



*Consortium for the Educational Development of Economically Disadvantaged Students*

# Strategic Plan

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## MISSION

Equip economically disadvantaged youth with the knowledge and experiences that will allow achievement in all areas of human endeavor.

## VISION

All economically disadvantaged youth will meet or exceed all prescribed academic standards and they will be thoroughly prepared for success in their future endeavors.

## WE BELIEVE

1. Parents of economically disadvantaged youth are primarily responsible for the actions and outcomes of their children.
2. Parents of economically disadvantaged youth are the first teachers of their children and must be advocates for them.
3. The community is ultimately responsible for the fate of economically disadvantaged youth.
4. The community must be active participants in the education of economically disadvantaged youth and be accountable for ensuring the success of economically disadvantaged youth in all settings where learning takes place.
5. The educational system must be held accountable for its role in economically disadvantaged youth achievement.
6. Student evaluation must be data driven.
7. Economically disadvantaged youth, similar to all students, must be oriented and encouraged to achieve at high levels.
8. The school climate must be a caring and nurturing environment that meets the needs of the whole child.
9. Early childhood education is vitally important in preparation for the readiness to learn.
10. All educators must possess the will, knowledge and skills necessary to develop and empower economically disadvantaged youth to achieve at high levels and diverse educators must be fully represented throughout the educational system.
11. The current academic trend of low achievement among the vast majority of economically disadvantaged youth is not an indication of their true abilities to learn.
12. An education environment **free of** prejudice, racism, inequities, bigotry and stereotypes should exist for economically disadvantaged youth, parents/guardians, and staff to achieve success.
13. Economically disadvantaged youth can achieve at high levels when teaching is aligned with learning styles and students can demonstrate brilliance through multiple intelligences.
14. Economically disadvantaged youth can achieve when high expectations exist and effective instructional strategies are utilized as they are nurtured and respected in the educational setting.
15. Educators must be culturally competent in the use of curriculum and effective teaching and learning strategies to ensure academic success of economically disadvantaged youth.

16. The higher education system must play a leading role in the training of professionals by addressing the unique needs of economically disadvantaged youth.
17. The business community must be a participant in the alleviation of the inequities that exist among economically disadvantaged youth.
18. The current system of education must be comprehensively and systematically modified to ensure that economically disadvantaged youth are fully prepared to meet the new demands and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

The outcomes for economically disadvantaged youth must include the following learning goals:

1. Belief in self and ability to achieve at high levels
2. Function as caring, responsible individuals and as contributing members of families, work groups and communities; enjoy a productive and satisfying life
3. Think analytically, logically and creatively to integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems
4. Understand the importance of achievement and how performance, effort and decisions directly affect career and educational opportunities
5. Resiliency
6. Ability to network and maneuver the system
7. Become continual learners, resourceful and flexible in the face of known and unknown
8. Read with comprehension, write with skill and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings
9. Know and apply core concepts of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; arts; financial literacy; and health and fitness
10. Apply strategies of conflict management and mediation of economic concerns
11. Acquire and utilize computer and technology skills
12. Know and apply knowledge of self and the perspective of others
13. Economically disadvantaged youth obtain a broad exposure to the world around them to facilitate learning through prior knowledge

## **GOAL I**

***Collaborate with the education system to develop a performance-based system of accountability that is fair and free of bias***

### **STRATEGIES**

1. Secure resources to support highly impacted economically disadvantaged youth and hold the school accountable for utilizing these resources.
2. Establish employment goals for the employment of diverse teachers and building administrators.
3. Establish employment goals for the development and/or employment of diverse educational leaders.
4. Identify and utilize available resources of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and other agencies.
5. Identify and duplicate exemplary programs and successful practices for economically disadvantaged youth and incorporate them into teacher training and instructional methodology.
6. Develop a system of continuous monitoring and evaluation of student performance and provide intervention early in the process.
7. Infuse appropriate and accurate comprehensive history and culture into K-12 academic curriculum and offer diverse history and culture courses in the curriculum.
8. Provide focus to the issue of language difficulties possessed by many economically disadvantaged youth.
9. Utilize effective curriculum reform designs to improve instruction for economically disadvantaged youth.
10. Extend opportunities to learn by restructuring space and time for a more flexible education.
11. Ensure that occupational and technical education is an integral part of the curriculum.

