

# EQUITY CONTINUUM



September 2021

PREPARED FOR  
GROWING INLAND ACHIEVEMENT



# INTRODUCTION

Growing Inland Achievement (GIA) is a regional collective impact organization dedicated to increasing equitable postsecondary credential attainment, adding more qualified people to the workforce, and contributing to a thriving economy. GIA's vision is that by 2035, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties will be widely recognized for their educated workforce, thriving communities, and vibrant economy that creates prosperity for all.

GIA's Action Network Teams (ANTs) are the backbone of their collective impact model. ANTs bring together the Inland higher education network—regional educators that combine their expertise in order to work toward a vision of student success—to focus on six areas. ANTs are composed of staff and faculty from regional K-12 districts, community colleges, four-year colleges, and institutional leaders in education management.

GIA's Equity ANT works to significantly increase degree and certificate completion by reaching equity in education for all racial, ethnic, and gender groups. By undertaking outreach campaigns to close the equity gap, the Equity ANT helps historically underrepresented groups enroll in college, succeed economically, and ultimately catalyze economic change in the region.

The Equity Continuum—developed by the Equity ANT—is a tool designed to support regional educational organizations as they examine their current organizational culture and structure and the ways they support or hinder diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. The Equity Continuum allows organizations to surface and address inequities that exist in the regional education institutions. We also recognize that this current version is centered around racial inequity. We acknowledge that people are marginalized everyday along the lines of gender, sex orientation, disability, and additional intersectionalities. However, this continuum emphasizes the impact of racial discrimination that stems from our country's history in creating an anti-blackness culture that stems from slavery.

# HOW TO USE THE EQUITY CONTINUUM

The Equity Continuum is comprised of six Dimensions, or areas, that foster equity in educational settings: Resource allocation, communication, policy, culture, physical space, and data. It is intended to be used routinely, and can serve as a guide for future-state planning. By highlighting areas for improvement, organizations can begin to address them.

Here you will find an eight step process for beginning an equity journey broadly, and using the Equity Continuum specifically. An organization may choose to complete each step, while another selects may choose to complete only certain steps. The steps completed are less important than the genuine commitment to reflection and change an organization makes throughout its equity journey.

An organization's equity journey will be unique to its stakeholders and the organization itself. At the end of this document you will find tools for establishing your own Dimensions or developing assessments unique to your situation.



# HOW TO USE THE EQUITY CONTINUUM

**Step 1 - Identify:** The organization identifies an Equity Champion who creates a Community of Impact—a team of representatives from multiple stakeholder groups.

**Step 2 - Collect:** The Community of Impact reviews the potential data sources within each of the *Equity Continuum's* Dimensions and determines if additional data needs to be collected.

**Step 3 - Assess:** The Community of Impact completes the Organizational Assessment for each Dimension through listening sessions, surveys, and focus groups of key stakeholders and the broader community. The Community of Impact ensures to document the lived realities of members of marginalized communities.

**Step 4 - Reflect:** The Community of Impact reviews the collected data and completed Organizational Assessments.

**Step 5 - Plan:** The Community of Impact identifies the areas with the greatest inequities. The Community of Impact reviews additional resources and research to create an action plan (e.g the California Community Colleges' Student Equity and Achievement Annual Report Template or the Metrics Aligned to State Priorities) to address the identified equity gaps.

**Step 6 - Align:** The Community of Impact ensures its plan is aligned to any pre-existing equity work of the organization and/or that it meets any equity facing requirements or incentives.

**Step 7 - Communicate:** The Community of Impact communicates an action plan, goals, indicators of progress, and the first steps the organization will complete to address the identified gaps.

**Step 8 - Monitor:** The Community of Impact monitors progress towards the action plan's goals and communicates progress internally, and with the organization's stakeholders.

# HOW TO USE THE EQUITY CONTINUUM

The aforementioned steps are a guide for an organization as it begins its equity journey broadly and as it uses the Equity Continuum specifically.

