

Governing with Equity

Maryland Alliance of Public Charter Schools
January 1, 2022

EducationBoardPartners

great boards. great schools.



Education Board Partners is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated exclusively to strengthening nonprofit boards in education. We focus our work to ensure **quality, equity** and **accountability**.

We are a team of teachers and educational leaders who believe **every child** deserves the opportunity to attend an excellent public school.

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Agenda

1	Welcome, Agenda, and Objectives
2	Temperature Check
3	Equity-Focused Governance
4	Framework for Inclusive Governance
5	Racial Equity Impact Assessment
6	Things to Consider



Objectives

1. Discuss how to use the DEI Toolkit to implement equity-centered board governance.
2. Understand how to use a framework for inculcating inclusion in board governance.
3. Identify strategies to ask the right questions and review data through an equity lens.



Temperature Check



Creating a Beloved Community

1. What is the difference between equality and equity?
2. What is the difference between justice and equity?
3. What does a just society entail?



Equity vs. Equality: What's the Difference?

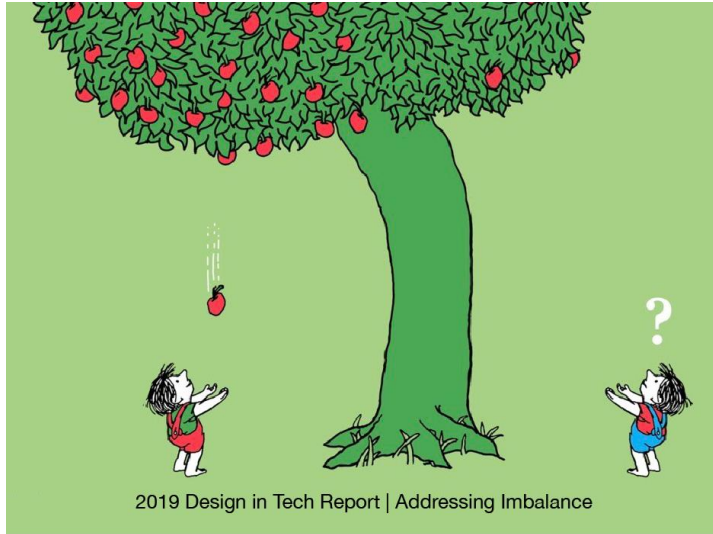


Inequality



Equality

Equity vs. Equality: What's the Difference?



