

March 31, 2021 #EquityChat
Chris Nellum (@chrisnellum),
Acting Executive Director The Education Trust-West (@EdTrustWest)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Hello and welcome to #EquityChat with ur #EquityAvengers @iamkeithcurry & @SDMesaPrez @CollegeFutures Tonight our guest is @chrisnellum @EdTrustWest Ex Director. Welcome Chris!!!

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q1. @chrisnellum. Our education, background, and experiences make us who we are. Please tell us about the non-resume you? We want to know what's not on your resume. @iamkeithcurry #EquityChat @EdTrustWest @CollegeFutures

[@chrisnellum](#) A1: Love the question. Uhh, my family traces our roots in the US to New Orleans so comfort food for me is red beans & rice, gumbo, po'boys, etc I also love gifs. Get ready! #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest [GIF: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1377411549229248515>

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Yum

[@chrisnellum](#) A1: Speaking of food...I grew up in #Brawley, CA so I also find comfort in tamales, albondigas, posole, and tacos de papa. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@econroy1](#) why you gotta do this to me? Now I miss me CA food scene!

[@chrisnellum](#) A1: Other non-resume, non-food stuff...I'm left-handed, the oldest of three boys, raised by a single mother, started school in @HeadStartgov, and I'm a huge mental health proponent. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q2. @chrisnellum. How are you feeling today? @CollegeFutures @iamkeithcurry,@SDMesaPrez, @edtrustwest

[@chrisnellum](#) A2: I feeling proud, anxious, and gluttonous. Proud because I'm (re)learning the importance of taking help when it's available and delegating; anxious because we're still living in a pandemic & the world is extra complicated. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@SDMesaPrez](#) That's for sure...

[@chrisnellum](#) A2: And last but not least, I'm feeling gluttonous because all I can think about are chicken nuggets but I'm trying to be good and stay focused on clean eating. 🥰 #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest [GIF: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1377413484456017921>]

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q3. @chrisnellum. Tell us about @edtrustwest and your work with @edtrustwest. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @CollegeFutures

[@chrisnellum](#) A3: I serve as the Interim Executive Director of Ed Trust—West. ETW has been in CA for 20 years fighting with/on behalf of communities of color & low-income communities to change policy, narrative, and practice across CA educ. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@chrisnellum](#) A3: Ed Trust—West focuses on early ed, K-12 ed, AND higher ed so we think a lot about each + the transitions between each and most importantly about the implications of changes in one area for the others. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@chrisnellum](#) A3: Our education "systems" are (or should be) more connected and thoughtful across the pipeline and we try to contribute with our statewide research, advocacy, and educator engagement work & priorities. #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest



[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q4. [@chrisnellum](#). What is your definition of equity? How is equity-minded practice embedded in your work?[@iamkeithcurry](#),[@SDMesaPrez](#), [@CollegeFutures](#) [@EdTrustWest](#)

[@chrisnellum](#) A4: Whenever I say equity, I mean "racial equity" and for me, that means seeking ways to ensure those of us who have been racialized in this country get access to and enjoy all the benefits of education that we deserve. #EquityChat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@edtrustwest](#)

[@chrisnellum](#) A4: That commitment to racial equity is embedded in my work daily: in the questions I ask about ed policy & practice, in the (disaggregated) data I ask to review, and in the targeted policy proposals I seek to pursue #EquityChat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@edtrustwest](#)

[@chrisnellum](#) A4: If I have to define "racial equity", I'd say we're improving equity when we're doing 2 things: 1) urgently targeting resources to racialized people and 2) removing racist barriers. Sometimes both happen at the same time. #EquityChat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@edtrustwest](#)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q5. [@chrisnellum](#). Can you share with us the [@edtrustwest](#) policy priorities and why they are all so important? #EquityChat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@chrisnellum](#) A5: We have many P-16 priorities, but our higher ed priorities are:

- #Allin4FinancialAid to ensure young people don't leave fin aid dollars on the table
- equitable dual enrollment to make sure students of color access it

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[@SDMesaPrez](#) We keep hearing about the "price tag" for CalGrant reform-how can we shift the narrative?

[@chrisnellum](#) We're a resource-rich state. So I always ask what's the price of NOT modernizing the Cal Grant so that it reaches more students from low-income & older students/student parents, etc. -- there's a price to that, too #EquityChat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [@edtrustwest](#) [@M_LGarcia](#)

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Amen...we need to quantify the opportunity cost

[@TomVu916](#) We can/should do more than "just" modernize CG. ensure the award is strong and equitable and accessible to all eligible students, no matter where they choose to attend. Invest in students—ROI is huge for the workforce, state economy & communities.