It is important to note that this work does not end when an organization reaches the “Sustained Equity” phase. In fact, an organization should continuously assess and reflect on how it is creating a representative, inclusive, and belonging environment for its stakeholders. This will result in a cyclical process, where an organization reflects and identifies areas of opportunity related to the Dimensions below or crafts additional, new Dimensions.

An organization's equity journey does not end, but instead is continuous and requires strong commitment to sustain it indefinitely.



# DIMENSION - ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

Allocation of resources is the process in which time, money, and human capital are allocated to a project, initiative, experience, or event. In most communities, these resources are budgeted on a routine basis and are used by those in charge of creating the experience for their stakeholders. These resources should be used in a manner that creates the highest level of impact on the individuals and groups that are in greatest need of those resources to be successful.

## DATA COLLECTION

There are many data sources, and methods by which to collect data, that can assist an organization as they complete an Organizational Assessment of their resource allocation. The following are potential data sources an organization may use as it seeks to understand its current place on the Equity Continuum:

Annual, office and program budgets

Indicators of student improvement by subgroup

Allocation of human resources

% of POC on staff

Allocation of physical space

% of POC in leadership

Indicators of data movement by SES groupings

% of historically marginalized group improvement



STAKEHOLDER  
EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

## EQUITY FOCUSED

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

## Students

Students are unable to access the resources they need to be successful.

Students are able to advocate for the resources they need and attempts are made by faculty/staff to get them what they need.

Students have full access to resources that promote their success on a routine basis.

Students understand their options. There are systems in place that ensure students receive the resources they need and the ability to advocate for something different if needed.

## Families

Families are unaware and uninformed of the resources available or how to access them, nor where or to whom they are allocated. The organization does very little to connect with families about resources they may need or seek their input on how allocation of resources could impact their children.

Families are recognized as a partner in their student's success and are given information about the resources available. However, the organization does not connect families with the resources their child may need to be successful in their organization.

Families are allocated resources based on specific needs, identified by data points collected by the organization. In addition, the organization actively seeks input on the lived experience of families who receive those resources.

Families have access to resources that support their child's experience. The organization proactively seeks input on the experience of families prior to allocating resources to all families. Based on the input from families and the data points collected by the organization, the organization is responsive to the needs of the family and their child's experience.

## Faculty/Staff

Faculty/staff in the organization continue practices that do not change the experience of students in marginalized groups.

Faculty/staff are aware of the inequities that exist for marginalized groups and attempt to allocate resources to those groups to allocate resources to those groups in routine processes or when it is convenient for them.

Faculty/staff seek input from those most impacted before allocating resources to a project or initiative to ensure the needs of those they serve are met.

Faculty/staff are intentional with resource allocation and ensure that those they serve are given the resources they need to be successful, even if this means reducing resources for the privileged.

STAKEHOLDER  
EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

Administration does not use data to drive decisions. Resources are unequally distributed to groups or individuals.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

Administration uses data to deepen its understanding of who is receiving resources and how that impacts the performance and well being of all groups with an emphasis on marginalized groups of students (especially People of Color).

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

Administration consistently reviews and improves its management and allocation of resources to ensure statistically marginalized groups are equitably supported.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

Administration creates spaces for input on the allocation of resources from marginalized groups first. Administration enables systemic equity through its practice of resource allocation that results in improved outcomes and experiences by statistically marginalized groups.

## Administration

## Organization

The organization does not recognize the need to change the way resources are allocated. Large groups of stakeholders remain underserved.

The organization recognizes that resources are often provided equally, not equitably. The organization attempts to allocate resources equitably to the groups with the greatest need.

The organization routinely goes through the practice of providing resources to the most marginalized groups and/or groups with the greatest need that ensure their success.

The organization has redesigned its systems so that all resources are allocated to the groups most impacted by a decision or project in a transparent and consistent manner.

Indicators of  
Movement

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional conversations about budget, personnel, and use of physical space at scheduled times of year.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional communication of funding, where it is allocated, and who is most greatly impacted by the allocated funds.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional system(s) redesign to mitigate racial disparities in resource allocation.



