



EQUITY in DATA

A Framework for What Counts in Schools

Appendix A:

Quantitative Data Showing Inequity

Below are facts and figures that paint a stark picture of inequity in American society. As you read, ask yourself “why?” Why do these forms of inequity exist in our society? If you ever find yourself blaming the victim or blaming a single person in power, stop yourself and try to focus on larger policies or systems. Also, place your identities, stories, and beliefs in these numbers. Examine your own markers of privilege and consider how your privilege makes you complicit in certain areas. Where are you silent or complacent? Where are you fighting to survive? Where are challenging the status quo or disrupting the system?

K–12 Schools

- Schools have gradually resegregated in the 65 years since *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided. ([source](#), [source](#))
- PreK students are expelled at more than 3x the rate of K–12 students. ([source](#))
- Teachers are more likely to deem children who are overweight as less intelligent. ([source](#))
- 91% of White kindergartners graduate from high school, compared to 87% of African Americans, 62% of Hispanics, and 52% of Native Americans. ([source](#))
- Schools are less likely to place Black and Latinx students with the same test scores as White and Asian students in accelerated courses and more likely to place Black and Latinx students in low-track academic courses. ([source](#))
- Students are disciplined at disproportionate rates based on race, gender, and disability status. ([source](#))
- Schools suspend or expel Black students at a rate of 3x that of White students. ([source](#))
- The poorest schools are also the most likely to be segregated. ([source](#))

Higher Education

- Children with parents in the top 1% of the income distribution are 77 times more likely to attend elite colleges and universities than children with parents in the bottom 20% of the income distribution. ([source](#))
- College enrollment is disproportionately White. 64% of freshmen are White (despite being 54% of college-age population), whereas 7% are Black (despite being 15% of college-age population) and 12% are Latinx (despite being 21% of college-age population). ([source](#))

Teachers

- 53% of students are people of color, yet 80% of teachers are White. 40% of all public schools don't have a single teacher of color. ([source](#))
- Less than 7% of teachers are Black. Only 2% of teachers are Black men. ([source](#))
- Exposure to a single Black teacher in elementary school improves educational outcomes for Black male students and reduces the high school dropout rate by 39% for the most marginalized Black males. ([source](#))
- Almost three-quarters of teacher candidates in traditional education schools are White. ([source](#))
- In high-poverty schools, half of teachers leave the field within five years. (*School Figures: The Data Behind the Debate*, Skandera & Sousa, 2013)

School Funding

- The average non-White school district receives \$2,226 less per student than a White school district. ([source](#))
- School districts primarily serving students of color receive \$23 billion less than districts serving primarily White students. ([source](#))
- The county in Minnesota where George Floyd was murdered spent 6x as much on public safety (i.e., police, courts, prisons) than on public health (i.e., homelessness, mental health, food insecurity). ([source](#))
- Investing in preschool results in an annualized 13% rate of return. ([source](#))

Wealth & Income

- The net worth of a typical White family (\$171,000) is nearly ten times greater than that of a Black family (\$17,150). ([source](#))
- Income inequality is correlated with higher levels of crime, stress, and mental illness. ([source](#))
- 39% of trans people in the United States earn less than \$30,000 a year per household. ([source](#))
- White families hold 90% of the national wealth. Black and Latinx families combined hold less than 5%.
- Even when they grow up in families with comparable income levels, in 99% of American neighborhoods, Black men earn less as adults than White men. ([source](#))
- Teachers are paid 21% less than peers in other professions which require a college degree. ([source](#))

Health

- Latinx patients get less pain medication than White patients. ([source](#))
- Elderly women get fewer life-saving interventions than elderly men. ([source](#))
- In 2020, antidiscrimination healthcare protections for trans people were eliminated. ([source](#))
- Black people have a greater chance of having heart disease, asthma, diabetes. ([source](#))
- Indigenous, Black, and Pacific Islander Americans experienced the highest death tolls from COVID-19. ([source](#))
- Black newborns cared for by Black doctors are less likely to die than those with White doctors. ([source](#))
- Medical professionals diagnose Black people with schizophrenia more often than White people with the same symptoms. ([source](#))

Workplace

- Men are given more mentorship and offered higher starting salaries than women. ([source](#))
- Black job applicants are half as likely as White applicants to get an interview callback. ([source](#))

- The number of Black professionals that hold master's degrees has increased 133% from 1980 to 2016. The number of Latinx professions with master's degrees has increased by 400%. ([source](#))
- More than 80% of the jobs that were lost between 2007 and 2009 belonged to men in industries like construction and manufacturing, and female-dominated industries like healthcare, education, and service were where the most jobs were created. (*For the Love of Men*, p. 188)
- Over 75% of trans people report experiencing workplace discrimination. ([source](#))
- Ethnically diverse companies are 35% more likely to outperform the national industry median for financial returns. Gender-diverse companies are 15% more likely to outperform. ([source](#), [source](#))
- Candidates who are women, are LGBT+, have disabilities, are wearing headscarves, and are older are all less likely to be hired. ([source](#))

