

MAKING STRIDES IN YOUR DISTRICT'S EQUITY JOURNEY

How to Keep Moving Forward on DEI

Meaningful equity progress does not happen overnight. It's a journey that requires a long-term commitment to taking action and creating lasting change. Yet while most school and district leaders acknowledge addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is essential to positive student outcomes, many struggle to move from ideation to implementation.

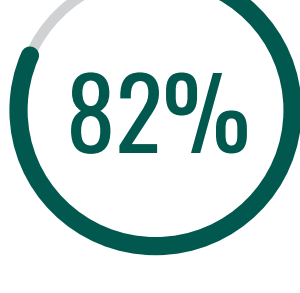
To find their footing, districts and schools can use checkpoints along their equity journey to assess current DEI efforts and identify feasible next steps — even when strained for time, resources, or consensus.

THE CURRENT STATE OF DEI IN K-12 EDUCATION



41

The number of states that have introduced measures to prevent or restrict instruction related to DEI topics in public schools



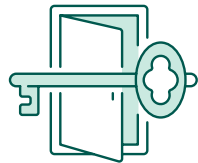
The percentage of K-12 parents and staff who say it is a high priority for their district to ensure a welcoming and safe school environment for students of diverse backgrounds



The percentage of K-12 staff who feel that schools provide enough quality professional development on equity-related topics

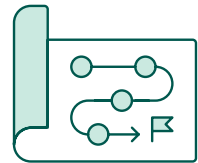
WHAT DOES EQUITY LOOK LIKE?

Districts achieve educational equity when they provide all students with the resources and conditions necessary to realize academic excellence across all valued indicators of success. Educational equity involves:



ACCESS

All students have access to courses, programs, high-quality teachers, supports, and resources to help them achieve their academic goals



PROCESSES

Processes at the school and district levels are appropriate, fair, and move beyond simply treating all students the same way



OUTCOMES

All students are provided educational experiences that ensure the achievement of certain uniform goals and objectives

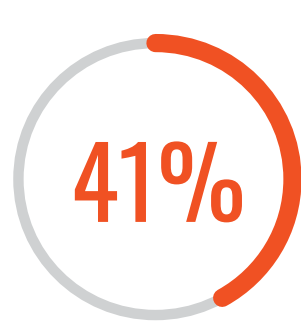
In the classroom, equity also calls for culturally responsive teaching. To reduce inequities in the classroom and foster students' sense of belonging, teachers and staff must understand how to honor differences and examine any biases, norms, and values that erode student well-being.



The percentage of staff, parents, and students who agree their schools support people of diverse backgrounds



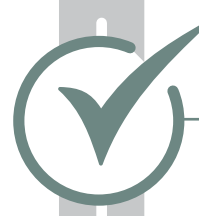
The percentage of staff, parents, and students who believe their schools support people of all gender identities or expressions



The percentage of K-12 staff who agree that resources are equally distributed across their district's schools

BUILDING EQUITY MOMENTUM

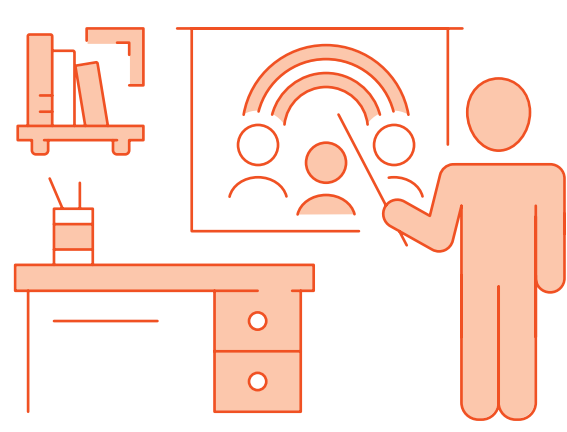
Not sure which step to take next in your equity journey? Review these checkpoints to see where you may be able to make more progress.



CHECKPOINT

Define Equity for Your Community

The most successful DEI strategies include local community members' perceptions. Look for opportunities to gather input about inequities that affect students, families, and staff and develop tailored definitions of DEI based on shared values.



CHECKPOINT

Empower Teachers to Champion Equity Work

Pursue professional development plans that help teachers build skills to counter classroom inequities. Research shows that equity-focused training works better when participants have autonomy over their engagement and see connections to their daily work.



CHECKPOINT

Examine Decisions Through an Equity Lens

When faced with program, policy, or practice decisions, reflect on the following questions:

- Who benefits most (and who benefits least) from our curriculum, hiring practices, specific courses or programs, extracurricular activities, budget decisions, and accountability measures?
- Does the policy, program, or practice ignore or worsen existing disparities?
- What are the barriers to more equitable access and outcomes?
- How can these barriers be reduced or eliminated?
- How have stakeholders been involved?
- How are diverse student groups affected by this decision?



CHECKPOINT

Investigate Data and Ask Questions

Review or improve your practices for collecting and analyzing data that informs DEI outcomes. Examining and reflecting on current and historical data uncovers insights and patterns that equip leaders to create meaningful plans and track results over time.

GUIDING QUESTIONS TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS

No matter where your school or district stands with its DEI efforts, leaders can ask vital questions to facilitate discussions, steer data analysis, and illuminate a path for improvement:

1



PERFORMANCE

- ☐ What is our performance by school and by student group?
- ☐ How have achievement rates for student groups changed over time?

4



FUNDING

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

2



CURRICULUM

- ☐ Do we provide a high-quality curriculum in all schools?
- ☐ Do we provide equitable opportunities for students from all backgrounds to access and participate in programs (such as special education and gifted and talented) and courses (such as AP and high-level mathematics and science)?
- ☐ Do we provide extra support to struggling students and have policies in place to make sure they get the benefit of these supports?

5



DISCIPLINE

- ☐ How do our overall discipline rates compare to other districts?
- ☐ Are discipline rates similar for all student groups? Do we suspend some students more often than others?
- ☐ Do we have enough school counselors and trained mentors to support students and work in partnership with families?

3



STAFF

- ☐ What are the qualifications of our teaching staff?
- ☐ Is teacher quality distributed equitably among schools as well as within school buildings?
- ☐ Do all student groups have fair access to the best teachers?
- ☐ Are teachers well-supported? Do we reward teachers who serve the neediest students?

6



EVALUATION

- ☐ Do we monitor our progress?
- ☐ Do we make adjustments when needed?
- ☐ Are all our students learning, engaged, and on track to graduate college- and career-ready?
- ☐ Do we ask our students, families, and teachers for their perspectives about how they feel and what they need to succeed?

Looking to advance equity conversations in your school or district?

Learn how other districts are gauging stakeholder perceptions with our recent report, **The Current State of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Public Schools**.