



Toward Racial Justice in California's Education Systems:

An Introduction to Policy Spanning K-12 and Higher Education

September 2022

For the California Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP)

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Executive Summary

California's public schools, colleges, and universities regularly yield student outcomes that reveal substantial disparities based on race and income. This is true at nearly every stage of public accountability along the student pathway from early childhood education and K-12 schools to community colleges and universities. There are persistent gaps by race for K-12 students meeting state standards, those graduating from high school, students enrolling in a college or university, and students earning a postsecondary degree in a timely manner. These disparities are chronic and cumulative, and they have not narrowed appreciably over the past decade. In these ways California's education systems, for all their goals, are in tune with its criminal justice and healthcare systems; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color face systemic and structural barriers, and this information is not new.

Since the efforts to be made in education equity follow the entire student pathway, this guide seeks to advance a public dialogue about and action toward racial justice across the state's public schools, colleges, and universities.

In supporting dialogue and action, this guide also seeks to model it. The model used is borrowed from the California [Education Policy Fellowship Program \(EPFP\)](#), which convenes a group of education leaders annually to meet and network several times during the year. These professionals work in K-12 schools, higher education, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. They include teachers, faculty, staff, administrators, researchers, and policy specialists. They come together from across their roles in education to:

- identify and discuss broad challenges and opportunities facing education in California;
- examine student data and research that can inform these deliberations;
- expand their knowledge of state, system, and institutional policy across K-12 and higher education; and
- diversify their statewide networks to take advantage of opportunities for educational advancement in California.

The chapters in this guide are organized around these four areas. They are designed to stimulate and inform discussion and action among all education leaders whose work provides opportunities to advance student learning and success, whether directly or indirectly, regardless of our job titles or roles.

Chapter one provides context for this work in racial justice within and across California's schools, colleges, and universities. Why focus on this now in California, and what roles can education serve in addressing the challenges that Californians face? The chapter offers definitions of key terms associated with race and racism, based on the literature. Each chapter closes with a set of questions to support difficult discussions about racial equity.

Understanding educational challenges and opportunities requires attention to student data, and chapter two provides a summary of student outcomes by race in California, from pre-kindergarten to postsecondary graduation. California's public K-12 and higher education systems have seen improvements in most student outcomes over the past decades, but across virtually all indicators substantial inequities persist by race, and these gaps are not one-time blips. Rather, they reveal patterns of injustice throughout students' educational pathways.

The final two chapters explore the roles of governance and policy in supporting equity in education institutions and systems. The third chapter provides a common knowledge base about the governance structures for and recent reforms in K-12 and higher education, so that those seeking to address structural racism or other broad-scale issues in California education are aware of challenges and opportunities for action and alignment across K-12 and postsecondary systems.

Chapter four identifies the levers available for enacting policy change at the state level, and concludes by exploring three on-going examples of cross-system reforms whose alignments and misalignments impact racial justice: statewide remediation policies; math pathways; and common course numbering in the community colleges. In these examples, education leaders took on leadership roles within and beyond their own organization, they networked with others to address inequities by race and other factors, and they used policy at the departmental, institutional, system, and state levels to support cross-system change.

These efforts are still underway, but they already show the key roles that all education leaders can serve, wherever we sit, in addressing equity within and across systems—through examining student data and research, understanding policy and practice, expanding our leadership capacity, and building relationships within and across institutions and systems.

Foreword

Supporting Educational Equity Wherever We Sit


Toward Racial Justice in California's Education Systems comes at a pivotal time for K-12 and postsecondary education in California, and for all of us who work in or with these systems to advance equity in education. Over the past few years, California's education institutions and systems have made commitments to address racial and other inequities in student learning and opportunity, and many institutions have taken steps toward this goal. Yet Students of Color, students from low-income families, first-generation college students, and others continue to face structural barriers, including those exacerbated by COVID-19.

Transforming how our schools, colleges, and universities function is complex, time-consuming work. Taking on systemic racism seems overwhelming when we already face everyday challenges in addressing the needs of students. Often, the barriers to student progress that we witness lie outside our expertise and responsibility: at the institutional, system, state, or federal level. How can we gain traction together and move the work forward? *Toward Racial Justice* is modeled on the premise that underlies the [California Education Policy Fellowship Program \(EPFP\)](#), that transforming education in California needs the attention of all education leaders wherever we sit, and yet it cannot be done by individuals working alone or in silos.

I was a participant in California EPFP in 2017-18, and from my experience the program features several key elements. It centers truth telling and difficult discussions among education leaders across K-12 and postsecondary education, to support better understanding of the needs of students throughout their educational pathways. This includes examining research and student data disaggregated by race and other factors. California EPFP also expands awareness about statewide policy options and broadens networking opportunities to align policy with practice and research. In these ways, the program supports education leaders in finding allies and working with colleagues within and across districts, campuses, and systems to improve policy and practice.

In line with this overall approach, the first chapters of *Toward Racial Justice* set the table for an examination of racial justice in California education and offer a stark summary of chronic and cumulative patterns of racial injustice in California's public schools, colleges, and universities. The report's final chapters encourage networking beyond our own domains by providing a baseline of information about governance and the policy levers available for change in California. The final chapter provides examples of cross-system changes currently underway to create more equitable schools and colleges. These examples show the roles that we all can serve, no matter where we sit, in informing and contributing to policy change across systems.

The benefits that I received from my participation in California EPFP have lasted well beyond the content of the year-long program of seminars and networking. The experience broadened my perspectives about educational change in California at a time when I was returning to the state. The discussions and readings deepened my knowledge of California's education systems, including data efforts, research, practice, and policy. The relationships that I nurtured with participants, speakers, and those who ran the program connected me with a broader network



of colleagues working to advance equitable practices, policies, and outcomes across California education.

California needs public schools, colleges, and universities that open doors to new knowledge, provide onramps to promising careers, and support personal and civic growth in ways that are equitable for all state residents. Our institutions and systems, however, can be slow to change. *Toward Racial Justice* reveals some key ways we can all work together for more equitable schools, colleges, and universities.

Christopher J. Nellum, Ph.D.

Executive Director, The Education Trust-West
Participant, California EPFP, 2017-18

Preface

The Education Insights Center (EdInsights) and the Center for California Studies commissioned this guide to support discussion, reflection, and networking among participants in the California Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) and among education leaders wherever we sit: in schools, colleges, universities, policy and research centers, foundations, and government agencies. The guide focuses on racial justice to build on efforts in California’s education systems to advance racial and other equities at a time when the impacts of the pandemic appear to be magnifying educational disparities.

Most education discussions focus on the separate K-12 and postsecondary education systems, or on specific issues or roles within each of the systems. We wanted this guide to build a common knowledge base across our education systems, including student outcomes, governance structures, recent reforms, and state policies spanning pre-K to 16. Those of us seeking to address structural racism or other broad-scale issues in California education need to be aware of challenges and opportunities for policy leadership and networking across students’ educational pathways from preschool to college graduation.

California EPFP helps to spark these kinds of statewide discussions and networking by bringing together a diverse group of California education leaders several times a year to build education policy awareness, leadership, and networking. This statewide program, modeled after the national EPFP, was spearheaded by Andrea Venezia and Steve Boilard, who were co-founders, and by Terra Thorne, former director of California EPFP. We want to acknowledge the support of Diane Hyson, dean of the College of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies at Sacramento State, where California EPFP is housed. We are also grateful to the College Futures Foundation for funding that supported the development of this guide.

We hope this guide will spark discussion and action in pursuit of California’s vision for its public education systems and equitable opportunities and outcomes for students.

Sincerely,

LeAnn Fong-Batkin
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1. Education in the Context of Racial Injustice

This policy guide about California’s public education systems comes at a critical time in the nation’s long, often brutal, and unresolved journey toward racial justice and equitable opportunity—an arc that schools and colleges have not always helped bend toward justice (Valencia 2005; Ramsey 2017; Ryssdal & Palacios 2020; Ed Trust 2020; Craig 2021). Several factors converged over the past years to sharpen and sustain a national focus on racial injustice: the killings of Black men and women at the hands of police; the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on People of Color and low-income families; and the leadership and truth-telling by those experiencing these and related injustices, especially through the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. These events have shaped public dialogue as part of a broader pattern of hate crimes against Black people, Latinx people, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and others (Zhang et al. 2021; Gamboa 2020).

This paper focuses on racial equity to shed light on enduring patterns of racial injustice across California education, build on current opportunities for policy change, and highlight the need for leadership and networking to make these changes happen.

In response to these conditions and to demands for change, education institutions and systems in California, as well as other public and private entities, have committed publicly to examining their own policies and taking actions to address inequitable practices and outcomes. These promises offer education leaders an opportunity to work with students, to build relationships with each other, and to network with those outside their institutions to address racial injustice in schools, colleges, and universities—and thereby build momentum that can help California reach an era of unparalleled educational attainment and widespread economic growth.

By education leaders, I mean all of us whose work provides us with opportunities to advance student learning and success, whether directly or indirectly, regardless of our job title or role in our school, school district, county office of education, college, university, foundation, policy and research center, advocacy organization, or local and state government, including, but not limited to:

- teachers, faculty, instructors, trainers, chairs, deans, and provosts;
- advisors, student support staff, admissions and financial aid officers, and researchers;
- principals, directors, mentors, superintendents, organization leaders, vice presidents, presidents, and chancellors; and
- policy and finance analysts, state advisory boards, legislative staff, executive agency staff, legislators, and the Governor.

California’s campuses and education systems have many priorities to be addressed internally, but these are not the focus of this guide. Since the efforts to be made in education equity follow the entire student pathway, this guide seeks to advance a conversation about racial justice

across the state's public schools, colleges, and universities. This guide asks, after this chapter focusing on the imperatives facing K-12 and postsecondary education:

- Chapter 2: What are California's major education outcomes from pre-K through college, and what disproportionate impacts do they exhibit, if any, by race and other factors?
- Chapter 3: What are California's governance structures for and recent reforms in K-12 and postsecondary education, and what challenges do these structures and policies present in achieving racial justice and equitable opportunity in education?
- Chapter 4: In examining California's levers of policy change across K-12 and higher education, what opportunities exist for action by education leaders?

Through these questions, this paper engages a conversation whose structure has been proposed by others. Dr. Frank Harris at San Diego State University, for example, has suggested that addressing structural racism in education involves identifying disproportionate impacts on Students of Color; understanding and acknowledging the historical structures that contribute to these impacts; and creating opportunities for change, which always involves listening to and partnering with students (Tan 2020). In addition, this guide borrows from the curricular purposes of the California Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) regarding policy, leadership, and networking. Rather than making recommendations, that is, this paper is a call to action for all education leaders, wherever we sit, to work together with students to adjust policy and practice, provide leadership, and build professional relationships that support equitable systems of teaching and learning.

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Why Focus on Race?

The paper focuses on *racial* equity to shed light on enduring patterns of racial injustice across California education, build on current opportunities for policy change, and highlight the need for leadership and networking to make these changes happen at every level along students' entire educational pathways. This does not mean that race is the only issue that our education institutions and systems need to address. It is important to recognize that students face barriers beyond those associated with race, including the intersectionality of race and other factors, such as income, ability, LGBTQ+ identification, foster care status, food insecurity, and criminal justice involvement. Students also experience hate crimes and prejudice associated with religious identity. In engaging a conversation about racial equity, this paper adopts a student-assets framing, placing the burden on the state's education systems and institutions to adapt in ways that are welcoming for students, that remove barriers to student success, and that provide

* California EPFP is jointly administered by the Education Insights Center and the Center for California Studies at Sacramento State University. It is part of a national program sponsored by the Institute for Educational Leadership, in Washington, D.C. This guide has been commissioned by and serves as a springboard for discussions at California EPFP.

equitable structures and scaffolding for learning (for example, see Ddamulira 2019 and Hands 2020). This process requires that institutions and systems understand the challenges their students face, including those posed by intersectionality between race and other factors.

This guide also makes the case for racial equity for another reason: so that all Californians can experience the benefits that derive from increases in educational attainment. If the state's public schools, colleges, and universities can work together to close educational gaps by race, California could lead the nation in creating a renewed sense of civic community, an expansion of individual opportunities, a stronger workforce and economy, and a broader prosperity for all Californians.

A Note About Terms

This guide seeks to use descriptive words in ways that are constructive, and yet labels are never accurate in describing identities. In focusing on California, this guide employs these terms across data sources: Native Americans, Asian Americans, Black people, Latinx people, Pacific Islanders, and White people. These terms do not portray the complexity of cultures, languages, and backgrounds within these groups. They do not address the extent to which individuals and communities who are racialized and minoritized face varying types of discrimination. And they do not account for the extent to which people identify intersectionally. This paper uses the adjective form for racial identities where practical; exceptions are in tables and charts. The paper avoids acronyms but sometimes uses broader terms such as Students of Color, Faculty of Color, or Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, while capitalizing these terms to draw attention to these terms. When used in relation to data, the terms Native Americans, Asian Americans, Black people, Pacific Islanders, and White people refer to those who identify as non-Latinx.

An Imperative for Equity in California Education

The Context of Racial Injustice

California is the largest and most diverse state in the nation. Latinx people surpassed White people as the largest racial group in 2014 and comprised about 39% of state residents in 2019. White residents accounted for 37% of the population, Asian Americans 16%, Black residents 7%, Multiracial residents 4%, and Native Americans and Pacific Islanders less than 1% each (U.S. Census 2020b). A quarter of California's residents (27%) are foreign-born, which is nearly double the share nationally (14%). Immigration from Asia has outpaced that from Latin America by a two-to-one margin in recent years (Johnson et al. 2020). Eighty-six percent of the state's immigrants have legal status (Lin & Watson 2019).

The Golden State is also a land of disparities. California is home to more of the "super rich" than any other state (Pastor & Braun 2015), yet it also has the highest rate of poverty, after adjusting for housing and other costs (Comen 2019). Latinx residents represent 39% of the state's population and 51% of its poor. About 23% of Latinx residents lived in poverty in 2018 (after adjusting for housing and other costs), compared with 19% of Black residents, 16% of Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders, and 13% of White residents (Bohn et al. 2020). Since the onset

of COVID-19, unemployment in the state jumped from 4% to 16% from the first to the second quarter of 2020. The effects have been severe for all Californians, and particularly for Black and Latinx residents (EPI 2020).

Beyond income, California has large disparities in wealth, well-being, and education, and these broader factors contribute to its reputation as “the most unequal” state (Luhby 2015, 1; Burd-Sharps & Lewis 2015). Wealth is distributed more unevenly than income in California: Black and Latinx families have much fewer assets and savings than White families (Bohn & Thorman 2020), and they are much more likely to face basic needs shortages and housing insecurity during economic downturns (Hanks et al. 2018). Higher income and wealth correlate with access to healthier living conditions and healthcare. Black people in California, for example, have the lowest life expectancy at birth, at about 75 years, and Latinx residents are most likely to be uninsured (CHCF 2019). In terms of education, 66% of Latinx adults are high school graduates (as of 2019), meaning that access to education and training beyond high school is a high hurdle for a third of Latinx. In comparison, 95% of White, 91% of Black, and 89% of Asian American adults graduated from high school (U.S. Census 2019a).

The onslaught of COVID-19 exposed and exacerbated these inequities, since low-income, racialized, and immigrant families are more likely to experience the underlying conditions which increase community spread and individual risks. For example, they face increased exposure as frontline, essential, or critical infrastructure workers (CDC 2020). In California, Latinx people are much more likely than others to contract COVID-19, and both Latinx and Black people are more likely than others to die from it (see Figure 1-1).

Figure 1-1. Cases and Deaths Associated With COVID-19 in California, by Race, as of April 14, 2021

Areas that are shaded are overrepresented, based on population.

Race	% of CA Population	% of Cases	% of Deaths
Latinx	38.9	55.6	46.8
Whites	36.6	20.3	31.2
Asian Americans	15.4	6.9	12.1
Blacks	6.0	4.2	6.3
Multi-Race	2.2	1.7	1.3
Native Americans/Alaska Natives	0.5	0.3	0.4
Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders	0.3	0.6	0.5
Other	0.0	10.5	1.4

Source: CDPH 2021. Census data do not include “other” category.

The pandemic’s devastation of California’s workforce extends across all geographic regions and industry sectors, and the largest shares of job losses are in urban areas, in the leisure and hospitality sector, and among Latinx and Black residents (L.A. Times 2020; Anderson 2020). Schools and colleges moved almost all instruction online, but low-income families, immigrant families, and many Latinx, Black, Native American, and Asian American students face a range of barriers in accessing online education, including lack of internet, broadband, or computer access; food insecurity; home environments that are less conducive to studying; and difficulty accessing support services, including for mental health (NEA 2020; Ed Trust-West 2020a;

Laska & Fleishhacker 2020). One in five school-aged children in California lack access to the internet at home (Ed Trust-West 2020b). With many private schools remaining open (small class sizes make it possible to disperse students in classrooms) yet located near public schools that are closed, the chair of the state Assembly Education Committee, Patrick O'Donnell (D-Long Beach), called California's approach "state-sanctioned segregation" (Mays & Murphy 2020).

