District
Management
Group

Taking Action on Equity in Education

DMGroup's Framework and Approach

by Kristen Schnibbe Cervantes

Originally published in the *District Management Journal*, v.30, Winter 2022

> *Making progress on equity is a complex journey, often requiring changes to long-standing systems, policies, and practices, and often involving myriad systems and factors outside of the control of the public education system.*

Taking Action on Equity in Education

DMGroup's Framework and Approach

Kristen Schnibbe Cervantes

The disruptions to schooling caused by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic brought national attention to the inequalities in our public education system. Statistics continue to emerge highlighting disparities in access, opportunity, and outcomes:

- 40% of Black students and 30% of Latinx students in U.S. K-12 schools received no online instruction during the Covid-induced school shutdowns, while only 10% of White students had no online instruction.[1]

- Students in schools with high percentages of students of color or of low income in grades 1-6 ended the 2020-2021 school year six or seven months behind in math and five or six months behind in reading, while students in schools that were majority-White or of higher average income ended up just four months behind in math and three months behind in reading.[2]

- Students with disabilities have not had equal access to educational programming and other activities, and in many cases have not received all services called for by their Individualized Education Programs.[3]

- The Office of Civil Rights notes mounting evidence that English learners are among those hardest hit by disruptions to in-person learning. As of fall 2020, several districts across the country reported an uptick in the number of failing marks given to English learners.[4]

> **" Making progress on equity is a complex journey, often requiring changes to long-standing systems, policies, and practices, and often involving myriad systems and factors outside of the control of the public education system.**

For those in education, these statistics are alarming, but unfortunately come as little surprise. The pandemic only served to widen pre-existing inequalities of which those in education have long been aware. Despite decades of work by so many in the education field, progress at scale has been elusive. The following situation that arose during the pandemic demonstrates the complexity of addressing even a seemingly straightforward challenge:

> *One school district, eager to set students up for successful remote learning, provided every student a Chromebook when they moved to 100% remote learning, thereby treating students equally. But when the district found that some students lacked internet access, they provided those students a MiFi or personal mobile internet, thereby shifting from treating students equally — providing each and every student a Chromebook — to trying to treat students equitably — providing all students equal opportunity to access instruction. Unfortunately, the story does not end there. In this case, the school district discovered that some students, disproportionately those living in mobile home parks, did not have access to strong-enough cell towers to access the internet, even with the MiFi. This challenge was outside the school district's locus of control, and the district had to try to work with the cellular companies to improve services.*
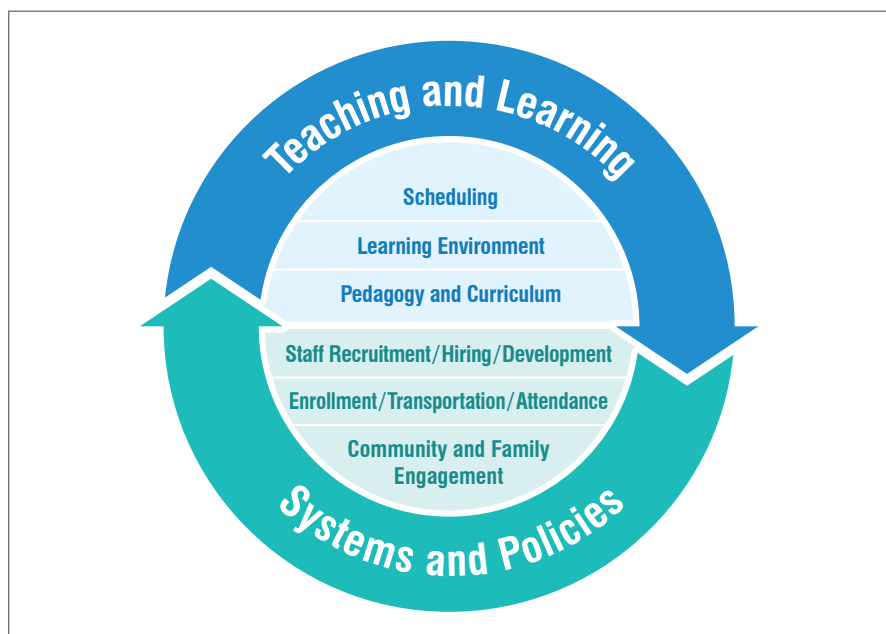
As this example demonstrates, making progress on equity is a complex journey, often requiring changes to long-standing systems, policies, and practices, and often involving myriad systems and factors outside of the control of the public education system.