Housing

- Black prospective home buyers are five times more likely to be denied a mortgage. ([source](#))
- Over half of Whites and Blacks would need to move out of their current neighborhood in order to make that neighborhood fully integrated. ([source](#), [source](#))
- An estimated 14–29% of federally funded housing facilities violate federal regulations for disability access. (*Disability and Health Journal*, 1(1), 25–29)

Incarceration

- Black men are 50 times more likely than White women to be incarcerated. ([source](#))
- White men with African facial features receive harsher prison sentences. ([source](#))
- People in prison are 3x more likely to have a disability as the nonincarcerated population. ([source](#))
- Black people are 12 times more likely to be wrongly convicted of drug-related crimes than White people. ([source](#))

- White teens use drugs, drink, and smoke cigarettes at higher rates than Black teens. White people are more likely than Black people to deal drugs (*Monitoring the Future national survey results on drug use, 1975–2004. Volume I: Secondary school students*)
- There is a clear correlation between dropping out of high school and experiencing incarceration. ([source](#))

Other

- 55% of Whites believe that they are discriminated against for being White. ([source](#))
- Media portrayals of White drug users use more sympathetic language than those of Black drug users. ([source](#))
- Black parents of foster children are more likely to have their parental rights terminated than White parents. ([source](#))

Appendix B: Explanations for Why Inequity Exists

First, we must acknowledge that schools mirror the many shapes and forms of inequity in our society. Drawing on the research of Glenn Singleton, Ibram X. Kendi, and many others, we share both racist and antiracist explanations as to why inequity exists. We focus on racial inequity, but other lines of difference, such as gender and ability status, could be applied equally.

There are three common racist explanations as to why inequity exists:

1. **Genetics or innate differences:** “I have very good genes.”

This argument is the most obviously racist. At its problematic root, this argument falsely suggests that ability is distributed unequally between identity groups (e.g., “Boys are good at __, and girls are good at __”; “Black people are more __ than White people”). This is a racist idea that has been perpetuated by European colonists since the 1400s, by U.S. presidents from the late 1700s up to present day, and by researchers such as Charles Murray with 1994’s *The Bell Curve*. Importantly, research has repeatedly debunked all these ideas. The suggestion of genetic differences between racial groups has led to a global history of horrifying acts and continued oppression of marginalized groups. The result is the castification, segregation, and classification of people by race. Any insinuation that one group is inherently better or more advanced than another group perpetuates arbitrary hierarchies and normalizes inequity.

2. **Poverty or some other variable:** “It must not be race. It’s probably poverty.”

Colorblindness often pushes us to seek out other explanations for racial inequity. The argument that race doesn’t predict outcomes but poverty does is a distraction from the power race and racism hold. Researchers control for factors like socioeconomic status when they conduct studies, meaning that they examine outcomes between groups that have the same socioeconomic status. Research consistently shows that race plays a statistically significant role. The desire to remove race from the equation reflects a belief in a “post-racial” society where race no longer matters, but that clearly is not our society. This mindset therefore asks

marginalized groups to assimilate: to erase their culture and identity in order to fit into the dominant culture.

3. **Culture or choices of the marginalized group:** “That’s just their culture.”

This explanation suggests that racial groups choose their outcomes. Built on the common meritocratic and individualistic myth that all a person needs to do is “pull yourself up by your own bootstraps” does not match research around social mobility. It’s both a confusing and problematic idea that an entire racial group might simply choose worse outcomes or teach their children to make choices that will hurt themselves.

There are two core antiracist explanations for why inequity exists:

1. **Policies and laws:** Laws, systems, and structures—both current and historical—have created an inequitable society and must be changed or replaced in order to create an equitable society. It’s important to note that these policies are not solely in the control of politicians. Schoolwide and classroom policies exist in both racist and antiracist forms. Racist examples include suspension-focused discipline systems or required curricula that only show stereotypical depictions of minoritized groups. Antiracist examples include restorative, healing centered systems or culturally relevant curricula. The ideas we spread through systems can enact or exacerbate equity by codifying and legalizing how we collectively operate.
2. **Culture or choices of the marginalizing group:** Humans are policymakers in the spaces where they yield power, great or small. What we say and do, even on the smallest level, matters. Where we spend our money, where we are silent or speak up, who we shame and who we love—all of our actions move us further from or closer to equity. That does not mean that everyone has equal power, but it does place the ownership for enacting equity on those with power, not the people who are being oppressed. Protests from the marginalized group are an example of collective empowerment. Yet without a shift in the behaviors—not just mindsets—of the marginalizing group, there is little meaningful progress towards equity.

Appendix C: Equity and Inequity: A Metaphor

The relationship between equity, inequity, equality, and inequality is complex. Perhaps counterintuitively, inequality can be a tool for driving equity; in order to create fair outcomes, we must distribute resources in *unequal* amounts. The United States already has many systems in place that operate this way. For instance, the government allocates more resources for students with diagnosed disabilities because society recognizes that unequal treatment in the form of additional or different services is fair and should result in equitable outcomes for those students.