# DIMENSION - COMMUNICATION

Communication encompasses the person/people sharing the message, the message itself, and the way an organization shares information. The communications of an organization are often a reflection of its beliefs and values. The message (content of the communication) and modality (the way the content is shared) are equally important in all communications, not just those addressing or containing messages of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. When designing responsive, inclusive, and equitable communication there is an alignment of message throughout all levels of an organization; as well as the opportunity and ability for communication to flow between all stakeholders, regardless of positions, title, or stake in the organization.

## DATA COLLECTION

There are many data sources, and methods by which to collect data, that can assist an organization as they complete an Organizational Assessment of their communication. The following are potential data sources an organization may use as it seeks to understand its current place on the Equity Continuum:

Stakeholder Survey Data

# of stakeholder groups opening communications (e.g. emails, newsletters, phone calls, or text messages)

Frequency of communications

Variety of stakeholder groups' communications

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EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

Students receive communications in one language or through modalities that are difficult for some students to access. Messages about diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging do not exist.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are isolated messages or messages sent through separate or singular modalities.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are incorporated in some content and messages. Messages are provided in additional languages if requested.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

Messages about diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are present in all communications. Students receive messages in multiple languages and use modalities easy for them to access.

## Students

## Families

Families are infrequently communicated with about their organization's decisions and actions that impact their student's experience. This communication is often only provided through one avenue that doesn't reach all families.

Families are communicated major messages that impact the entire organization. Families find themselves seeking more information and, at times, receive this information from informal channels or secondary sources.

Families are communicated with frequently. Families receive information that provides insight into the organization's actions. Communication provided is accessible in multiple languages upon request.

Families are communicated with routinely and with a high level of transparency. Families have an avenue to provide feedback and insight on their experience that informs future communication. Communication is provided using multiple modalities and is accessible in the languages spoken at home.

## Faculty/Staff

Identifying a need for content and the agency to create content are afforded to few.

Identifying a need for content is afforded to few; messages are influenced by select stakeholders, however the messages' voice and perspective are not authentic or representative of all stakeholders.

Everyone is able to name a need for content; messages are influenced by select stakeholders, however the messages' voice and perspective are not authentic or representative of all stakeholders.

Everyone is able to name a need for content and the process of crafting the message provides multiple, authentic methods of ensuring all stakeholder voices and perspectives are included.

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EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

Messages are shared in a final state, and are passively received.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

The ability to update modalities is reserved for few; modalities used only allow for one-way communication.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

The ability to update modalities is reserved for few; modalities used allow for two-way communication. Select stakeholders are heard and acknowledged.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

Any stakeholders can challenge—and are heard and acknowledged—the usefulness of a modality and offer solutions to increase the impact of modalities; modalities used allow for two-way communication.

## Administration

## Organization

Messages are only valued if shared by a select few; few are afforded the modality to share a message broadly.

Messages are only valued if shared by a select few; some are asked or required to share another's message broadly.

Messages are only valued if they reflect the values, mission, and purpose of the organization; few are afforded the modality to share a message broadly.

Messages are only valued if they reflect the values, mission, and purpose of the organization; all are afforded an opportunity to share a message broadly.

Indicators of  
Movement

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

The values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are messaged by an organization via a singular, one-way modality.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Organizational leadership incorporates the values of diversity, equity, , inclusion, and belonging into its broader communications and messaging via one-way and varied modalities.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

All stakeholders having the ability to craft and share messages; the organization's values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging rooted in all messages, which are two-way and include varied modalities.

# DIMENSION - POLICY

Policies are the governing rules, principles, and guidelines that inform the way an organization and its individuals implement practices and beliefs. Policy allows or denies equitable experiences by individuals and the design of those policies dictate the effectiveness of the corresponding responses and practices.

## DATA COLLECTION

There are many data sources, and methods by which to collect data, that can assist an organization as they complete an Organizational Assessment of their policies. The following are potential data sources an organization may use as it seeks to understand its current place on the Equity Continuum:

Frequency of policy revision

Intended audiences of policies

Impacts of policies for intended audiences

Governing documents

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EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

The experience of implemented policies is varied and maintains the inequities that exist for marginalized students.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

The established policies name the inequities experienced by marginalized students, however do not always yield a change in practice as implemented.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

The experience of the implemented policies directly aligns with the values and needs of the students it is intended to impact, most of the time.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

The experience of the implemented policies is responsive to the changing needs of those who are impacted.

