



YOUNG WOMEN OF COLOR AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Structural barriers are **systemic challenges** embedded in our culture, economy, and institutions that **cause inequality**. Produced by systems of power, they require **large-scale investment** and **policy solutions** to achieve meaningful change. In 2017, CLASP conducted focus groups* with young women of color to learn what structural barriers they encounter in daily life. This fact sheet includes insights from **Hmong-American, Latina,** and **Native** young women about their experiences with educational equity. Uprooting educational equity and other structural barriers demands **turning over the ground** to reveal these root causes, **partnering with young women of color** to identify solutions, and **seeding change** in equitable ground.

DISPROPORTIONATE DISCIPLINE

Black girls have the highest suspension rate (**11.1%**), followed by American Indian/Native girls (**5.1%**).¹

At high schools that were majority students of color, **46.6%** had law enforcement in the building (compared to **31.4%** of white schools).

Black, Native American, and Pacific Islander students have the highest rates of school-based arrests (**20.2%**, **4.6%**, and **2.5%** respectively).²

“The girls are always, were always the ones to get in trouble. The ones to get sent home for the littlest things. It’s like what do you expect from us? You want us to be perfect?”

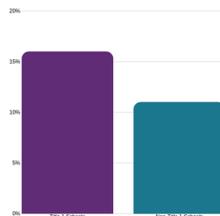
- Denver

TEACHER QUALITY

“And like the curriculum you learn on the computer and you go into a classroom, it’s a whole lot different than what you’re learning and it’s like two different curriculums trying to put in one. And it’s just like you get so confused and when you’re online and you ask the teacher or whoever, your mentor to help you, they don’t know what they’re doing...”

- Denver

Low-income girls of color are more likely to attend high-poverty schools that lack qualified, experienced teachers and counselors. They’re also less likely to access college and career readiness courses.³ Schools serving the highest concentration of students of color have the highest teaching-staff turnover rates (**70%**).⁴



Teachers in title I schools+ serving low-income students of color overall have about one year less of experience and higher turnover rates (**16%**) than their colleagues in non-title I schools (**11%**).⁵

During the 2013-14 school year, **25%** of schools serving most students of color had four times as many uncertified teachers than **25%** percent of schools serving the fewest students of color. Because they are hard-to-staff schools, the absence of qualified teachers leaves schools to rely on less qualified, uncertified teachers to close this gap.⁶

RE-ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

"I went to beauty school. I graduated I did all of that and then like what happened was I passed my state board and everything but it took the school ... a while to send the state board my papers that I had completed everything that I needed to complete so it took like 6 months to get my license so by the time I became super unmotivated because I couldn't work, I couldn't do anything and I forgot like everything I knew so I started working on it and it just kind of sucked."

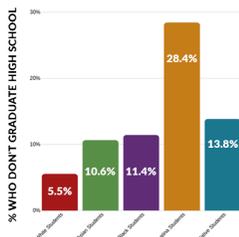
- Central Valley

56% Among the 13 percent of non-degreeed labor force participants, the most common credential, held by about half of these adults (56 percent), was a license.⁷

Credentials often don't connect to each other or to education and careers.⁸

"A lot of our schools now since we're older than 21, that we need to like have like provide money in order to go to schools. And colleges....Like with here they help with...trying for scholarships ... but it's like not full amount. Like, where we have to find a way to pay for it."

- Denver



High school completion rates for female students were highest for white students at **94.5%**; for students of color this rate did not exceed 90% (**89.4%** Asian, **88.6%** Black, **71.6%** Latino, and **87.2%** Native).⁹

<1%

Total federal funding for Adult Education programs in 2019 was less than 1% of the total education budget.¹⁰

FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

"Being a person of color in college, from my experience is also, very, very difficult, um, because, you know, getting your, you're a first-generation college student, you know. Your parents didn't help you with financial aid. You had to do it with yourself. You had ... all those other college prep, college prep, um, mentors, or they, they help you through that, but your parents didn't do that, all that work for you, unlike, your white peer."

- St. Paul

First-generation college students are defined as predominately non-white undergraduate students who come from low-income backgrounds and have parents with little or no college experience.

48% of Latinos, **42%** of Blacks, and **28%** of Whites are first-generation students.¹¹

Only **14%** of Hmong students have a bachelor's degree. That is significantly lower than Asian Americans (**49%**) and the average for all students (**29.6%**).¹²

First-generation students have a significantly lower median household income (**\$37,565**) than students overall (**\$99,365**). This contributes to financial and academic barriers that make enrollment and completion challenging.¹³

¹ CLASP conducted five focus groups with African American, Hmong American, Native, and Latina girls and young women as well as gender non-conforming youth as part of a research project with Frontline Solutions focused on structural barriers and identity. Different groups of young women highlighted different structural barriers and each group that we spoke to is not represented on every fact sheet.
² Title I schools serve economically marginalized students from low income households, this program receives federal funds under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and is designed to help students meet academic achievement standards.

³ Musu-Gillette et al., Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2017, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2017, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>

⁴ Adaku Onyeka-Crawford, Kayla Patrick, Neena Chaudhry, Let Her Learn: Stopping School Pushout for Girls of Color, NWLC, 2017, https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/final_nwlc_Gates_GirlsofColor.pdf

⁵ NoVo Foundation, Frontline Solutions, CLASP, Start From The Ground Up: Increasing Support for Girls of Color: G4GC Research Report, 2017.

⁶ Desiree Carver-Thomas, Linda Darling-Hammond, Teacher Turnover: Why It Matters and What We Can Do About It, Learning Policy Institute, August 2017, https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Teacher_Turnover_REPORT.pdf

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Stephanie Cronen and Emily Isenberg, Degree and Non-degree Credentials held by Labor Force Participants, American Institutes for Research, 2018, <http://connectingcredentials.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/NCES-data-point-nondegree.pdf>

¹⁰ Lumina Foundation, Connecting Credentials: Making the case for Reforming the US Credentialing System, 2015, <https://connectingcredentials.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/MakingThe-Case-6-8-15.pdf>

¹¹ National Center for Education Statistics, "Rates of High School Completion and Bachelor's Degree Attainment Among Persons Age 25 and over by Race/Ethnicity and Sex: Selected years, 1910 through 2016," Digest of Education Statistics Tables, Table 104.10, accessed November 26, 2018, https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/digest/d16/tables/dt16_104.10.asp

¹² Department of Education Fiscal Year 2019 Congressional Action (In Thousands of Dollars), "Career, Technical and Adult Education," 2019 Subtotal Adult Education, Table 6, accessed November 26, 2018 <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget19/19action.pdf>

¹³ First Generation Students in Higher Education, Postsecondary National Policy Institute Factsheet, 2016, <http://pnpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/First-Generation-Students-FINAL-2016.pdf>

¹⁴ Center for American Progress, Who are Hmong Americans?, AAPI Data Factsheet, April 2015, <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/AAPI-Hmong-factsheet.pdf>

¹⁵ First Generation Students in Higher Education, Postsecondary National Policy Institute Factsheet, 2016, <http://pnpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/First-Generation-Students-FINAL-2016.pdf>