As inequities in public health gained public attention, the high-profile killings of Black people by police in the U.S., many of which have been captured through recordings, has laid bare a pattern of systemic racism in the nation's system of justice. The depictions of violence and death have been called "modern-day lynchings" (Deegan-McCree 2020; McLaughlin 2020; Brown 2020), in reference to a form of domestic terrorism perpetrated by White people particularly upon Black people but also upon other People of Color. Nationally, Black Americans are more likely than White Americans to be stopped by police on the street, to experience the use of force in those stops, to be killed by police, to be confined, and to serve longer sentences (Gramlich 2020; Sawyer 2020; Brown 2020). These interactions last a lifetime for Black families and communities, in terms of trauma and stolen earning capacity, wealth, and voting rights (Craigie 2020). California's justice system creates disproportionate impacts on Black people that align strongly with national patterns (Race Counts 2020; Sentencing Project 2020).

In response to these conditions, Black leaders in California and throughout the U.S have been steadfast in organizing, demonstrating, and seeking to call out and address racial injustices. The Black Lives Matter movement, which began as a Twitter hashtag in 2013, is now a potent, decentralized international movement facilitating local organizing against police brutality and other injustices. Its affiliated protests in the U.S., including throughout California, brought 15 to 26 million Americans onto the nation's streets during June 2020, fueling estimates that this has become the largest movement in the country's history (Buchanan et al. 2020). Black writers, poets, journalists, sports figures, academics, and others have told their stories through tweets, music, articles, books, histories, and scholarship, part of a tradition of Black activism, criticism, artwork, and truth-telling that has been in plain sight for centuries in America. Public interest in racial issues created sales booms for books about race, titles by Black authors, and sales at Black-owned bookstores (Daniels 2020; Viltus 2020). Corporations and organizations donated to and issued statements in support of the movement (Livingston 2020). The NBA and WNBA acted in strong support, and even the more conservative sports associations, such as the NFL and NASCAR, published statements in favor of BLM (Atoms 2020; Assimakopoulos 2020).

The BLM movement was also met with opposition and vitriol from the Republican Administration at the time, and from others on social media and other forums. Some BLM demonstrations led to destruction of property and other violence, some of it incited by right-wing and White supremacist groups (Hosenball 2020). BLM activities were also targeted by the Justice Department and the Department of Homeland Security (Wilkie 2020; Ecarma 2020). The Republican Presidential Campaign in 2020, after losing overwhelmingly in Black urban areas throughout the U.S., sought to overturn votes in Black precincts in those states that had close election results (Badger 2020) and sought to overturn the election itself (Gerhart 2021).

Racism is not limited to violence against Black people. In 2020, as the world was responding to fears about the pandemic, anti-Asian American rhetoric, harassment, and violence became widespread and overt in the United States. In March 2020, the U.S. President at the time began publicly using the words "China virus" to refer to COVID-19 (Shinkman 2020). Over the next year, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders experienced a 149% increase in hate incidents (Abrams 2021). Stop AAPI Hate reported in 2021 that about one in five Asian Americans in the

U.S. (that is, over 5 million people) experienced a hate incident during the past year, and most incidents took place on public streets and in businesses open to the public (Yellow Horse, et al. 2021). These incidents of discrimination, harassment, physical assault, and other forms of racist hatred against Asian Americans are part of a longer history in the U.S. that reaches back at least to the 1850s, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the internment of Japanese American citizens during World War II, and the killing of Vincent Chin (Abrams 2021; Brockell 2021; Takaki 1989).

Recent national polls reflect both the traction and polemics associated with advancing racial justice in America.

- A survey by NPR/Ipsos reported that 36% of respondents—30% of White, 41% of Black, 49% of Asian American, and 51% of Latinx people—said they had personally taken actions to better understand racial issues (Florida & Penaloza 2020).
- Americans' perceptions about the condition of Black-White relations, according to Gallup polls, worsened substantially after the killings of Trayvon Martin in Florida in 2012 and Eric Garner in New York in 2014. In 2013, 72% of White and 66% of Black respondents said that relations between White and Black Americans were very or somewhat good. By summer 2020, these numbers had dropped to 46% for White and 36% for Black respondents (Saad 2020).
- Both Black and White Americans, since 2011, have become much less sanguine about the progress they have seen during their lifetime regarding the civil rights of Black Americans; a majority of U.S. adults favor new civil rights laws (Jones 2020).

These polls suggest that many (and perhaps growing numbers of) Americans are coming to acknowledge the prevalence of racial injustices in the U.S., but much work remains to be done.

The Role of Education

California's public systems of early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary education are vital civic assets that can support individuals, families, and communities in expanding opportunities. Educators have liberatory and transformative roles in supporting students as they think critically; listen to and explore their own voice and the voices of others; gain literacy in science, math, language, and other areas; engage with peers to address challenges and opportunities in their own communities; understand forms of identity and expression; explore family and community values; master professional expertise; and otherwise guide their own education (see Freire 2000).

Organized schooling, however, is institutional. The processes, policies, and environments of education institutions can create barriers as well as opportunities for students. Systemic or structural racism refers to the normalization of historical, cultural, cross-institutional, and interpersonal dynamics that cumulatively and chronically benefit some racial groups while disadvantaging others. Institutional racism refers to parallel dynamics that occur within and among institutions, including practices, policies, opportunities, and impacts that disproportionately benefit some racial groups over others (see "Some Definitions for Discussion and Use," at the end of this chapter). Despite the best intentions of instructors, staff, and administrators to serve all students, the ways that schools and colleges function—in relation to each other and in society—can benefit some racial groups over others. Who gets into which classrooms? At what cost or debt? Whose stories are taught? What kinds of evidence and inquiries are valued? How are learning outcomes distributed? To be schooled can mean being educated. Or it can mean being trounced on a field of play.

Some of the factors associated with the transformative role of education in expanding opportunity include:

- **Helping individuals and families escape poverty and enjoy the benefits of well-paying careers.** Not everyone needs a bachelor's degree, but those seeking a middle-class standard of living need some form of education or training beyond high school (Carnevale et al. 2017). Average full-time earnings are twice as high for college graduates as for high school graduates (Johnson & Mejia 2020a). Conversely, high school graduates are much more likely to be in poverty (Bohn et al. 2020). During the Great Recession (2007 to 2009), those without a college degree were much more likely to be unemployed (Berube 2010), and this appears to be true during the pandemic. Educational attainment is correlated with a range of benefits beyond work, including better health outcomes (Egerter et al. 2009; Fletcher & Frisvold 2009).
- **Diversifying and strengthening the workforce and economies of communities, cities, and regions.** Education can serve as an engine of economic recovery and renewal for impacted communities (Deming 2020). Many regions in California face shortages of middle-skilled workers who understand the technology of machinery, science, and processing. A community's ability to remain on the cutting edge depends on the education of its diverse populations, including through badges, certificates, and associate degrees (NSC 2017).
- **Reinforcing California's civic institutions.** Education can contribute to a democratic society by providing social and economic opportunities across income and racial groups. It can contribute to an informed electorate, which is particularly important when the country is polarized politically and the boundaries between news, social media, and self-promotion are blurred. People with higher levels of education are more likely to contribute to society, including taxes, voting, and volunteering (File 2015; BLS 2016).

To be schooled can mean being educated. Or it can mean being trounced on a field of play.

While education can serve these roles across income groups, the evidence is mixed as to whether our schools and colleges are doing so. Upward mobility appears to have stalled nationally. Most children born into an income group tend to remain there as adults, and the gaps between the top and the bottom earners are widening (APM Reports 2018; Chakrabarti & Jiang 2018; ACE 2020). Parental income contributes much more than education does to children's earning potential (Gregg et al. 2017).

Californians in 2020 rejected Proposition 15, which would have increased funding for public schools and for the California Community Colleges (CCC). State voters also rejected Proposition 16, which would have allowed public K-12 and postsecondary education to design programs to improve opportunities by race. Schools cannot solve society's challenges on their own, and these voting outcomes limit their abilities to address systemic racism and inequities based on income. But if California's education institutions and systems are to serve as engines of opportunity for all state residents, then they must work to identify and address—with supportive state governance and policy—their inequitable impacts on Students of Color, as well as their impacts on other groups, including students from low-income families.

Conclusion

Patterns of police brutality, combined with the effects of COVID-19, laid bare inequities that were already in plain sight. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in response to the death of George Floyd and other racial injustices, launched a series of public conversations, called on school districts to address institutional racism, and recommended an ethnic studies curriculum (CDE 2020). The CCC Board of Governors agreed unanimously to codify principles of equity in the Education Code and endorsed unanimously the passage of Proposition 16 (CCC 2020). The Chancellor of the California State University (CSU) spoke out against violence, acknowledged the existence of systemic racism in the U.S., and pledged to take action to promote justice (CSU 2020). The President of the University of California (UC) committed the university to equitable and antiracist behaviors, policies, practices, and structures (UC 2020). Since spring 2020, the two public university systems appointed new leaders, and all public education systems in California are now led by a Person of Color (Smith 2020). This policy guide seeks to build on these commitments through engaging a dialogue for the development of public policies and leadership that support systemic equity and antiracism in California education.

Some Definitions for Discussion and Use

This information is drawn from *Stay Woke* (Bunyasi & Smith 2019), *How to Be an Antiracist* (Kendi 2019), *Between the World and Me* (Coates 2015), “Our Enduring Caste System” (Wilkerson 2020), “Equity vs. Equality” (Casey Foundation 2020b), and “Structural Racism” (Lawrence & Keleher 2004).

Race is a social, not a scientific, construct developed to categorize humans largely by physical traits and primarily for economic gain and power. Wilkerson writes: “What people look like, or rather, the race they have been assigned ... is the historic flashcard to the public of how they are to be treated, where they are expected to live, what kinds of positions they are expected to hold, whether they belong in this section of town or that seat in the boardroom, ... whether they may be shot by the authorities with impunity” (p. 31).

Systemic or structural racism refers to the normalization of historical, cultural, cross-institutional, and interpersonal dynamics that cumulatively and chronically benefit some racial groups while disadvantaging others. Systemic or structural racism is infused within societal norms and myths and embedded in political and economic policy, sometimes explicitly and often implicitly. The impacts of COVID-19 on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color reveal the breadth of systemic racism, because the inequities reach beyond healthcare to span housing, transportation, education, prisons, and employment.

Institutional racism occurs within and among institutions, including practices, policies, opportunities, and impacts that disproportionately benefit some racial groups over others. An example can be seen in the ways Black people suffer disproportionate impacts at every interaction with the justice system, from police engagement to sentencing.

White supremacy is the preferential treatment of Whites compared with other groups. Both systemic and institutional racism are characterized in the U.S. by White supremacy, due to the history and dominance of preferential treatment for Whites. All racial groups in the U.S. face challenges with unemployment, low pay, healthcare, housing costs, access to affordable education, and other issues, but Black, Indigenous, and People of Color face additional challenges associated with systemic and institutional racism.

The issue of intention. Persistent inequities in power, access, opportunities, treatment, and outcomes are identifiers of racism, regardless of the intention of institutions or individuals. That is, people from any racial group can intentionally or unintentionally assist in perpetuating systemic racism, institutional racism, and White supremacy.

Racist, antiracist. In line with this concept of intentionality, Kendi suggests that anyone who supports racist policy through action, inaction, or expression is racist. An antiracist is one who supports equitable policy through action or expression (p. 13).

Equity, justice. Equity is the state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair. An equity-minded or antiracist approach seeks to identify the disparate effects of racism, understand the historical, cultural, and institutional policies that contribute to these effects, and develop actions to address these issues.

Equality vs. Equity. Equity seeks to address disparities in order to help people reach an equal footing; equality offers the same approach or resources to everyone regardless of their condition. An equitable approach, for example, might provide different learning materials to

students based on their areas of proficiency. An equal approach might offer students the same resources, regardless of proficiency.

Systemic or structural equity can be described as a prevailing combination of interrelated expressions, actions, and outcomes—including societal norms and political and economic policy—that support and sustain racial justice and antiracism.

Questions for Chapter 1

The questions at the end of each chapter are designed to support discussions about racial equity in education.

1. In relation to your experiences at your institution or organization, how would you describe the public dialogue about equity that you've witnessed or engaged over the past few years? How have students been involved—or not involved—in this dialogue?
2. In examining your own history in education, have the institutions you've been involved with changed in acknowledging, addressing, or acting on issues of racial injustice and other inequities? How?
3. What commitments, if any, has your institution or organization made in acknowledging structural racism and in addressing inequities through actions (planned or taken)? What about your department, division, or program? What gaps do you see in these commitments or actions?
4. What successes has your institution had in identifying and addressing the ongoing equity impacts associated with COVID-19? What challenges have been more difficult to address?
5. This paper addresses racial inequities in education. What other inequities need to be prioritized, based on your experiences?
6. This chapter includes “A Note About Terms” (sidebar). Which terms for various racial groups are you comfortable with, or less comfortable with? What recommendations or improvements do you have?
7. In “Some Definitions for Discussion and Use” (sidebar), which ideas do you connect with, if any? Which concepts seem surprising to you, off the mark, or problematic? What gaps do you see in this listing, and what revisions would you suggest?

2. Chronic and Cumulative Patterns of Racial Injustice

California's public K-12 and higher education systems have seen improvements in most student outcomes over the past decades, even as funding for K-12 schools has remained below the national average and drops in the share of state funding for postsecondary education have passed higher prices onto students and their families (Finch 2019; Cook 2017). Across virtually all indicators, however, substantial inequities persist by race, and these gaps are not one-time blips. Rather, they reveal chronic and cumulative patterns of injustice at nearly every stage of public accountability for students in California's K-12 and postsecondary education systems. This chapter offers an introduction to the measure of these patterns, by describing first the students in California's public schools, colleges, and universities, and then the major outcomes along students' educational journeys from pre-kindergarten to college completion.

Who Are California's Students?

About nine million children lived in California in 2018—a decrease from 9.6 million a decade and a half earlier. A further decline to 8.3 million is projected over the next 15 years, due primarily to drops in birth and immigration rates (Aguilera 2020). California has the highest rate of child poverty (Aguilera 2020). The state ranks in the bottom third of states (34th) in overall child well-being and in the bottom quarter on three of the four underlying measures: economics (44th), education (38th), health (11th), and family (37th) (Casey Foundation 2020a). There are substantial gaps by race on most of the indicators. For example, 28% of Black and 23% of Latinx children in California grow up in poverty, compared with 9% of White children, and these numbers do not account for the economic downturn since the pandemic (Casey Foundation 2020a). Roughly one in eight children in the U.S. lives in California (U.S. Census 2019b); improvements in child education and welfare in this state can lift national averages on these measures.

School enrollments are declining in California. More than half of the state's students are Latinx (55%, see Figure 2-1), and this share has been growing. Overall enrollments, however, are projected to drop nearly seven percent by 2027-28, and this will put financial pressure on school districts due to corresponding declines in enrollment funding (Warren & Lafortune 2020). California's student population has a larger percentage of multilingual students who are learning English than any other state (NCES 2020a). California is seventh in the share of students who receive free or reduced-price meals, behind Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and South Carolina (NCES 2019).

Figure 2-1. Quick Facts About California K-12 Students, 2019-20

Description	Number	Percentage
Enrollment, K-12 public schools	6,163,001	100.0%
Socioeconomically diverse students*	3,741,775	60.7%
Multilingual learners†	1,148,024	18.6%
Race/ethnicity		
Latinx	3,381,198	54.9%
Whites (not Latinx)	1,381,737	22.4%
Asian Americans	575,067	9.3%
Blacks (not Latinx)	324,496	5.3%
Two or More Races (not Latinx)	243,372	3.9%
Filipinos	146,501	2.4%
None Reported	53,153	0.9%
Native Americans/Alaska Natives	30,282	0.5%
Pacific Islanders	27,195	0.4%
TOTAL	6,163,001	100.0%

* Socioeconomically diverse students, called SE disadvantaged by the California Department of Education (CDE), are those identified as migrant, foster, homeless, or low-income (i.e., qualifying for free or reduced-price meals), or those with neither parent having a high school diploma.

† Multilingual learners, called English learners by the CDE, are those whose language at home is not English and who are classified as needing additional English skills to succeed in instruction.

Note: Data include charter and non-charter public schools.

Source: CDE DataQuest 2020.

