Resource Guide for the Local Equitable Access Plan

January 2024

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Table of Contents

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Local Equitable Access Planning

Since teachers are the most important school-based factor affecting student achievement[1] and school leaders are second[2], it is essential to staff Ohio's schools with excellent teachers and leaders. Ohio's 2015 Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators speaks to this commitment at our state and local education agencies. The goal of Ohio's Equity Plan is to ensure that students living at or below the federal poverty line (economically disadvantaged) and students of color (minority students) have equitable access to excellent educators – those teachers and leaders who are effective, experienced, and properly licensed or certified.

Signed into law on December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and continues the commitment to equal opportunity for all students. The Ohio Department of Education developed this guidance document to assist districts and schools in addressing section 1112(b)(2)[3] of Act (ESSA).

Planning Requirements

Districts and schools will continue to use the ED STEPS process to engage in local equitable access planning. Plans will be submitted through the Professional Capital section within the One Needs Assessment and One Plan of the ED STEPS system. The timing of the local equitable access plan submission will depend on the district or school's ED STEPS One Plan Cohort. While these are three-year plans, it is recommended that districts or schools review their data annually and make any necessary changes.

Planning Process

This section includes information on the following key areas of local plan development:

- Stakeholder engagement;
- Data analysis;
- Root-cause analysis;
- Determining strategies;
- Planning items and criteria;
- Scoring rubric; and
- Additional resources.

---

[1] Rivkin, S.G., Hanushek, E.A., & Kain, J.F. (2005). Teachers, schools, and academic achievement. *Econometrica, 73*(2), 417-458.

[2] Waters, T., Marzano, R.J., & McNulty, B. *Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement.* Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED481972.pdf

[3] To ensure that all children receive a high-quality education, and to close the achievement gap between children meeting the challenging State academic standards and those children who are not meeting such standards, each local educational agency plan shall describe how the local educational agency will identify and address, as required under State plans as described in section 1111(g)(1)(B), any disparities that result in low-income students and minority students being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers.

Department of Education & Workforce

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS IN LOCAL EQUITABLE ACCESS PLANNING

Districts and schools engage in the planning process in collaboration with multiple stakeholders. Stakeholder groups can include, but are not limited to, teachers, principals, district administration, treasurers, school improvement support staff, human resource staff, community organizations, federal program coordinators, EMIS coordinators, teacher association representatives, teacher leaders, local school board members, parents and/or other stakeholders deemed appropriate for this planning process. Diverse stakeholder groups can yield multiple benefits including:

•   A broader range of ideas and opinions resulting in a strong plan that benefits all students,

•   Unique insights into how equity work will affect different groups in the field, and;

•   Ensuring that all voices are heard in the planning process, fostering more robust public support for the work.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data should drive how districts and schools approach equitable access planning. Understanding the landscape of educator staffing and placement alongside student demographic data is essential in ensuring all students receive equitable access to excellent educators. In this step of the local equitable access planning (LEAP) process, districts and schools utilize data to determine whether or not gaps in equitable access exist within their district and schools.

There are federally required educator and student group measures that districts and schools must consider in the LEAP process, these are marked below with an asterisk (*). If there are no gaps in these measures, it is recommended that districts and schools consider the optional measures, in order to best support all students. All measures and definitions are provided in the tables below.

Table 1. Student Group Definitions

Student Group Name	Definition
Students of color*	Members of African-American, Multiracial, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander, American Indian/ Alaskan Native, or Asian ethnic and racial groups
Students with economic disadvantage*	Students reported to ODE as being economically disadvantaged, including all students in districts where there is community eligibility for free and reduced-price lunch
Students with disabilities	Students reported as having a disability condition
Students learning English	Students that are still learning (not yet proficient in) English as identified by the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment

Department of Education & Workforce

Table 2. Educator Measure Definitions

Educator Measure	Definition
Out of field teachers*	Teachers who are teaching a core academic course for which they are not licensed to teach
Inexperienced teachers *	Teachers with fewer than two years of teaching experience
Not yet effective teachers*	Teachers who received a final summative rating of "ineffective" or "developing" on the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) in the previous year's round of evaluations
Frequently absent teachers	Teachers who are absent more than ten days a year, excluding absences counted as long-term illness (e.g., maternity leave)
No enrollment in advanced courses	Percent of students enrolled in at least one designated advanced course, including AP, IB, CCP and CTE CCP classes
Inexperienced principals	Principals with fewer than two years of experience

The Ohio Department of Education annually produces the Equitable Access Analysis Tool for individual districts and schools to use in local plan development to see whether some student groups have significantly less access to quality educators. The tool can be found in the Secure Data Center via the Reports Portal application, see Appendix A.

DETERMINING GAPS

While the Equitable Access Analysis Tool provides a lot of useful data and comparisons, it is essential for district and school decision-makers to understand the most significant gaps. A risk ratio, sometimes called relative risk, provides helpful insight into gaps that exist between student groups. A risk ratio compares one group's risk of experiencing some outcome with another group's risk of the same outcome and measures the extent to which students in a group of interest have access to quality educators relative to a comparison group.

The Equitable Access Analysis Tool relies on risk ratios to report whether different student groups have exposure to staff attributes and coursework that research has shown do not lead to higher student outcomes.

In order to assess the risk ratio for each student group of interest, we divide the percentage of students from that group by the percentage of teachers from the comparison group in the overall student population for a given year.

Department of Education & Workforce

The general equation for the risk ratio is:

$$Risk\ Ratio = \frac{\%\ Exposure\ or\ Access\ for\ Group\ of\ Interest}{\%\ Exposure\ or\ Access\ for\ Comparison\ Group}$$

Risk ratio equation example

If we are looking at one student group and one educator measure specifically, for example, students with disabilities and inexperienced teachers, the risk ratio formula would be:

$$Risk\ Ratio = \frac{\%\ Students\ with\ disabilities\ with\ Inexperienced\ teachers}{\%\ Students\ without\ disabilities\ with\ Inexperienced\ teachers}$$

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce has defined a gap as a risk ratio of at least 1.5.

