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<https://www.epi.org/publication/early-education-gaps-by-social-class-and-race-start-u-s-children-out-on-unequal-footing-a-summary-of-the-major-findings-in-inequalities-at-the-starting-gate/> Early Education Gaps By Social Class And Race Start U.S. Children Out On Unequal Footing: A Summary Of The Major Findings In Inequalities At The Starting Gate Since key foundations for learning are established beginning at birth, starting school behind makes it likely that early disadvantages will persist as children progress through school, and last into their adult lives. Analyses of national data from both the High School and Beyond Surveys and the National Educational Longitudinal Surveys have demonstrated that, while there are dramatic differences among students of various racial and ethnic groups in course-taking in such areas as math, science, and foreign language, for students with similar course-taking records, achievement test score differences by race or ethnicity narrow substantially. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/unequal-opportunity-race-and-education/> Unequal Opportunity: Race And Education The U.S. educational system is one of the most unequal in the industrialized world, and students routinely receive dramatically different learning opportunities based on their social status. Americans often forget that as late as the 1960s most African-American, Latino, and Native American students were educated in wholly segregated schools funded at rates many times lower than those serving whites and were excluded from many higher education institutions entirely. Knowing which groups of children tend to start school behind, how far behind they are, and what factors contribute to their lag, can help us develop policies to avert the early gaps that become long-term problems. Educational experiences for minority students have continued to be substantially separate and unequal. On an inter-state basis, such students are concentrated in states, primarily in the South, that have the lowest capacities to finance public education. Low social class poses major barriers to young children's readiness in reading and math. Research has established that growing up in poverty tends to put children behind. Research has found that both students and teachers are tracked: that is, the most expert teachers teach the most demanding courses to the most advantaged students, while lower-track students assigned to less able teachers receive lower-quality teaching and less demanding material. Several pending bills to overhaul the federal Higher Education Act would ensure that highly qualified teachers are recruited and prepared for students in all schools. Given the large share of children entering our schools from disadvantaged contexts, these findings demand our urgent attention on both economic and moral grounds. Low social class puts children far behind from the start.