

SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

Improving Education Resource Equity

ALLIANCE FOR
RESOURCE
EQUITY

Uniting advocates and education leaders
to unlock excellence for every student



No two children are alike. Parents and teachers understand this intuitively. And they respond by working to provide the right combination of supports at the right time to meet each child’s unique needs so they can achieve their biggest dreams.

Yet many schools and school systems don’t follow this example. They are set up as if all students need the same things. Worse yet, students of color and students with higher needs — such as students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, English learners, and students experiencing homelessness, foster care, or the juvenile justice system — are often *less* likely than their peers to have access to the high-quality learning experiences that research tells us are necessary to prepare them for college and career.

But, change is possible and is happening in districts across the country as school systems assemble the right combination of resources to support every student — including strong and diverse teachers and school leaders, empowering, rigorous content, student supports and interventions, and the funding necessary to pay for it all. This is what we call education resource equity. Education resource equity is what we need to make sure that school unlocks every child’s power to live a life of their choosing — and that race and family income no longer predict a student’s life trajectory.

The [Alliance for Resource Equity](#) has developed an [Education Resource Equity Toolkit](#) to support district leaders and community advocates in moving from learning about education resource equity to assessing their own system to taking action to eliminate inequities.

The first step to improve resource equity is assessing the current state of equity and excellence in your system. District leaders, working together with community members and equity-minded advocates, can use the [The Resource Equity Diagnostic](#) to identify which areas have the greatest gaps in equity and excellence in their school system. This **sample meeting agenda** can be used to support a four-hour workshop to diagnose resource inequities in a specific system of schools by collaboratively completing the diagnostic tool.

Suggested Participants:

- **Practitioners**, including school district leaders (e.g., school board members, superintendent, deputy superintendent, district equity officer, data leaders of relevant content areas — curriculum and instruction, assessment, special populations)
- **Educators** (e.g., school leaders, teachers)
- **Advocates** (e.g., civil rights leaders, business leaders, families, and other community members)

What Kind of Advocates Should You Look For?

You know your communities best, but we encourage you to consider these suggestions as you identify key equity-minded advocates to engage in exploring resource equity and generating a plan to address any identified opportunity gaps.

- Advocates that have a specific focus on historically underserved students, particularly those experiencing the largest opportunity gaps
- Advocates associated with community-oriented organizations
- Advocates that are trusted community leaders who are well respected and well connected to other advocates in the community

- Advocates that represent the varied voices of the community focused on equity, including students and families
- Advocates from and who look like the community

If you have an existing, diverse stakeholder group that includes advocates specifically focused on the students experiencing the largest gaps (e.g., a racial equity taskforce), we encourage you to utilize that group for this work. If, however, you have an existing, diverse stakeholder group that is broader, in which these equity-oriented advocates are likely to be drowned out, it may not be the right group for this particular body of work.

Session Pre-Work:

- **Required reading:** [The Education Combination](#). Learn more about the 10 dimensions of education resource education equity that unlock better, more equitable experiences in school for all students.
- **Suggested reading:** [The Resource Equity Diagnostic](#). This tool helps you better understand the current state of education equity and excellence for students in your school system across all 10 dimensions. It will be used during the workshop.
- **Suggested survey:** To inform the introduction to the session, consider sending meeting participants a survey requesting information about key historical context and existing district efforts the full group should be aware of, as well as participant interest in joining specific dimension groups.




Sample Meeting Agenda (4 hour; ½ day workshop)

Time	Topic	Learning Objectives and Activities	Notes and Considerations
40 MINS	Introduction and Session Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Meeting Agenda ■ Differentiate between equity and equality. ■ Introductions: In one large group or several small groups, introduce yourself (name and role) and respond to the following question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Imagine a future where your district has created student experiences that enable all children to reach empowering, rigorous learning outcomes — no matter their race or income. Describe what one aspect of the student experience would look and feel like. Name the resources involved.</i> ■ What is Resource Equity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator shares definition and framework described in The Education Combination. ■ Norms: Develop or finalize workshop norms and expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Welcome: Depending on the existing relationships among district leaders, community members, and equity-minded advocates, it could be powerful for the district to invite an equity-advocate to co-host and help to lead / facilitate this meeting. ■ Introductions: During the icebreaker activity, you should display the graphic from p. 2 of The Education Combination for participants to see. ■ Norms: Meeting facilitators should consider providing norms for discussion, and provide an opportunity for participants to adjust them as needed. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Present: Ringers off. Refrain from email — if you need to deal with something urgent, please get up and take care of it. • Individual Contribution: We will each contribute to this work by sharing our own unique perspectives, expertise, and questions. • Candor: We will expect frank, honest, and respectful communication, even when it is controversial or challenges conventional wisdom. • Confidentiality: We will value confidentiality and will consult the group before sharing material or potentially controversial information with people outside of this room. • Attribution: Comments will not be attributable to individuals — what's said here, stays here, but the learning we all take away. • Assume Positive Intent, but Own Impact: We will assume positive intent to allow space for creative thinking, but expect speakers to own the impact they have on others (intended or not). • This is just the beginning: We will not make decisions today; we commit to going beyond examining data / problems and to action planning. That action planning will necessarily take longer than this meeting.



