Leading for Equity

Annette C. Anderson, Ph.D.
Shifting Leadership Paradigm

Traditional Leadership Role
- District Leader
- Building Leader
- Classroom Leader

Equity Leadership Role
- Situational Leader
- Equity Leader
- Pragmatic Leader
- Contextual Leader
“To truly level the playing field, educators must move beyond a focus on equality and start demanding equity. By focusing on equity we expand our offerings beyond student placement. And in doing so, we can broaden our vision to include not only equity for students of all races and ethnicities but also for students of all socioeconomic statuses…”

- *Building Equity*, p. 16
Equity vs. Equality

Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.

- Albert Einstein
Models of Educational Equity
Standard 3 and the Special Role of Equity

How can School Leaders demonstrate support for addressing matters of Equity and Cultural Responsiveness in all aspects of leadership?
What’s missing from this model?
The Reality Regarding Equity
When we focus our attention on opportunities to develop schools as allies of equity, we inherently promote strategic equitable outcomes for every student.

Principals must understand how to look beyond their own identity formation to lead through an equity lens.

A 2018 evaluation from the JHU Institute for Education Policy suggests three key areas of convergence in Principal Evaluation:

- Instructional Leadership Practices: Coaching, Evaluation and Defining the Educational Program
- Organizational Management: Systems Leadership
- Community Leadership: Promoting the Success of All Students
In *Building Equity* (2017), Smith et al. identify a range of factors endemic to moving the needle in terms of how student identity is formed.

It is useful to understand that school leaders are duly influenced by their own identity formation as they decide what to value in their Instructional Leadership.

Principals can identity and help to build capacity based upon knowledge of their own identity and comfort in framing Instructional Leadership through the lens of Equity.
Elements of Equitable Leadership Practices

Recognize, respect, and employ each student’s strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning

Promote the preparation of students to live productively in and contribute to the diverse cultural contexts of a global society

Establish a learning environment where each student is treated fairly, respectfully, and with an understanding of each student’s culture and context

Act with cultural competence and responsiveness in interactions, decision making, and practice

Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status

Develop student policies and address student misconduct in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner

Ensure that each student has equitable access to effective teachers, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success

Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement
Equity Exercise

• Take a look at the Equity Placemat.
• Place a Green Dot next to all of the Elements of Standard 3 on which you would assess yourself as Highly Effective.
• Place a Yellow Dot next to all of the Elements of Standard 3 on which you would assess yourself as Effective.
• Place a Blue Dot next to all of the Elements of Standard 3 on which you would assess yourself as Developing.
• Place a Red Dot next to all of the Elements on Standard 3 on which you would assess yourself as Ineffective or having no experience at all.
• How many Green Dots do you have?
• What is your evidence??
What is Equity?

Equity = Effort + Evidence
Equity Requires Evidence

Equity ≠ Effort + No Evidence
Equity without Evidence is simply Effort.
Building Equity

- **Author: Dominique Smith:**
  - [https://vimeo.com/226920731](https://vimeo.com/226920731)
The Building Equity Taxonomy

1. **Physical Integration**
   - Race/ethnicity, ability, gender, class, sexual orientation: Broadening the lens.

2. **Social-Emotional Engagement**
   - Cultural proficiency, welcoming climate, restorative practices, attendance

3. **Opportunity to Learn**
   - Structural access to curriculum, human and social capital

4. **Instructional Excellence**
   - Gradual release of responsibility, compensatory and adaptive practices, professional learning

5. **Engaged and Inspired Learners**
   - Student voice and aspirations, assessment-capable learners.
LEVEL 1: PHYSICAL INTEGRATION
1. Our student body is diverse.
2. Our school publicly seeks and values a diverse student body.
3. Efforts are made to promote students’ respecting, and interacting with, students from different backgrounds.
4. Our school facilities and resources are at least equal to those of other district schools.
5. Classroom placement and student schedules ensure that diversity exists in all learning environments.

LEVEL 2: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT
6. The social and emotional needs of students are adequately supported in the school, from prosocial skills development to responsiveness to trauma.
7. Teachers and staff show they care about students.
8. The school has programs and policies that are designed to improve attendance.
9. The school’s discipline plans are restorative rather than punitive.
10. Students are treated equitably when they misbehave, and consequences are based on an ethic of care rather than demographic characteristics.

LEVEL 3: OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN
11. We do not use tracking to group or schedule students.
12. Students have equitable access to class placement and course offerings.
13. All students have access to challenging curriculum.
14. Teachers have high expectations for all students.
15. There are active working relationships between home and school to increase opportunities to learn.
16. Soft skills are developed and valued in our school.

LEVEL 4: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE
17. All students experience quality core instruction
18. There are transparent and transportable instructional routines in place schoolwide.
19. Grading and progress reports are focused on subject matter mastery and competence.
20. Teachers notice students’ individual instructional needs and have systems to differentiate as needed.
21. Educators have access to professional learning that builds their technical and intellectual skills.

LEVEL 5: ENGAGED AND INSPIRED LEARNERS
22. Students are engaged in a wide range of leadership activities within the school.
23. Student aspirations are fostered.
24. Students select learning opportunities related to their interests.
25. Students are provided authentic and applied learning experiences that link with their goals and aspirations.
**Group Activity: Seeking Evidence**

**LEVEL 1: Physical Integration**

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*What is the verifiable evidence that will compel a leader to support a stance of Effective at each level?*
• Questions and Discussion

annette.Anderson@jhu.edu
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