The national attention on the inequalities in our public education system is now sparking a demand for action. This focus, combined with the unprecedented federal funding for education, is creating opportunity to effect significant change. At District Management Group, we have been developing a perspective on how school districts can work to concretely further equity in education. In our Equity in Action framework, we focus on the interconnectedness between teaching and learning and district-wide systems and policies to highlight what can be done. We then leverage our Change Management framework to help districts navigate how to put this work into action.

How Do We Define Educational Equity?

Before proceeding any further, we begin by clarifying the term "educational equity." Over the past decade or so, there has been a shift in terminology from "achievement gap," which focuses on outputs such as test scores, to "opportunity gap," which draws attention to the inputs — the disparity in resources, systems, structures, and conditions that students of color and students in poverty encounter throughout their educational careers. It has been noted that the term "achievement gap" seems to place responsibility on students for their lack of achievement, whereas "opportunity gap" places the emphasis on equalizing the opportunities that can allow all students to achieve.

> *For DMGroup, "educational equity" means providing a deliberately designed system supplying the resources, supports, and opportunities needed to allow all students not only to achieve, but to thrive.*

Exhibit 1 **DMGROUP'S EQUITY IN ACTION FRAMEWORK**

Source: DMGroup.

What Needs to Be Done
A Framework for Putting Equity into Action

Since DMGroup's founding in 2004, much of our work has been focused on creating more equitable systems and structures to effect sustained performance improvements, which include reallocating resources of funding, talent, and time to support priorities; realigning schedules to ensure that all students receive the recommended amount of core instructional time and appropriate/additional supports based on student needs; examining special education to review identification practices and supports; developing strategic plans that take a systemic approach to sustained improvement; and much more.

To better support districts in their work to make methodical progress on equity, we have organized the myriad pieces of our own work into a framework (*Exhibit 1*). We share this framework here with an appreciation for the complexity and nuance of equity work, and thus want to articulate the following caveats:

- Like virtually all frameworks, its purpose is to help organize a very complex and nuanced situation so that the user can more deeply understand the current situation, better diagnose root causes, help prioritize action, and work toward better outcomes. This framework is *not* a silver bullet to "fix" systemic inequities.

- There is no order of operations or list of actions to check off that gets us to our destination. Although the framework is presented in list form, it is not meant to be understood as a linear process. The pieces are interconnected and the solutions should be interconnected as well.

- While it is essential to recognize the deep role individuals play within the larger system of a school district, this factor is not named directly in the framework because that work happens at an individual level throughout all the drivers identified here. District leaders, teachers, and staff must seek to deepen their understanding of how identity markers (i.e., those assigned by race, ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender) influence biases.

- Beyond the framework, we want to encourage the tremendous power of tiny, almost imperceptible acts of inclusion that are capable of sparking enduring change.

- We believe there is no single "right" answer for equity work in districts (however, there are wrong answers!).

Our framework seeks to organize the key categories of work that need to be addressed to help forge the systemic changes needed on the journey toward equity. The work is grounded in two interconnected domains: (1) teaching and learning, and (2) systems and policies. Within these two domains, we identify six key drivers of systemic change.

Within our discussion of the key drivers, we pose some statements to consider. Reflecting on where your district may fall in response to each of these statements can help you to assess areas of greatest need and to develop an action plan for the work ahead.

DOMAIN ONE:

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Core to seeing progress in equity in education is the work that happens in teaching and learning. At District Management Group, we see three key drivers of equity and inclusiveness within teaching and learning: scheduling, learning environment, and pedagogy and curriculum.

Scheduling: Time and talent are the most precious resources in schools, and ensuring that they are used effectively and consistently across district schools is essential to providing an equal foundation for all students.

