

Establishing District Equity Committees for Senate Bill 732

ODE Guidance

July, 2023



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A note from State Board Chair Guadalupe Martinez-Zapata

June 21, 2023

Two years ago, the State Board of Education began to develop the idea of supporting a law that could support a meaningful avenue for every school district to benefit from the strengths and leadership within its community. The requirements and recommendations in this guidance come from years of learning. They are the fruit of decisions made by the Oregon Legislature to codify an expectation for how school districts are governed in relationship to their community and how the community can lead and offer counsel and insights to school districts.

I'm so pleased with how this guidance has been brought to life as it marks what is required and what is encouraged in ways that are both practical and intentional.

I'm honored to give voice to the importance of this effort and the way it can continue our statewide journey towards realizing the promise of an excellent education for each and every child in relationship to connected, engaged, and whole communities.

Con respeto,



Guadalupe Martinez-Zapata
Chair
Oregon State Board of Education

Introduction

In 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 732 ([ORS 329.711](#)) and amended Oregon Revised Statutes 328.542 and 329.095. The laws require each school district to establish what in statute is described as an “educational education advisory committee” and for this guidance will be referred to as a District Equity Committee (DEC).

DECs are meant to help school leaders identify what helps or hinders the success of students who Oregon’s educational systems have historically excluded, impacted, marginalized, or underserved. They are intended to advise school boards and superintendents on the educational impacts of policy decisions, the larger district-wide climate, issues impacting underserved student groups, and additional topics necessary to fully elevate student experience. DECs are a powerful mechanism to engage community voice and advance equity in Oregon’s school districts.

SB 732 sets minimum requirements for DECs. The bill directs the State Board of Education to adopt complementary rules, which have been set forth in Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) [581-022-2307](#).

This guidance document brings together into one place the law’s requirements, the recommendations enshrined in law¹, the administrative rules, and the Oregon Department of Education’s guidance on implementation.

Explaining the Term “District Equity Committee”

While the term “educational equity advisory committee” is used in the ORS and OAR, for the purposes of this guidance, ODE uses the term “District Equity Committee” (or DEC) as a substitute term. This is done with the understanding that the work presented in this guidance is important by any name.

DEC is an efficient, shorthand acronym and helps to avoid confusion that might occur in trying to distinguish between the state level Educator Advancement Council (EAC) and this body of work. Therefore, the term District Equity Committee fulfills the function as written in statute and rule. Your district may choose to use “District Equity Committee” or you may find that another name will make more sense for your particular community and context. This guidance will support you to develop that understanding.

¹ Section 2 of this guidance provides a more in-depth explanation of the difference between the law’s requirements and recommendations.

Section 1: Getting Started & Identifying Existing Work

This section supports the start-up phase of planning for your DEC – how to create conditions for success, what to consider in your process, where to look within your district for pre-existing work, and variables you may need to consider as you think about the membership, structure, and purpose of your DEC.

VERY IMPORTANT: For ease of use - this document will use the following symbols to track distinctions between **requirements** in rule or statute and **recommendations** enshrined in statute or rule.

- **Requirement:** What is required of districts to implement as part of SB 732 and adopted into OAR Chapter 581, Division 22.
- **Recommendation:** What is outlined in statute or rule as a recommended function that districts can choose for the DEC to implement, but is not required.

Where left un-noted, what is offered is guidance from ODE on implementation.

Requirement

- Districts with an average daily membership of 10,000 or less are required to first convene a District Equity Committee by September 15, 2025.² [OAR 581-022-2307](#) states that a DEC “shall be selected by the school district board and school district superintendent and must be composed of parents, employees, students and community members from the school district.” In addition, “the school district superintendent is responsible for coordinating the member nomination process and proposing finalists to the school district board.”

Responsibility for tending to the start-up and development of a District Equity Committee begins with the district superintendent.

Launching a DEC will, in many cases, mean identifying existing work and teams in your district that can seamlessly tie in, overlap, or be moved to work with your DEC. As you begin the process, ODE recommends that you:

1. Form/delegate a team or staff to help coordinate the DEC membership nomination process.
2. Start to identify existing groups, teams, and work that could be involved in the development or functionality of your DEC.
3. Begin communicating the SB 732 criteria and your plan/process to your school board and community.

² Districts with an average daily membership of 10,000 or more were required to first convene a District Equity Committee by September 15, 2022.

Step One: Form a team or delegate staff to help coordinate the DEC membership nomination process

While the superintendent has accountability and authority by law to coordinate the membership nomination process for the DEC, ODE recognizes the myriad of responsibilities on superintendents' plates as well as the importance of bringing key staff in at the ground level to help strategize and implement SB 732.

For small and rural schools where capacity is smaller, superintendents can invite instructional assistants, custodial staff, nutrition staff, or counselors onto the team. Perhaps a principal or teacher leader with strong stewardship and capacity can lead the effort in conjunction with superintendent consultation. Other groups that may have members with the capacity to take on this work include, but are not limited to: Education Service Districts (ESDs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Culturally-Specific Organizations (CSOs), and other organizations that regularly partner with school districts to assist students with meeting state and local standards and/or prepare them for post-high school transitions. ESDs can also be key partners to help districts strategize and develop the District Equity Committee.

What's noted for smaller districts and schools is just as valuable for medium and larger schools and districts. In addition, medium and larger districts might engage assistant superintendents, equity/literacy TOSAs, senior advisors, directors of services (equity, inclusion, diversity; multilingual services; special education), district community and partnership coordinators, family engagement specialists, academic language specialists, or district emerging bilingual specialists. This is an opportunity to already think about diversifying the team that can help on-ramp and coordinate the membership nomination process for the DEC. A diversity of roles and backgrounds involved in this initial planning window will lend itself to a more inclusive and equitable DEC down the road.

The goal of coordinating the membership nomination process is to provide opportunities - a kind of clarion call for community members' voices - in order to engage those that have or might currently be marginalized. School leaders can ask key interested parties, students, and community leaders to nominate people who represent the community and school; this would be followed up with an invitation to participate. Deeply-rooted community members with context of the local landscape are paramount in providing the District Equity Committee with strategies to connect and identify unintentional educational equity impacts and remove barriers to student success.

Use of Equity Lens and Tools

An equity lens is a tool that helps center core values and commitments when working towards shared goals. It includes a series of questions that help leaders intentionally account for the end impact of their decisions. The use of an equity lens is a valuable tool in identifying local needs and how DEC's can best reflect communities served, including the voices of those who have historically been excluded.

