



BUILDING A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT TOOLKIT

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INTRODUCTION

To move forward with an equity mindset, district leaders and teacher stakeholders need to reflect on their own biases and practices so they can begin addressing them. Such critical reflection will help stakeholders “articulate questions, confront bias, examine causality, contrast theory with practice, and identify systemic issues all of which helps foster critical evaluation and knowledge transfer.”¹ These critical reflections can then lead to “crucial conversations” on equity as a district—which can be challenging, uncomfortable, and require participants to reflect on differences between words and actions.² To support this work, a member has partnered with Hanover Research (Hanover) to support its district leaders in introducing equity as a priority focus to its staff stakeholders to set the stage for a forthcoming Equity Scorecard.

OVERVIEW

The following toolkit aims to help district and school leaders understand the “why” for the equity work. To this end, this toolkit:

- ✓ Discusses [equity and the positive impacts it has on students](#);
- ✓ Examines strategies that school leaders can use to [promote their staff’s understanding of equity and application of culturally sustaining practices](#);
- ✓ Outlines key considerations and questions for scrutinizing data that school leaders and other stakeholders should leverage to [identify existing inequities](#) in their communities; and
- ✓ Describes key considerations and strategies to [help school leaders set goals](#) to guide their campus’s equity work and implementation of culturally sustaining practices;
- ✓ Explores how school leaders can [support the identification and implementation of culturally sustaining and equitable practices](#) at their school to address existing inequities.

AUDIENCE

This **Building a Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Environment Toolkit** is designed to support district leaders in guiding staff through equity-focused conversations and the implementation of culturally sustaining practices in school-based programming (e.g., academic, behavior management). The toolkit synthesizes existing research literature and policy guidance related to educational equity and culturally sustaining pedagogies and policies.

UNDERSTAND EQUITY AND ITS IMPACTS

Disparities exist in the quality of education that students receive and in the specific educational outcomes they achieve.³ Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and others indicate that students from historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups (e.g., Black, Hispanic) typically have lower achievement scores, lower rates of participation in advanced courses, higher rates of disciplinary action, higher rates of absenteeism, and higher rates of dropout than their White peers.⁴ Similar trends occur when comparing students with disabilities to those without disabilities, English learners (ELs) to native English speakers, and students from low-income households to those from higher income households, with some exceptions (e.g., ELs being less likely to be chronically absent than non-ELs).⁵ Concerningly, such educational inequalities are expected to widen as a result of COVID-19 school closures and unevenness in how those closures impacted the immediate educational experience of students of color, students with disabilities, ELs, and students from low-income households.⁶

Given discrepancies in academic outcomes, educational opportunities, disciplinary actions, and attendance between different populations of students, schools require solutions to reduce such gaps in the immediate and short-term and to eliminate them in the long-term.⁷ This means moving beyond a standard “one-size-fits-all” approach to curriculum, instruction, and support services to a systemic commitment to provide the resources and supports that students need to be successful in all areas.⁸ Furthermore, these efforts should seek to preserve student diversity in their identities, cultures, languages, and experiences rather than minimizing or damaging these elements in favor of “mainstream” or “acceptable” values that reflect historically advantaged groups (e.g., White, male, English-speaking).⁹ To this end, **districts, schools, and the educators who work in them should embrace equitable and culturally sustaining practices in academic programming, behavior management, complementary services, and resource allocations.**¹⁰

The principle of equity is one of fair—rather than equal—treatment to help students achieve proficiency in outlined learning standards, excel in content areas where they display interest and potential, and receive comparable opportunities to their peers without having to diminish or disguise some aspect of their personal identity or cultural background.¹² Essentially, *equal* supports and resources for students regardless of divergent needs are generic and tailored to group “averages,” whereas *equitable* supports and resources are meant to be fairly distributed according to individual assets and needs.¹³ Educators must recognize that providing equitable supports and opportunities to each and every student will be challenging, given finite resources at a district’s disposal (e.g., funding, personnel, facility capacity).¹⁴

Gaps to Address Via Equitable and Culturally Sustaining Practices



ACHIEVEMENT GAP

This gap references disparities in academic performance or educational attainment that exist between student subgroups. *Excellence gaps*—disparities between groups in reaching “advanced” or “mastery” performance levels—are a subset of achievement gaps.



OPPORTUNITY GAP

This gap references disparities in educational aspirations, achievement expectations, and the provision of learning opportunities that exist between student subgroups.



DISCIPLINE GAP

This gap references disproportionality in the application and severity of disciplinary actions that exist between student subgroups.

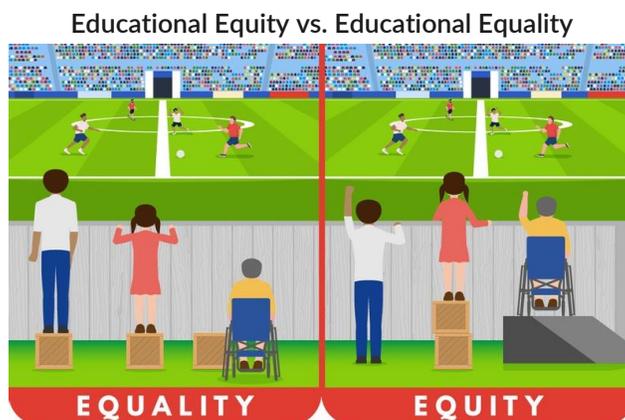


ATTENDANCE GAP

This gap references disparities in the rates of absenteeism, chronic absenteeism, and truancy that exist between student subgroups.

Source: Multiple¹³

UNDERSTAND EQUITY AND ITS IMPACTS



Source: The United Way¹⁵

Relatedly, such efforts should be culturally sustaining and consistently “allow, invite, and encourage students, staff, and families to not only use their cultural practices from home in school, but to maintain them.”¹⁶ School leaders and staff members who commit to culturally sustaining practices inherently promote equity by questioning the embedded historical norms of U.S. education and actively viewing students’ “values, worldviews, [and] ways of thinking, knowing, expressing oneself, communicating, and relating to others” as assets to strengthen teaching and learning rather than deficits to overcome.¹⁷ The core philosophy of embedding culturally sustaining practices in a school’s larger work around equity is that teaching and learning should augment and enrich—rather than correct or minimize—individual students’ or certain demographic groups’ identities, experiences, cultures, and values.¹⁸ Embedding culturally sustaining practices has many benefits for all students who are exposed to them, not just those who are traditionally marginalized.¹⁹

Benefits of Culturally Sustaining Practices

 <p>Academic and Cognitive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduces racial achievement gaps ▪ Encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity ▪ Higher average test scores ▪ Students are more likely to enroll in college ▪ Students are less likely to drop out
 <p>Civic and Social-Emotional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creates meaningful relationships between individuals with diverse backgrounds ▪ Exposure to diversity reduces anxiety ▪ Challenges the imbalance of power and privilege ▪ Reduces racial bias and counter stereotypes ▪ Students are more likely to seek out integrated settings later in life ▪ Improves students’ satisfaction, intellectual self-confidence, and leadership skills
 <p>Economic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attending an integrated school can be a more effective academic intervention than receiving extra funding in a higher-poverty school ▪ Promotes more equitable access to resources ▪ Prepares students to succeed in a global economy ▪ Diversity produces more productive, effective, and creative teams ▪ Students have higher earnings as adults, improved health outcomes, and are less likely to be incarcerated

Source: The Century Foundation and the Great Schools Partnerships²⁰

On the following page, the [Equity Reflection Worksheet](#) provides a space for educators and other stakeholders to reflect on their understanding of equitable education and their own beliefs. This worksheet is designed to give users a chance to privately reflect before engaging in group discussions such as those introduced in the next section of this toolkit.