Districts and schools should analyze all risk ratios above 1.5 to assist in determining their most concerning gap. It is recommended that districts and schools select one gap, to focus on for their local equitable access plan. See Appendix A.

ROOT-CAUSE ANALYSIS

Once the data analysis is completed, districts and schools will conduct a root-cause analysis to understand why there are equitable access gaps to excellent educators. This analysis will help identify the systemic challenge causing the gap and help in selecting a strategy or strategies that are most likely to have the greatest impact. For more information on conducting a root-cause analysis with stakeholders, see Appendix B.

DETERMINING STRATEGIES

Districts and schools will identify and describe the strategy or strategies they will use to address the systemic root-cause(s) to lessen or eliminate the identified gaps in equitable access. They should select strategies directly connected to the findings from the root-cause analysis and focused on the educators within the school or district. For more information on strategy development, see Appendix C.

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Planning Sections and Questions

This section explains each part of the Local Equitable Access Plan and where districts and schools will submit their plan. The table also provides section descriptions and questions that districts and schools should use as they engage in the planning process.

Sections	Descriptions	Questions	Plan Submission
Data Analysis	Conduct an analysis of your district or school's Equitable Access Analysis Tool[4] to determine where and to what extent any gaps in equitable access to excellent educators exist. Document the most concerning gaps for the district or school after reviewing the data.	1. Local Equity Access Planning (LEAP) seeks to ensure that low socio-economic and minority students have equitable access to excellent educators. After analyzing your data in the Equitable Access Analysis Tool (Secure Data Center) what is the most concerning gap(s)? a. In which building(s) does the equitable access gap occur? b. What is the percent of the equitable access gap? c. What is the student demographic information for the identified building/s?	Question #1 in the Professional Capital Section of the One Needs Assessment **If there is a gap, the district or school MUST mark 'Yes' to Question #4 (*Is this a Priority Need?*) in the Professional Capital section of the One Needs Assessment**
Root-Cause Analysis	Conduct a root-cause analysis with stakeholders[5] to determine the systemic challenge(s) contributing to gaps in equitable access and	2. How do you ensure stakeholders participate in the local equitable access planning process (data analysis, root-cause	Questions #2 and #3 in the Professional Capital Section of the One Needs Assessment

---

[4] School districts can use other relevant data to complete item one and should make note of the data source(s) in their response.

[5] Stakeholders can include teachers, principals, district administration, school improvement support staff, human resource staff, community organizations, federal program coordinators, teacher association representatives, teacher leaders, local school board, parents and/or other stakeholders deemed appropriate for this planning process.

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

	describe findings. Consider the continuum of the human capital management system (attracting, assigning, developing and/or retaining educators) during the root-cause analysis to find the underlying cause(s) of identified gaps.	analysis, and strategy development)? 3. Root Cause(s): Based on your analysis, what are the underlying root cause(s) that if addressed, would result in a positive impact?	
Determining Strategies	Describe the identified strategy or strategies (e.g., professional development, recruitment programs, or other strategies) the district personnel will use to assure that students living at or below the federal poverty line and students of color are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, out-of-field, ineffective teachers and/or served by inexperienced, ineffective principals. Include activities, timeline, and progress monitoring for the strategy or strategies, and changes in data that would demonstrate progress.	1. The specific strategy or strategies to address the equitable access gap(s) are aligned to the root cause analysis findings. 2. Strategy implementation and supporting activities have been outlined. 3. The plan notes the changes in data that would demonstrate progress and provides a date the anticipated goal will be met.	One Plan

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

Scoring Rubric

The rubric below reflects the criteria that will be used to score the Local Equitable Access Plans submitted through the One Needs Assessment and One Plan.

Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria	Meets Criteria with Recommendation	Meets Criteria	N/A
#1 - The specific strategy or strategies to address the equitable access gap(s) are aligned to the root cause analysis findings.	☐	☐	☐	
Positive Notes:				☐
Recommendation Notes:				
#2 - Strategy implementation and supporting activities have been outlined.	☐	☐	☐	
Positive Notes:				☐
Recommendation Notes:				
#3 - The plan notes the changes in data that would demonstrate progress and provides a date the anticipated goal will be met.	☐	☐	☐	
Positive Notes:				☐
Recommendation Notes:				

Additional Resources

The local equity plan website on the Ohio Department of Education provides multiple resources to help districts and schools engage in planning.

- For information on step by step procedures on how to complete the sections in the Data Submission Forms, click here
- To see the Ohio 2015 State Equity Plan, click here
- To see local equitable access strategies, click here
- To find resources to attract, hire, and support excellent educators, click here

Contact Information

equity@education.ohio.gov

Department of Education & Workforce

Appendix A: Using the Equitable Access Analysis Tool

Introduction

Ohio's Equitable Access Analysis Tool (EAAT) has always provided data to each district to show where schools' educator workforce is more or less strong, based on key measures of educator strength known to influence student outcomes.

The EAAT has been revised for the 2023-2024 school year to better support districts' analysis of stronger and weaker educational foundations across their schools. The EAAT provides a wealth of information and data, while highlighting which students groups are at a disadvantage when it comes to the strength of their educators. Key changes in what users will see in the Tool include:

1. Equitable Access **Gaps are calculated and displayed**.
2. Users can **view the underlying data** on teachers, principals, and schools **within the tool**.
3. Additional student groups, students with disabilities and students learning English, are included and gaps calculated for them.

The revised Equitable Access Analysis Tool highlights any school where at least one student group is likely to be standing on a weaker foundation of teaching and learning within their school. Users will see counts of gaps across the district for each student group, meaning a school in which the student group has significantly greater exposure than their peers to weaker teachers or significantly less access to certain types of courses.

The revisions have been developed, tested, and reviewed in collaboration with a District Steering Committee of users from about 15 school districts and community schools. Please note that all school names or IRNs displayed in the visuals in this Guide are not actual school identifiers.

