



## EOS' Excellence in Equity Newsletter

Your bimonthly newsletter on equity & opportunity at the highest levels

### Student Experiences: Video Testimonials



Max Gonzalez, West Leyden Student

*"I am very glad that I signed up for AP classes just because it gave me more exposure to like what a college course is going to be like when I get there in three years. My mindset has changed totally now that I'm more familiar with it, I'm not afraid to take more AP classes."*

[Watch Video](#)



Marco Hernandez, West Leyden Student

*"The person who influenced me the most, was probably my counselor Mr. Jackson. He looked at my grades and transcript and really told me that it should be something that I should be doing so that I have a better opportunity to get into good colleges that I want to get into."*

[Watch Video](#)

*\*Permission granted by students, guardians and district.*

### Student Experiences: Profiles



Dora - 11th Grader  
Atlanta Metro



Bruno - 12th Grader  
Southern CA



Anna - 10th Grader  
Chicago Metro

"The encouragement that was given helped me a lot... [my teacher] didn't have a favorite student so it made you feel welcome."

"Teachers in AP classes don't want you to fail...whenever you have a question you can just go up to him and he'll sit down and explain to you."

"I want to do something hard early, so when I get [to college] I'm prepared...[so] I try to get A's because I know I'm capable of doing it."

Click on each student to read their full story.

\*Per FERPA, names and images have been changed to protect students' identities.

## School Experiences: School Partners in their 'Experience Success' Year

### Jonesboro School District - Removing Barriers

*Our work [second year] with Equal Opportunity Schools has enabled us to dismantle the belief that there is a certain type of student suited to the rigors of AP. Through our collaboration, we were able to tear down racial and cultural barriers, which traditionally prevented some students from enrolling in our programs, and create a more diverse, modern body of AP students.* - **Matthew Still** - Principal, Jonesboro Public Schools.



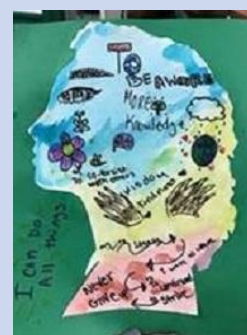
*This term, I have seen an enormous positive change in many of my first-time AP students. Most notably, there has been an obvious boost in student self-confidence; I have observed students transition from believing "I don't belong in this class" to "I have something to offer here."* - **Emily Garrison** - English Teacher, Jonesboro Public Schools

### San Juan School District - First-Time AP Takers

On a beautiful California summer day, El Camino Fundamental High School staff were busily preparing for the upcoming school year. With classes still a week away, a dedicated group of 30 AP students were on campus to attend *Camp AP*.



El Camino Fundamental High School, one of nine comprehensive high schools in the San Juan Unified School District, was unique in offering this four-hour invitation-only workshop for first-time AP students. The day began with team building exercises led by AP Psychology teacher and Link Crew advisor, **Ms. Amanda Belt**. Students worked through fun tasks that were designed to help them develop collaboration skills and gain a network of peers to rely on during the upcoming school year. After team building, students attended skill building workshops led by Vice Principal, **Ms. Tanya Baker**, and AP Seminar teacher, **Ms. Evelyn Welborn**. Students gained time management and personal wellness strategies, as well as active reading and note-taking skills. The final workshop of the day was led by AP Studio Art teacher, **Ms. Jodee Hartney**. Students created an art project in which they envisioned their upcoming AP experience. Ms. Hartney encouraged students to slip the completed project into the front of their binders to remind themselves of their vision when and if they felt challenged by their AP coursework.



Student Art Project

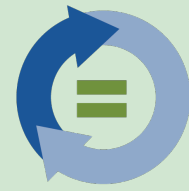
Based on the positive feedback about *Camp AP* from both staff and students, El Camino is already discussing ways to reach out to more AP teachers and students for next summer. They hope to double attendance each year until all AP students have the opportunity to attend such a fun and beneficial summer program.



Student Art Project

To learn more on *Camp AP*, contact [Ms. Evelyn Welborn](#)

In the first Equity Leader Lab session on implicit bias, participants engaged in a retrospective on their school's multiyear journey with EOS to expand access and opportunity for students. Here are a few participant's comments collected through an exit ticket.