EQUITY REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Directions: Use this worksheet to record your understanding of equitable education and reflect on your own beliefs. This worksheet will not be shared with anyone else; it is meant to prepare you for the discussion in the next section.

1. In your own words, describe and define “equitable education.” Consider what this term means to you personally and to the larger school and/or district community in which you work or participate.

2. How were you taught to view people who look different from you or do not share your beliefs? Did these teachings vary based on the specific differences you observed? How have you either retained these teachings or evolved your viewpoints as you have gained more life experience?

3. Do you interact only with people who look and think like you? Do you primarily engage with others who may similar stories, upbringings, or backgrounds to you? Or, do you interact with others who may look or think differently from you or who have different stories, upbringings, or backgrounds?

UNDERSTAND EQUITY AND ITS IMPACTS

4. What factors strengthen your relationships with colleagues, students, and students' families? Comparatively, what factors might hinder your ability to form relationships with colleagues, students, and students' families?

5. Do any preconceptions or biases about individuals from certain social or cultural groups or demographics influence relationships at your district or school and your own ability to form relationships? If so, do these preconceptions or biases stem from organizational culture or the beliefs of individuals—including yourself?

Source: Edutopia²¹

HELP STAFF UNDERSTAND AND EXPLORE EQUITY

While district and school leaders may be committed to equity and the deployment of culturally sustaining practices in academics, behavior management, and other aspects of school operations, their school's and district's goals in these areas will not be achieved without a shared commitment by staff.²² Superintendents, principals, and other leaders cannot create significant change in isolation nor can they meet the challenge of addressing historic inequalities in U.S. education by themselves.²³ Consequently, educational leaders should actively engage their district and school staff in conversations about equity and culturally sustaining practices and investigations into how to apply both concepts in their work with students and other stakeholders.²⁴

Foremost, leaders should create formal and informal mechanisms by which staff (e.g., teachers, front office staff, support services staff) can expand their knowledge of equity and their ability to implement culturally sustaining practices.²⁵ Such mechanisms can include sustained professional development (e.g., coaching, workshops, professional learning communities), leader-facilitated discussions with individual staff and small groups about equity, and dedicated meetings looking at school policies and goals for equity and culturally sustaining practices.²⁶ Through these activities, school leaders can familiarize staff with the various manifestations of inequity in schools, how these dynamics impact students, families, and other stakeholders, and what can be done to alleviate and eliminate inequity.²⁷

Ways in Which Inequity May Manifest in K-12 Education

INEQUITY TYPE	DESCRIPTION
 <p>Societal Inequity</p>	<p>Students may be disadvantaged by preexisting bias and prejudice in American society, with both conscious and unconscious discrimination surfacing in public schools in ways that adversely affect learning acquisition, academic achievement, educational aspirations, and post-graduation opportunities. While not always the case, inequity in education is most commonly associated with groups that have suffered from discrimination related to their race, ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, or disabilities.</p>
 <p>Socioeconomic Inequity</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that students from lower-income households, on average, underperform academically in relation to their wealthier peers, and they also tend to have lower educational aspirations and enroll in college at lower rates (in part due to financial considerations). In addition, schools in poorer communities, such as those in rural or disadvantaged urban areas, may have comparatively fewer resources and less funding, which can lead to fewer teachers and educational opportunities—from specialized courses and computers to co-curricular activities and sports teams—as well as outdated or dilapidated school facilities.</p>
 <p>Cultural Inequity</p>	<p>Students from diverse cultural backgrounds may be disadvantaged in a variety of ways when pursuing their education. For example, recently arrived immigrant and refugee students and their families may have difficulties navigating the public education system or making educational choices that are in their best interests. In addition, these students may struggle in school, because they are unfamiliar with American customs, social expectations, slang, and cultural references.</p>
 <p>Familial Inequity</p>	<p>Students may be disadvantaged in their education due to their personal and familial circumstances. Some students may live in dysfunctional or abusive households, or they may receive comparatively little educational support or encouragement from their parents (even when the parents want their children to succeed in school). In addition, evidence suggests that students whose parents have not earned a high school or college degree may, on average, underperform academically in relation to their peers, and they may also enroll in and complete postsecondary programs at lower rates. Familial inequities may intersect with cultural and socioeconomic inequities.</p>
 <p>Programmatic Inequity</p>	<p>School programs may be structured in ways that are perceived to be unfair, because they contribute to inequitable or unequal educational results for some students. For example, students of color tend, on average, to be disproportionately represented in lower-level classes with lower academic expectations (and possibly lower-quality teaching). This can give rise to achievement gaps or cycles of low expectations in which stereotypes about the academic performance of students of color are reinforced and perpetuated because they are held to lower academic standards than their peers.</p>

HELP STAFF UNDERSTAND AND EXPLORE EQUITY

INEQUITY TYPE	DESCRIPTION
 <p>Staffing Inequity</p>	<p>Wealthier schools located in more desirable communities may be able to hire more teachers and staff, while also providing better compensation that attracts more experienced and skilled teachers. Students attending these schools will likely receive a better-quality education, on average, while students who attend schools in less-desirable communities, with fewer or less-skilled teachers, will likely be at an educational disadvantage. Staffing situations in schools may also be inequitable in a wide variety of ways. In addition to potential inequities in employment (e.g., minorities being discriminated against during the hiring process, female educators not being promoted to administrative positions at the same rates as their male colleagues), students may be disadvantaged by a lack of diversity among teaching staff. For example, students of color may not have educators of color as role models, students may not be exposed to a greater diversity of cultural perspectives and experiences, or the content taught in a school may be culturally limited or biased (e.g., history being taught from an exclusively Eurocentric point of view that neglects to address the perspectives and suffering of colonized countries or enslaved peoples).</p>
 <p>Instructional Inequity</p>	<p>Students may be enrolled in courses taught by less-skilled teachers who may teach in a comparatively uninteresting or ineffective manner or in courses in which significantly less content is taught. Students may also be subject to conscious or unconscious favoritism, bias, or prejudice by some teachers, or the way in which instruction is delivered may not work as well for some students as it does for others.</p>
 <p>Assessment Inequity</p>	<p>Students may be disadvantaged when taking tests or completing other types of assessments due to the design, content, or language choices or because they have learning or physical disabilities that may impair their performance. In addition, situational factors may adversely affect test performance. For example, lower-income students who attend schools that do not regularly use computers may be disadvantaged—compared to wealthier students with more access to technology at home or students who use computers regularly in school—when taking tests that are administered on computers and that require basic computer literacy.</p>
 <p>Linguistic Inequity</p>	<p>Non-English-speaking students or students who are not yet proficient in English may be disadvantaged in English-only classrooms or when taking tests and assessments presented in English. In addition, these students may also be disadvantaged if they are enrolled in separate academic programs, held to lower academic expectations, or receive lower-quality instruction as a result of their language abilities.</p>