At the district level, it is important to set up and incorporate guidelines into scheduling to ensure all students receive instructional minutes in line with research-based best practice and have daily time for intervention or enrichment. Also, scheduling should be viewed as an enabling system to ensure that students with the most needs are paired with the most effective educators.

While scheduling is often regarded as a tedious, mundane task, DMGroup identifies it as a key lever for driving student achievement. Over the years, DMGroup has analyzed hundreds of thousands of student schedules from districts across the country. Our analyses very frequently reveal major disparities in instructional minutes between schools in the same district. A difference of 15 minutes a day in ELA instruction, while seemingly small, adds up to approximately 45 hours of additional instruction over the course of the academic year for students at one school compared to another. Our analyses also reveal that the complexities of scheduling frequently prevent students from being paired with the most appropriate, most effective teacher. Unintentionally, disparities can be perpetuated by pairing students who have the most needs with teachers who lack the appropriate background or experience.

Consider where your district falls

Scheduling

District or school leaders create clear guidelines for how time is spent during the school day. The number of instructional minutes, especially for core subjects, is grounded in research and is the same across all schools. If there are any differences in the way time is spent, it is intentional and strategic, based on the needs of students.

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No	└─ To Some Degree ─┘			Yes
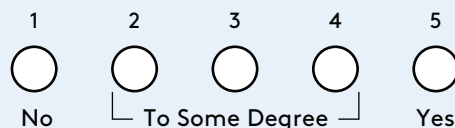
Schedules deliberately prioritize the learning and development goals set by the district. Student and teacher schedules are routinely reviewed to evaluate whether time is being utilized most efficiently and effectively.
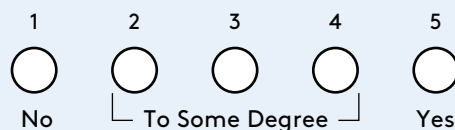
1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No	└─ To Some Degree ─┘			Yes

> **"** *A difference of 15 minutes a day in ELA instruction, while seemingly small, adds up to approximately 45 hours of additional instruction over the course of the academic year for students at one school compared to another.*

Learning Environment: Learning environment encompasses anything that happens within the four walls of the classroom or directly impacts what happens there. Strong learning environments prioritize meaningful relationship development between students and teachers and among peers. They facilitate community building and other routines that promote wellbeing. They encourage student agency, enabling students to provide input into their learning. Strong learning environments ensure students have clear expectations so they know how to be successful, and have accountability systems that promote social-emotional wellbeing and do not shame a student in any way. They ensure students are supported to explore their personal, cultural, racial, and academic identities. Diversity of language and ability, like all differences, is viewed as an asset to the learning community. English learners and students with disabilities are provided a standards-based program and are included in general education settings and community building activities as much as possible. Strong learning environments ensure schools use a consistent, rigorous, and unbiased process to refer students for special education services.

Pedagogy and Curriculum: Foundational to teaching and learning are the curriculum (subjects and what we teach) and the pedagogy (method and practice, or how we teach). Central to a strong curriculum is having students engage in academically rigorous work to develop the knowledge and skills to engage the world and others critically. Central to the pedagogical approach is setting students up to feel affirmed in their identities and experiences.

The majority of teacher-training programs have not changed sufficiently to prepare teachers to meet the needs of students from significantly more diverse backgrounds. In a teaching workforce that is about 80% White, almost 40% of White teachers do not feel that their training program prepared them to work with Black, Latinx, and low-income students.[5] Additionally, over half of teachers participating in a recent RAND study indicated a need for more culturally relevant curriculum and materials, and 45% reported needing resources that better meet the needs of their English learners;[6] however, the three major curriculum publishers whose materials are in the majority of classrooms around the country do not have materials or curriculum noted as culturally relevant.

Even as teachers report the need for training and curriculum to support more diverse student populations, 27 states (as of August 26, 2021) have introduced bills or taken other steps that would restrict teaching critical race theory or limit how teachers can discuss racism and sexism, according to an *Education Week* analysis.[7] In some cases, opposing camps seem to be arguing over misunderstood definitions and beliefs, all in a highly polarized environment. Our hope is that leaders can rally stakeholders around the objective of providing an inclusive education where every child's self-worth is celebrated.

