

Key Superintendent Actions for Staying the Course Towards Equitable Outcomes for All

Superintendents are central to achieving social justice in public schools. Here are five key actions that support superintendents in staying the course towards realizing equitable outcomes for all students.

Action 1 Define and communicate a rationale for equity-driven work

1. Be prepared to **readily articulate a rationale** for ensuring all students have access to equitable, quality, inclusive learning environments in district terms, connecting to the district's mission, vision, values or strategic plan. Develop "talking points" that can be shared among district and school leaders.
2. Have a **multi-prong plan for providing a clear and consistent message** about the district's commitment and actions toward addressing systemic inequities, including strategies for communicating this message to school board members, students, district personnel, as well as parents, caregivers, and community members.
3. **Center the "voices" and experiences of individuals** who have been historically **closer to inequity** within the school community.

Action 2 Ensure student, staff and community safety

1. **Ensure safety measures are in place** during public convenings regarding equity-related matters.
2. **Consider what safe looks like to different groups.** Consider which groups may already feel safe and which groups may not.
3. **Establish norms for communication** that support respectful and collegial expression of opinions in written and verbal forms.
4. **Create and enforce a process for responding when established communication norms are violated.** Make sure the process is public and apparent.
5. **Respond immediately to all overt and implied threats** including those made verbally, graphically, or in writing, in email or social media to district personnel who are leading, associated with, or are perceived to be the "public" face of equity initiatives.
6. **Communicate the consequences for threats made to district personnel, board members, or students;** make it clear to members of the school community what would happen to individuals threatening, intimidating, or committing violent acts against district personnel or students.
7. **Demonstrate an authentic understanding of the emotional impact and respond with support** when local and national events occur that may affect historically marginalized groups or individuals (e.g., the killing of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, violence directed towards members of the Asian or Jewish communities)

Action 3 Understand the obstacles and ways of leveraging state and federal legislation

- 1. Develop a repository of high quality, relevant, and equity-focused legal resources.**
- 2. Use and make available resources which recognize the need to redress** the historical race, gender, and dis/ability-based **inequities in education.**
- 3. Use and have available legal resources** that address equity-driven district improvement efforts.
- 4. Leverage leadership networks** to invoke policy and legislation that supports equity-driven education.

Action 4 Build knowledge about and responding to coordinated tactics to disrupt equity-driven education initiatives

- 1. Ensure space is created and resources are allotted for principals and other district leaders to research and develop a deeper understanding** of goals, origins, and objectives of disruptive tactics.
- 2. Interrupt the spread of mis/disinformation about equity-related district efforts** and engage in activities to build the capacity of district leaders to effectively respond to coordinated attacks with factual information.
- 3. Provide professional development and resources for district leaders and educators to learn how to respond to and disrupt the spread of mis/disinformation** about equity work.

Action 5 Increase awareness of organizations that provide just-in-time supports and resources to strengthen networks and coalitions

- 1. Identify local and national organizations that can provide support** for your district's equity efforts including equity assistance centers and other federally-funded technical assistance centers, colleges and universities, community-based organizations, and professional associations.

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