

## School Choice is a Viable Option

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Gary Orfield, former Harvard University Professor and present Co-Director of The Civil Rights Project at UCLA, indicated that minorities, and particularly those dwelling in urban areas, are more likely to receive an education inferior to that of their white counterparts residing affluent suburbs. Teachers with fewer than three years of experience often populate the faculty in urban schools. Unfortunately, it is in the first three years of teaching where their learning curve is quite steep. Most classroom instructors begin offering quality instruction after three years of experience.

### SPOTLIGHT ON NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

While the opportunity structure in the U.S. education system functions so that students of color have more difficulty excelling, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) [Public Law print of PL 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 \[1.8 MB\]](#) is a federal initiative, drafted as an acknowledgement of and solution to the educational disparities that exist in the United States. NCLB mandates that states hold teachers requires that teachers be highly qualified in their content areas and that students be held accountable for their learning. States such as New York, Massachusetts, and Florida administer assessments that functions as a gate keepers for graduation. Students are required to pass their assessment with proficiency, in order to receive a diploma. Such tools of accountability can bolster students' investment in their educational experience. Advocates of NCLB indicate that there must be basic standards of mastery, required of all students, regardless of whether they dwell in the suburbs or the inner city. Requiring testing, such as The Regents in New York, can ensure that each student has mastered the necessary skills that will prepare him to excel in higher education, should he choose to enroll.

### STAY EMPOWERED

During the early years of a child's education, parents have the power to increase access to educational opportunities for their child. Enrolling children in programs with an educational component prior to enrolling in kindergarten and advocating that they participates in enrichment activities during the summer months can ensure that children continually engage in increasing their academic prowess.

Resources

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