

Equity *in* Student-Centered Learning Design

A Collaborative Guide to Realize
Equity Across Your School





This guide is designed to help you and your team collaboratively design and implement learning that equitably honors the unique assets and needs of your students.

Like you, we believe that learning must be designed with students at the center. It must be personalized to students' unique assets, interests, identities, and aspirations—and designed with their ideas and voices at the table. Education Evolving has identified seven common principles of learning that are present when students are at the center of school design decisions. These principles were identified by listening to students and educators, and a careful review of academic research.

When these principles are fully realized, the result is learning that is equitable, by design. But doing that—fully realizing these principles equitably—is a challenge. This guide is intended to help you and your team face that challenge.

How to Use This Guide

- 1** First, work through the Getting Ready as Individuals and as a Team sections (pages 5 to 8)
- 2** Then, as a team work through each of the seven principle sections, one at a time. Use the discussion questions to identify immediate design changes your team can make to live each principle more equitably (pages 10 through 23).
- 3** Finally, we suggest doing a deeper dive (for example, over a full year) on one principle you particularly need to work on (pages 24 and 25)

Visit educationevolving.org/equity-guide to find accompanying resources to this guide.

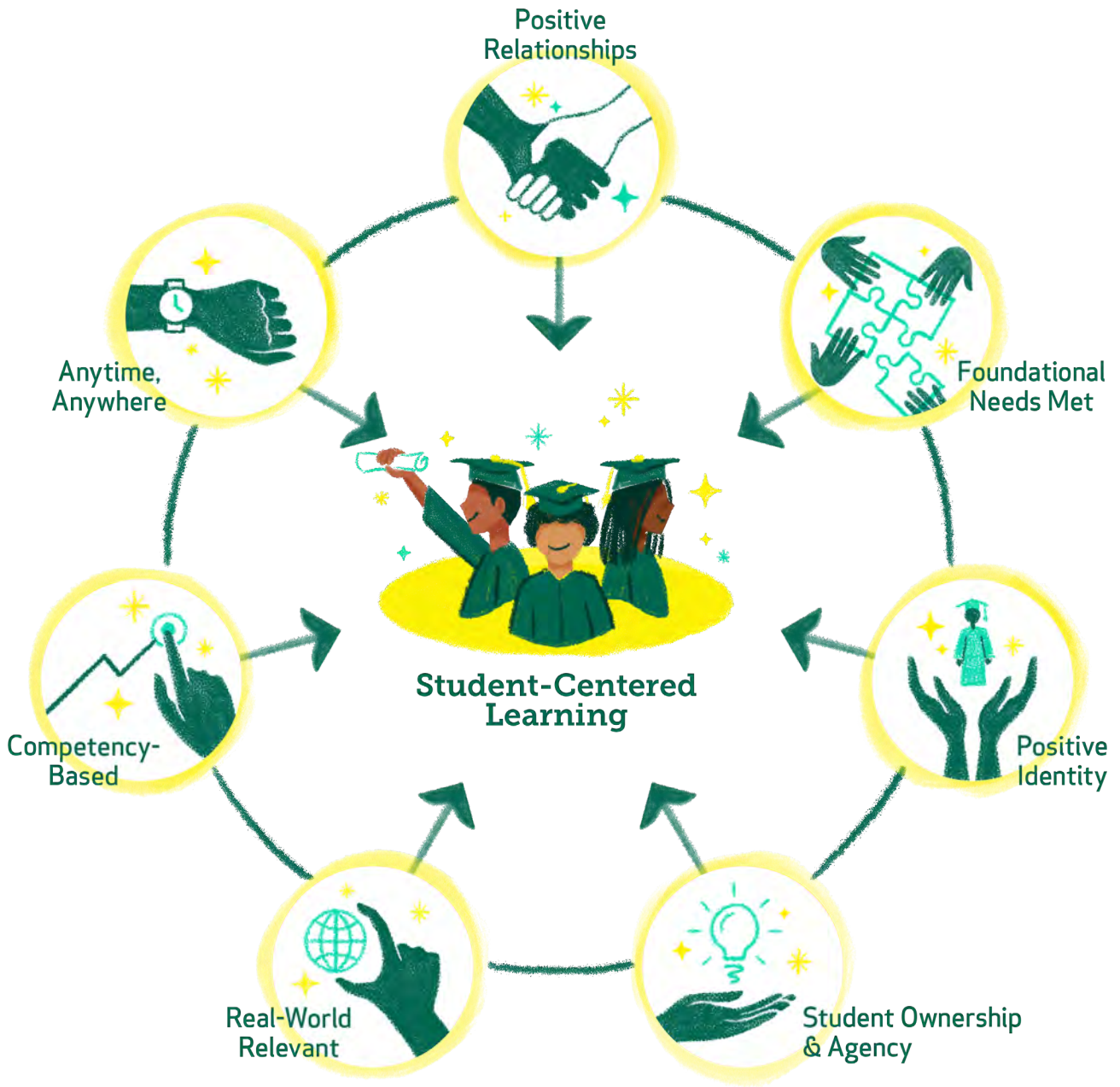


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Getting Ready as Individuals

This guide is intended to be used as a team, but before the team work can begin, each individual must do some deep, sometimes uncomfortable, self reflection. Use the following chart to help guide yourself and your team as you prepare to do this work together.

Are You Ready?

