LESSONS FROM THE FIELD: CREATING AN EQUITABLE SCHOOL SYSTEM

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ABOUT HANOVER RESEARCH

- Hanover Research (Hanover) provides unlimited access to customized research across four research methodologies – quantitative, qualitative, secondary, and survey research – to serve K12 organizations as an adjunct planning group or extension of the central office.

- Hanover offers this access to K12 leaders for a fixed, annual fee to include the following services:
    - **Unlimited custom research projects** across the four methodologies
        - All research projects are conducted sequentially
        - This model typically allows for 4-6 custom projects annually
    - **Access to HR Digital**, which houses:
        - Over 1,000 redacted research reports and toolkits
        - Hanover's DataLab (Peer Generator Tool, Dashboard, Enrollment Projections Dashboard, Daily Coronavirus Tracker)
        - Quarterly webinars (e.g., "Navigating Professional Learning in a Virtual Environment")
        - COVID-19 Resource Center
    - **Dedicated account team** (Content Director and Relationship Director)

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INTRODUCTION

In this presentation you will:

- ❑ Understand the difference between equity and equality

- ❑ Learn what other districts are doing to create a system of equity

- ❑ Examine tools and resources to support implementation

- ❑ Explore ways Hanover can support school districts

Dr. Marriam Ewaida
K-12 Senior Research Advisor

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UNDERSTANDING EQUITY AND EQUALITY

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EQUALITY, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

Equality	Equity	Justice
The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.	**Everyone gets the supports they need** (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.	All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed.** The systemic barrier has been removed.

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DEFINING EQUITY
EQUITY AS A PROCESS

- Equity is a **process** or **set of strategies and supports** to help students achieve **equal outcomes**.

- Achieving equal outcomes and implementing equitable practices are complex problems impacted by **many interconnected school- and community-based factors**.

> In education, the term **equity** refers to the principle of *fairness*. While it is often used interchangeably with the related principle of *equality*, equity encompasses a wide variety of educational models, programs, and strategies that may be considered fair, but not necessarily equal. It is has been said that "equity is the process; equality is the outcome," given that equity—what is fair and just—may not, in the process of educating students, reflect strict equality—what is applied, allocated, or distributed equally.
>
> -Glossary for Education Reform | Great Schools Partnership

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CAUSES AND RESULTS OF INEQUITY
SOURCES OF INEQUITY: OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Socioeconomics
- Income gaps
- Other resource disparities
- Differences based on setting (e.g., rural, urban, suburban)

Society
- Bias and prejudice against certain groups
- Discriminatory practices or structures

Families
- Dysfunctional or abusive households
- Gaps in educational support or encouragement

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CAUSES AND RESULTS OF INEQUITY
SOURCES OF INEQUITY: OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Culture
- Unfamiliarity with U.S. customs, social norms, and cultural references
- Difficulty navigating the U.S. education system

Language
- Segregation into separate programs
- Difficulty understanding material in English
- Disadvantages resulting from low expectations and biased tests

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CAUSES AND RESULTS OF INEQUITY
SOURCES OF INEQUITY: SCHOOL-BASED

Instruction
- Conscious and unconscious favoritism, bias, or prejudice in pedagogies
- Unresponsiveness to different learning styles

Assessment
- Bias in assessment content or structure
- Failure to account for disabilities impairing student performance
- Addition situational factors

Resources
- Differences in access to or quality of teachers, diverse staff, technology, instructional materials, facilities, and funding

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CAUSES AND RESULTS OF INEQUITY
SOURCES OF INEQUITY: SCHOOL-BASED

Programming
- Under- or overrepresentation of subgroups across programs or courses
- Differing expectations for academic achievement across subgroups

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BEST PRACTICES FOR DISMANTLING INEQUITIES

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ADDRESSING EQUITY SYSTEMATICALLY

Educators should embed a commitment to equity within *all district and school policies, programs, and practices*, beginning with strategic plans. When taking a systematic approach to advancing equity, districts typically proceed through four phases.

| Assemble an Equity Team | Evaluate Current Policies and Conditions | Develop an Equity-Focused Strategic Plan | Implement and Monitor Progress |

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STEP 1: FORM A TEAM

Assemble an Equity Team

- **Key stakeholders**—e.g., administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, community members, and/or school board members

- **Purpose** - development and implementation of plans, policies, programs, and practices aimed at improving equity.