An equity lens is most useful when it accurately represents the aims of local leadership. Within ODE's guidance, *Aligning for Student Success*, Appendix E: [Equity Lens and Tools](#) offers a foundation for districts that can be expanded through reflection and intentional community engagement.

Step Two: Start to identify existing groups, teams, and work that could be involved in the development or functionality of your DEC

Although every District Equity Committee will share certain similarities, that does not mean they should all be the same. Districts will need to work closely with their local communities in determining how best to engage in this work. For some, this may feel like an entirely new venture. For others, it may feel familiar and can be built upon similar bodies of work and existing community relationships. District equity groups and similar student, parent, or community advisory committees may be good candidates for adaptation into a District Equity Committee. Districts should closely consider the functions of their current groups, and the adjustments that might be necessary to perform the duties of a District Equity Committee. Districts should work closely with such groups to gather feedback and consider impact. A DEC that advises both the school board and superintendent and may be subject to public meeting requirements. Below are examples and types of groups to consider adapting or asking to help support the creation of the DEC:

- Site Committees
- Parent-Teacher or Family Organizations
- Existing equity and/or constituency groups
- SIA Advisory or other Community Advisory Groups

Organizing Your Thinking

Some districts have robust strategies and structures in place to support the ongoing needs of their focal student groups³ and school communities in equitable and culturally-sustaining ways. ODE has developed a simple [Mapping Existing Equity Efforts](#) worksheet that may provide districts a starting point for evaluating the equity work already in progress with consideration for next steps.

A Thought Experiment: Sketching what it might look like to adapt and link with existing efforts

You've already created important groups of students, parents, educators, thought leaders and community partners who gather in a variety of ways and formats. This is based on the promise of realizing an excellent education for each and every child in relationship to connected, engaged, and whole communities.

Think about how the following questions might help you connect your existing efforts with the functions and aims of the District Equity Committee:

- What are the district equity groups, student, parent, or community advisory committees that are honoring diversity, amplifying voices in your community, examining historical educational impacts on focal groups, and delivering outcomes for student-centered learning?
- What persons/organizations are concerned about student advocacy and voice, shared experience and connections with teachers, and community involvement in the reimagining of how school systems affect students positively?
- From a small school/district perspective, are there community members, educators, culturally-based organizations, student advocacy groups within the region willing to create a consortium of members to advance a District Equity Committee?

³ The [Aligning for Student Success Integrated Guidance](#) outlines the following as focal student groups: students experiencing poverty, students of color, students with disabilities, students who are emerging bilinguals, students experiencing homelessness, students experiencing foster care, LGBTQ2SIA+ students, students recently-arrived, migrant students, and students with experience of incarceration or detention.

Suggested approaches for implementation of the District Equity Committee

Oregon’s districts are at different points of implementation when it comes to District Equity Committees. We have outlined two different implementation approaches that districts might use as a resource to set their own implementation plans. A combination of both approaches may also be very helpful.

Approach A - Detailed implementation timeline

This approach to implementation uses the backward mapping strategy to identify key processes and procedures in order to fully enact District Equity Committees by September 15, 2025.

1: Getting Ready (leading up to Feb 2024)

- Form or delegate a team/staff to help coordinate the DEC membership nomination process
- Start to identify existing groups, teams, and work that could be involved in the development or functionality of your DEC

2: Understand and Prepare (February - June 2024)

- “SB 732: District Equity Committee” to be added as an ongoing agenda item in local school board meetings.
- Superintendent discusses SB 732 and its components with their school board.
- Superintendent reviews SB 732 guidance with board members.
- Superintendent and board develop an implementation plan.

3: Assess and Plan (July - August 2024)

- Superintendents and designated planning teams design the application and candidate selection process.
- Develop an understanding of the desired composition of the DEC in order to match demographics and needs of students and the broader school community. Design outreach to meet desired membership.

4: Engage (September 2024 - February 2025)

- Find potential members to serve on the DEC through Community Engagement events.
- Post information about the DEC on the district website.

5: Committee Member Application Period (March-July 2025)

- Continue to seek applicants via intentional outreach and utilizing ESD partners.
- Superintendent reviews applications and finalizes DEC appointee recommendations.

6: Local Approval (August 2025)

- School board appoints members of the District Equity Committee at the recommendation of the superintendent.
- The new DEC meets with the superintendent to collaborate on creating a shared understanding of the role of the DEC and supports needed.

7: Ongoing Implementation (September 15, 2025 and beyond)

- First Meeting of the District Equity Committee is set and the work begins.

Approach B - Make use of organic opportunities to build momentum over time

This approach to implementation seeks to more organically develop the design and plans for the DEC. Because the DEC offers flexibility for what it looks and feels like, seeking multiple viewpoints and design inputs can support a DEC that is uniquely situated and tailored to your district's and community's needs. While the largest districts in Oregon began implementing SB 732 in September 2022, many smaller and mid-size districts have time to foster teaching and learning opportunities around shared understanding of how best to implement District Equity Committees. What follows are some of the innovative and creative approaches that the larger districts have used and that could be of support to districts who are still in the beginning stages of this work:

- Utilizing sporting events, community engagement activities, and school-based activities as a platform to have preliminary informal conversations with community members, parents, students, and staff with the intention to provide shared understanding of District Equity Committees and start to identify individuals interested in serving on the DEC.
- Gathering a small cadre of interested parties as a means to listen and learn about the implementation of District Equity Committees. This cadre can serve as a voice to teach other groups and support in recruitment of potential District Equity Committee members.
- Encouraging school boards to learn about the implementation of District Equity Committees during board meetings and to help generate shared intentionality behind implementation.
- Dialogue around implementation of the DEC between administrators and students; administrators and staff; staff and students; and administrators and students.
- Attend community based organization meetings and/or civic organizational meetings to both provide information about the DEC and to potentially garner interest in serving on the DEC.
- Create a design/implementation committee to begin to structure the operationalizing of the DEC.

Small and Rural Accommodation (School districts with less than 1650 ADMw): For small and rural districts, implementation of DECs may emerge in partnership with local ESDs or other small/rural schools where geography, distance, and population size is a potential barrier. As districts in these rural and remote areas wish to develop a DEC utilizing a regional approach in partnership with their ESDs, districts may apply for the accommodation and gain approval by:

1. Developing an initial plan with the ESD partner or additional partnering districts and outlining the architecture of how the DEC will be implemented along with how requirements set forth in [OAR 581-022-2307](#) will be met⁴.
2. Submitting the initial plan by emailing responses to the questions below to ODE.EII@ode.oregon.gov:
 - i. Who is partnering? List relevant entities
 - ii. Who will be the primary point-of-contact for this partnership?
 - iii. How is this benefiting students, families, and communities? Describe how the assets and experiences of students and families who have been historically marginalized by our education systems will be able to inform and strengthen the DEC proposed?