Source: Glossary of Education Reform | Great Schools Partnership²⁸

In particular, **district and school leaders should familiarize staff members with assets-based approaches**—which encompass culturally sustaining practices.²⁹ Essentially, school leaders should help staff reorient their work to focus more on students’ “strengths, skills, talents, interests, and competencies” rather than “what students cannot do.”³⁰ This is not to say that leaders should ignore or minimize the challenges facing students, staff, and families; rather, they must refine their district’s or school’s work to emphasize available assets and current successes to build from as they develop and implement more effective and equitable programming.³¹ Engaging staff in such explorations will validate and celebrate “multiple expressions of diversity (e.g., race, social class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, ability)” in culture and identity among stakeholders.³²

Comparing Assets- and Deficits-Based Approaches

ASSETS-BASED	DEFICITS-BASED
Driven by strengths	Driven by needs
Focused on opportunities	Focused on problems
Looks at internal processes	Looks at external processes
Builds on current success	Corrects past failures
Motivates stakeholders	Disengages stakeholders

Source: University of Memphis³⁴

To guide such explorations via formal discussions with staff, educational leaders can use the [Discussion Guide on Equity and Culturally Sustaining Practices](#) beginning on the following page. The guide includes several questions to engage facilitators and participants in important reflections about equity and culturally sustaining practices and how both impact their current behaviors and viewpoints and their organization’s operations and performance.



DISCUSSION GUIDE ON EQUITY AND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PRACTICES

Directions: Use this discussion guide to facilitate critical conversations among your staff or with your colleagues around equity and culturally sustaining practices. The questions can also be used for independent self-reflection. Listed questions address specific dynamics or challenges related to equity and/or culturally sustaining practices that typically arise in K-12 schools. Space is provided after each question for notes.

1. Do all students who walk into your school or classroom have an opportunity to achieve to their fullest capabilities regardless of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, home language, (dis)ability, and other identities? What do you do or have seen that shows this behavior?

2. Do you understand that equity requires eliminating disparities in access and opportunity—what some people call fairness or justice—and that sometimes when we advocate equality (i.e., giving everybody the same thing) we fail to meet this requirement? What should you do instead to meet the requirement?

3. When you advocate for equity, do you account for all types of access? Do you consider physical, social, economic, and cultural access? For example, all students might have “access” to advanced math classes insofar as they are available to anybody who takes the prerequisites. But, do you consider ways some students (e.g., female students) are socialized not to pursue advanced math, which also is a matter of access and equity? If yes, how do you advocate this? If no, what stops you from doing so?

HELP STAFF UNDERSTAND AND EXPLORE EQUITY

4. Do you tend to find fault in students of color, students experiencing poverty, and other students and families while failing to examine ways policies and practices, as well as larger societal factors (e.g., inequities in access to living wage work, health care, and safe and affordable housing), drive outcome disparities? If yes, why do you think this is and what do you need to help make the change? If no, how do you address it when you see others acting in this way toward students?

5. Do you tend to use strategies for addressing educational outcome disparities that emphasize “fixing” marginalized students and families rather than addressing the conditions that marginalize those students and families and focusing on the cultural assets they bring to the classroom? If yes, do you understand how this is detrimental to students? And what you need in order to make the change? If no, what strategies do you use and have you shared them with your colleagues who seem to want to “fix” their students?

6. Do you ignore the existence or implications of difference to avoid addressing the inequities related to them? If yes, what factors cause this behavior in you and what do you need to overcome them? If not, how do you help address the inequities?

HELP STAFF UNDERSTAND AND EXPLORE EQUITY

7. Although learning about students' individual cultures is a valuable pursuit, do you stop there or do you commit to fighting for their rights, such as the right to schools in which policies and practices are constructed around their strengths, interests, needs, and experiences? If yes, how do you do this? If no, what is holding you back from going to the next level?

8. Do you require marginalized students to celebrate diversity while the inequities they experience go unaddressed? Building equity initiatives around “celebrating diversity” can perpetuate the very inequities we should be eliminating. What can you do to both honor student differences and address inequities?

