



NAACP EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Rekindling the Fire for Excellence in Education

Education Strategy Statement

Mission Statement: *The NAACP works to ensure that every disadvantaged student and student of color graduates ready for college or a career by ensuring access to great teaching, fair discipline, equitable resources and challenging curriculum.*

The NAACP is dedicated to eliminating the severe racial inequities that continue to plague our education system. Our ultimate goal is that every student of color receives a quality public education that prepares him or her to be a contributing member of a democracy.

To achieve these goals, the Education Committee of the national board, in concert with education chairs and leaders from across the Association, have settled upon a four-prong strategy to improve educational achievement for disadvantaged students:

- Increasing Resource Equity: *Target funds to neediest kids*
- Ensuring College & Career Readiness : *A path to success after graduation for all students*
- Improving Teaching: *Growing our own great teachers now in underserved communities*
- Improving Discipline: *Eliminate zero tolerance; keep kids in school*

** All applied to turnaround schools*

We think that advocating for improvements in these four issue areas will enable communities to substantially improve the academic achievement of their disadvantaged students. By no means are these the only issues that must be addressed. And we understand that local issues will arise that claim a branch's attention. However, we're asking **each branch to be a part of the national campaign for educational excellence by choosing to work on at least one of these issues using one of our suggested strategies and targeting their efforts to reforming turnaround schools** (identified in each state as the bottom 5% in terms of test scores) **or high schools with a graduation rate below 60%.**

Our strategies for reforming these areas of education are based in the latest and most comprehensive educational research available. For each issue area, we have a recommended series of strategies that branches can choose to implement:

Teaching: *Growing our own great teachers now in underserved communities*

- ✓ Stronger, More Diverse Pipeline (improving and diversifying preparation)
- ✓ More Mentoring & Coaching (slows turnover so teachers gain experience; improves classroom practice)
- ✓ More teachers with Advanced Certification (improves ability to teach content knowledge)

Resources: *Advocacy at every level for targeting funds to neediest kids*

- ✓ Federal reforms to make Title I more targeted
- ✓ Reforms for states to target extra funds to low-wealth school districts
- ✓ Reforms within districts so schools serving neediest students are targeted for increased funds based on individual students' needs.

Discipline: *Working to eliminate zero tolerance and keep kids in school*

- ✓ Advocating for reforms to include issues of discipline in ESEA, the main federal law governing education of the disadvantaged
- ✓ Working to change state laws so zero tolerance isn't a default or requirement for districts
- ✓ Advocating at district level for policies that don't remove students from school and that ensure access to challenging curriculum for disciplined students

College & Career Readiness: *Blazing a path to success after graduation for all students*

- ✓ Advocating for the creation of early warning and benchmarking systems that keep students on a path to college-ready high school graduation.
- ✓ Advocating for innovative whole-school reform models that can improve academic achievement at lowest performing schools.
- ✓ Helping local districts and turnaround schools address issues of school climate, extended learning time and connecting students with social service and academic supports to graduate ready for success in college or work.

We ultimately aim to make learning so engaging, teaching so effective and schools so well resourced that each student is appropriately supported and the need for discipline will be a rare occurrence. By harnessing the advocacy skills which the NAACP has perfected over the last 101 years, we can rekindle the fire for strong public education in our communities and ensure that disadvantaged and students of color receive a world-class education.