What we must do when interrogating our pedagogy and curriculum is understand the local context and the students in our classrooms, and then design and facilitate lessons that set them up to thrive. To do so is not about erasing Shakespeare from the high school ELA curriculum, but instead engaging students in critical thinking to discuss what has made Shakespeare's works seem relevant for so long. Who are some of the other authors
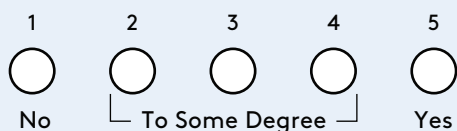

Consider where your district falls

Learning Environment

There are clear expectations for conduct, and students have agency in helping develop these. Responses to student misbehavior are culturally sensitive, respectful, and highly consistent to student needs. Students monitor their own and their peers' behavior, ensuring accountability to the learning community. When breaches occur, staff are committed to positive and restorative discipline practices that rebuild and repair the community.

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No		To Some Degree		Yes
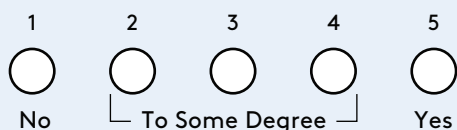
The district has a stated culture of inclusion, and all teachers and staff members have been trained in the use of inclusive, researched-based universal design for learning practices – consistently offering a variety of ways to engage and motivate all students, offering information in multiple formats, and giving learners more than one way to interact with materials and demonstrate what they know (engagement, representation, action, and expression).

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No		To Some Degree		Yes

of the time, and why is it that their works have not been as enduring? What can we learn from all of those authors to help us develop our own voices as writers?

Consider where your district falls

Pedagogy and Curriculum

All staff effectively communicate academically rigorous expectations for student work, effort, and behavior such that students take ownership of meeting learning goals. Teachers deliver content that is challenging to each student and use curriculum materials, evidence-based strategies, and appropriate differentiation and scaffolding to provide access points for students at all levels.

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No	⌞ To Some Degree ⌟			Yes

Students are provided with opportunities to examine diversity in social, cultural, political, and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified. They are encouraged to speak up with courage and respect when they or someone else has been hurt or wronged by bias. They are taught to respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding, and connection.

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No	⌞ To Some Degree ⌟			Yes

DOMAIN TWO:

SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

While a focus on teaching and learning is always imperative, systems and policies that strengthen teaching and learning opportunities are equally important in pursuing meaningful change. Three key drivers that move districts toward change include district staff recruitment, hiring, and development; enrollment, transportation, and attendance; and family and community engagement.

District Staff Recruitment, Hiring, and Development: People are a district's greatest resources. District and student success depend on strong recruitment for all roles, and hiring processes that model the culture of day-to-day expectations. Additionally, retaining your highest-performing and highest-potential talent is highly dependent on having strong development programs so all staff members feel they are growing in their roles.

Districts that focus on equitable practices have hiring policies that proactively build a pipeline of candidates with diverse backgrounds and experiences, as well as staff supports that are responsive to staff needs to ensure high rates of retention and satisfaction across lines of difference. Roles are intentionally staffed to ensure that every student in the district is provided equitable opportunities to learn from well-prepared, highly effective educators and a diversity of role models.

Consider where your district falls

District Staff Recruitment, Hiring, and Development

The district proactively designs recruiting, interviewing, and hiring practices that account for bias. This includes approaches such as anti-bias training, diverse hiring committees, and systematizing the process to account for unconscious bias. The district and its schools hire staff members who believe that bias and many long-held structures and systems serve as barriers to achievement, access, and opportunity for historically marginalized students.

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No	⌞ To Some Degree ⌟			Yes

The district has intentionally aligned teacher-quality measures to student outcomes. Leaders have spent time strategically considering where staff are best placed so that students with the greatest needs have access to the district's most effective teachers and leaders, and all students have access to a diversity of role models.