Students and Educator Measures: Data Sources and Definitions

All data in the Equitable Access Analysis Tool comes from district reporting in EMIS for students, teachers, principals, and courses. Evaluation data for teachers and principals comes from the Ohio Evaluation System, only in aggregate at the school and district level. Because districts carefully report such detailed data each year about courses, the students enrolled in each course, and the teachers who teach those courses, the revised tool is based on a data set that connects students to their courses and to their actual teachers in the previous school year.

Department of Education & Workforce

The EAAT includes data on four traditionally underserved student groups and their peer comparison groups. The data basis for these groups comes from student demographics EMIS reporting by districts in the previous school year.

Table 1: Student groups in the Equitable Access Analysis Tool.

Comparison	Student Group	Peer Comparison Group
Race/Ethnicity	Students of Color	White Students
Economic Disadvantage	Students with economic disadvantage	Students without economic disadvantage
Disability Status	Students with disabilities	Students without disabilities
English Learner Status	Students learning English	Students proficient in English

Educator measures in the Tool are also sourced from EMIS data[1] or from Ohio ES data.

Table 2: Educator and course measures in the Equity Tool.

Educator / Course measures	Definition
Out of Field Courses	Academic core courses whose teacher's credential does not qualify them to teach the course.
Inexperienced teachers	Teachers with fewer than two years of Authorized Teaching Experience Years.
Not yet effective teachers	Teachers who received a final summative rating of *Ineffective* or *Developing* on the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) in the previous year's evaluations.
Frequently absent teachers	Teachers who are absent more than ten days a year, excluding absences reported as *Long-Term Illness Days* (e.g., medical leave).[2]
No enrollment in advanced courses	Percent of students who were not enrolled in at least one designated advanced course, including AP, IB, CCP and CTE CCP, or classes reported with a Course Level of "Advanced."
Inexperienced principals	Principals with fewer than two years of experience as a school leader.

---

[1] See the Course Master, Staff Course, Student Course, Staff Employment, and Staff Demographic records as reported in EMIS during the previous school year.

[2] Per EMIS reporting requirements, professional development days do not count as Absence Days.

Department of Education & Workforce

Visualizations within the Analysis Tool show individual-level data on educators and courses related to gaps. All such data, shown on the *Educator Measures Detail* page and the *Educator Activity* pages, is sourced from district EMIS reporting and from the Ohio Evaluation System.

Risk Ratios Define Equity Gaps: What is inequitable access?

When the EAAT shows a gap, it means that the *actual teachers* of one group of students, such as students with disabilities, are more likely to be out of field, inexperienced, or similarly weaker as a group than the *actual teachers* of the peer comparison group.

Gaps are defined within the EAAT using a calculation called the ***risk ratio.***

> A **risk ratio** compares the rate of experience with teachers across two groups. The risk ratio measures the extent to which students in a traditionally underserved group have access to quality educators relative to a peer comparison group.

Consider the courses with *Out of Field* teachers as the educator measure. In the 2022-2023 school year, the teachers of traditionally underserved students across Ohio were more likely to be *Out of Field* than their peer groups' teachers.

Table 3: Percentage of students with out of field teachers in 2022-2023, by student group

Ohio	Average - All Students	
	7%	
Race*	White Students	Students of Color
	4%	12%
Economic Disadvantage*	No Economic Disadvantage	Economic Disadvantage
	3%	10%
Disability Status	Without Disabilities	With Disabilities
	7%	9%
English Learner Status	Proficient in English	Learning English
	7%	11%

Economically disadvantaged students were three times (3x) more likely than their peers to have an out of field teacher core academic teacher, so the risk ratio for this comparison is 3. The risk ratio for students with disabilities is 9% divided by 7%, or 1.3.

Department of Education & Workforce

$$Risk\ Ratio = \frac{\%\ Exposure\ or\ Access\ for\ Group\ of\ Interest}{\%\ Exposure\ or\ Access\ for\ Comparison\ Group}$$

The definition of an equitable access gap is a risk ratio of at least 1.5.[3]

A risk ratio of 1.5 means that certain students are 50% or more likely to be taught by out-of-field, inexperienced, or frequently absent teachers, indicating a significant disparity in the strength of the educator foundation supporting them.

The range between 0.5 and 1.5 indicates roughly equal access to stronger teachers. The risk ratio on exposure to *Out of* Field teachers for students with disabilities above lies in this range.

When the ratio exceeds 1.5, we identify it as "inequitable exposure to out of field teachers." This situation calls for a strategy to address the underlying systemic gap. In the example above, the EAAT would flag gaps on *Out of Field* teachers experience by students of color and students with economic disadvantage.

PowerBI Navigation Basics

The revised EAAT has been built in PowerBI to take advantage of its capabilities for visualizing data and for showing how various dimensions of data are related to one another. To take full advantage of these features and to make your way through the Equitable Access gap analysis, there are some important navigational features and techniques to know about.

- **Interactivity**: Visualizations and other elements in the EAAT interact with one another. For example, clicking on a column representing a single student group on the District View will focus the school and gap count data on that student group.
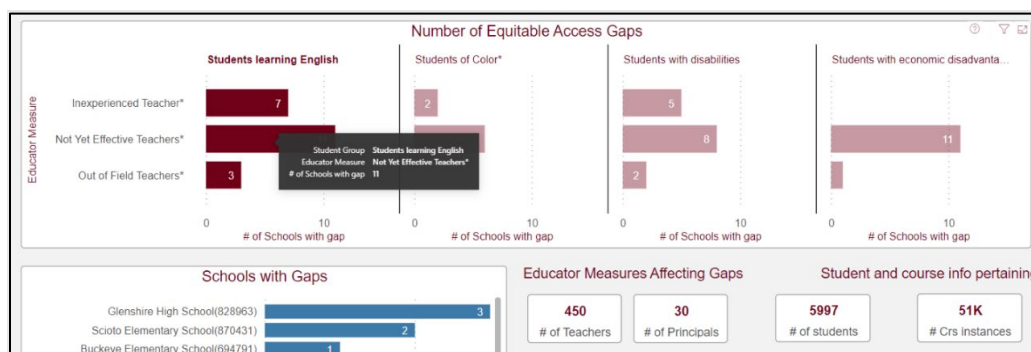
Clicking on a column highlights a student group; schools list shows only schools with gaps for that group (demo data here).

