

# EDUCATIONAL EQUITY DISCUSSION GUIDE

To give each student equal opportunity for success, district leaders across the country are prioritizing equity in their strategic planning efforts. The Educational Equity Discussion Guide provides guiding questions that help support district and school leaders' critical equity conversations, ensure decision-making alignment with equity goals, and encourage strategies to integrate equity mindsets systemically.

## 1 THE ROLE OF EQUITY IN OUR DISTRICT

What is our current reality when it comes to student equity?

What can we do differently?

Where is equity reflected in our curriculum, instruction, and assessment work? What is the effect of equity not being included in this work?

How does our equity work align with our cycle of continuous improvement?

What are our motives for doing equity work? Are we providing all students with access to educational opportunities that allow them to maintain their individual identities?

District leaders can use the **Equity-Focused Guiding Questions** to reflect on the performance of specific indicators of equity in their schools, such as curriculum, funding, and staff. By looking at district- and school-level data, leaders can facilitate the development of an equity lens.

## EQUITY-FOCUSED GUIDING QUESTIONS

### 2 PERFORMANCE

What is our performance by school and by student group?

### 3 FUNDING

Do all schools have adequate funding? Do funds flow to schools according to need?

### 4 CURRICULUM

Do we provide a high-level curriculum in all schools?

Do we offer AP courses and is access open to all? Do our high schools offer course sequences in high-level mathematics from Algebra I to Calculus and in science from Biology to Physics?

Do we provide extra supports to struggling students and have policies in place to make sure they get the benefit of these supports?

### 5 STAFF

What are the qualifications of our teaching staff?

Is teacher quality distributed equitably among schools as well as within the school building?

Do all student groups have fair access to the best teachers?

Are teachers well-supported? Do we reward teachers who serve the students most in need?

### 6 DISCIPLINE

How do our overall discipline rates compare to other districts? Do we suspend students more often than others?

Are discipline rates similar for all student groups?

Do we have enough school counselors and trained mentors to support students and work in partnership with families?

### 7 EVALUATION

Do we monitor our progress? Do we make adjustments when needed?

Are all of our students learning, engaged, and on track to graduate college- and career-ready?

## INTERRELATED GUIDING QUESTIONS

District leaders can use the **Interrelated Guiding Questions** to assess interconnected areas of equity, such as achievement status and social-emotional supports. District leaders can look at district- and school-level data when reflecting on these questions, using data from district data systems, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and classroom observations.

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### ACHIEVEMENT STATUS

How have achievement rates for sub-groups changed over time?

What teacher and staff qualities are related to student achievement across sub-groups?

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### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

What types of in-school and afterschool opportunities are offered, and which students participate in them?

What are teaching and learning conditions?

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### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

How is school discipline implemented?

What social-emotional supports exist for students and are all students able to access them?

What policies and practices are in place to address historical and social inequities?

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### CLIMATE & CULTURE

What is the culture of the school and district?

What practices are in place to support engagement among multiple stakeholders (students, teachers, administrators, families, community members)?

**Sources:** Sources: "Equity in Education: What it Is and Why it Matters"; "Using an Equity Lens: A Guide to Creating Equitable and Inclusive School Environments"; "Equity Toolkit for Administrators"; "Educational Equity: What Does It Mean? How Do We Know When We Reach It?"; "Systemic Equity Review Framework: A Practical Approach to Achieving High Educational Outcomes for All Students".