## Students

## Families

Families are unable to provide insight and are given little information about new policies, policy changes or modifications. Families first learn about policies of the organization during periods of policy enforcement.

Families have limited access to the policies and receive infrequent information about policies that impact them. However, there is an effort by the organization to identify how families want to be communicated with about policies and how policies impact their experience.

Families have access to all policies identified through a policy review process. Families are informed about all policy changes and attempts are made to ensure that families are provided information about the impacts of these changes.

Families have access to and give input on all policies through a transparent policy process that includes families in the policy revision process. Families are proactively informed about the organization's policies, potential policy changes, and the impact of policies on their students.

## Faculty/Staff

The structures and approach to the implementation of policies do not address the inequities that exist for those faculty/staff they serve.

The structures and approach articulate an understanding of the impact a policy has; however, the implementation of the policy minimally changes outcomes.

The implementation and follow-through of established structures, systems, and approaches are centered on those they most greatly impact. The previously experienced inequities are lessening.

The implementation of all policies is driven by data reflective of the most marginalized groups. These individuals are a part of the solution and in turn, create a system of inclusive policy-making and implementation.

STAKEHOLDER  
EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

The structures, systems and approaches by leadership do not embody practices aligned to creating equitable outcomes.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

The structures, systems and approaches by leadership addresses inequities in writing however, the practices of those policies are inconsistent.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

The structures, systems, and approaches by leadership are consistent in policy and practice and result in equitable outcomes for the marginalized individuals they serve.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

The structures, systems, and approaches by leadership are flexible and inclusive of the varying needs of the individuals they serve.

## Administration

## Organization

The organization operates without input of its stakeholders when creating, revising, or implementing organizational policy. The organization is unaware and unwilling to recognize any inequities that may exist within its policies.

The organization creates, revises, and implements policy with a level of awareness as it relates to the impact of its policies. However, the organization has not committed to making consistent shifts in policy based on inequities that exist.

The organization creates, revises, and implements policy based on the lived experiences of those that work for the organization and for those that it serves.

The organization creates, revises, and implements policies that intend to improve the organization and those it serves by ensuring that the decision makers of the new policy represent the community it serves.

Indicators of  
Movement

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentionally scheduling policy development or policy planning meetings with stakeholders.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentionally creating policies that are driven by stakeholder input; actions taken are clear and communicated widely.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional policy checkpoints at least twice a year, informed by data that highlight existing inequities.



# DIMENSION - CULTURE

Culture is the way people work, connect, and operate together in an organization. Culture consists of a set of shared beliefs and values established by both leaders and members within an organization and are communicated and reinforced through multiple methods. A strong, inclusive culture is one that recognizes the greatness of each individual and empowers them to be their authentic selves.

The result is a culture that thrives off of the voice and contributions of its people who consistently pursue the well-being of the greater good.

## DATA COLLECTION

There are many data sources, and methods by which to collect data, that can assist an organization as they complete an Organizational Assessment of their culture. The following are potential data sources an organization may use as it seeks to understand its current place on the Equity Continuum:

Faculty/staff satisfaction survey data

Participation rates in optional opportunities (e.g. extracurriculars, community events, focus groups/committees)

Student satisfaction survey data

Frequency of HR-related concerns

Faculty/staff attendance rates

Responses to HR-related concerns

3 yr. trend of student grad rates by racial demographic

Response time to HR-related concerns

STAKEHOLDER  
EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

Student voice is absent from the decision making process.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

Student voice is requested at a very high level through targeted or selective methods to include representation of desired groups.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

Student voice is integrated into the approach of the organization's leadership with intentionality and equity in mind.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

Student voice is a prerequisite for any and all change at the systems level of the organization. Student voice is centered and mobilized to impact their experience individually and collectively.

