

Fact Sheet: Ensuring Everyone a Good Education

Getting a good education is the key to economic success, and it's especially important for women trying to move into well-paying fields traditionally dominated by men.

There is inadequate government funding for schools and student loans.

- The cost of college has increased significantly, but aid for students hasn't kept pace. In 2001-2002, the average Pell Grant covered more than 60% of the cost of tuition at a public university. By 2005-2006, the average Pell Grant covered less than 45% of the cost of tuition at a public university.
- No Child Left Behind programs are woefully underfunded, forcing school districts to make up the gap by cutting other programs in local schools.

Girls are dropping out of high school at alarming rates and face extreme economic consequences as a result.

- One in four girls overall fails to complete high school in the standard time period, and the rates are worse for black and Hispanic girls.
- Girls who drop out have higher rates of unemployment, make significantly lower wages, and are more likely to need to rely on public support programs to provide for their families than males who drop out.

A college education is especially important to close the wage gap between men and women.

- Women with a high school diploma earn only 75% of what men with a high school diploma earn. But women who have recently graduated from college have been able to cut that differential by 20%, making 80% of what recent male college graduates earn.

Students don't get the same protection from harassment in school that their teachers receive.

- Under a decision of the Supreme Court, students who are harassed at school have to meet a very high legal standard in order to hold the school responsible for the harassment. Employees in the workplace, including teachers, enjoy a legal standard that is far more protective of their rights. Efforts to make sure students get as much protection as the grownups who are charged with their education have not passed in Congress

Federal programs that help women succeed are being dismantled.

- The Bush Administration has forced schools to eliminate programs that can help women pursue higher education in math and science, even though women still earn far fewer degrees than men in engineering and computer science.
- The Bush Administration has adopted policies that could roll back decades of gains for women in intercollegiate athletics under Title IX.

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