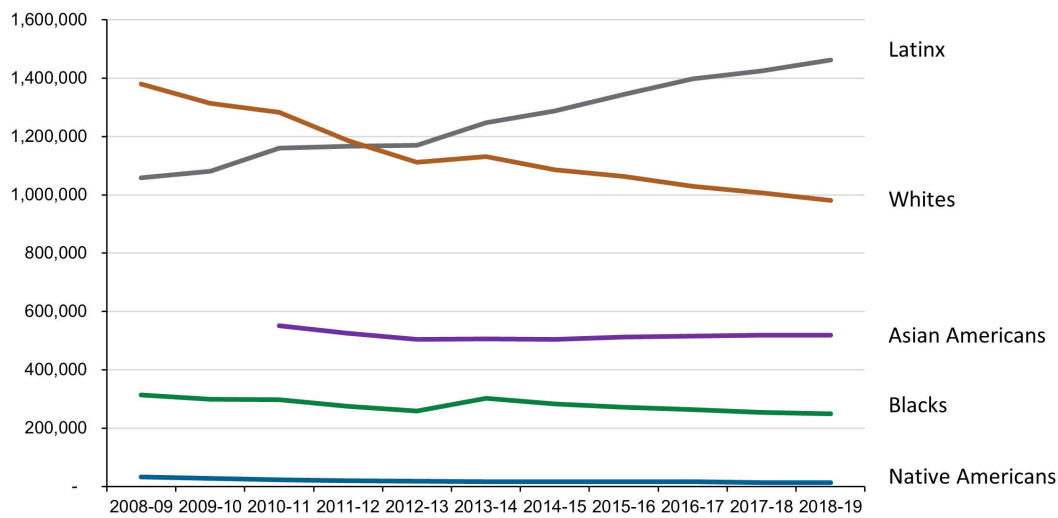
At the postsecondary level, about one in seven students in the U.S. attends a college or university in California. Compared with even a decade ago, students at postsecondary institutions are more diverse in terms of age, race, income, work status, and other factors. California does not have an entity that regularly compiles and reports student data from across its higher education systems, but based on national data about college students in public and private institutions prior to the pandemic:

- almost two-thirds (64%) work, and 40% work full-time;
- almost half (46%) are first-generation college goers;
- more than one-third (37%) are 25 or older;
- about a quarter (24%) have children or other dependents;
- over a third (36%) report food insecurities;

- almost one-third (31%) are below the federal poverty guideline; and
- about one in ten (9%) report being homeless within the past year (Lumina 2019).

California does not regularly report data about its higher education enrollments, but based on state data reported to the U.S. Department of Education, the composition of college campuses has shifted dramatically over the past decade. From 2008 to 2018, total fall enrollment in California’s public and private colleges and universities increased modestly, from 2.73 to 2.75 million students. During this period, the number of Latinx students enrolled increased by 50%; they surpassed Whites in 2012 as the largest group (see Figure 2-2). During the same period, enrollments dropped by 19% for Black, 26% for White, and 51% for Native American students. Asian American enrollments dropped by 5% from 2010 to 2018 (NCES 2020b).

Figure 2-2. Enrollment in California Colleges and Universities, by Selected Racial Groups



Note: The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) shifted its tracking of Asian Americans, and so comparative data begins for this population in 2010 on this chart. Data are collected from public and private Title IV institutions for fall enrollments.

Source: NCES 2020b.

Some of these changes in enrollments reflect shifts in the composition of California’s young population, but across California’s public and private colleges and universities, Latinx remain underrepresented compared with their share of K-12 students (see Figure 2-3). It is important to note that enrollments by race vary substantially by higher education system and by campus, as reported later in this chapter.

Figure 2-3. Selected Racial Groups as a Share of Enrollments in California, 2018

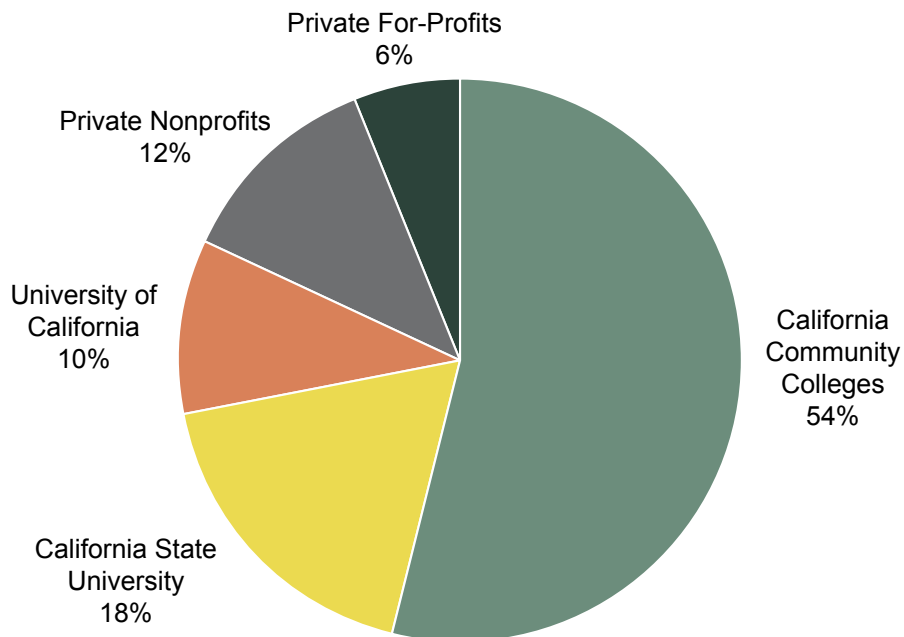
Description	K-12 Enrollment	College Enrollment
Latinx	54.6%	39.4%
Whites (not Latinx)	22.9%	25.8%
Asian Americans	9.3%	14.2%
Blacks (not Latinx)	5.4%	5.8%
Native Americans/Alaska Natives	0.5%	0.4%
TOTAL	92.7%	85.6%

Note: Definitions of racial groups differ somewhat by source. Totals do not equal 100% because not all groups are included. The final column includes fall enrollments at Title IV public and private institutions.

Sources: K-12 data are for 2018-19 from CDE. College data are for fall 2018 from NCES.

About 82% of higher education students in California attend a public institution, based on available data from national sources (see Figure 2-4). These data, however, include only institutions that offer at least an associate degree, and so they underrepresent the share of students in private for-profit institutions, many of which offer certificates or badges but no degrees. Badges are digital displays of specific skills that students have mastered.

Figure 2-4. Eight in Ten California College Students Attend Public Institutions



Note: For students at postsecondary institutions offering at least an associate degree as of fall 2017. Source: Johnson & Mejia 2019. Data are pulled from NCES, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Students Identify in Vital Ways That State Averages Do Not Address

Increasing numbers of students, in both K-12 and postsecondary education, identify as two or more races or decline to select a race. All the state's racial groups are diverse and to varying degrees include groups of low-income students, foster youth, homeless youth, and first-generation college students. The state's populations of Latinx, Asian Americans, Filipinos, and Pacific Islanders are diverse culturally, economically, and in many other ways. Among California's Asian American population, educational patterns and outcomes vary among Hmong, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, and others. Statewide data generally and statewide averages in particular tend to mask these diversities because the data are not disaggregated by subgroup.

In addition, many students identify intersectionally—that is, they embrace multiple kinds of identity and face overlapping forms of discrimination, depending on their self-identified and perceived race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, family income level and wealth, or other characteristics. This chapter, in providing an overview of K-12 and higher education outcomes, focuses primarily on public education and on factors associated with race and income, while acknowledging that students experience education intersectionally and that educators face the complex task of understanding the diversity of students' identities and creating a welcoming and supportive environment.

A Snapshot of California's Education Outcomes

Early Childhood Education

Along students' educational pathways, an initial key outcome for a state's education system involves access to high-quality early childhood education. California assists low-income families in participating in early childhood education, but childcare is expensive in the state and about 40% of children ages three to five do not enroll in preschool or kindergarten (Stipek 2018). California's main publicly funded preschool programs for children ages three and four are the California State Preschool Program (CSPP), Head Start, and Transitional Kindergarten. In addition, some low-income families qualify for childcare funded by CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids), but most of these programs are unlicensed and therefore not required to meet any educational standards (Stipek 2018).

Who are *least* likely to be enrolled in preschool in California?

- Children whose parents do not have a college degree (37% are in preschool, compared with 59% for children with a parent who has graduated from college),
- Children whose families are in or near poverty (28% vs. 52%),
- Children of Color, compared with White children (42% vs. 55%), and
- Children in families who may be multilingual but with limited English (39% vs. 47%) (Thorman & Danielson 2019).

Several studies have found that California's lagging educational outcomes—and its disparities by race—begin before students enter kindergarten (see Reardon et al. 2018) and they attribute relatively large learning gaps in kindergarten to lack of access to affordable, high-quality preschool for large segments of the state's residents (Stipek 2018).

K-12 Education

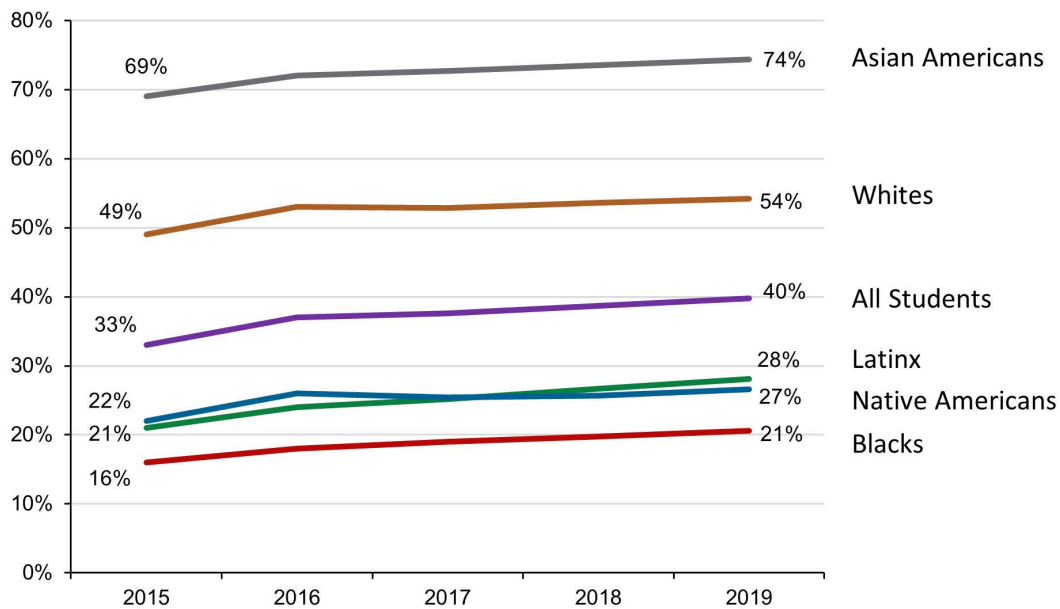
State standards and assessment results

California overhauled its K-12 education system, beginning with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards for math and English language arts in 2010 and new standards in other areas since then. In 2015, California began administering Smarter Balanced assessments aligned with the new standards. The state shifted decision-making to local school districts by adopting new funding mechanisms and local accountability processes in 2013. A new California School Dashboard followed in 2017. None of these reforms focused explicitly on racial equity, partly because Proposition 209 prohibits state government from considering race in education. Chapter 3 describes the changes in greater depth.

Long-term outcomes from these reforms are not known, but California's scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and math have improved significantly for fourth and eighth graders. The state's scores remained below national averages, but California gained ground in math and reading, particularly since 2015 for eighth graders. The scores for California's Black and Latinx students, however, remained below those for White students over the past two decades, with no significant narrowing of these gaps. Low-income students scored lower than their peers, with no substantial narrowing of this gap (NAEP 2018).

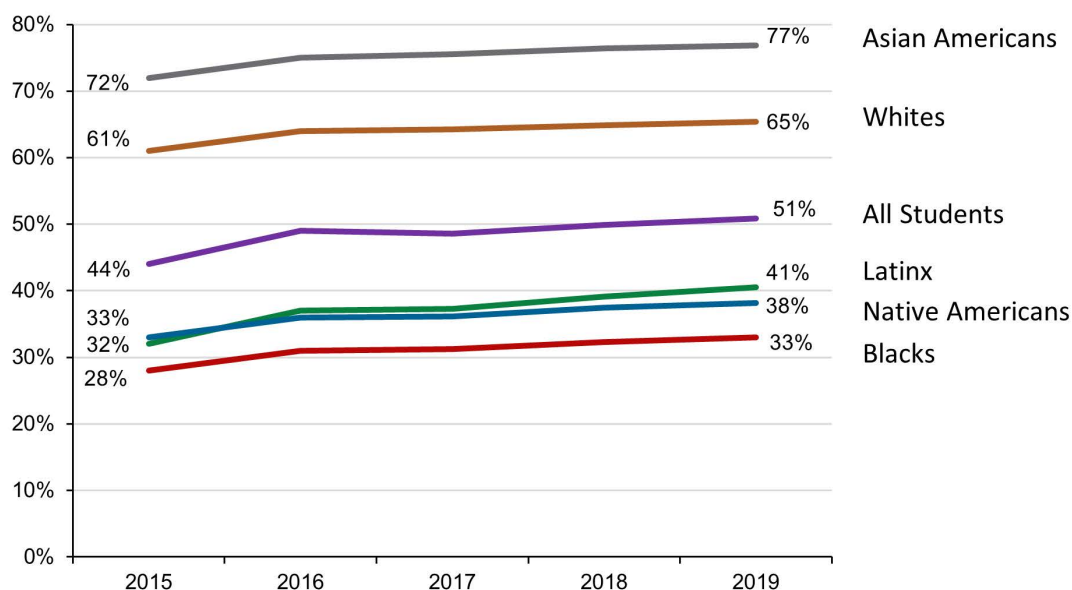
In examining the state's Smarter Balanced assessments, aggregate scores increased for all racial groups from 2015 to 2019, but the gaps did not narrow appreciably (see Figures 2-5 and 2-6). The scores remain low for most students, especially in math: 40% of students met or exceeded the standards in math in 2019 and 51% did so in reading (Cano 2020).

Figure 2-5. Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards in Math



Note: Smarter Balanced Assessment results in math for all tested grades (3-8 and 11).
Source: Cano 2020.

Figure 2-6. Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards in Reading



Note: Smarter Balanced Assessment results in reading for all tested grades (3-8 and 11).
Source: Cano 2020.

Suspensions and chronic absenteeism

California includes suspensions and chronic absenteeism in its school dashboard to highlight the importance of these and similar measures in impacting academic performance. Based on statewide averages over the past decade, suspension rates have decreased significantly for all students (from 5.8% in 2011-12 to 3.5% in 2018-19). Gaps across racial groups have narrowed. Some attribute this partially to legislation that tightened suspension guidelines (Cano 2020). Nonetheless, suspension rates for Black (9.1% in 2018-19) and Native American (7.5%) students remain substantially higher than those for Latinx (3.6%), White (3.0%), and other children (CDE DataQuest 2020). These rates of exclusion also vary substantially by district and gender. For example, males are more likely than females to be suspended statewide. In one urban school district, for instance, Black males are five times more likely to be suspended, compared with the statewide average (Wood et al. 2020).

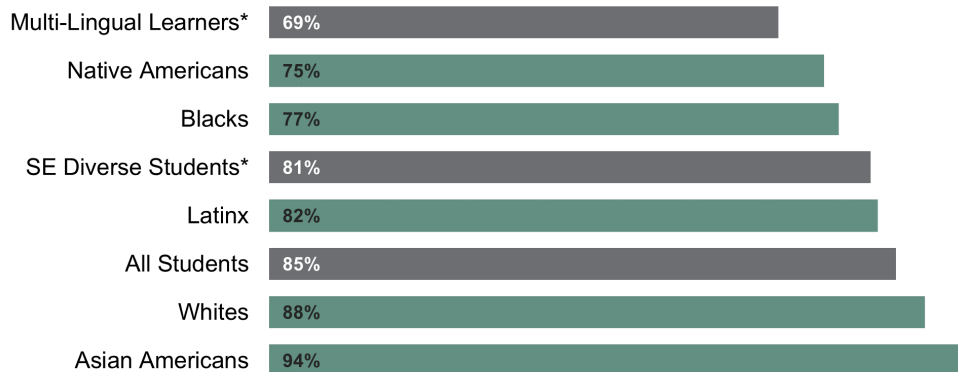
Whereas statewide suspension rates are declining, rates for chronic absenteeism are increasing, and this trend is likely to worsen after data from the pandemic are included. From 2016-17 to 2018-19, chronic absenteeism increased from 10.8% to 12.1%. The rates are much higher for Students of Color and the inequities by race have grown wider since 2016-17. In 2018-19, absenteeism rates were: 22.5% for Black, 21.8% for Native American, 13.4% for Latinx, and 9.9% for White students (CDE DataQuest 2020).

High school graduation

California's high school graduation rates improved over the past few years, tracking national trends and remaining slightly below the U.S. average. There are substantial gaps by ethnicity and income, based on state data (see Figure 2-7). In 2019-20, Latinx students accounted for 55% of the high school cohort and 71% of socioeconomically (SE) diverse high schoolers. White students accounted for 23% of the cohort and 11% of SE diverse high schoolers. SE diverse

students can be migrant, foster, homeless, or low-income (i.e., qualifying for free or reduced-price meals) youth, or those with neither parent having a high school diploma.

Figure 2-7. High School Graduation Rates, for Multi-Lingual Learners, Socioeconomically Diverse Students, and by Race, 2018-19



* Multi-lingual learners are called English learners by the CDE. “SE diverse” stands for socioeconomically diverse; these students are called SE disadvantaged by the CDE.

Note: Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate for public charter and non-charter students for 2018-19.

Source: CDE DataQuest 2020.