Before you dive into the 7 principles together, make sure you have done the individual pre-work. (this will require 3-4 months minimum)

Choose at least one resource to help guide your personal journey. You can find a list of suggestions at educationevolving.org/equity-guide



Join or host an equity book club



Participate in a facilitated or self guided training course



Watch documentary films or series on topics of equity

As you do this personal work, check in with yourself by working through these questions:

- Can I be challenged?
- Do I trust and respect my colleagues? Do they trust and respect me?
- Who am I? Do I understand my role in this work?
- Do I have healthy ways of addressing conflict?
- Do I hold an awareness of any privilege I have? Or lack?
- What is my personal definition of equity in education? What is my role in ensuring equity is present in my work?
- Who can support me and hold me accountable?

Which resources did you choose?

Share what you learned with your team.

Getting Ready as an Educator Team

Team equity work elicits strong feelings. Before any team can productively engage in this important work there must be a strong foundation of mutual respect amongst colleagues. Trust is essential for everyone to feel safe to share ideas, ask hard questions, and challenge each other. Assess and discuss whether your team is ready with this [trust survey](https://bit.ly/Aguilar-Trust) (bit.ly/Aguilar-Trust).

It is also equally important that you all as an educator team co-create and agree upon a shared purpose. Shared purpose consists of aligned vision, mission, and goals. When your team is clear on your shared purpose it ensures that all conversations are grounded in these values. Your team might find the Teacher-Powered [Shared Purpose](https://bit.ly/Shared-Purpose) (bit.ly/Shared-Purpose) resource useful.



Establishing Norms

As you step into this work as a team you will need to create an intentional set of norms for this equity work that sets expectations and boundaries to ensure these conversations are safe, productive, and reflective. It is helpful to have an assigned facilitator who will hold everyone accountable to the co-created group norms. Think about behavioral norms, procedural norms, and accountability norms. To begin, consider these foundational questions as a group:

- ✦ What do you need from your fellow group members to feel safe in this group?
- ✦ How will we create space for the worldviews and perspectives of our team and student communities?
- ✦ How do we leave space for differences and conflict while ensuring respectful conversations?
- ✦ How often and when will you meet?
- ✦ Who will be responsible for notetaking?
- ✦ Who will be responsible for planning next steps?
- ✦ How will you hold each other accountable along this journey?

Setting Goals

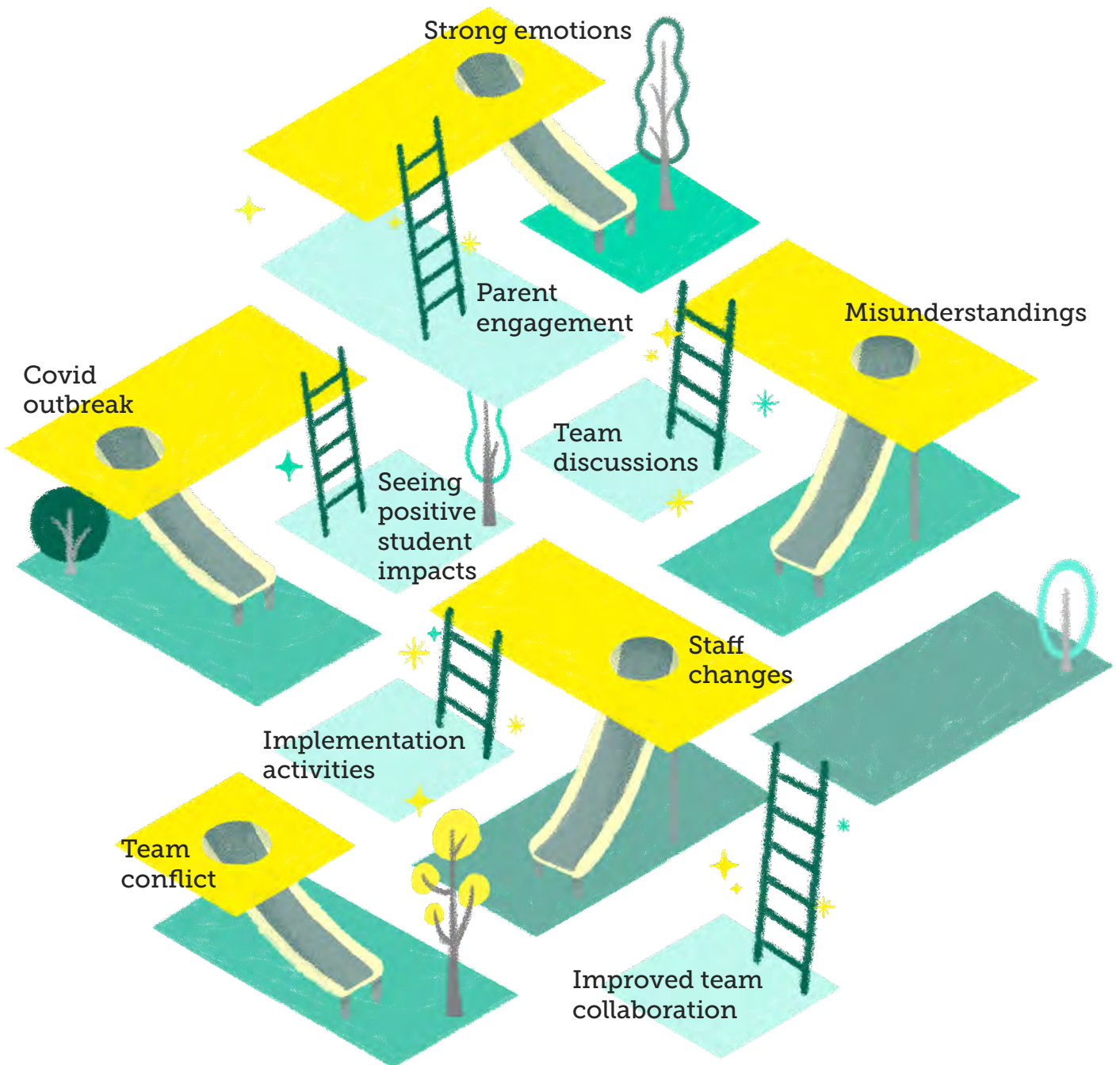
The following are some prompts for you to work through as a group, to help set the goals for your team as you work through this guide.

