necessary to improve outcomes for our students. Disagreement comes over strategy. Some organizations believe that only public schools will work. Others take a "private school only" route. Some say we need more money, better teachers, and less government. While each statement is valid, BAEO advocates for a three-sector approach that empowers Black low-income and working-class families to have access to high-quality options in the traditional public school system, in public charter schools and in private schools. In fact, Black families support a three-sector approach — because educational options matter.

While the results of Black and low-income education in the traditional pubic school system is less than desirable, there are traditional pubic schools that are providing Black students from low-income and working-class families with a rigorous education and are preparing them for college.

For example, Brooklyn College Academy in Brooklyn, N.Y., graduated 100 percent of the school's Black students on time in 2014, and almost all of them went on to four-year colleges. The school's principal, Nicholas Mazzarella, attributes the school's success to a commitment to building of relationships between adults and students. In Newark, N.J., Brick Academy students consist of 80% Black students and 90% low-income students and has achieved great learning gains. From 2010 to 2014, the number of students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the state math assessment at Brick AVON (one of Brick Academy's two schools) increased by 20.8 percent. In addition, Arcadia Elementary School in Illinois was recognized as a "Dispelling the Myth" school in 2013. About 70 percent of the third-grade students at Arcadia exceed math standards on the state assessments compared to only 43 percent with students in the state.

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS: WHY THEY MATTER TO OUR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Black families desire a quality education for their children. Socioeconomic trends nevertheless validate that Black children are in the most need of a high-quality education, yet they are most likely not to receive one. Why? BAEO commissioned a study in July 2014 to find answers. The target region is the South. Why? According The Condition of Education 2014, Blacks accounted for 24 percent of students enrolled in public schools in the South. Comparatively, Blacks accounted for 15 percent of students in the Northeast, 14 percent in the Midwest, and only 5 percent in the West. So it made sense for BAEO to focus where the majority of Black students — and a sizable low-income population— live.

When families living in Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Mississippi were polled, 75 percent of respondents in each state identified "creating jobs" and "education" as the two most important issues facing their community. When asked to rate the quality of the public school system, 70 percent of respondents rated the system fair to poor. When asked if they would send their child to another school if they could, the responses were typically affirmative: Mississippi (47 percent), Alabama (51 percent), Louisiana (59 percent), Kentucky (60 percent), and Tennessee (61 percent). Simply put: Black low-income and working-class families want their children to receive an education that prepares them for college, a career or both. So why don't they have access to educational options?

Drs. Peterson, Henderson and West in "Teachers Versus the Public: What Americans Think About Schools and How To Fix Them (2014)" used national polling data to identify what Blacks and other key stakeholders think about schools and how to fix them. Their answers provide a glimpse into the schism between what Blacks want and what the establishment wants. Below is a sample of stakeholder responses indicated by support (+), do not support (-), or neutral (*).

Opinions on Educational Issues	Blacks	Teachers	Parents	Hispanics
Income-Based Vouchers	+	-	-	+
Charter Schools	+	-	+	+
Tax Credits	+	-	+	+
Online Education	+	-	+	+
Increase Spending	+	+	+	+

The results regarding Blacks' support for educational options are interesting for two reasons. First, Blacks and teachers strongly agree that our schools need more money. Second, Blacks support charters, vouchers and tax credits as strongly as teachers oppose them. So what are we to make of this? Blacks support educational options, including access to schools that work for their children.

Black families, it is worth noting, have exercised choice for decades. Home schooling is one example. Black parents home-schooled their children before there were public schools, as did most other American families. According to the National Home School Research Institute, approximately 2.2 million students were home-schooled in the U.S. in 2010. About 220,000 were Black students. Publications ranging from "Morning By Morning: How We Home-Schooled Our African-American Sons into the Ivy League (2003)" to a 2015 article in The Atlantic magazine helped to popularize this movement nationally. Scholarly articles by Venus Taylor (2005), Drs. Field-Smith and Kisura (2013), and Garvey Lundy and Ama Mazama (2014) put this movement in a socio-historical context. For instance, Black and low-income families who choose public and private options do so in order for their children to get a better education, have smaller classes, and safety. Black home-schoolers do as well. Black families, nonetheless, cite low expectations schools fostered for their children, boys in particular, and school-based racism as factors that led them to home school. As for academic achievement, Dr. Brian Ray published in a 2015 article that Black home-schooled students scored in the 68th percentile in reading, 56th in language, and 50th in math on the Iowa Test compared with students of all races, where the 50th percentile is the mean. Simply put: Dr. Ray said there, "test scores were quite high, all things considered." This is a movement we should pay more attention to.

Black families have enrolled their children in independent private schools, too. Black independent schools started in the wake of the Black Power movement in the 1960s, and many, such as The Marcus Garvey School in Los Angeles, remain in operation. Black families have also enrolled their child in non-Black private schools. For example, A Better Chance, Prep for Prep, and the Oliver Scholars Program have placed Black students in elite day and boarding schools for more than 30 years. For parents who want another type of boarding school experience, the 106-year old Piney Woods School in Mississippi is an option. The nation's oldest Black-founded and led boarding school is now under the leadership of one of its first alumni: President Will Crossley. Students in private schools tend to score higher on the SAT and ACT, go to college at a higher rate, and earn more money in the future.

