

EQUITY IMPACT GROUP: *Targeting Equal Outcomes*

Impact Groups: Engaging Deeply, Acting Purposefully

Grantmakers for Education (GFE) impact groups leverage the network of education philanthropists within GFE to bring people together for meaningful dialog and action on the most critical challenges in public education today and into the future.

The Equity Impact Group seeks to facilitate learning and collaboration among foundations, promote collective impact at scale, and support grantmakers in the implementation of an equity lens internally and externally.

The mission of the Equity Impact Group is to support education grantmakers in their efforts and investments to mitigate the predictive power of demographic variables such as race, income, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religion on student success in school and in life.



Why does equity matter to education?

Equity means giving each and every student what they need to succeed, regardless of where they start or the challenges they face on the way. Foundations can serve as change-makers and catalysts in closing the aspiration and achievement gaps caused by inequities. These gaps are a serious problem in the United States because they demonstrate inequity within and across education systems.

The achievement gap is defined as the disparity in test scores between low-income students and/or students of color in comparison with Asian and white peers (NEA 2014).

This gap has long term implications in terms of access to opportunities, such as higher education or advanced math and science classes, and attainment, such as graduating from high school and college or viable employment (NEA 2014). These disparities lead to poorer adult outcomes, such as chronic health and mental health issues, substance abuse, unemployment and poverty (Hopson & Weldon 2013).

The aspiration gap is the gap between the aspirations young people have for themselves and what our education system is preparing them for. The aspiration gap can occur due to education systems' lack of focus on transition periods from preschool to college as well as students' disengagement with what they once hoped to attain.

How does the Equity Impact Group support equity?

The Equity Impact Group can strengthen the impact grantmakers have on equity. The group has committed to addressing issues of equity within education and within philanthropy by designing big solutions in partnership with communities and thinking innovatively in addressing issues related to poverty, structural racism, and models that cripple our education systems.

Possibilities include:

- Providing a forum to discuss questions, ideas and challenges related to cultural competency and incorporation of an equity agenda into grantmaking.
- Identifying evidence-based or innovative practices that improve outcomes for students who are impacted by inequitable systems, policies and practices.
- Ensuring that an analysis of race, gender and income is used to inform education grantmaking, resulting in equitable outcomes and closing the achievement gap for low-income students of color.
- Serving as a learning community that is willing to pioneer efforts in equity-focused philanthropic investments and share knowledge gained from grantmaking, research and general explorations in the field.

The Equity Impact Group commits to the following impact measures:

- Increase GFE members' understanding of the importance of equitable practices, policies and systems.
- Increase the number and percent of people of color in the field of philanthropy and the field of education to be more reflective of the students served.
- Decrease the educational disparities as demonstrated by indicators within the pre-K, K-12 and higher education systems.

We welcome your participation. Joining the Equity Impact Group will give you access to resources and a committed group of practitioners that can help you:

- Be prepared to take on issues of equity internally and externally.
- Target opportunities to decrease educational disparity across all indicators.
- Educate partners about the importance of equitable practices, policies and systems. fulfill our impact measures.

For more information, contact Letitia Dowling at ldowling@edfunders.org.

Hopson, L. & P. Weldon 2013. "Parental expectations and academic success in the context of school climate effects." *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services* 94, no. 1 (2013): 45-52.

National Education Association. 2014. "Students Affected by Achievement Gaps." Accessed June 6. <http://www.nea.org/home/20380.htm>.