Equality

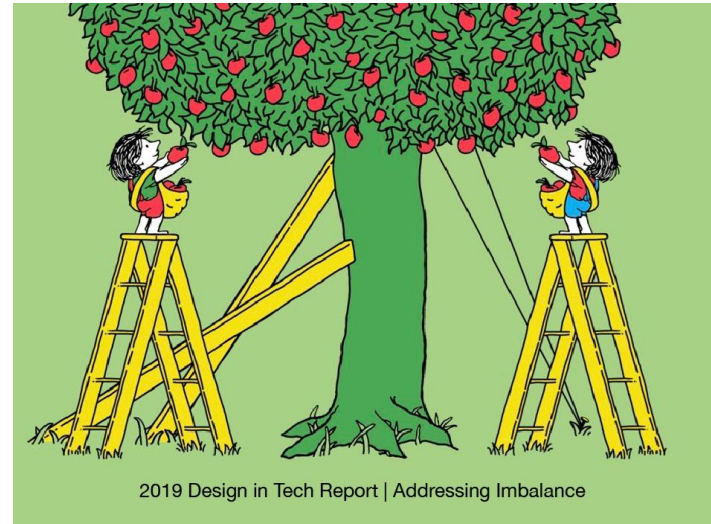


Equity

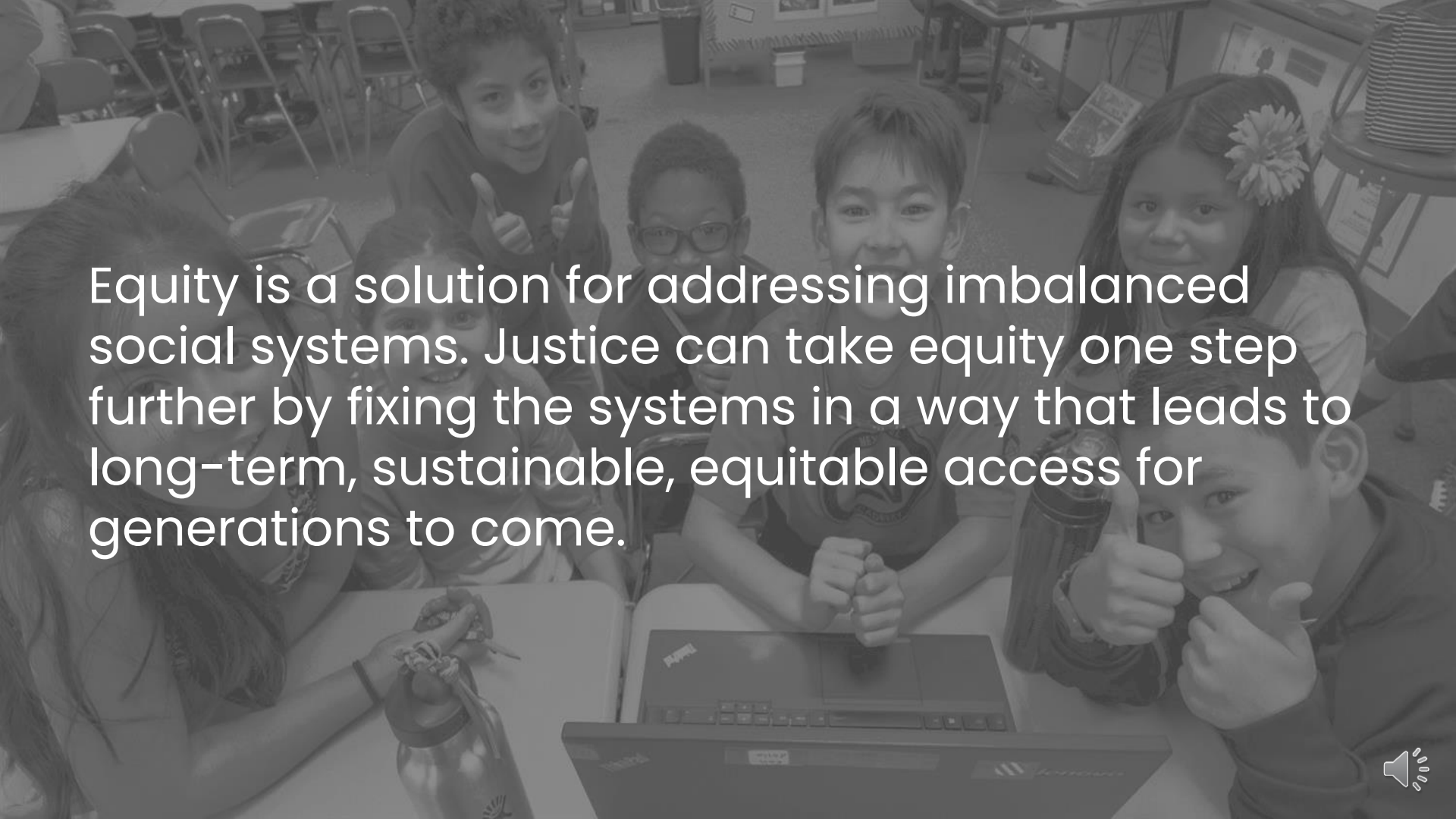
Equity vs. Equality: What's the Difference?



