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Addressing Inequities in Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic: How Education Policy and Schools Can Support Historically and Currently Marginalized Children and Youth

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MATERIALS

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Statement of the Evidence

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Volume Editor

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on global communities. There are few people on the planet who have not been affected by the viral outbreak ranging from coping with infections, death of loved ones, employment and income loss, and social distancing practices, to remote work and schooling.

Although COVID-19 has touched all lives, it has not done so uniformly. In the United States, the pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and challenges for historically and currently marginalized groups of children, youth and families, including those who are American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN), Asian, Black, Latinx, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+). This five-part *Statement of the Evidence* volume focuses on the short- and long-term impact of educational, employment, family, and personal pandemic-related disruptions for those vulnerable children and youth. Although the volume focuses on the impact of COVID-19 in the United States, many of the issues are relevant to other global communities.

AIAN, Asian, Black, Latinx, and LGBTQ+ children, youth, and their families have been impacted in unique and universal ways during the pandemic. Long before the COVID-19 pandemic, each group was targeted by historical and current systemic racism, oppression, and inequalities (i.e., institutions and structures that restrict opportunities by virtue of one's social group membership). However, the specific expression and manifestation of these systems of oppression, and the extent to which they have been exacerbated during the pandemic, is unique to each group and is the focus of the volume's individual briefs.

Given the recent emergence of the pandemic, there is limited evidence of the exact nature and depth of its impact. Scientists are just beginning to understand the present-day effects of the pandemic on children,

youth, and families. It may take years, or even generations, to understand the depths of its effects on socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical development, as well as on academic achievement and future career/economic success. This volume draws from the available evidence on how the pandemic is affecting diverse children, youth, and families, as well as evidence of the effects of systemic inequalities on their communities. Together, this volume integrates relevant science and existing data to present evidence-informed recommendations to best support historically and currently marginalized children and youth as schools adopt policies and practices to resume instruction, whether online and/or in-person, for the start of the 2020 - 2021 academic year. With schools back in session, we urge educators, policymakers, and lawmakers to consider how policies, practices and programs can be leveraged to promote children's optimal development and address the exacerbating effects of COVID-19 among historically and currently marginalized children and families now and into the future.

The *Addressing Inequities in Education* volume examines the impact of systemic racism and the potential exacerbating effects of COVID-19 on racial-ethnic minority children, youth, and families, and LGBTQ+ youth. In addition to this introduction from the editor, briefs in the volume include:

- Considerations for American Indian and Alaska Native Children and Youth in the Era of COVID-19
- Considerations for Asian American Children and Youth in the Era of COVID-19
- Considerations for Black Children and Youth in the Era of COVID-19
- Considerations for Latinx Children and Youth in the Era of COVID-19
- Considerations for LGBTQ+ Children and Youth in the Era of COVID-19