

Step 4: Apply an Equity Lens

How has equity shown up in your launch of the design process? This requires a look back at who has been included in the design team, how your design team has functioned, who has been interviewed, and what data you've researched. In this phase, you will **reflect on the ways that your design team has – or has not – lived out your commitment to equity** in your early activities to learn about your school(s) from your stakeholders' perspectives.

► Activity: Reflect on Equity in Your Process

Take time to step back and reflect on how equitable your design process has been



Framing

In the beginning of the redesign process, you will have closely examined the history and current state of your district in terms of equity and resiliency in teaching and learning. You've looked at internal and external data, heard from stakeholders, and sought inspiration from outside your community, all while approaching the work with equity at the forefront.

Now, it is time to step back and honestly reflect on the ways in which equity has – and has not – been part of your process to date. If your process itself is not as equitable as it should be, it is unlikely that you will achieve your desired outcomes of a more equitable approach to teaching and learning.

Ensuring Equity & Resiliency

Equity looks like honestly reflecting on who has – and has not – been included in the design process and the impact of this on the direction your team is headed in, and being willing to make changes to the process based on your reflection. It looks like collectively re-examining your “why” in light of the information you now have, considering if and how your team’s discussion of equity has evolved. Lastly, it looks like considering what it will take for your team to stay focused on excellence for every child, especially those at the margins, as the work becomes more difficult or there is pushback.

Resiliency looks like doing this step frequently so that you keep equity in sharp focus; it also means including others in the team and/or changing how the team works together to address any identified challenges to equity in your process.

Steps to Implementation

Suggested time: 30-60 minutes

1. Gather your team in a room (in-person or virtual).
2. As a design team, consider the following questions:

Topic	Question	Notes
Our core understandings	How do we define equity?	
	What are the general narratives and beliefs about equity in our district?	
Our design team	Given our identities, what perspectives are most likely to be well represented? Which perspectives are least likely?	
	How can we incorporate perspectives that are not well-represented on the planning team?	
	How have our perspectives or biases shown up in this process thus far?	
	What communication issues may exist in our design process? What agreements can we reach about addressing them?	

Topic	Question	Notes
<p>Our design efforts</p>	<p>Who are the people we most want to benefit from our work? Get specific, e.g., high school seniors, especially students of color.</p> <p>How do we know who they are?</p> <p>How are they impacted by our current system of teaching and learning?</p> <p>How are they included in our process?</p>	
	<p>What assumptions did our design team have that were confirmed by our Section 1 activities? What assumptions were proven false?</p>	

3. Revisit the work you’ve done in this section. If necessary, repeat activities to improve the equity of your process.
4. Next, you will start an exciting new phase of this work: defining your problem of practice (based on all the inputs from this phase!) and envisioning a solution.

