Supplementary Education

The Hidden Curriculum of High Academic Achievement

Edmund W. Gordon, Beatrice L. Bridglall, and Aundra Saa Meroe
To the next generation, Andrew, Armand, Devin, Ishan, Isobel, Jude, Kai, Ke-
nan, Scott, Stephen, Susan Rosa, and Wyatt, grand children all.

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**Foreword**

Child guidance and counseling, Head Start, compensatory education, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, equal educational opportunity, career education, human diversity and pedagogy, dynamic assessment and pedagogy, and now supplementary education are aspects of education that have claimed the attention of the senior editor of this book. In fact, some of these terms had their origins in his work and that of his colleagues. After almost sixty years devoted to the field of education, many of those years devoted to effort at improving the quality of schooling for less advantaged children, Edmund W. Gordon, with the assistance of his young colleagues Beatrice Lillian Bridgegall and Aandra Sae Meroe, has turned his attention to the examination of several nonschool factors that they claim may enable schooling to be effective. They do so in this collection of essays and papers, some of which were initially presented in the 1999 Invitational Conference on Supplementary Education that was sponsored by The College Board and the Laboratory for Student Success at Temple University.

Gordon and his colleagues argue that affluent and educationally sophisticated parents have long recognized that not only what happens in school is important for high academic achievement but also factors in the daily lives of children that happen out side of school and are in support of academic development are important. Gordon, Bridgall, and Meroe borrow a notion that I have advanced (Waiting for a Miracle: Why schools can not solve our problems and how we can). Directing their attention to a variety of experiences of persons from low-income families and people of color who have gone on to high levels of achievement, the editors develop the rationale for the importance of what they call “intellectual competence”—critical literacy and numeracy, problem solving, analogical reasoning, knowledge and skill transfer.
Preface

Our concept of supplementary education rests on Pierre Bourdieu’s notion that academic achievement is related to access to and participation in various forms of education-related capital such as health and nutrition, the material resources that money provides, cultural capital, human capital, political capital, and social capital. We posit that access to such capital may be necessary if schools are to succeed at enabling academic achievement for students in general, and students of color in particular. We contend that it is the unequal distribution of access to these forms of capital that severely limits the effectiveness of schools. The redistribution of access to such capitals may be beyond our immediate reach, but all may not be lost because concerned communities and families can and should influence the effectiveness of schooling.

In Supplementary Education, we argue that, while access to schools that enable and expect academic achievement is a necessary ingredient for the education of students, good schools alone may not be sufficient to ensure universally high levels of academic development. Supplemental educational experiences may also be needed. The idea of supplementary education is based on the assumption that high academic achievement is closely associated with exposure to family- and community-based activities and learning experiences that occur both in and out of school in support of academic learning. For low-income and some ethnic minority student groups, opportunities to participate in such activities are generally under-resourced and underutilized in comparison to the access to and participation in such activities by many European Americans and Asian Americans from mid to high socioeconomic backgrounds.

This book is organized into three sections. The first makes the case for supplementary education. Specifically, it focuses on the need for universal access.
to high levels of academic achievement and the challenge of reducing the "achievement gap" that exists between Asian American and European American students and their African American, Hispanic American, and Native American counterparts. Having posed the problem, the second section of the book is directed toward defining the construct and provides in-depth descriptions of some of the more colloquial expressions of supplementation in after school care, youth development, and other forms of supplemental education. The book closes with a discussion of the emerging institutionalization and need for more thoughtful and rigorous research on the supplementary education movement and a reflection by the senior editor, Edmund Gordon, on the idea of supplementary education. In this reflection, Gordon perceives supplementary education as an instrument in the negotiation of sociocultural marginality and places supplementary education within the context of family and community as forces that (1) influence the quality of academic achievement and (2) shape the political economic integrity of the societies that spawn them. Supplementary education, indeed, may be the hidden curriculum of high academic achievement.

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We, as editors of this collection of papers that began with a small conference in 1999, gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to the late Professor Margaret Wang, who provided the initial support for that conference. Since that time, other contributors have been added. We are grateful for the strength these papers have added to the collection. We especially appreciate the support of Dean Birkenkamp, former editor, and our current editor at Rowman & Littlefield, Alan McClure. We also want to acknowledge the invaluable bibliographic assistance and support of Mrs. Ines Sacre, reference librarian and information specialist at the Institute for Urban and Minority Education at Teachers College. Thanks goes to the College Board, which in the past two years, has provided support for the scholarly work of the senior editor.

Edmund W. Gordon
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