---

[3] The threshold of 1.5 has been previously utilized in research and practice for this purpose (e.g., Hansen & Quintero, 2018[3]). Additionally, the Department examined this threshold for these student groups and educator measures in Ohio and found it to be a realistic and attainable threshold when looking at results across the state.

Ohio **Department of Education & Workforce**

- **Tootips**: Tooltips are another important feature built into the EAAT. Hover on some visual elements to provide data detail or interpretation.
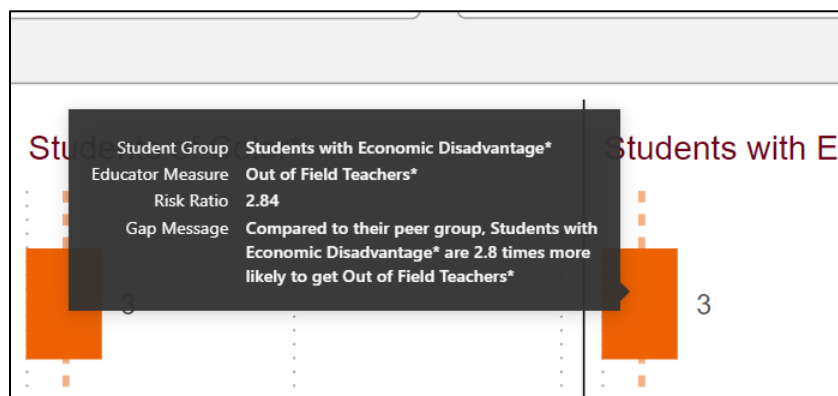

A tooltip on the Equitable Access – All Measures page interprets the risk ratio for economically disadvantaged students and out of field teachers.

- The pathway through identifying gaps and the data behind them requires "drilling" from one page to another. **Hover over a blue bar and drill-through** from one page to another. On a Chromebook, Control+click to show the drill menu; otherwise right click for the list of drillable pages. Blue bars in the "Schools with Gaps" visual, for example, are the pathway through to the School View of all measures or to the educator overview for the school, *Educator Measure Detail*.
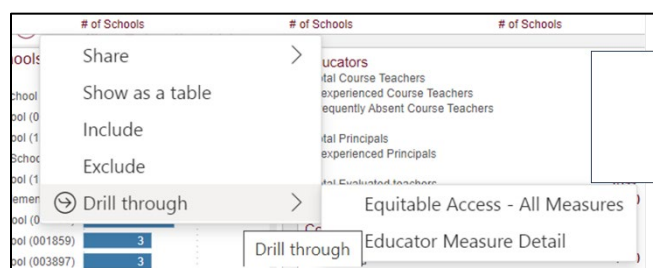
Drill-through pathway: Hover and right-click to drill through to other reports.

- **Use the back-arrow button** is useful for returning after you have drilled through. This button, at the top left-hand corner of the page, returns you to the report that you drilled from.
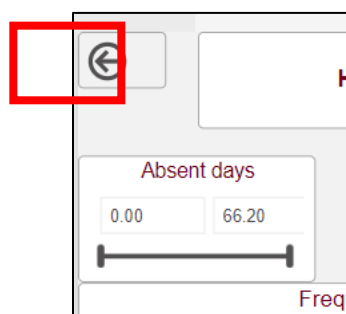

Use the back arrow button to return to the previous page from a drill-through.

Department of Education & Workforce

- **Settings and report-specific navigation buttons** allow further customization. The "Reset to default view" button clears interactive selections and returns the page to the full *District View*. To use and display the report to various audiences to whom you do not want to display educators' names, choose that option next to *Show teacher names?*

Report Tabs Overview

Opening the Equitable Access Analysis Tool, three tabs are visible at the bottom of the screen.
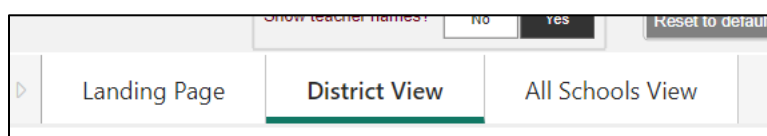
Visible tabs in the Equitable Access Analysis Tool.

1. **Landing Page**: Definitions and navigation guidance are on this tab.
2. **District View**: Begin the gap analysis here. Visuals identify student groups affected by gaps across the district as well as specific schools where students experienced those gaps. Further detail on gaps is access through a visual in this page by drilling through to other reports.

3. **All Schools View:** An overview of all risk ratios for all educator measures in all the district's schools. Each tab displays data for one student group comparison.
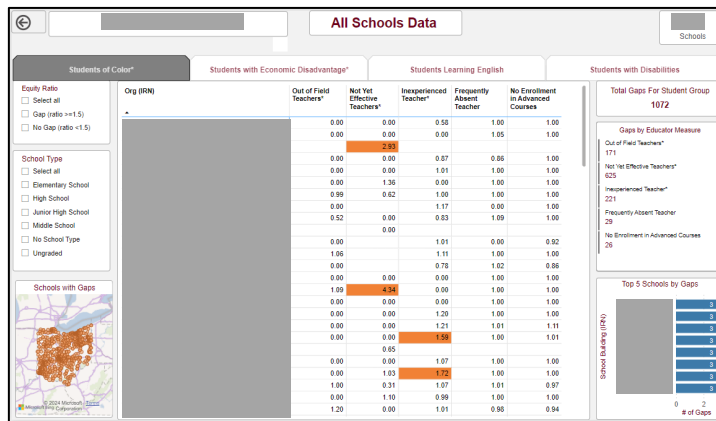
Gap Analysis Navigation Pathways

