



EOS' Excellence in Equity Newsletter

Your bimonthly newsletter on equity & opportunity at the highest levels

Colleagues, it is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I find myself writing this forward and launching Equal Opportunity Schools' (EOS) very first partner newsletter—Excellence in Equity (EnE).

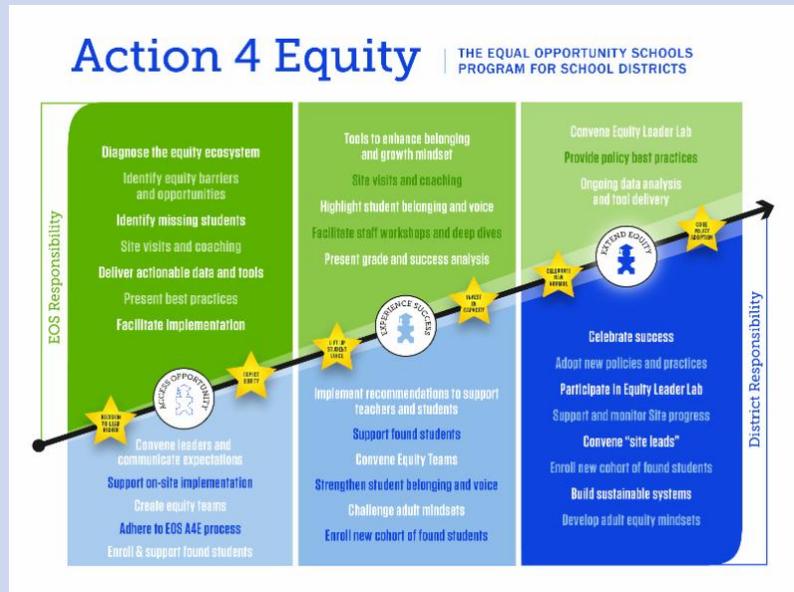
You can expect the newsletter to be delivered to your inbox bimonthly—EnE is being curated with you in mind. Issues will touch on best practices for Advocacy & Outreach, adult mindsets, supporting student success, and more.

Strong and forward-looking leadership is essential for transforming student opportunities. Students can and will rise to higher expectations in the classroom—if you ask your team to rise to your expectations for a new system of equitable access. We are honored to be your partners in this. - Reid Saaris, CEO & Founder

Our Partnership

We strive to be the best partner your school and district has ever had. We believe that opportunity precedes achievement and we strive for a relentless focus on the lives, experiences, and success of students of color and low-income students. Over this next year, we plan to focus our energy on amplifying the voices of historically marginalized students and to work closely with you on student belonging and student and teacher success in new and powerful ways. We also see a need to explicitly address systems for sustainability.

Equity requires focus, engagement, and investment. Analysis of our portfolio data and results over EOS' first five years gives us tremendous insight into what works. Building on these learnings and incorporating your



Introducing Action For Equity

The Action For Equity (A4E) model builds on the learnings of EOS' first 5 years. Equity at the highest levels is urgent and possible. Our newly expanded model drives partners from access to success and onward to sustainability, while staying true to our mission of ensuring students of all backgrounds have equal access to America's most academically intense high school programs—and particularly that low-income students and students of color have opportunities to succeed at the highest levels.

feedback, we have updated our program offerings for 2018-19 and beyond. Our **Action For Equity (A4E)** framework, building on the best of what we have done the last five years, is an important step to bring coherence and increase our impact.

You took on this partnership because you believe that students of color and low-income students can and will succeed if we, as adults, provide the opportunities they need and deserve. We look forward to working with you to change the sense of what is possible for students across your district.

Action 4 Equity

Visit our [Action For Equity](#) website to learn more about the program and impact EOS is having on districts like yours.

Access Opportunity

Phase 1: Data, coaching, and action to ensure students of color and low-income students enroll at equitable rates in your most rigorous high school courses.

Experience Success

Phase 2: Maintain equitable access, support students and staff, and focus on the experiences of students of color and low-income students to develop belonging-rich contexts for their success.

Extend Equity

Phase 3: Develop and enshrine the policies, practices, and mindsets to sustain your equitable opportunities and begin to drive the core work on your own.

