

*Transformation for Racial Equity:
Moving Toward Action*

2020 W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Grantee Convening

"WHEN YOU ARE NOT
WITH YOUR PEOPLE
YOU DO NOT WORK
PROPERLY. WE HAVE
NOT HAD THIS TIME TO
BE TOGETHER AND TALK
IN NON-REACTIONARY
WAYS."

"I am feeling
challenged,
determined, resolute,
sad, focused,
distracted, ready.
Sometimes
simultaneously."

52 grantees representing early
childhood, youth development and
k-12 education, research, policy
and practice participated in a 2-day
virtual convening.

SPEAKERS TO SPARK THE CONVERSATIONS

During the convening three speakers who are also grantees shared thoughts to catalyze the shared conversation.

- Linda Darling-Hammond
- Lashawn Routé Chatmon
- John King



LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND

“WHAT WE INHERITED FROM 100 YEARS AGO WAS THE NOTION OF A SYSTEM THAT WAS SUBSTANTIALLY ORGANIZED AROUND A BELL CURVE,... TESTING AND TRACKING FRAMEWORKS ... AND [ABOUT] WHO FITS WHERE, TIED TO RACE.”



LASHAWN ROUTÉ CHATMON

“THERE IS A MORAL IMPERATIVE. WHO DO WE CHOOSE TO BE RIGHT NOW? WE HAVE TO BUILD THE CAPACITY OF LEADERS TO NOT GO BACK TO NORMAL. THE NORMAL SYSTEM WAS NOT SERVING HUGE POPULATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE.”



JOHN KING

“WE NEED TO HOLD UP A MIRROR TO MATCH RHETORIC TO REALITY. MANY DISTRICTS, FOUNDATIONS, PUT OUT STATEMENTS OF SOLIDARITY ... BUT THEN DO THE ACTIONS FLOW FROM [THAT]? “

TRANSFORMATION IDENTIFYING ACTION FOR RACIAL EQUITY

Participants created a list of *programs, policies, and practices that need to be transformed, re-imagined or created in early childhood, youth, and education that increase access and benefit for Black, Native American and Latinx children, their families, and communities.*

Participants considered:

- **the people and institutions that have the capacity and power to implement the strategy and distribute resources,**
- **coalitions or allies that are essential to take action,**
- **leverage points for creating something “new” or transforming existing policies and practices, and**
- **actions their institutions can take.**

ACTIONS FOR
EQUITABLE
TRANSFORMATION

LIFT UP PARENT, YOUTH, AND COMMUNITY VOICES

"There will be tension in the work. We have to check our adultism and our privilege so we make sure that beneficiaries are at the table setting parameters, taken seriously, and not tokenized."

"I want to underscore the need to focus on voices, depending on where we are in the system – we must do this on an ongoing basis as organizations."

Leaders

- Leaders' practices would intentionally include diverse voices in design, implementation of policy, and practices to increase perspective-taking and acknowledge the variability of beneficiaries' experiences (positive, negative, sufficient, and insufficient benefit).

Practices

- Create, provide, and share facilitated dialogue protocols to support a broad coalition of providers, parents, students, and educators to express thoughts, opinions, and interest.
- Activate the power of students, youth, and families' voices as decision-makers. Honor voice in the identification of the problem and the creation of the solution.
- Monitor advocacy and program design and implementation to determine if they are grounded in parent voice.

Structures

- Create permanent structures which center and respond to student, parent, family, and provider voice, e.g., school boards.
- Create structures to build bridges between organizers, advocates, and policy groups, e.g., Head Start Policy Councils that remove institutional and structural barriers.

Communication and Specific Messages

- Uplift strong strengths-based narratives of communities and individuals and respond to student, youth, family, and community voice.

SHARED FRAMEWORK
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD,
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT,
AND K12

“It is not trying to convince people on the educability of black children. We want to champion ways it can look fundamentally different.”

"How do we center the identities of Black and Indigenous people in the competencies of how we train and hire and assess?"

- Create a shared framework for advancing equity in access for children, youth, families, communities, and the workforce with measures of quality from early childhood through college, e.g. workforce diversity.
- Advance a whole-child and whole-family framework for schools as healing places, e.g., emotional, mental, physical, academic for children, youth, and families.
- Move metrics of success beyond grades and assessments to consider formative assessments.

EQUITABLE FUNDING STRATEGIES

“Competing for funding requires success versus a learning agenda and failing forward.”

