

Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation



The COVID-19 Education Coalition Centering Equity working group members include the National Center for Learning Disabilities, National Education Association, CAST, Center for Black Educator Development, Education Commission of the States, Learning Ally, Learning Forward, Quality Matters, SchoolHouse Connection, and Understood.

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The questions below are intended as self-reflection opportunities for the identified stakeholders addressing key issues of access, capacity, opportunity, and outcomes for the success of all students.

Stakeholder	Questions to Consider for Equity
Chief State School Officers	<u>For Access:</u> • How can we collaborate with our Governor and legislature to scale connectivity across our state, particularly in low-income, rural, and/or remote areas? <u>For Capacity:</u> • What parts of the state are facing the greatest staffing shortages (e.g. counselors, teachers, librarians, nurses, etc.), and what is our plan to address these gaps and provide holistic support within and beyond the classroom? <u>For Opportunity:</u> • What instructional resources and supports are we recommending, funding, and providing to ensure that educators are prepared to deliver high-quality online learning, and are these resources available for all students? <u>For Outcomes:</u> • Have opportunity gaps in our state narrowed, widened, or remained the same in light of COVID-19, and what does this call us as an agency and state to do?
District Superintendents	<u>For Access:</u> • What partnerships have we developed to ensure that students who lack access to technology are able to access the same educational opportunities as those who have access? <u>For Capacity:</u> • How have we leveraged opportunities to enhance personnel capacity to expand support services and resources such as instructional aid, counseling, school psychology, etc., to meet the needs of all students?

Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation

Stakeholder	Questions to Consider for Equity
District Superintendents <i>(continued)</i>	<u>For Opportunity:</u> - To what extent have we created and communicated a plan to provide academic and accessibility services and resources for educators of our most vulnerable students? <u>For Outcomes:</u> - Have opportunity gaps in our district narrowed, widened, or remained the same in light of COVID-19, and what does this call us as a district to do?
School-Level Administrators	<u>For Access:</u> - Which of my students lack access to necessary technology (devices, hotspots, etc.) to continue learning? How can I go about collecting that data? Who can I work with to ensure that those students can access this technology? <u>For Capacity:</u> - What are the professional development and personal wellness needs for staff to serve our most systemically marginalized populations effectively in light of COVID-19? <u>For Opportunity:</u> - How can I ensure that students have access to high-quality instructional materials and that our educators have the skills and supports to effectively identify and deliver those materials? Additionally, are we providing quality resources for parents to support their learners? <u>For Outcomes:</u> - Have opportunity gaps in our school narrowed, widened, or remained the same in light of COVID-19, and what does this call us as a school to do?

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Stakeholder	Questions to Consider for Equity
Teachers	<u>For Access:</u> • Which of my students are experiencing the greatest barriers to learning (connectivity, inaccessible content, etc.)? What can I do to ensure that those students are equitably served? <u>For Capacity:</u> • How have I developed and implemented a self-care plan to ensure healthy and sustainable balance during distance learning, including professional boundaries, to ensure that I am in an appropriate frame of mind to equitably serve my students? <u>For Opportunity:</u> • What actions can my team take to ensure that we have the necessary resources to serve the variety of learning needs in my classroom? <u>For Outcomes:</u> • Have opportunity gaps in my classroom narrowed, widened, or remained the same in light of COVID-19, and what does this call me as a teacher to do?

Read [66 Years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Work Is More Urgent Than Ever](#) to learn about the COVID19 Education Coalition's challenge to educators, school and district leaders, and state policymakers to raise the difficult conversations and take tangible and essential steps to support every learner.

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Specific Student Group: American Indian Students		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	What tangible actions could state education agencies and the Bureau of Indian Education take in consultation with tribal nations to ensure access to hotspots and education technology in tribal communities so that Native students can effectively access learning?	Federal, state, and local policy makers, tribal leaders, state education agencies, and the Bureau of Indian Education
Capacity	What actions are being taken to train educators to deliver culturally competent and trauma-informed instruction for Native students and their peers?	Tribal leaders, school districts, federal, state, and local policy makers, state education agencies, and the Bureau of Indian Education
Opportunity	Are learning materials being procured and deployed in schools serving Native students culturally appropriate to students' experiences?	Tribal leaders, school districts, federal, state, and local policy makers, state education agencies, and the Bureau of Indian Education
Outcome	How effectively are we tracking both physiological (e.g. how many students are getting fed during remote instruction) and academic needs of Native students in light of distance learning during COVID-19?	Federal, state, and local policy makers, tribal leaders, school districts, state education agencies, and the Bureau of Indian Education

