



BUILDING A BRIDGE TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL:

HOW SCHOOL LEADERS CAN OVERCOME EDUCATIONAL INEQUITIES.

INTRODUCTION

LEADING FOR EQUITY

Preparing for Your District's Journey to Increase
Student Achievement Through Equitable Practices





WHAT'S YOUR STORY

HOW IT STARTED

Why are you here today?

Why does equity matter to you?



WHAT IS EQUITY?



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF DISTRICTS & BOARDS?

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY

In order to better serve students and address gaps in achievement and opportunity, boards and districts must identify the barriers or inequities that are at the root of these gaps in order to successfully address them and meet their purpose and responsibility as public-school leaders.



INFLUENCES, CHARACTERISTICS, CIRCUMSTANCES & EXPERIENCES

Race & ethnicity
Gender, gender identity & sexual orientation
Ability- physical & cognitive
Immigration status
Physical & emotional well-being
Basic needs- food & shelter
Safety & security
Stability of home & family
Shared language & culture
Acceptance & understanding
Location & proximity
Resources & support
More...



ACCESS (MEASURES)

- Can they get to school?
- What is the quality of the buildings, teachers and materials?
- What resources and opportunities are offered?
- Are they able to effectively receive instruction?
- Does the environment make them feel included and safe?



OUTCOMES (IMPACT)

- Academics
- Attendance
- Behavior
- Awards & recognition



WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL EQUITY?

ASBA's Definition:

Educational equity is the fair allocation of resources, based on need, to address opportunity gaps and promote equal outcomes for every student.

WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT ISN'T

EQUITY IS...

- Believing that each and every student is capable of success
- Recognizing that students have different strengths and needs
- Acknowledging that opportunity and resulting achievement gaps exist
- Working to ensure every student has what they need to be successful

EQUITY ISN'T...

- Believing that one group is innately "bad" or oppressive
- Watering down expectations for any group of students
- Focused on blaming or shaming
- Taking from some to give to others.
- Punishing or penalizing White students/teachers/families

