

### What does the Bible say?

Do not let wisdom and understanding out of your sight, preserve sound judgment and discretion; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble. **(Proverbs 3:21-23)**

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. **(Psalm 32:8)**

Only be careful, and watch yourself closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. **(Deuteronomy 4:9)**



### What does The United Methodist Church say?

We believe that every person has the right to education. We also believe that the responsibility for education of the young rests with the family, faith communities, and the government. In society, this function can best be fulfilled through public policies that ensure access for all persons to free public elementary and secondary schools and to post-secondary schools of their choice. **(Social Principles ¶164.E)**

At a moment when childhood poverty is shamefully widespread, when many families are under constant stress, and when schools are limited by the lack of funds and resources, criticism of the public schools often ignores an essential truth: we cannot improve public schools by concentrating on the schools alone. In this context, we must address with prayerful determination the issues of race and class that threaten both public education and democracy in America... Local churches and all communities of faith must become better informed about the needs of the public schools in their communities and in the country as a whole. **(2016 Book of Resolutions, #3165, “United States Public Education and the Church”)**

Denying access in today’s world to basic information communication technologies like the Internet due to their cost or availability, limits people’s participation in their government and society. We support the goal of universal access to telephone and Internet access services at an affordable price. **(Social Principles ¶162. T)**



# EDUCATION REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES



**CHURCH & SOCIETY**

The United Methodist Church

Living **FAITH** Seeking **JUSTICE** Pursuing **PEACE**

# EDUCATION REFORM

IN THE UNITED STATES

### What do the facts say?

- The COVID-19 pandemic revealed how vital schools are not only in providing a quality education but also providing students with necessary nutrition including breakfast and lunch.
- Earnings and employment are directly related to educational attainment. In 2020, the median weekly earnings for individuals without a high school diploma was \$619 versus \$1305 for those with a college degree. The unemployment rate for those without a high school diploma (11.7%) was twice that of those with a college degree (5.5%) (US Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and other disciplinary measures are disproportionately applied to students of color. The “school-to-prison pipeline” names how, rather than educating these children, educational systems are failing them and funneling them to incarceration through disproportionately applied disciplinary policies. Black students are 3.8 times as likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspensions as White students and are 2.3 times as likely to receive a referral to law enforcement or be subject to a school-related arrest. (UNCF)
- Schools with 90 percent or more students of color spend \$733 less per student per year than schools with 90 percent or more white students. (UN)



### What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

**Champion** public education as a basic human right; and curb school districts' reliance on school fund-raising and state-alternative revenues, such as gambling, for financial support.

**Advocate** at the state and local level for adequate public school funding, equitable distribution of state funds, free and reduced-price school meal programs, and policies to end unjust educational disparities. Call for an end to punitive policies, out-of-school suspensions, and other practices supporting the school-to-prison pipeline.

**Visit** your local school, build relationships with teachers and administrators and volunteer your time.

**Establish** and nurture partnerships with local public schools supporting free and reduced-price school meal programs, summer meal provision programs, after-school and vacation enrichment programs, adopt-a-school programs, teacher appreciation programs, updated library materials, and parenting enrichment classes.



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