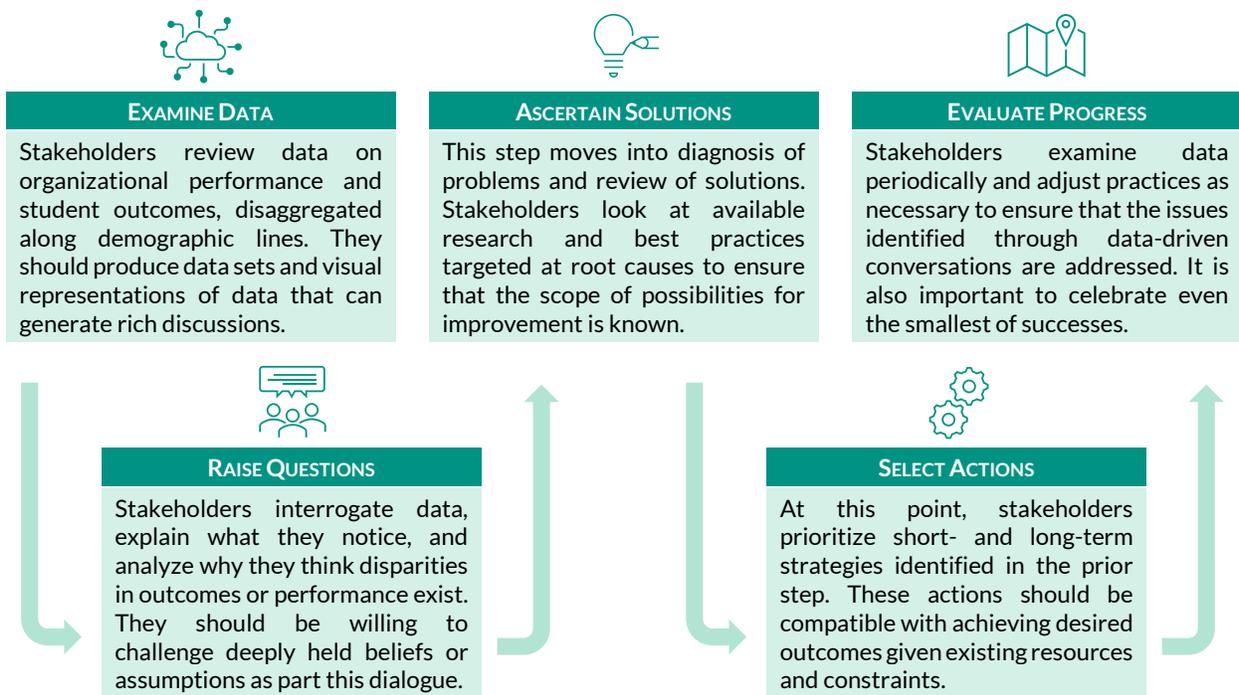
Source: Equity Literacy Institute³⁴

IDENTIFY EXISTING INEQUITIES

Once district and school staff understand the larger concept of equity and related issues, **district and school leaders should help staff adopt specific procedures and tools to examine student outcomes and organizational performance over repeated iterations of a continuous improvement cycle.**³⁵ Processes and guiding documentation for equity-focused data analyses will help decision-makers generate meaningful information related to outcomes and performance gaps that can then be translated into relevant and effective action plans.³⁶ A number of frameworks exist for educational agencies to set goals, identify needs, and map corresponding actions to those needs, such as the ERASE Framework presented below and the DATA Protocol presented on the following page—though many options beyond these two samples exist to support a variety of contexts and circumstances.³⁷

Broadly speaking, any selected processes for collecting, analyzing, and distilling insights from data should maintain a clear focus on the school’s goals for examining student performance data.³⁸ At the same time, such procedures should be iterative and ongoing in nature to allow for continuous cycles of evaluation and action to drive ongoing improvements.³⁹ The key idea is that a given organization—and those individuals it employs—have a concrete plan to collect data from available sources, examine those data for patterns, discrepancies, or outliers indicative of inequities, and develop clear actions to address inequities.⁴⁰

The ERASE Framework

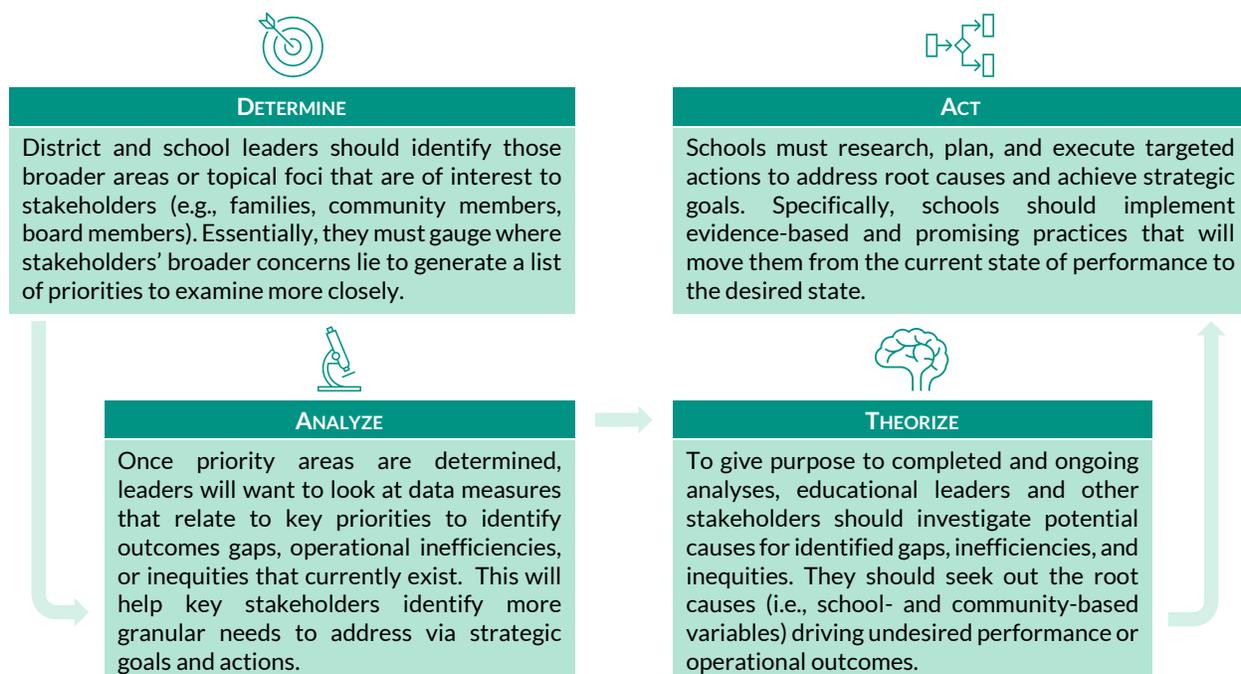


Source: VUE⁴¹

Beginning on p. 15, the [Equity-Related Data Analysis Planning Template](#) provides a tool to help school leaders and their staff determine how they intend to conduct data analyses and subsequent action planning. The template asks users to consider items such as the purpose of a given data analysis cycle, who should participate in the analysis, what data should be examined, and what actions should be undertaken during and following the analysis.

IDENTIFY EXISTING INEQUITIES

The DATA Protocol



Source: Multiple⁴²

Relatedly, **district and school leaders should work with their staff to standardize the interrogative language and questioning strategies by which they will discuss and investigate data.**⁴³ Common language and stock questioning strategies will help them understand precisely how to disaggregate data, compare data between subgroups to identify discrepancies, and begin exploring root causes for such gaps.⁴⁴ For example, questions that can support educational data analysis may include:⁴⁵

- How do student outcomes and opportunities differ by demographics, programs, and schools?
- To what extent have specific programs, interventions, and services altered outcomes and opportunities?
- What is the longitudinal progress of a specific cohort of students?
- What are the characteristics of students who achieve proficiency and those who do not?
- Where are we making the most progress in closing gaps (e.g., achievement, opportunity, discipline, attendance)?
- How do absence and mobility affect assessment results?
- How do student grades correlate with state assessment results and other measures?

In particular, school leaders should formulate common language and standard questioning protocols around equity and cultural sustaining practices in key areas of student and organizational performance.⁴⁶ Such language and questions will engage school staff in a process of looking at various metrics (e.g., standardized test performance, disciplinary actions, attendance) for the whole population and disaggregated by subgroups.⁴⁷ Furthermore, adopted language and questioning strategies should be grounded in the organization's goals and vision of equity and cultural sustenance to guide stakeholders as they identify the existence of inequities, as well as potential reasons for the incidence of those inequities (e.g., uneven access to resources, implicit bias).⁴⁸

IDENTIFY EXISTING INEQUITIES



EQUITY-RELATED DATA ANALYSIS PLANNING TEMPLATE

Directions: Use this template to determine key aspects of how your district or school intends to conduct a given instance of data analysis and subsequent action planning. Listed items ask users to identify goals, specify data for analysis, determine which student subgroups should be emphasized, decide on who should participate in the process, and outline a schedule for completing analysis and subsequent action planning.