Consider this metaphor: Two schools in the same district share a band teacher for 2nd graders. School A serves an affluent community. Most parents buy nicer instruments for their children than the ones the district provides and pay for private lessons outside of school. School B serves a low-income community, and most students use district-provided instruments that they must leave at school; most of their families cannot afford private lessons. Both schools share an incredible band teacher, Mx. S, who is one of the top teachers in the district, well-loved and well-respected. Mx. S teaches half of their day in one school and half of the day in the other school. Since the students are 2nd graders, we can assume that their musical ability is evenly distributed across both schools — they are all young and new to playing in a band.

The district has a band competition, and both schools will compete. Mx. S plans to do their best to prepare both schools. Who do you think will do better? Why?

Maybe School B's band can overcome the odds to win. But the more likely outcome is that School A wins.

In this context, what do inequity, equality, inequality, and equity mean?

- **Inequity:** One group has the odds stacked against them not because they've slacked off or are less talented, but because of the unfair distribution of resources and opportunities. Any argument that says, "but School A's parents must have worked harder and that's why they have more money" is rooted in the myth of meritocracy that is addressed in Appendix B.
- **Equality:** The district believes it allocated resources and opportunities evenly; both schools get equal time with the same talented teacher, all

students have access to instruments, and both schools are eligible to participate in the band competition. Although there is clearly inequality outside of the district's control (school districts don't tell parents what they can and cannot buy for their children), from the district's perspective this looks about as equal as possible.

- **Inequality:** In this example, inequality looks like differences in socio-economic status that predict differences in musical success. Inequality could also look like adjusting Mx. S's schedule to spend more time in one school, or giving more money for a band program to one school than the other. If School A is given that preferential treatment, then that would clearly be unfair. Giving School B this preferential treatment, however, would clearly help rebalance opportunities and outcomes and give everyone a fair shot at winning the competition. Those who challenge policies like affirmative action or slavery reparations make the problematic case that equal treatment is what's fair, even though *unequal* treatment is actually what produces fairness. Ironically, inequality done right helps bring about equity.
- **Equity:** Equity could take several forms: the district provides high-quality instruments to School B's students that they can take home; the band competition sets limits on the type of instrument performers can use during competition; the district invests in an extracurricular program for students to access free private lessons; changing the competition to allow more than one school to perform at the top tier and earn first place. Like inequality done right, equity redistributes resources in a manner that gives everyone a fair chance.

What is the current approach to addressing the unfair opportunities School A has over School B? We send the band teacher to professional development. We celebrate the principal of School A and tell the principal of School B to "work smarter, not harder." We blame School B's families for not caring about their kids' achievement or we suggest that their culture doesn't value music. We give awards to School A's children while assuming that School B's children don't like school and don't work hard enough. We actively exacerbate inequity in the name of "equality" when we should be changing policies and redirecting resources and opportunities.

Appendix D: Types of Biases and How to Break Them

In his book *Thinking Fast and Slow*, the psychologist Daniel Kahneman catalogs examples of unconscious bias in decision making. By definition, when people are affected by unconscious bias, they are unconscious of it, which means they don't realize that they were affected by it. We simply don't realize which of our trillions of synapses were firing in the making of any given decision. In a particularly disturbing example, a team of researchers discovered that judges dole out harsher sentences before lunch and lighter sentences after lunch for similar crimes. The punishment for the same crime is harsher (on average, not in every case) if the judge is hungry and tired from a long morning of reviewing cases. Surely if judges were asked whether they gave out harsher sentences when they were hungry, they would scoff and insist that their brains outsmart their stomachs. But this was not the case. The uncomfortable truth about bias is that it can be invisible and it is easy to think that it does not affect you if you're not looking for it. We all think of ourselves as intelligent, logical decision makers, and for the most part we are, but even the most intentional and thoughtful people take mental shortcuts to get through the day.

There is plenty of evidence that bias creeps into teacher decision making. The most urgent type of bias that needs to be addressed in schools, and which we address in this book, is the bias that results in differential treatment of people based on their identities. For example, racial bias produces higher suspension and expulsion rates for Black boys (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo, & Pollock 2017) and gender bias leads teachers to underestimate girls in math (Robinson-Cimpian et al. 2014). Bias comes from a lifetime of racist and sexist conditioning. It's reinforced in the media we consume, our social interactions, and "perpetuated in the commercial information portals that the public relies on day in and day out," says researcher and professor Safiya Noble. (*Algorithms of Oppression: how search engines reinforce racism* (Noble, 2018). Educators are not immune to bias; their racial attitudes are similar to the general population (Kumar, Karabenick, & Burgoon, 2015).

Luckily, there are ways that we can counteract bias. We focus here on the forms of bias that we think might be the most harmful to students. We then suggest ways that teachers and administrators can train their brains to spot and root out bias in their daily decisions.