⁴ This accommodation does not create new requirements, it provides ODE a way to see how the actual work being proposed would meet the requirements of existing laws and rules.

- iv. What is the geographic range the partnership would cover?
 - v. Please share how this partnership makes sense from a community sensibility?
 - vi. Any information that is ready that describes any agreements on how the requirements of SB 732 will be made across the partnership districts (i.e. liaisons to budget committee, member nominations, appointments, optional annual report, etc.)
3. ODE will review the initial plan and provide feedback if needed; ODE will make a determination on the accommodation and partner with districts to ensure implementation is both supported and successful. Additional documentation may be needed to formalize the plan.

Step Three: Begin communicating DEC criteria and your plan to your school board

While the appointments to the DEC will move through the school board, ODE encourages superintendents to explain the functions and vision the district has for the DEC to the school board ahead of time, before you seek their approval and formal engagement in the process.

This could come through an item in a work session or as part of retreat planning and engagement at the start of the 2023-24 school year. Another approach to begin communicating SB 732 implementation is through any strategic planning that is happening in the district.

One encouragement to superintendents is to add “SB 732: District Equity Committee” as a recurring agenda item to keep the board apprised of the ongoing work to implement District Equity Committees. This not only provides transparency, but also demonstrates the prioritization, as a district, to implement DEC with care.

Section 2: Purpose and Duties of a District Equity Committee

A DEC can inform and advise their school board and superintendent on a number of topics, including the experiences of historically-underserved student groups, the educational equity impacts of policy decisions, and the larger district-wide climate. DECs are responsible for highlighting school-specific situations that impact underrepresented students, and considering whether such situations are unique or systemic. DECs are meant to supplement and support local leadership in understanding how their decisions have affected students, and what they can do to make positive impacts.

SB 732 outlines core requirements for a DEC as well as additional recommended, but not required, functions that a DEC can play in the district.

Requirements

Section 4 of [OAR 581-022-2307](#) articulates that the duties of a DEC [*educational equity advisory committee*] shall include:

- Advising the school district board and the school district superintendent about the educational equity impacts of policy decisions; and
- Informing the school district board and school district superintendent of the larger district-wide climate and the experiences of underserved student groups, and advising the board and superintendent on how best to support. This includes:
 - Informing the school district board and school district superintendent when a situation arises in a school of the school district that *negatively* impacts underrepresented students, and advising the board and superintendent on how best to handle that situation.
 - Informing the school district board and school district superintendent when a situation arises in a school of the school district that *positively* impacts underrepresented students, and advising the board and superintendent on how best to replicate within the district.
 - Considering whether such situations are unique to the school or indicative of a district-wide trend, and advising on how best to handle that trend.
- The school district board, in consultation with the District Equity Committee, must select at least one member of the District Equity Committee to serve on the school district budget committee. A budget committee is not required to include a member of the District Equity Committee of the school district until a vacancy on the budget committee occurs by a member who is not also a member of the school district board.

Additional Recommendations

Section 5 of [OAR 581-022-2307](#) outlines additional functions and roles that a District Equity Committee may fulfill. Listed below are those recommendations paired with guidance, suggestions and best practices for consideration.

SB 732 Recommendations:

- **A District Equity Committee [*educational equity advisory committee*] may consider topics that the DEC deems critical to its ability to represent and elevate educational equity impacts to student experiences in the district.**
- **A District Equity Committee may consider topics submitted by the school district board or school district superintendent.**
 - **It is recommended that school boards add a standing agenda item to discuss potential issues they would like the DEC to consider and provide feedback on. The DEC liaison would report back to the board on recommendations from the DEC.**

Considerations:

District Equity Committees are intended to support a wide range of equity-related issues, topics and dynamics. They should be seen as a core ally and resource for your district to help address concrete issues. As you create your DEC, consider what topics/issues are alive in your district.

These could include:

- Reviewing disaggregated student data and the district needs assessment as an input into long-term strategic planning (aligns with ODE's [Integrated Guidance](#)).
- Consulting on equitable hiring practices^{5 6}
- Providing feedback and input on federal-program implementation (which often requires community engagement) - including but not limited to:
 - Migrant Education
 - Multilingual and/or Emergent Bilingual Learning
 - Federal school improvement efforts in high-poverty schools
 - Improved [Tribal Consultation](#)
 - Reviewing disproportionate disciplinary actions
- Improving partnerships with local and regional business partners and community-based organizations
- Focusing on student engagement, school culture, student safety, student mental health, and addressing the root causes of chronic absenteeism
- Student safety & belonging; inclusive communication practices
- Youth mental health; patterns of participation (or not) for focal groups
- Supporting improved community engagement efforts year-over-year

⁵ Fricano, C., Kim-Gervy, C., Lien, L., Gregory, R. (2021). "Just Not Ready for a Female." Coalition of Oregon School Administrators, Oregon Commission for Women, Oregon Department of Education, Oregon Office of the Governor. https://www.oregon.gov/oac/Documents1/Just_Not_Ready_for_a_Female_FINAL.pdf

⁶ [Oregon's Educator Equity Report \(2022\)](#)

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- Informing teacher & staff training and professional development by sharing short-, mid-, and long-term goals
- Curriculum adoption: As the schools and district create curriculum adoption committees, consider inviting the DEC members to participate in the process and provide feedback
- Discussing and informing district budget priorities
- Review of board policy and administrative regulations
- Reviews of student and staff handbooks
- Review, reflection, and recommendations on local district policy. Race Forward's [Equity Policies Toolkit for School Boards](#) offers useful resources, tools, and case studies.

SB 732 Recommendation:

- **A District Equity Committee *may* select a single member to serve as an advisor to the school district board, for the purpose of providing updates and acting as a liaison between the District Equity Committee and the school district board and school district superintendent.**

Considerations:

It is advantageous to each school district to create conditions whereby each DEC operates with a designated liaison. The DEC liaison, superintendent, and school board working together provides coordination between the three entities ensuring that the DEC's updates and recommendations are heard. In addition, district goals and priorities are centered when all three entities come together for the good of students. When there is a potential change in leadership and/or school board members, this collaborative structure provides a foundation for continued positive movement and cohesion of both the DEC's ongoing work along with district goals. Note: A meeting between one elected board member, a superintendent, and a non-elected DEC liaison (even if the local legal committee determines a DEC to be a public body) meeting together does not create a public meeting body.