GOALS	<i>Use this space to list any specific objectives or purposes you have for conducting the data analysis.</i>
DATA TO EXAMINE	<i>Use this space to list the quantitative (e.g., test scores, attendance rates) or qualitative (e.g., staff perceptions survey responses) data you will examine related to the goals listed above.</i>
SUBGROUPS TO COMPARE	<i>Use this space to record the subgroups you wish to disaggregate data by and compare to one another (e.g., male vs. female students, students with and without disabilities).</i>

IDENTIFY EXISTING INEQUITIES

PARTICIPATING STAKEHOLDERS	<i>Use this space to identify specific individuals or groups that should be involved in this analysis.</i>
SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETE	<i>Use this space to record deadlines for completing specific components of the analysis and what actions the participants should complete before each deadline.</i>
ADDITIONAL NOTES	<i>Use this space to write down any additional considerations or special circumstances that you and your collaborators should be mindful of when completing the above-listed process.</i>

Source: Multiple⁴⁹

IDENTIFY EXISTING INEQUITIES

Foundational Questions for Equity-Related Data Analysis in Key Areas



ACHIEVEMENT STATUS

- How do all students and subgroups perform?
- How have achievement rates for all students and subgroups changed over time?
- What teacher and staff qualities are related to student achievement across subgroups?



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- What types of in-school and afterschool opportunities are offered, and which students participate in them?
- What are the current teaching and learning conditions at our district or school?



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

- How is school discipline implemented?
- What social-emotional supports exist for students and who has access to them?
- What policies and practices are in place to address historical and social inequities?



CLIMATE AND CULTURE

- What is the culture of the school and district?
- What practices are in place to support engagement among multiple stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, administrators, families, community members)?

Source: Education Development Center⁵⁰

On the following page, the [Inequity and Root Causes Identification Worksheet](#) provides a space for district and school leaders and other stakeholders to record data for a given metric or outcome by student subgroup and for the entire student population. It also allows users to determine whether disparities exist in outcomes or educational opportunities between different subgroups and to brainstorm potential root causes for such gaps if they exist.

IDENTIFY EXISTING INEQUITIES



INEQUITY AND ROOT CAUSES IDENTIFICATION WORKSHEET

Directions: Use this worksheet to record data for a specific outcome or performance metric by year of measurement for the entire student population and disaggregated by specific subgroups (e.g., Hispanic students, gifted and talented students). After recording the data, determine whether any performance gaps exist and brainstorm a list of factors that may be driving the identified gaps.

Target Outcome/Data Metric: _____

YEAR	ALL STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE	SUBGROUP PERFORMANCE (record one subgroup's data per column)					DO GAPS EXIST?
							<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
							<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
							<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
							<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
							<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Root Causes Driving Identified Gaps

Source: Colorado Department of Education⁵¹

SET GOALS TO GUIDE EQUITY-RELATED WORK

District and school leaders must recognize that setting clear and tangible goals for equity and culturally sustaining practices is essential to developing a strong foundation for the larger strategic planning and school improvement process.⁵² Concrete and easily discernable goals reinforce systemic commitment to equity and distill the abstract concept of equity into measurable and assessable targets around which to orient resources, policies, and actions.⁵³ Without goals, stakeholders lack an anchor for discussions around current disparities in outcomes and opportunities versus “desired state” outcomes and opportunities.⁵⁴

Guiding Questions to Establish a Vision of and Baseline Goals for Equity

- What is your current view of equity? What is your current view of *educational equity*?
- What is your district’s and/or school’s view of educational equity?
- What are your organization’s motives for equity? Is it to “save” students from deficits and disadvantages, or is it to provide access to educational opportunities that still allow students to maintain their identities and cultures?
- How is educational equity evident in your school? What are your indicators?
- What are the practices that hinder or help with equity issues?
- What can you do differently to promote equity?
- How does equity work affect curriculum and instruction? How does it align with a cycle of continuous improvement?

Source: Colorado Department of Education⁵⁵

Therefore, **district and school leaders should simultaneously consider the ideal outcomes and opportunities they wish to achieve at their individual campuses, for the student body at-large, and for specific sub-populations of students alongside current outcomes and opportunities, paying particularly close attention to outliers and inequality.**⁵⁶ Moreover, leaders should contextualize goal-setting for equity within the larger framework of their district’s strategic goals to ensure alignment of practices and commitments across campuses, programs, and classrooms.⁵⁷ Outlining a vision of ideal performance for schools and students allows decision-makers to limit the scope of data analyses, needs assessments, and subsequent action planning to those priorities of greatest consequence to stakeholders.⁵⁸ It also provides a basis for determining the magnitude of inequities and their level of deviance from the outcomes a given organization wishes to achieve and the opportunities it wishes to provide.⁵⁹

Educational leaders should build their site’s broader goals on a set of relevant attributes such as the SMART (i.e., specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) or ABCD criteria (i.e., audience, behavior, condition, degree).⁶⁰ However, when seeking to draft strategic goals through an equity lens, leaders may be best served by using the SMARTIE attributes—which extend the SMART criteria by adding inclusivity and equity.⁶¹ When drafting SMARTIE goals, districts and schools should answer the following questions:⁶²

- **Specific/Strategic:** Does each goal reflect an important dimension of what the district or school seeks to accomplish? Does each goal clearly state what is to be accomplished?
- **Measurable:** Does each goal refer to a measurable outcome or opportunity? Does it set a standard that will allow the district or school to know whether the goal has been met?
- **Attainable/Ambitious:** Does the goal seem reachable given where things are now? At the same time, is it challenging enough that success would mean significant progress for the district or school?
- **Relevant:** Will attaining this goal make a difference in the quality of students’ and stakeholders’ lives or school governance and operations? Is the goal aligned with other school improvement goals?
- **Time-Bound:** Has a timeframe been established for achieving the goal? Have shorter-term benchmarks been set so progress can be monitored along the way?
- **Inclusive:** Does this goal invite traditionally excluded individuals to make decisions and contribute in a way that shares power?
- **Equitable:** Does this goal include an element of fairness or justice that seeks to address systemic injustice, inequity, or oppression?