In summary, educational options matter to Black families and children, be they within our public school system or outside of it. We must do all that we can to increase access to high-quality education options for Black children by actively supporting transformational education-reform initiatives and parental-choice policies that empower low-income and working-class Black families and not because "outside interests" are cajoling Black families to do so. Rather, Black families have advocated for, and participated in, educational options long before state legislatures enacted laws for income-based vouchers, charter schools, tax credits and online education.

THE BLACK PURSUIT OF EDUCATION OPTIONS: LOOKING BACKWARD TO MOVE FORWARD

"Be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all and every person and persons whatsoever, who shall hereinafter teach or cause any slave or slaves to be taught, to write, or shall use or employ any slave as a scribe in any manner of writing whatsoever, hereafter taught to write, every such person and persons, shall, for every such offense, forfeit the sum of one hundred pounds current money."

— SOUTH CAROLINA SLAVE CODE, 1740

Black parental choice in America did not begin with the creation of charter schools or publicly funded voucher and tax-credit programs in the 1990s. Black parents' demand for a quality public education in a non-segregated school did not begin with the Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954. Black adults' aspirations for higher education did not wait for congressional enactment of the G.I. Bill of Rights in 1944, nor did Black parents wait for systemic school reform with the creation of the federal Department of Education in 1867.

Neither did enslaved Blacks hold their breath for U.S. presidents to take the lead in education. Excavations of slave quarters on George Washington's estate produced slates (writing tablets) with carvings on them and on Thomas Jefferson's estate "237 unidentified slates, 27 pencil leads" were found among other items that proved the slaves were learning how to write and read in secrecy in the 1700s.

Black people's struggle to obtain an education in America is older than the Declaration of Independence. From the arrival of the first Africans in the Jamestown colony in 1619, the status of Blacks in the American social order has remained fluid, though our determination to use education as a tool for liberation is steadfast 396 years later. Throughout the centuries Black families have desired what all parents want for their children: a safe home, access to a job with a livable wage, freedom for faith, and a high-quality education.

But the pathway for Blacks to join their peers' pursuits in the burgeoning new nation was made rough once a Virginia judge ruled in July 1640 that John Punch, an African man who ran away from Virginia to Maryland, had to serve the rest of his life in service to his master for his crime. What was his crime? Running away from his master. A "life sentence" was his punishment— while the punishment assessed to his two Europeans accomplices included only more time as indentured servants. The peculiar institution called chattel slavery changed the life trajectory of John Punch and millions of Black people like him.

One hundred years after the decision in the John Punch case, the South Carolina legislature, in response to the Stono rebellion in 1739, enacted the colonies' first laws to make it a crime for a master or any person to educate a slave. Southern lawmakers fearful of rebellion within their borders enacted Black Codes to curtail social mobility of slaves as well.

This action resulted in legal and violent means to deny Blacks a formal education for the next 125 years in the South. Yet in spite of it all, Blacks took the pursuit of literacy into their hands; at times with support from Whites, literate Blacks or Native Americans, through missionary aid societies, or by running away.

The emblem that best expresses Black people's confidence in education is the public policies former slaves enacted as members of Reconstruction legislatures in the former Confederate States. As W.E.B. Dubois reminds us, universal free public education in the South, as we know it, is a product of Black lawmakers. Today, many Black elected officials continue to enact legislation in statehouses and school boards to open the doors of opportunity for families and children, continuing a tradition begun long ago.

Blacks in other regions have a long history of advancing educational options as well. In 1773, when the British Parliament enacted the Tea Act, and American colonists replied by staging a Boston Tea Party that helped to ignite the Revolution, several enslaved and free Blacks submitted five petitions to the Massachusetts legislature demanding the end of slavery. In 1777, when Vermont declared its independence from New York, Prince Hall, then a slave, and seven other enslaved Blacks submitted another petition to the Massachusetts legislature demanding freedom and independence to enjoy their lives, which included the right to raise their children.

Although the officials did not respond to the petitioners' letters, Blacks continued advocating for a better life for their children. For example, in 1850 a Black father sued the Boston School Committee so his daughter could gain access to a better public school. Although the Roberts family lost the court case, Massachusetts in 1855 enacted the nation's first law outlawing segregation in public schools. This statute would be a forerunner to the Brown v. Board of Education nearly 100 years later. Today, Massachusetts (and New England) is home to some of the best-performing Black students in the nation, be they in traditional public schools or public charter schools.

Blacks in the middle colonies mattered too. In April of 1787, a month before colonial delegates arrived in Philadelphia to write the U.S. Constitution, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones founded the Free African Society (FAS). Its goals were to improve the economic and social conditions of Black people in Philadelphia. Education was part of the plan. In the FAS articles of 1787 is the following:

