

About WestEd

[WestEd](#) is a nonpartisan research, development, and service agency that works collaboratively systemwide to provide a broad range of services — research and evaluation, professional learning, technical assistance, and policy guidance — that are tailored to the needs of schools and districts. We draw from and add to the research base in our core areas of work and identify the best available evidence to guide decision-making. WestEd operates with a particular commitment to populations that traditionally have been inadequately served or unfairly treated, aiming to eliminate opportunity gaps and foster equitable opportunities and outcomes through all we do.

Our Equity Work

Commitments to achieve education equity are not enough—policies, practices, and systems must change accordingly. This requires mindfulness in centering race and identifying and addressing power, privilege, and bias-based beliefs. The intent of our work is to address and fix inequitable policies, practices, and systems that do not work effectively or efficiently to achieve educational equity for students and their families. To do this, we coach educators to use culturally responsive data inquiry methods in order to include the voices, expertise, needs and aspirations of those most impacted by—and therefore knowledgeable about—education inequities. Examples of our services include:

- Coaching and professional learning to help educators learn and apply foundational district, school and classroom equity skills, including in topics covered in the publicly available [Engaging Equity](#) course
- Facilitated leadership and instructional reflection and improvement protocols (e.g. application of school/classroom observation and walkthrough tools) to improve availability and quality of culturally responsive and sustaining practices
- Collaborative skill-building for culturally responsive social and emotional learning practices that are critical to welcoming, empowering classroom environments and that honor students' identities and individual learning needs
- System-level supports essential to build sustainable leadership for equity-centered decision-making, including:
 - Collaborative [Systemic Equity Reviews](#), which may include reviews of outcomes and experiences, and their associated policies and practices, related to academics, behavior, family engagement, school climate, special education, and other school/district-based systems.

- Asset mapping and landscape analysis to help understand community needs and opportunities for improving educational experiences and outcomes
- Facilitation of professional learning communities, practical workshops and coaching to build culturally responsive data literacy and data inquiry skills for equity decision-making at all levels (e.g. policy, leadership, and practice)
- Differentiated coaching and strategic planning to help districts attract, support and retain a culturally diverse educator workforce
- Community-centered design and implementation of a district Portrait of a Learner that establishes an actionable vision and aligned set of student and educator competencies to guide equity-centered improvement efforts
- Coaching and facilitation to cultivate inclusive learning environments where students develop positive learner identities and feel equipped and empowered to direct their own learning, through [WestEd's unique model of formative assessment](#)
- Facilitation of professional learning and coaching for leveraging use of student evidence of learning and student agency, and elevating and recognizing student funds of knowledge during instruction as an equity strategy