

Alliance for Early Success

# National Issues ▶ State Action

June 22, 2020

Hello Allies,

Thanks again for joining the Alliance for Early Success National Issues>State Action call, **Moving Toward Action: Strategies for State Advocates to Operationalize Racial Equity Principles** on Friday. We were fortunate to be joined by an incredible line-up of guests who joined Alliance staff in recognition and celebration of [Juneteenth](#) by sharing steps that organizations can take to center equity in their policy pursuits and examples of policy opportunities that address systemic racism.

Missed the engaging presentation and discussion? You can watch the recording here:

[WATCH THE CALL](#)

Addressing systemic racism and the barriers it creates is a multi-lane highway and [early childhood advocates have a lane to drive in](#). To be better “drivers” attendees heard from:

**Erica Williams** and **Cortney Sanders** from the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) who shared that in order to move forward with powerful policy changes you have to [know their origins](#). They helped us understand [three principles](#) organizations should use to pursue anti-racist and equitable policies to dismantle persistent inequities and [the concrete actions](#) to take to pursue the principles.

**Cemeré James** and **Cassandra Johnson** with the [National Black Child Development Institute](#) and their [Denver affiliate](#), respectively, and **Christina Walker** with [Clayton Early Learning](#) brought Erica and Cortney’s actions to life by giving practical examples. Cemeré shared how NBCDI thinks of the phases of Racial Equity Progress:

*Racial Equity Literate:* Building knowledge of research, policies and program design that advance racial equity.

*Racial Equity Fluent:* Building competencies required to inform and influence people.

*Racial Equity Effective:* Building competencies required to influence systems and institutionalize change.

Cassandra offered this powerful quote from author [Bettina Love](#), "Too often we think the work of fighting oppression is just intellectual. The real work is personal, emotional, spiritual, and communal... We must teach everyday people to demand recognition of their inherent humanity with the courage, persistence, vigilance, and visionary imagination of an abolitionist" before sharing about their pursuit of change via suspensions and expulsions as well as addressing even earlier experiences for families, including unwelcoming environments.

Christina discussed how the Raise Colorado Coalition established an [equity rationale](#) to drive their work and [critical examination of equity issues and the pandemic](#).

**Miriam Rollin** with the [Education Civil Rights Alliance](#) shared with attendees:

The local efforts underway across the country to address policing in schools, particularly in light of incidences where [young children are being arrested](#)—Miriam discussed the fact that in 2018, there were more than 3,500 children under the age of 10 arrested in schools in the United States and that there is no scientific evidence that having school resource officers or other law enforcement in schools increases safety from school shootings (e.g., Parkland, which had an SRO) or otherwise increases safety. (For more statistics regarding policing in schools, see the [report of the US Commission on Civil Rights](#), pages 42-63.)

Efforts to leverage the CARES act to address racial inequities in education;

Impending state budget cuts and the need to ensure maximum racial equity in any cuts

Addressing "return to school" plans and ensuring maximum racial equity.

Lastly, Alliance Team members and attendees shared resources in the chat to support efforts to center antiracism in policy pursuits and move along NBCDI's phases of Racial Equity Progress:

Erica shared powerful words from Nikole Hannah Jones, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning effort the [1619 Project](#) and keynote speaker at [this advocacy event in Georgia](#) earlier this year.

Cortney Sanders talked about fees and fines, check out this [powerful piece last Friday](#) from NPR on the subject.

Cassandra shared [an effort to support racial equity training](#) for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and White allies literacy

**Lauren Hogan** with NAEYC shared their publication [Increasing Qualification, Centering Equity: Experiences and Advice from Early Childhood Educators of Color](#).

And we shared resources on equitable access to programs, including American Progress' [report on child care deserts](#), CLASP's [report on disparate access](#) to child care and early childhood programs, and the Education Trust's [resource](#) on state-funded pre-k and high-access to children of color.

As we wrapped, we looked ahead to the next National Issues>State Action call on Friday, July 24, which will feature a presentation by **Joia Crear-Perry**, MD, Founder and President of the National Birth Equity Collaborative. Dr. Joia will explore structural racism as a root cause of infant and maternal mortality, and will discuss policies and practices that dismantle systemic racism and improve infant and maternal health outcomes.

See you then,

Karen

**Karen Howard** | Senior Policy Director

**Alliance for Early Success**

*Every child. Every state.*

[www.earlysuccess.org](http://www.earlysuccess.org)