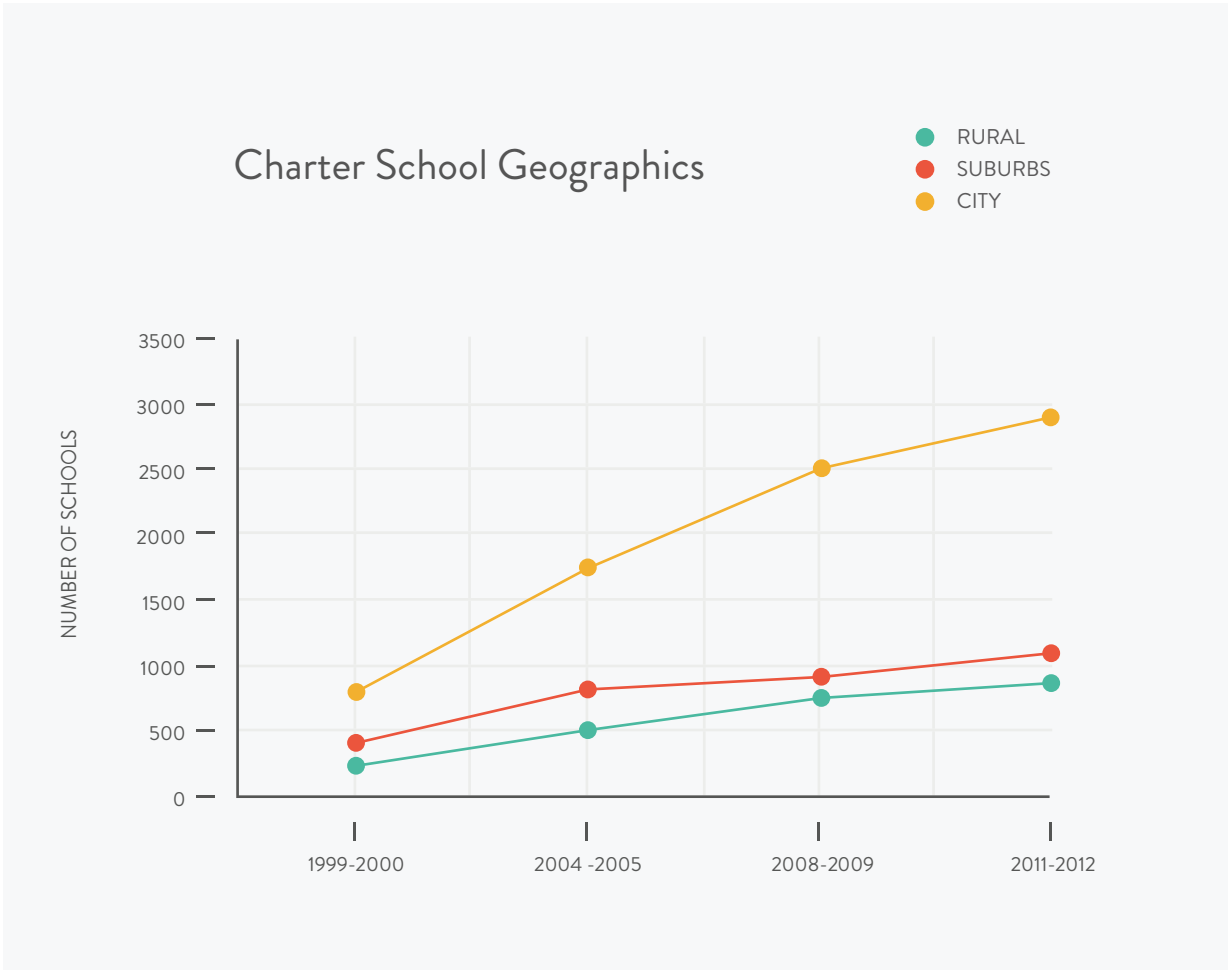
"And we apprehend it to be necessary, that the children of our deceased members be under the care of the Society, so far as to pay for the education of their children, if they cannot attend the free school; also to put them out apprentices to suitable trades or places, if required."

FAS helped to launch independent Black churches and church-founded schools in the middle colonies, as well as laid the foundation for Blacks to create churches and "underground" schools in the South. In turn, Black churches supported legislative campaigns for public schools and money for their children through, for example, the Colored People's Conventions that began in the 1830s and held events ranging from Buffalo, Detroit and Indianapolis to Sacramento, Trenton, and Mobile. Today, Black faith leaders remain an essential part of our community's campaign for better education.

In 2015, far too many Black schoolchildren are not proficient in reading, math, or science. We have a moral duty to change the equation. Our approach is through high-quality educational options and parental choice policies that benefit low-income and working-class Black families. Options include traditional public schools, charter schools, publicly funded vouchers and tax credits, home schooling or blended models. At its core, this is the modern articulation of parental choice that Black people helped to invent more than 300 years ago.

BLACK STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

The charter school movement is one of the most expansive parental-choice programs inside the public school system. When the Minnesota legislature enacted the nation's first charter school law in 1991, its goal was to empower public school teachers to create a student-centered, innovative learning environment on principles of teacher freedom and accountability. In 2015, we have 6,440 charter schools in 43 states and the District of Columbia educating 2.5 million students, with nearly 1 million students on waiting lists. Today, teachers, parents, public universities, community groups, or school boards can create a charter school. Their students account for 5 percent of the national public school enrollment, although each year more parents are choosing to enroll their child in a charter school. The fastest growth of charter schools is in cities.



The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS) and the Center for Education Reform provide great information about what a charter school is — and is not. A charter school is a public school and is free and open to all students. It operates with local, state and federal funds, as do traditional public schools, and must adhere to state and federal civil rights, health and accountability standards. It is managed by a governing board. The majority of charter schools have been operating longer than 10 years, and approximately 50 percent of charters educate elementary-age schoolchildren. Nearly 80 percent of charters are non-unionized and more than 50 percent of the schools are located in cities, usually the urban core. Contrary to popular belief, nonprofit, school-site boards manage 67 percent of charters nationwide. For-profit companies only manage 13 percent of charter schools. Also, according to a 2014 NAPCS annual report, 70 percent of Americans support charter schools. Black parents are among the biggest supporters of charter schools in the U.S.

