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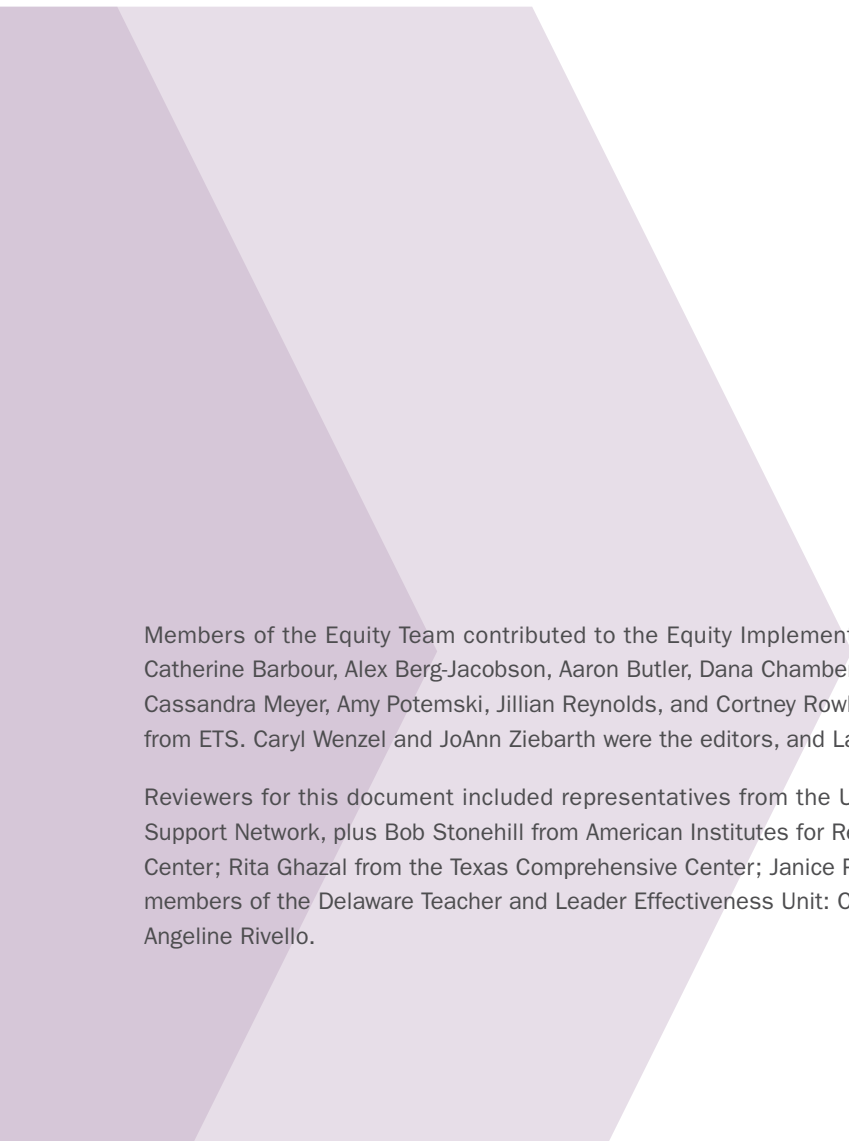
at American Institutes for Research ■

The Equitable Access Implementation Playbook

**ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT EDUCATORS**

Strategic Guidance for Districts

December 2015



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# Contents

- Introduction . . . . . 1
- Objective . . . . . 1
- Definitions . . . . . 1
- Part 1: Exemplary Plan Characteristics. . . . . 2
- Part 2: Creating Local Equitable Access Plans . . . . . 3
- Part 3: Sample Plan Strategy Entry . . . . . 9

A Microsoft Word version of the planning template is available for those who would like to work with an electronic version.



# Introduction

This resource provides guidance for local education agencies (LEAs) as they create local Equitable Access Plans, including resources on stakeholder engagement, data collection and analysis, root cause analyses, and strategy development. To create an exemplary local Equitable Access Plan, LEA leadership must collaborate with local stakeholders to analyze data, determine root causes behind local equity gaps, identify the strategies most likely to address equity gaps, and then consider how to innovate with traditional funding sources to implement these strategies and monitor their long-term implementation.

To use this resource with your LEA, please complete all placeholder sections (printed in red) and modify the text of this document to match the needs of your state education agency (SEA) and LEA context.

Add details on requirements and grant funding (if applicable).

Placeholder: Plan requirements and a possible educator equity competitive grant opportunity. STATE will add these details before sharing with LEAs.

# Objective

*Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: Strategic Guidance for Districts* provides information for LEAs to develop effective plans for addressing equitable access to excellent educators within **district or charter school name**.

# Definitions

The following terms related to equitable access and their associated definitions come from our state's equitable access plan.

Term	Definition

# Part 1: Exemplary Plan Characteristics

Exemplary local Equitable Access Plans have two overarching characteristics: (1) significant stakeholder engagement and (2) strategic, research-based strategies and supporting activities.