College and career readiness

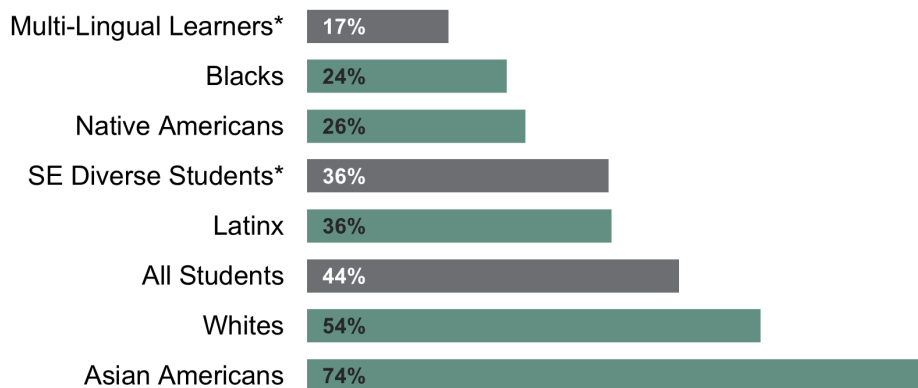
The California Department of Education (CDE) includes a college/career indicator (CCI) in its school dashboard to signal to students, parents, and schools the multiple ways in which high schools can help students prepare academically for college and career beyond graduation requirements. Students can be identified as “prepared” on the CCI through these means:

- completion of a career technical education pathway;
- sufficient performance on
 - Grade 11 Smarter Balanced summative assessments,
 - Advanced Placement exams, or
 - International Baccalaureate exams;
- completion of sufficient college credits;
- completion of a-g courses required for admission at UC or CSU, plus other criteria;
- earning a state seal of biliteracy, plus other criteria; or
- military science/leadership criteria.

Most who meet the criteria as “prepared” on the CCI do so through completion of a-g courses or by scoring well on Smarter Balanced tests, or both. For the two years of available data, the share of high school graduates who were identified as “prepared” increased from 42% in 2018 to 44% in 2019. Outcomes by race, however, highlight the chronic injustices that accumulate for Black, Native American, and Latinx students by high school graduation: about a quarter of Black (24%) and Native American (26%) high school graduates and about a third of Latinx (36%) graduates were identified as “prepared” for college or careers in 2019, compared with over half of White (54%) and three-quarters of Asian American (74%) graduates (see Figure 2-8).

Compared with the extent to which California public schools inequitably support Black and Native American students in preparing for college, the schools appear to be somewhat more successful in helping low-income students, identified here as SE diverse students (36%). This suggests that challenges in increasing educational attainment need to be addressed through systemic and institutional antiracism, not solely by addressing barriers for low-income students.

Figure 2-8. Percentage of Graduating High School Cohort Identified as “Prepared” on the CCI, for Multi-Lingual Learners, SE Diverse Students, and by Race, 2019



* Multi-lingual learners are called English learners by the CDE. “SE diverse” stands for socioeconomically diverse; these students are called SE disadvantaged by the CDE.

Source: CDE DataQuest 2020.

Examining readiness for college over a longer period in California, the available data provide some good news: more students across all racial and income groups are seeking to attend college. The number of high school students who completed the a-g courses required for admission by the CSU and the UC increased by 25% from 2011 to 2017. During the same period, applications by state residents to the CSU and the UC increased by 18% and 24%, respectively (PPIC 2019). However, large inequities by race persist. In 2011 and 2017, for example, the gap between Black and White students on the share completing the a-g courses was 17 percentage points (CCO 2019b).

Postsecondary Education

Participation and enrollment

Participation rates in postsecondary education seek to measure college and university enrollment in relation to the pool of residents aspiring to college, to identify how well a state’s postsecondary system is serving the needs of state residents. The two common measures are not perfect, since the pool of residents who aspire to college is difficult to determine:

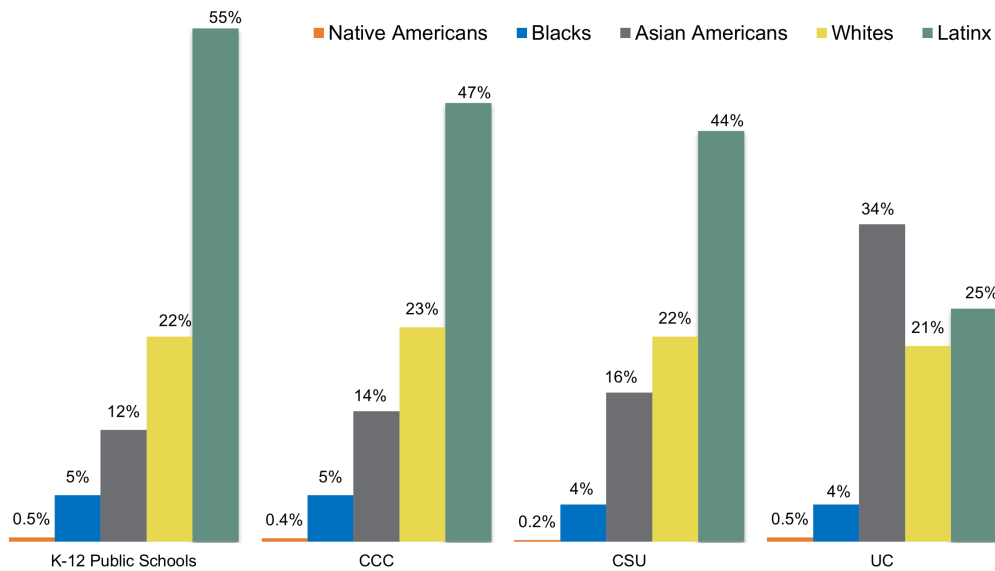
1. *College-going rates* calculate the number of first-time college freshpersons in relation to the number of high school graduates; and
2. *The percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled* in college calculates undergraduate enrollment in relation to census estimates for this age group.

California does not regularly provide this kind of information about its postsecondary education systems, but a national center offers periodic updates. California’s participation rates,

particularly on the second measure, are high compared with other states, largely due to its long-standing commitment to provide lower-priced access to postsecondary education through its 116 community colleges. For example, California ranked fourth among all states on the share of 18- to 24-year-olds (42%) enrolled in college in 2017 (NCHEMS 2020). Historical data reveal significant gaps in postsecondary participation in California by race, income, and region, but these data have not been updated for some time (CRB 2013).

Postsecondary enrollments provide less information in relation to state needs but are simpler to track. Enrollment data from the public higher education systems show that Black students are underrepresented at the universities, in relation to their share of enrollments in public K-12 schools, and Latinx are underrepresented at all the public postsecondary systems, particularly at the UC (see Figure 2-9). Asian Americans are overrepresented in public colleges and universities, particularly at the UC. These data do not account for students enrolling out of state.

Figure 2-9. Enrollments in Public Segments for Selected Racial Groups, 2019



Note: The data for each segment do not each add to 100% due to rounding and because not all categories are included, including international students.

Source: Freedberg 2020, from CDE, CCC, CSU, and UC data.

To clarify the inequities of Black and Latinx enrollments at the universities, for undergraduates in California in 2017:

- for Black students in 2016-17: 72% attended the CCC, 9% the CSU, and 3% the UC (CCO 2019b);
- for Latinx students in 2016-17: 72% enrolled in the CCC, 13% in the CSU, and 4% in the UC (CCO 2018); and
- among students at large in fall 2017: 54% enrolled in the CCC, 18% the CSU, and 10% in the UC (Johnson & Mejia 2019).*

* Data for all three sources are from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Capacity at the public colleges and universities

Demand for postsecondary education increased over the past two decades despite sharp rises in tuition and the cost of living in California. As the number and share of high school graduates eligible for and planning to enroll in postsecondary education continues to rise (even as overall K-12 enrollment is declining), California's public university systems are facing substantial challenges in providing sufficient spaces for these students while also holding to the limits set forth in California's Master Plan for Higher Education (1960), the document that has guided the state's overall approach to higher education for 60 years.

The Master Plan identifies the CCC as the primary point of entry into public higher education for Californians. The community colleges offer access to all state residents, but they do have enrollment limits in many programs, such as nursing. During the 2008 recession, community college enrollments dropped precipitously as state budget cuts and other factors squeezed students out of courses and programs (Bohn et al. 2013). Enrollments have not recovered, with headcounts reaching over 2.9 million in 2008-09 but hovering at about 2.3 million students since 2012-13 (CCCCO Data Mart 2020). These data do not include the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the 2008 recession, community college enrollments dropped precipitously as state budget cuts and other factors squeezed students out of courses and programs.

The Master Plan also sets forth California's commitment to low-priced bachelor's degree attainment through transfer from the community colleges. As part of this commitment, the Master Plan sets minimum admission standards at the CSU and the UC for transfer students. Based on these standards, UC has been admitting all eligible transfers, though not necessarily to the campus of choice (LAO 2016). At the CSU, the number of eligible transfer students who were denied admission grew from 2,500 in 2008 to 12,600 in 2018—a trend that challenges California's commitment to higher education opportunity (Cook & Mehlotra 2020).

At the universities, the Master Plan calls for the CSU to draw from the top third of high school graduates (33.3%) and for the UC to draw from the top eighth (12.5%), but these guideposts are out of alignment with recent demand in California, based on the numbers of students meeting the systems' eligibility requirements. According to a 2017 study, the CSU increased its draw to the top 41% of graduates and the UC to the top 14% (Silver et al. 2017). Yet despite this expansion of applicant pools, both systems turned away additional Californians who met their eligibility requirements. At the CSU, for example, the number of eligible freshpersons who were denied admission increased from 4,100 in 2008 to 21,800 in 2018 (Cook & Mehlotra 2020).

Constraints on opportunity in higher education are not limited to enrollment at the system level, but also include lack of access to specific campuses, programs, and classes. At the CSU, many campuses and degree programs have declared themselves "impacted," a policy that enables the campuses and programs to limit enrollments. From 2011-12 to 2020-21, the number of impacted campuses (meaning that all majors were unable to meet student enrollment demand) increased from two to seven. As of 2020-21, 22 of the 23 CSU campuses have at least one impacted major (Cook & Mehlotra 2020). Both the UC and the CSU redirect eligible applicants to campuses beyond their first choice, but few students accept this option (PPIC 2020).

Students in all three public systems (but particularly those at the CCC and the CSU) face challenges in getting into the courses they need to graduate on time. Students consistently report that course availability presents a major challenge to their educational plans (Moore & Tan 2018), but empirical studies are lacking in this area.

Rates of postsecondary completion

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports on postsecondary graduation rates within 150% of “normal time,” meaning six years for bachelor’s degrees at four-year institutions and three years for associate degrees at two-year institutions. California performs better than national averages on these measures, though both the state and national outcomes are low, particularly at the two-year institutions, considering the share of students not graduating in these timeframes and the burdens of debt they accumulate. At the public four-year institutions, 65% of students in California complete a bachelor’s degree within six years, compared with 58% who do so nationally. At the public two-year colleges, 35% of students in California complete an associate degree within three years, compared with 30% nationally. On both measures, there are substantial inequities by race (NCES 2020c).

In California, the public community colleges report six-year (rather than three-year) completion rates. Those completing one- and two-year degrees, as well as transfer students, are included (see Figure 2-10). The community colleges serve a key role in providing students with access to postsecondary certificates and degrees, including bachelor’s degrees through their transfer function. Students who begin at a community college intending to transfer are less likely to earn a bachelor’s degree than those who start at a four-year university (PPIC 2017). For the community college students who do transfer to a university, however, 73% graduate within four years at the CSU, and 89% do so at the UC (Johnson & Mejia 2020b).

Figure 2-10. Six-year Completion Rates at the CCC, for Low-Income Students and by Race



Note: For cohort entering in 2011-2012 (outcomes by 2016-2017). Low-income students are those defined as “economically disadvantaged” by the CCC.
Source: CCCCCO Data Mart 2020.

The CSU and the UC report a range of graduation data, including four- and six-year rates (for the six-year rates, see Figures 2-11 and 2-12). Some good news across the state’s public postsecondary systems is that completion rates increased over the past two decades for all racial groups—a significant achievement considering the fiscal challenges over the past decades. Nonetheless, the outcomes display chronic inequities by race at all levels. The lower completion rates in the community colleges have additional implications for racial justice since three-quarters of the state’s Black and Latinx college students begin postsecondary education at these public institutions. The CCC and the CSU have implemented systemwide initiatives to improve student learning and timely completion of degrees and close inequities. These efforts are described in Chapter 3.

Figure 2-11. Six-year Completion Rates at the CSU, for Low-Income Students and by Race



Notes: For first-time, full-time freshpersons entering in fall 2013. Low income is defined as Pell Grant eligible.

Source: CSU Analytic Studies 2020.

Figure 2-12. Six-year Completion Rates at the UC, for Low-Income Students and by Race



Notes: For first-time, full-time freshpersons entering in fall 2013. Low income is defined as Pell Grant eligible.

Source: UC InfoCenter 2020.

College affordability

Through its historic low-tuition policies and substantial student financial aid programs, California has a tradition of providing low-priced access to postsecondary education, compared with other states. As part of this tradition, California is one of only nine states whose state funding for higher education (per student) had increased in 2018 compared with the recession levels in 2008 (Mitchell et al. 2019). Key challenges to this tradition include the following.

- State funding of higher education in California declined as a share of the state budget over the past decades (Cook 2017), and tuition prices rose 69% at public four-year universities in the state from 2008 to 2018 (Mitchell et al. 2019). Proposition 98, passed in 1988, required a minimum share of the state budget for K-14 education, which resulted in shifting more state higher education funding to the CCC. The state has no consistent approach to budgeting for the universities (LAO 2018).
- Tuition and fees have risen substantially for decades in California and nationally, as students and families have taken on the bulk of education-related institutional costs for higher

education (Desrochers and Hurlburt 2013). Currently, tuition and fees are relatively low at the CCC and the CSU, compared with similar institutions in other states, but are more expensive at the UC compared with peer institutions (LAO 2018).

- Pell grants, the federal need-based student aid program, covered about half the cost of attendance at four-year public colleges in the 1980s; now they cover less than 30 percent (TICAS 2020a). Housing and food costs are higher in California, compared with other states.
- California's tax revenues—and its state budget and funding of higher education—experience boom-and-bust cycles aligned with economic growth and recession. When tax revenues are down and state funding of higher education declines, the state's public systems of higher education tend to raise tuition precisely when students can least afford to pay it. For example, tuition at California's public universities doubled during the Great Recession but leveled off after 2012 (Johnson et al. 2019).

Total cost of attendance. Tuition comprises only one component of total college costs. Students and families must also factor in other costs, including room, board, transportation, books, and supplies. Median rent, in particular, has increased substantially over the past decade in California, and increasing numbers of undergraduates face homelessness and food insecurity (before and during the pandemic). In California, living costs are more than half of the overall cost of attendance for many students (LAO 2019). UC campuses have the highest total costs of attendance in the nation, relative to comparable public research universities. In terms of total cost, CSU campuses and the community colleges are more expensive than peer institutions in most other states (LAO 2016).

Net cost of attendance. Net costs tell a somewhat different story, and they are calculated by subtracting federal, state, and institutional student aid from total costs of attendance. Due to expensive housing for all students and the higher levels of student aid available to low-income students at four-year institutions, the net cost of attendance in California is lower for these students at many UC and CSU campuses, compared with community colleges in the same region. In the Sacramento area, for example, net costs annually are about \$8,700 at the nearby UC campus, \$11,400 at the CSU campus, and \$20,500 at a CCC campus (TICAS 2020b).

For low-income students, the net cost of attendance in California is lower at many UC and CSU campuses, compared with community colleges in the same region.

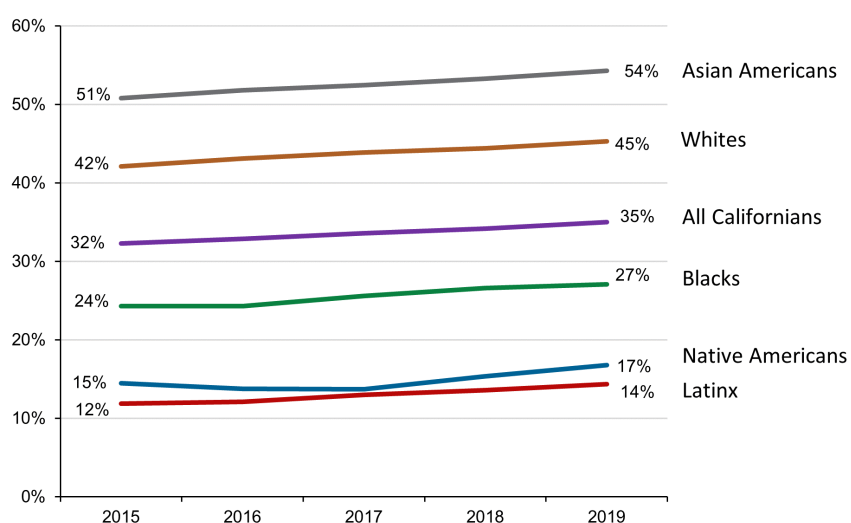
Ability to pay = Net cost in relation to income. For students and families, the ability to pay for college depends on the student's net cost of attendance in relation to their family income (and accumulated savings or wealth, though this is not part of the calculation). In California, the average net cost of attendance required about 16% of a family's median household income in 2017, which was lower than the national average (23%). Net costs required about 24% of family income for Blacks in California, 20% for Hispanics, and about 14% for Whites (Mitchell et al. 2019).