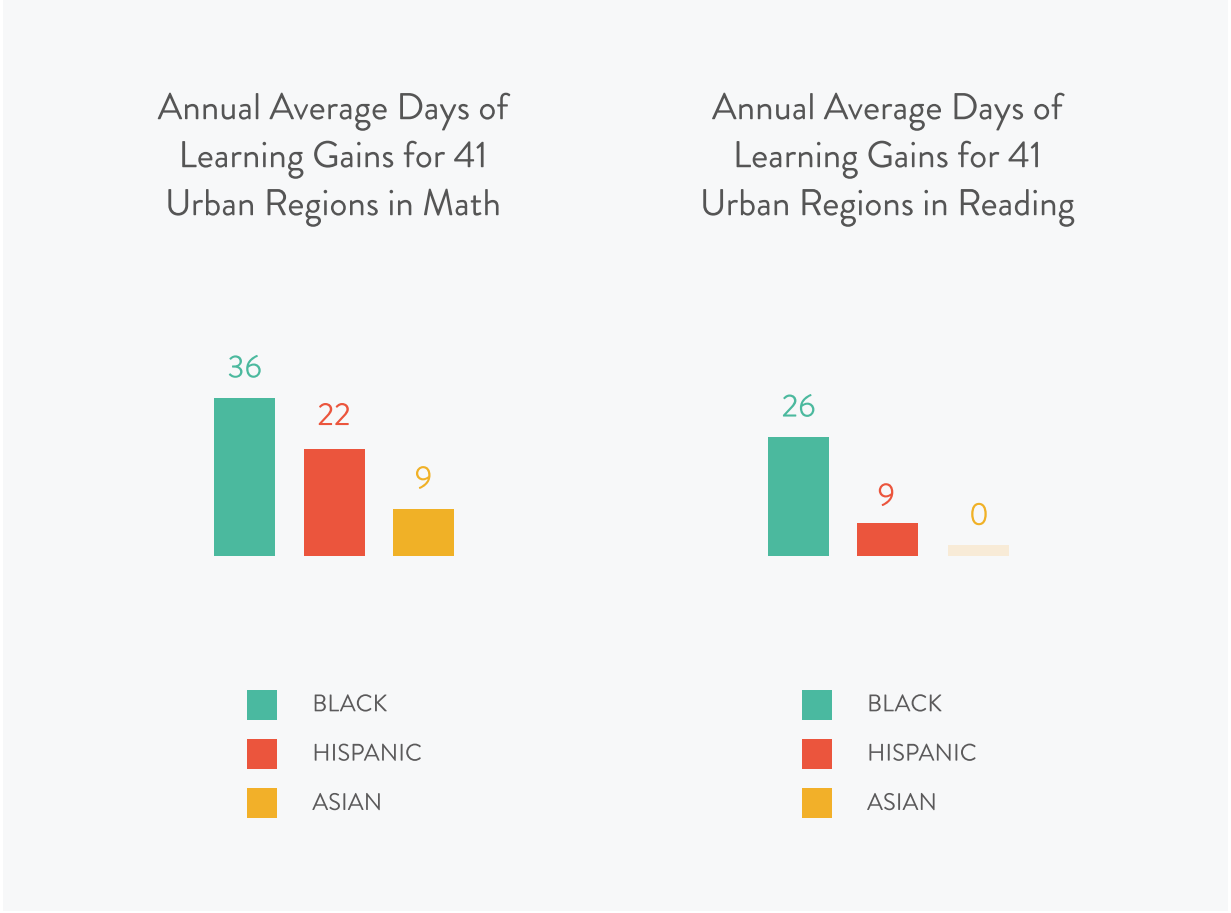
According to the Conditions in Education 2015 report, 28 percent of charter students are Black—nearly double the Black enrollment percentage in traditional public schools (TPS). The Hispanic charter and TPS enrollment rate is nearly identical at 30 percent and growing annually in each sector. White enrollment in charters is 35 percent compared to 40 percent in TPS. On average, Black parents enroll their children in a public charter, compared with TPS, at a higher percentage than any other group. Since parents of all backgrounds are taking advantage of charter schools, where they are available, it is helpful to understand how charter schools and their students are performing compared with peers in TPS.

According to the research, public charter schools help low-income students as well. A U.S. Department of Education report identified that, "charter schools serving more low-income or low-achieving students had statistically significant positive effects on math test scores, while charter schools serving more advantaged students — those with higher income and prior achievement — had significant negative effects on math test scores."

