



Spark the Journey's Statement on Equity

At Spark the Journey, equity means ensuring that everyone regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, ability, and physical and mental health have access to the same opportunities – that they're able to participate fully and fairly to achieve success in their own right. We believe in the inherent worth, dignity, and equality of all people and endeavor to create a culture where everyone can show up as their full selves each and every day. Our commitment to equity starts within our organization and extends to the community of people we serve.

For over 30 years, Spark has worked to level the playing field between Black and Brown students from low-income areas and their white peers from wealthier backgrounds. Our program participants encounter many challenges, including but not limited to income inequality, attending under resourced schools, living in under resourced neighborhoods, and lacking access to generational wealth.

We've inherited an unequal world and we want to help equip students for that world by providing them with a community of support to help change their outcomes. Only 21% of low-income, first-generation college students graduate within six years; yet the rate for Spark students has been 58%.

Equity for our students involves access, resources, opportunities, and connections to influential networks. As we prepare them for the transition between predominantly Black and Hispanic schools in DC and the predominantly white institutions (PWIs) of higher education many of our students will attend out of state, issues of race, racism, language, culture, tokenism, classism, and safety on campus are vital concerns.

Our program equips students with the best possible resources and support systems to guarantee their success. We are committed to providing responsive and impactful programming, connections to an engaged and supportive mentor, and needs-driven resource support - the winning formula that we've developed to keep students on track for college and career success.