



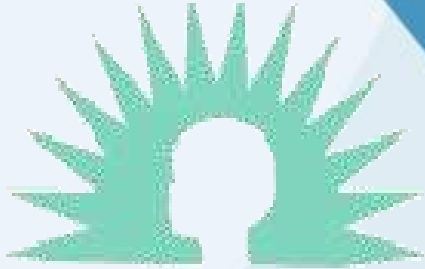
PARENTAL READINESS AND  
EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

A PROGRAM OF  
THE LAWYERS'  
COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL  
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# NEWSLETTER



## The First Teacher

by Rhajaa Wright

In our July 2017 newsletter, PREP emphasized the importance of parents introducing their children to people who look, act, dress, love, and pray differently than themselves.

However, motivating children to be open is only one step of many towards creating inclusive environments. Parents must additionally stay in tune with their own biases and perceptions to create integrated and equal classrooms. Parents are often their children's first teachers and as a result they cannot underestimate the influence that their actions and words have over young minds.

### Ignoring Integration

A 2014 [study](#) by UCLA suggests that public schools are more segregated today than they were in 1968. After the desegregation ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* some school districts across the nation began scrambling to identify various methods to integrate their schools. However, others searched for ways to keep students of color and white students in separate classrooms, if not entire schools. One of the most infamous cases of this type of discrimination can be seen in Prince Edward County, where officials decided to close all public schools and send white

students to private schools known as "segregation academies" as opposed to integrating the schools. As a result, many black children went without education for as many as five years during the time that the public education system was closed in the area.

### Admiring All Children

It is crucial to understand that *all* children are entitled to a quality public education. One student's success does not have to be at the cost of another.

Surely, parents want the most loving and understanding environments inside of their children's schools. But, for their families to receive this type of acceptance, they must first give this type of acceptance and advocate on behalf of others.

**"There is beauty in these children.  
There is genius in these children. Their  
presence and their differences add  
value to the space that they are in."**

**- Nathaniel Cole,  
Executive Director of  
The Urban Alliance**





## Director's Comments

Under the new administration, schools might receive new instructions from the government on ways to educate children. Regardless of the forthcoming changes, parents can still remain consistently involved in their children's education and ensure that they are aware of what is happening inside of their child's schools.

PREP is a proponent of the two-generation approach that advocates for opportunities and services that benefit both children and parents, at the same time. By being involved in their children's education, parents can contribute to positive changes in the schools while simultaneously developing skills that will help them at their own jobs such as speaking out for others, solving conflicts, and communicating effectively.

Parents can team up together to request that certain initiatives be introduced within schools that promote transparency and accountability. In addition, they can join school organizations that need parent volunteers to provide extra help and continue building positive relationships with others in the community.

Please vote for our 2018 SXSW Education Conference panel on "Hate Online & in Schools: Building a Tech Resistance." It's easy to vote: just create an account and then visit the Panel Picker website to "Vote Up" our panel: <http://panelpicker.sxsw.com/vote/77312>

Voting ends August 25th and makes up 30% of the selection process. So your vote is important!

Your vote will help us support students, parents, schools and teachers to combat bullying with technology and dialogue to create a safe environment for all students. Please share with your networks!

*Natasha Quiroga is PREP Director and Senior Counsel for the Educational Opportunities Project*

[WWW.PREPparents.org](http://WWW.PREPparents.org)



# PREP Resources

## NOW PLAYING:

### Video Tutorials

- ⇒ Parent Advocacy
- ⇒ Navigating the School System
- ⇒ Special Education
- ⇒ English Language Learners

[www.youtube.com/prepparents](http://www.youtube.com/prepparents)

### State-Specific Parent Guides

- ⇒ On education law and policies

[www.prepparents.org/resources/for-parents](http://www.prepparents.org/resources/for-parents)

### Recorded Webinars

- ⇒ Parent Advocacy
- ⇒ Mobilization
- ⇒ Special Education Process
- ⇒ School Discipline
- ⇒ Bullying
- ⇒ English Language Learners

[www.prepparents.org/webinar](http://www.prepparents.org/webinar)