Proceeding through an analysis of equitable access gaps begins at the second tab, the *District View*. An overview of the district's gaps and its relevant data, this page is also the launching point for detail on additional pages that do not appear as tabs on the bottom menu.
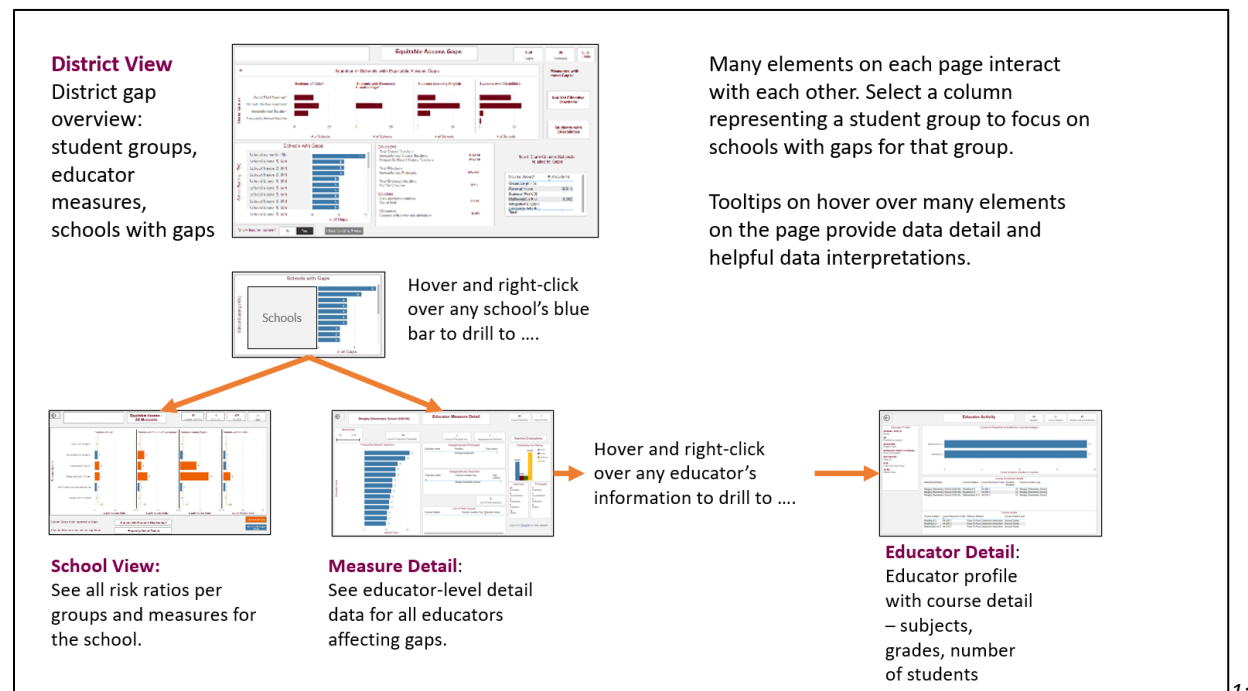
A navigation map from the District View through detailed reports on schools, educator measures, and educators and their courses.

From any detail report, use the **back button** to return to the previously viewed page.

District View Tab

Begin any analysis of equitable access gaps from the **District View** tab.

District View
Summarizes district-level numbers of gaps, for which groups on which educator measures. Interactivity between visuals allows user to identify schools with particular gaps.

The District View tab is the beginning point for digging into the gap analysis or other data exploration.

The page is 'zoned' into several sections. These narrow from an overview of gaps for student group on each educator measure, to data detail about the overall numbers of educators, students and courses involved in gaps in the district.
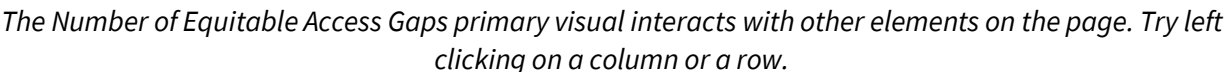
District information & gap counts

Gaps across the district: Student groups affected, educator measures, count of schools with each type of gap.

Gaps in Schools: Lists schools with gaps and the number of gaps.

District data detail: Counts of educators, courses, and course subjects related to gaps.

Department of Education & Workforce

The primary visual – an interactive element on the page - summarizes the number of schools where any of the student groups are affected by gaps on any of the educator measures.

The Number of Equitable Access Gaps primary visual interacts with other elements on the page. Try left clicking on a column or a row.

A red bar means that in at least one school, students in the group are significantly more likely than their peer group to have teachers who are weaker on the measure named on the row. Hover over any red bar for a summary of gap information.

Other tooltips appear when hovering over many elements on this page; these provide data detail or summary for school gaps, the teacher evaluation distribution for the whole district, and many other data summaries and statements around the page.
Right click and drill-through from one blue bar (one school with gaps) to the Equitable Access – All Measures page summarizing all risk ratio data for that school.

Right-click on a blue bar & "drill through" to *Equitable Access – All Measures.*

Department of Education & Workforce

Drill through any school (blue bar) to see pages with more detail. View a summary of all measures, whether gaps or not, in the School View, entitled *Equitable Access – All Measures.*


Equitable Access - All Measures:
See all risk ratios per groups and measures for the school.

The School View displays risk ratios on all measures and information on whether the principal(s) have fewer than two years of experience.

Blue and orange bars represent risk ratios for student groups (columns) on educator measures (rows). Orange bars represent risk ratios high enough that students have significantly greater exposure than their peers to teachers who are weaker on that measure. These are the gaps.

Hover over the school's name in the upper left (masked in this figure) for a data overview of the school's student population and other details.

Department of
Education &
Workforce
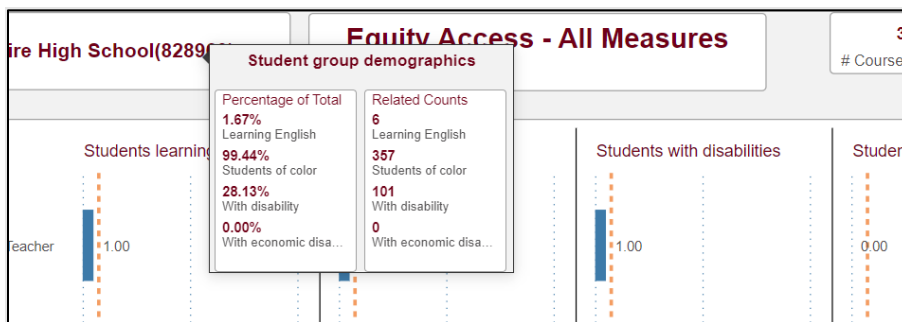
Return to the District View page, using the back arrow on the upper left, then drill again from the school's blue bar through to the *Educator Measure Detail*. This page shows a data detail overview on educators involved in the gaps in the school, along with detail on frequently absent teachers and the aggregated teacher evaluation results.

