Advancing Equity at the Agency Level – Minnesota Department of Education Brown Bag Session

Being an Equity-Oriented Leader: Process, Planning, and Dispositions

May 14, 2013

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Great Lakes Equity Center

One of the ten regional EACs funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Great Lakes Equity Center provides assistance to state education agencies and public school districts in the areas of race, gender, and national origin equity.
Our Mission

- Ensure equity in student access to and participation in high quality, research-based education
- Expand states’ and school systems’ capacities to provide robust, effective opportunities to learn for ALL students
- Reduce disparities among and between groups in educational outcomes
- Serve as a resource for the Office for Civil Rights and Department of Justice
Virtual Equity Library
Tools and assessments for building and improving culturally responsive policy and practice

Targeted Support
For agencies in Region V requiring short-term consultations in addressing equity-related issues

Connecting Stakeholders
Participation in and creation of communities of practice

Intensive TA for Systemic Change
MOU and Scope of work

Resource Dissemination

Topic-Specific Technical Assistance

Professional Learning Network Development

Systemic Equity Partnerships

Multi-Tiered Model of Technical Assistance
Our Partnership with MDE

Consultation
- Collaboration Calls
- Facilitated Learning and Planning
- Co-development and co-delivery of Professional Learning Experiences

Equity Tools
- Development
- Monitoring
- Evaluation

Resources
- Networking
- Readings/materials
- Collaborating with Partner TA/D agencies
Challenges faced by K-12 Systems

- Performance Gaps
- Opportunity Gaps
- Disproportionality
Many school improvement efforts have focused on “fixing” the problem

“Fixing” the numbers

“Fixing” the teachers

“Fixing” the students & families
We need to stop trying to “fix” the problem and focus on *transforming* schools and schooling.
What is Transformative Change Towards Equity

Transformative change towards educational equity is **systemic** change that **disrupts** and **dismantles** historical legacies of normative assumptions, beliefs, and practices about individual characteristics and cultural identities **that marginalize** and disenfranchise people and groups of people.
What research tells us us

Improved perceptions by students, families and teachers regarding

- School capacity
- Student learning
- School climate

Hughes et. al., 2004; Kalyanpur, 2003)
What research tells us

• Engagement
• Time on task
• Student Conduct

Improved quality of instruction

(Hughes et al., 2004; McClure, 2006)
Characteristics of An Equity-Oriented Change Agent

- Has an Equity Attitude
- Avoids Demonization
- Initiates Courageous Conversations
- Demonstrates Persistence
- Remains Committed but Patient
- Maintains an Asset Attitude
- Maintains a Coherent Focus

Skrla. Bell McKenzie & Scheurich, 2012
Transformative change is enacted through...

People:
- Dispositions
- Awareness
- Skills
- Competencies

Policies:
- State
- District
- School
- Classroom

Practices:
- Curricular Material
- Instructional Decisions
- Social Interactions
Critical Collaborative Inquiry: Building Capacity for Systemic Change
Collaborative Inquiry

Collaborative inquiry provides a shared context for the process on on-going dialogue, identifying issues related to equity, proposing and testing solutions, and (de)constructing individual and collective knowledge.

We operate in systems where taken-for-granted assumptions are rife with issues of **privilege and power**; such issues must be surfaced in order to disrupt systems towards advancing equitable practices.
Critical Inquiry Questions

Whose interests are being served well by our system and whose are not?

What is it about our people, policies, and practices that is advancing some and not others?

What can we do differently to better serve all people within our system?

How do we ensure the voices and perspectives of historically under-represented groups are included?
The Cultural Nature of Learning

What people bring with them

What’s already there

The work people do together

Institutional Culture

The Culture We Create

Adapted From The Equity Alliance at ASU, 2011
Critical Collaborative Inquiry

Multiple Perspectives

- Asking: How we doing it? How is it working?
- Asking: What & Who
- Asking: How?
- Asking: Why

- Identifying indicators of inequities
- Collecting and analyzing data
- Monitoring actions and evaluating impact
- Creating strategies and taking action

Asking: Why? How is it working? How we doing it? What & Who?
Bringing Historically Marginalized Populations Into The Center

Access
Power
Privilege
Decision Making

English Learners
Latino/a
American Indian
Women
Refugees
LGBTQ
Asian Pacific Islanders
Ethnic Minorities
People with Disabilities
Religious Minorities
African American/Black
Economically Disenfranchised
Bringing Historically Marginalized Populations Into The Center
Use data to go beyond technical knowledge.

Data should help us obtain contextual and critical knowledge about our schools, districts, and organizations.
Technical Knowledge
- Information for solving specific and direct problems of practice in the organization

Contextual Knowledge
- Information regarding the underlying beliefs and cultural practices of an organization that afford and/or constrain culturally responsive practices.

Critical Knowledge
- Information about the underlying beliefs and practices that maintain and sustain the status quo in power and privilege.
Data: Assisting districts in understanding THE WHAT & THE WHY
STUDENTS LEARNING DATA

STUDENT & STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

DATA IN SCHOOLS

PERCEPTION DATA

SCHOOL PROCESS DATA
Qualitative Data

Are Values in Theory and Rhetoric in sync with the Values in Practice

- Values
- Beliefs
- Assumptions
- Perceptions
- Patterns of behavior
- Artifacts of Policies and Practices
- Historical Patterns

Gonzales & Skelton, 2010
TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE REQUIRES

Critical Solutions

Technical Solutions

Contextual Solutions
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>To have an impact actions must ...</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lead to consistent change in adult practices</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Facilitate systemic changes</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Affect classroom instruction and curricular decisions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Involve families and community members in meaningful partnerships</strong></td>
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Skelton, SWO SERRC, 2009
Planning for High impact and sustainability

Adapted from McNulty, 2009
What’s needed for sustainable change?

Adapted from McNulty, 2009
Five Shifts in Practice That Indicate Transformative Change Towards Equity

- Teaching
- Service
- Individual
- Reform
- Parent Involvement
- Learning
- Support
- Group Practice
- Continuous Improvement & Renewal
- Family & Community Partnerships

Equity Alliance, 2010
change leading to improved student outcomes

revisions reshape original design

many users

change maintained over substantial time

many users who feel empowered to make new changes

Adapted from Cynthia Coburn, 2009
Tools, Products and Learning Opportunities

Equity Leaders Institute
February 20-21, 2013

STEM Education Needs All Children: A Critical Examination of Equity Issues – Part I

Start Time
May 9, 2013 - 3:30 pm, EST

Session Goals
Part One of this two part series surfaces and addresses broad equity issues in STEM education. We will:
- Examine through an equity lens the relationship between K-12 STEM education and STEM-related careers;
- Explore equity issues in STEM education, including issues of access, representation, and rigor of STEM curricula and instruction for underserved populations; and
- Critically examine systemic structures, policies, and practices that affect student participation in STEM-related courses and co-curricular activities

Session recording coming soon!

Download Presentation Materials
Want us to host a repeat session of this webinar so you can participate live? Click here.
Welcome to the Great Lakes Equity Center, one of ten regional Equity Assistance Centers (EACs) funded by the U.S. Department of Education. We provide technical assistance resources and professional learning opportunities related to equity, civil rights, and systemic school reform throughout our six-state region of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Please explore our website to learn more about what we do and how we may serve as a resource for you. We look forward to hearing from you!
Thank you for your participation!

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