

Reflections on EOS and Our Accomplishments

Equal Opportunity Schools began as a small project in South Carolina nearly twelve years ago. As of today, we have enabled tens of thousands of students of color and low-income students to successfully access the high-level learning opportunities they need and deserve. And if we are to achieve our mission to reach the hundreds of thousands still missing each year from America's most challenging high school classrooms, we need to continue to evolve.

To that end, we will be undergoing a period of leadership change. As with many founder transitions, we are appointing an Interim CEO to help the EOS Board shepherd the organization forward, assess organizational needs, and position us for new long-term leadership to scale our impact to the scope of the national challenge.

Today is my last day as CEO, and I am excited to hand off leadership of the organization to our Interim CEO, [Debora Merle](#). Deb has significant experience in educational leadership, including running the California and Washington State Boards of Education and working with several governors on educational policy.

I will continue to stay engaged with EOS. I'll be serving on the board of directors and will contribute to the search for a permanent CEO. At the same time, as an advisor to EOS, I will explore creative pathways and partnerships with the potential to significantly increase our impact. On a personal note, I look forward the chance to reflect on all we've done, the opportunity to do more writing, and to spend more time with my growing family.

It's hard to imagine a more meaningful professional experience than this one has been – a chance to build something profoundly impactful with a team and partners from whom I have learned so much. Though founders are often credited with the “big idea,” this idea was never mine. This work has been, and will continue to be, about the lived experiences of close to a million students each year who are overlooked and underestimated for no good reason. The inequities they experience are inherently disturbing, and call us all to action. Through our shared efforts, we have been able to make significant progress, and build a foundation for greater future impact.

Just consider some of the accomplishments we achieved so far working together:

- Added tens of thousands of students of color and low-income students to the advanced courses they need and deserve.
- Developed an amazing team of leaders – now 70 FTE strong – with incredible passion, skills, diligence, and wisdom for the work of bringing equity to the highest levels of our public schools.
- Developed \$46M in philanthropic and service revenue with amazing partners to advance our mission.
- Grew the initial work from one school to 550 high school partners across twenty-nine states.
- With the White House's My Brother's Keeper Initiative, launched the first-ever statewide commitments to fully reflect student diversity at the highest levels of K-12, and collaborated with states on missing students reporting and the adoption of a statewide equity policy.

- Brought together, through a variety of forums including two national symposia, our national network of educational leaders to share their equity journeys and develop greater collective ability to lead our school systems higher on behalf of historically under-served students.

I am forever humbled and grateful to our team; our Board; and our school, state, national, and philanthropic partners. Thank you for your passion, hard work, and dedication to our mission. I have personally and professionally grown while serving as EOS's CEO.

I eagerly look forward to the day in which students of each and every background have an equal opportunity to succeed at the highest levels. Your continued and incredible efforts on behalf of our shared mission will be essential to getting us there.

Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

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