

## PRESS RELEASE

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The report and state-specific data can be found here: [www.blackboysreport.org](http://www.blackboysreport.org)

### **Schott Foundation: America's Education System Neglects Almost Half of the Nation's Black and Latino Male Students**

*New report cites need to address students being pushed out and locked out of opportunities to learn;  
Schott Foundation joins call for a moratorium on out-of-school suspensions*

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – A new report from the Schott Foundation for Public Education finds that only 52 percent of Black male and 58 percent of Latino male ninth-graders graduate from high school four years later, while 78 percent of White, non-Latino male ninth-graders graduate four years later. The report suggests that without a policy framework that creates opportunity for all students, strengthens supports for the teaching profession and strikes the right balance between support-based reforms and standards-driven reforms, the U.S. will become increasingly unequal and less competitive in the global economy.

According to *The Urgency of Now: The Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*, the national [graduation rate for Black males](#) has increased by ten percentage points since 2001-02, with 2010-11 being the first year that more than half of the nation's ninth-grade Black males graduated with a regular diploma four years later. Yet, this progress has closed the graduation gap between Black male and White, non-Latino males by only three percentage points. At this rate, it would take nearly 50 years for Black males to achieve the same high school graduation rates as their White male counterparts.

“We have a responsibility to provide future generations of Americans with the education and the skills needed to thrive in communities, the job market and the global economy. Yet, too many Black and Latino young boys and men are being pushed out and locked out of the U.S. education system or find themselves unable to compete in a 21st Century economy upon graduating,” said John H. Jackson, president and CEO of the Schott Foundation for Public Education. “These graduation rates are not indicative of a character flaw in the young men, but rather evidence of an unconscionable level of willful neglect, unequal resource allocation by federal, state and local entities and the indifference of too many elected and community leaders. It's time for a support-based reform movement.”

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Among the states with the largest Black enrollments, North Carolina (58%), Maryland (57%), and California (56%) have the highest graduation rates for Black males, while New York (37%), Illinois (47%) and Florida (47%) have the lowest. Arizona (84%) and Minnesota (65%) were the only states within the top ten ranked states, in graduation rates, with over 10,000 Black males enrolled. Among the states with the highest enrollments of Latinos, Arizona (68%), New Jersey (66%) and California (64%) have the highest graduation rates for Latino males, while New York (37%), Colorado (46%) and Georgia (52%) have the lowest.

Three of the four states with the highest graduation rates for Black males were states with a relatively small number of Black males enrolled in the state's schools: Maine (97%), Vermont (82%), Utah (76%). This seems to indicate that Black males, on average, perform better in places and spaces where they are not relegated to under-resourced districts or schools. When provided similar opportunities they are more likely to produce similar or better outcomes as their White male peers.

The report cites the need to address what the Schott Foundation calls a “pushout” and “lockout” crisis in our education system, in part by reducing and reclaiming the number of students who are no longer in schools receiving critical educational services and improving the learning and transition opportunities for students who remain engaged. Blacks and Latinos face disproportionate rates of out-of-school suspensions and are not consistently receiving sufficient learning time – effectively being pushed out of opportunities to succeed. Many who remain in schools are locked out of systems with well-resourced schools and where teachers have the training, mentoring, administrative support, supplies and the facilities they need to provide our children with a substantive opportunity to learn.

In the foreword to the report, Andrés A. Alonso, CEO, Baltimore City Public Schools, described his city's efforts to keep kids in schools: “We could not have made these strides without asserting unequivocally that we had no disposable children, and that we needed everyone's help to make things right.” Alonso concludes, “I am confident that we as a nation will rally and we will succeed. The cost of continued failure is around us, a disservice to our best hopes. The cost of continued failure should be abhorrent to contemplate.”

To cut down the alarming “pushout” rate, the Schott Foundation is supporting the recently launched *Solutions Not Suspensions* initiative, a grassroots effort of students, educators, parents and community leaders [calling for a nationwide moratorium on out-of-school suspensions](#). The initiative, supported by The Opportunity to Learn Campaign and the Dignity in Schools Campaign, promotes proven programs that equip teachers and school administrators with effective alternatives to suspensions that keep young people in school and learning.

Schott also calls for students who are performing below grade level to receive “Personal Opportunity Plans” to prevent them from being locked out of receiving the resources needed to succeed. The report highlights the need to pivot from a standards-driven reform agenda to a supports-based reform agenda that provides all students equitable access to the resources critical to successfully achieving high standards.

*The Urgency of Now* also provides the following recommendations for improving graduation rates for young Black and Latino men:

- End the rampant use of out-of-school suspensions as a default disciplinary action, as it decreases valuable learning time for the most vulnerable students and increases dropouts.
- Expand learning time and increase opportunities for a well-rounded education including the arts, music, physical education, robotics, foreign language, and apprenticeships.

- States and cities should conduct a redlining analysis of school funding, both between and within districts, and work with the community and educators to develop a support-based reform plan with equitable resource distribution to implement sound community school models.

“There is no doubt that the stakes are high. Black and Latino children under the age of 18 will become a majority of all children in the U.S. by the end of the current decade, many of whom are in lower-income households located in neighborhoods with under-resourced schools,” said Michael Holzman, senior research consultant to the Schott Foundation. “We do not want our young Black and Latino men to have to beat the odds; we want to change the odds. We must focus on systemic change to provide all our children with the opportunity to learn.”

For the full report, *The Urgency of Now: Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*, including detailed state data, visit [www.blackboysreport.org](http://www.blackboysreport.org).

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**About The Schott Foundation for Public Education** Founded in 1991, the Schott Foundation for Public Education seeks to develop and strengthen a broad-based and representative movement to achieve fully resourced high quality preK-12 public education.

Learn more at: [www.schottfoundation.org](http://www.schottfoundation.org)