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Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *School Counseling to Close Opportunity Gaps*.

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Foreword

When most students of color walk through their school halls, they are too often met with low expectations, hyper surveillance, lack of resources, racialized tracking, and a long-standing tradition of racist practices that linger in the walls silently. Because of class, race, ethnicity, ability, and language, students face invisible and visible barricades.

Districts with mostly white students receive more funding, and students are exposed to more internship opportunities and college preparatory classes. Districts with mostly Black and Latinx students experience punitive policies and practices that seek to push them out of school and into the criminal punishment system. These students are interacting with school resource officers when they should be interacting with school counselors.

School counselors are often the doors for students to higher education. But sometimes school counselors close doors on students. Sometimes school counselors have internalized the racist ideas that there is something academically or behaviorally wrong with Black, Latinx, and Native students; that Black caretakers don't value education; that Native people are not hard workers; or that Latinx parents don't care to spend time teaching their children. It is critical for school counselors to be antiracist, to realize there is nothing wrong or right with any group of students or parents, to individualize and encourage every single student, to standardize the opportunities that are available to students. Students need the emotional, social, and cultural support and resources to achieve.

Ten years after writing the first edition of this book, Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy returns and rightfully turns her attention to school counselors who have the power to disrupt the racist practices and policies in schools. School counselors must radically shift their attention from the failure of the students to the negligence of our education system to support students who are the most marginalized.

School counselors can and *must* intervene. If they are not increasing the opportunities for all students, then we are doing a disservice. School counselors—as people who engage with multiple stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers,

administrators—must take advantage of their unique positionality to support the humanity of all students and fight for equal access.

I wish that we didn't need a book like this, that school counselors and teachers and all educators understood the significance of modeling antiracist practices and behaviors in schools. But the reality is that we need someone to lay out the foundational tools. Holcomb-McCoy wrote this purposeful and action-oriented volume, with deep concentration and care, with the intent for school counselors and educators to step into their roles as agents of change.

—**Ibram X. Kendi, PhD**

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Director of the Center for Antiracist Research, Boston University
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