- ✦ What is your team good at? What are your team's current strengths?
- ✦ Where do you need to improve? What are your potential blind spots?
- ✦ What goals do you have for your work together?
- ✦ How will we know if we've done this successfully?

Once you have agreed on team norms and goals, take the time to document and post them in a space everyone can see or refer to regularly. In keeping the 'what' and 'who' of your shared purpose at the forefront of your time together, you will be better equipped to tackle difficult conversations and decisions.

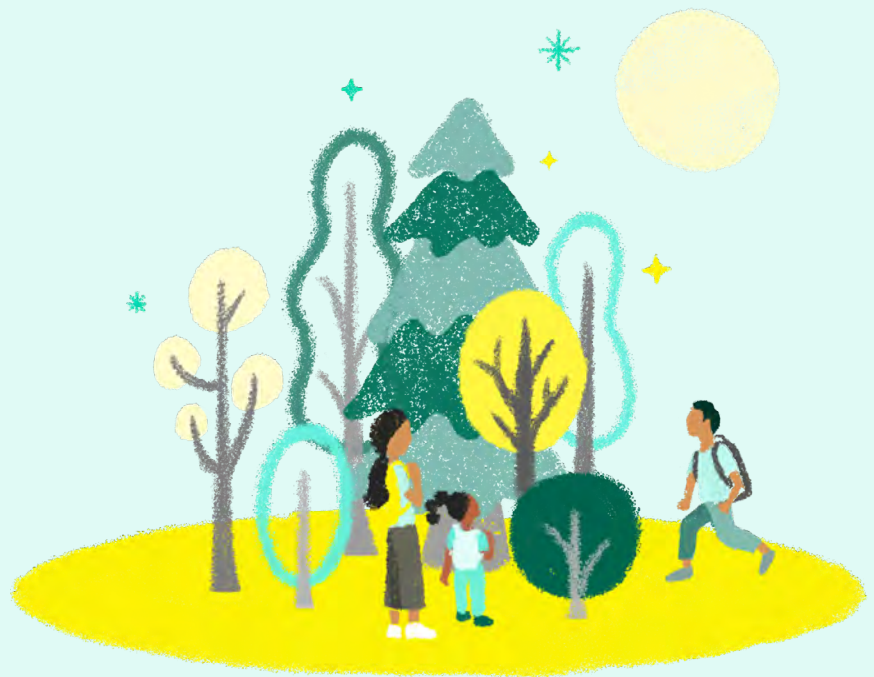
Working Through The Guide

We suggest working through each principle one at a time. Set aside either a series of staff meetings or PD times to dedicate to each principle. Each person should think through the discussion questions individually before talking through them together as a team. As you proceed, there will be chutes and ladders along the way. We suggest a few in the chart below. **Take a moment to fill in a few chutes and ladders you all foresee in your school and keep in mind that this is normal and expected. Enjoy the journey!**



Seven Principles of Student-Centered Learning Design ▶

The following pages are informed by leading educators with experience in designing student-centered environments for educational equity. They represent a diverse collection of school settings, serving many unique student populations. These **Equity Fellows** met over the course of three months sharing ideas and advice, which ultimately led to the creation of this guide. We invite you to keep an open mind, embracing that you can learn from all the Fellows—and will always need to adapt what you learn to your specific community.





Positive Relationships

Students develop strong relationships with other students and with adults who care about them, believe in their potential, and hold them to high expectations.

Nobody cares what you know until they know that you care.

-Sizi Goyah

Why It Matters for Equity

Deep learning requires students to process difficult problems and generate new ideas. In short, it requires vulnerability. But such vulnerability is especially difficult for those already experiencing trauma and oppression. Educators must be intentional and consistent in building trust — by knowing, valuing, and celebrating each student, then holding them to high expectations to support their future.



Tips for Living this Principle Equitably

- ✓ Adjust school schedules to establish advisories or other intentional space for connecting and following up with students. Also schedule time for educators to collaborate — strengthening their own relationships — and discuss ways to support students.
- ✓ Create opportunities for students to build multi-year relationships with adults in the building, for example, mentoring programs or looping students.
- ✓ Invite guest speakers, tutors, and parents who have interest in a particular subject area, or alumni who have developed careers in certain fields, to build relationships with the broader school community.
- ✓ Empower students to create and run affinity groups and mentorship programs. Allow students to choose staff mentors to support each group. Compensate staff for their time, either financially or by shifting other responsibilities.
- ✓ Invite students to cook and share family recipes, and interview their elders about family and stories. Find consistent ways for students' cultures to be celebrated.

Equity in Action: Specific Examples



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When our students first come into the school we use kinship terms with them. I do not call them by name, I call them based on their kinship relationship to me...I am not a Teacher or Ms., I am T̥h̥uŋw̥iŋ (Aunt). As a T̥h̥uŋw̥iŋ I have a responsibility to teach them how to exist as a Lakota woman. The only way I can teach is by how I conduct myself and how I embody that

relative. I can't tell a young woman that she needs to be Lakota or Dakota. If I don't know who I am. I can't call her thozan, if I really can't be a t̥h̥uŋw̥iŋ to her. It is making that choice yourself, are you going to be a relative or you going to just use kinship labels. This responsibility does not stop once we leave the school, but it continues in the community.

