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**Quotable**

"Working to raise achievement levels for all segments of the population is a key to keeping America strong and vital. Striving to remove group identities as predictors of achievement — in other words, to close achievement gaps between groups — will help make the fruits of America's vitality more equally available."

**Source:** *Toward Excellence With Equity* by Ronald F. Ferguson, Harvard Education Publishing Group, 2007.

[www.agi.harvard.edu](http://www.agi.harvard.edu)

A related source of useful information is The Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard.

[www.edtrust.org](http://www.edtrust.org)

**DEFINING THE PROBLEM, HIGHLIGHTING SOLUTIONS**

NATIONAL INEQUITIES IN STATE AND LOCAL REVENUE PER STUDENT

	PER-STUDENT GAP
High-poverty vs. low-poverty schools	\$773
High-minority vs. low-minority districts	\$1,122

**Source:** Education Trust analysis based on U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Census Bureau data for the 2005-06 school year.

See *America and Her Urban School Districts: A Quick Look at the Numbers*, available at [www.edtrust.org/dc/resources/presentations](http://www.edtrust.org/dc/resources/presentations).

Numerous studies detail the resource inequities between high- and low-performing schools and discuss possible implications. The Education Trust promotes high academic achievement for all students. Their data analyses and reports give districts, communities, and policy makers powerful information for pinpointing concrete areas of need among specific groups of students. At the same time, their stories of success — see the Dispelling the Myth section of the website — highlight pathways to promising results for underserved students.

## What's the problem?

One starting point for understanding how different groups of students perform relative to their majority peers is a series of reports from the Center on Education Policy. Three recent reports discuss the educational needs of African-American, Latino, and Asian-American students. The reports reflect the growing national concern about the need for education and policy leaders at all levels to more aggressively improve the quality and effectiveness of these students' educational opportunities.



### [www.cep-dc.org](http://www.cep-dc.org)

- *Policy Implications of Trends for Asian American Students*
- *A Call to Action to Raise Achievement for African American Students*
- *Improving Achievement for the Growing Latino Population Is Critical to the Nation's Future*

### A CULTURAL PROFICIENCY PRIMER

### [www.nsd.org/news/authors/guerranelson.cfm](http://www.nsd.org/news/authors/guerranelson.cfm)

Since 2007, *JSD* columnists **Patricia L. Guerra**, top, and **Sarah W. Nelson**, bottom, have shared practical strategies, foundational knowledge, and real-life experiences to build readers' understanding of cultural proficiency in schools. (See their column on p. 61.) Reach back in the *JSD* archive to inform your learning and to engage your peers in a cultural proficiency exploration.



### [www.nsd.org/news/jsd/](http://www.nsd.org/news/jsd/)

Guerra and Nelson shared their experience and insights for this issue in an online-only Q-and-A. Be sure to visit the web for this additional social justice piece.



In the most recent *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher*, MetLife Foundation identified schools as high-collaboration or low-collaboration schools based on the reported frequency of participation in several types of collaborative learning activities (team meetings, discussions of student work, peer observation).

Both teachers and principals in schools with higher levels of collaboration are more likely than others to strongly agree that teachers in a school share responsibility for the achievement of all students and that greater collaboration among teachers and school leaders would have a major impact on improving student achievement.

Notably, the schools with higher levels of collaboration also report a higher level of trust. In those schools with higher levels of collaboration, educators strongly agree that a high level of trust exists (teachers: 69% in high-collaboration schools vs. 42% in low-collaboration schools; principals: 78% vs. 60%).

“... the context of a community of professional learners fosters the ideals of social justice.” (See “Building hope, giving affirmation,” p. 10.)

### EDUCATORS ALSO SAY

	TEACHERS	PRINCIPALS
Setting high expectations for all students would have a major impact on improving student achievement.	86%	89%
Having adequate public funding and support for education are very important for improving student achievement.	92%	96%
Strengthening ties among schools and parents is very important for improving student achievement.	88%	89%

Source: *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success.*