



Fact Sheet: Why We Serve “Strivers”

Inspiration from: *The Achievement Trap* by Civic Enterprises & John Bridgeland

- John Bridgeland defines “**Strivers**” as those who score in top 25% on national standardized tests whose family income is below the national median.
 - CNG uses a broader definition—average, low-income students
- From elementary through post-secondary education, these students lose more ground and excel less frequently than their high-income peers.
- The assumption is that they can fend for themselves, when the facts show otherwise.
- Far fewer “Strivers” from lower-income backgrounds achieve to the higher levels even though all indications show that they are capable. They fall out of higher achieving groups during elementary, middle and high school. Fewer graduate from college and go on to grad school.
- Unless something is done, many more of the brightest low-income students will meet the same educational fate robbing them of the opportunity and our nation of a valuable resource.
- The nation has focused education policy on low-performing students from low-income backgrounds. While this is understandable, we must accompany this with a concerted effort to promote services for moderate achievers within the same population. Their talents are similarly under-nurtured, and their needs are great.
- The educational system will not succeed if our moderate to higher performing students from lower-income families continue to slip through the cracks.
- These students are largely ignored and remain absent from policy discussions – “Strivers” have rarely been targeted.
- Summer learning loss tends to be greater for higher-achieving students from low-income schools.
- These facts were little known to the general public, so the attitude is that these students tend to succeed in their educational environment—the opposite is true.
- If given the necessary support and nurturing, these scholars have the potential to make significant contribution to our society and the world.