Types of Biases

Let's take a look at 8 common biases and how they permeate school data and exacerbate inequity. Awareness of these biases will help us apply Step 2 of EDA, where we put on our equity glasses.

- Correspondence bias (also called the fundamental attribution error): our tendency to attribute negative events to another person's intent, and attributing our own negative behavior to factors outside of our control.
 - *Example: A student has their head down for a class period. The teacher assumes the student doesn't care about school.*
 - *Example: A principal examines data from the recent benchmark with their superintendent. While noticing that scores fell from fall to winter, the principal explains how they've been really disappointed with the quality of teaching over the last three months and think the poor data was likely caused by a lack of teacher motivation.*
- Confirmation bias: our attachment to beliefs which results in interpreting new information in ways that confirm them
 - *Example: A dean believes that Puerto Rican kids are loud, and shares cherry-picked examples with her colleagues to prove her point, despite plenty of Puerto Rican students being quiet and plenty of students of other ethnic groups also being noisy in the hallway.*
- Belief persistence (also called belief perseverance): our inability to change our beliefs and determination to prove what we believe to be true, even in the face of contradictory evidence
 - *Example: An English teacher who unconsciously holds negative biases against multilingual students notices that a student who is an English language learner had the top score on an assessment. The teacher's first thought is that the student must have cheated.*
- In-group bias (also called in-group favoritism): our preferential treatment of those who belong to the same group as us
 - *Example: During instructional rounds with teachers and administrators, the principal is more deferential to and openly appreciative of the observations and suggestions from other administrators.*
 - *Example: A hiring team that is comprised of people between the ages of 24 and 38 rejects an older candidate that is qualified but not seen as a "good fit."*

- Dunning-Kruger Effect: when we have little knowledge or skill in a given area, we overestimate our abilities in that area. This effect often impedes inquisitiveness.
 - *Example: A superintendent with a limited understanding of data sees that one of their schools has a low overall score on the district’s “School Report Card.” The superintendent writes a sternly-worded letter to the school principal.*
- Availability bias (also called availability heuristic): our mental shortcut where we rely on information that is easy to recall
 - *Example: A parent reaches out to their child’s teacher, inquiring about the child’s performance. The teacher remembers that the child had a good day and that the last they checked had a B+ in the class, and so responds that the child is doing well. However, the child has been struggling with math for the last few weeks, and had the teacher done even a quick scan of the child’s grades they would have noticed and shared this concern.*
- Anchoring bias (also called focalism): when we “anchor” our opinion on the first piece of data we see and base decisions on that piece of data
 - *Example: A leadership team is reviewing employee engagement survey results. The principal reads the response from one particularly upset teacher, takes it personally, and then continues to come back to this single response throughout the meeting, despite it not being representative of the more obvious trends.*
- The halo effect: our tendency to let a narrow impression of a person influence our larger judgement of their character
 - *Example: A principal in a large school notices that a new teacher is always well dressed. The principal assumes that the teacher must be a strong teacher, despite rarely being in their classroom.*

The way we interpret new data requires heightened awareness of how these biases play out. Even when faced with new information, we default to biases and stereotypes, incorrect assumptions rooted in a lifetime and history of programming.

Breaking Biases

Although we can't eliminate bias, we can acknowledge it and try to interrupt it. Most research on bias suggests that we have yet to determine effective ways to change our biases, with trivial short-term changes in behavior as the best-case scenario ([source](#)). Traditional one-off anti-bias training has little impact. However, research suggests that a greater shift in biased behaviors can be achieved by doing the following ([source](#)):

- Integrate anti-bias training into comprehensive diversity and equity professional development
- Focus less on anti-bias programs and more on individual school needs and issues
- Intentionally create discomfort and give participants tools to manage their emotions
- Hone in on just a few high-impact strategies instead of providing a bank or checklist
- Monitor the effectiveness of training using school goals and metrics, like increasing the proportion of students of color referred to honors classes

Breaking implicit biases requires us to ACT: Awareness (paying attention to triggers, stereotypes, and assumptions), Concern (wanting to change and seeing the connection to breaking biases and promoting equity), Time (a commitment to practice and retraining your brain) and tactics (stereotype replacement, reviewing images and data that counters stereotypes, individuating people of marginalized groups, and spending more time with marginalized groups). (Devine, For-scher, Austin, & Cox, 2012; Quintana & Lana Mahgoub, 2016).

Zaretta Hammond ([source](#)) builds on research out of the University of Wisconsin from psychology professor and director of the Prejudice Lab, Patricia Devine, to outline a number of strategies that have proven effective at reducing bias, including.

- “Re-Association (Stereotype Replacement):” Notice when you are activating a stereotype about someone else and intentionally replace your biased response with a response that is not rooted in stereotypes.

- “Refuting (Counter-stereotypic Imagining):” Generate counterexamples of people you know or situations you’ve been in that refute common stereotypes.
- “Perspective-taking:” Imagine you are the person being stereotyped. What does it feel like?
- “Increasing Opportunity for Positive Contact:” Put yourself in situations where you are likely to have positive interactions with people of color or other marginalized groups about whom you might hold stereotypes.

