



**WHAT LEADERS ARE SAYING ABOUT
THE STATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR BLACK CALIFORNIANS
FEBRUARY 2021**

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LEADERS

"Our California Community Colleges are a lifeline to social mobility for our Black community but far too few are transferring or leaving our system with a credential. We must serve our Black students better and the recommendations in this report outline urgent and intentional ways to move forward. Creating a campus environment that reflects our student body is key to supporting our students as is ensuring equity focused reforms are implemented with fidelity. Our work is far from over."

Pamela Haynes
President
California Community Colleges Board of Governors

"Campaign for College Opportunity's *State of Higher Education for Blacks in California* report paints a very clear picture of what educational leaders and policymakers must do to close persistent equity gaps in our public colleges and universities. While there has been substantial progress made in expanding access to postsecondary education for Blacks, more work must be done to ensure that access leads to completion. Anyone who cares about the status of Black Californians must read this report, take action, and encourage their colleagues to do the same."

Dr. Frank Harris III
Community College Equity Assessment Lab Co-Director



San Diego State University

“The ***State of Higher Education for Black Californians*** is an invaluable resource for researchers, policy leaders, and community members. It provides an empirical foundation for advocacy, while also serving as a historical snapshot for how well (or poorly) higher ed is doing by Black Californians. (Every year, I pay close attention to the figures related to Black community college and transfer students, and this year, I am struck by the number of Black community college students who transferred to for-profit colleges. We in California public higher education need to do better”.

Jamaal Muwwakkil
Student Regent
University of California
University of California, Santa Barbara
Linguistics PhD Candidate

“We thank the Campaign for College Opportunity for this comprehensive 2021 report. It is clear that our Black/African-American students are in need of focused and resourceful efforts in order to close achievement gaps. The Board of Governors of the California Community college system is committed to improving the lives of Black Students.”

Valerie Shaw
Board Member
California Community Colleges Board of Governors

“The ‘bad news’ documenting the severe inequalities experienced by Black students in our higher education system might create the wrongful impression that somehow they need to be fixed to be more successful. But what this report says is that we need to fix a system that is failing Black students. We owe a debt to these students and in not paying it we are forfeiting the future of all Californians.”

Estela Bensimon
University Professor Emerita
University of Southern California

"The ***State of Higher Education for Black Californians*** Report is a timely and important report. It's time for leaders, including myself, to be unapologetic and focused on Black Californian educational success. Furthermore, with only 26 percent of Black Californians obtaining a Bachelor's degree and 10 percent having an Associate Degree, this is unacceptable."

Dr. Keith Curry
President
Compton College

“The work of the Campaign for College Opportunity is essential to our understanding of the experiences of Black students in California higher education. This report clearly shows that while some progress has been made there remains more to accomplish to fulfill the promise of potential in our Black student youth of CA. It will require our Pk-12 schools and colleges alike providing what our black students need, when they need it to succeed.”

Dr. Dawn Person



Professor of Educational Leadership
California State University, Fullerton

Director for the Center of Research on Educational Access & Leadership



CALIFORNIA LEADERS

“Since 1968, the Greater Sacramento Urban League has worked diligently to ensure access to a quality education and meaningful job opportunities for our underserved communities. The ***State of Higher Education for Black Californians*** report highlights that despite increasing enrollment numbers, our Black students continue to have low completion rates across all systems of higher education, leaving them with fewer and fewer job opportunities that lead to economic stability and success. We can and need to do better for our Black students and for our workforce that increasingly requires college-educated workers. Closing the racial equity gap in higher education is essential for California’s future.”

Cassandra Jennings
President & CEO
Greater Sacramento Urban League

“We stand by the Campaign for College Opportunity’s recommendations as put forth in their ***State of Higher Education for Black Californians*** report, specifically around the calls to action for continued reforms, based on similar findings from our own recent research related to transfer supports and strategies and the transfer experiences and outcomes of African American/Black students. We hope to continue to work in partnership with the Campaign for College Opportunity to help our students achieve bright and rewarding futures through and beyond their educational journeys.”

Darla Cooper
Executive Director
The RP Group
Board President of Umoja Community Education Foundation

“For the well-being of our state and its residents, it is essential that higher education serve as a meaningful ladder to economic mobility. This important report documents the impressive educational gains made by Black students in California and the need for continued improvements. New reforms in higher education policies and practices have helped, but better access to the state’s universities, both through freshmen admission and transfer from community colleges, are necessary to fully realize the promise of higher education.”

Hans Johnson
Center Director & Senior Fellow
Public Policy Institute of California

“California needs a system of public education that equitably serves and supports Black students. Rather than putting roadblocks in their path, that system must put social mobility and economic prosperity within reach. Our success as a society depends on it. The progress we have made so far is laudable, but we have a long way to go, and change is long overdue.”

Monica Lozano
President & CEO
College Futures Foundation



“As a community-based organization in Inglewood, CA, that is creating transformational educational experiences, whose work advances educational equity, college access and persistence, we most certainly endorse the ***State of Higher Education for Black Californians*** report published by The Campaign for College Opportunity. We believe the research and report findings are an important tool to provide data to support SJLI's college access and persistence advocacy efforts.”

Derek Steele
Interim Executive Director
Social Justice Leadership Institute

“This report reminds us that closing racial equity gaps is not achieved by a single silver-bullet policy but by investing in the ecology of postsecondary systems. From improved K-12 connections to co-requisite remediation to the hiring of more diverse faculty, we know that the challenges our African American students are facing have intersegmental roots and so they require intersegmental solutions.”

Peter Taylor
President & CEO
ECMC Foundation

"While there have been gains for Black students over the last few years, most students are still stalled at key points in the college completion pipeline. Policy makers, practitioners and advocates must be courageous and push and persevere until equitable outcomes are realized for Black students across California. We must commit to a BOLD vision for Black student success!"

Dina Walker
President & CEO
BLU Education Foundation

"The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the deep inequities built into our laws and economy — and the reckoning with racial injustice has sparked a renewed movement to close gaps in wealth, health, and opportunity for Black Americans,” said Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti. “Studies like The State of Higher Education for Black Californians are absolutely essential in this moment: helping us identify the key issues in education fairness, find viable solutions, and place racial equity where it belongs — front and center in any conversation about our schools, colleges, and universities.”

Eric Garcetti
Mayor
City of Los Angeles