## Significant Stakeholder Engagement

The development of a district- or school-level Equitable Access Plan is to be fully informed by the ideas, insights, and perspectives of a wide variety of stakeholder groups.

- Stakeholders should participate throughout the development of the statewide Equitable Access Plan and continue their involvement during implementation.
- All stakeholder engagement events are inclusive, collaborative (i.e., two-way), and solutions oriented.

Local stakeholder engagement should include the following:

- Teachers
- Principals
- Teacher and principal association leaders
- Parents
- Local community (civic, government, or business) organizations

An effort should be made to represent a diversity of stakeholders in terms of age; race; gender; type of school, grade, or subject represented; and specialists supporting students in special education programs, English learners, and early education as appropriate. Other stakeholders that may be included include students, nearby institutions of higher education, and advocacy organizations.

## Strategic, Research-Based Strategies and Supporting Activities

The Equitable Access Plan identifies the strategies and supporting activities that have been established to meet both statewide and locally established equity goals, including resources, action steps, and deliverables.

- All strategies and supporting activities address the root causes of equity gaps **in district or charter school name**, including those identified through our state's Equitable Access Plan. These strategies and supporting activities should include the following:
  - Address systemic root causes, implementation fidelity, and professional development quality and transfer.
  - Build institutional knowledge and leadership capacity, especially to support strategies.
  - Be based on best practices or research (see [\*Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educator: Research-Supported Implementation Tips for Equitable Access Plan Strategies\*](#)).
  - Have a single owner who is ultimately responsible for implementation.
- Resources should be focused on a limited number of prioritized strategies that can be implemented with quality during the specified duration. Strategies and activities that introduce new initiatives should not be redundant and include plans for training, support, and monitoring to ensure implementation fidelity.
- Federal, state, and district funding sources and specific amounts are included. Strategies and activities introducing new initiatives should include sustainable funding sources to ensure long-term implementation.

- Action steps should articulate clear and specific commitments. They should be written at a high level but be specific enough to communicate the major tasks to be undertaken. Specificity might include, for example, indicating what data will be used and for what purpose rather than wording such as “use data for class assignments.”
- Deliverables should be concrete, verifiable products that are created by completing the action steps.
  - Deliverables should be aligned to strategies and provide insight to the quality of implementation. For example, common formative assessments are a strong deliverable for a professional learning community initiative, but sign-in sheets are not.
  - Deliverable dates should be staggered to demonstrate how each strategy and supporting activity are implemented across the duration of implementation.

## Part 2: Creating Local Equitable Access Plans

The following guide for creating a local Equitable Access Plan includes four steps related to engaging stakeholders, analyzing data to identify local equity gaps, identifying root causes, and determining strategies to address the root causes. Prompts to consider and suggested resources are included with each step.

### Plan for Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement in the plan design should align to our state’s vision for stakeholder engagement statewide. Consider the following:

- What stakeholders should be invited to ensure a representative group?
- What information does the LEA need from stakeholders to understand the equity gaps?
- What information will stakeholders need from LEAs to engage with the available data and contribute their perspectives?
- How will stakeholder comments and suggestions be documented?

When preparing for this step, consider reviewing the [Moving Toward Equity Stakeholder Engagement Guide](#) and [interactive tool](#), which help SEAs and LEAs brainstorm and implement effective methods for authentically engaging key stakeholder groups.

**1. Describe the stakeholder engagement used to develop your plan. Make sure to include questions to the prompts in this section.**

## Identify the District's Gaps in Access to Excellent Educators

Your state SEA will provide data on statewide equity gaps, but you are welcome to complement these data with other local data to identify additional gaps. You also are encouraged to identify and address within-school gaps (for which your state SEA will not be providing data). Consider the following:

- What are the most relevant data and information sources to use?
- What are the most concerning gaps for the district?
- If data are available, what are the long-term trends for the identified gaps?
- What data would be useful to further explore identified gaps?

When preparing for this step, see the [Moving Toward Equity Data Review Tool](#) to engage with equitable access data and metric selection.

### 2. Identify your gaps in access to excellent educators. Make sure to include responses to the questions in this section.

## Identifying Root Causes

With internal and external stakeholders, identify your root causes by discussing the available data. Consider the following:

- What data are available related to root causes behind educator equity gaps?
- What factors contribute to the equity gaps as illustrated by the data?
- What additional root causes may be at play that are not currently captured by data collected within your LEA?
- What underlying factors contribute to the systemic root causes?
- Can we group or categorize any of our root causes?
- For systemic root causes, where does the specific breakdown occur?



When preparing for this step, consider reviewing the [Moving Toward Equity Root-Cause Analysis Workbook](#), which provides a guided process for root cause analysis.

**3. Using the questions presented in this section, identify your root causes by discussing your available data with both your internal and external stakeholders.**

## Strategy and Implementation Plan Development

**Please note:** This section involves a consideration of the multiple and interrelated inputs for your Equitable Access Plan. The table that follows the presentation of the six steps documents the supporting information for each step.

