Advocating for Equity Across All Levels of Government

DIMENSION 10:
DIVERSE SCHOOLS & CLASSROOMS
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THE VISION: Each student is enrolled in classes that are racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse, so all students can reach high standards and thrive.

KEY QUESTION 10.1 Is each student enrolled in a school and attending classes that are racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse?

Federal

- Congress authorizes and funds several programs that support school diversity and integration, such as:
  - The Fostering Diverse Schools Demonstration Grants program
  - The Magnet Schools Assistance Program
  - Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to support students from low-income backgrounds
  - School transportation programs, which can also be used to support school integration
  - Other programs administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development that support the residential diversity of neighborhoods (e.g., by building mixed-income housing, providing families from low-income backgrounds with housing vouchers, etc.), which have the second-order effect of diversifying the schools serving those neighborhoods

- The US Department of Education can:
  - Issue guidance and technical assistance, primarily to state education agencies, about how federal education funds can and should be used for diversity initiatives
  - Provide guidance on how elementary and secondary schools and districts may voluntarily consider students' race in efforts to increase diversity and avoid racial isolation in schools
  - Fund Equity Assistance Centers that provide technical assistance to school districts on promoting equitable education opportunities to students of diverse races and backgrounds
  - Bring school districts together to collaborate and develop strategies for school integration

State

- State legislatures can:
  - Establish grant programs or fund the creation and operation of specialized schools that are relevant and accessible, especially for underserved students and families
  - Draw or require school and school district boundaries that promote diversity
  - Set rules and review processes to ensure that when districts are redrawn, divided, or consolidated, these changes increase rather than decrease district diversity and the potential for meaningful intra-district integration
● Create advisory bodies or offices within the state education agency to recommend best practices for diversifying schools within the state context

● Design inter-district programs that allow some students to enroll in schools outside their districts of residence and incentivize or require schools to receive out-of-district students

● State education agencies can establish regional authorities (county or intermediate offices) to administer multi-district initiatives that focus on promoting diverse school enrollments across district lines

School District

● Local school boards can:
  ● Design school zoning boundaries and feeder patterns to maximize school diversity and prevent the replication of neighborhood segregation in schools
  ● Make decisions (about school size, grade levels, school pairings, school locations, etc.) to maximize school diversity
  ● Make their schools available to out-of-district students with enrollment priorities
  ● Create specialized schools or programs (STEM, dual language, arts, etc.) that attract families of all backgrounds and ensure seats go to students with higher needs
  ● To overcome residential barriers created by historic discrimination practices, ensure choice policies are equitable and hold all schools accountable for student success
  ● Work with school district administrators to:
    ○ Analyze current racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic enrollment patterns across schools within the district

● School district administrators can ensure equitable access to advanced coursework (for more on this, see Dimension 4: Empowering Rigorous Content)

School

● School leaders can:
  ● Ensure equitable access to advanced coursework (for more on this, see Dimension 4: Empowering Rigorous Content)
  ● Analyze and revise student schedules to create more diverse classrooms, and audit schedules to ensure all students have access to appropriate courses and learning environments