## Students

Family voice is absent from the decision making process of the organization.

Family voice is requested through one avenue of communication (e.g. a survey). The results of the families' input is disaggregated by demographic subgroups to better understand the family experience.

Family voice is evident in most of the organization's decisions. The organization is cognizant of the lived experiences of the family through its equity-based family-focused committee that includes families representative of their community.

Family voice is paired with student voice in all decision making processes of the organization. Families are proactively sought out early in the decision making processes of the organization. Families feel valued, heard, and seen as a partner in the organization's success and well being.

## Families

Faculty/staff are unaware of their impact on the organization, its goals, and/or the students they serve.

Faculty/staff are aware of the inequities that may exist and take steps towards understanding those inequities and how they show up for them and those they serve.

Faculty/staff routinely reflect and engage with an equity-driven mindset that enables them to make decisions that are consistent with their values and the values of others.

Faculty/staff operate with equity at heart and mind at all times. Their actions are always rooted in doing what is right for the group they are serving. They seek to improve the outcomes of the most marginalized in all situations.

## Faculty/Staff

## STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCE

### Administration

#### INEQUITABLE

The administration operates with a high level of confidentiality to meet transactional outcomes that have remained unchanged year over year.

#### EQUITY FOCUSED

Administration begins to show signs of evolution through occasional transparency and a growing desire to better understand the impact of past decisions and direction.

#### EQUITY AFFIRMING

The administration is transparent with their goals and potential actions as they have become more aware of their policies and practices through engagement with the organization's community.

#### SUSTAINED EQUITY

The administration embodies the diversity of the people it serves and intentionally and consistently communicates its position to ensure they are growing and evolving for the people they serve.

### Organization

There are no cohesive or connected structures or systems in place. No one is served well, morale remains low amongst staff, and those who thrive are those that are least impacted by inequitable systems.

There are limited,—but promising—efforts to create alignment across systems that embody equitable practices; however, the execution of these systems is inconsistent.

There are systematic approaches implemented across the organization that empower marginalized individuals to be successful and engaged in the well-being of the organization.

The organization operates from a high level of integrity that thrives off of core values that generate trust, empathy, safety, and belonging for all people that interact with the organization.

### Indicators of Movement

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional attempts to openly communicate about the inequities they see and can name sources of those inequities.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional actions are taken by leadership to address the inequities by including the voice of students, staff of color, and other leaders who are impacted by inequitable practices within the community.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional alignment of the organization's core values to actions that promote equity, infuse voice in all decisions, and ultimately create intentional spaces of inclusion and access in aspects of the community.

# DIMENSION - PHYSICAL SPACE

Physical space refers to both an organization's walls and buildings as well as the space in which its stakeholders find themselves. It can also refer to the location of a space on campus or in a building that is reserved or designed for a specific purpose. Oftentimes physical spaces can be used for specific functions or groups of people.

The design, creation, and construction of the space should be unique to the purpose of its intended use and should be designed, created and constructed in partnership with those who will use the space.

## DATA COLLECTION

There are many data sources, and methods by which to collect data, that can assist an organization as they complete an Organizational Assessment of their physical space. The following are potential data sources an organization may use as it seeks to understand its current place on the Equity Continuum:

Stakeholder survey data

Aggregation and analysis of the distribution of physical space

Annual facilities budget(s)

STAKEHOLDER  
EXPERIENCE

## INEQUITABLE

The facilities may look and feel sterile, which might remind students of past inequitable institutional experiences (past trauma, lack of physical safety, etc).

## EQUITY FOCUSED

The facilities may look and feel sterile, but there are small attempts to soften the institutional feel of the space.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

The facilities may have some unique touches that reflect the groups or community that are using them.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

The facilities feel like a home away from home for all those who are using them and are welcoming to those who are new to a space.

## Students

## Families

Families do not feel welcome in the organization's environment. There is limited or no access to the physical space of the organization.

Families are able to identify spaces where they feel the most welcome. However, families have some experiences where they are unable to connect to the environment because of inaccessible information.