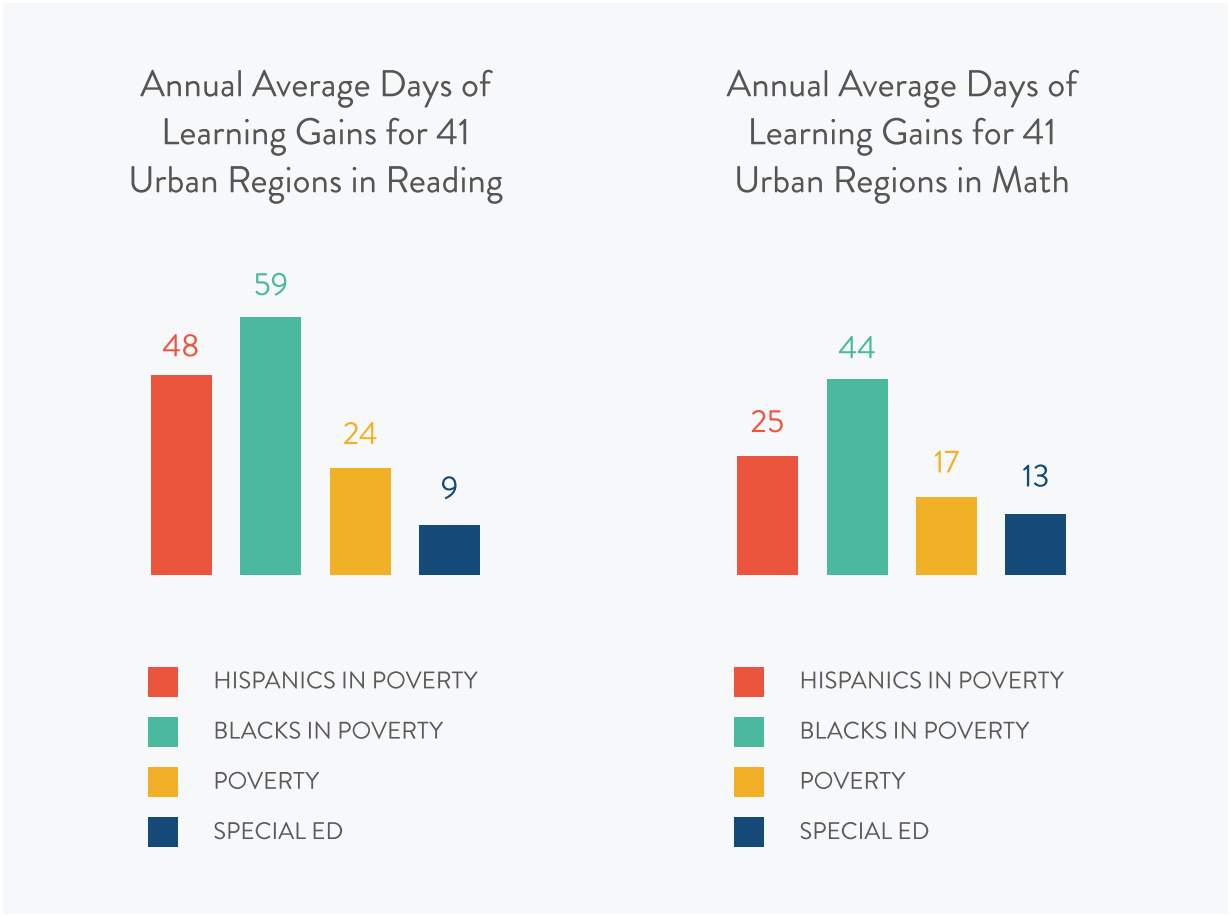
On the fiscal side of the ledger, Dr. Patrick Wolf, et al., published "The Productivity of Charter Schools" (2014). The researchers found that for every $1,000 invested in a charter school and a TPS in 20 states and the District of Columbia, charter schools produced "a weighted average of 17 NAEP points per $1,000 invested in math" and "16 NAEP points per $1,000 invested in reading." This is a 40 percent productivity advantage in NAEP scores over TPS. Similarly, in reading, charter schools produced a 41 percent productivity advantage in NAEP scores over TPS. On the academic side of the ledger, four national studies and 12 regional studies have been conducted since 2010. Fifteen of the 16 identified that charter students outperformed their TPS peers, and only one study found mixed results.

The Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University published the most recent charter school study in 2015. It examines achievement results for students enrolled in charters and TPS between 2006-2007 and 2011-2012 located in 41 urban areas in 22 states. CREDO researchers concluded that urban charter school students gained 40 additional "days of learning" when

compared with their peers in TPS. This is a two-month gain favoring charter school students. Regarding race and results, Black students gained the most from their enrollment in urban public charter schools compared to other charter peers and peers in TPS. For example, Black students received an additional 36 days of learning in math and 26 days in reading compared to their TPS peers—the highest gain for all students in each subject. Hispanic students also gained learning days in math and reading, while Asians gained learning days in math only. But charter schools did not benefit all students. Native American students in TPS significantly outperformed their charter peers in math. White students in TPS significantly outperformed their charter peers in reading and math.



After analyzing 2006-2012 student achievement data in 41 urban areas, CREDO researchers found that low-income charter students gained more learning days than their peers in TPS. CREDO researchers also found that special-education students in charters tend to gain about one month's worth of extra learning in math and reading per year compared with peers in TPS. Black students in poverty, by comparison, received an additional 59 days of learning in math and 44 days in reading compared with their TPS peers — the highest gain for all low-income, non-English Language Learner (ELL) students.