-Randilynn, Pine Ridge Girls School



“

Students begin each school year taking the E3 Educational Strengths Assessment. This assessment sets the tone for the year by emphasizing the 21st century skills that each student excels in such as innovation, adaptability, critical analysis, cross-cultural communication, and teamwork. For incoming students, this is often their first acknowledgement of their assets and creates the foundation for building and strengthening relationships.

-Katie, El Colegio Charter School

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We cannot claim to be student-centered when we are NOT deliberately seeking and maintaining teachers of color.

-Sizi, Brooklyn Center STEAM Secondary School



Team Discussion Questions

In what ways does your team intentionally strengthen relationships between teachers and students and between students and their peers? How do you evaluate if your strategies are successful?

How will your team know that you are faithfully applying an equity lens to build and foster relationships with and among students?

Are there any language or cultural differences that are creating challenges for positive relationships at your school? What resources do you already have on staff or within the community to bridge this challenge?

It is well known that there is a lack of teachers of color and American Indian teachers. How does this impact students at your own school and, if your school does not have teachers from the same ethnic communities as your students, how do you provide relationship opportunities for students within their own communities?



Foundational Needs Met

Students are supported in meeting fundamental physical, psychological, and safety needs. They get help navigating social services or may receive them directly at school.

We hold high expectations with our students and also understand that they may come to school not ready to learn- we work with the individual and work to get to the bottom of what is going on so they can be ready to be in class, and if they are not we need to find out what they need.

-Katie Groh de Aviña

Why It Matters for Equity

Students enter school every day with many foundational needs unmet. These areas of need map to lines of race, ethnicity, income, and ability. Even well-intentioned school teams miss the mark if they fail to account for the traumatic structures of oppression in their students' lives. By providing services to meet students' foundational needs, schools create the conditions needed for students to be ready to learn.



Tips for Living this Principle Equitably

- ✓ Identify what your students do well beyond dashboard data. Use the [E3 Educational Strengths Assessment \(bit.ly/E3Assessment\)](https://bit.ly/E3Assessment), the [Developmental Assets Framework \(bit.ly/DAFramework\)](https://bit.ly/DAFramework), or something similar to establish an assets-based approach with students.
- ✓ Set up regular weekly team meetings specifically focused on sharing student needs and successes that staff have identified. Let students know that you will be communicating with colleagues about their needs to not betray their trust.
- ✓ When students share needs, respond in a timely manner with immediate plans or by making connections to community partners who can provide necessary support. Follow up to see how it is going. Research and apply for grants to support common student needs.
- ✓ Identify at least five community partners (health services, food banks, housing stability, immigration support, etc.) to collaborate with, and assign someone on staff who is charged with maintaining that relationship and communication. As you identify community partners, ensure that they are representative of the cultures and ethnicities reflected in your student body.
- ✓ Prioritize heritage languages, ceremonies, and other cultural practices. Invite elders into the school to participate in these activities.

Equity in Action: Specific Examples



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We have an onsite clinic that caters to the students and their families whether or not they have health insurance. We also have optometrists and dentists that come weekly to help our students.

-Sizi, Brooklyn Center STEAM Secondary School



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Our school is located on Standing Rock Sioux Reservation and was designed by the community to meet the foundational needs of Lakota children living on the reservation. For this community, language, culture, and ceremonies are foundational needs.

-Elder Dave, Lakota Immersion School

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With the Hmong students I serve... psychological is the one with the highest needs because there's a lot of intergenerational trauma passed down from the Secret War in Laos. Anxiety and depression are the most common mental health concerns of my students. Because my colleague and I are [Hmong] heritage speakers and have grown up in the community, we understand what families are going through. We not only help families, but also work on educating our staff about the trauma some of our Hmong students and families may have experienced. It takes a whole village to provide foundational needs of students, especially students of color that are not understood by white educators and the white educational system.



-Pang, Park Center Senior High

Team Discussion Questions

What processes do you have in place to identify your student's foundational needs?

Describe the foundational needs your students have. Create a word cloud of these. How might you host this activity with students and families?

How will your team know that you all are faithfully applying an equity lens both identifying and meeting the foundational needs of your students?

Is there anything that feels overwhelming from the word cloud? Are there areas your team isn't equipped to help students with?

How might community leaders help meet the cultural foundational needs of students? Who can you partner with to meet these needs?



Positive Identity

Students are fully embraced for who they are, in the context of their communities and cultures, and feel that they belong. They develop a positive sense of their own identities and see those identities reflected around them at school.

Community must instill in the child that who they are and where they come from should be a source of pride.

-Dr. Courtney Bell-Duncan

Why It Matters for Equity

Schools that celebrate diversity create environments where students can develop a positive sense of self — in all the ways students might identify themselves, whether by race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or religion. Education must embrace and celebrate student's unique cultures and intersectionalities, integrating their lived experiences with their learning experiences — thereby enabling them to build deeper connections to and find meaning in their learning within school and the broader community.