SB 732 Recommendation:

- **A District Equity Committee may prepare an annual report that:**
 - **May include, but is not limited to the following information:**
 - **The successes and challenges the school district has experienced in meeting the educational equity needs of students in the school district; and**
 - **Recommendations the committee made to the school district board and school district superintendent, and the actions that were taken in response to those recommendations;**
 - **Is made available by being:**
 - **Distributed to the parents of the students of the school district;**
 - **Posted on the school district's website;**
 - **Presented to the school district board in an open meeting with adequate opportunity for public comment; and**
 - **Sent to the State Board of Education.**
 - **The Oregon Department of Education shall review all submitted reports and annually prepare a summary for the State Board of Education. Members of the State Board of Education shall have access to all submitted reports.**

Considerations:

The DEC’s success will be supported by greater working knowledge of how it contributes to positive district climate, culture and operations. Although the production of an annual report is not required, the intent behind that possibility is for the district to have a consistent way to keep families, communities, and state leaders updated on the key information that the District Equity Committee has worked and deliberated on.

Sharing DEC Work with the Community

Whether or not you decide to produce an annual report, consider how you can create consistent and transparent communication pathways with the community. Small districts with limited capacity could consider: informal town halls, regular presentations at the school board or in the district, tagging onto any district/school newsletters, and/or asking their ESD for support. It is highly recommended that there be some mechanism(s) for communicating this kind of information to the public. An annual report is one way that the DEC can share its findings and work, and it should be seen as an aid to equity work, allowing district staff, families, and communities to better understand key equity challenges and opportunities within the district.

At the end of the day, the work of the DEC is meant to support healing and equity work in your district and communities, and that work will be aided with more transparency and communication with students, families and communities.

Financial Stewardship and Budgeting Requirement

The District Equity Committee is also intended to help center equity in district budgeting and fiscal processes.

Section 3 of [OAR 581-022-2307](#) states that:

- **The school district board, in consultation with the District Equity Committee [*education equity advisory committee*], must select at least one member of the District Equity Committee to serve on the school district budget committee. A budget committee is not required to include a member of the District Equity Committee of the school district until a vacancy on the budget committee occurs by a member who is not also a member of the school district board.**

The DEC budget committee member can offer deeper alignment between a school district’s equity lens and its operational, budget, and financial processes. The participation of a DEC member in the budget committee provides an opportunity to increase understanding of emerging or ongoing fiscal-and-community priorities and to strengthen voices that have not been included in district financial decision-making processes. Ensuring that district budgets reflect the district’s equity priorities will offer greater alignment and accountability to students, families and communities.

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Examples of ways that the DEC can support the budget committee could include the DEC budget committee member working with the entire DEC to:

- Review budgets, documents, and processes to ensure alignment with district equity goals and priorities.
- Consider the braiding and blending of funding streams to target key strategic equity areas and focal groups.
- Offer feedback to the superintendent regarding district planning and investments for all strategies and activities, including multi-year planning for target focal groups.
- Look at a district's Integrated Planning and Budgeting Template for the ODE Integrated Guidance and provide feedback.
- [Section 3 of the Aligning for Student Success guidance on Financial Stewardship](#) could offer a starting point for the DEC budget committee member to understand how their district's budgeting processes are tied to educational equity.

Section 3: Membership and Participation

A District Equity Committee represents a partnership between local communities and local district leaders. It is an opportunity for individuals who educational systems have excluded, impacted, marginalized, or underserved to provide regular and consistent feedback to district leadership.

Underrepresented⁷ parents, employees, students, and community members are the core of a District Equity Committee. The focus of the DEC should be rooted in local community voice⁸ and need, and it is important that these spaces remain safe and protected for members to review and reflect on their experiences within the district, and then provide meaningful feedback to their school board and superintendent. DECs themselves should work with school leaders on how best they can be supported, how to deliver feedback, and what additional work is necessary to fully elevate student experience.

Requirements

Section 2 of [OAR 581-022-2307](#) articulates that:

- A DEC [*Educational Equity Advisory Committee*] shall be selected by the school district board and school district superintendent and must be composed of parents, employees, students and community members from the school district.
- The school district superintendent is responsible for coordinating the member nomination process and proposing finalists to the school district board.
- The school district board is responsible for appointing members from those proposed by the superintendent, and ensuring that membership is primarily representative of underserved student groups.
- For the purpose of selecting members, the school district board and school district superintendent:
 - May not deny members based on language;
 - May not deny members based on immigration status;
 - May not deny members based on protected class, including age, disability, national origin, race, color, marital status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity;
 - May not appoint a voting member of the school board or the school district superintendent to an educational equity advisory committee; and
 - Must ensure that the composition of an educational equity advisory committee elevates underrepresented parent, employee, student, and community member voices.
- The school district board and school district superintendent, in consultation with the educational equity advisory committee, shall fill vacancies on the committee in the same manner as original appointments.

⁷ “Underrepresented” refers to communities, groups, families and students that due to systemic barriers and intersectional oppression have been excluded and limited proportionate access to the dominant or mainstream educational system despite efforts to participate. This includes students of color, tribal students, English language learners, LGBTQ2SIA+ students, students experiencing and surviving poverty and houselessness, students with disabilities, women/girls, and students from rural communities.

⁸ “Community Voice” means that members representing the community served by the [project/plan/initiative] will be involved in co-constructing the project design, implementation, evaluation and/or providing strategic guidance in final decision-making.

Nomination & Appointing Process

Superintendents design the application and candidate selection process, which can vary greatly. One of the responsibilities superintendents hold in the nominating process is to put forward candidates who are ready, willing, and open to engaging meaningfully with each other in support of the aims set forth in statute.

The design of the application process can be by intentional outreach, an application or nomination process, or a combination. Designing this process should take into account how existing equity work can be restructured to meet the requirements of the DEC, as well as the ideal size of the group. The following sections include suggestions and guidance for locating potential District Equity Committee candidates, avoiding tokenization, as well as determining roles and ideal group size.

Finding Members through Community Engagement

A recommended practice for finding members begins with authentic community engagement. Authentic Community Engagement provides a critical foundation with students, parents, employees, and community members from underserved and underrepresented communities within the district. Developing a strategy of engagement and outreach to specific focal populations can begin by completing the [Mapping Existing Equity Efforts](#) worksheet which includes an example School & Community Partners Asset Map. The Asset Mapping process documents existing community connections and resources, such as key staff, affinity groups, tribal partners, local leaders, community-based organizations, and culturally-specific organizations. As the impacts of the developing committee will land on students, consider student involvement early on in this process. Solicit student feedback on trusted staff, parents, and community members to include in the School & Community Partners Asset Map. Returning to this Asset Map as a list of contacts to invite will support outreach efforts. To truly broaden support and outreach to underrepresented voices, return to community engagement regularly to expand connections with insights from focal group populations.