Urban charter schools in certain cities had higher learning gains than TPS students. In Boston, for example, 92 percent of charter school students outperformed TPS students in math. In New York City and Philadelphia, it is 66 percent and 61 percent, respectively. Sixty percent of Detroit and Milwaukee charter school students outperformed their peers. In reading, Boston, again, leads the group with 81 percent of its charter school students obtaining higher learning gains than TPS students, and 63 percent of D.C. charter students' outperformed TPS students. However, sometimes TPS outperformed charter students. For instance, 69 percent of charter students in Las Vegas did worse than TPS students. In El Paso, Texas and Fort Myers, Fla., all TPS students outperformed charter school students. So there is room for improvement.

Since Black and low-income students in charter schools typically perform better than their peers in TPS, just how well do they perform in urban cities with a majority or sizable Black student population? CREDO's data show each subgroup has higher academic gains in math and reading, with a few exceptions. To analyze this point, BAEO identified 18 of 41 urban school districts with a Black majority, or near-majority, student population.

GAIN (OR LOSS) BY DAYS	Charter Math	Charter Reading	Low-Income Math	Low-Income Reading	Black Math	Black Reading
Atlanta	13	22	30	49	(-4)	4
Boston	233	170	31	59	196	101
Chicago	17	1	28	35	(-30)	(-33)
Cleveland	31	40	16	-69	36	122
Columbus	(-3)	12	31	47	6	(-11)
D.C.	96	70	51	35	52	37
Detroit	65	50	22	25	50	34
Indianapolis	48	55	19	16	60	45
Jacksonville	13	(-19)	12	(-6)	10	(-8)
Memphis	97	118	(-27)	(-3)	107	109
Milwaukee	66	30	12	(-11)	68	41
Minneapolis	55	4	66	38	51	14
Nashville	51	81	4	45	42	30
New Orleans	86	63	1	1	78	54
New York	104	24	20	28	96	2
Newark	168	156	9	14	156	134
Philadelphia	42	40	17	19	28	29
St. Louis	(-1)	6	(-17)	(-17)	7	14

The conclusion from this table is unambiguous: Black and low-income students enrolled in charter schools with majority, or near-majority, Black school districts have higher learning gains in math and reading than their TPS peers; many of whom are Black, low-income or both. When you consider that most states require 180 instructional days a year, the gains are significant. While disappointing results in

Chicago, St. Louis and Jacksonville, Fla., affirm that not all charter schools are closing the achievement gap for Black and low-income students, examples of charter schools doing so abound, including those operated by Black people.

In Washington, D.C., for example, Black students have made tremendous academic gains in charter schools. Donald Hense, founder the Friendship Public Charter School, is one reason for this success. Hence opened the nation's first multi-campus charter school in 1998, had the top D.C. charter high school in 2011; and has sent thousands of low-income Black students to and through college.

In Newark, N.J., the math and learning gains for Black students are almost one year's worth of growth. Mashea Ashton, CEO of the Newark Charter School Fund, is a key stakeholder in driving reform in this city. In Memphis, Tenn., Black students also made substantial gains in reading and math, yet its low-income students had the largest loss of learning days among the 18 schools in this table. Derwin Sisnett, CEO of the Gestalt Community Schools, is the Black education executive whose Power Center Academy middle school is the highest-performing middle school in Tennessee.

BLACK STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WITH PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHERS

The nation's best-known publicly funded private choice plan is called the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. When the Wisconsin legislature enacted the nation's first voucher school law in 1990, its goal was to empower parents to use public funds to pay for an education at a private, nonsectarian school of their choice.

A Black state representative, Annette "Polly" Williams, sponsored the voucher law to create a path for low-income, primarily Black families to gain access to a school that would improve their child's academic outcomes, get her or him into college, or into well-paying jobs. The program began with 337 students. Since 1990, governors across the country have signed private school-voucher bills into law.

During the 2014-2015 school year, at least 141,326 students benefited from 21 private voucher programs in 12 states. The majority of the national enrollment is concentrated in four states: Indiana (21 percent), Wisconsin (21 percent), Florida (20 percent), and Ohio (20 percent).

Vouchers are funded by public money. More specifically, a portion of a student's public school money follows her or him to a private school of their parents choice. Private schools participating in a voucher program must adhere to nondiscrimination laws, health and safety codes, and accountability standards. The majority of schools are diverse in faith traditions (i.e., Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim) and others are non-denominational.

A voucher law is either means-tested (10 states), which solely targets low-income families, or means-preference (11 states), which gives a preference to low-income families and middle-income families, too. Eleven voucher programs focus on all students and 10 focus on students with special needs.

STATE	YEAR	VOUCHER PROGRAMS IN 2014-15	STUDENTS
Wisconsin	1990	Milwaukee Parental Choice Program	26,930
Ohio	1995	Cleveland Scholarship and Tutoring Program	7,449
Florida	1999	McKay Scholarships for Disability Students	28,957
Ohio	2003	Autism Scholarship Program	3,181
D.C.	2004	D.C. Scholarship Opportunity Program	1,442
Ohio	2005	Educational Choice Scholarship Program	20,261
Utah	2005	Carson Smith Special Needs Scholarship	700
Georgia	2007	Georgia Special Needs Scholarship	3,400
Louisiana	2008	Student Scholarships for Education Excellence	7,362
Louisiana	2010	Certain Students with Exceptionalities Program	311
Oklahoma	2010	Henry Scholarship for Disability Students	384
Indiana	2011	Choice Scholarship Program	29,148
Ohio	2011	Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program	3,680
Colorado	2011	Douglas County Choice Scholarship Program	0
Wisconsin	2011	Racine Parental Choice Program	1,740
Mississippi	2012	Mississippi Dyslexia Therapy Scholarship	116
Mississippi	2013	Mississippi Speech-Language Therapy Sch.	1
North Carolina	2013	Opportunity Scholarship Program	1,199
North Carolina	2013	Children With Disabilities Scholarship Grants	356
Ohio	2013	Education Choice Expansion (of 2005 la w)	3,702
Wisconsin	2013	Wisconsin Parental Choice Program	1,107
TOTAL ENROLLMENT			141,326