Educator Measure Detail:
See educator-level detail data for all educators affecting gaps in the school.
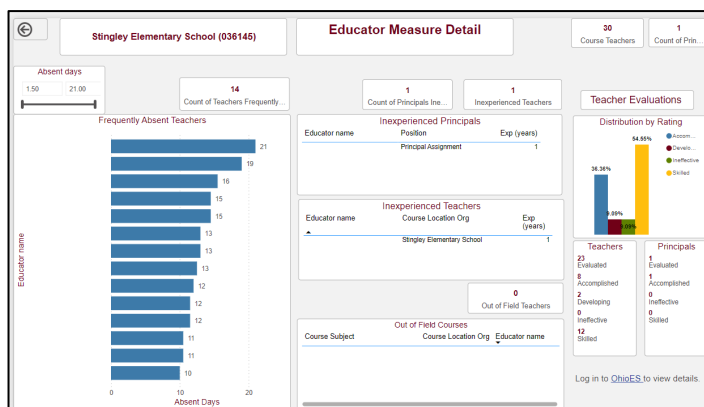
Educator Measure Detail shows course and educator data related to gaps, along with all frequently absent teachers. This page also displays the aggregated summary of evaluation results for the school.

From the *Educator Measure Detail* page, drill from any teacher's name or visual to the *Educator Activity* page. This page displays information about the educator's courses and the students in them, along with absence days detail and demographic information.

Educator Activity:
Educator profile with course detail – subjects, grades, number of students

Department of Education & Workforce
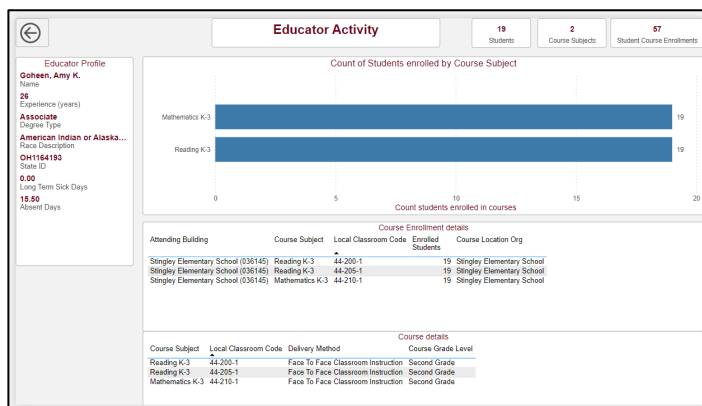
The All Schools Tab

This page shows four tabs at the top, one for each student group. On each tab, all schools in the district with attending students are listed. Risk ratios on every metric of educator strength are shown, with risk ratios indicating gaps highlighted in orange.
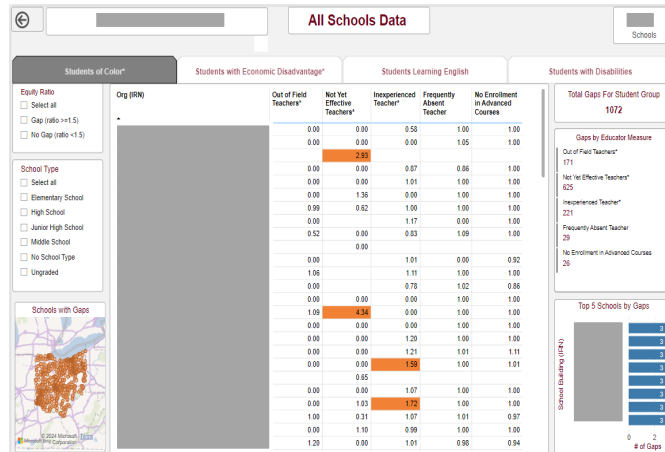
The All Schools tab, a supplement to the gap analysis pathway views. Interact with slicers, data detail, and a map function.

While the pathway from the *District View* through to educator detail has been designed to facilitate a gap analysis, the *All Schools* is provided as a supplement to the analysis pathway. Users can select slicers, or filters, to show only schools of a certain level (Elementary, High School), or to show only schools with at least one gap. The top schools by count of gaps are listed on the lower right, with educator counts by metric shown above. As on other pages, many elements interact with one another to help the user focus by student group or educator metric, or to see detailed counts and other relevant data.

Exporting and Printing Information from the Tool

Information from the tool can be printed and shared with others.

