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## Equity of opportunity: A pressing concern for school improvement

In celebrating the contributions and wisdom of Martin Luther King, Jr., we want to remember that his concern was for society's future progress, more than fretting about its past. And he knew that progress required a constant striving for system changes that enhance equity of opportunity. He stressed that:

*Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.*

*Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle.*

*When you are right you cannot be too radical; when you are wrong, you cannot be too conservative.*

*A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus.*

From his speech about "The Other America" (at Grosse Pointe High School - March 14, 1968)

<http://www.gphistorical.org/mlk/mlkspeech/mlk-gp-speech.pdf>

*We've got to get rid of two or three myths that still pervade our nation. One is the ... notion that only time can solve the problem of racial injustice. ... many sincere people ...[say] you should slow up, you're pushing things too fast, only time can solve the problem. And if you'll just be nice and patient and continue to pray, in a hundred or two hundred years the problem will work itself out. There is an answer to that myth. It is the time is neutral. It can be used either constructively or destructively.*

As you celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., take a few minutes to consider how you are helping to enhance equity of opportunity in schools. Then:

(1) see the Briefing to The United States Commission on Civil Rights entitled:  
>Public Education Funding Inequity in an Era of Increasing Concentration of Poverty and Resegregation -- <http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018-01-10-Education-Inequity.pdf>

(2) browse the following Center resources to consider how addressing barriers to learning and teaching is key to moving forward:

>ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning --  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf>

>Integrated Student Supports and Equity: What's Not Being Discussed? --  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/integpolicy.pdf>

>The Challenge of Addressing Equity of Opportunity for All Students --  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/spring13.pdf>

Let us know what is being done in your locale to directly address barriers to learning and teaching as a major component in efforts to enhance equity of opportunity. Send to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)