Millions of students are enrolled in special education (e.g., individualized education plan) or special needs (e.g., autism or dyslexia) programs in our public schools. Fortunately, many districts do provide the educational and social services families need to help their children get an education. Some districts partner with a private school to provide services to its families. At times, the needs are beyond the scope of a public school. Therefore, state lawmakers enacted special-needs vouchers to help families choose a private school that can serve their needs. When Georgia passed its Special Needs Scholarship law in 2007, BAEO used urban radio ads and community meetings to educate Black and low-income parents about the program. In year one, at least 45 percent of scholarship recipients were minorities (mostly Black), and one-third of the students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. Black and low-income parents in Florida, Ohio, Louisiana, and Oklahoma also benefit from special needs vouchers.

BAEO supports means-tested vouchers too. Why? Means-tested voucher afford Black and low-income parents access to high-quality private schools they otherwise could not enroll their children into. The nation's oldest mean-tested voucher program is in Milwaukee. In that city, families with a household income below 300 percent of the federal poverty level ($71,550 for a family of four) are eligible for a Milwaukee Parental Choice Program voucher. The scholarship is capped at $7,210 for K-8 private schools and $7,856 for private high schools. Another means-tested voucher program exists in the nation's capital. In Washington, D.C., families with a household income below 300 percent of the federal poverty level, or qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunches, are eligible for a D.C. Opportunity Scholarship. The scholarship is capped at $8,381 for K-8 private schools and $12,572 for private high schools. Contrary to the claim that vouchers are a "false promise to poor Black people" who cannot afford tuition at an elite, private college prep school, low-income and working-class Black families enroll their children in Sidwell Friends, where President Obama and members of Congress send their children. How can these parents afford to enroll their children in high-priced, elite college-prep private schools? Participating private schools cannot charge tuition beyond the means-tested voucher scholarship cap.

Black and low-income students benefit academically from vouchers. Of 12 "gold standard" experimental evaluations of the impact on the test scores of students in a private school choice program, 11 find statistically significant academic outcomes for all students in general, and Black students too. One study found no difference, and no study found voucher students performed worse off than their peers. In Milwaukee, Dr. Patrick Wolf's (2012) summary of longitudinal evaluations of the MPCP found higher high school graduation and college enrollment rates when compared with TPS peers. In Washington, D.C., Drs. Stewart and Wolf (2014) found that voucher families' satisfaction with their children's school's academics, safety and peer interaction was high. It is worth noting that 99 percent of the students enrolled in the Milwaukee and D.C. programs are low-income and working-class, and the majority are Black.

In essence: Means-tested programs, parental demand for them and scholarly data about them prove that private school vouchers work for Black low-income and working-class students.

BLACK STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WITH TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS

The nation's fastest-growing publicly funded private choice plan is tax-credit scholarships. When the Arizona legislature enacted the first tax-credit scholarship law in 1997, its goal was to empower parents to pay for education at a private school that best fits the needs of their children. Similar to a voucher program. Under the Arizona law, individual taxpayers donated a portion of their state taxes to a student scholarship organization (SSO). Arizona passed a law in 2006 allowing a corporation to donate a portion of its tax liability to a SSO to pay for student scholarships. More states joined in.

During the 2014-15 school year, at least 209,808 students benefited from 17 tax-credit scholarship programs operating in 14 states. More than 75 percent of the national enrollment is concentrated in three states: Florida (33 percent), Arizona (26 percent), and Pennsylvania (18 percent) — the first three states with a tax credit law. Individual, corporate, or funds from both pay for this program by redirecting their taxes to an SSO. In turn, an eligible parent submits an application to an SSO to receive a scholarship to pay for a child's private school education.

STATE	YEAR	TAX CREDIT PROGRAMS IN 2014-15	STUDENTS
Arizona	1997	Individual School Tuition Org. Tax Credit	40,918
Florida	2001	Florida Tax Credit Scholarship	69,671
Pennsylvania	2001	Educational Improvement Tax Credit	38,278
Arizona	2006	Corporate School Tuition Org. Tax Credit	12,955
Iowa	2006	Individual and Corporate Tax Credit	10,254
Rhode Island	2006	Rhode Island Corporation Tax Credit	411
Georgia	2008	Georgia Tax Credit Scholarship	13,268
Arizona	2009	Lexie's Law	345
Indiana	2009	Corporate and Individual Tax Credit	11,067
Oklahoma	2011	Equal Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit	709
Louisiana	2012	Tuition Donation Rebate Program	53
New Hampshire	2012	Education Tax Credit	40
Pennsylvania	2012	Edl. Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit	7,601
Virginia	2012	Education Impro. Scholarship Tax Credit	982
Alabama	2013	Tax Credit	2,851
South Carolina	2013	Edl. Credit for Exceptional Needs Children	405
Kansas	2014	Tax Credit for Low Income Students	0
TOTAL ENROLLMENT			209,808

Similar to most voucher programs, state law uses a means test to determine family eligibility and a tax credit scholarship cap. In Florida, which has the nation's largest tax credit program, a family household income must not exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level ($44,123 for a family of four) to qualify for a tax credit scholarship. The scholarship cap is $5,272, which is 76 percent of the per-pupil school funding.

