



# EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

## LEARNING GOALS

- To consider the barriers students face in receiving quality education (primary and secondary school).
- To think critically about the factors driving educational inequalities at the state and national level.
- To practice drawing connections between local challenges and global contexts and best practices.

## ASSIGNMENT

Estimated Time: ~24 min

- Read: "[An Unfair Start: Inequality in Children's Education in Rich Countries](#)" pages 1-10 (~ 8 min.)
- Read: "[Japan Might Be What Equality in Education Looks Like](#)" (~ 10 min.)
- Read: "[Feds: Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Kids Suspended Far More Often](#)" (~ 6 min.)

## TERMINOLOGY

- **Chronic absenteeism** - in Hawaii, refers to students who are absent from school for 15 or more days for any reason.
- **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**- refers to a group of 35 wealthy countries whose education systems are often compared because of their similar, relatively high levels of wealth and human development.
- **Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)** - an international exam which tests fifteen-year old students' abilities in reading, science, and math. In the UNICEF report, countries' PISA scores in reading are used as an indicator of educational inequality.
- **Racial disparities in discipline** - when one group of students of a particular race is disproportionately disciplined or suspended from school compared to students of a different race. Racial disparities in discipline exist in Hawaii because Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders are disciplined and suspended at higher rates than other groups.

## KAHOOT QUIZ

- Go to Kahoot.it or use the Kahoot mobile app and enter the pin 01228410
- Or, use [this link](#)



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are some of the key factors driving inequalities in education, and how might these inequalities impact students later in life?
- Figure 1 on page 7 of the UNICEF report illustrates, in broad terms, the different factors contributing to access to education throughout a child's lifetime. Give some specific examples of how these factors manifest themselves in Hawaii, and consider how we might address these factors so that education is more accessible to all children.
- The UNICEF report outlines challenges and ways to address educational inequality globally. How can we apply this report and these recommendations specifically to Hawaii?
- How does Japan provide equitable opportunities to its students, regardless of their respective backgrounds? In particular, what kind of support does Japan provide for struggling students/prefectures, and why do you think this support is so important for ensuring equitable access to education?
- Why can racial disparities in discipline, as outlined in the Civil Beat article, be considered an obstacle to equal access to education in Hawaii?
- What factors could contribute to Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students being disciplined and suspended more frequently and at higher rates than other students?
- The Civil Beat article mentions that having a more diverse group of public school teachers plays a role in students' willingness and ability to remain in school. Why do you think teacher diversity is so important?
- What challenges do teachers, schools, and administrators face when trying to make education more equitable? Does inequality in education exist because the people who run school systems are unaware of these problems, or are there real barriers that are difficult to overcome? If so, what are they?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [NCEE's Top Performing Countries](#)  
A resource from the National Center on Education and the Economy which compiles information on top-performing and highly equitable educational systems in countries around the world.
  - ◇ Countries to consider: [Estonia: Supporting Equity - NCEE](#); [Finland: Supporting Equity - NCEE](#)
- [Fairness for Children - Income and Education Inequality](#) (2:36)  
A short video from UNICEF Innocenti explaining the impact of familial wealth on children's access to education, and how the correlation between income and educational access varies by country.
- [Dewi and Putri: How Inequality Separates Two Girls from Indonesia](#) (3:31)  
A short video from the World Bank explaining the various and lifelong factors impacting and limiting children's access to education.
- [Ethnic Inequality in the Aloha State](#) (2:50, 11:46)  
Hawaii Public Radio's interview with Professor Jonathan Okamura of UH Manoa on ethnic inequality in Hawaii, particularly at the college level, and steps policymakers can take to fix these inequalities.
- [Girls' Education: UNICEF](#)  
A short UNICEF article that provides an overview of the societal benefits of gender equality in education.



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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Hawaii Public Schools Sued Over Unequal Treatment Of Female Athletes](#)  
A Civil Beat article explaining the role of Title IX in high school athletics in Hawaii and the gender inequities that remain in high schools today.

## IDEAS FOR ACTION (continued)

### Easier

- Hold a class discussion on how schools in Hawaii have worked to provide equal access to students, and consider the ways in which schools can improve in this area. If they are comfortable sharing, ask your classmates if they were ever unfairly prevented from accessing educational opportunities.
- Talk to your teachers or school administrators about their thoughts on educational equality. If they could change anything about the school system to make it more equitable, what would it be and why?
- The resources in this lesson have focused primarily on wealthy and developed countries. Research educational equality and educational opportunities in less wealthy countries, and share your findings with your class in the form of a presentation or a short lesson similar to this one.

### Medium

- Spread awareness: give a presentation on the factors impacting students' access to education, and how these factors are present in Hawaii's educational system.
- Volunteer with non-profit organizations providing support for at-risk youth. Organizations include [Hapa Mana](#), which creates free sports camps and afterschool programs for children, and [Family Programs Hawaii](#), which provides support and services to children involved in foster care.
- Explore the [World Inequality Database on Education](#), which allows you to compare different aspects of countries' educational outcomes. Specifically, under the "Select an Indicator" dropdown menu, you can look at different educational indicators, such as primary school completion rates, and compare how these indicators vary by country. After exploring the database, what factors do you think contribute to the different educational outcomes between countries and demographic groups within countries?

### Hard

- Policy advocacy: research bills in the city council and state legislature on measures to make access to education more equal in Hawaii. Write and submit testimony.
- Present your findings from conversations with peers and teachers, as well as any outside research you may have done, to school administrators and work to make educational opportunities more equitable.

## HAWAII CORE STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (HCSSS) LINKS

- Content Standard [SS.WH.8.12.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.WH.8.7.2](#)
- Content Standard [SS.US.12.8.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.PID.4.10.2](#)
- Action Projects link to [SS.PID.5.7.1](#)

This lesson was created by Megan Tagami.

Your feedback is important! Please share your thoughts with PAAC via this [short survey](#).

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