

DAY 14: Education & School-Aged Children

Earlier in the Challenge, we explored how segregation persists in American communities. Our economically and racially divided neighborhoods are leading to inequitable educational environments and adverse academic outcomes for our youth. [Studies show that children from families with low incomes](#) enter high school with literacy skills 5 years behind and are over 4 times more likely to drop out than those from high-income families. Students of color, who are more likely to attend under-resourced schools than their white counterparts, suffer because of teachers working in under-resourced school environments and large classes sizes, which when controlling for socioeconomic status, almost entirely explain [disparities in academic achievement](#) according to Brookings.

In our State, despite decades of efforts, [the achievement gap between rich and poor students hasn't budged in since at least 2000](#), according to an article by The Bridge. "Improving Michigan's K-12 schools is seen as key to boosting the state's economy. Michigan is in the bottom third in the nation in education, [according to most measures on the NAEP](#), which allows cross-state comparisons. Michigan also ranks in the bottom half of states in the percent of adults with a college degree. On average, a bachelor's degree boosts lifetime earnings by about \$900,000 over a high school diploma."



Source: [The Bridge Michigan](#)

Option 1: Check out this [interactive database to examine racial disparities in educational opportunities and school discipline](#). Reflect on your education experiences, and the disciplinary actions taken for your (or your child) Black peers. How did this shape your ideas about Black people?

Option 2: Watch [Boston teacher Kandice Sumner on the TED stage](#) discuss the disparities she sees in her classroom every day because of segregation in our school systems. Reflect on the disparities that impact learning in your local schools due to segregation. Identify your local community resources that are working to address the disparities. Is there a way for you to help magnify their efforts?

Option 3: Michigan is in the bottom ten states for African American Students in early literacy and eighth-grade math, [Review 2020 Michigan Achieves! Indicators](#) (page 25) in 2020 State of Michigan Education Report, Education Trust-Midwest. Explore options within the workforce for people with a significantly limited education. Reflect on the terms “lazy” and “undereducated” as you explore.

Option 4: Black students who have one black teacher by third grade are 13 percent more likely to enroll in college. Listen to the [WEMU Washtenaw United interview with 'Black Men Read'](#) an Ypsilanti based nonprofit promoting the power of storytelling and literacy in children.

Share your reflections on today's topic on social media using the hashtag [#unitedforequity](#), [#miuwequitychallenge](#), [#uwwcequity](#) and tag [@uwwashtenaw](#).