

Are the Schools Our Children Attend Contributing To the Achievement Gap?



Brief #17 September 19, 2015

*"It is an inescapable fact that if one district has more funds available per pupil than another district, the former will have greater choice in educational planning than will the latter. In this regard, I believe the question of discrimination in educational quality must be deemed to be an objective one that looks to what the State provides its children, not to what the children are able to do with what they receive. That a child forced to attend an **underfunded school with poorer physical facilities** [emphasis added], less experienced teachers, larger classes, and a narrower range of courses than a school with substantially more funds—and thus with greater choice in educational planning—may nevertheless excel is to the credit of the child, not the State. Indeed, who can ever measure for such a child the opportunities lost and the talents wasted for want of a broader, more enriched education?"* Thurgood Marshall, 1973

The gap is a real detriment to our country with a waste of talent, and immeasurable in its effects on our society

The question is: Are these facilities contributing to the achievement gap? The Education Facilities Clearinghouse recently commissioned C. Kenneth Tanner, Professor Emeritus, University of Georgia, to conduct a meta-analysis of effects of school design on student success. He was able to identify these best practices in schools and school design:

- ***Safety and security measures, as defined by Tanner's meta-analysis, have a significant impact on student outcomes.***
- ***Quiet places and spaces for reflection have a significant influence on student outcomes.***
- ***Color is significant in its effect on student achievement.***
- ***Ample state-of-the-art technology for teachers and students makes a significant contribution to student achievement.***

[Read full blog.](#)

Reference

Tanner, C. K. (2015). *Effects of school architectural designs on students' Accomplishments: An meta-analysis*. Retrieved from the Education Facilities Clearinghouse (EFC): <http://www.efc.gwu.edu/library/effects-of-school-architectural-designs-on-students-accomplishments-a-meta-analysis/>

The Education Facilities Clearinghouse (EFC) is a program of The George Washington University and the Graduate School of Education and Human Development and is funded by the U.S. Department of Education.