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
No	⌞ To Some Degree ⌟			Yes

Enrollment, Transportation, and Attendance: Many school districts still operate as neighborhood schools; unfortunately, many school boundary lines were drawn decades ago when demographics were significantly different or, in some cases, when discriminatory housing policies served as cover for maintaining segregated schools. Because a thoughtful redrawing of boundary lines is often a politically fraught exercise, many district leaders are unable to initiate a change even as population demographics shift and disparities in enrollment and resources grow. The result is that children in expanding communities of color are often reassigned to schools with available space that are farther away, thereby excluding these students from the inherent benefits of neighborhood schools, and making them reliant on district-provided transportation that can preclude their ability to participate in extracurricular opportunities and lead to increased absences.

Transportation challenges constitute one of the many factors contributing to chronic absenteeism (defined as missing 10% or more of the academic year). Chronic absenteeism can keep students from reaching critical early learning milestones, and increase the chances that students will drop out before graduation. Failure to obtain a high school diploma is linked to poorer outcomes later in life, including diminished health and involvement in the criminal justice system.[8]

Districts that focus on equitable enrollment and transportation ensure they have school assignment, program enrollment, and transportation policies and procedures that are designed and implemented to proactively prevent systemic differences in opportunities based on race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. Moreover, they use data and feed-back to ensure that all students are regularly attending school so that chronic absenteeism does not disproportionately affect historically marginalized communities.

Consider where your district falls

Enrollment, Transportation, and Attendance

The district strategically designs and implements enrollment policies with an equity lens. The district looks closely at the systemic differences in opportunities and proactively work to prevent or mitigate them.

1	2	3	4	5
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
No	└─ To Some Degree ─┘			Yes

The district strategically designs and implements transportation policies with an equity lens. Systemic differences in access are examined closely, and proactive steps are taken to prevent or mitigate these.

| 1	2	3	4	5
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
No	└─ To Some Degree ─┘			Yes

> **"** *The traditional approach to family engagement in schools — PTA meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and open houses — fail to position parents as true partners. These approaches typically provide information to families about how students and families can meet expectations rather than acknowledging the expertise families are able to provide about their children.*

Family and Community Engagement: It goes without saying that strong partnerships between all key stakeholders are imperative for success. For school districts, that means families and community members are invested in ultimate outcomes: "When [families] and staff work together to support student learning, students earn higher grades, score higher on achievement tests, adapt better to school, attend more regularly, earn more credits, have better social skills, and are more likely to graduate and go on to higher education."[9] However, the traditional approach to family engagement in schools — PTA meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and open houses — fail to position parents as true partners. These approaches typically provide information to families about how students and families can meet expectations rather than acknowledging the expertise families are able to provide about their children. It is up to the school district to know the cultures of the communities within their district and to take the first steps to build trust. Families and communities must be viewed as critical members of the collective charged with nurturing children's learning and development. Relationships between district staff and families must be grounded in mutual respect, trust, a shared vision, and authentic collaboration.

Consider where your district falls

Family and Community Engagement

Leaders and teachers have strong, mutually beneficial, accountable, and equitable relationships with families and the community (i.e., family and community members are partners in decision making, have formal structures such as networking or advisory committees, etc.). They think creatively about how to build relationships with all family members, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

1	2	3	4	5
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
No		To Some Degree		Yes
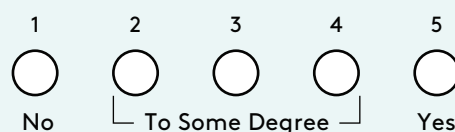
The district regularly provides opportunities for families and community members to actively contribute to schools' visions, priorities, and policies. There are predictable and planned opportunities for input and feedback. This may include practices like incorporating families/community members in hiring processes and including families/community members on decision-making bodies such as working groups or advisory teams.