Outreach

Outreach and messaging about the development of the District Equity Committee can be an excellent opportunity to find potential members and also to raise community awareness about how to get involved to support the DEC beyond membership. Consider accessibility along with the languages spoken and practiced within the district during outreach.

Outreach will likely vary depending on the method of appointing applicants, ranging from intentional-and-selective outreach to a broad search. During a broad search for interested applicants, multiple methods of communication and outreach are encouraged. For small and rural regions, connecting with the Education Service District as a hub to foster partnerships is encouraged. Consider what is shared in messaging about the role of the DEC member, the Member Terms of Service (if opting to implement), time capacity required, and skill sets sought, along with a basic outline of the application & appointment process.

Further outreach to raise general community awareness is recommended to provide an opportunity to introduce the DEC, and to invite in student, family, and affinity group involvement. This [District Equity Committee Introduction Message Template](#) could offer some recommendations on how to frame the DEC and extend the opportunity for involvement.

Skill Sets & Lived Experiences

Members are responsible for advising the school board and superintendent on the educational equity impacts of policy decisions. Members should inform the school board and superintendent when a school-based situation arises that negatively impacts underrepresented students, and be able to advise on the proper response.

Additionally, members can highlight effective strategies that support underrepresented students in overcoming barriers to acknowledge and celebrate progress. Ideally, members who hold this responsibility will have direct knowledge of the complexities, dynamics, and nuances of your district. Members should be able to provide guidance on these issues by bringing valuable insights from lived experiences, advocacy work, career history, and community involvement. Members who possess contextual knowledge of public education locally and statewide and who represent the various needs and demographics of your district community will likely have valuable perspectives to offer.

These considerations are recommended:

- When considering member applicants, return to the Equity Lens & short, mid, and long-term goals to ensure a connection between what the member may be able to offer in relationship to the district's equity vision.
- When assembling a new group of DEC members, consider candidates in relationship to one another to foster a supportive and balanced composition.
 - For example, a trusted staff member working alongside students may be supportive in further elevating student voice.
 - As the skills of collaboration and deep listening will be vital to this role, selecting members who either have a history utilizing said skills or who demonstrate their ongoing commitment to collaboration in diverse settings will be important.

Avoid Tokenism

The Oxford English Dictionary defines tokenism as “the practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce.” While ensuring the composition of the District Equity Committee elevates underrepresented voices, avoiding the tokenism of individuals from underrepresented populations during the nomination & appointment process is critical.⁹ This is particularly true for regions where diverse populations can be limited. Recommendations include:

1. Frame appreciation for the valuable perspective specific to the experience individuals with underrepresented identities can bring.
2. Build and sustain relationships based on reciprocity and follow-through.

⁹ Statute names that DEC membership should be primarily representative of underserved student groups. This guidance is provided to make this effort authentic and to try to avoid a phenomenon where a member might be nominated with the intent of “checking the box”. DEC membership is a meaningful opportunity to recognize and build appreciation for a range of life experiences and perspectives.

3. Foster environments that allow each member to bring the multifaceted and intersectional identities they hold as individuals. Consider factors of culturally-responsive care and hospitality to foster inclusivity:
 - o These factors include considerations for safety, comfort, scheduling needs, child care, food and fulfillment of ADA requirements in meeting spaces in order to meet the needs of every member and allow them to participate.

Group Size

When designing and adapting the DEC, the size of the group can impact the efficacy of what the group is able to accomplish while working in collaboration. Ideally, the group is large enough to accomplish the tasks needed, yet still small enough to communicate effectively with opportunities for each voice to be heard. A recommended range is anywhere from 8 to 14 people. An effective DEC could function well with as few as five members for small and rural districts. This is not a dictate, rule, or requirement and the size of the group can be set within each district’s policy formation. Here’s information to help inform your decision-making:

Size of DEC	Pros	Cons
Less than 8 members	Decision-making process is much easier with fewer people. Cost of managing the DEC is lower. Recruitment process may be easier. A smaller team may be more nimble and develop more efficient collaboration skills.	Less diversified due to reduced numbers. DEC operations may be impacted due to attendance issues. Greater workload for individual members, potential for burn out. Potential for less analysis and discussion on key issues due to lack of different perspectives. Greater potential for “groupthink”. Desired skill set may not be achieved. Less flexibility in turnover & succession planning.
Greater than 10 members	Greater opportunity for genuine diversity. Broader range of skill sets. Workload may be shared across greater numbers. Potential for enhanced analysis and deliberation. Able to cope with absence of members. More effective for turnover & succession planning.	Less time for each DEC member to weigh-in. Greater potential cost to fund DEC. Potential for cliques to develop. Not enough work to keep members stimulated and interested. Potential for reduced commitment (i.e. plenty of people to do the work). Increased numbers do not necessarily mean better decisions.

<p>Between 8-10 members</p>	<p>Potentially large enough to meet diversity and skill base needs.</p> <p>Adequate numbers to “spread the workload” and retain interest at the same time.</p> <p>Cost to fund DEC is not excessive.</p> <p>DEC member engagement can be maximized without impact on the decision making process.</p> <p>Orderly succession can be managed.</p> <p>Attendance issues are mitigated.</p>	<p>At 8 members, if 2 or more are absent, DEC effectiveness and diligence may be negatively impacted.</p> <p>Requires full commitment of all members as numbers do not allow individuals to take an extended leave of absence.</p> <p>Lower numbers may impact community perceptions of appropriate representation and governance.</p> <p>Even numbers may be problematic in a 4 - 4 vote.</p>
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Roles

Your DEC’s design may include leadership and role titles. If this is the case, it is advised to document any authority that is delegated. In general, it is helpful to define roles, duties, and responsibilities early on for all members. Consider how roles can be designated to foster efficacy and collaboration. Some roles may best be suited to individuals with specific skill sets, and some may rotate. Responsibilities to consider include:

- Facilitation
- Note Taking¹⁰
- Liaison to the Board Budget Committee
- Time keeper
- Agenda Coordinator
- Schedule Coordinator
- Liaison between the DEC and the school board

DEC Member Appointment

The School Board is responsible for appointing candidates who are nominated by the superintendent based on applications submitted. **The school board and superintendent must ensure that membership is primarily representative of underserved student groups.** During this process, it is recommended to anchor in this guidance and to apply the district’s equity lens and/or decision tool.

In the hypothetical case of disagreement or dissonance between the nominations of the superintendent and the appointments of the School Board, districts are encouraged to seek technical assistance from their legal counsel, education service district, OSBA, and COSA.