Questions for Proactive and Equitable Educational Implementation

Specific Student Group: Students who are Black		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	What tangible steps have we taken to identify and address the digital and learning opportunity (both devices and the quality of educators support) and training divide that negatively pervades the experience of Black students and other students of color, as well as their educators?	State and district leaders
Capacity	How are we rethinking school staffing (including teachers, social workers, counselors, literacy specialists, case managers, and other staff) to ensure that all students, including those in the Black community, have equal access to qualified teachers that are ready to meet their academic, social, emotional, and trauma-informed needs?	State policy leaders, District and school leaders
Opportunity	What learning opportunities are we providing our Black students to develop both critical thinking and literacy skills they need to succeed in our modern society?	District and school leaders, educators
Outcome	What measures of success are we utilizing to inform the success of all our students and do those measures inform the pervasive learning gaps between Black students and their peers?	State and district policy leaders

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Specific Student Group: Students with Disabilities		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	Are we ensuring that accessibility is guaranteed in the procurement of materials (print and digital) and technologies, enabling students with disabilities to access curricula with assistive technology?	State, district, and school policy makers and administrators
Capacity	Do we have personnel and guidelines in place to ensure that students' IEPs and 504 plans are appropriately reviewed, revised, and updated in partnership with parents and guardians, as scheduled during the coming year, whether remote or in-person?	State, district, and school policy makers and administrators
Opportunity	Are our general education, special education, assistive technology, and education technology staff prepared to collaborate to ensure that every learner with a disability continues to learn and make progress in the least restrictive environment, regardless of the potential fluidity of where teaching and learning happen?	Educators, school administrators, district policy makers, and state-level policy makers
Outcome	How are data being collected to determine if the outcomes for students with IEPs and 504 plans are proportionate to those without?	Educators, school administrators, district policy makers, and state-level policy makers

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Specific Student Group: Students who are English Learners		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	How are schools connecting and collaborating with families to expand students' language abilities in both their home languages and English in ways that honor their knowledge and experiences?	School-level administrators and teachers
Capacity	How are teachers equipped to engage with English learners and their families in ways that make them feel welcomed and honor their knowledge and experiences, whether online or in-person?	School-level administrators and teachers
Opportunity	What professional development are we providing to implement culturally responsive and sustaining teaching practices to better serve English learners during distance learning?	School-level administrators and teachers
Outcome	How are schools reflecting on school climate to ensure English learners feel welcomed and engaged, whether online or in-person?	School-level administrators and teachers

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Specific Student Group: Students who are in Foster Care

Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	Do students in foster care have access to devices and broadband in order to participate in school? If not, how are they being provided devices or accessing learning?	School and district leaders and service providers
Capacity	How are schools utilizing district liaisons or coaches for students in foster care to understand needs and provide services and support, including social emotional learning services?	School and district leaders
Opportunity	Does your district or school seek or provide a forum for students in foster care, their parents, grandparents or caregivers, to provide input and feedback on the quality of learning environments?	School and district leaders
Outcome	With state assessments and accountability systems on hold for the 2019–2020 (and potentially 2020–2021) school year, how does your state gather and analyze disaggregated data about students in foster care? Does the state accountability system or report card include this information?	State policy leaders

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Specific Student Group: Students who Experience Homelessness		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	In coordination with the local educational agency homeless liaison, what steps is the school taking to ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness are identified and informed of their educational rights, so that they can enroll and participate fully in school and preschool?	School-level administrators
Capacity	Do local educational agency liaisons have the capacity, training, and support they need to carry out their duties under the McKinney-Vento Act, to ensure identification, immediate enrollment, and full participation for children and youth experiencing homelessness?	District Superintendents
Opportunity	Do students experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied homeless youth, have access to appropriate academic, outreach, and other supports, including through the LEA Title I, Part A homeless set-aside?	District Superintendents
Outcome	How are we disaggregating, examining, and using data on children and youth experiencing homelessness, including data on preschool enrollment, and on K–12 attendance, discipline, and graduation rates, to identify gaps in opportunity?	Chief State School Officers

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Specific Student Group: Students from Low-Income Communities		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	How are your state or districts assisting low-income students with access to the necessary devices, broadband access, food, or housing necessary to participate in distance learning?	School district and state policy leaders
Capacity	Is there sufficient capacity to understand the needs for and barriers to accessing non-academic services and supports? What other agencies could education partner with to increase that capacity?	State and school district policy leaders and school leaders
Opportunity	What resources do your districts need to provide or refer students and their families to the appropriate community resources (e.g., housing or food)?	School district and school leaders and community-based organizations
Outcome	What is the plan for districts or schools to evaluate and address the social emotional needs of students during distance learning or upon return to school environments?	District and school leaders