## **GOAL II**

***Impact the various policymakers and the Legislature on changes needed to improve learning opportunities and academic achievement of economically disadvantaged youth.***

### **STRATEGIES**

1. Work with policymakers on the national, state and local levels to ensure positive treatment of economically disadvantaged youth.
2. Confront the issues of attitudes and other aspects of the problem that are rarely discussed.
3. Increase numbers of diverse educators in the schools at all levels.
4. Increase representation of diverse, educators on committees and advisory boards of the DPI and other education agencies and entities.
5. Provide additional resources to assist the full array of disadvantage student needs, (e.g., homelessness).
6. Partner with other groups to get what's needed for our kids.
7. Employ attorneys to advocate for students/parents in handling discipline problems.

8. Allow the system to enter contractual agreements with agencies to provide alternative education for students not succeeding in the conventional system.

### **GOAL III**

***Mobilize the community to respond to student needs and be actively engaged in their education.***

#### **STRATEGIES**

1. Develop a safe, caring, responsive environment where students exist without labels.
2. Build meaningful relationships to assist economically disadvantaged youth in the development of self-knowledge, motivation and overall responsibility.
3. Provide models to teach interpersonal communication, conflict resolution and social skills development.
4. Place teachers/staff in their areas of expertise and competence.
5. Expose economically disadvantaged youth to a variety of experiences that promote and expand their horizons.
6. Establish academic programs from birth to grave.
7. Adapt and implement a rites of passage program at the community level.
8. Establish efficient, effective ways to monitor student achievement.

### **GOAL IV**

***Provide assistance in the development of cultural competency for teachers, administrators, counselors and staff through continuous training and professional development.***

#### **STRATEGIES**

1. Provide training for all educators in the unique culture, characteristics and learning styles of economically disadvantaged youth, including pre-service training.
2. Provide teachers with resources and tools to assist with implementing multicultural education in the classroom.
3. Assist teachers in understanding the importance of incorporating students' voices, culture and world views in the classroom and school environment.
4. Ensure that professional development training includes multicultural education as well as gender and ethnic bias awareness.
5. Strengthen the role of paraprofessionals.

## **GOAL V**

***Mobilize family and parental involvement in the education process of economically disadvantaged youth.***

### **STRATEGIES**

1. Help parents to access the educational system and understand how it operates.
2. Design and implement a model for community mobilization.
3. Provide training to successfully develop leadership within communities to carry out plans for educational improvement.
4. Develop community-based family involvement centers, including tutoring, mentoring, parent training, technology training, etc.
5. Ensure that parents of economically disadvantaged youth are broadly involved in decision-making processes in the schools.
6. Encourage volunteerism and other involvement of community members in the schools.
7. Institute social service collaboration between schools and community entities on behalf of children.
8. Proactively engage parents and volunteers in early childhood education strategies and methods.

## **GOAL VI**

***Impact postsecondary education institutions, policies, programs and practices, making them more accessible and responsive to the needs of economically disadvantaged youth.***

### **STRATEGIES**

1. Maintain access to educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged youth through affirmative outreach, recruitment and other programs of inclusion.
2. Convene a postsecondary group of policymakers and administrators to discuss the needs of economically disadvantaged youth.
3. Influence future planning of higher education to include different approaches to professional preparation and development.
4. Encourage the establishment of strategic partnerships between post-secondary institutions, nonprofit organizations, K-12 institutions, corporations, and other stakeholder groups to align in their efforts to educate and prepare more economically disadvantaged youth for a world that is diverse, global and interconnected.
5. Develop innovative mentoring and career development experiences for economically disadvantaged undergraduate and graduate students.
6. Request a regular report from each post-secondary institution in the community regarding their efforts to educate economically disadvantaged students as an external technique for stimulating change and accountability.
7. Create pressure on institutions to close the 6-year graduation gap between economically disadvantaged youth and the majority student community on campus.

8. Create opportunities for college and university scholars to translate their research acumen into innovations and solutions to address problems plaguing the economically disadvantaged community.
9. Create targeted efforts designed specifically to create awareness and action to address crisis at all levels of education, stimulating matriculation and success in higher education.
10. Establish bridges with diverse educators, administrators and staff, welcoming them into the community and helping them with recruitment, dual career challenges, overall adjustment issues, and other dynamics that may hinder them from making their local community a long-term home.