Tips for Living this Principle Equitably

- ✓ Correctly pronounce each of your students' names and learn the cultural meaning of their name.
- ✓ Invite guest speakers from the community to speak about their lived experiences — as artists, elders, chefs, producers, entrepreneurs, etc. and to inspire students to dream big.
- ✓ Use texts, audio, videos, and other materials by diverse authors that tell diverse narratives in all subjects.
- ✓ Remember that parts of our students' identities may be in violent conflict with one another, so as we focus on a student's racial and ethnic identity, take the time to understand how their gender identity or socioeconomic status might also be impacted.
- ✓ Provide credit-based opportunities for students to study their own heritage and culture during the school day.
- ✓ Give your students opportunities to lead. Whether it is an affinity group or a mentorship program — for example, one that pairs older students with younger ones experiencing housing instability to help them navigate the complex system and trauma associated with homelessness — students must have the opportunity to share their assets with their peers and be leaders.
- ✓ Incorporate Ethnic Studies into your curriculum. We cannot talk about fostering students' identities without understanding how identities are represented, misrepresented, or entirely erased in the curriculum.



Equity in Action: Specific Examples



“Our team regularly reviews their reading options in the English Department to ensure that both diverse authors and stories are represented. The Social Studies Department

supplements textbooks with other materials to include histories not reflected in their traditional textbooks. They have also found that participating in History Day and other opportunities for students to choose and guide their own work have provided students with opportunities to focus on their own identities.

-Peg, DeLaSalle High School



“Our school has seen the importance of community and family partnerships in building their students’ positive identities so much so that they influence their school schedule,

providing students with flexibility to participate actively with partner organizations. With a student body that is almost entirely Somali, our school has made it a priority to offer classes in Somali, Arabic, and Somali history and culture. We also offer English classes that include novels related to Somali culture and history. In social studies, we try to examine their materials using a culturally affirming and responsive lens.

-Andrew, Heritage Academy

Team Discussion Questions

What two elements of student identity does your team currently focus on the most? Are these the right ones to prioritize?

What part of students’/colleagues’ identities do you most often see affecting their interactions with other students and colleagues?

How will your team know that you all are faithfully applying an equity lens supporting your students’ identity/ies?

Role models that look like students are important. How does your team highlight and feature culturally affirming leaders in the community?

For some students, part of a positive identity includes pride and fluency in their heritage language. If you work at schools where this is relevant, please share an artifact to show how you are affirming this language. If not, which partners can you work with in your community to better support students in this area?



Student Ownership and Agency

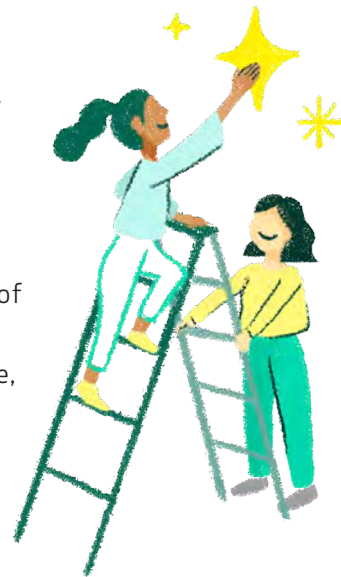
Students take responsibility for their learning, exercising choice to pursue their interests and passions, and agency to shape their school environment.

When students feel they have a stake in their education, they will feel much more invested.

-Pang Yang

Why It Matters for Equity

Expanding student ownership and agency improves not only motivation, engagement, and achievement, but also students' sense of confidence and self-determination — cornerstones of an equitable learning experience. Further, expanding agency is a self-reinforcing cycle: elevated agency results in higher levels of cognitive and emotional functioning, which in turn leads to successful learning experiences and higher levels of perceived agency. Many marginalized students have not had opportunities to develop the skills needed to effectively use their voice for change, establish a sense of ownership over their learning, and understand their role in their own education. Teaching these skills improves students' overall success in and outside of the classroom.



Tips for Living this Principle Equitably

- ✓ Co-create community norms — a set of agreements about how everyone behaves, rooted in shared values — with students and staff at the beginning of each year.
- ✓ Have students and educators complete learner profiles — identifying learning styles, preferences, and a commitment to learning in and out of the classroom.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for students to choose ways to demonstrate their learning; for example, write a report, create a presentation, build a model, write a song, use Minecraft, etc.
- ✓ When using projects or project-based learning models, ensure that they are student-directed. By allowing students more agency in their projects, teachers become guides, advisors, and facilitators.
- ✓ Look at which students are represented on the school leadership team. Consider whether students with poor attendance and lower GPAs are included in shaping the curriculum. Find ways to include all voices.
- ✓ Incorporate [Youth Participatory Action Research \(bit.ly/YPAR-tool\)](https://bit.ly/YPAR-tool) into your curriculum, also a great opportunity to partner with community organizations and researchers.

Equity in Action: Specific Examples



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A critical practice at HSRA is students leading their weekly community meetings. This gives students practice in public speaking, leadership to facilitate large meetings, and clear ownership in the school community. Students also use these skills when hosting tours, in publications, and presenting at

national conferences. All of these activities build a strong community among students and staff at HSRA.

-Haben, High School for Recording Arts



“

Our teachers are intentional about creating classroom atmospheres, norms, and routines that encourage their young learners to take ownership in their learning. They provide multiple mediums for their students to demonstrate their understanding. Even at the elementary level they found that when students knew why and could decide how to make sense of the information they were a lot more engaged, present, and in general just happy to be at school.

-Hanna, Jefferson Community School

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Our norm setting begins at the beginning of each school year. Learners spend weeks practicing positive habits of mind to help them be successful in using their own voice and choice. Learners step through different learning opportunities and are encouraged to identify why options work best for them. During this period, teachers track student choices and progress to guide or coach their learners in developing self-management skills.