Equality



Justice

A group of diverse children, including boys and girls of various ethnicities, are sitting around a table in a classroom. They are looking towards the camera with various expressions, some giving thumbs up. There are two laptops on the table in front of them. The background shows classroom furniture like chairs and tables.

Equity is a solution for addressing imbalanced social systems. Justice can take equity one step further by fixing the systems in a way that leads to long-term, sustainable, equitable access for generations to come.



Standards for Effective Governance



Focus relentlessly on student achievement



Recruit and retain an exceptional leader



Invest in exemplary governance



Act strategically and be accountable



Raise and use resources wisely



Commit steadfastly to compliance

Center People, Culture and & Equity

Equity-Focused Governance



The Equity-Centered Governance Toolkit



Systemic Focus

*Understand the roots/history
of oppression*



Individual Focus

*Create space for ongoing
individual work*

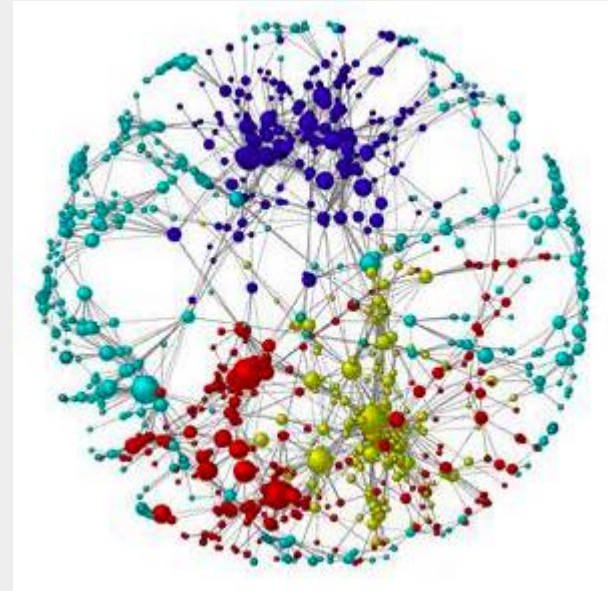


Organizational Focus

*Audit policies, procedures
and practices*

Systemic Focus

- **Grow** knowledge of systemic oppression
- **Know** the legacy of systemic oppression and its impact on public education
- **Understand** the relationship of various levels of oppression: individual, interpersonal; organization and systemic/societal/cultural



Individual Focus

- **Aid** members in understanding their personal development of racial socialization and identity development
- **Understand** how oppression impacts and influences how they govern/lead
- **Support** members in developing the skills and competencies needed to identify, analyze, and act in ways that increase equity and eliminate oppressive actions



Organizational Focus

- **Audit** policies, procedures, processes and the experience of stakeholders to understand the current state of your school and board
- **Engage** diverse stakeholders in analysis to identify priorities and a vision for the future
- **Create** a customized plan of action to eliminate inequity in your school and board



Equity-Focused Governance

Six steps to take to move towards equity-focused governance

1. Identify Your “Why?”
2. Build Awareness
3. Conduct Analysis
4. Take Action, Identify Priorities and Develop a Plan
5. Build Accountability
6. Determine Impact



Identify Your “Why?”

1. Why does deepening our focus and expertise and competence regarding DEI make sense for us?
2. Why is now the right time to focus on DEI in governance?
3. How do our mission and values align with DEI-focused governance?
4. What’s happening related to DEI in our school? Region? Nationally?
5. What can and/or will sustain the WHY?



Build Awareness

1. What vision, goals, effort and/or initiatives have been identified or undertaken at your school?
2. What has been the outcomes of your DEI efforts?
3. What do our stakeholders believe? Need? Want?
4. What does research suggest?



Conduct Analysis

1. What do we and/or others think about what's going on?
2. How do we/others interpret what's going on?
3. Where do you/others think you should be?
4. What patterns do you see?
5. What strengths and gaps exist?
6. What are the highest priorities for the board?
Others? Are there conflicts?
7. Consider drafting a summary of findings,
analysis and conclusions.