[View the A4E chart](#)

Superintendents Speak



Click image to watch



“After working with Equal Opportunity Schools for the past two years, the results for our students at Leyden have been both rewarding and encouraging.” - Nick Polyak, Superintendent, Leyden School District 212



Click to expand

[Black and Brown Students Are Denied Access to Advanced Placement Courses: The New Jim Crow In Education](#)

As a Partnership Director, I found this article on Black and Brown kids systematically being kept out of AP courses to be particularly powerful. The author specifically identifies prerequisites and school segregation as gatekeeping in New York state. I thought especially pertinent the paragraph where he discusses the damage done by the ‘myth of meritocracy’, and the danger of the idea, in particular for underrepresented kids, that the system is fair if you just work hard enough.

I’m interested in how we can explore this – helping kids (and staff) understand that the inequities in their schools won’t just be solved by kids ‘working harder’. In fact, the communication of that message can be especially damaging to underrepresented kids.





Why Equity Matters

New partners often find themselves trying to respond to inquiries about why this work matters, and specifically why equity matters?



Research conducted by the **Ed Trust and EOS** found that equity matters because students who are ready to succeed in Advanced Placement (AP) courses are being left out of those courses at alarming rates.

In 2013, we analyzed data from 690,000 high school graduates and found 72% of American-Indian students, 69% of black students, and 65% of Hispanic students whose PSAT scores suggested they had the potential to be successful in an AP science course were left out ([Finding America's Missing AP and IB Students](#)).

Principals from EOS partner schools say equity matters because of the historic shift we can make in the life trajectories of the students we serve:

The early numbers for next year's AP registration are in, and despite our efforts, our AP program will be disproportionately comprised of White students. This trend, which is not unique to our school, serves to perpetuate historical racial disparities in this country – some directly, as in college acceptance and college success rates, and some less directly as in income levels, home ownership, and longevity. Unless we take direct action, these trends will not fix themselves. - Principal, EOS Partner School

It bears repeating that your leadership over the upcoming year is essential as your Equity Team collaborates with EOS. Your ability to convincingly speak your why will be a powerful catalyst for change in your system.

A Part of the Class Culture: How AP classes can be more welcoming to poc

“While the push to get more cultural diversity into these [AP] classes is nothing less than great, several students of color feel that they have to not only challenge themselves with the curriculum but challenge the classroom dynamic as well...Having one friend that you can identify with on a cultural level builds confidence and a level of comfort for a lot of students of color in their AP classes...Keep the conversation going to change the dynamic of the AP system.”

Francis Lewis High School strongly encourages all students to invest in an AP



class. There's a variety of AP courses to take and an array of sample students share their experiences with them.



This Bentonville West High School video shares the experiences of

the students and staff with the Lead Higher initiative (Action For Equity).

If you are interested in collaborating on student voice video vignettes, please contact marketing@eoschools.org.

“Our work with Equal Opportunity Schools has given us specific strategies and outreach plans that have resulted in a significant increase of low income and students of color having access to our Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses.” - **M. Scott Reeves, Executive Director Secondary Academic Affairs, Westerville City Schools**



Equity Case Studies

The equity case studies highlight districts reasons for engaging in the equity work as well as what they have learned. To have your district profiled, download the [questionnaire](#)

- Bernadette Merikle, Senior Director
Partnerships

and submit for inclusion.

If interested in highlighting your districts equity program, unique feature and outcomes to your district, or on the overall student/staff impact that Action For Equity is having on your district, contact marketing@EOSchools.org.

- [Mesa Public Schools](#)
- [Kankakee SD 111](#)
- [Salem-Keizer Public Schools](#)
- [Anderson School District 4](#)
- [Wauwatosa School District](#)
- [Santa Clara Unified School District](#)
- [Highline Public Schools](#)

EOS in the News

For updated articles on EOS and district partners, visit the [EOS News Page](#).

- [Meet the Queen of the Greater Hartford Puerto Rican Parade coming up Saturday](#)
- [First-time AP students tell D204 school board they relished the challenge](#)
- [By what means could we reduce access gaps in education?](#)
- [Illinois outpacing the nation in increasing low-income students' participation in Advanced Placement](#)
- [Chicago Public Schools Named AP District of the Year by the College Board](#)

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