

As the Founder and CEO of Educate the City (ETC), Ashley firmly believes that early childhood education is crucial for academic success as it forms the foundation of education. ETC is committed to providing programs and services to young scholars, regardless of their ability to pay, with the goal of not only offering academic-based support but also opportunities for learning and skill development beyond the classroom.

ETC fully supports Executive Order (EO) 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, as well as local schools' strategies for advancing equity in education.

1.1 Barriers

Despite Atlanta's reputation as a welcoming city with a thriving Black community, systemic racism, immobility, and inequity continue to persist. While there are numerous community assets and educational resources in the metro Atlanta area, scholars face significant disparities in social equity and educational opportunities. These disparities are a result of long-standing systems and structures that affect the living, learning, working, and playing conditions of our young scholars.

1.2 Opportunities

We have identified several opportunities to address these barriers, including:

- Improving access to educational resources by understanding the needs of the population we serve and identifying challenges and opportunities.
- Establishing partnerships with professionals and subject matter experts to communicate community initiatives and resources effectively. This includes collaborations with organizations like Microsoft.
- Providing relevant training to ETC educators on educational, safety, SEL and health and wellness topics, enabling them to understand and respect the needs of different races and cultures and develop social skills to support young scholars. We can leverage community resources for training and educational opportunities for scholars.

1.3 Leveraging Underserved Communities

ETC recognizes the importance of improving outcomes and eliminating disparities in the communities we serve. As an organization dedicated to preparing young scholars for lifelong academic success, we embrace the responsibility and opportunity to contribute to building a stronger organization and community where racism and inequality have no place. We have a significant impact on the Atlanta and East Point communities, and we are committed to making a positive difference in their lives.

1.4 Enhancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

We believe it is crucial to continuously improve diversity and inclusion for all individuals. Promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEI&A) in education, particularly in the metro Atlanta educational system, is a priority. ETC aims to be a model for DEI&A, treating all scholars with dignity and respect and creating a healthy learning environment. This includes implementing systematic processes, utilizing existing resources, and embracing new ideas. We

will support APS CESj events, promote ongoing education, awareness, and inclusivity in the communities we serve, leverage technology and communication to advance diversity and inclusion, and collaborate with community experts and organizations to ensure fair and impartial treatment of all educators and scholars.