Continued: Sample Meeting Agenda (4 hour; ½ day workshop)

Time	Topic	Learning Objectives and Activities	Notes and Considerations
30 MINS	Build Shared Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review district demographic data (e.g., enrollment data broken up by student group) and outcome data (e.g., assessment results, graduation rate). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present data using easy to read tables, bar charts, or other graphs so all participants can access the information. ■ Share important historical context or existing districtwide efforts to improve equity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use data gathered in the pre-meeting survey to gather this information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Critical note: “Achievement gaps” identified in outcome data are always the result of opportunity gaps, not student characteristics. It is critical to always make this point explicitly, and to remind the room that we are here to identify and then address those opportunity gaps. 
75 MINS	Assess Education Resource Equity in the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The facilitator should introduce The Resource Equity Diagnostic and walk through the instructions for completing it. ■ In small groups made up of advocates and practitioners, use available data and stakeholder perspectives to complete The Resource Equity Diagnostic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each small group should complete the diagnostic for 1 – 2 areas. • The district should provide relevant data, as available, to each small group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Group assignment: In advance of the meeting, facilitators should pre-assign groups that include a mix of practitioners and advocates with diverse experiences. ■ Data: See <i>What to Look For</i> within The Resource Equity Diagnostic to determine which readily available data is most relevant and be sure that participants will be able to make sense of the data (or will have direct support to do so).

Continued: Sample Meeting Agenda (4 hour; ½ day workshop)

Time	Topic	Learning Objectives and Activities	Notes and Considerations
10 MINS	Break		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ During the break, facilitators should assemble a chart to be displayed for the entire group that captures the “Foundations of Excellence” and “Equitable Access” scores that small groups identified for each dimension.
40 MINS	Reflect on Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider the results across each dimension of the diagnostic tool. ■ In one large group or several small groups, discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is this similar to or different from what you might have expected? • How are current district efforts addressing — or not addressing — these gaps? • Where may there be overlap in efforts for change across dimensions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitators should keep the scores from the diagnostic on display throughout this discussion. ■ Depending on the size of the group, the discussion could take place in small or large groups, and facilitators may want to provide note catchers to participants to capture feedback.





Continued: Sample Meeting Agenda (4 hour; ½ day workshop)

Time	Topic	Learning Objectives and Activities	Notes and Considerations
30 MINS	Begin to Identify Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In one large group or several small groups, participants should discuss the “Interpret Your Results” reflection questions from the end of The Resource Equity Diagnostic and identify any dimensions where you need more data to help you establish the extent/magnitude of the challenge. What data (quantitative or qualitative) would you need? ■ Groups share out responses and facilitators identify commonalities across groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitators should remind participants that this meeting is not the end of the conversation — it is the beginning. The purpose of this session is primarily to assess resource equity within the district. Additional collaboration will be needed to unpack the root causes of any inequities and identify potential levers to address these root causes. ■ If participants have been working in small groups, shift these groups so that participants have the opportunity to hear new voices and different perspectives.
15 MINS	Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitators should consider sharing responses to these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are we taking away from our work today? • What’s ahead for the participants in this workshop? • How can we apply our learnings from today into our work together moving forward? • Identify the next opportunity for the group to convene to continue the group’s work (e.g., to conduct root cause analysis and action plan). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitators should be sure to make sure this closing is not only focused on “to dos,” but also on building enthusiasm for follow up collaboration between district practitioners and community advocates. ■ Coming Soon: The Alliance for Resource Equity will be releasing a series of guidebooks that will support you in digging deeper into your diagnostic results by probing the underlying cases of inequities in your system and considering ways to improve the experiences that students have in school each day. Sign up here to be notified when the Resource Equity Guidebooks are posted!



Partners

Education Resource Strategies is a national nonprofit that partners with district, school, and state leaders to transform how they use resources (people, time, and money) so that every school prepares every child for tomorrow — no matter their race or income. Since 2004, ERS has worked with more than 40 school systems and states to improve resource equity for students by analyzing data, exploring trade-offs, planning strategically, building consensus, and monitoring progress.



The Education Trust is a national nonprofit that works to close opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. Through research and advocacy, Ed Trust supports efforts that expand excellence and equity in education from preschool through college; increase college access and completion, particularly for historically underserved students; engage diverse communities dedicated to education equity; and increase political and public will to act on equity issues.



The Education Trust



WHY AN ALLIANCE?

Across the nation, local decision makers and equity advocates are committed to improving schools, including school board members, state and district leaders, civil rights advocates, families, educators, and even students themselves. However, a lack of coordination can limit the impact of these efforts. The Alliance for Resource Equity works to bring many combinations of stakeholders together around a framework for shared understanding and a plan for collaborative action.