One way to combat stereotype threat is to emphasize that data points about children are not a reflection of their intelligence. Teachers can reiterate this message to students throughout the year, especially prior to assessments, saying, “The exams for this class are not a test of your intelligence, but rather of your preparation for class, your attention during class, and your work in resolving questions you have about the material” ([source](#)). And leaders can reiterate this message prior to student data analysis in a PLC, reminding the group that “these tests are more a reflection of how well we are teaching the content than how smart our students are. Let’s be sure to check ourselves whenever we start connecting student test results to their intelligence.” Framing data collection in the case of administering an exam or data analysis in the case of reviewing student work disrupts our mental tendency to connect numbers with identities and abilities.

Appendix E:

Equity Advocacy in Conversation: How to Respond to Problematic Statements

Category	Sample Problematic Statements	Strategies to Respond
<p>Blaming Points the finger at others for student outcomes and behavior; resists pushes to be reflective, take ownership, or examine systems they participate in</p>	<p>Blaming parents/ neighborhood/ environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“If only these parents would take an interest...”</i> • <i>“They just don’t value education.”</i> • <i>“They don’t read at home.”</i> <p>Blaming others in the educational system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“What were their teachers doing last year?”</i> • <i>“Administration sets us up for failure!”</i> • <i>“We should really be asking how a student got to 8th grade without being able to read.”</i> • <i>“This school just keeps pushing kids through the system even though they aren’t ready.”</i> <p>Blaming students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“He doesn’t work hard and he’s missed a LOT of school, so really? We’re going to send him to the next grade?”</i> • <i>“They failed because they weren’t paying attention.”</i> • <i>“They just don’t value education.”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refocus on what’s in our control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Let’s refocus ourselves on our locus of control.” – “We have a group norm to [assume best intentions/ stay solutions-oriented], and right now we are doing a lot of finger pointing. How can we refocus ourselves?” – “What is our own role in this problem?” “You’re with [student] for almost six hours five days a week—that’s a lot of power that you hold in being able to support them.” – “What else might be happening in [student’s] life?” • Name the issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I’m hearing a lot of blaming in our comments. – “It sounds like we’re putting the onus on others instead of ourselves.” – “Teaching students to meet the bar is an equity issue—our kids deserve access to rigorous content.” • Redirect towards solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “There are lots of causes to this problem. What can we do to move towards solutions?” – “Could we collaborate with the family?” – “Have you spoken with [person being blamed] about your concern?” – “That’s valid. Can we work with admin on that?” – “Can we shift our conversation towards what we can do to address this challenge?”

Category	Sample Problematic Statements	Strategies to Respond
<p>Anti-Assessment Challenges the use of assessment or quality of an assessment; questions the rigor expected on the assessment; disconnects the assessment from good teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“These tests don’t reflect what my kids know.”</i> • <i>“That question is bogus/unfair/too hard.”</i> • <i>“Our English language learners didn’t do well on the assessment because the test required oral fluency in English.”</i> • <i>“I took the test and I even got some of the questions wrong.”</i> • <i>“I think that question is worded weirdly.”</i> • <i>“So we’re just teaching to the test?”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press for evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Do you have a better source of evidence of student learning around this topic?” – “Is there a skill on this assessment that’s not aligned to grade-level standards?” • Empathize & shift away from venting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I see those concerns, but we only have 20 minutes left. Can we use our time to focus on ways we can improve outcomes for students and set up a time to talk more about the validity of the assessment?” – “No test is perfect, but at the moment this is our best way to assess what our students have learned and what we have taught, so let’s focus on what it can tell us.” – “We certainly want our students to be life-long learners • Challenge with research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “The research (e.g., Opportunity Myth report) tells us that all students benefit from grade-level instruction and assessment, so let’s stay focused on what we can learn from this.” – “I’ve heard this frustration come up a lot this year. We can’t change the tests, but given that the people who created these tests—although not necessarily experts—have had a lot more time to develop them than we could. What we can change right now is how we’re preparing students.”