Equality



Equity

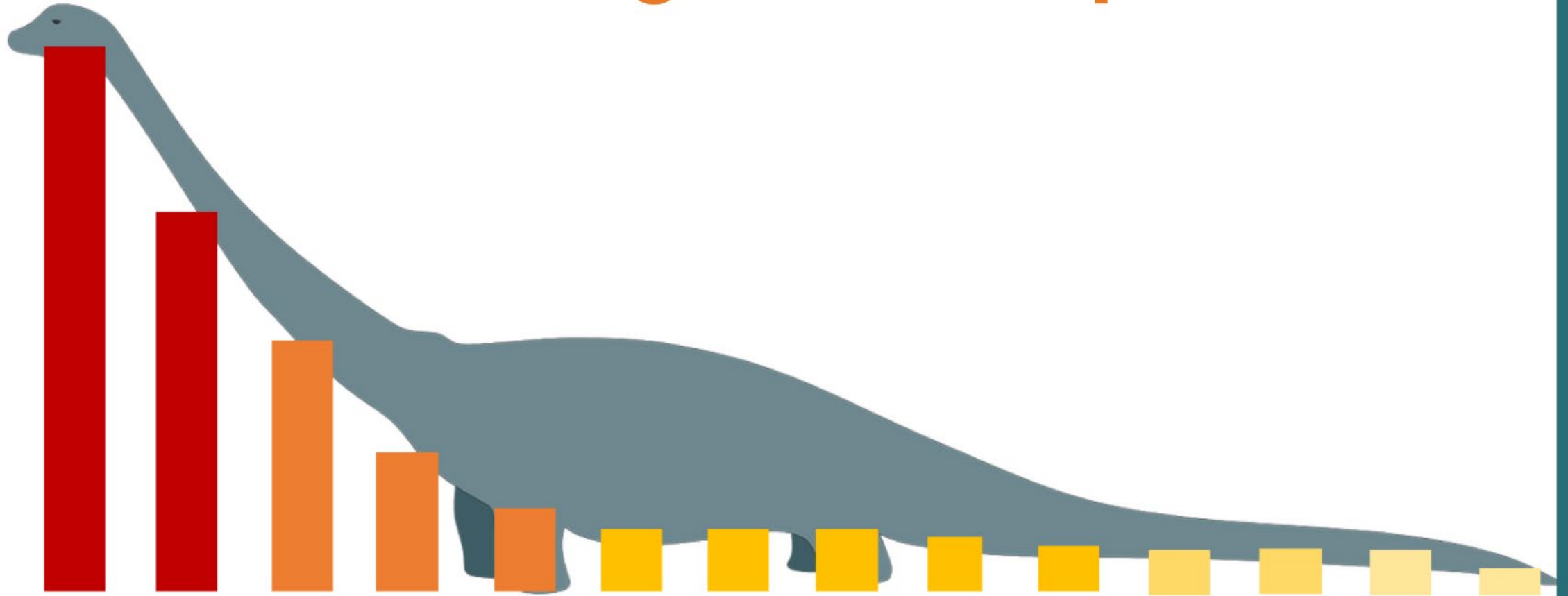


What Does Your Mission Statement Say?

“The mission of the ABC School District is student achievement, preparing 80% of students to become responsible, successful contributors to our diverse society.”

“ At ABC district we believe 2 out of 3 ain't bad.”

The Long Tail Principle



INFLUENCES, CHARACTERISTICS, CIRCUMSTANCES & EXPERIENCES

Race & ethnicity
Gender, gender identity & sexual orientation
Ability- physical & cognitive
Immigration status
Physical & emotional well-being
Basic needs- food & shelter
Safety & security
Stability of home & family
Shared language & culture
Acceptance & understanding
Location & proximity
Resources & support
More...



ACCESS (MEASURES)

- Can they get to school?
- What is the quality of the buildings, teachers and materials?
- What resources and opportunities are offered?
- Are they able to effectively receive instruction?
- Does the environment make them feel included and safe?



OUTCOMES (IMPACT)

- Academics
- Attendance
- Behavior
- Awards & recognition



FOUNDATIONAL PREMISES OF EQUITY



1 FOCUS ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Student achievement and positive student outcomes must be the central focus of the work of school boards



2 ADDRESS OPPORTUNITY GAPS

Opportunity gaps exist in every school and in every district.es.



3 RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL BOARDS

School boards are responsible for setting expectations and making decisions that support educators in closing opportunity gaps.



4 BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

School boards must have trusting and collaborative relationships with the many communities they serve to be successful in these endeavors and model this for district staff..



5 COMMIT TO THE JOURNEY

Educational equity is an ongoing journey, not a fixed destinations.

For more information and tools to support your equity journey visit: www.azsba.org/equity

“

INSPIRING WORDS

**You can't wake a person who is
pretending to be asleep**

NATIVE AMERICAN PROVERB
(NAVAJO)

PARTICIPANT POLL

HOW READY IS YOUR DISTRICT TO LEAD FOR EQUITY?

1. There are initial talks happening among a small group of interested folks.
2. It's been identified as a priority but little work has begun.
3. It's early but equity work is happening.
4. Equity is a clear goal of our district--consistent work and progress is being made.
5. Equity is embedded system-wide and is an accepted part of our district culture.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF EQUITY



5 ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF EQUITY



Vision



Understanding



Engagement



Action



Accountability

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS & THE FRAMEWORK

The Leading for Equity Framework is a tool districts can use to build up the Five Essential Components of Equity.



Leading for Equity Pathways



Define Equity
Within Your
Community



Dig Into Data



Practice
Cultural
Awareness,
Humility &
Agility



Embed Equity
System-Wide



Demonstrate
your
Commitment



DEFINE EQUITY WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

Equity and equality often get used interchangeably but they are actually two distinct ideas. Developing a common definition of equity in your community will help you shape your vision for the future.



WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL EQUITY?

Equal = Same

Equity = Fair

Equal is not always equitable.



DIG INTO DATA

Being aware of the different groups your district serves and in what proportions is foundational knowledge for equity-focused discussion and decision-making. Also important is data around outcome and access measures for these groups.

A close-up photograph of a flashlight's lens on the left, with a bright, circular beam of light extending horizontally across a dark, gradient background. The light is brightest at the lens and fades into a soft glow as it moves to the right.

USE DATA AS A FLASHLIGHT...

There are two types of data and both are important when addressing equity within your district.