-Kendra, Boeckman Middle School

Team Discussion Questions

Student voice and choice is a trendy phrase in education. How does your team authentically create space for this? What skills do your students need to be taught to be successful in this area?

Maybe your students had a taste of voice and choice during distance learning. What worked well? What didn't? (Remember that equity doesn't mean the same experience for everyone)

Think beyond the classroom—what are age appropriate ways for all students to participate in decisions impacting their education?

How will your team know that you all are faithfully applying an equity lens to allow your students ownership and agency in their learning and school community?

What fears do you have about sharing power with students? Why?



Real-World Relevant

Students solve problems that exist in the real world, learning skills and knowledge in a multidisciplinary context that they will use in their future lives and careers.

Students should be encouraged to do what is natural for humans: to fight for something, to believe in something, to seek belonging in a movement.

-Hanna Haileyesus

Why It Matters for Equity

Students should understand why they are learning a lesson — specifically, why it matters and how it relates to their lives. When such relevance is lacking, students feel alienated, hindering academic achievement and educational equity. Integrating students' classroom learning with their lived experiences outside of school creates opportunities for students to identify problems, challenge inequities, and take action to solve them. These real-life experiences reinforce lessons and skills taught in school, ultimately leading to deeper learning and real world applications.

Tips for Living this Principle Equitably

- ✔ Provide time for students at all grade levels to share and discuss issues that are important to them, for example, through journaling, one-on-one check ins, or class discussions.
- ✔ Regularly discuss current events with your students in age-appropriate ways and incorporate current events into the curriculum.
- ✔ Participate in protests, rallies, parades, and community events that are important to your students. Allow them to lead these activities.
- ✔ Create internship opportunities for students in middle and high school in a wide variety of fields, or invite a community organization to teach an elective in their field.
- ✔ Provide service-learning opportunities for all students allowing them to brainstorm, plan for, and work to solve community problems.
- ✔ Invite local colleges to share with students about career paths of different majors. Tour local community colleges and universities, broadening students' experiences.
- ✔ Prioritize extracurricular opportunities for all students — including clubs, sports, and affinity groups — as safe spaces for students to explore their passions.
- ✔ Incorporate real world application into all curriculum. For example: create maps of your community, add budgeting portions to projects, trace the roots of popular music, research fashion trends, discuss a sample voting ballot, etc.



Equity in Action: Specific Examples



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Our team makes sure to connect lessons to real world lessons young adults will need to understand. They do learning simulations in social studies related to home purchases, SMG (stock market game), and relocation analysis. The team has learned that beyond building societal issues into all

their classwork, opportunities to actively engage as community members are critical. Teachers work with students to organize participation in immigration rallies, visits to political representatives, write letters to politicians, and community clean-ups.

-Andrew, Heritage Academy

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HSRA's flexible schedule and commitment to student agency leads to a lot of powerful out of state field trips. Students have gone on biking trips to Canada, mission trips to Kenya, HBCU tours to the south, education conventions in Washington D.C, music conventions in Austin, and so much more. Teachers build the fundraising and planning aspects of each trip into the project with students, making those valuable parts of the learning experience.



-Haben, High School for Recording Arts



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Students at DeLaSalle are encouraged to lead when they see a need. In 2000, a group of seniors hosted a small dance “prom” for people in the greater community with disabilities. The first year the Starry Night Prom had around 60 guests but over the years has expanded to host over 1,500 guests. The event is planned, hosted and executed by about 200 DeLaSalle students each year. The students are required to attend multiple training in advance of the day to prepare them for working with differently abled people. This incredible project touches the hearts of guests and students alike.

-Peg, DeLaSalle High School

Team Discussion Questions

Please share 3-5 equity or social issues the students at your school identify with.

In the last 3-4 months what are the top current events your students are discussing amongst themselves?

What real world relevant topics are you hesitant to bring up? What support would be helpful in better preparing teachers and students at your school to have these conversations?



Competency-Based

Students advance by demonstrating mastery of clearly articulated learning objectives, receiving personalized support when they struggle and new challenges when they've ready to move on, in the context of an overall rigorous learning program.

Students should be able to show you how to do something and explain why it matters, not simply be able to identify the right answer from a list of options.

-Haben Ghebregorghis

Why It Matters for Equity

Competency-based learning allows students to demonstrate progress and mastery on what they are required to learn — in ways unique to their talents, skills, and learning styles. Rigor, personalized learning, and differentiated instruction are key components of competency-based learning, ensuring each student is appropriately challenged, engaged, and motivated to learn. Ensuring students have a strong foundation in literacy, mathematical reasoning, and critical thinking — drawing on current research and science — is important in creating equitable learning environments.

Tips for Living this Principle Equitably

- ✓ Take an assets-based approach when assessing students. Focus on their strengths, prior knowledge, and experiences; build their confidence.
- ✓ Take a deep hard look at your school's grading system. Consider: does it accurately reflect students' learning? Is it relevant and appropriate? Does it reward mastery over compliance?
- ✓ Build reflection practices into your lessons and assessments. Students often learn things that aren't asked on a test. Provide an open answer section asking students what else they learned that is relevant.
- ✓ Do not penalize late work. For students working to support their family, taking care of siblings, experiencing instability, or who simply learn differently, rigid due dates are especially challenging. Prioritize competency attainment over prescribed timelines for school work. The goal is mastery; be flexible in how and when that is accomplished.
- ✓ Consistently pre-assess students before starting a new unit or class. Give credit for what they already know and engage them in delving deeper or moving onto the next level.
- ✓ Differentiate instruction for students as they master skills in mathematics and literacy. This keeps students engaged and curious about their learning.