Families are welcome in most spaces. There are attempts by the organization to understand the families' needs to feel more connected to the organization's environment.

Families are welcome in all spaces. Families are able to bring their culture to the physical spaces with joy and without judgement. The physical space is physically, emotionally, and linguistically inviting for all families that are represented within the community.

## Faculty/Staff

The physical space does not account for the way the staff need to use the space or support their student groups to use the space.

The physical space is updated and revised for staff to use on a traditional planning calendar, so that every space is updated at the same interval.

The physical space is updated and revised for staff to use in a responsive manner that allows for the needs of staff to be considered.

Designed collaboratively with students, the physical space on campus reflects the unique and individual staff and students who use the facilities.

## STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCE

### Administration

#### INEQUITABLE

Decisions about facilities and their use and development are made by a few at the top and in silos.

#### EQUITY FOCUSED

Stakeholders (college students, k-12 students, families, faculty, staff, admin, etc) are passively surveyed for feedback about the look, feel and use of physical spaces.

#### EQUITY AFFIRMING

Stakeholders (college students, k-12 students, families, faculty, staff, admin etc) sit in related committees and offer input about the look, feel and use of physical spaces.

#### SUSTAINED EQUITY

Stakeholders (college students, k-12 students, families, community faculty, staff, admin etc), community partners, and local employers are engaged and own the development of the physical space.

### Organization

Physical spaces on campus feel exclusive.

Physical spaces on campus feel disconnected from the campus community.

Physical spaces display a level of visible pride of organization and community.

Physical spaces communicate a sense of ownership by the campus community.

### Indicators of Movement

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional attempts to make physical spaces more closely aligned to the needs of the community and stakeholder groups.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional attempts to create spaces that are responsive to the needs of the community and stakeholders.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

Intentional attempts to provide ownership over the physical spaces all across campus.



# DIMENSION - DATA

Organizations leverage data in their decision-making processes, and use it to measure the impact and outcomes of their work. An inclusive data collection process ensures an organization is accounting for and addressing the needs of all stakeholders. Additionally, organizations that transparently share their data broadly, allows for honest assessments and reflection. Transparent sharing of data also empowers stakeholders to have the insight and information needed to spur and affect change.

## DATA COLLECTION

The importance of data in this dimension is to reflect on how it is collected and used. The following are potential data opportunities for this reflection. an organization may use as it seeks to understand its current place on the Equity Continuum:

An audit of which stakeholders and subgroups are able to provide data

An analysis of when messages and practices do not align with data

An audit of how easily accessible data is to all stakeholders

A reflection on what data is and isn't used in decision making processes

STAKEHOLDER  
EXPERIENCE

## Students

## INEQUITABLE

Students are not provided access to (quantitative or qualitative) data. There is limited to no transparency regarding the organization's data.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

Students have limited access to (quantitative or qualitative) data. The data is provided on a "request only basis" and is given through a criteria driven approval process. There are attempts to ensure that data collected is reflective of the demographics of the institution fairly and without filters.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

Students have access to most quantitative and qualitative data. Students can request additional data points if needed. The organization intentionally meets with students on a scheduled basis about their data needs and continues to work towards becoming a more transparent organization—particularly along the lines of equity.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

Students have full access to all quantitative and qualitative data that can be seen by faculty and staff within the organization. There is a high level of transparency about the available data. The organization has created sustained conversations with students about the data and responsively identifies solutions with their student body to improve data trends and lived experiences.

## Families

Families do not have access or understanding of the data of the organization. There is limited to no transparency regarding data with families nor do families have insight to how their student's data relates to the data of the larger community.

Families have limited access to the organization's data through one channel of communication (i.e annual report). The data provides limited insight into the individual or collective well being of their student or the student community as a whole. However, the data is available by racial demographics upon request.

The organization provides data to families and guidance on how to interpret the data made available to them. There is a high level of transparency with families in an effort to better understand how to improve along the lines of equity.

Families have full access to the organization's data. The data is provided in multiple ways to ensure families can access, interpret, and engage with the data in an intuitive manner. Families have clear avenues to provide feedback on the data and have routine conversations with the organization about the data points. Families that are identified as underserved in the data are the greatest priority of the organization's actions and families partner with the organization to improve those lived realities.