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Specific Student Group: Students who identify as LGBTQ+		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	Are there procedures in place to remove barriers to education opportunity due to anti-LGBTQ+ bias, especially when that bias intersects with racial bias, such as addressing incidents of bullying and harassment, whether online or in-person?	School and district leaders and educators
Capacity	Do educators have access to culturally responsive training that will allow them to affirm LGBTQ+ identities and to identify and address signs of isolation and bullying, whether online or in-person, with a positive and proactive social and emotional learning curriculum?	School and district leaders
Opportunity	Have we taken appropriate steps to facilitate participation and access in supportive peer networks, such as GSAs (Gender Sexuality Alliances or Gay Straight Alliances), and elevate nondiscrimination protections for students, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity?	School and district leaders (+SEA guidance)
Outcome	What outcomes are we monitoring and leveraging toward action that relate to student engagement, connection, and acceptance (e.g., attendance, disparate discipline referrals, participation in extracurricular activities, etc.)?	School leaders and educators

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Specific Student Group: Migrant Youth		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	What steps are we taking to spur collaboration between Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Labor, Agriculture, Commerce, and other agencies to ensure migrant youth in specific areas are identified and receive the foundational services they need to access learning?	District and state policy makers
Capacity	Are teachers and staff trained, aware, and themselves supported in social emotional and culturally relevant pedagogy and outreach strategies to reach and teach migrant learners?	State, regional, and local policy leaders, school leaders and educators
Opportunity	Given the lack of broadband access in migrant communities, how are we leveraging different strategies to ensure migrant students receive assignments and relevant information?	District and school leaders
Outcome	Given higher mobility rates, what steps are we taking to identify and support migrant youth in our state and community and ensure they are effectively served so that they are healthy, safe, and have access to learning?	District and state policy makers and school leaders

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Specific Student Group: Students who are part of other Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	How can we ensure that racial and ethnic minorities are not further segregated due to potential changes in policy relating to safety and reopening (e.g., reducing class loads and staggering schedules)?	State, district, and school policy leaders
Capacity	What resources do your teachers have to manage social and emotional, mental health, and academic supports for racially and ethnically diverse learners?	School leaders
Opportunity	Do our students have access to culturally and linguistically diverse learning opportunities, whether online or in-person, as schools reopen?	School leaders
Outcome	What specific actions can we take as a school to ensure we're identifying and addressing differential instruction, experiences, and outcomes within specific racial groups (e.g., differences in outcomes between Southeast Asian American students from refugee backgrounds as compared to Asian students broadly)?	School leaders

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Specific Student Group: Students who live in Rural and/or Isolated areas		
Equity and Inclusion Factor	Most Important Question Relating to This Group	Decision Maker or Decision-making Body Most Appropriate to Consider Question
Access	How do we coordinate and ensure access to proper services such as healthcare, meals, and emotional support for students in rural and remote regions?	State policy makers and local decision makers
Capacity	What support are we providing rural educators who were already serving in multiple roles before the pandemic and may now have to take on more responsibilities across greater geographic distance with their students?	State policy makers and local decision makers
Opportunity	Acknowledging lack of internet access and greater barriers to deliver paper packets to students, what compensatory strategies are we taking to ensure rural and remote students can receive assignments and participate in facilitated learning tasks?	School decision makers and educators
Outcome	What ambitious goals are federal and state policymakers setting to ensure dramatically broader access to the broadband needed to engage rural and remote regions and learners during the pandemic?	Federal and state policy makers

Acknowledgements

The ISTE Equity Working Group members would also like to thank the thoughtfulness and collaboration of the partnering individuals and organizations for informing specific subgroup questions. Though the responsibility for content of the questions and resources lies with ISTE and Equity Work Group members, our work would not be as strong without the constructive and positive input of the following individuals and organizations:

Francisco Garcia, Executive Director, Interstate Migrant Education Council

Victor Goode, Assistant General Counsel, NAACP

Todd Lloyd, Senior Policy Associate, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative at the Annie E. Casey Foundation

Allen Pratt, Executive Director, National Rural Education Association

Aaron Ridings, Director of Public Policy, GLSEN

Chris Topoleski, Legislative Director, National Indian Education Association

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