

Core Opportunity Resources for Equity and Excellence Act of 2014
U.S. Representative Marcia L. Fudge

In the minds of our citizens and immigrants, and in the imagination of billions worldwide, the United States is built on the principle of great and equal opportunities. Facing enormous demographic change and international competition, the urgent task is to remake our education system to meet the demands of justice and the tests of competition. Americans need only recommit ourselves to the values that stir our hearts and inspire the world.

U.S. Department of Education, For Each and Every Child—A Strategy for Education Equity and Excellence, Washington, D.C., 2013.

Behind the achievement gaps that exist and have persisted -- between economically disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers; Black, Latino, American Indian and Alaska Native students and White students; English learners and native English speakers; and students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers -- are opportunity gaps. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights recently published data from a comprehensive survey of schools across the nation that illustrated the magnitude of these gaps, including:

- Black, Latino, American Indian, Native Alaskan students, and English learners attend schools with higher concentrations on inexperienced teachers.
- Nationwide, one in five high schools lacks a school counselor.
- Between 10 and 25 percent of high schools across the nation do not offer more than one of the core courses in the typical sequence of high school math and science, such as Algebra I and II, geometry, biology, and chemistry.

The **Core Opportunity Resources for Equity and Excellence (CORE) Act** will tackle these inequities head on by establishing accountability requirements for states and school districts for providing fair and equitable access to the core resources for learning, giving all students the opportunity to achieve college and career readiness by high school graduation. These resources include:

- High quality instructional teams, including licensed and profession-ready teachers, principals, school librarians, counselors, and education support staff;
- Rigorous academic standards and curricula that lead to college and careers readiness by high school graduation and are accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners;

- Equitable and instructionally appropriate class sizes;
- Up-to-date instructional materials, technology, and supplies;
- Effective school library programs;
- School facilities and technology, including physically and environmental sound buildings and well-equipped instructions space, including laboratories and libraries;
- Specialized instructional support teams, such as counselors, social workers, nurses, and other qualified professionals; and
- Effective family and community engagements programs.

State accountability systems would be required to include measures of fair and equitable access to the core resources for learning and a plan for identifying and addressing any inequities in access to them. State and district report cards would also include information on access to the core resources for learning.

States that fail to make progress in eliminating in equities for two or more consecutive years would be ineligible to participate in competitive grant programs authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

For school districts identified for improvement, the state would have to identify gaps in access to the core resources for learning and develop an action plan in partnership with the local school district to address those gaps.

Supporters of the CORE Act:

American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education
 American Federation of Teachers
 American Libraries Association
 League of United Latin American Citizens
 National Education Association
 Opportunity Action
 Coalition for Community Schools