## Faculty/Staff

Faculty/staff have topical data on the students they serve and limited access to organization-wide data. Requests made to gain access to more data are often denied.

Faculty/staff have access to their student's data and some level of demographic data of the organization and the community it serves. Faculty/staff are able to request data if they want to know more about the students they serve.

Faculty/staff are actively involved with data collection within the organization. Faculty/staff are able to access most data available. There is a high level of transparency about the data and the organization has begun to prioritize the data needs of the faculty/staff to respond to the inequities that exist within the organization.

Faculty/staff are a part of an inclusive data culture. Transparent data is provided to faculty/staff on a routine basis and highlighted trends and shifts are openly noted for faculty/staff. Faculty/staff see the data practices as an integral part of their role within the organization and actively use data to improve the inequities that exist within the organization.

STAKEHOLDER  
EXPERIENCE

## Administration

## INEQUITABLE

Administration operates with a high level of secrecy or lacks awareness of data points within the organization. Data-driven decision making is not a part of the leadership's approach to their role.

## EQUITY FOCUSED

Administration is aware of inequities that exist within the organization's data, however action is only taken on the most glaring data points that directly impact their ability to do their job effectively.

## EQUITY AFFIRMING

Administrators actively use data to drive decisions that eradicate their organization of the inequities that exist. There is a high level of transparency and accountability as a result of the data collected on a routine basis.

## SUSTAINED EQUITY

Administrators proactively use data trends to responsively connect with underserved populations within the organization. The administrators' heightened awareness and responsiveness moves them to action. Administrators create high levels of impact and see consistent decreases in equity gaps.

## Organization

The organization operates with limited to no transparency about the data it has on the well-being of the organization or the individuals it serves. The data that is available is disorganized and unusable to individuals within the organization.

The organization provides an annual report that outlines a high level understanding of the organization's well-being and the individuals it serves. There is increased transparency about the inequities that exist within the data. There is limited to no action taken by the organization based on the data.

The organization transparently communicates its data, trends, and shifts within the organization by the demographics of the organization and the individuals it serves. The organization uses this data to increase the accountability and expected effectiveness of the actions leadership takes to improve the experience for the most marginalized or underserved populations.

The organization proactively uses data to highlight their strategic priorities. The strategic priorities are identified based on the needs of the most marginalized or underserved individuals and groups. Those individuals and groups are included in the improvement process and their feedback is sought for further improvement and organizational accountability measures.

Indicators of  
Movement

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

The organization takes steps to make data available throughout the organization albeit with the provision of approvals needed to be granted for data to be received.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

The organization makes data widely available and the use of data to drive the organizations decisions.

The movement to this phase can be evidenced by:

The organization uses data to drive all decisions.

# ADDITIONAL DIMENSIONS

The Equity ANT's Equity Continuum is designed to support regional education organizations as they examine their current culture and structure and evaluate the current state of the organization. That said, the Equity Continuum does not address every area or Dimension that an organization could contemplate as it seeks to surface inequities that exist within its organization. As such, the following process will allow an institution to identify additional Dimensions that are appropriate to its equity journey as it seeks to inclusively serve its stakeholders.

Process	Action	Essential Question
Identify your Challenge	Spend time reflecting on what makes you or your organization stuck or fall short of its goals for marginalized groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is showing up for you?</li><li>• What do you believe is getting in your way?</li></ul>
Collect Data	Unpack the data that you have available to identify gaps, disparities, or differences between marginalized groups and traditionally privileged groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who is most impacted by your disparities?</li></ul>
Review Data	Reflect on the trends within the data to create an objective narrative about the inequities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the data telling you?</li></ul>