Quantitative Data: Counts, percentages

Qualitative Data: Experiences and perceptions

CULTURAL AWARENESS, HUMILITY & AGILITY

Systems are most effective when they respond respectfully and authentically in a manner that recognizes, affirms values and preserves the dignity and worth of individuals, families and communities. Public schools and districts are no exception.



“

INVOLVEMENT OR ENGAGEMENT?

A school striving for family involvement often leads with its mouth - identifying projects, needs and goals, then telling parents how they can contribute. A school striving for engagement, on the other hand, tends to lead with its ears - listening to what parents think, dream and worry about.

LARRY FERLAZZO,
AWARD-WINING TEACHER AND
COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

ENGAGEMENT: TOKENISM VS. AUTHENTICITY

TOKENISM- The practice of making only a dutiful or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of fairness.

(Oxford Dictionary)

AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT- When students, families and community take an active and collaborative role in tackling the challenges and opportunities facing them.



EMBED EQUITY SYSTEM-WIDE

It has been said, "A dream without a plan is just a wish."
If you dream of a more equitable educational system for your students, a plan must be created. Words and good intentions will not create the changes needed to correct inequities.



STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Define Vision
- Define Mission
- Define Core Values

**Gather Data and
Identify Issues**



Agree on Priorities



Craft Goals and Strategies



DEMONSTRATE YOUR COMMITMENT

Accountability is about doing what you say you will do. It requires an honest look at your progress. Remembering that equity work is work we do with our community, not “to” or “for” our community. It is also important that we demonstrate openness and an ongoing commitment to two-way communication.



KEEP YOUR PLAN ALIVE

- Be explicit about how the plan is guiding decisions at the board table.
- Talk about how the superintendent's evaluation should be tied to the plan.

Leading for Equity Framework: Overview

PATHWAYS

The framework consists of five pathways boards can explore on their equity journey.

THINK ABOUT

Questions in this section are intended to encourage boards to assess their current practices

I CAN/ BOARD CAN

Consider what board members can do as individuals and what boards can do together to progress equity

DIGGING DEEPER

For boards that have already begun their work, this section offers suggestions to go further.

DEFINE EQUITY WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

Getting Started:

- Does district leadership understand the difference between equity on equality?

Digging Deeper:

- How will you create and share with all stakeholders the district's equity definition or vision?



Think About



I Can...



The Board Can...

DEFINE EQUITY WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

I Can:

- Suggest the leadership team discuss equity versus equality, how it relates to our vision and mission and where it aligns to our strategic plan.

District Can:

- Create and encourage participation on a committee or task force to define equity and set a vision for the district.



Think About



I Can...



The Board Can...

SCENARIO

The district has received a grant to provide free preschool to 75 students per year. The board must decide which school site will host the program. Parent groups at two of your schools have been outspoken at board meetings in their requests to host it and are upset that the board is considering a third school from which no parents have attended a meeting.

Think About



I Can...



The Board Can...

**WHAT'S YOUR
PLAN?**



VSBA Equity Definition

(shared with VSA and VPA)


Each student receives the resources and educational opportunities they need to learn and thrive.

- Equity means that a student's success is not predicted nor predetermined by characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, family economics, class, geography, ability, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or initial proficiencies.
- Equity means that every school provides and every student has access to high quality culturally responsive curriculum, programs, teachers and administrators, extracurricular activities and support services to meet the needs of each and every student.
- Equity goes beyond formal equality where all students are treated the same. Achieving equity may require an unequal distribution of resources and services.
- Equity involves acknowledging and disrupting inequitable practices, acknowledging biases, employing practices that reflect the reality that all students will learn, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children.



Coming Soon...

VERMONT
SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION



**Leading for Equity
Workbook**

Readying Yourself for
Discussion and Action

ASBA
Arizona School Boards Association

Copyright © 2020 Arizona School Boards Association. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any manner without written permission of the copyright owner.

THANK YOU

Nikkie Gomez-Whaley, MPA

ASBA Board Support & Equity
Services Manager

Email: nwhaley@azsba.org

LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/deileader/>

Sandra Cameron, M.Ed

VSBA Associate Executive
Director

Email: scameron@vtvsba.org

Twitter: @VTVSBA

