

## THE OCCASION

# 2018 SECC EQUITY SUMMIT Accountable Leadership: Opportunities for Equitable Systems

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Southeast Comprehensive Center at AIR

November 29–30, 2018



**SOUTHEAST**  
Comprehensive Center  
at American Institutes for Research

**SECC EQUITY SUMMIT**  
Accountable Leadership:  
Opportunities for Equitable Systems

## About the Event

The Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) Equity Summit–Accountable Leadership: Opportunities for Equitable Systems took place November 29–30, 2018, at the Historic King Edward Hotel–Hilton Garden Inn in Jackson, Mississippi. The event, which followed several optional pre-summit activities, offered state and local education agency leadership and other education stakeholders the opportunity to take stock of the conditions, practices, and policies within their states and local contexts that call attention to equity as a moral imperative.



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## Goals

- To clarify the purpose for the event.
- To help participants arrive at a working definition for equity leadership focused on self and system.
- To move participants to action for educational equity.

## Objective

Participants will...

- Examine equity-related considerations that clarify the intersection of self and systems in equity leadership.
- Consider ways in which they can enact self- and system-change for educational equity.

# Equity Leadership



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*“What the best and wisest parent wants for his child, that must we want for all the children of the community. Anything less is unlovely, and left unchecked, destroys our democracy.”*

- John Dewey, 1907



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# Equity Leadership—What is it?

It is leadership that anticipates and acts strategically to address the needs of all education shareholders (particularly those with the greatest unmet needs) and develops a culture that advances individual and collective growth, knowledge and skill development, and the empowerment of those shareholders.



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# Equity Leadership—What it is not

## EQUITY LEADERSHIP IS *NOT* ...

- a fleeting trend
- inaction, indecision, or silence
- unquestioned compliance
- deficit-focused
- disconnected from learners, families, and communities
- unaware of community cultural wealth
- ambiguous or unintentional
- designed to protect or preserve oppressive norms
- meant to benefit *some* learners and education shareholders
- for those who lack the will and courage to speak out against inequity and actively pursue equity

# Equity Leadership—What Does It Enable?

It enables the capacity to recognize the value of the undervalued and to appreciate assets misunderstood to be deficits.



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# Equity Leadership—Why Is It Needed?

*It is a moral imperative!*

“When you look at the disparities and inequities we have in education, employment, and healthcare, it is not due to overt racist or the White supremacist. It is due to the well-intentioned teachers who educate our children, employers who decide who to hire, who to retain, and who to promote, and it is those individuals who are unaware of their hidden biases that are having the major impact on our standard of living.”

Source: Derald Wing Sue from PBS News Hour, 2015, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/what-is-a-microaggression>



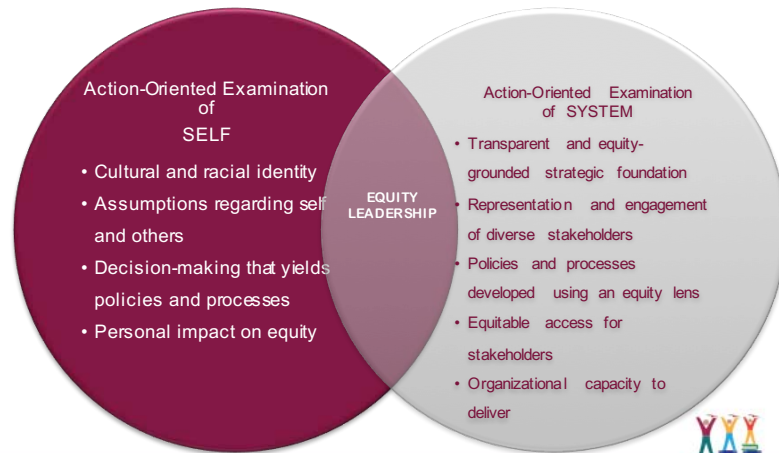
Note to Self ...  
Check biases.



Photo by [Andre Mouton](#) on [Unsplash](#)



## Equity Leadership Requires Examination of Self and Systems



## Taking Stock of Self

- How do you identify?
- Which aspects of your identity do you opt to highlight?
- Which aspects of your identity do you opt to mute at times? Why?
- Where did you learn about what would advantage or disadvantage you in terms of your identity?
- What assumptions do you hold regarding yourself and others based on cultural and racial identity?
- How do these assumptions affect your interactions with and decisions involving education stakeholders?
- How do they influence your decision making and actions, personally and professionally?
- What is your impact on equity?
- What would you have it be?