# ADDITIONAL DIMENSIONS

Process	Action	Essential Question
Assemble a Decision-Making Team	Create a space with people who have experienced these inequities and those involved in leading the change to engage in new possibilities and criteria for success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who is at your table informing the direction of this Dimension?</li></ul>
Identify A New Dimension	Identify the Dimension that the decision-making team creates to address progress against the existing inequity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What system or structure are you looking to change or redesign?</li></ul>
Determine Growth and Success	Create a progression that identifies the current state of the Dimension, and clear goals for progress and success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the necessary steps to address this inequity and transform our performance within this Dimension?</li></ul>
Test	Find ways to safely test the Dimension's efficacy and impact on the marginalized community. Repeat the process if needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is this newly created Dimension solving for the inequities you identified?</li></ul>
Implement	Create a plan to implement at scale for the organization (pending results from the testing step).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How will you scale this Dimension for your organization?</li></ul>

# NEXT STEPS

Surfacing inequities that exist within an organization and committing to addressing them is a continuous, non-linear process. This Equity Continuum serves as just one resource and tool in an institution's equity journey. While assessing and reflecting on an organization's current place along the Equity Continuum's Dimensions is important, it is a single step in the process.

It must be noted that the process of undertaking an equity journey is just as important as the end result. While organizations are encouraged to use the Equity Continuum's Dimensions to identify initial opportunity areas, others may find that using the Equity Continuum as a frame to build out their own Dimensions is a more genuine part of their equity journey.

There is no correct way to identify and address the gaps, blind spots, and opportunities an organization may face as it attempts to equitably and inclusively fulfill its mission. Whether it is using the Equity Continuum's Dimensions or creating their own, the act of an organization candidly assessing and reflecting on its practices is the most important part of being able to identify areas of growth and opportunity; not only for those within the organization, but also for those the organization serves.



# GLOSSARY

**Administration Experience:** The way the organization's senior leaders or leadership team experiences a particular Dimension.

**Dimension:** An area of focus that greatly impacts an organization's stakeholder's relationship with diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; and impacts all aspects of the organization and its stakeholders.

**Equity Champion:** The individual leading the Community of Impact and its efforts to increase diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging for all of an organization's stakeholders.

**Community of Impact:** A team composed of representatives from multiple stakeholder groups, focused on increasing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for all of an organization's stakeholders.

**Family Experience:** The way a student's family experiences a particular Dimension in relationship to the organization.

**Faulty/Staff Experience:** The experience of the faculty and or staff as it relates to a particular Dimension.

# GLOSSARY CONTINUED

**Modality:** The way by which communication occurs (e.g. written, verbal, video, etc.) as well as the the method by which it is delivered and/or received (e.g. one-way vs. two-way communication)

**Organizational Assessment:** The process by which an organization reviews their practices according to a single Dimension and determines which Phase (Inequitable, Equity Focused, Equity Affirming, or Sustained Equity) is representative of the organization at the moment.

**Organization Experience:** Framing the Equity Continuum broadly and its Dimensions and Phases specifically from a holistic view of the organization -- those it serves, those that partner with it, and those that work for it (paid, volunteer, etc.).

**Phase:** The articulation of an organization's place within an Dimension (i.e. Inequitable, Equity Focused, Equity Affirming, or Sustained Equity).

**Student Experience:** The perspective of the students the organization serves as it relates to a Dimension.

# DEVELOPING THE EQUITY CONTINUUM

The Equity Continuum was developed in partnership with GIA, its Equity ANT, The 305 Education Group and Made By Change. This work was made possible through funding from The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as part of its Intermediaries For Scale Exchange. Grounded in an approach of designing with and not for, the Equity ANT, The 305 Education Group and Made By Change worked collaboratively to develop this tool.



THE 305 EDUCATION GROUP

The 305 Education Group is a consultancy supporting education and nonprofit organizations and their leaders in the areas of executive coaching and professional development, strategic planning, continuous school improvement, and COVID response, whose team members and partners all approach their work through a lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.



Made By Change is a mission-driven social equity and impact consulting firm rooted in the power of collective change for common inequities. We believe that the solutions to the social inequities exist at the intersection of inequities across industries within any ecosystem. We create transformative experiences and connect leaders from various industries to connect, convene, and conspire to form cross sector strategies to end social inequities within their ecosystems.