SET GOALS TO GUIDE EQUITY-RELATED WORK

The [District SMARTIE Goal Worksheet](#) (pp. 21-22) will support district leaders and collaborating stakeholders in translating identified needs and gaps related to equity into transparent and impactful strategic goals. The worksheet leads users through a series of guided questions around existing priorities, differences in the desired and current state of performance, expected improvements to outcomes and operations, and the SMARTIE criteria themselves. Once the goal is set, district leaders should then assist individual building leaders and teachers develop their own SMARTIE goals that will support the district.⁶³

Similarly, the [Building SMARTIE Goal Worksheet](#) (pp. 23-24) leads users through a series of guided questions around the current goals of the district, differences in the desired and current state of performance of the building, expected improvements to outcomes and operations, and the SMARTIE criteria. The [Staff SMARTIE Goal Worksheet](#) (pp. 25-26) then guides teachers through a series of questions that narrows their goal focus on student outcomes or professional practices, while ensuring their goals align with building and district goals.⁶⁴

Relatedly, **districts, schools, and teachers should identify key performance indicators (KPIs) and specific data by which they will monitor progress and measure summative performance related to adopted SMARTIE goals.**⁶⁵ Selected KPIs and data measures should link back to a specific SMARTIE goal in order to be useful for analysis and strategic action planning.⁶⁶ Furthermore, selection of relevant and accessible KPIs will center ongoing data analysis discussions on potential inequities that are of the greatest interest and highest priority to stakeholders.⁶⁷

Potential KPIs and Outcomes Data Related to Specific Inequities

AREA OF INEQUITY	RELATED KPIs AND OUTCOMES DATA
 <p>Achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder perceptions data gathered via surveys, interviews, and focus groups ▪ Percent of 4th and 8th graders proficient in reading and math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) ▪ Algebra I completion rates for credit by Grade 9 ▪ Grade 9 course failure rates — at least one core course ▪ Ninth graders with B average (GPA) or better ▪ Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exam pass rates ▪ Four-year graduation rates ▪ High school dropout rates
 <p>Opportunity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder perceptions data gathered via surveys, interviews, and focus groups ▪ Program participation rates and number of program participants (e.g., special education, gifted and talented) ▪ Pre-K enrollment relative to Kindergarten enrollment ▪ Honors, dual enrollment, AP, and IB participation rates ▪ Number of community partnerships ▪ Number volunteers and family/community leaders ▪ Number of volunteer hours ▪ Frequency and volume of outreach to families and community members
 <p>Discipline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder perceptions data gathered via surveys, interviews, and focus groups ▪ Discipline and incidence data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-school and out-of-school suspensions ○ Expulsions ○ Fights ▪ Instructional days missed due to suspensions ○ Harassment/bullying ○ Alternative school assignments
 <p>Attendance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder perceptions data gathered via surveys, interviews, and focus groups ▪ Staff and student attendance records ▪ Data on chronic absenteeism

Source: Multiple⁶⁸

SET GOALS TO GUIDE EQUITY-RELATED WORK



DISTRICT SMARTIE GOAL WORKSHEET

Directions: Use this worksheet to outline strategic goals for equity and other priority areas. The worksheet will guide you in exploring gaps between your district's current performance and its desired state of performance relative to a specific priority. In addition, the worksheet asks you to draft a strategic goal statement—related to the examined priority and its associated performance gap or inequity—that follows the SMARTIE Goals Framework presented below.

S	Goals are specific to the desired outcome and strategic in that they reflect an important dimension of organizational priorities.
M	Goals are measurable using one or more applicable metrics or assessment tools relative to an established threshold of success.
A	Goals are attainable and ambitious . They are reachable given current performance but also challenging enough to signify progress.
R	Goals are relevant to the needs of the broader population of students, as well as the needs of historically disadvantaged groups.
T	Goals are time-bound , having clear checkpoints for stakeholders to track progress and a deadline for goal achievement.
I	Goals are inclusive of all stakeholders—particularly those impacted by inequities—in decision-making processes and planned actions.
E	Goals are equitable and have explicit language that addresses systemic injustice, inequity, bias, and oppression.

1. What should change about district operations and/or student, staff, and family outcomes to address the existing inequity in the priority area, as well as its root causes?

2. What stakeholder groups will be directly or indirectly impacted by this change?

3. What is the expected magnitude of this change (e.g., percentage change)?

SET GOALS TO GUIDE EQUITY-RELATED WORK

4. Do you believe the expected magnitude of this change is reasonable given the current state of your district?

5. When should this change occur by?

6. How do you expect to track progress toward this change, and how do you expect to determine if the change has occurred within the established timeline?

7. Use this space to draft your SMARTIE goal statement.

8. Is the preceding goal statement...

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Specific and strategic? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Time-bound? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Measurable? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inclusive? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attainable and ambitious? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Equitable? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Relevant? | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Source: The Management Center and Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning⁶⁹



BUILDING SMARTIE GOAL WORKSHEET

Directions: Use this worksheet to outline strategic goals for equity and other priority areas. The worksheet will guide you in exploring gaps between your school’s current performance and its desired state of performance relative to a specific priority. In addition, the worksheet asks you to draft a strategic goal statement—related to the examined priority and its associated performance gap or inequity—that follows the SMARTIE Goals Framework presented below.

S	Goals are specific to the desired outcome and strategic in that they reflect an important dimension of organizational priorities.
M	Goals are measurable using one or more applicable metrics or assessment tools relative to an established threshold of success.
A	Goals are attainable and ambitious . They are reachable given current performance but also challenging enough to signify progress.
R	Goals are relevant to the needs of the broader population of students, as well as the needs of historically disadvantaged groups.
T	Goals are time-bound , having clear checkpoints for stakeholders to track progress and a deadline for goal achievement.
I	Goals are inclusive of all stakeholders—particularly those impacted by inequities—in decision-making processes and planned actions.
E	Goals are equitable and have explicit language that addresses systemic injustice, inequity, bias, and oppression.

1. What are the district’s SMARTIE goals?

2. What should change about school operations and/or student, staff, and family outcomes to address the existing inequity in the priority area, as well as its root causes? How would this support the district’s goal?

3. What stakeholder groups will be directly or indirectly impacted by this change?

SET GOALS TO GUIDE EQUITY-RELATED WORK

4. What is the expected magnitude of this change (e.g., percentage change)?

5. Do you believe the expected magnitude of this change is reasonable given the current state of your school?

6. When should this change occur by?

7. How do you expect to track progress toward this change, and how do you expect to determine if the change has occurred within the established timeline?

8. Use this space to draft your SMARTIE goal statement.

9. Is the preceding goal statement...

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Specific and strategic? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Time-bound? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Measurable? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inclusive? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attainable and ambitious? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Equitable? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Relevant? | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Source: The Management Center and Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning⁷⁰



STAFF SMARTIE GOAL WORKSHEET

Directions: Use this worksheet to outline your professional goals for equity and other priority areas. The worksheet will guide you in exploring gaps between your current performance and your desired state of performance relative to priorities set by the district and school leaders. In addition, the worksheet asks you to draft a strategic goal statement—related to the examined priority and its associated performance gap or inequity—that follows the SMARTIE Goals Framework presented below.

S	Goals are specific to the desired outcome and strategic in that they reflect an important dimension of organizational priorities.
M	Goals are measurable using one or more applicable metrics or assessment tools relative to an established threshold of success.
A	Goals are attainable and ambitious . They are reachable given current performance but also challenging enough to signify progress.
R	Goals are relevant to the needs of the broader population of students, as well as the needs of historically disadvantaged groups.
T	Goals are time-bound , having clear checkpoints for stakeholders to track progress and a deadline for goal achievement.
I	Goals are inclusive of all stakeholders—particularly those impacted by inequities—in decision-making processes and planned actions.
E	Goals are equitable and have explicit language that addresses systemic injustice, inequity, bias, and oppression.