Student debt. Students in California take on lower debt burdens compared with peers in other states, largely because of the state's generous financial aid programs. But debt has different impacts based on race and income levels. For example, loan default rates are much higher among those attending private for-profit colleges (Johnson et al. 2019), and Students of Color are overrepresented in these institutions (Jackson & Adan 2016). In addition, White households, on average, have ten times the wealth of Black households in the U.S. and are in a better position to pay for college and to repay debt.

Educational attainment

Educational attainment rates are slower to change, compared with postsecondary graduation rates, because they encompass the entire adult population. These rates, however, have been inching up steadily in California and nationally. From 2010 to 2019, the share of adult Californians (ages 25 and older) with at least a high school diploma or equivalent increased from 81% to 84%. The share with a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 30% to 35% during the same period (U.S. Census 2020a). As with all measures examined in this chapter, however, these rates vary significantly by race (see Figure 2-13). Not everyone needs a bachelor's degree to succeed financially, but the lack of postsecondary education or training places job applicants at a disadvantage for well-paying careers. By this measure, Latinx, Native American, and Black residents appear to face difficult odds in a competitive job market.

Figure 2-13. Attainment of Bachelor's Degrees or Higher



Note: Rates are for adults in California ages 25 and older.
Source: U.S. Census 2020a.

Conclusion

California's public schools, colleges, and universities faced a severe recession and multi-year funding cuts during the Great Recession. They shifted their instruction and student supports online during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these and other challenges, Californians have experienced increasing educational opportunities, whether measured by the shares of students meeting state standards, graduating from high school, completing the a-g courses for the CSU and the UC, enrolling in college, or earning a college degree in a timely fashion. California's investments in higher education institutions and student financial aid have recovered since the Great Recession, and tuition increases have tapered off, though the long-term nationwide trend of shifting higher education costs to students and families continues. Educational attainment rates are inching upward, though not as fast as needed to support Californians in earning a living wage.

Telling the story of California's education outcomes through its state averages, however, belies a deeper and more complete narrative of chronic and cumulative injustices by race, income,

and other factors. California's public school districts have work to do, from kindergarten to high school, to create systems of equity for Black, Latinx, and Native American students, for all children from low-income families, and for others, including Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (CCO 2015). Transformative work also lies ahead for the public community colleges and university systems to create equitable structures for these students and for first-generation college students. The education institutions cannot do this work on their own. The next chapters explore the role of state governance and policy—with some examples of efforts underway—in developing and supporting racially just education institutions and systems.

Due to the size of California's population, statewide increases in educational outcomes and economic conditions for youth can help drive improvements nationally. Similarly, California's young Latinx residents, representing over half the state's public school students, are incredibly important to California's future. As Latinx, Black, Native American, and other Students of Color fare in achieving their educational goals, so too will California fare in increasing educational opportunity, developing its competitive workforce, and strengthening its communities and democratic institutions.

Questions for Chapter 2

1. How do the major findings of this chapter—chronic and cumulative injustices by race throughout a student's trajectory—align and contrast with your experiences in education (as a student and professional)? What are the implications for you as an education leader?
2. In relation to your experiences at your institution or organization, how would you describe local processes—both internally and with broader communities—for gathering, sharing, and discussing student data? How useful are these processes in informing changes in services, policies, or programs at your institution?
3. What student data does your institution, department, program, or organization gather that are disaggregated by race, income, or other factors? Issues to consider:
 - a. What historical timeframes are available?
 - b. With whom are the data shared, and how regularly?
 - c. What quantitative and qualitative data are included?
 - d. Who are involved in analyzing and discussing the data, and how could these discussions be expanded, deepened, and directed toward actions?
 - e. In what ways are students involved? Who needs to be invited to the table?
4. This chapter relies on statewide data from pre-kindergarten through higher education. Based on data from your institution, department, or program, what major outcomes appear along pertinent pathways for students, and what disproportionate impacts do they exhibit, if any, by race, income, and other factors? What key data are missing at your institution?
5. What's missing from this chapter's focus on statewide data? For example, what are the range of ways that students at your institution identify racially, culturally, by gender, and in other ways? How do they embrace or experience intersectionality at your institution? How does your institution gather student perspectives about these issues?
6. This chapter provides a snapshot in time about education outcomes at the state level. What has changed since this was written in early 2021?

3. A Statewide Vision Amid Disconnected Governance

Structural racism does not exist in isolation. The inequities that students experience in education are linked with forms of injustice outside the schoolhouse doors and beyond the college gates. These inequities have political and cultural histories. They are embedded into social norms and institutional structures that continue to be experienced by students, both individually and collectively, through anxiety, stress, and other manifestations of trauma. There are resources available concerning systemic racism and its impacts. There are professional opportunities for exploring bias and internalized racism. Research, scholar engagement, and student activism have spurred the creation of fields of study that reassess dominant histories in the U.S. and bring in voices of those who have been marginalized. Examples include critical race theory; African American studies; Indigenous studies; Chicana and Latinx studies; Asian American studies; Queer, Trans and Intersectional theory; and liberation pedagogy. These efforts provide important frameworks and context for understanding and addressing racism.* These approaches suggest that a wide range of factors—beyond education policy and practice—contribute to inequity in education, including, for example, tax structures, the prison system, lack of affordable housing, and the impacts of red-lining.

This chapter offers a much narrower scope in providing context for addressing structural racism. The inequities that students experience span their educational pathways, from preschool to college completion, and yet the professional domains of K-12 and postsecondary education might as well be worlds apart, with different governance, oversight structures, financing, legislative committees, lobbyists, administrative apparatus, professional organizations, and instructional supports (Kirst & Venezia 2017). The purpose of this chapter is to provide a common knowledge base about the governance structures for and recent reforms in K-12 and higher education, so that those seeking to address structural racism or other broad-scale issues in California education are aware of challenges and opportunities for action and alignment across K-12 and postsecondary systems. Secondly, this chapter offers brief summaries of recent state and system policy reforms to provide a baseline of information across the systems.

The formal structure of California's K-12 governance dates to 1913 and its Master Plan for Higher Education was created in 1960.

State Overview

California organizes its K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions through a distributed and disconnected set of governance structures that were created for an earlier century. The state's K-12 governance mechanisms date to 1913 and its Master Plan for Higher Education was created in 1960. These structures were created when most students did not have access to education or training beyond high school, and those who did enroll in college were predominantly White and mostly affluent. In enacting the Master Plan, California became the first state to establish universal access to college as a statewide policy goal (Callan 2012). The state invested in this goal during the 1960s by transforming and expanding its community college system as a lower-cost model, compared with four-year universities, for increasing postsecondary access. The federal government, through the Higher Education Act in 1965,

extended need-based financial aid to the general population for the first time, which expanded access to postsecondary education nationally (Eaton 1997).

The Master Plan defined separate governance structures for each of the public postsecondary systems (the CCC, the CSU, and the UC), without creating meaningful and on-going ways for the systems to align offerings with each other, or with K-12 schools. Through recent reforms at the K-12 level, the state has deferred budgetary decision-making primarily to local school districts and county offices of education, while also trying to encourage greater accountability at the local level through a “principle of subsidiarity” (Lin 2016). For public higher education, the state defers most decision-making and accountability to the CCC, CSU, and UC systems.

Disconnected systems of K-12 and postsecondary education have created barriers that make it more difficult for students to progress from high school to college, from community college to four-year institutions, among colleges and universities, and through college and into the workforce—particularly for Black, Latinx, Native American, low-income, and other students who have been underserved traditionally by higher education. These barriers include mixed signals to students, multiple and confusing admissions and placement processes, disconnected curricula and program requirements, loss of credits across institutions, and lack of cross-sector data to understand student progress (Kirst & Venezia 2017; Lewis et al. 2016a; Venezia et al. 2010). These disconnects also make it difficult to track student progress and thereby assess how well state-funded programs serve students throughout their educational pathways.

Statewide efforts to understand and address barriers that students face within and across systems occur in ad hoc and limited ways.

School districts and public higher education systems are crucial assets in supporting student learning, progression, and completion. But there is no on-going, structured process to support coordination, planning, or accountability across the education systems to meet the educational, training, and workforce needs of Californians. As a result, statewide efforts to understand and address barriers that students face within and across systems occur in ad hoc and limited ways. The only state entities that exercise substantial authority across the systems are the Governor (for planning, budgets, and administration) and the Legislature (for finance, legislation, and accountability). These powers are substantial, but are limited by the State Constitution (particularly with regard to the UC), the politics and finances of the moment, and other factors.

Governor Gavin Newsom has used his office to speak out about the role of education in contributing to the well-being of Californians and to their prospects for economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. Even as traditional education delivery systems have been upended during the pandemic, his administration has also, with legislative support, convened taskforces to develop a statewide vision across education systems, including through these plans that explicitly address equity:

- An overhaul of early childhood education in California, which would seek to integrate a range of federal and state systems beyond education (CHHS 2020);
- The creation of a cradle-to-career data system, which would track student progress across the education systems and into the workforce (WestEd 2020); and

* The Center for Teaching and Learning at Columbia University has developed a synthesis of some key resources on antiracist pedagogy in action, available at <https://ctl.columbia.edu/resources-and-technology/resources/anti-racist-pedagogy/>. See also APC et al. 2021 and Myung et al. 2021.

- A recovery plan that addresses equity in higher education, which would require better collaboration across the postsecondary systems (Governor’s Council 2021).

These plans seek to align the systems more effectively to address equity for California’s students. Examples of some actions underway at the state level are provided in Chapter 4. The ad hoc nature of the task force process, however, attests to the challenges ahead in a disconnected education governance environment: securing follow-up from the institutions and systems to plan and implement internal reforms; building coalitions to address legislative options where appropriate; and committing state finances to pay for the key steps along the way. These efforts are further complicated by Proposition 209, which banned affirmative action policies for state government, including in public schools, colleges, and universities (see sidebar). While these factors present challenges to statewide agenda setting and action for racial justice, they can be addressed through strong leadership and broad coalitions, a clear vision that is articulated well to taxpayers, and a series of concrete steps that offer win-win-win scenarios for the education systems, students, and Californians.

Proposition 209

In 1996, California voters passed Proposition 209, which amended the State Constitution to prohibit state government—including public schools, colleges, and universities—from considering race, gender, or ethnicity in employment, contracting, and education. In 2020, Proposition 16 gave Californians an opportunity to remove this ban on affirmative action policies, but a majority (56%) voted against removing the ban (that is, maintaining Proposition 209).

In effect, Proposition 209 prohibits public schools and colleges from considering race or gender in decision-making. This affects a wide range of issues, including the hiring of teachers, faculty, staff, and administrators, making it more complicated to diversify the workforce in ways that reflect the demographics of the state. It makes dialogue by any public body about race and structural racism more difficult and charged. For schools, it means that LCFF cannot target supplemental funding based on race or gender. For school districts, it means that the racial composition of neighborhoods cannot be a factor in considering school boundaries. In higher education, Proposition 209 decreased enrollment of Blacks and Latinx across the UC after its implementation in 1998, many of whom in turn enrolled in the CSU or the CCC, which pushed out other Black and Latinx students, many of whom exited higher education altogether (Carey 2020).

Early Childhood Education

California does not have a governance system for early childhood education. Rather, the administration of preschool in California is fragmented among upwards of a dozen state and federal programs that have different eligibility criteria, application processes, cost structures, educational standards, regulations, and requirements for preparation of childcare workers. Even though many families may be eligible for subsidized childcare, only a third of eligible children enroll in the state’s publicly funded programs (CHHS 2020). Children of Color and those from low-income families are overrepresented in those who miss out on these opportunities (Thorman & Danielson 2019).

Governor Newsom, however, has made early childhood education a high priority, and with support from the Legislature and guidance from several ad hoc task forces, a comprehensive Master plan for early learning and care (CHHS 2020) was published in December. The fact that the report was released by the state’s Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS), rather than the California Department of Education (CDE), shows the extent to which childcare spans government functions. The new plan creates guidelines for how to build a more equitable system of care that supports two generations—children and their working parents—by supporting universal preschool for all four-year-olds for the first time, expanding access for low-income three-year-olds, and increasing access to paid family leave. The plan seeks to make eligibility and applications for preschool more family friendly by unifying programs and funding streams, standardizing educator competencies, and streamlining governance and administration. The overall goals have been met with support from a range of early childcare specialists and advocates (D’Souza 2020). Some of the plan’s elements can be found in the Governor’s budget proposal and in the state’s final budget for 2020-21, including universal access to transitional kindergarten for four-year-olds (Ma 2021; EdSource 2021).

K-12 Education

Dual System of State Governance

California has a two-headed system of governance for K-12 education, with a State Superintendent of Public Instruction elected by voters every four years and a State Board of Education appointed by the Governor. The arrangement was formalized in the State Constitution in 1912 and in legislation in 1913 (Haberman 1999). This has been described as providing the Governor with relatively weak powers over education, since the state superintendent is not dependent on the Governor for appointment (Railey 2017).

- The State Board is the policymaking body with oversight over K-12 academic standards, curriculum, instructional materials (K-8 only), assessments, and accountability. The body has 11 voting members, including a student, all of whom are appointed by the governor.
- The state superintendent serves as executive officer and secretary of the State Board, but is not a voting member. The position is “nonpartisan” and is responsible for leading the CDE and executing the policies of the State Board.

The split governance system has been the source of sustained conflict. During the 1980s, the State Board (most of whom were Republicans appointed by Governor George Deukmejian) and State Superintendent Bill Honig (a Democrat, though the position is nonpartisan) aired their disagreements publicly. Their differences included adequate financing of education and the role of the superintendent in education policy—with the State Board taking the superintendent to court. Conflicts about the authority of each entity continued during the governorship of Pete Wilson in the 1990s (Haberman 1999).

Despite multiple reform attempts over the past hundred years, the governance structure remains intact, partly due to the challenges of gaining political support to amend the State Constitution. The past two decades have seen greater cooperation over policy. During the recent terms of Edmund G. “Jerry” Brown, Democrats controlled the Legislature, Democrat Tom Torlakson served as state superintendent, and most of the members of the State Board were Democrats and Brown appointees. State leaders took advantage of this opportunity to implement significant changes in education policy. These reforms (described below) were driven by the State Board

(and its president, Michael W. Kirst), the Legislature, and the Governor—and administered by the state superintendent.

Democrats continue to control these positions, with Tony Thurmond serving as state superintendent and all State Board members having been appointed by Governor Brown or Newsom. In his first years in office, Governor Newsom, while working to contain and address the COVID-19 pandemic, continued the major K-12 reforms of his predecessor and presented state budgets supportive of K-12 schools and of equity-centered efforts, including funding for teacher recruitment and plans for a cradle-to-career data system (Wheatfall-Lumm 2021).

Recent State Policy Reforms

State reforms during the Brown Administration altered the K-12 landscape by removing a range of state fiscal mandates and shifting control to local education agencies (school districts and county offices of education). The reforms include new state standards and assessments, and local finance and accountability mechanisms.

State standards and assessments

The State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards for math and English language arts in 2010, the Next Generation Science Standards in 2013, and the revised Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards the same year. The Common Core State Standards reduce the number of topics required to be taught in each grade and they emphasize conceptual understanding and real-world problem solving. The Smarter Balanced assessments, aligned with the state standards, have been administered since 2015. Students are tested in grades 3 to 8 and 11, as part of the broader California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), which also includes the California Alternate Assessments and the state's standards-based tests in Spanish.

The State Board achieved an important cross-system alignment by encouraging the state's public college and university systems to accept proficiency on the 11th grade assessments as evidence that a student is ready for college-level coursework. The initiative is called the Early Assessment Program (EAP). The CSU system and most CCC campuses include the EAP as one of multiple ways incoming students can show proficiency.

Greater local control of finances and accountability

From 1978 to 2013, California took steps that had the effect of centralizing funding and accountability of public schools at the state level:

- **Proposition 13.** In 1978, voters limited property tax revenues in California by passing Proposition 13 as an amendment to the State Constitution. Property taxes paid by individuals and businesses dropped by 60% statewide in the first year (Taylor 2016), which significantly decreased public funding for schools and community colleges. The proposition also shifted the burden of financing public schools from local governments to the state general fund (Haberman 1999).
- **Proposition 98.** In 1988, voters passed Proposition 98 as an amendment to the State Constitution to establish a minimum annual funding level for K-14 schools (that is, K-12 schools and community colleges). State funding for the schools increases annually based on attendance and growth in the economy. Proposition 98 shifted local revenues from property taxes into a special state fund to support schools statewide. It also affected higher education by further distinguishing funding for community colleges from funding for the university systems.

- **Categorical funds.** During this period, the California Legislature targeted increasing shares of local education funding for specific purposes, programs, or categories of students, determined by the state (examples include funding for administrator and teacher training, staff mentoring, English tutoring, and library improvement). Over time, the growth of these programs added complexity to local budgeting and limited the flexibility of school boards to allocate funding. These “categorical programs” were also popular, however, among many who supported the specific causes identified in the funding restrictions.
- **No Child Left Behind.** In 2001, the U.S. Congress passed No Child Left Behind, which mandated states to increase their accountability of K-12 schools, through greater emphasis on standardized tests and the determination of “adequate yearly progress” (AYP). These and other federal efforts contributed to centralizing educational accountability at the state level in California.