Take Action

1. Engage multiple stakeholders to craft a DEI vision.
2. Given the vision and where you want to be, what are your priorities?
3. What potential courses of action exist to achieve your vision?
4. Develop and implement your plan to eliminate inequity in your school and board.



Build Accountability

1. What structures, practices, policies, procedures and/or processes can be put into place to sustain your commitment to DEI?
2. Plan and fund ongoing learning and development in DEI skills and competencies throughout the board and school.
3. Engage diverse stakeholders in analysis of plan, strategies and impact.
4. Share progress with stakeholders and standardize opportunities to gather stakeholder feedback regularly.



Determine Impact

1. What was the impact from our actions/decisions? Was this our intention?
2. What was the impact and experience for various stakeholders?
3. Did our plan create unintended impacts (+/-) for any stakeholder(s)?
4. What did we learn?
5. What will we do differently?

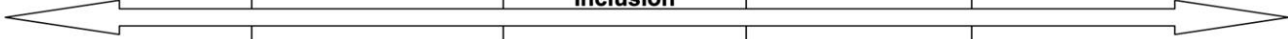


The Framework



A FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE: THE CONTINUUM FROM EXCLUSION TO INCLUSION

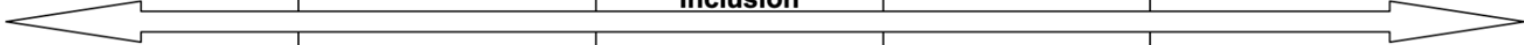
By the Foundation Consortium for the
Results for Children Initiative (Prop. 10)

Active Exclusion	Passive Exclusion	Potential Exists for Exclusion or Inclusion	Working Towards Inclusion	Full Inclusion
				
<p>Commitment The group actively opposes the inclusion of people or groups beyond those who already hold power.</p> <p>The group believes that addressing disparities in outcomes for the different kinds of children and families living in the community is not part of its charge and in fact is counter-productive to their success.</p>	<p>The group only involves the people or groups who have always been involved in decision-making.</p> <p>Group members do not talk about the implications of disparities in outcomes for their work because they are either unaware of their existence or fearful of creating controversy.</p>	<p>The group has never had discussions about issues of equity and/or the need to expand beyond the people and groups who have traditionally held power.</p> <p>Some group members may, however, be interested in having these discussions.</p>	<p>The group recognizes that success or desired outcomes cannot be achieved without addressing disparities in outcomes and engaging people and groups beyond those who have traditionally held power. Discussions about what the group can do to better address equity and diversity are commonplace. The group has begun to take action.</p>	<p>The group has formally committed to engaging other people and groups in its work. Efforts to eliminate inequities in outcomes for different children and families are integral to their work. The commitment to these goals is reflected in the way resources are allocated and a willingness among participants to share their power</p>
<p>Access to Information Information about what the group is doing and how it operates is withheld from the general public and the families most affected by policies and practices.</p>	<p>People can obtain information only if they ask for it. Information is not available in language easily understood by families and people affected by the policies and practices</p>	<p>Information is distributed but only to select groups or people.</p>	<p>Information is widely distributed in written and verbal forms. Care is taken to avoid jargon; information may be available in at least one other language.</p>	<p>Information is not only widely distributed but is easily understood and available in the home languages of the different ethnic groups who make up the community.</p>
<p>Meeting Culture Meetings are held behind closed doors.</p> <p>People outside the inner circle of decision-makers are not permitted to voice their opinions.</p>	<p>Meetings are held only in English at inaccessible locations and take place during the day when many family and community members are working.</p> <p>The group only responds to the opinions of a few. People outside the inner-circle of decision-makers feel that their knowledge and opinions are ignored and discounted.</p>	<p>Meetings are held at accessible locations and times.</p> <p>Attention has not yet been paid to how to facilitate the meetings so that everyone is engaged.</p> <p>Outside of an inner-circle of decision-makers, people are not certain whether the group is interested in their knowledge and insights.</p>	<p>Translation is available during the meeting for selected groups. Childcare is also provided if needed.</p> <p>Participants generally feel that their opinions and insights are welcomed and respected.</p>	<p>Meetings are held at accessible times and locations. The group considers attending meetings in the community as important as inviting community members to their own meetings. Facilitation is culturally and linguistically appropriate.</p> <p>Group members - learn from each other and respect the different kinds of knowledge that they bring. When certain members have less knowledge about a specific topic, an effort is made to build their capacity so that they can be more fully engaged.</p>



