

**Environmental Justice Educational Series**

**Part 4: Environmental & Natural Resources Policy (ENRP)**

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Policy: Written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people.

In education, one study analyzed racial disparities in college attendance outcomes from the 1980s through the 2010s. Although college entrance rates increased for all racial groups, Black and Hispanic youth became increasingly less likely than their White peers to attend four-year selective colleges. In the 2010s cohort, Black and Hispanic youth were 8 and 7 percentage points, respectively, less likely than their White counterparts to secure admission to four-year selective colleges, **even after controlling for parents' income, education, and other family background variables.**

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This has roots in residential segregation, where much more resource investment went into A-graded communities vs. D-graded.

Housing and schooling are intrinsically enmeshed in the United States, both in terms of education and property values. An A+ graded school has a 4-fold higher median home price than that of the lowest quality (D or less), and school attendance zone boundaries are drawn along residential assignment, a direct result of policy.

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Black and Hispanic individuals are overrepresented in the essential workforce, a direct result of inequity in educational opportunities, and face disparities in health insurance with lower access to healthcare.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the amalgamation of systemic injustices directly related to redlining were brought to a head: [During July 2020](#), Hispanic folks were 5x more likely to die of COVID than white, while Black and Indigenous folks were 3-4x more likely.

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Colorado has taken steps to implement antiracist policies.

For example, the legislature passed a bill in 2021 (HB 21-1266) to create a single definition

Consider the impact of future policy across agencies  
Set goals to eliminate existing health disparities  
Improve community involvement and 'participatory science'  
Emphasize the voice of tribal nations in Colorado  
Increase funding

With bill HB 23-1233, the term Disproportionately Impacted Communities (DIC) was enacted.

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The bottom line is that dismantling racist policies requires taking a look at their history and implementing policies. Each MENV student must look at how current policies impact their future careers and create change through education, voting, and utilize privilege to amplify voices of those impacted by racist policies.

More reads:

1. by Richard Rothstein
  2. Chomsky by Aviva
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