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Prospectus

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and its Impact on NYC Educational Policies: Inequity in school funding and its impact on After-School Programs

Abstract

Over the years, educational laws like Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) have been put in place to help improve school infrastructure and create equity in America's schools. However, like many federal laws that were implemented before the implementation of ESSA, these laws have all given rise to more and more state and local educational policies that have caused inequity in school funding which provides for resources such as after-school programs to be created and implemented in many school systems. This became even more evident during the pandemic than ever before. With the signing of ESSA in 2015, New York City Public Schools have seen a rise in excessive testing with more accountability placed on the teachers, added stress placed on teachers and students, and far less funding given to some schools versus others, to provide for and support the needs of students and teachers to meet the demands of those tests. In looking at data from case studies conducted over the past 20 years of public high schools in NYC, it is evident that the policy makers lack an understanding of the needs of students. In creating and implementing policies that impact the NYC public school system, policy makers have not included educators in their creation process, nor do these policies address the needs of students the system was created to serve. To truly understand the impact of many NYC educational policies and how they create an inequity in funding of after school programs, this research will analyze the following: How and to what extent is the policy being implemented? What effect, if any, has this policy had on the inequity in funding for after-school programs? What effect does the inequity in funding for after school programs have on the students?

Keywords: accountability, discipline, infractions, parental involvement, policy implementation, school safety, NYC Chancellor's Regulations

Annotated Bibliography

Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Unequal Opportunity: Race and Education. Brookings.

Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/unequal-opportunity-race-and-education/>

This article discusses educational disparities that exist based on color. While these disparities are not new, they have existed for many decades. As the article suggests, affirmative action as it pertains to education, was supposed to ensure that blacks received equal access and funding, however, it has been under attack. These educational disparities are inclusive of but not limited to teachers who are well prepared pedagogically, high quality curriculum and access to technology.

Edley, Jr., C., Koenig, J., Nielsen, N., and Constance, C. (Editors) (2019). Monitoring Educational Equity. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25389>

This book analyzes key indicators used to monitor and measure equity in K-12 schools throughout the United States. It also looks at educational policies that are in place, and the impact that those policies might have in causing disparities or allowing for education to be equitable. In doing so, we can understand the indicators, which include, but are not limited to “Disparities in Curricular Breadth’ which includes equitable access to technology and high-quality curriculum. If all students were able to have equitable access to both, that would be one step in the right direction, however, without federal policies in place that mandate its usage, the disparities in this area will remain.

Educational policy can alleviate educational inequity. University of Berkeley:

Responding to Educational Inequity. Othering and Belonging Institute. Retrieved from: <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/raceeducationpolicybrief/educational-policy>

This article examines the role that educational policies play in the inequities that exist in America’s school systems. The article strives to answer the following questions: “Do these research findings suggest that educational policy cannot mitigate educational inequities? Can educational policy in fact improve learning opportunities for all students?” While the article also suggests that educational policies can correct the disparities and inequities that exist, they have certainly helped to cause the very same disparities that were expected to fix. In many cases, simply having access to technology, and quality curriculum would begin to fix the inequities that exist.

Gamoran, A. (2001). The Future of Educational Inequality in the United States: What went wrong and how can we fix it? (PDF File) Sociology of Education.

This report describes the inequality in education that has existed for several decades and a prediction of whether these inequalities be addressed in the future. While the author stated that

the research suggests that his predictions have been contradicted in many cases, he does believe that although there has been narrowing of certain gaps, there is still a great deal of work to do. The article further suggests that the educational disparities that exist are often due to the socio-economic backgrounds of the students, and racial and ethnic minority status. In collecting and sharing the data in real time, it allows for quicker response time in addressing the inequalities we see, unfortunately, we still have a great deal of work to do.

Garcia, E. and Weiss, E. (2017). Educational inequality at the school starting gate: Gaps trends and strategies to address them (PDF File). Retrieved from: <https://files.epi.org/pdf/132500.pdf>

This article explores the achievement gap and the existing inequities that cause student failures, and the strategies that can be implemented to ensure student success. The study suggests that one of the primary predictors of student success is a child's social class. It is interesting that the research discussed in the article suggests that students who start from behind, rarely bridge the gaps caused by the inequities they experience, to succeed. Many of the strategies that are suggested to help bridge that gap all have two commonalities-funding and adequate resources. In many cases, we see in poorer school districts where technology is unavailable. Without the funding and access to adequate resources, those students who start from behind will remain behind.

McInerney, M., and McKlindon, A. (2014). Unlocking the Door to Learning: Trauma-Informed Classrooms & Transformational Schools. Education Law Center.

This article discusses how childhood trauma outside of the school can impact the way in which students behave and perform in schools, and how to change the way in which school staff treat those students. It suggests that if administrators, teachers, and school staff learn a trauma informed approach in dealing with many of their students, it can change the way in which schools address students who break school rules. Oftentimes students who experience childhood trauma react to those in positions of authority in a negative way depending on how they are approached. Understanding the hows and whys of their reaction and providing the right supports to help them deal with these traumas will help to change their behaviors and hopefully lessen the incidences of poor behaviors that are seen in students who have experienced forms of childhood traumas.

Theoretical Framework

Objective: The objective of this study is to show how educational laws cause inequity in funding for after school programs in NYC Public Schools.

Problem: While educational laws are created and implemented to serve the needs of students in the public-school systems in America, those laws cause schools systems to create policies that create inequity in funding for after school programs.

Research Question(s): How and to what extent is the policy being implemented? What effect, if any, has this policy had on the inequity in funding for after-school programs? What effect does the inequity in funding for after school programs have on the students?

Literature Review: Garcia and Weiss discuss the inequalities that exist in public schools and ways in which to mitigate them. They believe that having access to a variety of resources, this will help fill the gap for students who have fallen behind to help them surpass the benchmarks set for them. While the disparities of funding impact the number of resources that schools can provide to their students, it is necessary that any resources that are put in place for students take into consideration their needs prior to and even after the pandemic.