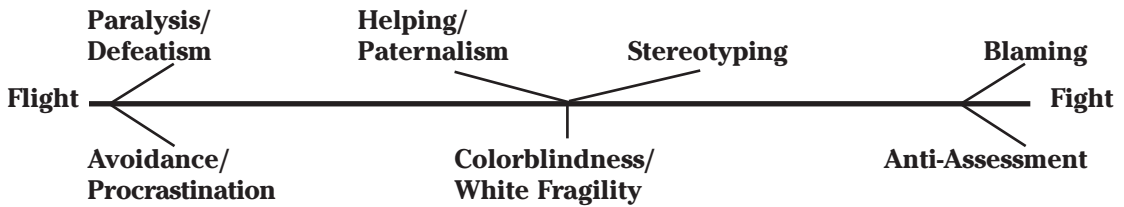
Category	Sample Problematic Statements	Strategies to Respond
<p>Stereotyping Resorts to generalizations about students based on race, gender, IEP status, or other characteristics, often as justification for lowering expectations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Boys are just too hyperactive to read independently; that’s why I had him on the computer instead.”</i> • <i>“It’s no surprise our Asian students are at the top of the class.”</i> • <i>“My IEP kids need to be in a self-contained room. They can’t be successful with the gen-ed kids.”</i> • <i>“These kids”</i> • <i>“That’s not happening for my IEP kids”</i> • <i>“But they have IEPs”</i> • <i>Euphemisms and coded language, e.g. “high and low kids,” “violent neighborhood,” etc.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for and request others’ reactions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Let’s take a minute to check in and see how people are feeling.” – “When you said X, I noticed Y happen in the room.” – “I’m hurt by some of the things I heard and wonder if anyone else feels similar.” • Interrupt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I want to bring us back to our norm of [talking about students like they are our own children].” – “That’s a stereotype.” – “I’m going to stop us because I hear a lot of stereotyping happening.” – “Hold on. I think we need to talk about what was just said.” • Get clarity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Where do you think that idea might be rooted in or come from?” – “Could you say more about X?” – “Are you saying that all X students are Y?” – “What were you hoping to communicate with that comment?” – “Can you help me understand what you meant by X?” – “Are you suggesting that X is a reason for Y?” • Personalize/ build empathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “How might you approach this differently if it were your child?” – “Are you referring to a specific student or all students who are X?” – “I’d be really upset if someone said that about my child.”

Category	Sample Problematic Statements	Strategies to Respond
<p>Colorblindness/ White Fragility Resists any discussions about equity that name race or other “controversial” topics; shuts down, withdraws, or becomes angry/defensive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“I don’t see color in my classroom. I treat all students equally.”</i> • <i>“This isn’t really about race, it’s about poverty.”</i> • <i>“Why do we have to make everything about race?”</i> • <i>“I don’t see why we’re spending time talking about [insert issue].”</i> • <i>“I’m feeling personally offended by the fact that we’re talking about race.”</i> • <i>“I’m not saying anything because I feel attacked.” [when being challenged about one’s privilege, bias, etc.]</i> • <i>[Silence, walking out, or crying]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulse check of the room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I noticed how quiet everyone got; I’m wondering what is going on for folks?” – “It seems some people were impacted by that statement, am I right?” • Encourage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I want you all to take a moment to stop and notice the role you’ve been playing in this space. Have you been more of a listener or a sharer? Have you been engaging or distracting yourself? I invite you to try on a different role for a bit.” – “Remember our norm of [push ourselves, be vulnerable].” • Address the avoidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I think this silence is a way of avoiding something.” – “I’m noticing a lot of silence. What’s going on for you?” – “I wonder if [cultural norm, other issue] is invading the group right now and getting us stuck.” – “Where does this way of avoiding the issue originate?” • Challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “We are not serving our students by refusing to acknowledge all of their identity.” – “What are you trying to communicate to us with that statement?” – “Part of knowing our students is seeing all aspects of their identity. If you told me that my [identity marker] didn’t matter, I’d be offended.” – “I’m uncomfortable, but want to share a bit about myself.” [insert story]

Category	Sample Problematic Statements	Strategies to Respond
<p>“Helping”/Paternalism Portrays lowering expectations for students as helping them; particularly likely to lower the bar for students with IEPs, students performing below grade level, and students who have faced many challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“He can’t read, so I excused him from that assignment.”</i> • <i>“I decided to skip the constructed response because I knew they would just shut down.”</i> • <i>“Her IEP goal is only to know 1st grade sight words, so I don’t see why she should have to read this 5th grade level text.”</i> • <i>“Giving these kids grade-level text is doing them a disservice; we’re just going to hurt their confidence.”</i> • <i>“I know this is 3rd grade, but we should really be looking at the 2nd grade standard because our kids are so low.”</i> • <i>“These babies just need someone to love them.”</i> • <i>“They have so many challenges at home, I just want them to be happy here.”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check on feelings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I’m noticing I’m feeling...anyone else?” – “You seemed to have a reaction to what I just said...” • Clarify <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Can you help me understand what you meant by X?” – “Are you talking about differentiation?” – “Are you saying that [action that lowers expectations] is in our students’ best interest? Can you explain that?” – “What specifically is it about [their IEP, grade-level expectations] that suggests that we should change our standard for success?” – “Would it help if we talked about specific scaffolding strategies?” • Challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I’m going to remind us of the research that tells us that high expectations and grade-level work benefit all students.” – “I don’t see how that’s going to benefit the student.” – “Remember that part of loving our students means believing in their ability to reach the bar.” • Personalize/ build empathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “How might you approach this differently if it were your child?” – “What might be the long-term consequences of this approach for [student]?” – “You’re right that some expectations are built around White, monolingual students, so can we unpack differences in expectations for the students you’re describing?”

