

## Taking Initial Steps on Strategic Plans

Identifying and addressing inequities can be daunting—and, as a result, descriptions of state strategic priorities are complex and multi-dimensional. To move toward meaningful action, it will be important to craft specific questions and/or identify smaller steps that can be accomplished in a 5–6-month period that will move your team toward addressing larger questions.

Where to start? How to focus your team’s activity? Consider using the table below to get your team conversation going.

**If Your Strategic Priority Is About.....**    **Examples of Equity-Related Steps**

<p><b>Breaking down silos within the SEA to have collective impact on equity</b></p>	<p>Develop an inventory of equity-related (or potentially related) policies and opportunities within departments (e.g., data collection around disciplinary incidents within SPED)</p> <p>Host an information session about equity indicators for representatives from various departments (e.g., use videos from CoP to introduce key concepts)</p> <p>Invite departments outside accountability and teaching/learning (e.g., licensure, 21<sup>st</sup> Century, facilities) to share the information they collect on a regular basis and discuss its implications for an equity perspective on opportunities available at the district level</p>
<p><b>Raising the profile of the value of using indicators/ measurement to identify disparities in opportunities and outcomes</b></p>	<p>Host focus groups with stakeholders to discuss alignment of equity indicators to goals within the state board/agency strategic plans</p> <p>Learn from the process of analyzing data and crafting visualizations for 1-2 indicators for which the SEA has a critical mass of data</p> <p>Use resource allocation reviews to assess degree to which schools are providing equitable opportunities of various types (e.g., tutoring, access to rigorous courses) as well as fiscal resources. Develop a summary report of findings across reviews.</p> <p>Use focus groups/interviews to learn what messages about equity the leaders of low performing schools/districts are getting (or think they are getting) from their interactions with the SEA (e.g., through grant expectations, via reporting requests, etc.)</p>

**If Your Strategic Priority Is About..... Examples of Equity-Related Steps**

<p><b>Improving equitable provision of support for low performing schools</b></p>	<p>Undertake a small pilot project to document and analyze the types and extent of supports provided (and resulting actions) <u>by</u> profiles of school need (e.g., socioeconomic characteristics, outcome trends, geographic location). For example, are different types of supports being provided to schools with the highest concentrations of poverty? ....to schools in racially isolated neighborhoods?</p> <p>Learn (via interviews/focus groups) from schools that in the past have made and sustained substantial improvements about their perspectives on the relative value of particular supports (e.g., in hindsight what changes led to the biggest improvements)</p> <p>Gather information from low performing schools about who they consider trusted partners for different needs</p>
<p><b>Revising statewide data systems to collect information that is meaningful to LEAs and useful for uncovering and addressing inequities</b></p>	<p>Learn from a sample of LEAs the information/data that they currently use (and also data they would like to have) to make decisions about resource allocations</p> <p>Inventory the nature/"location of" data that the SEA currently collects about opportunities to learn (e.g., data related to teacher effectiveness, rigor of academic programs, access to extended learning)</p> <p>Gather multiple perspectives on the types of data breakouts (e.g., ethnicity, mobility experience) that would facilitate creating better supports and opportunities for all students</p> <p>Examine what is learned from different monitoring systems/approaches currently in use in the state about disparities in opportunities/outcomes and the resulting recommended actions</p> <p>Identify the connections that exist (or are needed) in data systems to enable schools and state staff to track growth and change (rather than only static info)</p>
<p><b>Navigating the current climate</b></p>	<p>Focus your discussions on what equitable outcomes and opportunities look like</p> <p>Keep your discussions focused on students, effective teaching, and data that describes the current status</p> <p>Leverage your policy environment wherever possible (e.g., state board’s strategic plan about expectations, a Governor’s initiative related to access for all)</p>