In 2013, California began reversing these centralizing trends with the passage of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

- **Equity.** The new funding formula made the state’s allocations more equitable across school districts, though race could not be a factor in the formula (due to restrictions of Proposition 209). LCFF equalized base funding at a higher level for all districts. In every district, it also provided extra funding for every child who is from a low-income family, is an English learner, or is a foster youth. For those districts with over 55% of students in these three categories, the formula gave an additional add-on for each of these students (Kirst & Nodine 2021).
- **Local flexibility.** In repealing over 40 categorical programs, LCFF simplified the state’s funding allocation. This gave school districts increased flexibility in deciding how to allocate resources.

The Legislature, in passing LCFF, also included a new Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), to give school districts and their local communities (including parents) a greater voice in identifying student performance goals and how to achieve them. The idea was to shift from a “test-and-punish” compliance model (Darling-Hammond 2013) to a continuous improvement model that encourages local-driven accountability and progress over time. After the state implemented the LCAP in 2014, advocacy groups serving Students of Color, low-income students, and other students criticized the lack of statewide accountability regarding these student groups (Fensterwald 2016). The state updated LCAP in 2017-18, requiring districts to identify and describe wide achievement gaps and how they planned to address them.

A new California School Dashboard was also implemented in fall 2017, providing a way to assess and compare local performance statewide. The dashboard includes six state indicators (graduation rate, academic performance, suspension rate, English learner progress, college and career preparation, and chronic absenteeism) as well as several local indicators. Outcomes on each of the state measures are comparable across districts and reflect both current status and change over time (Chapter 2 provides statewide outcomes on several indicators). The approach focuses on multiple measures to understand school performance.

Concerns about racial equity

It has taken a decade for these substantial reforms to be rolled out and implemented. In the first years, some teachers reported challenges in developing instructional strategies for the range of concepts featured in the state standards (Warren 2013; Lewis et al. 2016c). Similarly, districts and county offices of education reported a need for guidance and capacity building in

strategic planning and data-informed decision making in relation to the state's priority areas (Fullan and Rincón-Gallardo 2017; PPIC 2016b; Lewis et al. 2016b). In response to these kinds of challenges, the state and the local education agencies expanded their instructional materials and trainings associated with the standards. In 2017, the state established the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) to assist school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools in developing and achieving their accountability goals.

Persistent questions remain, however, about the implications of LCFF and LCAP for Black, Latinx, Native American, and other Students of Color, as well as the student groups identified by LCFF. The new finance mechanism has been successful in allocating education funding more equitably among school districts, based on student factors identified in the formula, but concerns remain as to whether the additional funding that districts receive for the identified student groups reaches these students consistently (Ed Trust-West 2017; KPCC 2017; Hill & Ugo 2015). LCAP was designed to shift greater authority for accountability to the local level, with the potential of engaging more parents and communities in the process. It was not designed to address equitable use of resources within a district nor to rethink the structures and dynamics of schooling.

Postsecondary Education

A Patchwork of System Governance

The Master Plan's roles for each system

California's governance structure for public colleges and universities stems from the Master Plan for Higher Education, created over 60 years ago as a 15-year plan which was, itself, a product of historical circumstances, political compromises, education system aspirations, and state leadership at the time. In particular, its development came during a booming economy and it was spurred by statewide needs to accommodate in a planned way the large and growing numbers of Baby Boomers, so that political interests, ambitions, and conflicts among postsecondary institutions did not dominate decision-making about the creation of new campuses and programs (Callan 2012). In seeking to achieve these aims, the Master Plan acknowledged the importance of private colleges and universities, but it focused primarily on the three public systems of higher education, for which it established distinct roles.

When the state had faced increased demand for college primarily from White students in the late 1950s, California created its famous Master Plan and invested in the expansion of the community colleges.

- **The California Community Colleges** operate as open-access institutions and serve as the state's primary point of entry into higher education. They offer lower-division academic courses for students interested in transferring to four-year colleges and universities; career education and vocational certificates; adult basic education; and enrichment courses. The community colleges are heavily regulated by the Legislature (through the education code), but the system's governance structure is decentralized. The systemwide chancellor and 17-member Board of Governors have only nominal authority to set policy and goals for the system. Rather, the 116 colleges (including one fully online college) have a strong tradition of local control, with each of

the 72 community college districts having its own faculty pay schedule and course numbering systems. The colleges comprise the nation's largest higher education system.

- **The California State University** serves as the state's comprehensive four-year university, providing broad access to undergraduate students pursuing a bachelor's degree. The CSU draws from the top third of the state's high school graduates and has 23 campuses. The CSU also offers teacher training and master's programs, and a limited number of doctorate programs. The CSU is centrally governed by a 25-member Board of Trustees. It is the nation's largest university system.

- **The University of California** is the state's primary academic research university, where undergraduate admission is highly selective. The UC draws from the top eighth of the state's high school graduates, and those who wish to attend the UC must have near-perfect grades and very high test-scores. The UC is unique among the state's education systems in having constitutional autonomy from the State Legislature. However, the Governor and state legislators can request that the university take actions—for example, as part of budget agreements—which then become binding if agreed to by the 26-member UC Board of Regents. The UC operates 10 campuses.

Each of the public systems has strong traditions of faculty governance over academic issues (such as admissions standards, assessments, and course and program requirements). The Legislature exercises some authority over these areas for the CCC, but mostly refrains from doing so for the CSU and does not have these powers over the UC.¹ The CSU Chancellor's Office and the UC Office of the President do have these powers for their respective systems.

No framework for statewide planning and coordination

The Master Plan does not provide a framework for statewide planning, policy development, addressing the roles of private nonprofit and for-profit institutions, or updating the Master Plan itself. The private for-profit colleges have expanded rapidly and are overseen by the Department of Consumer Affairs; these institutions have faced concerns about quality and account for a disproportionate share of student loan defaults (PPIC 2016a). The state has not integrated career and vocational education into its plans for higher education generally. Workforce investment boards, for example, facilitate regionally based career training opportunities; they are operated by the California Workforce Development Board. The California Student Aid Commission predates the Master Plan and provides statewide policy analysis and planning on financial aid. The commission was created by the Legislature in 1955 to administer financial aid programs for students in postsecondary programs.

In short, the state has multiple higher education entities operating with little coordination: each of the three public higher education systems, the private nonprofit institutions, the private for-profit institutions, the adult education programs operated by K-12 school districts, and the workforce investment boards (Scott & Kirst 2017). This does not include the K-12 schools, whose role is to prepare students for college and careers.

Could a coordinating body help California?

For almost 40 years, California did have a statewide entity, the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), whose purpose was to assist with statewide planning and coordination of higher education. Established in 1974, CPEC advised the Legislature and

¹ The passage of AB 928 reveals the Legislature's latest efforts to encourage the public systems to work together to improve transfer opportunities for students. See Chapter 4, "Common Course Numbering in the Community Colleges," for more information.

gathered and analyzed higher education data, but it did not have substantial influence over the postsecondary systems. It was eliminated by Governor Brown in 2011 in a line item veto to the budget during the Great Recession. In his veto message, the Governor wrote, “While I appreciate the importance of coordinating and guiding state higher education policy, I believe CPEC has been ineffective” (Murphy 2011). This comment raises an important question: What kind of coordinating body could help California identify and address its goals for postsecondary education?

During CPEC’s final two decades, the organization was not effective in helping the state address the needs of students. During the 1990s and 2000s, California’s colleges and universities faced new economic and demographic challenges, including constrained public financing of higher education at a time when the demand for college was expanding rapidly and student populations were becoming much more diverse. When the state had faced increased demand for college primarily from White students in the late 1950s, California created its Master Plan and invested in the expansion of the community colleges. In the 1990s and 2000s, by contrast, the state did not develop a comprehensive plan to support access and success for the larger and more diverse populations, many of whom were Black, Latinx, Native American, and other Students of Color.

As a result of this lack of leadership in planning for predictable enrollment growth and the cyclical nature of financial downturns, college access for Californians declined sharply—in terms of drops in enrollment and in enrollment growth, primarily at the CCC and the CSU—during three economic recessions: the early 1990s, the early 2000s, and 2008 to 2010 (Callan 2012). In addressing statewide goals that require cross-system coordination or planning, California’s disconnected postsecondary governance structure has proven ineffective, even during CPEC’s tenure (Finney et al. 2014; Richardson & Martinez 2009).

Governor Newsom’s agenda across higher education systems

Governor Newsom has stepped into this void by supporting the development of several proposals to coordinate planning and action to address equity across the education systems. The plans include creating a cradle-to-career data system (to track student progress across the education systems) and seeking to address equity through better statewide coordination across higher education. Regarding the latter, the Recovery with Equity roadmap was developed by the California Governor’s Council for Postsecondary Education, an advisory body pulled together by the Governor that has been meeting every two months to address statewide needs in education, particularly regarding equity. The Council includes the heads of each of the public postsecondary systems, the president of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the President of the State Board of Education, and other leaders. The Council’s Recovery with Equity plan includes these ambitious cross-system elements:

In the 1990s and 2000s, the state did not develop a comprehensive plan to support access and success for the larger and more diverse populations, many of whom were Black, Latinx, Native American, and other Students of Color.

- facilitating student transitions from high school to college, including integrated advising, access to transcripts, streamlined financial aid assistance, and increased options for dual enrollment;

- establishing an integrated admissions and transfer platform across the public higher education systems;
- streamlining and unifying the college admission process, including a “common application” and an option for dual admission at a community college and a university;
- developing a common course numbering system; and
- establishing an integrated platform so that students can access the state’s social services in one place, including financial aid, housing, food support, healthcare, and childcare (Governor’s Council 2021).

Some elements of the plan are being supported immediately through the state budget for 2020-21 and through legislation (see Chapter 4), but it is not clear, currently, how the agenda will be parsed over time for messaging and implementation, and what actions will be taken up within or across systems. This agenda, however, represents the first expansive and detailed statewide vision across the education systems in decades, and it is geared toward addressing equity (writ broadly, with Proposition 209 intact) and student success.

Recent System Initiatives

The sections below briefly summarize recent efforts by the open-access and broad-access systems in California—the CCC and the CSU, respectively—to address equity and improve student success. The initiatives described do not reflect all pertinent actions underway by the systems, nor do they include reform efforts at the campus level. In addition, these summaries do not include the many actions taken by the systems and institutions in response to COVID-19.

The California Community Colleges

Vision for Success. Since 2017, the community colleges have been guided by an ambitious strategic plan for large-scale reforms called the Vision for Success. The plan commits to transparency in achieving a series of systemwide goals by 2022, including: increasing degree and certificate completion, increasing transfers to four-year institutions, closing equity gaps (by 2027), reducing excess credit accumulation, and increasing employment on-ramps (CCCCO n.d.; LAO 2021b). In 2020, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force at the CCC reported that most community college students (51%) are Students of Color*, yet only one in five tenured faculty (21%) self-identify as such (CCCCO 2020). The task force recommended a series of “institutional” strategies driven by policy changes; “interactional” strategies based on procedural changes; and “individual” strategies to promote supportive and inclusive behaviors.

Guided Pathways. The community colleges’ systemwide implementation of Guided Pathways has important implications for equity by seeking to provide students with a more integrated instructional and support system. The initiative supports colleges in organizing their existing programs (across instruction, student supports, and administrative divisions), so that students are provided with course-taking choices that are more connected to their educational and career goals, and with supports that are integrated more holistically (CCO 2020).

Assessment and placement: AB 705. In 2017, the Legislature passed AB 705 (Irwin), which transformed the community colleges’ approach to assessment and placement into math and English courses, with significant implications for equity. Starting in fall 2019, the colleges were required to use students’ high school grades as the main way of placing students into courses, and were restricted from placing students into remedial, or basic skills, courses unless evidence suggests that they are highly unlikely to succeed in the college-level course. The new policy brought changes in remediation at many colleges during the first year of implementation, with

impacts for Black, Latinx, Native American, and other Students of Color, as well as low-income students, since these students are overrepresented in remedial courses:

- The colleges doubled the proportion of transfer-level classes in English and math.
- There was a significant growth in “corequisite” supports as a primary way to address the learning needs of incoming students—that is, providing students with additional supports within transferable, college-level classes, rather than requiring them to take remedial coursework that does not count toward graduation (CCO 2019a).

The second year of implementation, however, saw a significant slowing of this progress, with many colleges maintaining large remedial course offerings, particularly in math. Black and Latinx students are disproportionately enrolled in these colleges (Hern et al. 2020).

New state funding formula. A new performance-based funding formula was implemented in 2018-19, with important implications for equity. Each college’s funding is driven by: (1) a base allocation reflecting enrollment, (2) a supplemental amount based on enrollment of students from low-income backgrounds, and (3) a range of student outcomes aligned roughly with the Vision for Success, including success metrics for students from low-income backgrounds. The state’s overall allocations to each of the above areas are 70%, 20%, and 10%, respectively, with “hold harmless” provisions that insulate districts from some funding losses over the next several years (LAO 2021b).

The California State University

Graduation Initiative 2025. In 2016, the CSU Chancellor’s Office committed to an ambitious set of goals called Graduation Initiative (GI) 2025. The plan calls for increasing graduation rates substantially for all CSU students while eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps based on income and ethnicity. The initiative’s goals include doubling the four-year graduation rate, from 19% in 2015 to 40% by 2025, and increasing the six-year rate from 57% in 2015 to 70% in 2025. As of 2020, the four-year rates had risen to 31% (over halfway to the target), and the six-year rates to 62% (not quite halfway) (CSU 2021). Progress on equity gaps has been uneven (CSU Dashboard 2021). The initiative includes strategies in six areas (academic preparation, enrollment management, financial support, student engagement and well-being, data-driven decision making, and administrative barriers), with each of the universities mapping out its own roadmap to achieve the goals through these six areas.

Assessment and placement: EO 1110. The CSU Board of Trustees in 2017 directed all campuses to transform their approach to assessment and placement into math and English courses, with significant implications for equity. Through the implementation of Executive Order (EO) 1110, the CSU retired the use of assessment exams for course placement. Instead, campus programs overseeing math and English courses began to use multiple measures for course placement, including high school grades and scores on the Smarter Balanced assessment given to high school juniors. EO 1110 also eliminated noncredit-bearing remedial courses in these subject areas. Campuses were required to develop alternate ways to provide additional supports to help students succeed in courses that count toward degrees, such

* The community colleges use the term “underrepresented minorities,” though these groups represent 51% of students.

as corequisite courses that provide remedial help aligned with the coursework. Campus departments had to redesign their curricula, and the early results have been promising in helping more incoming students pass college-level math and English (Bracco et al. 2019; Watanabe 2019).

Conclusion


Over the past half-century, California's public systems of education have succeeded in preparing many more students for higher education and expanding postsecondary access to much more diverse populations, yet the Golden State's governance structures have not changed significantly since the Master Plan of 1960. There remains no routine way for California to develop, coordinate, and track the success of statewide strategies to facilitate student progress from high schools to colleges, from community colleges to universities, and into the workforce. Without these mechanisms in place, efforts to address racial justice and equity—or other major reforms—across the systems must rely on ad hoc tactics and strategies driven by the moment.

Is this one such moment of transformation? California's schools, colleges, and universities have substantial strengths to draw from in building more equitable approaches to student learning, progress, and completion. The state's public education systems are working on reforms that address equity in important ways. With the support of the Legislature, system leaders, and others, Governor Newsom has presented an ambitious vision for education in California, with priorities described in taskforce plans. Rather than transforming the state's governance structures, this vision relies on public policy to build bridges across the systems to support equitable student success. Several elements from the plans are already in play, through the 2020-21 state budget and in legislation (see Chapter 4). As the state emerges from the impacts of COVID-19, will education leaders, joined by community and business leaders, work with the Governor, Legislature, and the education systems over the next years to contribute their voices, reshape and refine the concepts, bring together coalitions to inspire action, and invest resources to build infrastructure for an equitable California?

Rather than transforming the state's governance structures, Gov. Newsom's vision for education relies on public policy development to build bridges across the systems to support equitable student success.

Questions for Chapter 3

1. This chapter provides an overview of state governance of public K-12 and postsecondary education in California.
 - a. Based on your own experiences in education, how is your work affected by local/institutional, system, and state governance?
 - b. What tensions do you experience across the levels? What alignments and misalignments do students experience?
 - c. In what ways are these alignments and misalignments related to equity?

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2. This chapter also provides short summaries of major reforms underway in relation to equity in public K-12 schools, the public community colleges, and the CSU.
 - a. Based on your own experiences in education, what additional reforms or initiatives are important to be aware of in the public systems? For example, what should be considered from the UC?
 - b. What key information needs to be considered regarding the roles of public charter schools, private K-12 education, and private nonprofit and for-profit postsecondary education?
 3. In considering the major reforms that are occurring in relation to your own experiences in education, at what level are they taking place: local/institutional, systemwide, or state policy? Or has it been a mix?
 4. Would a statewide coordinating body across K-12 and higher education help California? If so, what powers should it have, and not have? What benefits and challenges would it present?
 5. This chapter provides a snapshot in time about governance and system reforms in public schools, colleges, and universities in California. One thing that has changed since this was written in early 2021 is that the state revenue outlook appears to much more favorable, and perhaps for several years. What does this suggest for addressing racial disparities in education?