When preparing for this step, consider reviewing the [Moving Toward Equity Tool](#), which is an evolving repository of strategies and resources to help education stakeholders address equity gaps. **Helpful hint:** Consider reviewing the strategies presented in your state's Equitable Access Plan as a starting place for your local plan. You should leverage or tap into emerging policies, practices, or programs discussed in your state's Equitable Access Plan to support the needs of your local context. See the companion document, [Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: Research-Supported Implementation Tips for Equitable Access Plan Strategies](#), for a list of your state's strategies to ensure equitable access as well as a variety of supporting resources and implementation tips focused on each strategy.

- A. Strategy Development.** Prioritize the strategies and supporting activities most likely to impact root causes. What strategies and activities will remediate the root causes of equitable access gaps?
- B. Define Action Steps to Implement the Prioritized Strategies and Activities.** For each strategy and activity, what knowledge, capacity, systems, and resources already exist to support the strategy, and what is still needed in each category? Consider each level of implementation (district, subject, grade-band, school, classroom) when planning for high-level action steps.
- C. Determine Deliverables.** Refer to the exemplary plan characteristics at the beginning of this document.
- D. Schedule Strategies and Activities.** Considering the workflow of the school year and staff capacity for implementation, what is the best time to start and end each strategy and activity? (Aggregate the duration of action steps.)
- E. Associate Funding With Strategies, Innovating Wherever Possible.** How much funding is necessary to implement each strategy with high quality, considering the identified needs for knowledge, capacity, and so on? Do any of the initiatives currently being funded provide an insufficient return on investment and thus should be retired (e.g., they are redundant with other activities, have not demonstrated effectiveness, have low implementation fidelity, or require staff time that can be better directed elsewhere)?

**F. Identify Success Metrics, Leading Indicators, Progress Monitoring Systems, and Feedback Loops to Ensure Effective Implementation.** Using your data sources to track equity gaps, what changes would demonstrate progress? How will you support stakeholder engagement at each level (e.g., district, building leadership, and teachers)? How will you create ownership for strategy implementation and results?

### Strategy Development

LEA Strategies

## Activity Plan by Strategy

Note: Copy this blank template and complete for each strategy.

Strategy 1:			Owner:																	
A. For each activity, indicate the budgeted amount required for it (with funding sources) and the person who will be responsible for it.			D. Place an X in each box that represents the time period in which the activity will be carried out.																C. List the major deliverable(s) for each activity and when each will be completed.	
			Year <input type="text"/>				Year <input type="text"/>				Year <input type="text"/>				Year <input type="text"/>					
B. Activities/ Action Steps	E. Budgeted Amount	Person responsible	Fall				Winter				Spring				Summer					
Budget Total																				

**F. Identify Metrics, Leading Indicators, Progress Monitoring Systems, and Feedback Loops to Ensure Effective Implementation.**

LEA Metrics	LEA Baseline (Cite Date)	LEA Targets				Relevant State Target

## Part 3: Sample Plan Strategy Entry

Strategy 1: Improve Teacher Mentorship													Owner: Jane Doe						
A. For each activity, indicate the budgeted amount required for it (with funding sources) and the person who will be responsible for it.			D. Place an X in each box that represents the time period in which the activity will be carried out.																C. List the major deliverable(s) for each activity and when each will be completed.
			Year 2015-16				Year 2016-17				Year 2017-18				Year 2018-19				
B. Activities/ Action Steps	E. Budgeted Amount	Person responsible	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	
Develop new research-based mentorship program	\$150,000	Marcus W.	X	X	X	X													<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literature review of relevant research</li> <li>Initial proposed program</li> <li>Final approved program</li> </ul>
Pilot implementation of mentoring program in targeted schools	\$200,000	Jane A.					X	X	X										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial staff recruitment and training</li> <li>Support for and monitoring of pilot staff</li> </ul>
Pilot evaluation of mentoring program	\$100,000	Oscar B.								X	X	X	X						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey development</li> <li>Conduct interviews and administer survey</li> <li>Collect and analyze interview and survey data</li> <li>Final evaluation report</li> </ul>
Full-scale implementation districtwide	\$550,000	Jane A.												X	X	X	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and train staff for all schools</li> <li>Support and monitor staff</li> <li>Assess fidelity of implementation and complete implementation progress report</li> </ul>
Budget Total	\$1,000,000																		

**F. Identify Metrics, Leading Indicators, Progress Monitoring Systems, and Feedback Loops to Ensure Effective Implementation.**

LEA Metrics	LEA Baseline (Cite Date)	LEA Targets		Relevant State Target
Percentage of new teachers retained	2014-15	Observe relative gains in new teacher retention in pilot schools versus control schools; +5% or more in 2016-17		Statewide increase in the retention of new teachers; +5% or more in 2016-17
Percentage of new teachers reporting positive mentorship experiences	2014-15	Observe relative gains in reports of “very positive” mentoring experiences on the annual survey by teachers in pilot schools versus control schools; +15% or more in 2016-17	Observe relative declines in reports of “very negative” mentoring experiences on the annual survey by teachers in pilot schools versus control schools in 2016-17	Statewide increase in positive mentorship experiences; +10% or more in 2016-17 on the annual survey



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