



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Charlotte's Achievement Gap Is Smaller than Nearly 70 Percent of Major U.S. Cities, But Growing

The Education Equality Index Shows Other Major North Carolina Cities Home to Significantly Larger Achievement Gaps

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The achievement gap between students from low-income families and their more advantaged peers is smaller than nearly 70 percent of major U.S. cities, according to the Education Equality Index (EEI), a first-of-its-kind tool released today. It is also the only major North Carolina city with 10 schools that have small or nonexistent achievement gaps and also serve student populations where the majority are from low-income families. Unfortunately, the Education Equality Index shows that Charlotte's achievement gap has grown in recent years.

"Despite being home to an achievement gap smaller than 70 percent of major U.S. cities, students from low-income families in Charlotte are falling further behind as the gap grows," said Ethan Gray, founder and CEO of Education Cities. "We celebrate Charlotte schools proving that equality is possible, and encourage education and policy leaders to redouble their efforts to increase the number of gap-closing schools in their community."

The Education Equality Index is the first national comparative measure of the achievement gap at the school, city and state levels, and identifies the regions where children from low-income communities are most likely to attend schools with small or nonexistent achievement gaps. Funded by the [Michael & Susan Dell Foundation](#) and developed in partnership by the foundation, [Education Cities](#), and [GreatSchools](#), the EEI features school, city and state-level data covering the nation's 100 biggest cities in 35 states.

Initial EEI findings demonstrate that Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Raleigh and Winston-Salem are all home to massive achievement gaps. Statewide, between 2011 and 2014, the achievement gap North Carolina widened at a pace quicker than every other U.S. state for which data is available.

Key findings from the Education Equality Index include:

- North Carolina is home to the fastest growing achievement gap in the nation — expanding 20 percent between 2011 and 2014.
- North Carolina's achievement gap is larger than those of other nearby states, including Virginia, Tennessee and South Carolina.
- Charlotte earns an EEI score of 38.9, indicating it has the 31st smallest achievement gap in the nation out of the 100 cities for which data is available.
- Charlotte's achievement gap grew by 6 percent between 2011 and 2014.

- Charlotte’s achievement gap is smaller than North Carolina’s other largest cities, including Fayetteville, Greensboro and Raleigh.

The top 10 Charlotte schools with small or nonexistent achievement gaps that serve a student population where the majority are from low-income families are:

- Clear Creek Elementary
- Collinswood Language Academy
- Oaklawn Language Academy
- Highland Renaissance Academy
- Joseph W Grier Academy
- Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology
- Piney Grove Elementary
- Sedgefield Elementary
- Sugar Creek Charter
- Windsor Park Elementary

As detailed in the EEI, there are hundreds of schools across the nation where low-income students are achieving at levels that match or even exceed their more advantaged peers proving that all children can excel in school when given the opportunity.

“Equality of opportunity is an American ideal,” said Ethan Gray, founder and CEO of Education Cities. “The Education Equality Index shows that while we, as a nation, have a long way to go to ensure our most vulnerable children have the opportunities they need to thrive, there are schools in almost every city proving that equality is possible.”

This is the first in a series of releases intended to identify the practices that are closing the achievement gap at the quickest pace. To see more data from the Education Equality Index and use the interactive online tool, visit www.educationequalityindex.org.

About Education Cities

Education Cities is a non-profit organization that convenes, advises, and supports a network of cities in their efforts to increase the number of great public schools. Learn more at www.education-cities.org.

About GreatSchools

Founded in 1998, GreatSchools is a national, nonpartisan nonprofit helping millions of parents find high-quality schools, support great learning, and guide their kids to great futures. GreatSchools offers thousands of articles, videos, and worksheets to help parents support their children’s learning. Last year, GreatSchools had more than 56 million unique visitors, including more than half of all U.S. families with school-age children. Headquartered in Oakland, California, GreatSchools partners with cities and states across the country to promote access to school quality data to families, particularly those in high need. Through its GreatKids program, GreatSchools promotes parenting for education success and teacher-parent collaboration.

About the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

The Michael & Susan Dell Foundation is dedicated to improving the lives of children living in urban poverty around the world. Headquartered in Austin, TX with satellite offices in New Delhi, India and Cape Town, South Africa, the Dell family foundation funds programs that foster high-quality public education and childhood

wellness, and improve the economic stability of families living in poverty. The foundation has committed more than \$1.2 billion to global children's issues and community initiatives to date. Learn more at www.msdf.org.

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