

Identifying your equity imperative

Naming what you stand for and why

Time required: About 30 minutes for a team of four educators

Space and materials requirements:

- A quiet space
- Timer
- Pencil and paper or computer

"Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential."

[National Equity Project, 2021](#)

The activities within the Next Education Workforce [Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion collection](#) are intended to facilitate thinking, intention-setting and clarifying purpose along your individual journey and support your growth with your educator team. We recommend that you plan a sequence of activities for your team with intentionality or follow the sequence we have proposed in the [Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion collection](#).

In this activity, you will reflect on a possible definition of equity, identify your equity imperative and share with your team.

An equity imperative is a call to action representing an urgent and deeply felt need to address inequity. An equity imperative empowers you to answer the question, "What do I stand for and why?"

Getting organized (5 minutes)

1. (2 min) Norms: Review team norms. If your team does not have norms, consider borrowing these:

- Be present
- Speak your truth
- Maintain confidentiality
- Expect and accept non-closure

2. (1 min) Roles: Identify a facilitator who will move the team through the activity and a note-taker who will capture notes on the team's definition of equity.

3. (2 min) Preview: Preview the activity as a team.

Defining equity (5 minutes)

4. (1 min) Read: Consider this definition of equity: "Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential" (National Equity Project, 2021).

5. (4 min) Discuss: Discuss as a team:

- What aspects of this definition of equity resonate with you?
- Are there elements that might be missing?
- How, if at all, might the team alter the National Equity Project's definition of equity so that all team members are proceeding with a shared understanding of what is meant by "equity"?

The note-taker should record the team's definition of equity where members can easily reference it.

Identifying your equity imperative (10 minutes)

6. (1 min) Read: Consider this definition of “equity imperative”:

An equity imperative is a call to action representing an urgent and deeply felt need to address inequity. An equity imperative empowers you to answer the question, “What do I stand for and why?”

7. (6 min) Journal independently: Journal your responses to the following questions in an effort to identify your equity imperative:

- Why do I feel a need to address inequity?
- Where am I on my equity journey (e.g., just starting, restarting, continuing along the path) and how do I know?
- What is my equity-centered focal point (e.g., personal growth such as developing deeper knowledge and understanding, an issues-based focus such as advocacy for a specific marginalized group)? Has your focal point changed recently? Why or why not?

Your responses are for your own private reflection.

8. (3 min) Identify your equity imperative: Considering your responses to the journal prompts, draft your equity imperative. You might use the sentence starter, “I stand for... because...”

You will share your equity imperative with your team members in the next segment of the activity.

Sharing (5 minutes)

9. (5 min) Share: Share your equity imperatives round-robin. Each team member has up to one minute to share.

When not sharing, team members should avoid commenting and instead practice active listening (e.g., nodding, eye contact).

Reflecting (5 minutes)

10. (2 min) Reflect independently: Silently reflect or journal in response to the following prompts:

- What feelings did this activity raise for you?
- To what extent did this activity help you individually to gain momentum and confidence in your equity journey?

11. (3 min) Discuss: With your team, discuss:

- How might this activity have equipped your team to work more effectively together to better serve your students?
- When might your team explore another activity from the Next Education Workforce [Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion collection?](#)

References

National Equity Project. (2021). Educational equity definition. Oakland, CA: National Equity Project. Retrieved <https://www.nationalequityproject.org/education-equity-definition>