# What Does an Examination of Our Education Systems Reveal?



Decades In Pursuit of Educational Opportunity for All

# Examining Our Systems

- What was the impetus for the 5 decades of national mandates?
- Who accrued benefits?
- Who did not benefit? Why?
- What outcomes are being produced within a context of ongoing inequity?
- As a leader, for what part of this challenge are you accountable?



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## System Outcomes

- Based on the Schott Foundation's Opportunity to Learn Index, **students from historically disadvantaged families have just a 51% opportunity to learn** when compared to White, non-Latino students (<http://www.blackboysreport.org/2015-black-boys-report.pdf>).
- Diverse students are **disproportionally suspended and expelled**; some 1.2 million African American students were suspended from K–12 public schools in 1 academic year (Smith & Harper, 2015).
- High- and low-/moderately-performing **schools perform similarly poorly in their preparation students of color and students from low-income families** (Ushomirsky & Williams, March 2015).



## Systems Outcomes

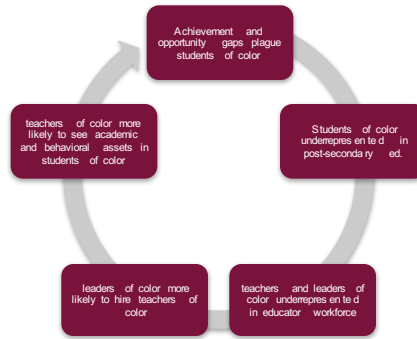
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) learners have been **historically misdiagnosed, misidentified and overrepresented in programs serving students with high-incidence disabilities** (e.g., learning disabilities, speech/language impairments CLD learners also are **underrepresented in gifted education and advanced educational programming** (Tomlinson, 2003).
- **Negative life outcomes**, including completion of fewer years of schooling, increased likelihood of reporting poor health lower wages as adult and fewer working hours as an adult in the workforce are an outcome of inequitable educational practices (Children Defense Fund, 2012).





# Equitable Access—A Systems Issue

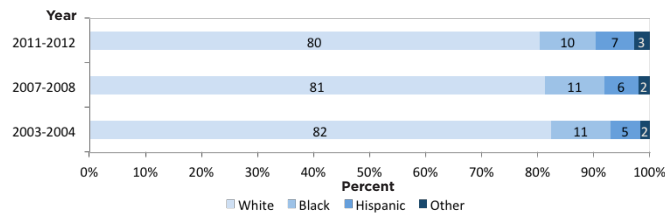
- Research recognizes teachers of color as important role models for both White students and students of color (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011).
- The educator workforce remains mostly White and female.
- The issue of insufficient employment for teachers of color is linked to a larger system issue—student of color underachievement in elementary and secondary schools.



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# Race/Ethnicity of Principals in the United States

**Figure 3. Percentage distribution of public school principals, by race/ethnicity: Selected years 2003–04, 2007–08, and 2011–12**



**NOTE:** The 2007–08 data for the Other category include estimates in which the coefficient of variation (CV) is between 30 and 50 percent of estimates. The Other category represents the sum of Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Two or more races.

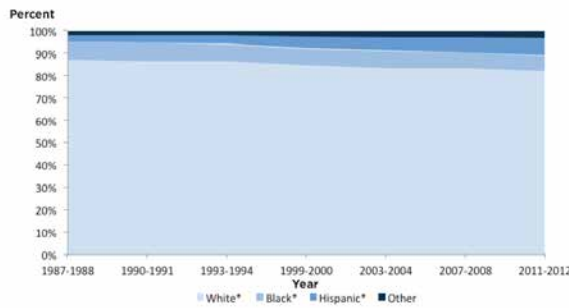
Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 6



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# Race/Ethnicity of Teachers in the United States

**Figure 2. Percentage distribution of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1987-88 through 2011-12**



*\*Data for years 1987-88 through 1999-2000 are only roughly comparable to data for later years, because the new category of two or more races was introduced in 2003-04.*

Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p. 6



# Benefits of Increasing Student Access to Teachers of Color

## For Students of Color

- Learning gains
- Greater access to cultural brokers
- Decrease in disparities
- Role model effect

