A Seat at the Table examines the perspectives of low-income African American youth on their educational aspirations, barriers to achievement and priorities. The report offers meaningful commentary on students’ educational environment and recommendations for improvement. Below are a few key findings. To view the full report, please visit: UNCF.org/aseatatthetable #UNCFk12

1. Reduce barriers to college by increasing access to guidance counselors, investing in school and university partnerships and creating awareness about the value of HBCUs.

2. Address widespread student discipline issues in schools through transparent data systems, restorative justice and cultural competency training.

3. Challenge the deficit narrative about the educational aspirations of low-income African American youth.

4. Improve school-based practices and partnerships to increase African American youth achievement.

Footnote on methodology: A Seat at the Table utilizes data from The Inner City Truth 3 (ICT3) survey. ICT3 is the third iteration of a national survey of 1,700 low-income African American and Latino youth and young adults, ages 16-20. Participants were surveyed in the following cities in 2013: Los Angeles, Long Beach, Oakland, Richmond (CA), Philadelphia, Chicago and Atlanta. Census tracts identified participants with average household income under $40,000. For this report, the sample was limited to African Americans. A total of 797 participants were included for analysis.
UNCF’S MANIFESTO—WHAT WE BELIEVE IN

We believe that if students are academically prepared for college, we can radically change the story of what’s possible—not just for African American students but for the African American community as a whole. UNCF is passionately invested in transforming dreams of college into reality and we will continue to push until all students who want to go to college are afforded that opportunity.

For our students to be college ready, we need to ensure that their K-12 educational experience is preparing them to excel in college and beyond. As a result, we believe students must:

- **Attend a quality school** that offers a rigorous college preparatory curriculum and enables them to graduate at a college-ready level. We believe that free, safe, high-quality school options should be available and accessible to all students in every neighborhood.

- **Have effective teachers** in each of their classes who guide them through challenging course work, building the academic and social skills needed to ensure they are successful in college, career and life.

- **Understand how to navigate critical decisions along their K-16 journey**, such as selecting quality schools, understanding their full breadth of choices, learning how to secure financial support for college, and positioning themselves for college and career success.

- **Receive guidance and mentoring** from an adult who can help them navigate the complex college-going process and provide them with the support along the way.

- Understand how, along with their parents and communities, to **hold their school and teachers accountable** for providing a high-quality education.

- **Be immersed in a college-going culture**, where college is not an exception, but an expectation coupled with the belief that all students have the aptitude to reach this goal.