Category	Sample Problematic Statements	Strategies to Respond
<p>Paralysis/Defeatism Assumes that nothing more can be done; gives up on students or teaching a particular skill; uses systemic inequity as an excuse for inaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“But they’re basically all bombing the common assessment we gave.”</i> • <i>“We can’t expect schools to succeed until we fix intergenerational poverty.”</i> • <i>“This just goes to show how the foster system is broken.”</i> • <i>“But they don’t know how…”</i> • <i>“I’ve never seen kids master main idea”</i> • <i>“I’ve tried everything, it’s not working, and I think we just need to move on.”</i> • <i>“There’s no way…”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name the group’s energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I’m noticing a lot of discouragement in the room. Anyone else?” – “This conversation is getting pretty negative. How are you all feeling?” • Narrow the scope of the issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Is there a specific student you’re struggling with?” – “It’s only November. There’s a lot of year remaining.” – “Remember that we haven’t taught that skill yet, so it’s not showing us what they can’t do this year, but instead is showing us what we still need to teach.” • Redirect towards solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “What’s in our locus of control?” – “What is our own role in this problem?” – “Systems are made up of people. What can we do as individuals to influence this system?” – “It sounds like you’re referring to the many factors that make it harder for the students we serve. What’s in your locus of control?” – “There are lots of causes to this problem. What can we do to move towards solutions?” – “What can we do today that will move us one step closer to solving the problem?” – “How can this group support you in solving this problem?” – “It sounds like you really care about [issue]—can we talk about ways we can battle it?”

Category	Sample Problematic Statements	Strategies to Respond
<p>Avoidance/ Procrastination Attempts to delay work, often repeatedly so that it doesn't have to be done; does not see urgency or immediacy in the work; resist challenges by trying to get through the difficult parts of the work in order to arrive at the easier parts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"We're running behind, so let's just push that assessment back" (for the 3rd time).</i> • <i>"They're not ready to take the test yet."</i> • <i>"That's the standard for the year and it's only September, so I'm not sure they'll be able to do it."</i> • <i>"We just need to get through this year."</i> • <i>"Her grandma said she's probably going to transfer her to another school at the end of the month, so let's just hold off for now."</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct towards action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – "I'm hearing a lot of things we can't do right now. What can we do right now to move our students forward?" – "The reality is that our students can't wait, so how can we adjust our plan to catch up and get back on track?" – "Given the time constraints, can we map out a plan/timeline together?" • Explore consequences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – "What might be the long-term consequences of this approach?" – "So if we don't [collect this data/ make a plan], then we delay action for another week." – "Let's not punish the students for us falling behind." • Get clarity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – "It feels like we are avoiding something." – "Is there a reason you don't want to do that right now?" • Return to the "why" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – "Let's clarify why we are [administering this assessment/collecting this data/making this plan]?" – "What is causing us to fall behind, and how can we address that root cause?" • Motivate for urgency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – "Like you said, it's only September! That means we have all year to teach that standard and get students on grade level." – "Students might not be there yet, but it's our job to get them where they need to be." – "Yes, time is super limited, but there's a lot of year left, and our goal is not to survive or get to the summer—it's about student achievement and growth." – "Every day counts for every child. Children deserve an excellent education every day."



PAIRS: EFFECTIVE DIALOGUE SKILLS

These skills can be used to conduct effective dialogue across a range of challenging conversation types.

P: PAN the environment and yourself; describe what you notice or engage others based on what you see (Pay Attention Now)

- I'm noticing I'm feeling...anyone else?
- I noticed how quiet everyone got; I'm wondering what is going on for folks?
- It seems some people were impacted by that statement, am I right?
- I'm noticing you're speaking with a lot of energy and emotion...
- I'm noticing that people get interrupted as they try to share...
- You seemed to have a reaction to what I just said...

A: ASK about the specifics behind the person's comment or behavior

- Could you say more about that...Tell me more...
- Can you give us an example of what you're saying...
- Help me understand what you meant by that?
- What were you hoping to communicate with that comment?
- Can you help me understand what your intent was when you said/did...
- Can you give me some background on this situation...
- How were you impacted when...What were you feeling when...

I: INTERRUPT the dynamics

- Let's slow down the conversation and talk about what just happened...
- I'm going to interrupt and try a different approach to this conversation...
- We are not engaging according to our group norms.
- Let's take a breath...

R: RELATE to the person or their comment/behavior

- I relate to what you're saying, I...I have felt the same way...
- I remember a time when I...I did the exact same thing...
- How do others relate to that comment?
- What you're saying seems to relate to what so-and-so just said...

S: SHARE about yourself ~ self-disclose with a story or example; your feelings in the moment; the impact of a comment or behavior, etc.

- When I hear you say that I think/feel....
- Just last week I...I remember when I...
- I was socialized to believe...
- I'm beginning to feel ____...
- My heart aches as you tell that story...
- I notice I'm feeling a little triggered...