[@chrisnellum](#) A5: Other priorities include:

- better a-g access to improve pathways to higher ed
- pushing for better co-req remediation implementation at both the CCCs and CSUs
- identifying more and equitable funding for #CAHigherEd

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[@chrisnellum](#) A5: Last two:

- #Data4ThePeople and seeing CA's data system come to life bc we need to know more to improve equity
- supporting networks of equity-minded leaders to be more race-conscious daily

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[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q6. [@chrisnellum](#). [@edtrustwest](#) has been engaged in policy research and proponents of solutions to numerous critical issues in Cal higher education. Can you please share some highlights from some of the [@edtrustwest](#) policy research? [@iamkeithcurry](#),[@SDMesaPrez](#), [@CollegeFutures](#)

[@chrisnellum](#) Get ready! I'm going to take us back a bit and then get to more recent [@EdTrustWest](#) work. #EquityChat [@iamkeithcurry](#) [@SDMesaPrez](#) [GIF: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1377419683108806662>]

[@chrisnellum](#) A6: From 2010, No Time to Delay: Delivering the Statewide Data Systems California's Students Deserve <https://west.edtrust.org/resource/no-time-to-delay-delivering-the-statewide-data-systems-californias-students-deserve/> - one of our earliest calls for #Data4ThePeople and a data system #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@MariselaCervan](#) This was 11 years ago! 😞

[@chrisnellum](#) Right? For shame.

[@chrisnellum](#) A6: From 2014, Doorways to College Aid: Boosting Access to Financial Aid in California - great early #Allin4FinancialAid evidence <https://west.edtrust.org/resource/doorways-to-college-aid-boosting-access-to-financial-aid-in-california/> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@chrisnellum](#) A6: From 2016, our #BlackMindsMatter report provides a comprehensive look at Black communities and education disservice in CA. It also resulted in some real policy change

<https://west.edtrust.org/resource/black-minds-matter-supporting-the-educational-success-of-black-children-in-california/> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@chrisnellum](#) A6: From 2017, #TheMajorityReport looked at what's needed to support the educational success of Latino communities in CA. (hint: LOTS) <https://west.edtrust.org/resource/the-majority-report/> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@chrisnellum](#) A6: In the last year, we conducted a statewide poll of #CAHigherEd students to understand the impacts of COVID, developed a #DigitIDivide tool to help leaders better estimate digital learning needs <https://west.edtrust.org/covid-19-education-equity-resources-responses/> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@chrisnellum](#) A6: In the last year, we also talked w ed leaders about equity issues around grading policies in #CAHigherEd that needed to be addressed given the pandemic

<https://west.edtrust.org/resource/education-equity-in-crisis-how-to-address-learning-promotions-transitions-and-grades/> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest @yvonn3munoz @LaraMayralara1 /fin [GIF: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1377420578953433090>]

[@chrisnellum](#) A6: Last year, we also released Hear My Voice II: Supporting Success for Parenting and Unhoused Women of Color to better understand needed policy changes across the CSU system <https://west.edtrust.org/ed-equity-in-crisis-centering-higher-ed-student-experiences/> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest /fin fin

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q7. @chrisnellum. What three recommendations would be provided to the Biden Administration about the challenges higher education institutions are faced with at this time? @iamkeithcurry #EquityChat @CollegeFutures

[@chrisnellum](#) A7: ETW focuses on CA policy but I personally think the Biden admin must #DoublePell, cancel student debt, esp for Black debt holders, and incentivize states to significantly increase funding to @CalCommColleges & @calstate #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@poppyfitch](#) Yes! All.of.this!! 🔥

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Q8. @chrisnellum. What gives you hope? @iamkeithcurry, @SDMesaPrez, @CollegeFutures

[@chrisnellum](#) A8: Fierce, Black women give me hope. I see you: @Im_Just_Krissy, @Melodiekbaker, @TiffanyJonesPhD, @SecSmithEllis, @MACooperPhD, @ESArrillaga, @VLundyWagner, @DanetteHoward16, @DrZainabOkolo, @dm_forte, @_DiaBryant +many more #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@DrZainabOkolo](#) I appreciate you Dr. Nellum! @chrisnellum

[@Im_Just_Krissy](#) Thanks. Feels great to be in the company of all my amazing sisters. Also, I went and followed each of you because yall are dope.

[@dm_forte](#) Thanks @chrisnellum and so honored to be with group. Also we are amazing.

[@TiffanyJonesPhD](#) Appreciate the love Dr.Nellum!!

[@Melodiekbaker](#) 🙏👉❤️ honored to be in the presence of giants.

[@SDMesaPrez](#) Q9. @chrisnellum. What are you reading? And what book(s) would you recommend we consider reading?

[@iamkeithcurry](#) #EquityChat

@chrisnellum A9: For fun, I plan to soon read @zafatista's NEW NYT best-selling book, What's Mine and Yours

<http://bit.ly/39h1nn7> & because I'm a new exec director, I'm reading The First 90 Days <https://amazon.com/First-90-Days-Strategies-Expanded/dp/1422188612> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest [GIF: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1377424893759873027>]

[@chrisnellum](#) A9: And finally, because I'm a father to be in 5 short weeks, I'm reading "We're Pregnant! the First Time Dad's Pregnancy Handbook" <https://barnesandnoble.com/w/were-pregnant-the-first-time-dads-pregnancy-handbook-adrian-kulp/1128179595> #EquityChat @iamkeithcurry @SDMesaPrez @edtrustwest

[@zafatista](#) So excited for you, Chris! Thank you for the shout out. ❤️

[@iamkeithcurry](#) Next week, April 7, 2021 on #EquityChat, we welcome @Michelson20MM Dr Gary Michelson as our guest. @CollegeFutures @SDMesaPrez @iamkeithcurry #EquityAvengers

[@saragoldrickrab](#) Can't wait!