

Title The Real Question After Hopwood: Why Equity in the K-12 Pipeline Will Change Our University Campuses for the Better and Help Preserve a Citizen Democracy

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ABSTRACT

The central thesis of this paper is that inequity problems in the Kindergarten - 12th grade pipeline presage problems for higher education, including under prepared college applicants, a need for remedial education at the postsecondary level, and under representation of minorities on campus. If only for their own self-preservation, colleges and universities must demonstrate an active commitment to education at all levels; and this commitment must include all the groups and races that will drive the economic future of our society. The challenge of access to a quality education for all Americans has been exacerbated by California's legislative initiatives, Propositions 187 and 209, as well as, the 1996 Hopwood decision against The University of Texas.

The author will review the ongoing debate about affirmative action nationwide and particularly the negative impact of policy reversals on educational equity and access to higher education. The author will propose, however, that the post-Hopwood era offers all educational providers a fresh opportunity to attack inequity in the K-16 pipeline, and to implement meaningful programs that will not only improve educational quality for all our citizens, but also increase the vitality of this nation's citizen democracy. Examples of these meaningful initiatives are partnerships among education, politics, business and parents; effective pragmatic counseling in elementary and secondary schools to prepare parents and students for the realities of academic competition stemming from educational reform; strong reforms at the community college level; and, a commitment on the part of colleges and universities to improve elementary and secondary education.