1. What are your district's and school's SMARTIE goals?

3. What student or stakeholder groups are the focus of this goal? Do you work directly with these groups?

3. How does your own work with students, staff, families, or other stakeholders impact your district's and school's ability to meet these goals? What might you do to support your organization's goal attainment?

SET GOALS TO GUIDE EQUITY-RELATED WORK

4. What activities can you engage in, and what strategies can you implement in your professional work to support progress toward the district and school SMARTIE goals?

5. How do you expect to track progress your actions and changes in stakeholder outcomes resulting from your actions?

6. Use this space to draft your SMARTIE goal statement.

7. Is the preceding goal statement...

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Specific and strategic? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Time-bound? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Measurable? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inclusive? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attainable and ambitious? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Equitable? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Relevant? | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Source: Multiple⁷¹

FIND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING SOLUTIONS

If a leader or staff member determines that students experience inequity, **they should research targeted actions, strategies, resources, or investments to rectify the identified gaps in achievement, opportunities, discipline, or attendance.**⁷² Understanding that resource and capacity constraints limit the number of inequities that can be simultaneously tackled and the breadth of responses to any one inequity, districts, schools, and individuals should seek culturally sustaining solutions with the greatest evidence of effectiveness or promise.⁷³ This requires careful research and consideration of best practices and proven resources and how those practices and resources will operate in the context of one’s own community.⁷⁴

Foundational Action Principles to Address Inequities

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
Commit	Understand that equity is a journey that requires collaborative commitments	Build	Replace institutional inequities with innovative supports
Collaborate	Value and prioritize inclusive communication strategies	Challenge	Ensure that all students are held to high expectations
Frame	Foster a culture that encourages self-reflection and new perspectives	Support	Deliver ongoing professional learning opportunities
Nurture	Provide social and emotional supports to all students and staff	Listen	Continually solicit feedback from impacted stakeholders
Empathize	Implement culturally sustaining teaching practices	Persist	Drive positive changes through perseverance

Source: McGraw Hill⁷⁵

Leaders and staff should determine what *existing* resources, assets, and programming they have at their disposal to address a given inequity.⁷⁶ This means cataloging curricular programs, material resources, uncommitted funding, staff expertise, and services available through community partnerships to identify what can be utilized to address specific inequities.⁷⁷ Once existing assets are accounted for, division and school leaders and collaborating staff members should guide research into *new* strategies and resources that will support closure of inequalities—as indicated by available research literature and policy guidance.⁷⁸

Online Learning Modules: Selecting and Implementing Educational Programs

Vanderbilt University’s IRIS Center hosts three modules in its “Evidence-Based Practices” sequence that support educators in selecting, implementing, and monitoring the implementation of evidence-based practices that can support districts’ and schools’ work around equity and culturally sustaining programming. These modules—hyperlinked via the icons below—include:

Part 1: Identifying and Selecting a Practice or Program



Part 2: Implementing a Practice or Program with Fidelity



Part 3: Evaluating Learner Outcomes and Fidelity



Source: IRIS Center, Vanderbilt University⁷⁹

After identifying and committing to culturally sustaining action items for a specific inequity, **leaders and collaborating staff should outline an implementation plan inclusive of the “metrics, [steps], timelines, responsible persons, and resources necessary to monitor and achieve each [attached] objective.”**⁸⁰ Creating comprehensive plans to address inequities with targeted actions will increase the probability that those actions will be successful.⁸¹ Specifically, leaders and staff should determine:⁸²

- *What* action or change will occur;
- *Who* will carry it out;
- *When* it will take place and for how long;
- *What* resources are needed; and
- *How* progress will be monitored.

FIND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING SOLUTIONS

Key Questions and Related Considerations for Culturally Sustaining Responses to Inequity

KEY QUESTION	RELATED CONSIDERATIONS
What actions has the district or school tried in the past and with what results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name specific actions and describe the short- and long-term goals of each Describe how staff were trained and how the action was implemented Show data on early indicators of success and progress toward goals
Why do district or school leaders and staff think a proposed action will work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how a proposed action differs from those tried unsuccessfully in the past Describe how a proposed action addresses the most pressing needs of the district, school, or the students for whom the organization is struggling Cite the research behind the action, including positive impacts in schools with similar characteristics (e.g., locale, size) and students (e.g., race, income)
How will district or school leaders and staff plan for and implement the action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly outline roles and responsibilities to support the action Provide up-front training and ongoing support for staff Establish necessary conditions (e.g., staff buy-in) for successful implementation
How will district or school leaders and staff know if this approach is working?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compose well-defined, measurable short- and long-term goals and early indicators of success (e.g., decreases in chronic absenteeism, improved working conditions) Conduct regular analysis of data on progress toward goals and the degree to which the action is being implemented as intended Engage students, families, staff, and community members about their experiences
What will district or school leaders and staff do if the selected action fails?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly reflect on data and adapt actions to the school context, as needed Formalize a timeline for determining whether the action should continue, be modified significantly, or discontinued

Source: The Education Trust⁸³

Beginning on p. 30, the [Action Plan Template for Addressing Inequities](#) serves as a tool for districts and schools to develop culturally sustaining action plans to address a targeted inequity. Listed items ask users to record action steps, a timeline for completing those steps, strategies to monitor progress, and a catalog of required resources and involved personnel. Then for each step listed in the action plan, leaders and responsible stakeholders can use the [Action Plan Step Implementation Guide](#) (pp. 32-33) to record the specific step they are responsible for, a timeline for completion, strategies for accomplishing the step, progress monitoring, a catalog of required resources and the follow up meeting date.

Sample Recommendations to Build Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Schools

DOMAIN	ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES
 <p>Advancing Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have staff complete an inventory in which they write down as many identity descriptors as possible to help label their cultural, philosophical, and social identities Encourage exploration of the social contexts that guide individual belief systems Create a positive climate and culture by intentionally promoting inclusivity and positive relations among students, among staff, and between students and staff Explore innovative ways to reach the surrounding community and families to utilize their strengths, keep them informed, and involve them in school programming
 <p>Diversifying Student and Adult Capacity to Transform Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish strategies for regular collaboration with families and community members Act with integrity and fairness when working with families and community members Provide professional development on cultural competence, equity, and social justice Provide flexibility to incorporate diversity in instruction, staffing, and hiring Encourage strategies that engage stakeholders in diversity and social justice efforts Recruit qualified teachers who are enthusiastic about change
 <p>Utilizing Assets to Ensure Culturally Sustaining Teaching and Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a repository of research and resources for staff to build foundational knowledge and skills for ensuring culturally sustaining teaching and learning Provide opportunities for staff to engage in professional conversations in developing skills related to cultural sensitivity to individual students and flexibility in adapting their content, curriculum, and teaching strategies