4. State Policy and the Roles all Education Leaders Serve

All education leaders in California—whether working in classrooms, support programs, institutionally, systemwide, or statewide—serve key roles in addressing racial and other inequities. Local education leaders working directly with students and with colleagues, for example, can request and analyze student data; examine and improve their own practices; support the hiring and advancement of Teachers, Faculty, and Staff of Color; contribute to supportive environments for Students of Color; bridge institutional silos to build whole-student approaches; ensure that the implementation of new policies and programs support equitable teaching and learning; develop and track equity goals in budget, strategic planning, hiring, and curriculum committees; and collaborate with researchers to create a scalable foundation of evidence about what is and is not working for Black, Latinx, and other Students of Color (see Dillard 2020; Ash et al. 2020; Tan 2020; APC et al. 2021; Myung et al. 2021).

Local education leaders, however, cannot do this work alone. Structural racism spans institutional borders, and those working locally for change sometimes come up against student barriers that exist across the education systems and may be addressed better by system or state, rather than institutional, policy. Local practitioners who are informed about system and state policy are better positioned to participate in and shape coalitions for change. And education leaders at the system and state levels (whether in government, foundations, or policy organizations) who connect with practitioners can help to ensure that policy reforms are aligned with sound education practice and bring funding for implementation support.

The cases illuminate the key roles that all education leaders can serve, wherever we sit, in addressing equity within and across systems.

In short, California needs its education leaders and its public systems of education to work together to address the impacts of racial and other inequities along the student pathway, from preschools, grade schools, and high schools through colleges and universities and into the workforce. To build awareness of state policy options, this chapter describes four state levers for enacting policy change in education. The paper concludes by exploring three on-going examples of cross-system reforms whose alignments and misalignments impact racial justice. The cases illuminate the key roles that all education leaders can serve, wherever we sit, in addressing equity within and across systems—through understanding policy, expanding our leadership capacity, and networking across institutions and systems.

State Education Policy Levers

California's Master Plan for Higher Education does not establish the means for planning common actions across the postsecondary systems or with K-12 education, but the Governor can use his office to build public awareness, develop a statewide agenda, build coalitions, draft proposals, draw attention to legislative or executive actions, and otherwise spur changes statewide. There are many policy areas that impact education significantly, including property tax structures, but this section describes state policy levers that are directly focused on

education: data systems, alignment of coursework and assessments, state finance, and accountability (Callan et al. 2006; Kirst & Venezia 2017). The section also provides examples of California's use of these levers to support cross-system alignment.

Statewide Data Systems

Until recently California has not been active in developing a statewide data system across K-12 and postsecondary education. California is, in fact, one of the few states that does not have a routine mechanism to track the progress of students across any combination of its education systems. Governor Newsom has proposed to change this and has supported the creation of a new “cradle-to-career” data system to provide for longitudinal tracking of student progress across preschool, K-12 education, postsecondary education, and into the workforce. The taskforce plan also includes an ambitious set of tools to help students select colleges and programs based on their interests; access financial aid; and connect with a range of supports and work opportunities (WestEd 2020). These proposals come with a hefty price tag, but there are lower-cost options (Moore & Bracco 2018). The final state budget for 2021-22 included \$15 million from the General Fund and \$3.8 million from Proposition 98 for the next phase of planning (Ting 2021).

Alignment of Programs, Coursework, and Assessments

California has been active in aligning coursework and assessments among K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions, and in transforming remediation in college.

- **Coursework.** The Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards are efforts to improve alignment of high school coursework with the rigorous expectations of college. Also, the “a-g” course sequence clearly identifies the high school courses required for entry into CSU and UC. Not all high schools offer the full a-g sequence, however, and not all interested students have access to these courses in the schools that do offer them. Black and Latinx students are less likely than White and Asian American students to complete a-g coursework (CCO 2021; CCO 2018).
- **Assessments.** High school juniors, in taking the state's Smarter Balanced assessments, automatically participate in the Early Assessment Program (EAP), which provides them with early indications about their preparation for college-level math and English. The CCC and the CSU, in turn, use these assessment results as a factor in determining access to math and English courses without additional supports. The CCC and the CSU also consider high school grades in determining access to English and math courses.
- **Transformation of remediation.** Remediation for incoming freshpersons in math and English in the CCC was transformed by the Legislature through AB 705. This has the potential of placing the vast majority of incoming students in college-level math and English courses that earn credits toward graduation, with additional supports provided within these courses. The CSU implemented similar systemwide changes through executive order by the chancellor. (For more information, see the case study later in this chapter on “Statewide Remediation”).

California has also sought to simplify transfer from the community colleges to the CSU, through the development of associate degrees for transfer (ADT), described later in this chapter.

State Finance

The state has strong powers associated with appropriations in education, through explicit and implicit incentives and messages embedded in the budget, but the state's record in using

finance levers to encourage sustained collaboration across the systems has been limited. For example, the state has not used the budget process to encourage or require the development of a common course numbering system or an explicit tuition policy (LAO 2017).

Some of the state's most influential policy levers are driven by its budget formulas, and these are based primarily on enrollment, enrollment of specific student populations, enrollment growth, and other factors, depending on the system. Proposition 98 stabilized revenues for schools and community colleges, but there has been volatility in state fiscal support for UC and CSU during economic upswings and recessions, as well as growing dependence on tuition (CFF 2017).

- **K-12 education.** The implementation of LCFF provided a more equitable method of funding across districts based on student demographics (as described in Chapter 3). It also provided substantial authority to school districts to set their own budgetary priorities. This shift confers broader latitude upon school districts to meet student needs, but advocacy groups and others have raised concerns about how to determine whether the additional funding for students from low-income families or with limited English-speaking abilities, for example, is being used to improve services for these students.
- **The CCC.** California has a new performance-based funding formula to determine allocations of state funding across the community colleges (as described in Chapter 3). For each college, 20% of its allocation is based on enrollment of students from low-income backgrounds, and 10% on student outcomes measures, including for students from low-income backgrounds. During 2019-20 and 2020-21, the colleges were provided with flexibility so that their funding would not be reduced due to disruptions from the pandemic (LAO 2021b). These metrics are promising over time, however, in catalyzing action on equity (Elliott et al. 2021). CCC districts, as a condition of receiving state funds for the Student Equity and Achievement Program, are required to develop and update student equity plans every three years (LAO 2021b).
- **The CSU and the UC.** The state has limitations on its authority in requiring changes in university practices, but it has used the budget process to foster agreements with the systems on state priorities. In the Budget Act of 2017 (AB 97), for example, the Legislature required "No later than May 1, 2018, the Trustees of the California State University shall change university policies and practices related to placement of students in remedial or developmental programs." Even for the UC system, which is granted autonomy by the State Constitution, the state has negotiated with the UC Office of the President on tuition, out-of-state and in-state enrollment levels, and reporting on student progression and completion.

The state offers dual enrollment funding to both high schools and colleges, which provides incentives for these institutions to work together regionally to offer college coursework for high school students. Whereas "traditional" dual enrollment programs typically serve advanced high school students who are college bound, California's College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) program, begun in 2015, targets students who are underrepresented in higher education. California also provides funding to many career and technical education initiatives, including career pathway programs and workforce preparation programs that incentivize regional collaborations between high schools and community colleges. Program outcomes appear promising but are difficult to assess without a statewide data system. Historically, workforce programs have not been integrated well with academic programs at the colleges (Koppich et al. 2017).

Accountability

For K-12 schools, LCAP defers most accountability processes to the local level. To support these processes, the California School Dashboard reports current outcomes and progress over time on a range of measures for each school (as summarized in Chapter 3). Transparent reporting on metrics for the college/career indicator provide additional incentives for high schools to address and improve the preparation of students for college. For 2020, state law suspended the reporting of all dashboard indicators due to COVID-19.

In the community colleges, California has begun to link funding to student outcomes through its new performance-based funding model (as described in Chapter 3). The community colleges offer several data tools that report student outcomes, including the Data Mart, which provides results based on queries, and Student Success Metrics, which capture key progression points along students' pathways from recruitment to completion, transfer, and the workforce.

Top-down interventions in academics by the state, even with the best intentions for students, can lead to unintended consequences in implementation.

For the CSU and the UC, state budget agreements shift annually based on relatively short-term priorities, including agreements that the systems set annual performance targets and report the results. Governor Newsom's budget proposal for 2020-21, for example, linked increased funding in base support for the CSU and the UC to goal-setting and reporting on equity gaps, online education, and dual admissions with community colleges. For the CSU, the Governor's proposed equity goals aligned with the CSU's own plans in GI 2025. For the UC, the Governor's goals accelerated the system's published goals for equity (LAO 2021a).

Statewide Opportunities to Address Structural Inequities

The fact that California can take statewide action, through its policy levers, to enact or encourage change in education does not mean that legislative language or executive orders are the best approaches for doing so. Top-down interventions in education by the state, even with the best intentions for students, can lead to unintended consequences in schools and colleges when implementation structures, processes, capacity, and limitations are not addressed.

This policy brief closes by describing three issue areas in which policy actions have been taken and continue to be adjusted in California: recent reforms in remediation, math pathways, and common course numbering in the community colleges. The changes in policy in these areas have implications for equity and for alignment across the education systems, and they have sprung from different levels of governance, in conflict or through collaboration: by academic program, institutionally, systemwide, and statewide.

The purpose of exploring these examples is not to advocate for a particular approach nor to suggest that these are the key issues to examine in addressing equity. Rather, the aims are to provide examples of the variety of roles that education leaders have undertaken to address equity through policy development; to encourage discussion about the range of policy options available at the program, institution, system, and state levels, including their strengths and limitations in implementation; and to spur leadership and coordinated action at every policy level to support racial equity in K-12 and postsecondary education in California.

Statewide Remediation: Top-down and Bottom-up Reforms

The passage of AB 705 regarding the community colleges

In 2017, Katie Hern, an English professor (now at Skyline College) and co-founder of the California Acceleration Project (CAP), spoke at the California Education Policy Fellows Program (EPFP) about CAP's efforts to catalyze changes in remediation in the CCC. Working with CAP co-founder Myra Snell, a math professor at Los Medanos College, Hern and other faculty had been travelling statewide since 2009, sharing research findings with their colleagues in CCC English and math departments, to encourage them to redesign ineffective and inequitable remediation practices.

CAP's work coincided with an upswell in research studies examining the impacts of existing remedial education practices on student persistence and completion. For example, the RP Group in 2007 (three years before CAP was founded) had released *Basic skills as a foundation for success in the California Community Colleges*, whose findings prompted many community college faculty and staff to rethink their remedial programs. The Community College Research Center (CCRC) was conducting national studies on the effectiveness of existing and alternative developmental education programs (Bailey 2009; Edgecombe 2011). One shot deal? (Venezia et al. 2010) brought students' voices into the conversation in California; the students described assessment and placement in the CCC as an isolated event for which they had received minimal advance information and yet it affected the cost of their education and their prospects of earning a degree. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching launched Math Pathways in 2011 (Huang 2018).

In sharing the findings of these and other studies with English and math departments, CAP provided evidence that

- the community colleges were placing far too many students into remediation who didn't need to be there;
- existing policies had significant implications for equity in the CCC, since Students of Color were far more likely, compared with White students, to be placed into remedial courses;
- colleges that had simply broadened their placement policies without any other major reforms had seen jumps in the completion of transfer-level English and math within a year; and
- colleges and universities that had developed corequisite courses were achieving significantly higher levels of student success across all student populations within the first year (CAP n.d.).

The changes in policy that Hern and Snell sought (that is, broadening placement policies through the use of multiple measures and implementing corequisite models) could not be made at the system level, since the CCC Chancellor's Office does not have this authority over academic programs. Likewise, neither district boards of governors nor campus administrators had authority over these program-level decisions. Rather, faculty in math, English, or other departments had established the placement and curriculum policies, and they had the power to alter them. As a result, CAP focused on changing departmental policies by sharing a body of evidence with colleagues across campuses and providing professional development and technical assistance to support reforms. Through this approach, CAP informed a conversation within and across colleges regarding assessment, placement, and developmental coursework, but faced challenges in convincing departments to change their policies.

“Voluntary grassroots mobilization wasn’t going to achieve the changes students deserved.”

— Katie Hern

In February 2017, when Hern spoke with California EPFP participants, she described the struggles of effecting statewide policy reform through a bottom-up approach, one department at a time, in the largest system of higher education in the nation (Nodine 2018). The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) had recently reported on the extent to which Students of Color were over-represented in developmental sequences in the CCC and the extent to which these sequences were delaying and derailing students’ college plans (Mejia et al. 2016). These findings confirmed CAP’s own research and experiences. The PPIC study also found that, despite CAP’s work over the decade to support the redesign of developmental education, “enrollment in redesigned courses represented only eight percent of total enrollment in developmental math” (p. 4). According to Hern, this information—that the vast majority of students in developmental education courses, which were disproportionately Students of Color, were still stuck in broken remedial structures—was a pivotal factor leading her and Snell to decide that “voluntary grassroots mobilization wasn’t going to achieve the changes students deserved, and we needed to work on state policy reform” (Hern 2021).

Hern and Snell reached out to the Campaign for College Opportunity and Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, with whom they’d been working on Basic Skills reforms, to discuss a state policy approach. Two EPFP participants, Laura Metune, vice chancellor for external relations at the CCCC, and Daisy Gonzales, principal consultant to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, worked outside the auspices of EPFP to contribute to the state networking that CAP, the Campaign, and others had begun. Jacqui Irwin introduced AB 705, the CCCC supported the legislation, and the Campaign played a leading role in building support among legislators, the Governor’s Office, and outside organizations. AB 705 was signed by Governor Brown in October 2017, and the new law mandated compliance by all community colleges by fall 2019.

The law required every college to maximize the probability that a student will enter and complete transferable, college-level courses in English and math (called “transfer-level” in CA) within one year. It also required colleges to use one or more of the following measures in placement: high school coursework, high school grades, and high school grade point average. In effect, the law flipped the burden of proof onto those seeking to maintain traditional developmental programs. Since the share of students progressing from traditional developmental coursework to complete transfer-level courses was very low (Hern 2010; Mejia et al. 2016), these courses did not meet the standard for maximizing completion as required in the law. Nonetheless, many English and math departments have continued to enroll students in these courses rather than in corequisite models, so continued work remains in implementation (Hern et al. 2020).

A wide range of education leaders stepped beyond their job descriptions to understand the interplay between state policy and local challenges, take on leadership roles within and beyond their own organization, and network with other individuals and groups.

These statewide policy changes did not happen suddenly, in a vacuum. Reports from research organizations, with support from foundations, had been percolating up for a dozen years. A growing movement was underway in the community colleges, supported by an annual

conference by the RP Group, for educators across campuses to share what they were learning in practice about student success. And CAP's efforts had been effective in engaging many community college faculty members throughout the state in examining their own policies for developmental education. Mintrom (2000) suggests that political actors who promote policy ideas serve key roles in enacting major policy innovations. Regarding the development and passage of AB 705, a wide range of education leaders stepped beyond their job descriptions to understand the interplay between state policy and local challenges, take on leadership roles within and beyond their own organization, and network with other individuals and groups. Faculty, researchers, administrators, legislative staff, foundations, policy and advocacy organizations, legislators, the Governor, and others served crucial roles in bringing together top-down and bottom-up policy change in the passage and implementation of AB 705 (Asera 2018).

The announcement of Executive Order 1110 in the CSU

By the time AB 705 was signed into law in October 2017, the CSU Chancellor's Office was requiring similar reforms of developmental education at its campuses through a different top-down process. In 2016, the CSU had already adopted (through GI 2025) its ambitious goals for increasing graduation rates, and each of the campuses had been charged with developing its own plans to contribute to these goals across six strategic areas, one of which was called "academic preparation." To support broader transformation in this area, the Chancellor's Office in March 2017 reported to the CSU Board of Trustees that it was planning systemwide reforms in remedial education that included eliminating no-credit classes in English and math and replacing them with for-credit courses that included extra academic supports within the class structure (Gordon 2017). In the state budget act approved by the Governor in June 2017 (AB 97), the Legislature required that the CSU change its policies for remedial education no later than May 1, 2018. In August 2017, the Chancellor's Office jumpstarted that process by releasing Executive Order 1110, which required all campuses by fall 2018 to use multiple measures, rather than assessments, for course placement in English and math, and to eliminate noncredit-bearing remedial courses in these subject areas, among other changes.

This top-down, systemwide approach and quick implementation (approximately one calendar year) was met with criticism from some English and math faculty (CSUN 2018), but the changes were in place on most campuses within the projected timeline. A study based on interviews and focus groups on nine of the campuses (from Oct. 2018 to Feb. 2019) found the one-year timeline to be the greatest challenge, according to interviewees, with general agreement about the overall goal of ending developmental education (Bracco et al. 2019).

The upshot: Removing a structural barrier and building bridges across systems

The long-term effects of these two major reforms of remedial education at the CCC and the CSU are still in process, and so it is not yet clear that the statewide and systemwide actions will have their intended effects. At the community colleges, the implementation of reforms has been uneven, suggesting that practitioners have key roles to serve in addressing racial inequities (Hern et al. 2020). As with any programmatic changes, a continuous improvement process requires gathering and examining student data and finding ways to adjust programs to better meet goals over time. Since Black, Latinx, and Native American students were significantly overrepresented in remedial education placements, however, these changes have the potential to remove a structural barrier to equity for these students.