¹⁰ In consultation with your legal counsel, note taking may be best completed by a trained volunteer, DEC member, or district staff person who has access to information about best practices for keeping notes when or if a discussion is considered to be a public meeting.

Member Terms of Service

While not required, districts may consider establishing Member Terms of Service that clearly outlines the roles, responsibilities, and commitments of each member. This could be a collaborative opportunity for boards, district leaders, and DEC members to develop a Member Terms of Service agreement together (formal or informal), if desired. Since a school board selects the DEC, it may want to establish these terms in board adopted policy. If Member Terms of Service are established, ODE guidance on best practices includes:

- Determining what is most appropriate for the district’s need and context, whether an informal document to be shared amongst members, or a more formal contractual document.
- If informal, consider:
 - Collaboratively developing the Member Terms of Service with the DEC; possibly including:
 - Commitments expected of individual members;
 - The process for leaving or being asked to leave the position.
- Communicating the Member Terms of Service to potential members interested in joining before they begin the application process.
- Ensuring the Member Terms of Service is accessible and available as a translated document.
- Considering general term of service variables, including:
 - Does a member’s term of service extend beyond their enrollment in the district, such as when a student graduates?
 - Does a member’s term of service continue if they leave their status of employment within the district?

Addressing Barriers to Participation

Longstanding barriers may impact participation from underserved or marginalized communities. These could include easily fixable variables such as making these meetings in a place, time, and way of doing business that is accessible and less rooted in protocols that are difficult to follow (e.g. Robert’s Rules). This could also include deeper variables such as relationships that have not been built with communities. If the district has created a team tasked with coordinating the membership nomination process, this team could also address these kinds of barriers.

Again, consider factors of culturally-responsive care and hospitality to foster inclusivity for each member: safety; scheduling needs; child care; food; transportation, translation, interpretation, and fulfillment of ADA requirements in meeting spaces. Considering these factors will help reduce barriers to participation and support the needs of every member.

Section 4: Structure and Organization

The structure and organization of your District Equity Committee will vary depending on your district's needs and variables like district size, existing equity teams, and bandwidth to staff the DEC.

Guiding Questions

Once your DEC's membership has been set, here are some key questions that can guide the launch of the group.

1. Why are you meeting? What's the group's purpose?
2. Who sits at the table? How are guests treated? Can visitors audit meetings?
3. Who provides initial leadership?
4. How will the DEC be supported? Consider how notes are taken, food and drinks, communication of action items, and the role of any staff or volunteers to support the group.
5. Will the group use committees to get work done? How will the DEC keep committees accountable for doing the right work?
6. Does the committee see benefits or drawbacks from establishing a quorum to meet, deliberate, or make recommendations?
7. How will the group meet its responsibilities, including responding to concerns, records requests, or questions about public meeting law?

Structure & Processes

As you consider the size of your District Equity Committee, you will also want to plan for key structural, operational, and logistical questions, including: how decision-making will work; what meeting protocols & processes will support DEC dialogue and operations; how frequently the DEC meets; and where the DEC will meet.

Decision-making¹¹

How decisions get made is a common part of an organizational document and of a governance structure. **One-person-one-vote** with majority prevailing is certainly one way of making decisions and is quite common, but there are other effective methods, as well. In a **collaborative decision-making** process, the group may decide that reaching a decision by consensus would be best. Then, the governing document would define consensus and define what happens if consensus cannot be reached. The governing document usually also defines how many members of a governing body must be present in order for the decision to be made—called a quorum. Regardless of what method you choose, DEC members will ideally agree with the choice the group sets on decision-making and “own” it for some length of time. Of course, you can change the decision-making method at a specified juncture, particularly if it is not working for the group.

¹¹ Work in this section comes from Portland State University and the National Policy Consensus Center's [“Creating a Collaborative Governance Framework: Supporting Oregon's STEM Hubs”](#)

One example of language related to decision-making:

The Deschutes Water Alliance (DWA)

1. “The DWA will use a consensus decision-making process and will foster a collaborative approach to problem solving. ‘Consensus decision-making’ means that every voting member present at the meeting votes yes or abstains. Each decision arising from an agenda item will be structured as follows:
 - a. **Discussion of the Item:** The item is discussed with the goal of identifying opinions and information on the topic at hand. The general direction of the group and potential proposals for action are identified during the discussion.
 - b. **Formation of a Proposal:** Based on the discussion, a formal decision proposal on the issue is presented to the group.
 - c. **Call for Consensus:** The facilitator calls for consensus on the proposal. Each member of the group actively states their agreement with the proposal.
 - d. **Identification and Addressing of Concerns:** If consensus is not achieved, each dissenter presents his/her concerns on the proposal, potentially starting another round of discussion to address or clarify the concern.
 - e. **Modification of the Proposal:** The proposal is amended or rephrased in an attempt to address the concerns of the decision-makers. The process then returns to the call for consensus and the cycle is repeated until a satisfactory decision is made.
2. Members are encouraged to voice and have recorded all views. If any member sees the need to stand in the way of consensus on a decision, he/she will explain his/her concern with the proposed decision to the group, and the group will make every attempt to understand the concern and the underlying interests. Members may choose not to block the consensus even though they do not fully agree with the decision. Once a consensus decision has been reached, all members agree not to oppose that decision.
3. Sufficient time will be provided for the members to seek advice from the entities they represent, constituents, agencies, or other experts, when desired, before a decision is adopted. All members present at the meeting are included in the consensus process. Any member may abstain from the consensus and may request to be acknowledged as abstaining in the publication of the consensus. Abstaining is a choice not to block or support the decision.
4. The group may decide to delegate an issue to a working group for further exploration, development or recommendation to the full group.
5. The group may delegate decisions on administrative matters to a smaller group, such as the executive committee.”

Meeting Protocols & Processes

While establishing a DEC, it is as important to talk about the kind of dialogue the group wants to have and how it wants to have it, as it is to set the technical roles and logistical needs. Because the larger purpose of a DEC is to help a diverse community come into relationship and identify both community assets and solve challenges, the methods used for agenda setting, discussion and supporting member participation are essential. As DEC's set their agendas and agree on how meetings should be facilitated, ODE suggests that time should be spent building relationships and determining an approach both to participatory decision-making and how the group engages with tension in a way that supports different perspectives.