FIND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING SOLUTIONS

DOMAIN	ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES
 <p>Utilizing Assets to Ensure Culturally Sustaining Teaching and Learning (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equip educators with the skills to increase their instructional differentiation repertoire to leverage the cultural assets and meet the educational needs of students ▪ Implement specialized training related to supporting the following populations: English learners; exceptional children; students of economically depressed families; and students who have experienced social hostility, such as racism or sexism ▪ Develop student interest surveys, and lead teachers to learn about students' interests. ▪ Incorporate staff meeting time for teachers to report on: what motivates students to learn; how a relationship has been built with each student; and what they learned about students' interests ▪ Ensure that teachers identify and have a specialized focus on students who are marginalized or are at-risk ▪ Initiate discussions with local, state, and national evaluation process designers to include indicators or cultural responsiveness and sustainability as essential components in teacher and staff observations ▪ Incorporate recommendations from educational texts and other materials into the teacher evaluation process and performance improvement plans for teachers and staff who have demonstrated deficits in cultural sustaining practices
 <p>Developing Awareness and Leading the Charge to Provide Diverse Opportunities for All Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create student diversity leadership training and diversity workshops for administrative teams and student leaders ▪ Provide chats, newsletters, and/or blogs written and led by the school leadership team to promote the diverse school culture and showcase how the school values diversity ▪ Endorse student-teacher collaboration by celebrating the school's diversity through developmentally appropriate activities and celebrations ▪ Promote regular school-to-family communications in the native languages of parents and guardians ▪ Include representatives from all demographic groups in the school's diversity planning

Source: National Association of Elementary School Principals⁸⁴

FIND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING SOLUTIONS



ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE FOR ADDRESSING INEQUITIES

Directions: Use this template to draft a culturally sustaining action plan to address specific inequities faced by students in your district or school. Listed items ask users to record the larger actions and their specific steps, a timeline for completing those steps, strategies to monitor progress, and a catalog of required resources and involved personnel.

Target Inequity: _____

MAJOR ACTION	<i>Use this space to describe the broader strategy or resource investment that will be made to address the inequity.</i>
STEPS TO IMPLEMENT ACTION	<i>Use this space to list the sequence of steps that will need to be completed to perform the above action.</i>
TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION	<i>Use this space to record checkpoints for completing the preceding steps and for full execution of the action.</i>

FIND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING SOLUTIONS

PROGRESS-MONITORING	<p>Use this space to describe strategies and tools that will be used to monitor the impacts of the chosen action in addressing the target inequity.</p>
RESPONSIBLE PERSONNEL	<p>Use this space to identify specific individuals or groups responsible for executing this action and its steps.</p>
NEEDED RESOURCES	<p>Use this space to record specific resources (e.g., materials, facilities, staff expertise) that will be needed to execute this action and its steps.</p>
ADDITIONAL NOTES	<p>Use this space to write down any additional considerations or special circumstances that you and your collaborators should be mindful of when implementing this action.</p>

Source: Minnesota Department of Education⁸⁵



ACTION PLAN STEP IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Directions: For each of the “Steps to Implement Action” listed in the Action Plan Template for Addressing Inequalities, fill out this form with stakeholders to record the specific step they are responsible for, a timeline for completion, strategies for accomplishing the step, progress monitoring, a catalog of required resources and the follow up meeting date to discuss the progress monitoring.

1. Which step of the action plan are we planning for?

2. When will this step be completed?

3. What strategies will be used to move us through this step?

4. How will we progress monitor each strategy listed in Question 3?

FIND CULTURALLY SUSTAINING SOLUTIONS

5. What resources (e.g., materials, facilities, staff expertise) that will be needed to execute this step?

6. When is the next meeting where we will discuss the progress monitoring pieces?

Source: Minnesota Department of Education⁸⁶

ENDNOTES

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⁵ [1] “Mapping the Early Attendance Gap: Executive Summary.” Attendance Works and Healthy Schools Campaign. p. 3. https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Mapping-the-Early-Attendance-Gap-Exec-Summary-4-pager_4.pdf [2] “Closing Achievement Gaps in Diverse and Low-Poverty Schools: An Action Guide for District Leaders.” Public Impact and Oak Foundation, 2018. pp. 6–8. <https://www.schools.utah.gov/File/77205ae6-5a76-41aa-af8f-c7551fb130bb> [3] Sacks, V. “The Other Achievement Gap: Poverty and Academic Success.” Child Trends, August 22, 2016. <https://www.childtrends.org/blog/the-other-achievement-gap-poverty-and-academic-success> [4] Reardon, S.F. “The Widening Income Achievement Gap.” *Educational Leadership*, 70:8, May 2013. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may13/vol70/num08/The-Widening-Income-Achievement-Gap.aspx> [5] Murphey, D. “The Academic Achievement of English Language Learners: Data for the U.S. and Each of the States.” Child Trends, December 2014. pp. 2–4. <https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2014-62AcademicAchievementEnglish.pdf> [6] “Academic Performance and Outcomes for English Learners.” U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/el-outcomes> [7] “English Language Learners.” National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences. p. 2. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/Indicator_CGF/coe_cgf_2013_05.pdf [8] Burke, A. “Suspension, Expulsion, and Achievement of English Learner Students in Six Oregon Districts.” Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest, Education Northwest, August 2015. pp. i, 5–12. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/REL_2015094.pdf [9] “Understanding the Gaps: Who Are We Leaving Behind - And How Far.” Center for Great Public Schools, National Education Association. pp. 2–6. http://www.useaut.org/assets/docs/18021-Closing_Achve_Gap_backgrndr_7-FINAL.pdf [10] Gottfried, M. et al. “Showing Up: Disparities in Chronic Absenteeism Between Students with and without Disabilities.” Institute for Education and Social Policy, New York University, June 2017. pp. 20–23. https://research.steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/lwb232/IESP_WP03-17_Chronic_1.pdf [11] “Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation’s Schools.” U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html> [12] Cortiella, C. and K.B. Boundy. “Students with Disabilities and Chronic Absenteeism.” National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota, April 2018. pp. 3–4. <https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOBrief15.pdf> [13] “Beyond Suspension: Examining School Discipline Policies and Connections to the School-to-Prison Pipeline for Students of Color with Disabilities.” U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, July 2019. pp. 64–74. <https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2019/07-23-Beyond-Suspensions.pdf> [14] Harper, K., R. Ryberg, and D. Temkin. “Black Students and Students with Disabilities Remain More Likely to Receive Out-of-School Suspensions, Despite Overall Declines.” Child Trends, April 29, 2019. <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/black-students-disabilities-out-of-school-suspensions> [15] Jacobson. “New Reports Reveal Extreme Discipline Disparities for Students with Disabilities.” America’s Promise, April 20, 2018. <http://americaspromise.org/news/new-reports-reveal-extreme-discipline-disparities-students-disabilities> [16] Cai, J. “Special Ed Discipline Disparities: The Numbers Reveal the Need for Positive Practices.” National School Boards Association, August 1, 2019. <https://www.nsba.org:443/ASBJ/2019/August/Special-Education-Disparities> [17] Aragon, S. “Information Request: Closing the Achievement Gap.” Education Commission of the States, August 18, 2016. pp. 1–2. http://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Information-Request_Closing-the-Achievement-Gap_August-2016.pdf

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