State law determines the value of the tax credit. For example, Virginia's tax credit value is 65 percent. An individual donating $1,000 to a SSO is eligible to receive a tax credit up to $650 for the year. In Arizona, by contrast, the tax credit value is 100 percent, so the individual or corporation will receive more money in return. Private schools participating in a tax credit program must adhere to nondiscrimination laws, health and safety codes, and accountability standards. The majority of participation private schools are diverse in faith traditions, though many are nonsectarian altogether. Eight legislatures have passed a tax credit law since 2011.

Millions of students enroll in public school programs to boost academic and social competence. Fortunately, many districts provide the educational services to meet this goal. Some districts cannot do it. To address this issue, districts will either bus students to higher-performing schools inside and outside its boundaries or enroll students in magnet schools and, at times, pay for a student to take courses at a privately operated school. To address this supply and demand issue, lawmakers widen options for families.

Black low-income and working-class families support tax-credit scholarships because they improve academic outcomes for their children. According to an evaluation of the Florida program conducted by Dr. Figlio (2014), participating students "come from less-advantaged families than other students receiving free or reduced-price lunch"; tend to be among the lower performing students in an already low-performing public school; and many are Black and Hispanic. After reviewing of nationally normed tests (i.e., Stanford Achievement Test, Iowa Test of Basic Skills and TerraNova), Dr. Figlio concluded that students gained one year's worth of learning in one year's time.

Demand for tax-credit scholarships is high among Black low-income and working-class families. Indiana provides a good example. It is one of three Midwestern states with a tax-credit law and a small Black population, relatively speaking. For example, Blacks accounted for 9 percent of the state population in 2014; Whites accounted for 86 percent. Blacks accounted for 5 percent of the statewide private school enrollment, and 12 percent of the statewide public school enrollment. Comparatively, Black students accounted for 17 percent of the student enrollment in the tax-credit program. The program started in 2009, and Black participation has tripled the statewide rate of private school enrollment.

Non-academic issues also influence Black low-income and working-class families' decision to choose private schools. In 2014, Paul DiPerna of the Freidman Foundation surveyed Indiana families who used a voucher or tax credit to switch from a public school to a private school. At least 92 percent of respondent families found it easy to access a private school with a choice scholarship; 57 percent were dissatisfied with their public school; more than 50 percent left the public school for academic reasons, lack of values instruction, and large class size; and 90 percent were satisfied with their new private schools.

A 2013 study by Dr. Ben Scafidi and James Kelly of the G.O.A.L. Scholarship Program found similar results from respondent families: more individualized attention, values and student safety matter, too. The G.O.A.L. Scholarship, which is the largest SSO in Georgia, has invested 56 percent of its $62 million in tax credit scholarships to families making less than $24,000 a year, with more than one-third being Black and Hispanic families.

PARENTS, POLICY & PURPOSE: A CALL TO ACTION

The time for us to make a positive contribution to the educational well-being of Black low-income and working class families is right now. BAEO desires that all of our children have access to a high quality education, whether they attend a traditional public school, a charter school, or a private education paid for by public funds. By doing so, we put our children on a path toward social and economic self-sufficiency.

Overall, this report celebrates the role parental choice and transformational education reform play in improving the lives of schoolchildren. The 2015 CREDO results about Black and low-income achievement gains in public charter schools, for example, validate why innovation matters to parents. At the same time, Black and low-income NAEP results in math, reading, and science tell us we have a lot of work ahead. Solutions to the education crisis affecting Black and low-income children, in particular, are available. As our foundering BAEO board chairman Dr. Howard Fuller reminds us, based on the thoughts of the late Professor Ronald Edmonds, "We already know everything we need to know about educating Black children. To me, this is not a knowledge problem. It is a political problem." So we

must fight for our children on multiple political fronts. Why? Because our children are the most likely impacted by the lack of reform and, conversely, they are the most likely beneficiaries of reform. But reform requires action. Three types of action are especially important to parental choice.

ADVOCACY

Parents, relatives, teachers, and other adults are the front-line leaders in this movement. Each one must advocate for high-quality options. Advocacy can occur inside a school building, at a school board meeting or at a state Capitol.

EDUCATING

This report is a good starting point. Share it with as many people as possible.

CONVENING

BAEO hosts an annual symposium, which includes the largest gathering of Black people in the parental-choice space. Come to our next symposium. In the interim, meet with other like-minded people to make parental choice a reality for more students.

In closing, the parental-choice and transformational education-reform movement is alive today because of people like you. To make it stronger, we welcome an opportunity to collaborate with organizations were we can find common cause to reduce the Black-White gap in education, income and human capital.

The struggle continues!

REFERENCES

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While the term "voucher" is used throughout this report, no state law refers to its scholarship program as a voucher. Rather, they are publicly funded scholarships for parents to use as the school of their choice.

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