Equity in Action: Specific Examples



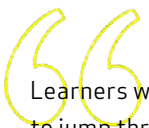
“At El Colegio, students are placed in grades based on the number of credits they have earned towards graduation. Celebrations are held twice a year as students move up grade levels. Students have a sense of ownership and pride when they advance to 12th grade because they know they are close to graduation.

-Katie, El Colegio Charter School



“The assessment of the content area is reflected in a student project... For example, students learn about the near extermination of the buffalo, which was used to help in the attempted annihilation of the Lakota people. Once again, a hard topic to cover, but the students created a proactive project to educate the community on prairie restoration and bringing back the buffalo. The assessments are used to empower students to heal and create a solution.

-Randilynn, Pine Ridge Girls School



Learners with traditional grading seem to only want to jump through hoops, earn the points, request extra credit for unmeaningful tasks. It often resulted in coercive practices of 'I'll perform for you if I want the points.' If I don't care, then no work is attempted. Families often advocated for points as the end goal, instead of what real learning took place.



-Kendra, Boeckman Middle School

Team Discussion Questions

What unique competencies/skills do your students have that your team currently aren't assessing?

What obstacles are there to trying CBE at your site?

If your team isn't using competency based learning yet, is there one area or subject that feels easier to try first?

How will your team know if your measures of success provide an equitable measure of your student's skills and knowledge rather than simply a measure of their ability to conform to majority norms?



Anytime, Anywhere Learning

Students have flexibility in when and where they learn within the school, as well as places outside of school (at home, out in community, at local businesses, etc.) and times beyond the typical school day and year.

Skills in self regulation, motivation, technology, research, on-line etiquette, professionalism, and more are enhanced outside of the classroom.

-Peg Hodapp

Why It Matters for Equity

The traditional school day and calendar is often not conducive to the life of many students, especially those traditionally underserved. Students working to support their families, caring for younger siblings or their own children, or those experiencing homelessness may not be able to participate in a regular school day. Acknowledging your students scheduling challenges, finding creative solutions for classes, and being flexible with where and when learning takes place helps students be successful. It is also important to provide opportunities for all students to apply their learning outside of the classroom, whether that be in community internships or exploring nature. Students who are more well-off often do these things with their families through camps, vacations, and extracurricular activities.

Tips for Living this Principle Equitably

- ✓ Involve families in students' learning. Have students interview their family members, learn a skill that has been passed down, or cook a traditional dish from their culture.
- ✓ Ensure students have the supplies and equipment to learn outside of school. Consider: do they have transportation? If doing outdoor activities, do they have proper clothing and footwear? Provide bus passes or have a supply library for students to borrow equipment. In elementary schools, consider a toy library with board games, building toys, and art supplies. Solicit donations from local businesses or nonprofits.
- ✓ Give class credit for activities students already do. For example: buy pedometers and give physical education credit for students who bike or walk to school, art credit for students who sing in a choir outside of school, or technology credit for students who help with tech issues on campus.
- ✓ Establish partnerships with local museums, state parks, mentorship programs, and more to help give students easier access to opportunities. Regularly provide learning opportunities outside. Interact with your students' environment, take them to places they don't have regular access to. Field trips are essential, but many times we limit them due to funding constraints. Let your students dream big and work together to include fundraising into the lesson.



- ✓ Redesign school space to reflect new learning spaces, such as flexible seating options and spaces for students to learn in the hallways, stairwells, and other areas.
- ✓ Ask students with chronic absenteeism what they need to be able to participate in the school day, and then follow through on those needs as best as you can as a school team, working together with community partners.

Equity in Action: Specific Examples



“So much learning happens when we can touch, see, and experience what we are learning. In order to enable students to explore their world in Lakota, the [school] provides rain gear, warm coats,

and snow gear for students... A special emphasis is taken to know the names of plants, trees, insects, and animals, such as mice, birds, etc. They learn to pick berries, dig roots, build snow forts, plant flowers, and grow and take care of little gardens, etc.

-Elder Dave, Lakota Immersion School



“In an urban setting like HSRA, getting outside might look different for students. [Students] can go out in nature, but they can also do research on the needs in their communities

and work with local organizations to serve their neighbors. There is an opportunity for students to explore their own community as academic content.

-Haben, High School for Recording Arts

Team Discussion Questions

Take some time to think, if there was no formal school, where, when, and how would your students learn?

What are some things your students do when not in school? (If you don't know, ask them!)

How will your team know that you all are faithfully applying an equity lens to the anytime, anywhere learning opportunities your students have?

What extra opportunities do your students have to learn that are not connected with the classroom?

Are there portions of your student body who don't participate in outside-of-school activities? Can you identify any demographic trends of nonparticipation? (BONUS: Ask the students who don't participate what they do outside of school and what they would need to become more involved in organized after-school activities.)

Next Steps: Going Deeper In a Cycle of Continuous Improvement

As you worked through this guide together, you explored each of the seven principles individually. Hopefully your group conversations gave you ideas of immediate changes you can make within your school to implement student-centered learning more equitably.

As a next step, we invite you to spend time working deeply on one principle at a time.

To start, choose one principle you particularly need to work on. Look back at your responses to each of the principles to help you choose. Then, follow the timeline below.

Keep in mind that nothing is set in stone; you may find after a few months that some of your plans are not working. That is okay; just be sure to make space for flexibility and remember to keep your students at the center as you adapt.

This is an ongoing journey for each of us as individuals and as teams. Working through this guide together is a step along that path. We wish you, your team, your students, their families, and their communities the best as you strive toward equitable, student-centered learning.