Focus Mode

To print a specific graph, click on "focus mode" in the upper-right corner of any graph.
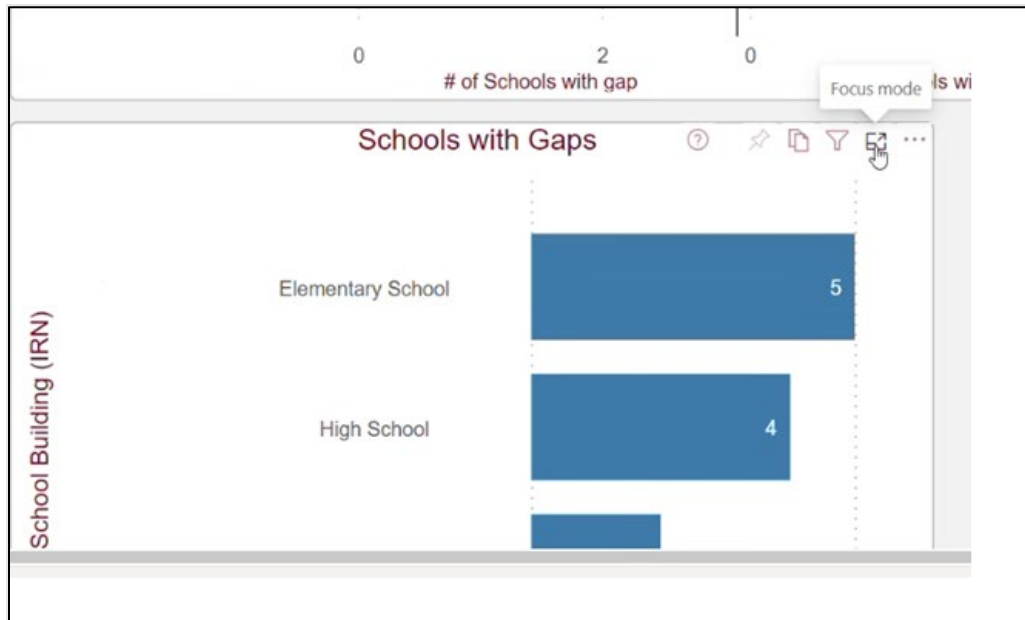
When focus mode is selected, the graph shows on its own screen. Select the "..." icon in the upper-right corner for more options. Choose "export data".
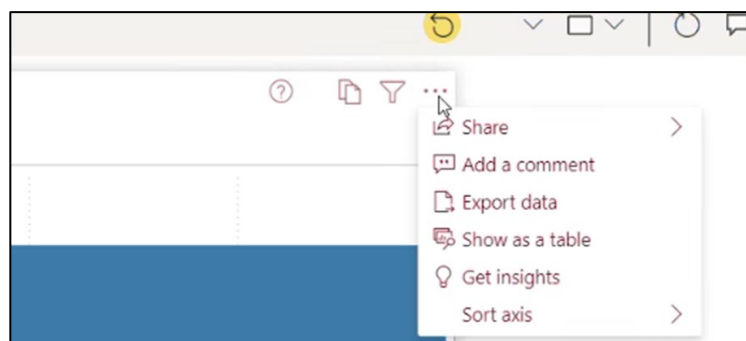
A pop-up screen will appear. If you are exporting a table, choose "Data with current layout." Click the yellow "Export" button and the data will export.

Department of Education & Workforce

Which data do you want to export?

Export your data in the format that suits your needs. If you have a lot of data, the number of rows you export might be limited depending on the file type you select. Learn more about exporting data

○ Data with current layout
ⓘ This option is only available for table and matrix visuals

● Summarized data
Export the summarized data used to create your visual (for example, sums, averages, and medians).

○ Underlying data
ⓘ The report author turned off this option

File format:
.xlsx (Excel 150,000-row max) ⌄

Export   Cancel

Information can also be displayed and exported as a table, as shown below. To access this view, select "show as a table" from the more options ("...") menu.

Continue steps to export the table, as above.

Exporting data for all schools, student groups, and educator measures
If you wish to export building-level gap information for all schools in the district, the best source is the *All Schools View.* For details of the educator information on those gaps, view the *Educator Measures Detail* for that school, go into focus mode for the specific table and export the information from there.

Department of Education & Workforce

Appendix B: Conducting a Root-Cause Analysis with Stakeholders
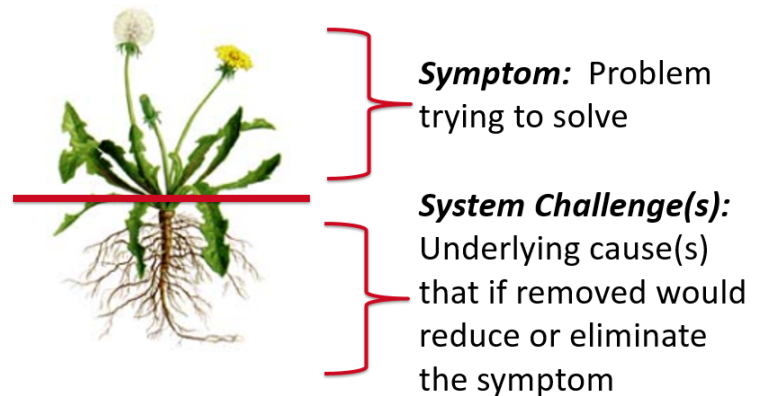
INTRODUCTION

It is imperative to understand *why* gaps in equitable access to excellent educators exist in schools with higher populations of poor and minority students. There are often systemic challenges present within the human capital management system that drive staffing and placement trends of educators which could cause an equity gap(s) to occur. To understand the systemic challenges of individual districts or schools it is necessary to conduct a root-cause analysis with stakeholders.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Stakeholder team
- Equity gap data
- Chart paper, sticky notes, pens/markers

UNDERSTANDING A ROOT-CAUSE ANALYSIS

Once districts and schools complete the data analysis, identifying the most concerning equity gap, districts and schools then conduct a root-cause analysis to understand *why* there are equitable access gaps to excellent educators. A root-cause analysis is a systematic strategy to determine the cause of equity gaps. It is important to differentiate between a symptom – for example, high teacher turnover – and a system challenge, or root cause, of that symptom – for example, a specific weakness in the building leadership.

Symptom: Problem trying to solve

System Challenge(s): Underlying cause(s) that if removed would reduce or eliminate the symptom

Designed by Battelle for Kids

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Districts and schools should invite stakeholders into the root-cause analysis process. This can include, but is not limited to, teachers, principals, district administration, school improvement support staff, human resource staff, community organizations, federal program coordinators, teacher association representatives, teacher leaders, local school board, parents and/or other stakeholders deemed appropriate for this planning process. Stakeholders provide essential perspectives in their various roles that can inform why gaps are occurring.

Ohio Department of Education & Workforce

CONDUCTING A ROOT-CAUSE ANALYSIS

As the district or school conducts the root-cause analysis, stakeholders should take into consideration the human capital management system for educators (both principals and teachers) from preparation to retirement. Activities and policies found in this continuum encompass recruitment, selection, hiring, induction, deployment, evaluation, development and career advancement.[1] During the root-cause analysis process, it is important to keep the focus on **educators and not students**. Stakeholders should ask reflective questions about the human capital management system in the district and the influence of that system on gaps in equitable access to excellent educators for poor and minority students.