Fostering a Generative Space

DECs are meant to support deeper equity reflection and response in the district. As such, they are meant to be able to hold sensitive, tender, and sometimes contentious discussions on issues that matter deeply for students, families, and staff. There are many approaches to holding a space that is conducive for this. You should consider your own community and culture, what frameworks (e.g. Courageous Conversations; Critical Friends Protocols) that are already in place or understood, and what you could build on to foster a generative space for the DEC. As an example, Arao & Clemens's ["From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces"](#) offers five equity-centered alternatives to some common "ground rules" that can engender a generative space:

1. Instead of "agreeing to disagree," center "controversy with civility," a "value whereby different views are expected and honored with a group commitment to understand the sources of disagreement and to work cooperatively toward common solutions"
2. Instead of "Don't take things personally," an agreement around "own your intentions and your impact" supports an understanding that "the impact of our actions is not always congruent with our intentions and that positive or neutral intentions do not trump negative impact."
3. Rather than simply asking others to "Challenge by choice," instead interrogate and name the factors that inhibit comfort (e.g. power, privilege, race, class, gender) to being comfortable with challenging others in the space.
4. While "respect" is often understood as a universal value, what is less discussed is the different ways that respect looks across cultures and communities. "The objective here is not to lead participants to consensus but rather to support them in maintaining increased mindfulness of the different ways they can demonstrate respect to one another.
5. Finally, a common ground rule says there should be "No attacks." Rather than accept this rule casually, Arao & Clemens "ask [their] participants to describe the differences between a personal attack on an individual and a challenge to an individual's idea or belief or statement that simply makes an individual feel uncomfortable." This can lead to deeper nuance around what is underneath the perceived threat.

Frequency

Each DEC will have the autonomy to decide the frequency of meetings based on their context and needs. It might make sense for the DEC to meet more frequently (e.g. weekly or bi-weekly) as it first gets going to create conditions for relationship, purpose, and clarity of structure. ODE recommends a regular meeting rhythm of at least one time per month. There are likely times when the DEC needs to gather to be responsive to community needs or to support more significant engagement in planning efforts or budgeting.

Location

The DEC can work in conjunction with the superintendent to determine a central location (either on a school campus or other community location) so that all members have access (thinking about distance and time). Meeting location may be in a virtual setting in order to provide accommodations for distance, travel, or other considerations.

The Very First Meeting

As you plan the very first District Equity Committee meeting, here are some considerations that could be structured into the first agenda:

- Ideally, the superintendent would attend the first meeting to help provide purpose, background, and lay a foundation for why the committee is critical. The first meeting will set the stage for the function, spirit, and trajectory of the District Equity Committee and the superintendent can help reinforce the value and the need for the DEC.
- The DEC should spend time building relationships, sharing stories, and offering mutual connections. The DEC is composed of individuals, each with their own unique experiences, voices, and perspectives, and will be nourished by the degree to which these can be fully expressed.
- If key logistical/operational details have been decided already (such as the variables previously outlined: leadership & decision making; meeting protocols & processes; frequency; location), spend time walking the DEC through those decisions and why those have been made. If some/all of those have not yet been deliberated, those details are themselves valuable to dedicate intentional time to.
- Offer visioning/strategy space: the District Equity Committee is intended to be a long-term support for the district while also being able to be responsive to short-term needs/issues that arise. Creating conditions for success over the long haul may involve dedicating time upfront to shared visioning, collective brainstorming/whiteboarding, free-flowing discussion, and activities that allow the DEC to envision what might be possible for the group.
- Begin an initial conversation about how the DEC will keep the community informed and if the DEC will exercise its ability (the statute reads *may*) to generate and share an annual report. ODE recommends districts and the DEC discuss any implications of this choice with legal counsel.

Section 5: Empowering and Resourcing Your District Equity Committee

The DEC brings people together to have honest conversations and to create action plans that work to dismantle current and historical inequities and continuous improvement. As a new entity, the DEC will navigate many new relationships, systems, and issues. Many of these will span across streams of work areas of the district that will need support from the superintendent and other district staff so that the DEC can carry out their mission and do their work effectively. In particular, as the DEC is meant to reflect the demographics of the communities and families that the district serves, DEC members may encounter issues and tensions related to positionality and power within the district. For small-and-rural districts where personnel is limited, perhaps consider engaging your ESD for training and support for the District Equity Committee members. Consider the training needs that will collectively best support members to work in alignment towards the district's equity goals.

Requirements

Empowering the District Equity Committee with the right tools, conditions, context, and resources is crucial for its long-term success. Section 3 of [OAR 581-022-2307](#) states that:

- **Each school district, in consultation with the District Equity Committee [*Educational Equity Advisory Committee*], is required to provide sufficient support to District Equity Committee members to participate in meetings, including, but not limited to, access to district-managed emails, translation and interpretation services, and relevant public meeting and security trainings.**

Supporting the DEC to do their best work

Beyond the requirements around what a district is required to provide for the DEC are a number of additional supports that you could offer the District Equity Committee to best serve your district. In most cases, DEC members are volunteering their time and capacity to support the district. Putting them in the best position to succeed and ensuring that their work makes a meaningful impact will help create a long-lasting District Equity Committee. Here are best practices and considerations for how you can support the DEC to do their deepest work in service to your district and community:

- Designating a district staff member to the DEC specifically for administrative, operational, and coordination support. If the DEC is unpaid, then supporting DEC members to spend their time discussing equity issues rather than engaging in administrative work will help with their time and bandwidth.
- The superintendent and district staff can support the DEC by providing context, story, and knowledge related to: district/school/community history; knowledge of operational budgets and state/federal plans; key anecdotes, vignettes and stories to help paint a picture of the district landscape; and other helpful insights that will allow the DEC to have as informed a discussion as possible. Think of this like the way in which some school boards or a site committee is staffed and supported with any inquiries.
- A meaningful practice is for the superintendent to simply be responsive to the DEC's requests and needs. Whether it is a request for follow-up, to attend certain meetings or contact specific staff, if the DEC feels like the superintendent is a cheerleader for their work and backs that with action, they will feel more empowered to do deeper work on behalf of the district.
- Allocating funding for the District Equity Committee. Supporting a DEC could be an allowable use of several grant programs (such as the Student Investment Account in the Aligning for Student Success

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Integrated Guidance) or the general fund. If funding allowed, a partial staffing of FTE could ensure the DEC has steady operational momentum that could be used to help cover: DEC gatherings/retreats (to support relationship-building and deeper strategic vision); professional development for the DEC; travel/food costs to help DEC members meet communities and families (especially in rural areas).

- Offering professional development, team-building activities, training or other opportunities to the DEC that can help them create shared equity frameworks, consciousness, and knowledge. Also making sure to attend to jargon, highly technical language, or “edu-speak” that may not be familiar for DEC members.