These reforms also affect students in more indirect ways, by building bridges across the education systems. For example, the new policies eliminate the use of placement exams by the

CCC and the CSU and institute in their place the use of multiple measures for placement into courses, including high school grades. This signals a shift away from an assumption that the high school grades that students earned are of little account at the college level—and toward a commitment to the structure and rigor of public high schools. This sends an important message to high school students, parents, and teachers that student persistence and achievement in high school coursework are markers of success in college.

Math Pathways

Requirements for math coursework in postsecondary education have been under scrutiny in California for decades, with actions taken by education leaders across multiple policy levels—both inside and outside of education institutions—to broaden the use of alternative math pathways for students. Quantitative literacy and reasoning skills are important foundations for all students in supporting their college and career goals, but not all students benefit from traditional math coursework driven by requirements and remedial prerequisites like intermediate algebra. For example, these requirements have been found to be a barrier for many Students of Color and first-generation students. In addition, the algebra-to-calculus sequence does not reflect the kinds of quantitative skills that many students who are not pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) degrees need for their careers (Burdman et al. 2018).

In terms of policy change, the adoption of alternative math pathways is complex because it involves departmental policy, institutional policy, and alignment among the postsecondary systems and with K-12 schools. At the postsecondary level, the policies include admissions and placement requirements for incoming first-year college students, general education (GE) requirements, requirements for a major, and requirements for transfer of credits.

The use of alternative math pathways—for example, in statistics—has been encouraged by many college and university math professors and faculty organizations, though certainly not all math departments. Their use is also supported by a growing body of research by mathematics, research, and policy organizations, such as the California Acceleration Project, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, the Community College Research Center at Columbia University, Complete College America, Just Equations, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the RP Group in the CCC, and Transforming Postsecondary Education in Math.

Many community colleges in California have been diversifying their math offerings for years. Through policy changes at the program and institutional levels, they offer alternative math courses and pathways that are aligned with quantitative reasoning skills associated with specific programs of study. The courses provide students with credits toward an associate degree, but until relatively recently, the public universities required that math courses at the CCC, to qualify as transfer courses at the CSU or the UC, had to include intermediate algebra as a prerequisite (Burdman et al. 2018). As a result, most community colleges focused on traditional algebra preparation for remedial offerings and prerequisites for transfer courses in math, both of which served as barriers to progression, degree completion, and transfer for many students.

Through systemwide actions, the UC accepted alternative math coursework for transfer students, after initially rejecting it (Burdman 2015). The CSU Academic Senate in 2016 recommended revisions to the CSU's quantitative reasoning requirements (ASCSU 2016), and the CSU Board of Trustees in 2017 voted to eliminate intermediate algebra prerequisites for non-STEM students (Zinshteyn 2017). These policy changes in California's two public university systems opened the door for community colleges to invest in alternative math pathways for

more students. Passage of AB 705 in 2017 (a state policy change driven by practitioners) transformed developmental education in the community colleges and further encouraged the use of alternative pathways aligned with students' programs of study (Burdman et al. 2018). Executive Order 1100 and 1110 (systemwide policy changes) appear to be having similar effects in encouraging the development and use of alternative math pathways on CSU campuses for non-STEM majors.

These and other postsecondary actions are also opening opportunities for high schools to invest in alternative math pathways for students. Until 2020, the UC and the CSU required that prospective high school students, as part of the a-g requirements, complete three years of high school math, with a fourth year recommended. The traditional sequence typically featured Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2, with a potential fourth year of pre-calculus or calculus. Postsecondary faculty in California, in collaboration with K-12 partners, have designed alternative math courses in high school to provide options for students who have struggled in traditional sequences and those who may not be interested in STEM fields, but who are planning to pursue a college degree (Bracco et al. 2018).

Practitioners' Impacts on State and Intersegmental Policy

As noted in the section on remediation, practitioners in the California Acceleration Project (CAP), the RP Group, and other organizations were instrumental in mobilizing for state policy changes to support equitable remediation reform for CCC students. Alternative math pathways are supported through policy reforms in developmental education because colleges working to redesign remedial sequences, rather than relying solely on preparation for calculus, must consider the math pathways appropriate for each program of study and tailor corequisite support accordingly.

As another case where grassroots mobilization by practitioners came together with top-down policy to eliminate structural barriers for students, practitioners in CAP and other groups have also networked directly with the CSU and UC to support intersegmental policy changes that support alternative math pathways. CAP, in supporting the work of colleagues at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Dana Center, the Campaign for College Opportunity, Just Equations, and others, has worked to persuade the CSU and UC to remove intermediate algebra as a prerequisite for transferable math courses from the community colleges (Hern 2021).

In 2020, the UC adopted new rules that allowed alternative math courses approved by the university, such as statistics, data science, and computer science, to be eligible to meet the a-g requirements for high school juniors and seniors (Johnson 2020). The CSU is reviewing a proposal to require a fourth year of quantitative reasoning in high school, and to allow students to choose from alternative math courses for that additional year. This proposal was met with opposition when presented to the Board of Trustees in 2020, primarily due to equity concerns associated with requiring a fourth year of high school math in a state where many schools lack qualified teachers for existing math courses—and these schools disproportionately serve Black, Latinx, and low-income students. A vote by the Board is expected in 2022, with plans for implementation in fall 2027 (Burke 2020).

The development and use of alternative math pathways in California—with increasing alignment across the public postsecondary systems—have taken years to mature and are still in process, including their implications for high school math. The changes show promise toward addressing some structural barriers to equitable student persistence and success in mathematics (though much work remains, including in supporting Students of Color in STEM fields). The policy changes suggest that California’s K-12 and postsecondary education systems can adapt their traditional structures and requirements to provide more equitable options for students. These structural transitions, however, cannot be achieved by educators working in silos. In this case, the policy changes were multiple and interactive; they depended on an overwhelming body of research by many organizations inside and outside of education; they involved education leaders using policy options at the departmental, institutional, system, and state levels; and they continue to rely on instructors and others to implement them in ways that are equitable for students. In other cases, such as in college affordability, these kinds of changes also entail federal attention.

These changes involved education leaders working within and outside of education institutions, using policy options at the departmental, institutional, system, and state levels.

In this case, “alignment across systems” is a practical, not an abstract, concept that is crucial to support equitable student opportunities. The four-year systems will need to demonstrate through their admissions policies that the alternative pathways are valued. At all schools and colleges, classroom and advisement policies as to how students are selected for and supported in alternative math classes will be important in creating high-quality and equitable experiences for students.

In short, to address the deep barriers and inequities that students face, California needs supportive policy changes and changes in practice and implementation. To get there the state needs education leaders who can learn about institutional, system, and state policy; about their leadership roles wherever they are, including implementation; and about networking across institutions and systems.

Common Course Numbering in the Community Colleges

Efforts have been underway for decades in California to streamline student pathways from high school to college and facilitate student transfer among the community colleges and from a community college to the public university systems. At the postsecondary level, one of the longstanding areas of study—with some limited progress in implementation—has been the development of a common course numbering system in the community colleges. The purpose of using common course numbering is to remove barriers and streamline information for students about what credits will transfer at the universities, both for general education (GE) and degree requirements; expand postsecondary options for students beyond local universities that have articulation agreements; expand student options for transferring credits across community colleges; and minimize excessive credit accumulation prior to transfer. All these goals directly impact Students of Color and low-income students since these students are disproportionately served by the community colleges.

In 2004, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed SB 1415, which sought to require the CCC and the CSU to adopt a common course numbering system for the 20 highest-demand majors in each of the systems. In complying with this law, the Academic Senate of the CCC in 2006 implemented a Course Identification Numbering System (C-ID) to facilitate the identification of lower-division courses across the CCC that had been approved by the UC and

the CSU for transfer (ASCCC 2020). Rather than changing the existing local course numbers in college catalogues, however, the C-IDs added an additional numerical system—comprised of “supranumbers” denoting comparable courses—as an interface among local course numbering systems. While the new numbers may have facilitated the development of articulation agreements among institutions, it is not clear that the layering of supranumbers lessened confusion among students about transfer of credits.

In 2010, the Legislature took a different approach to facilitate transfer of credits in passing SB 1440, which directed the CCC to work with the CSU to develop associate degrees for transfer (ADT). Students who earn an ADT at a community college are guaranteed junior status and a full transfer of degree credits if they retain their major at the CSU. The creation of these new degrees appears to be helpful in facilitating transfer for students, but many CCC academic programs created new ADT degrees while continuing to offer associate degrees in the same or similar fields, which has been confusing to students (Lewis et al. 2016a). The 2016 study also found that students had not consistently received the benefits at the CSU that the new degrees were designed to provide. For example, some institutional policies to manage enrollment levels at CSU campuses (called “impaction” policies) had created barriers to student transfer.

Input from practitioners is important to improve the legislative process, and funding for implementation planning and capacity building is pivotal for those in the field working for change.

These examples of legislative actions suggest that state policy directives seeking to spur systemwide improvements and efficiencies do not always go as planned in implementation. They suggest that input from research and from practitioners is important to improve the legislative process and that funding for implementation planning and capacity building is pivotal to support those in the field working for change.

The Recovery with Equity plan from the Governor’s Council calls for renewed state action to adopt a common course numbering system in the community colleges and to improve student transfer. In accordance with this vision, a new law (AB 1111) signed by Governor Newsom in October 2021 provides stronger language to require the community colleges to develop a “student-facing” common course numbering system to replace existing local course numbers. The bill also requires each college campus to incorporate the common course numbers in its catalog. In addition, Newsom also signed into law AB 928, which seeks to facilitate transfer through the creation of a statewide lower-division general education pathway in the community colleges that meets the academic requirements for transfer admission to the CSU and the UC. An intersegmental committee will be charged with developing the new pathway. The new law also includes language to strengthen the use of ADTs for transfer from the community colleges. For both of these state laws, education leaders at various levels within the systems can play strong roles in guiding implementation.

Conclusion

California exhibits chronic patterns of injustice by race and income at nearly every stage of student progression across its early childhood, K-12, and higher education systems. The state’s distributed and disconnected education governance structures, created for an earlier century when most students did not have access to education or training beyond high school,

complicates statewide goal setting, planning, and responsibility across the education systems. Rather than expending political capital to transform governance or create an education planning agency, Governor Newsom is using state policy levers and favorable revenue opportunities to invest in bridges across the systems to create more equitable student pathways—including early childhood education, a statewide data system, and postsecondary education. The proposals, costs, and implementation plans will need on-going scrutiny and deliberation, but the overall purposes deserve public attention and amplification as the first expansive and inclusive vision across California early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary education in decades.

Efforts to address racial and other structural inequities in education could not be more timely in the U.S., as public instances of racial injustice continue to disrupt communities and undermine American principles of fairness and neutrality before the law. California’s education institutions and systems have stepped forward with commitments to change. State revenues are higher than projected, the state budget is providing increases for all levels of education, and the federal government is considering substantial infrastructure investments. Now is the time, including over the next several years, for California’s education leaders across the spectrum—teachers, faculty, student support staff, principals, provosts, curriculum developers, researchers, superintendents, presidents, chancellors, foundation staff, program officers, agency directors, and state policymakers—to partner with students to identify structural inequities and work with each other to address them.

Now is the time for California’s education leaders across the spectrum to partner with students to identify structural inequities and work with each other to address them.

Building on this momentum will require education leaders at all levels to step out of our comfort zones—in some cases beyond the disciplines in which we have been trained—to work to achieve racial justice in California education. We’ll need to ask ourselves:

- **Policy and Practice.** What policies and practices—at the departmental, institutional, system, and state levels—can we learn about and implement to make our schools, colleges, and universities welcoming for and effective in supporting equitable outcomes for Students of Color, low-income students, and others?
- **Leadership.** What leadership roles can we open for others and can each of us step into as we seek to learn about and advance this work, including dialogue and action for equitable outcomes within and across our schools, colleges, and universities?
- **Relationship Building.** How can we expand our reach through networking across functions and roles at our institutions, as well as across our education systems and statewide, with a commitment to social justice?

California invested in low-cost postsecondary education when large and increasing waves of Baby Boomers were reaching college age in the 1960s. A few decades later, the state did not develop a similar master plan to support broader education access and success for the larger and more diverse youth populations, many of whom were Latinx, Black, Native American, and other Students of Color. According to a recent survey, over five million adults in California—a fifth of the state’s population ages 25 and older—intend to enroll in postsecondary education over the next few years (CA Competes 2021). A third of Latinx adults (33%) said they intend to enroll, compared with 15% of Asian American adults, 11% of Black adults, and 6% of White adults. Of the five million adults, four out of five said they are interested in taking all courses online.

These are primarily Generation Xers (ages 41 to 56) and Yers (also called Millennials, ages 25 to 40), populations that are more diverse than the Baby Boomers and have been called a “demographic bridge to America’s diverse future” (Frey 2018). Along with the demands of Generation Zers currently attending California’s schools, colleges, and universities, the eagerness of California’s adults for on-going education and training represents a call for systemic equity—in education capacity, net pricing, online access, personalized support structures, favorable rates of persistence and completion, seamless academic and career education, and administrative support functions (including credit for prior learning).

A benefit of having a distributed education policy environment is that it opens opportunities for education leaders at every level—program, institutional, system, and state—to examine data, identify structural barriers to student success, and work together with students to resolve these challenges. As California emerges from the impacts of COVID-19, the state’s education leaders can meet this moment by investing, within their sphere of influence across the student pathway, in a policy infrastructure for racial justice at every level of education. Through a combination of expressions and actions directed to equitable outcomes, California’s education leaders can build bridges within institutions and across systems to expand education opportunity and success, increase workforce preparation and resiliency, and achieve broadscale community, economic, and civic prosperity.

The state’s education leaders can meet this moment by investing, within their sphere of influence across the student pathway, in a policy infrastructure for racial justice at every level of education.

Questions for Chapter 4

1. In examining the levers of state policy change in California for K-12 and higher education (statewide data systems, alignment of programs, state finance, and accountability), what opportunities do you see for potential areas of action in addressing equity?
2. The three examples of statewide actions to address equity—transformation of developmental education, math pathways, and course numbering in the community colleges—each include cautionary elements in developing systemwide or statewide change. What cautionary examples of new state policies have presented implementation challenges in your work?
3. Beyond the three examples provided, what other issues are priorities for statewide action? For example:
 - early childhood education;
 - whole-student approaches across education and social services, such as through community schools (see Maier et al. 2020);
 - dual enrollment policies;
 - gaps in teacher quality and the STEM teacher pipeline;
 - admissions reform and the use of the SAT;
 - financial aid reforms and the use of institutional “merit” aid;
 - credit for prior learning in college and other assessments of work experience;
 - career pathways and the relationship between academics and career and technical education;
 - transfer policies and practices, such as implementation of the ADT; and

- concurrent enrollment in community colleges and the CSU.

4. What structural changes, if any, are being considered or are underway in your institution, department, or program to address inequities by race, income, or other factors?

a. How can these efforts best be built on—locally, systemwide, or at the state level? What is needed from which education leaders to support these efforts?

b. If structural changes are needed, who can serve as allies in moving forward?

5. What attitudes need to change for structural change to happen institutionally and statewide? Or can structural changes bring with them changes in attitudes?

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Acknowledgments

The Education Insights Center (EdInsights) is grateful to the College Futures Foundation for funding that supported the development of this guide. Andrea Venezia, a founder of California EPFP, shaped the vision and direction of this report. Terra Thorne was also integral to the development of California EPFP and provided key guidance for this paper. Rachel Croopnick served as researcher for chapter two, responsible for updating and analyzing all figures and data therein. Several cohorts of California EPFP participants reviewed drafts of an earlier version of this paper, and their comments improved this report. In addition, David Adler, Kathy Reeves Bracco, Pamela Burdman, Katie Hern, Michal Kurlaender, Anna Maier, Laura Metune, and Bernadette Muscat provided feedback that improved the scope and accuracy of this report. At EdInsights, Breanna Alexander, Lowela Anunciacion, Kenya Burton, Jaquelyn Caro-Sena, Madeleine Kerrick, Dylan Lohmeyer, and Kalifa Madden contributed important ideas to this paper, as did Dianne Hyson, Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies at Sacramento State. LeAnn Fong-Batkin, executive director of EdInsights, offered terrific guidance and improvements. Kalifa Madden managed editorial and communications processes. PDDG provided editing and design. Responsibility for errors and misinterpretations, however, rests with the author.

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The California Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) is a professional development program that aims to strengthen education policymaking in California. California EPFP, jointly administered by EdInsights and the Center for California Studies (both at Sacramento State University), is part of a national program sponsored by the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). California EPFP brings together about 20 professionals annually to explore critical topics related to California's educational environment and centered on the national program's three pillars of curriculum: policy, leadership, and networking.

Suggested Citation

Nodine, Thad. (2022, September). *Toward Racial Justice in California's Education Systems: An Introduction to Policy Spanning K-12 and Higher Education* [Report]. Sacramento: [Education Insights Center \(EdInsights\) Reports and Briefs](#).