You can use the following steps to conduct your root-cause analysis:
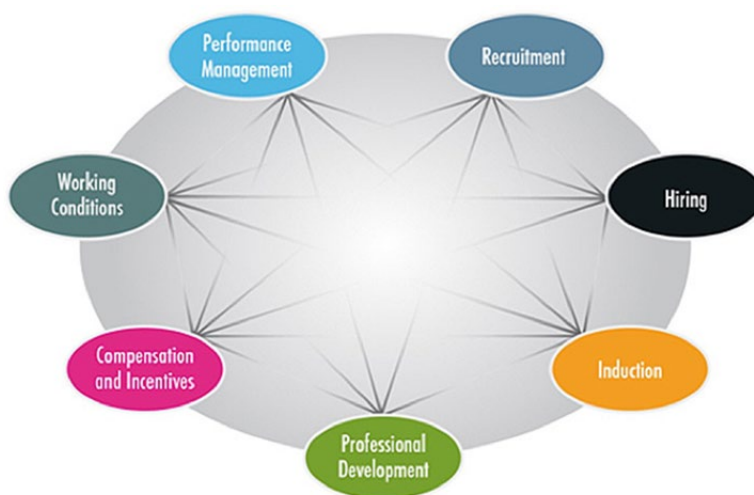
1. Develop a problem statement based on the most concerning gap from the data analysis. Use the problem statement to focus the root-cause analysis process.
2. Individually list on a sticky note what could be causing inequitable access in your building. Make sure to use the data from your analysis.
3. As a group, sort these sticky notes into categories on the chart paper. You can use a tool such as a fishbone diagram to further visualize the possible causes of your systems challenges.
4. Continue to dig down to find the most likely cause until your group is satisfied that you have identified the correct systems challenge. Identify the correct systems challenge that when addressed will alleviate the equity gap.

---

[1] Diagram taken from: ODE (2010). METWorks Ohio Frame Work. Retrieved from http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Equity/METworks-in-Ohio

Department of Education & Workforce

It is important to remember the following strategies when conducting a root-cause analysis:

- Focus on system challenges, not symptoms
- Keep in mind your sphere of influence
    - Focus your changes on the adults, not the students
    - Emphasize what you can control over what you cannot control
- Remember that the symptom can be reduced or eliminated if the system challenge is addressed
- There is rarely one root cause in complex systems such as education

Department of Education & Workforce

Appendix C: Determining and Outlining Strategies to Alleviate Gaps

INTRODUCTION

Now that you have determined the root-cause(s) of your equity gaps, it is time to determine and outline strategies to alleviate gaps. The goal is to identify one or two strategies that address your root-cause findings, adhere to SMART goals, and note the change in equity data that you hope to see.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Stakeholder team
- Equity gap data
- Notes from root-cause analysis
- Local Equitable Access Strategies webpage

SELECTING STRATEGIES

You will need to identify and describe the strategy or strategies that you will use to address the systemic root-cause(s) to lessen or eliminate the identified gaps in equitable access. Make sure that your strategies are closely aligned with the root causes they address. For example, if you found that a root cause of equity gaps in a building was poor leadership, you do not want your strategy to focus on mentoring new teachers.

There are a number of possible strategies listed in Table 1 at the end of this document. Districts and schools can utilize resources and strategies at the state and local level. The list is not exhaustive and districts and schools should choose strategies that most fit their local context and address unique root cause findings. Districts and schools also may visit the Local Equitable Access Strategies webpage for more information on various strategies. Resources to attract, hire, and support excellent educators can be found at the Human Capital Resource Center. Some districts and schools already may be implementing a strategy or strategies to improve equitable access to excellent educators and they can include those if aligned with the findings from their root-cause analysis.

OUTLINING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Once district or school team members identify a strategy or strategies, they can describe the specific activities that will occur and the timeline for implementation.

SETTING PROGRESS MEASURES

Lastly, the district describes the monitoring process and intervals. It will be important to note the changes in data that will demonstrate progress on the particular equitable access gap(s)

Department of Education & Workforce

targeted and the date that the expected change in data will occur. Using SMART Goals will help to ensure realistic expectations and evidence for progress.

Creating S.M.A.R.T. Goals

- **S** Specific
- **M** Measurable
- **A** Attainable
- **R** Realistic
- **T** Timely

Table 1. Possible Strategies and Related Gaps

Possible strategies local education agencies may use in Local Equitable Access Planning *(list is not exhaustive but provides possible strategies)*	Related Gap				
	Inexperienced Teacher	Out-of-Field Teacher	Not Yet Effective Teacher	Not Yet Effective Principal	Inexperienced Principal
Review and evaluate teacher induction program for effectiveness and fidelity of implementation.	x	x	x		
Utilize qualified international teachers to teach foreign language courses.		x			
Recruit dually licensed special educators.		x			
Align professional development opportunities for educators to the updated Ohio Professional Development Standards.	x		x	x	x
Offer educator exit survey to understand exit patterns and reasons for attrition in order to improve retention within local education agency.	x	x	x	x	x
Engage teachers in teacher leadership opportunities to increase the retention of excellent educators. Example: Conduct a co-observation initiative to understand the potential opportunities for teacher leadership.	x	x	x		
Offer beginning principal mentoring to increase effectiveness and retention of principals.				x	x

Department of Education & Workforce

Engage in targeted professional development that is based upon findings from OTES and/or OPES. Example: Assessment Literacy	x	x	x	x	x
Review and utilize Educator Preparation Reports in Ohio that provide data on passing rates and the number and specialization of educators produced by each institution of higher education to make informed decisions regarding human capital management.	x	x	x	x	x
Encourage and examine opportunities to provide incentives for teachers to teach in high-needs fields/buildings.	x	x	x	x	
Partner with institutions of higher education in order to offer professional development for teachers in high-needs schools.	x	x	x	x	x
Establish or evaluate a teacher mentoring program to increase effectiveness and retention of teachers.	x		x		

Department of Education & Workforce