## For All Students

- Further democratic values
- Break down stereotypes
- Dispel myths of inferiority
- Counter unconscious bias



## Benefits—What the Literature Says

- Positive academic gains for students of color taught by a same-race teacher (Clewell, Puma, & McKay, 2005; Dee, 2004; Evans, 1992; Gershenson, Holt, & Papageorge, 2015; Hanushek, 1992)
- Positive academic gains for students of color overall, not just those taught by a same-race teacher (Ehrenberg et al., 1995; Pitts, 2007)
- Having at least one Black teacher in Grades 3–5 reduces the likelihood of dropout for Black males (particularly the most economically disadvantaged) and increases the likelihood that persistently low-income students of both sexes aspire to college (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017)

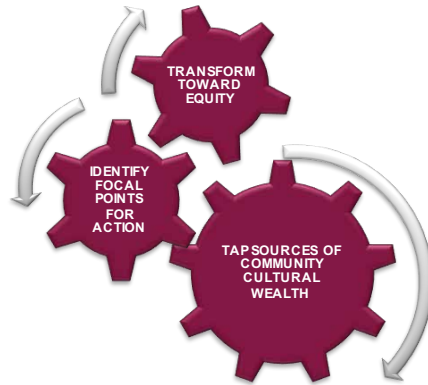


## Benefits—What the Literature Says

- Positive impact on enrollment in gateway courses, college matriculation rates, and absenteeism and dropout rates (Farkas, Grobe, Sheehan, & Shuan, 1990; Fraga, Meier, & England, 1986; Hess & Leal, 1997; Klopfenstein, 2005)
- Black teachers use exclusionary discipline practices (e.g., suspensions, expulsions) less often for all students and for Black students in particular (Lindsay & Hart, 2017).



# Equity Leaders Are Accountable Leaders Who Develop Equitable Systems



# Who Are You as Equity Leaders?

- Caring Educators (Starratt, 1994)
- Collective Action Leaders (Dantley & Tillman, 2010)
- Social Justice Advocates (Gerstil-Pepin, 2001)
- Systems Change Specialists (Fullan, 2010)

*What you touch as a leader, you change; what you change, changes you (Butler, 1995)*

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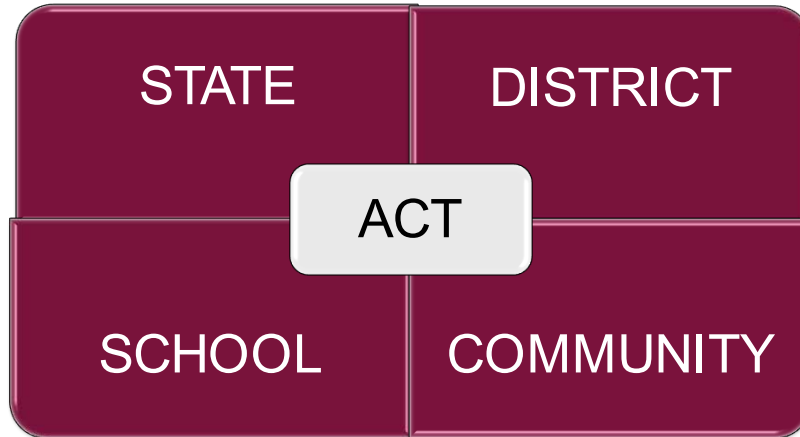
*"To be an effective [equity] leader is to be an active learner, open ...  
to hearing other perspectives, to entertaining unlikely curiosities,  
to questioning longstanding norms, to challenging things accepted uncritically,  
to enduring and examining challenge, to searching oneself for strengths and limitations  
alike and to applying "learnings" generously to self.*

*Such a leader must, thusly, be courageous enough to fertilize  
and nurture the kernels of wisdom acquired along the way and to  
allow them to sprout new, different, unfamiliar insights that  
change her together with her current practices, expectations, and aspirations.*

*In as much as a leader's vision charts a new course for the  
agreed upon uplift of others, a leader's vision must be adjusted  
to encompass her blind spots that would, if neglected,  
leave her on the fringes of her best accomplishments."*

Source: Causey-Konata, 2018

# Change Our Systems



**ACTION CHANGES THINGS!**



# Next Steps



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