1	2	3	4	5
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
No		To Some Degree		Yes
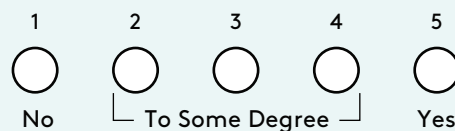
Consider how you rated your district in response to the statements across the six key drivers of systemic change. These statements are excerpts from our district self-reflection tool, but can be a start to helping you identify the areas of greatest need. DMGroup advises that the responses to these questions be considered alongside a thorough equity opportunity review (DMGroup's forward-looking equity audit) that includes analyses of the district's current state along the two domains of Teaching and Learning and Systems and Policies. The combination of these pieces of work can provide a solid foundation from which to set priorities and create a district action plan.

Equity in Education: *How* to Make This Happen

DMGroup's Equity in Action framework sets forth *what* needs to be addressed, from which a district can begin to develop a formal action plan. But to address *how* to tackle this work and make your plan a reality, we turn to DMGroup's change management framework (*Exhibit 2*), which combines process management with leadership enablers and strategies to engage and catalyze people to take action. Implementing the myriad complex systems changes involved in increasing equity in school districts is obviously highly complex and nuanced work, and we cannot in a short article address all of the complications and complexities. Here, we simply provide an overview of the steps in the process with some key reminders.

STEP 1

Create a sense of urgency: Acknowledge and understand the problem

This step may be the most uncomfortable, but it is a necessary step. Stakeholders need to have an under-standing — a shared understanding — of the problem. Data about the inequities that exist are a strong starting point.

While data may spark a sense of urgency among some stakeholders, it is critical to create the feeling of urgency broadly. The power of proximity and of storytelling should not be underestimated in creating a sense of real caring and helping stakeholders answer the questions "why?" and "why now?" in this work.

STEP 2

Build a guiding equity coalition

To tackle this work with any success, an equity coalition is critical to champion the change. Be deliberate about creating a coalition of diverse perspectives. In many change initiatives, diverse voices are left out of driving solutions — ironically, the same voices who are historically marginalized. Having a diverse coalition guiding the work can create greater support, stronger collaboration, and transformational outcomes. To network the change, it is advantageous to think beyond the traditional hierarchy when building the equity coalition. Consider selecting those who have personal influence or positional authority among your stakeholders.

STEP 3

Form a strategic vision as well as clear initiatives

There is no "quick fix" — social justice work is never-ending. A successful leader of this work cannot position themselves as either a savior or a martyr to the cause. While lofty goals initially sound inspiring, it is also important to set clear and specific priorities and initiatives. There needs to be a balance between ambition and pragmatism; otherwise, the effort may lose credibility or momentum. Clear objectives make small wins possible — which are much needed in what can seem like over-whelmingly complex work.

STEP 4

Enlist a volunteer army and enable action. Ask for help.

For a major change effort to succeed, it needs to be supported throughout the district by a large group of volunteers. District leaders and the equity coalition need to create conditions that result in people wanting to be involved in effecting change. Look to your community for support and ask for help. As a leader, do not release yourself from the responsibility of leading this work and leading change. Leaders — especially White leaders — do not have to pretend to have all the answers. It is okay, even advisable, to ask for help and seek out diverse opinions. But, do not make the misstep of delegating this work to people of color and expecting them to take charge.

STEP 5
Enable action by removing barriers

Making progress on equity will require changes to many systems and processes in the district. Even if there is little resistance to increasing equity on a philosophical level, instituting change to systems and processes is hard work and is typically met with resistance. It is critical for leaders of change to be prepared to step in and address barriers. After discussing the barriers, remove those that don't serve the ultimate goal. Be aware that some barriers are flags for other underlying issues that may require addressing.

STEP 6
Generate short-term wins and sustain acceleration

Increasing equity is a tall order. Experienced leaders of change set initial targets that are achievable early in the process in order to boost the credibility of the change process. In our Equity in Action framework, we identified six key drivers to help plan the work. Work needs to be broken down into pieces and prioritized, with measurable goals set for each piece of the work so the team can experience wins and see the path to change. For example, one measure of success might be an increase in families' satisfaction about your communications. Small, short-term wins are energizing and fuel action.