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<p>Membership The group denies and discourages participation of representatives or family members of other groups living in the community even though they will be affected by the decision.</p>	<p>The group uses membership criteria that indirectly inhibits the participation of key groups and families including those who will be most affected by the decisions made.</p>	<p>Membership open but little or no effort is made to invite the participation of the different types of groups and families in the community.</p>	<p>The group welcomes participation of all groups, is aware of who needs to be represented given the community's demographic composition and has begun reaching out to engage missing groups.</p>	<p>The group is made up of members who reflect and represent the wide variety of different types of families and ethnic groups affected by the group's decisions.</p>
<p>Decision-making Power & Perspectives Power is closely held by a small group (typically unrepresentative of the community being served in terms of dimensions such as ethnicity, gender and/or class). This small group makes all of the decisions and believes that their perspective should dominate the decision-making process.</p>	<p>Power is closely held by a chosen few (typically unrepresentative of the community served in terms of dimensions such as ethnicity, gender and/or class) who make all of the decisions. Members of the group may be unaware that it engages in exclusionary practices because how it operates is in keeping with how things have always been done.</p>	<p>The decision-making process is still dominated by a small, typically unrepresentative, group. The group has begun to recognize the need to involve other people in its work but their engagement has not yet moved beyond token representation.</p>	<p>Efforts have begun in earnest to solicit the opinion of advice and input of people and families from the different groups in the community. People who represent other perspectives have begun to participate in the decision-making process. The group has started to use mechanisms such as focus groups, personal interviews, surveys etc. to solicit broader input.</p>	<p>Family and community members from the different ethnic groups participate in a democratic decision-making process and effectively represent their views of their constituencies.</p> <p>The group uses a variety of mechanisms including focus groups, personal interviews, surveys to solicit input from families and people in the community on an on-going basis.</p> <p>Power is easily shared among the different groups living and working in a community. Mechanisms range from new governance structures to alternative forms of decision-making (e.g. consensus decision-making).</p>



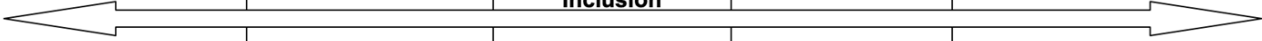
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<p>Community Assessment The group assumes that it knows what is best for the children and families in the community. It does not make any effort to assess the community's needs and strengths.</p>	<p>The group conducts an assessment of community strengths and needs but it is conducted by outsiders with little or no effort to consult with community members.</p>	<p>The group conducts an assessment of community strengths and needs. An effort is made to consult the community about the process and results. The people involved, however, tend to only be those easiest to reach. Many assume that data collected about the overall community can be applied to all children and families.</p>	<p>The assessment of community strengths and needs solicits the insights of people from the community. Efforts are made to ensure the assessment captures the needs and strengths of different groups and their families.</p>	<p>People from the community are actively involved in designing, collecting and analyzing information from the assessment of community needs and strengths.</p> <p>The results of the community assessment have been shared with the members of the broader community.</p> <p>The information collected is analyzed to reveal differences as well as similarities between conditions facing different groups and their families.</p>	
<p>Outcomes The outcomes (or desired results), which guide the work of the group, are imposed by a single group.</p>	<p>The outcomes that guide the work of the group only represent the thinking of only a select group of people. The people involved do not reflect the broad array of families and community members affected by the effort.</p> <p>The group only uses aggregate (or overall) data or indicators describing how well children and families are faring with respect to the desired outcomes.</p>	<p>The group has begun to examine whether its outcomes also reflect the priorities and concerns of other groups in the community.</p> <p>The group has begun to collect disaggregated data (data broken down by race, language background gender, income) to see whether issues play out differently for the different group. This information, however, does not yet have an impact on how the group thinks about appropriate outcomes and indicators of success.</p>	<p>The group actively engages the different groups in the community in discussions about what would be their desired outcomes or results for the work of the group. Tensions still exist, however, about whether a single set of shared outcomes can be developed.</p> <p>The group actively collects and uses disaggregated data to understand the needs and strengths of the different groups/families in the community.</p>	<p>Outcomes represent shared priorities across the different families and groups affected by the work. The outcomes have legitimacy with all of the parties involved.</p> <p>The group actively collects and uses disaggregated data to hold itself accountable for helping the different groups in the community to achieve the desired shared outcomes.</p> <p>Community members understand and use the data on outcomes to hold the group accountable.</p>	