Examples of how Hanover has helped districts involve stakeholders in equity-focused planning processes:
- *Equity Planning Guide*
- *Equity Toolkit*
- *Best Practices in Educational Equity*

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STEP 2: CONDUCT AN AUDIT

Evaluate Current Policies and Conditions

- Reflect using guiding questions

- Gather stakeholder feedback and conduct student-level data analyses to determine the nature of existing resource, opportunity, and achievement gaps

Examples of how Hanover has helped districts assess educational equity:
- *Review of Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice Tools*
- *Programmatic Equity Audit*
- *Achievement Equity Audit*
- *Analyzing Classroom Distribution*
- *Equity and Disproportionality in School Discipline*
- *Stakeholder Survey—Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*

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STEP 3: PLAN

Develop an Equity-Focused Strategic Plan

- Outline action steps to address specific factors contributing to current disparities.

- Share the document with stakeholders and provide staff with any professional development needed to support implementation.

Examples of how Hanover has helped districts develop equity-focused strategic plans:

- *Benchmarking the Inclusion of Equity in Strategic Plans*
- *Creating a Strategic Planning Workbook*
- *Best Practices in Equity Policies*
- *Benchmarking Equity Policies*

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STEP 4: IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR

Implement and Monitor Progress

- Establish a timeline for implementation

- Select appropriate benchmarks for progress-monitoring purposes

- Determine how to provide progress reports to stakeholders.

Examples of how Hanover has helped districts with implementation and progress-monitoring:

- *Benchmarking Select Strategic Plan KPIs*
- *Programmatic Equity Audit*
- *Achievement Equity Audit*

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LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

District leaders should integrate equity in strategic plans and policies

- Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr. from Alexandria City Public Schools is framing his strategic plan within an equity framework and the importance of transparency with all stakeholders. Check out how they developed a Strategic Planning Workbook to ensure all stakeholders can be engaged in the process.

- Several members are using the book *Building Equity: Policies and Practices to Empower All Learners* to guide their strategic planning and policy development.

Create a District-Level Position to Focus on Equity

- Many of our member districts are creating cabinet or director-level positions that will focus on equity.

Encourage Participation from Your Stakeholders

- Dr. Martinrex Kedziora highlights the importance of knowing your "why?". Moreno Valley Unified School District's journey involves developing 11 commitments. His team has tackled the challenges of ensuring all students are represented in Advanced Placement/Gifted and Talented classes.

- Dr. Marcy Shankman from Cleveland Metro Public Schools is using the Multicultural Organization Development Model to develop its Employee Engagement Instrument. She helped facilitate dialogue about how districts and divisions must make sure we have equitable learning environments for students and equitable work environments for staff.
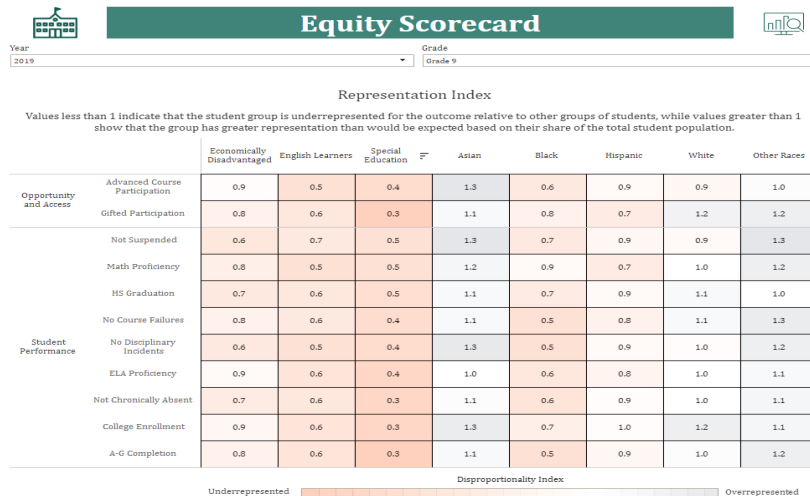
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EXAMINING YOUR DATA

Equity Scorecard

Year: 2019
Grade: Grade 9

Representation Index

Values less than 1 indicate that the student group is underrepresented for the outcome relative to other groups of students, while values greater than 1 show that the group has greater representation than would be expected based on their share of the total student population.