“State legislators are integral to create funding formulas, oversight bodies; commissions have tremendous power. Inside and outside strategies are needed. Connections to groups on the ground [are needed] to ensure proper distribution. Be accountable to the use of funding. Coalitions are needed across states.”

Create a funding strategy that will increase investments from birth through age 22 that is transparent, responsive to the voice of children, youth and families, reforms compensation, and tailors strategies for people of color.

STRUCTURE EQUITABLE ENVIRONMENTS

"We need to hold up a mirror to match rhetoric to reality."

"There is a lot of resistance to these ideas. Change is possible on an individual basis. But at what point do we settle for reducing harm instead of trying to change people?"

"We have to build the capacity of leaders to NOT go back to normal."

- **Actively engage families in children's learning, reducing uniformity and increasing customized approaches to children, student, family, and community needs including smaller schools and class sizes that include community-based wrap-around services, e.g. telehealth supports.**
- **Intentionally invest in infrastructure, e.g. facilities in low opportunity communities, technology.**

PATHWAYS FOR A
DIVERSE WELL-
QUALIFIED WORKFORCE

"We need to hold up a mirror to match rhetoric to reality."

"There is a lot of resistance to these ideas. Change is possible on an individual basis. But at what point do we settle for reducing harm instead of trying to change people?"

- Increase the diversity of staff, e.g., hiring practices, retention in communities with students of color, and eliminating barriers to teacher credentialing.
- Monitor higher education completion rates for teacher preparation; intentionally partner with HBCUs; support transfer agreements between 2 year and 4 year colleges.
- Modify institutional hiring practices, including ensuring diversity of hiring committee membership and expanding selection criteria beyond grades and test scores.

POLICY ACTIONS

“How do we make policy work accessible to communities and so organize against what is really killing black and brown people? How do we share in that urgency and beauty?”

"There is a disconnect between policy, research and direct services. We need to be more connected. "

Eradicate

Eradicate punitive policy structures, e.g., discipline, student access to courses and opportunities

Re - evaluate

Re-evaluate the performance metrics in the K-12 system including the role of high stakes or standardized testing.

Monitor

Monitor the implementation of specific programs and strategies to determine that the intended benefit is attained for racially diverse populations.

GRANTEE RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Grantees offered recommendations of resources related to actions recommended during the convening regarding education and teachers, approaches to equity, workforce, and English learners.

EDUCATION AND TEACHERS

- Black Teacher Project <https://www.blackteacherproject.org>
- Abolitionist Teaching Network <https://abolitionistteachingnetwork.org>
- CUNY equity scholarship report:
http://earlychildhoodny.org/pdi/download/ECCDC-scholarship_report-202008.pdf
- CSEP's Leadership for Equity Micro- Credentials Featured in Illinois School Board Journal <https://news.illinoisstate.edu/2020/09/cseps-leadership-for-equity-micro-credentials-featured-in-illinois-school-board-journal/>
- Commentary: As Education Leaders Plan for Fall, They Must Look Beyond COVID Toward Making Dramatic Changes to Protect Students of Color
<https://www.the74million.org/article/commentary-as-education-leaders-plan-for-fall-they-must-look-beyond-covid-toward-making-dramatic-changes-to-protect-students-of-color/>

EQUITY

- CPS Equity Framework <https://www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/equity-at-cps/>
- Massachusetts Education Equity Project <https://masseduequity.org>
- Liberatory Design
<https://www.nationalequityproject.org/frameworks/liberatory-design>
- Beloved Communities Equity Audit Tool for districts/schools and organizations.
<https://www.wearebeloved.org>

WORKFORCE

- Black College Enrollment and COVID-19: <https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-black-college-enrollment-sharply-down-during-covid-summer-of-2020/>
- Increasing Qualifications Centering Equity
https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/user-74/increasing_qualifications_centering_equity.pdf

ENGLISH LEARNERS

- Latino Policy Forum "Illinois English Learner Handbook"
<https://elhandbook.org/>
- English Learner COVID Preliminary Recommendations:
<https://elhandbook.org/covid-19-resources/>

“You must understand that in the attempt to correct so many generations of bad faith and cruelty, when it is operating not only in the classroom but in society, you will meet the most fantastic, the most brutal, and the most determined resistance. There is no point in pretending this won’t happen.”

James Baldwin
A Talk to Teachers
1963