*"I believe that opening up the conversation about race brings people's personal biases to the forefront. It makes them aware of self."* - ELLabs Participant

*"It was great to have the "Defining equity" activity and reflect on my own biases. It allowed me to realize my team and I have the same vision for our students."* - ELLabs Participant

*"Hopefully this is just the beginning of deeper understanding of values and biases that we all face."* - ELLabs Participant

## Administrator Experiences: Retired Superintendent



### So, this is how the kids feel?

Recently, I had a powerful experience that brought my conditioning as a person of color to the forefront. It caused me to immediately think about the children and young adults who we in the United States indoctrinate in school each day with our culture, social structure and norms. What I am about to relate will seem odd and even extreme to some but quite relatable to others, particularly others who look like me.

Let me first say that I am a seasoned educational administrator, and I've seen my share of challenges. I tell you this not to be prideful but rather to give context to the absurdity of what I am about to share.

So, the setting is an annual meeting of a state superintendents' association. The luncheon has commenced and now the state commissioner is about to give the keynote remarks. I am around the conference venue because, following the luncheon, business associates and I will be conducting a post-conference presentation for interested superintendents.

As the commissioner is introduced, I attempt to place myself along the wall outside of the luncheon room with my ear near the entry door. My effort is to hear the presentation without standing out by being visible. Why? Because I am not a part of this particular state superintendents' association, and I am one of only two faces of color in attendance. The other gentleman is part of the association. As an outsider of color I will be noticed. - **Dr. John Ramos**, Superintendent-in-Residence

[Continue Reading](#)

## Funder Experiences: Supporting Equity Work in Education



Our work with Equal Opportunity Schools over the past five years has deeply informed our understanding of school-level equity issues. The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's mission is to advance the education of

exceptionally promising students who have financial need. We focus squarely on the excellence gap – the disparity in the percent of lower-income versus higher-income students who reach advanced levels of academic performance. This “gap” appears in elementary school and continues as students move through middle school, high school, college and beyond. One of the main contributors to the excellence gap is lack of access to/enrollment in advanced coursework. EOS is tackling the excellence gap each and every day through their work in school districts across the nation.

EOS delivers knowledge and guidance to districts and schools dedicated to addressing inequitable enrollment in advanced coursework. Based on data driven best practices, EOS' interventions are integrated into the schools in order to support students who have the

potential for success in, but have not been identified for, high level courses. For these students, exposure to increased academic rigor is better preparing them for college and beyond. We are grateful for the opportunity to support EOS and the experience we have gained by learning from its important work over the past five years.

### Equity Case Studies

The equity case studies highlight districts' reasons for engaging in the equity work, as well as what they have learned.

- [Horry County Schools 01](#)
- [Lake Park High School District 108](#)
- [Simi Valley Unified School District](#)

To have your district included on our website, download the [questionnaire](#) and submit for inclusion.

### Upcoming Events

Jan 29-30, 2019 – Dr. John Ramos and Dolores Caamano will co-present with Middletown Public Schools. [AP New England Forum](#), Boston, MA.

Feb 14-16, 2019 – Dr. Chris Belcher will be hosting a pre-conference workshop with Dr. Matt Degner (Iowa City Community School District) and Ed Winchester and Terri Verhaegen (Santa Ana Unified School Districts). [AASA National Conference on Education](#), Los Angeles, CA.

Contact [marketing@EOSchools.org](mailto:marketing@EOSchools.org) if interested in co-presenting at future conferences.

---

### EOS in the News

For updated articles on EOS and district partners, visit the [EOS News Page](#).

- [DeKalb High commits to preparing more students for college](#)
- [East Mecklenburg High School Successful In Enrolling More Students Of Color In Advanced Classes](#)
- [Virginia Beach schools sees increase in AP students and AP scholars](#)
- [AP Celebration at Jonesboro Schools](#)

If you have an interesting student, staff or administrator story you would like to share with the EOS community, tweet us at @EqualOppSchools or @EquityLeaderLab.

Register to receive EnE

STAY CONNECTED

[www.EOSchools.org](http://www.EOSchools.org) | 206-547-1167 | [marketing@eoschools.org](mailto:marketing@eoschools.org)