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Appendix F: Equity Audit Sample Actions and Resources

Category	Sample Actions and Resources
Organization Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with all stakeholders, amend the school mission, vision, values, and strategic plan to reflect a commitment to educational equity (resource, resource) • Earmark funds in the budget for antiracist work; consider the scale of the investment compared to other school priorities • Examine the ways White supremacy culture plays out in the school (resource) • Publicly acknowledge the problem of systemic inequity both in education and in your school • Speak up when you hear problematic statements (resource, resource, resource)
Recruitment, Hiring, Evaluation, & Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with local HBCUs and organizations that reflect the student population in order to support a pipeline of teachers of color (resource) • Distribute highly qualified teachers equitably across classrooms and grades • Staff evaluation systems consider employees' equitable practices • Create a culturally affirming workplace and empower and invest in teachers of color (resource) • Create regular safe spaces, including affinity groups, for staff to have conversations about and engage in antiracist work (resource, resource)
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify academic performance and opportunity gaps within standardized tests, graduation rates, grades, and academic identity (resource) • Identify discipline gaps (referrals, suspensions, expulsions, exclusions, citations) (resource) • Preempt implicit bias and strategically sort data to illuminate disparities (resource) • In addition to quantitative metrics, examine qualitative data, like surveys and feedback about staff, family, and student engagement (resource)

Category	Sample Actions and Resources
Discipline & School Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement restorative practices programming (resource, resource bank) • Shift uniform policies to dress code policies (resource) • Change hallway transition policies (away from silent, boy/girl lines) • Replace school police / safety officers with counselors or social workers (resource) • Remove school to prison pipeline signaling and actions (metal detectors, bars on doors) (resource)
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create regular spaces for families to weigh in on important school decisions (resource, resource) • Regularly include families in conversations about their child's progress in a transparent and tactful way (resource) • Collect data on family perspectives (resource)
Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add welcoming signage throughout the school that messages the school's stance on diversity and inclusion (Black Lives Matter, trans pride flag, etc.) (resource) • Provide signage that is translated into multiple languages, and accessible to people who are visually impaired (resource) • Ensure that the school and/or school spaces (cafeteria, gymnasium, etc.) are named after people who reflect the community and school mission; make sure mascots and visual representations are free from bias (resource)
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in external trainers for staff to address implicit bias and racism, making explicit connections to classroom management and instructional practices; train teachers to recognize inequity in their classroom, school, and community (resource) • Train teachers how to teach (and learn from) students about oppression and racism

Appendix G: Equity Audit Survey Questions

*(Responses are on a 5-point Likert scale from
Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)*

1. Staff have regular structures for collaboration.
2. My relationships with colleagues feel transactional.
3. Leadership takes an empathetic approach to discipline.
4. My relationships with colleagues feel supportive.
5. Staff usually work independently.
6. People in power try to change the subject when race or bias are brought up.
7. My colleagues value my culture and identity.
8. Mistakes are seen as learning opportunities.
9. At work, I have experienced bias and/or discrimination.
10. People in power are all or mostly White.
11. Leaders prioritize people and their well-being.
12. It feels like there is one right way of operating.
13. Leadership communicates transparently with staff.
14. Leadership seems aware of their implicit biases.
15. We focus on quality over quantity in our work.
16. People in power get defensive easily.
17. People in power make decisions without including others.
18. People in power demonstrate vulnerability.
19. The demographics of people in power reflect the served community.
20. Decision-making centers the experiences and input of those with less power.
21. Equity-focused efforts are mostly performative.
22. Staff hold each other accountable when discrimination happens.
23. I have seen equity-focused efforts disrupt inequity in the school.
24. There is a culture of urgency.
25. There is a message to work beyond the normal work schedule.

Appendix H: Four Layers of Analysis

Layer 1: Growth trends

Examine the most macro data available at the grade and/or classroom level.

- Overall for the grade and each classroom, how are students performing? How is performance changing over time? Are student moving up or down?
- What inequities exist for the student population as a whole?
- *Take Action: Celebrate successes and use concerns in the data as a call to action.*

Layer 2: Student groups

Examine a data set that compares student performance at the classroom level.

- Which students are in need of intervention (Tier 2 and 3)?
- If you used this data, how would you re-group students for small group instruction?
- Are there any trends in terms of inequities?
- *Take action: Re-group students for small group instruction and/or identify 1-2 priority groups for intensive support.*

Layer 3: Skills/standards break down

Examine skills performance of a class or group of students.

- What common skills or standards is a particular small group struggling with?
- What individualized supports does that group need?
- *Take action: Plan a mini-lesson that draws on the small group's collective interests and identities and that can be used during small group support.*

Layer 4: Individual supports

Examine the most micro data available at the student level, like exit tickets or assessments.

- What specifically are the misconceptions or sub-skills the individual student is struggling with?
- What does truly individualized support look like for this child?
- *Take action: Plan a mini-lesson that draws on the student's interests and identities and can be used during 1-1 support*