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<p>Resource Allocation The people and groups with the best connections to the group in power get the bulk of the resources.</p>	<p>Decisions about how resources are allocated are made by a small group based upon their perceptions of what is needed and who is best suited to carry out the work.</p>	<p>The group takes the results of the community assessment into consideration when making decisions about how resources are allocated. Tensions may have started to emerge about the appropriateness of simply continuing to finance the groups who have traditional received support. Little emphasis is placed on tailoring – resource allocation decisions to the particular needs and strengths of different communities and their families.</p>	<p>The group uses the result of the community assessment to help make decisions about how resources can be most effectively allocated. Attention is paid to using resources to build upon the strengths and address the particular needs of the different groups living in the community. Processes are being put in place to ensure that all groups in the community have a chance to obtain resources based upon objective criteria.</p>	<p>Decisions about how resources are allocated are driven by the results of the community assessment and data on how well groups are achieving the desired outcomes. Community groups both new and old have opportunities to apply and receive resources based upon objective criteria. Resources allocations reflect a commitment to eliminating inequities in outcomes between different groups and their families.</p>
<p>Accountability The group adamantly opposes the creation of any mechanisms aimed at holding them accountable for what they do.</p>	<p>No mechanisms exist to hold the group accountable.</p> <p>The group assumes that good intentions automatically lead to better outcomes for children and families.</p>	<p>The group has begun to develop mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of its process and track the results of its work, but it is not yet poised to take action.</p>	<p>The group has developed mechanisms for evaluating its process and the results of its work.</p> <p>This system assesses the extent to which the group effectively engaged diverse groups in the community in its decision-making process.</p> <p>The group uses this information to detect problems and improve its strategies.</p>	<p>The group has a system in place for evaluating its work on behalf of children and families. This system assesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effectiveness and inclusiveness of its decision-making process; and, • How well the work of the group has improved outcomes for different sub-groups well as contributed to overall outcomes. <p>The group regularly reviews data from the evaluation to detect problems and improve its strategies.</p> <p>The results of these evaluations are regularly and widely disseminated to the broader public and the communities served,</p>