Supporting the DEC with Local, District Policy

SB 732 allows for a range of approaches to a District Equity Committee, including numerous recommendations such as developing an annual report to share with the district community and selecting a single DEC member to serve as an advisor to the school district board. Some districts, however, may wish to institutionalize their own local board-adopted policies and/or create resolutions that can make even more explicit the equity-driven goals that a district has for its DEC. For example, SB 732’s recommendations could be codified into local district policy.

If districts would like support with the creation or review of equity policies that can enhance the work of the DEC, they may contact the Policy Team at the [Oregon School Boards Association](#). For another key resource on equity and local district policy, see Race Forward’s [Equity Policies Toolkit for School Boards](#).

Key Connection Points

Creating conditions for the success of the District Equity Committee involves connecting the DEC with critical work in the district. Establishing touchpoints for DEC members to engage work across the district – or for district staff that aren’t on the DEC to engage in DEC work – will support the DEC to more effectively advise on important equity issues. Consider how to ensure that the DEC has as much context about the district’s ongoing equity work as possible. This could include:

- Regular briefings from the superintendent, district staff, community members, and other key equity teams in the district.
- Sharing the [Mapping Existing Equity Efforts Worksheet](#) with the DEC and creating standing agenda items in DEC meetings for presentations about other district equity work.
- Identifying what other meetings and teams DEC members can attend (either regularly or on an ad-hoc basis).

Safeguarding Transparency, Accountability and Safety

District Determinations on DEC's and Public Meeting Laws

For the District Equity Committee to do its work effectively, the district should plan for how they can account for the DEC's safety and well-being while upholding any relevant aspects of [Oregon's Public Meetings Law](#) it determines must be met.

Requirements like Public Meetings Law and responding to requests for public records are intended to support transparency and accountability. They can create greater public understanding and confidence in the DEC's work, as well as present the DEC opportunities to learn more from the public about what is occurring in the district. However, these requirements can also present challenges, tensions, and even hostility as the DEC touches on issues or dynamics in the district that could be sensitive or potentially polarizing. DEC members are volunteers and may not be trained in public relations or sensitive communications, let alone facing adversity from the public. This adversity could take the form of racial (or other identity-based) attacks/abuse, harassment, and repeat disturbances. These can cause impact and trauma for DEC members.

Consult with Legal Counsel on Local Application of Public Meetings Law

Public Meetings Law applies to any governing body of a public body. So, what is a governing body?

According to the [Department of Justice's Public Meeting Manual](#) a body that has authority to make recommendations to a public body on policy or administration is a governing body. All meetings of a governing body must be open to the public, unless Public Meetings Law permits the body to meet in executive session or otherwise provides an exception. These laws apply regardless of whether the governing body members are private citizens or not. The public meeting manual specifically provides, as an example of a public body, a "school board advisory committee consisting of private citizens who meet with and make recommendations to the board on school matters." **ODE is not able to provide legal advice on the applicability or requirements of the public meetings laws. Districts should consult with their legal counsel to determine whether the laws apply to the DEC.**

Throughout the rulemaking process, ODE heard significant discussion, questions, and concerns regarding the applicability of public meeting law to these equity committees. Given the composition and responsibilities of these committees, supporting the safety and wellbeing of members is both critical and difficult in a public meeting setting.

Districts may create meaningful designs and approaches to meeting SB 732 that meet the laws requirements, support high-quality DEC member participation, and adhere to public meeting law. ODE is not able to offer legal counsel or advice on any given design. Questions regarding how a proposed design does and doesn't interact with public meeting law needs to be addressed by local legal counsel. Districts may also review the information in the Department of Justice Public Meetings Manual and seek guidance from organizations like the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) and the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) when considering what is allowable.

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Asking vulnerable community members to step into a space that does not account for the different ways that transparency is felt by the different types of Committee members is a significant implementation challenge. The department has partnered with both COSA and OSBA on resources for holding safe and effective meetings, and we want to make those available to folks as we move forward.

Supporting the safety and well-being of DEC members

ODE recognizes the challenging reality that community leaders stewarding work focused on educational equity have been and could be impacted by threats, harassment, or intimidation. Districts should make pragmatic assessments about how to navigate these challenges in relationship with DEC members, and in ways that keep this important work moving.

It is vital to plan for the safety and well-being of DEC members.

There are limitations to what state guidance can offer to adequately ensure the safety and well-being of DEC members. For additional guidance in this regard, school administrators will benefit from connecting with the [Coalition of Oregon School Administrators](#) (COSA). COSA can provide proactive and responsive resources related to risk management, safety planning, and providing protocols for use with students, staff, and volunteers. COSA and OSBA are resources in the scenario where DEC members may be targeted or where public records requests could be used as a harassing tactic to unwind the goals of the DEC.

COSA can be reached at support@cosa.k12.or.us

Districts are encouraged to consider:

- Creating and implementing documented working agreements between the superintendent, school board, and DEC that include clear safety plans and risk management protocols for students, staff and volunteers.
- Partnering with your local education service district (ESD) to support training and share resources within a given region.
- Providing an orientation and onboarding process and materials that set up DEC members for success. Examples of materials might include: current budget, initiatives that the district is focusing on, attendance data, discipline data, strategic plans.
- Consulting this ODE resource on [Ensuring focal student group safety and privacy](#).

ODE will listen to early implementation efforts and continue to develop tools or frameworks that can support the important community dialogues these new laws animate while also seeking solutions to complex questions about student privacy.

Assuring the responsibilities, opportunities, and obligations of SB 732 are met

Senate Bill 732 sets minimum requirements for the implementation of District Equity Committees (DEC) and is set forth in Oregon Administrative Rules, Chapter 581 under Division 22 ([OAR 581-022-2307](#)). Annually, school districts are expected to complete assurances of compliance with the minimum requirements of SB732 just as they do with all requirements under Division 22. Signed assurances are submitted to the Oregon Department of Education.

The assurance process is constructed to be a supportive model for districts. Should a district not be in compliance with the DEC Rules, the assurance process provides districts opportunities to seek Technical Assistance in support of implementation. If districts know they are not in compliance, they may take a proactive approach and inform ODE. After which, they could begin the corrective-action process. If the district continues to be out of compliance following corrective action, ODE may withhold State School Funds as a final measure of accountability. Again, this process is designed to come alongside districts in the implementation of DECs and is not constructed to be punitive in nature. For more information on Division 22, please review the [Division 22 Standards For Public Elementary and Secondary Schools](#).

As with all laws, there is the letter and the spirit. The aim of this guidance is to speak to both. A thriving education for each and every student in Oregon can be brought to life through meaningful engagement and the establishment of strong and well-supported District Equity Committees.