		Economically Disadvantaged	English Learners	Special Education	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Other Races
Opportunity and Access	Advanced Course Participation	0.9	0.5	0.4	1.3	0.6	0.9	0.9	1.0
	Gifted Participation	0.8	0.6	0.3	1.1	0.8	0.7	1.2	1.2
Student Performance	Not Suspended	0.6	0.7	0.5	1.3	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.3
	Math Proficiency	0.8	0.5	0.5	1.2	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2
	HS Graduation	0.7	0.6	0.5	1.1	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.0
	No Course Failures	0.8	0.6	0.4	1.1	0.5	0.8	1.1	1.3
	No Disciplinary Incidents	0.6	0.5	0.4	1.3	0.5	0.9	1.0	1.2
	ELA Proficiency	0.9	0.6	0.4	1.0	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.1
	Not Chronically Absent	0.7	0.6	0.3	1.1	0.6	0.9	1.0	1.1
	College Enrollment	0.9	0.6	0.3	1.3	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.1
	A-G Completion	0.8	0.6	0.3	1.1	0.5	0.9	1.0	1.2

Disproportionality Index

Underrepresented — Overrepresented

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LOOKING IN: RESOURCES AND GUIDANCE TO DO THIS WORK IN YOUR OWN DISTRICT

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TOOLS FOR WORKING GROUPS

Workbook

- **Academic Equity Workbook** Provides explanation of key equity concepts and opportunity for educators to record and examine academic data to identify gaps and facilitate discussion.

Discussion Guide

- **Educational Equity Discussion Guide** Offers guiding questions that help support equity conversations, alignment with equity goals, and a systematic equity mindset.

Toolkit

- **Toolkit for Systemic Implementation of Equity** Toolkit to support district leaders and equity committee members in guiding initial conversations around equity.

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TOOLS FOR WORKING GROUPS

Reports

- **Offline Equity Best Practices** Research brief with an overview of the digital divide and strategies to reduce inequities between students learning online and offline.

- **District Equity Document Development** Benchmarking study to understand how districts develop foundational equity documents, including policies and mission statements.

- **Best Practices in Implementing Equity Walks** Research brief summarizing literature on best practices for equity walks, including sample tools and profiles of implementation.

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To begin reflecting on or discussing different components of educational equity, consider asking

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Climate and Culture	➢ Do we provide a positive learning environment to students and a positive working environment to staff? ➢ Do we effectively engage staff, students, families, and the broader community?
Staffing	➢ Do we equitably distribute effective teachers across and within schools? ➢ Do all subgroups have equitable access to effective teachers? ➢ How well do we support teachers?
Funding	➢ Do we fund all schools adequately? ➢ Do we allocate funds to schools according to need?

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GUIDING QUESTIONS

To begin reflecting on or discussing different components of educational equity, consider asking

Curriculum	➤ **Do we provide a rigorous curriculum at all schools?** ➤ **Do we supply additional supports to struggling students and ensure all students get the assistance they need?** ➤ **Do we offer advanced courses and give equitable access to all students?**
Academic Achievement	➤ How well do our students perform overall, by school, and by subgroup?
Discipline and Behavior	➤ Do we discipline subgroups at similar rates? ➤ Do we suspend some subgroups disproportionately? ➤ Do we offer students enough social-emotional supports, including trained counselors?

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CALL TO ACTION

- **Is your district ready to embed equity in all facets of its mission?**

- **To address equity purposefully and effectively at the district, school, and classroom levels?**

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Thank you.

CONTACT
Marriam Ewaida, Ph.D.
K-12 Senior Research Advisor
E: mewaida@hanoverresearch.com
P: 202-517-1273
🌐 hanoverresearch.com

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