“
The students are so aware, they want change and a better world. We just need to listen.

-Haben Ghebregorghis



Timeline for Focusing on Your Chosen Principle

Determine which principles your team does well already and which one your team is going to focus on this year for improvement. Remember to center this work around the shared purpose and expectations of your team and community. As you move forward, questions and problems will arise, but regularly returning to your shared 'why' for this work will help you work through issues.

Complete the chart on the right (or something similar) that works for your team and identify action steps for each section on the graphic. Keep in mind that not everyone on your team has to be an expert at applying an equity lens to each one of the seven principles.

Regularly check in on each section of the chart and the action steps. Make adjustments as needed and get feedback from educators, students, and families to ensure your actions are aligned to your purpose.

Over the next few days:

Over the next few weeks:

Over the next few months:



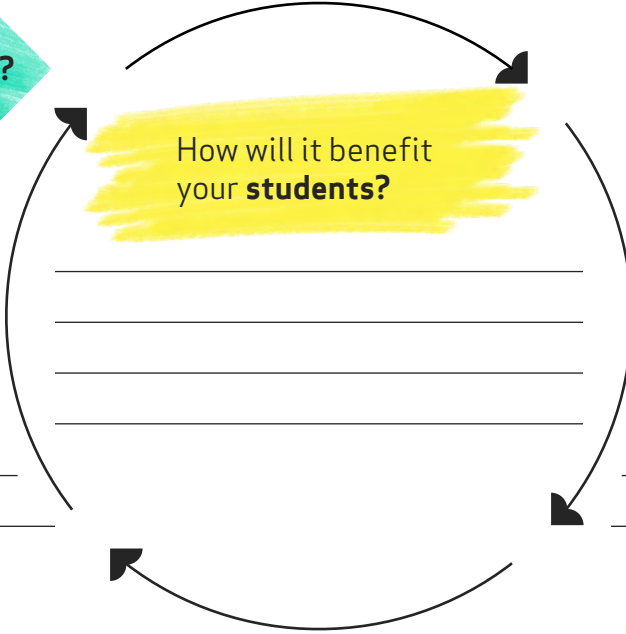
Which principle will you focus on?



Who is **represented** in the design committee?
Who isn't?

What is your **design/goal**?

What is the baseline and how do you **measure growth**?



How will it benefit your **students**?

What specific **impact** are you hoping to have?

What **supports and partners** do you need in place to move this forward?

How will you **continuously revisit and improve** the design?

Continue your journey! Check out our list of **recommended resources** (bit.ly/equity-scl).

As you implement your plan, set aside time at least once a month (schedule it now!) to reflect on how the plan is going. What is unexpected?



Over the next year:

Personal equity work is never a finished project. Revisit the chart on page 5. Commit to a different option. Remember this is a journey.



Over the summer:

Begin the process anew with a different principle.



Next year:

Meet the Equity Fellows



Andrew Skendi is a social studies teacher at Heritage Academy in Minneapolis and a veteran teacher of Dual Immersion, Open, International Baccalaureate, and STEM programs.

Dave Archambault, Sr. is Hunkpapa Lakota. He began his teaching work as a student teacher at the Little Wound School in Kyle, South Dakota and worked to challenge the K-12 system.



Haben Ghebregergish is a lead math facilitator who works with students that have been pushed out of traditional schools at the High School for the Recording Arts in Saint Paul.



Dr. Courtney Bell-Duncan is the founder and principal consultant of Courtney S. Bell Consulting, LLC and a former teacher of ninth grade African American history and human geography at North High in Minneapolis.

Hanna Haileyesus is the Global Studies and Humanities Magnet School Curriculum Specialist at Jefferson Community School in Minneapolis.



Katie Groh de Aviña is executive director of El Colegio High School. She has served on the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, was part of the Multilingual Equity Network, and is a strong advocate for increasing teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota.





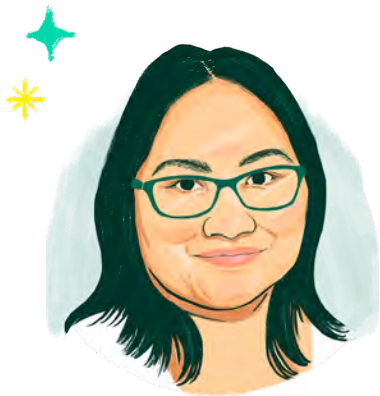
Kendra Caduff is a facilitator of instructional support at Farmington Area Public Schools, collaborating with staff in the personalization of learning for students and teacher professional development goals, and is serving her third term as president of the Farmington Education Association.



Peg Hodapp is a veteran teacher at DeLaSalle High School in Minneapolis, where she has served in multiple roles including Director of Equity and Inclusion.



Sizi Goyah is a math teacher at Brooklyn Center STEAM Secondary School, the Secondary Building Representative for Education Minnesota, a member of Education Minnesota's Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee.



Pang Yang is a Hmong Heritage Language teacher at Park Center High School in Brooklyn Park. She is a dedicated, multilingual veteran teacher and mother of seven children.

Zitkana Duta Win (Randilynn Boucher-Giago) is an enrolled member of the Dine'e Nation and a member of the Sissitunwanj Oyate and Bdewakanjtuwanj Oyate. She is an Education Consultant and Artist, currently working as a Multi-Immersion (3-5) Lakota Language Teacher at Red Cloud Indian School in Pine Ridge, South Dakota.



Read more in-depth bios at: www.educationevolving.org/equity-fellows



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