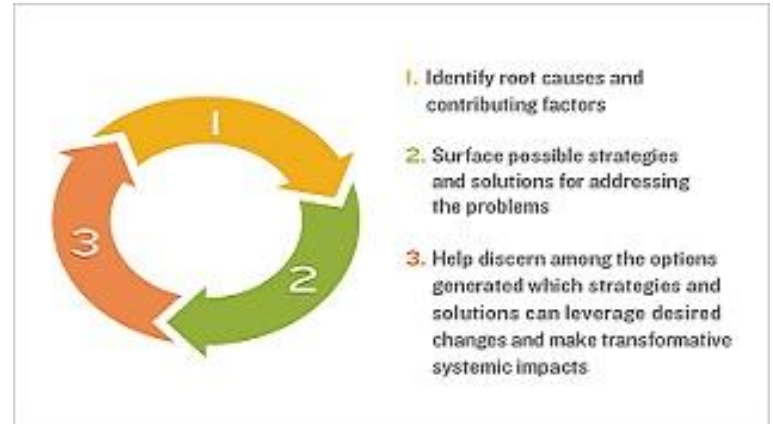


Racial Equity Impact Assessment



Racial Equity Impact Assessment

- The Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) is a systematic examination of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision.
- The REIA is a vital tool for preventing institutional racism and for identifying new options to remedy long-standing inequities.



REIAs and Education

Why are they needed?

REIAs are used to reduce, eliminate and prevent racial discrimination and inequities.

When should it be conducted?

REIAs are best conducted during the decision-making process, prior to enacting new proposals.

Where are they in use?

The use of REIAs in the U.S. is relatively new and still somewhat limited, but new interest and initiatives are on the rise.



Supporting Racial Equity

1. Re-examine the curricula
2. Elevate students' voices
3. Reform the way discipline is handled
4. Incorporate equity into any academic data review process
5. Ask critical questions through an equity lens.



REIA Guide

Identifying Stakeholders

- Which racial and/or ethnic groups are most affected by and concerned with the issues related to this proposal?

Engaging Stakeholders

- Have stakeholders from different racial and/or ethnic groups — especially those most adversely affected — been informed, meaningfully involved and authentically represented in the development of this proposal?
- Who's missing and how can they be engaged?



REIA Guide

Identifying and Documenting Racial Inequities

- Which racial and/or ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?
- How are they affected differently?
- What quantitative and qualitative evidence of inequality exists?
- What evidence is missing or needed?

Examining the Causes

- What factors may be producing and perpetuating racial inequities associated with this issue? How did the inequities arise?
- Are they expanding or narrowing?
- Does the proposal address root causes? If not, how could it?



REIA Guide

Clarifying the Purpose

- What does the proposal seek to accomplish?
- Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

Considering Adverse Impacts

- What adverse impacts or unintended consequences could result from this policy?
- Which racial and/or ethnic groups could be negatively affected?
- How could adverse impacts be prevented or minimized as a result?



REIA Guide

Advancing Equitable Impacts

- What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal?
- Which racial/ethnic groups could benefit?
- Are there further ways to maximize equitable opportunities and impacts?

Examining Alternatives or Improvements

- Are there better ways to reduce racial disparities and advance racial equity?
- What provisions could be changed or added to ensure positive impacts on racial equity and inclusion?



REIA Guide

Ensuring Viability and Sustainability

- Is the proposal realistic, adequately funded, with mechanisms to ensure successful implementation and enforcement?
- Are there provisions to ensure ongoing data collection, public reporting, stakeholder participation and public accountability?

Identifying Success Indicators

- What are the success indicators and progress benchmarks?
- How will impacts be documented and evaluated?
- How will the level, diversity and quality of ongoing stakeholder engagement be assessed?





Reflections and Close



Reflection & Commitment

- What was a significant learning for you?
- When reflecting about governing with equity, where is your board strongest? Where is there room for improvement and growth?
- As a result of what you learned, what are 2-3 actions you can take to improve your board's ability to govern with equity?

Looking for more information?

For more information, resources and questions please visit:

<https://mdcharters.org/governance-on-demand>

GOVERNANCE RESOURCES FOR MARYLAND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

This website is a Maryland Alliance for Public Charter Schools (MAPCS) curated page, developed specifically for Maryland Public Charter Schools operators and administrators. More resources are coming soon. Please bookmark this page and check back periodically for updated board governance resources.

Questions?

For any questions, please contact:

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