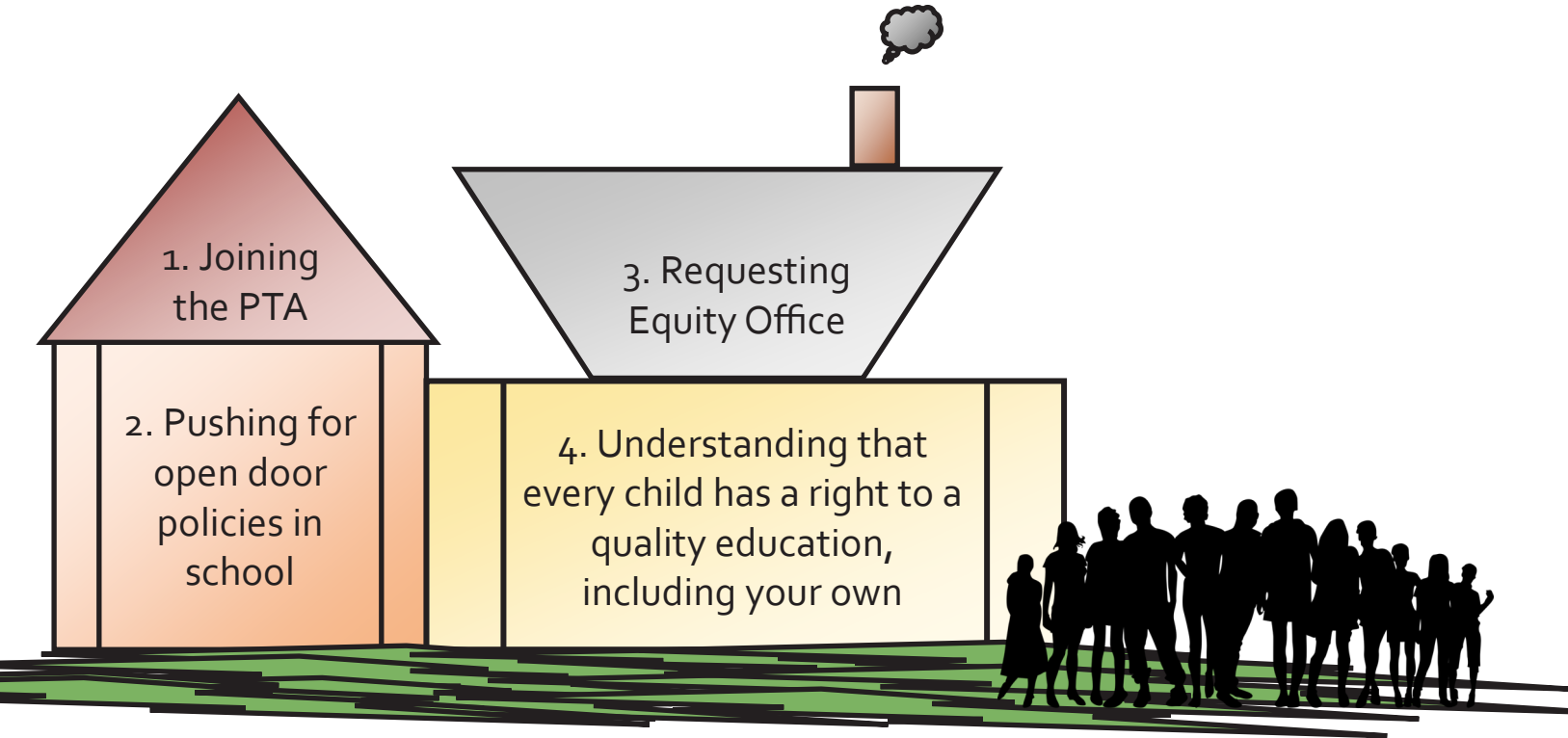
Have questions about **special education, school discipline, English learners, bullying, or discrimination**-related issues? Are you a parent in **California, New York or Mississippi**? Check out our newly launched **e-Clinic!**

[www.prepparents.org/appointments](http://www.prepparents.org/appointments)  
202-662-8600





# PREP's Tips for Advocacy

*Parents have some of the greatest influence over how their children think and behave. Here are some examples of how parents and advocates can ensure that they are promoting a healthy school environment for all students.*



1. Joining the PTA can ensure that you, as a parent can contribute to shaping the narrative and positive parent-teacher-child relations inside the school.
2. Open door policies within schools allow parents to visit schools during the day, without feeling like they are burdening the school, all the while introducing full transparency into their children's schools and first-hand insight into understanding how the administration and teachers treat the children in the school.
3. Advocating for an Equity Office would ensure that schools are held accountable for the opportunities and initiatives that promote a fair school environment.
4. This one is self explanatory! All children are entitled to a quality education.

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