Exhibit 2 **DMGROUP'S CHANGE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

Adapted from John Kotter's "8-Step Process for Leading Change," with additional material from the Center for Creative Leadership, *Harvard Business Review*, McKinsey & Company, *The Change Monster* by Jeanie Duck, and Lewin's 3-Stage Model of Change

> **"** *You must keep going, knowing you may never be finished with this work, but that you are making a difference for your students, for your district, and for our nation.*

STEP 7

Sustain acceleration

While this change management framework portrays a step-by-step process, we recognize that transformation is not linear — it is a dynamic process with ups and downs and roadblocks along the way. Often, after a few initial wins, some team members will feel that what has been achieved is "good enough" and lose interest; others might simply get tired or get discouraged. While some recalibration is often warranted during a change effort, district leaders must not waiver in their commitment and passion for the vision. They must highlight successes and keep the pressure on to continue the forward momentum.

STEP 8

Institute change: Assess and celebrate

Change is sustained only when teachers, staff, students, families, and the community no longer think of the changes as "the new way" but simply regard the change as "the way things are done in the district." To address equity, many changes to systems and processes will have to be made. This work is like the never-ending search for enlightenment. But make sure to stop and take stock of what you have accomplished. Celebrate the success with those around you and recognize and reward those who have been doing the work. And then, you must keep going, knowing you may never be finished with this work, but that you are making a difference for your students, for your district, and for our nation.

Moving Forward on Equity in Education

We put forth the above preliminary frameworks to help organize the *what* and the *how* of furthering equity in education. Tackling equity in education is highly complex, nuanced work that involves examining and adjusting many deeply rooted systems and structures. To effect sustainable change will take a great deal of effort and time. As we learned from our example about wireless networks in mobile home parks, equity is not a destination, but part of a longer journey toward a better future.

As advocates in education, we need to interrogate the conditions that young people are navigating both inside and outside of our school walls, and develop new and innovative approaches to how we foster conditions that make meaningful progress toward closing the opportunity gap. We must strive to support all students to achieve and thrive, regardless of their zip code, race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or other major identity marker. At DMGroup, we remain committed, now more than ever, to this goal and hope you will join us in this all-important work. ◆

Rachel Klein, Chrissy Heyne, and Kathleen Choi contributed to the research and writing of this article.

NOTES

[1] Emma Dorn, Bryan Hancock, Jimmy Sarakatsannis, and Ellen Viruleg, "COVID-19 and Student Learning in the United States: The Hurt Could Last a Lifetime," *McKinsey*, June 1, 2020, https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/covid-19-and-student-learning-in-the-united-states-the-hurt-could-last-a-lifetime.

[2] Emma Dorn, Bryan Hancock, Jimmy Sarakatsannis, and Ellen Viruleg, "COVID-19 and Education: The Lingering Effects of Unfinished Learning," *McKinsey*, July 27, 2021, https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning.

[3] Office of Civil Rights, *Education in a Pandemic: The Disparate Impacts of COVID-19 on America's Students* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, June 2021), https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/20210608-impacts-of-covid19.pdf.

[4] Office of Civil Rights, *Education in a Pandemic*.

[5] William R. Johnston and Christopher J. Young, *Principal and Teacher Preparation to Support the Needs of Diverse Students: National Findings from the American Educator Panels* (RAND Corporation, 2019), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2990.html.

[6] Laura S. Hamilton, Julia H. Kaufman, and Lynn Hu, *Preparing Children and Youth for Civic Life in the Era of Truth Decay: Insights from the American Teacher Panel* (RAND Corporation, 2020), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA112-6.html.

[7] "Map: Where Critical Race Theory Is Under Attack," *Education Week*, updated November 4, 2021, https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/map-where-critical-race-theory-is-under-attack/2021/06.

[8] U.S. Department of Education, "Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools," last modified January 2019, https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html#one.

[9] *Families in the Driver's Seat: Parent-Driven Lessons and Guidelines for Collective Engagement; A Road Map Parent/Family Engagement Curriculum* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2015), 5, https://education.uw.edu/sites/default/files/programs/epsc/ParentCurriculum-FINAL-Print.pdf. The report cites A. Henderson and K. Mapp, *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement* (Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Lab, 2002).