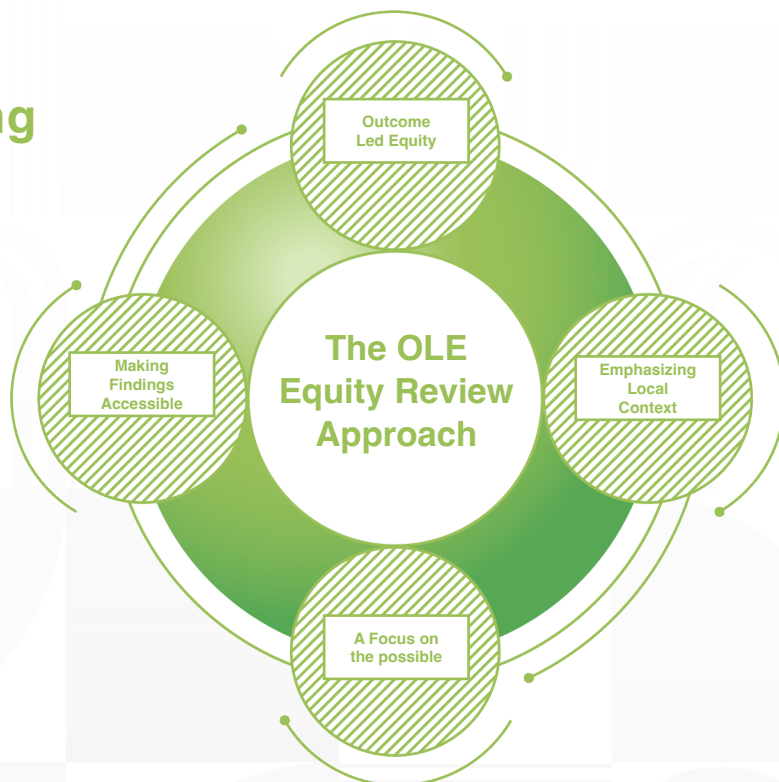


# Equity Reviews

Our equity reviews help leaders create the conditions, cultures, and competencies necessary to proactively work to advance equity, focusing on eliminating inequalities and increasing outcomes for all. We offer a unique approach to administering an equity review as an opportunity to help mission-driven organizations, state and local governments, and school systems identify their contributions to inequality and the ways in which they can improve advance equity and improve outcomes.

## Our approach rests on the following four guiding principles

- 1 Utilize a Proprietary, Outcome-Led Equity (OLE) Review
- 2 Conduct Stakeholder-Led Inquiry
- 3 Focus on the Possible
- 4 Provide Data and Findings Accessible to Everyone



## 1

## Utilize a Proprietary, Outcome-Led Equity (OLE) Review

The OLE review (also called an equity audit) provides organizations with clear indicators for how well their systems meet the needs of all their constituents, which areas need more attention, and how these areas may unintentionally contribute to existing inequality. The process is based on a core belief that every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets. In other words, any racial, income-based, or other type of inequality must be associated with a system that creates and maintains it. The equity review is meant to reveal the system, so it can be changed. It utilizes a rigorous approach, grounded in research, to analyze inequality in outcomes across a range of domains critical to people's lives. It helps organizations identify the drivers of inequality in existing policies and practices and leverage points for making changes. The results of an equity review aim to change policies and practices or implement new policies and practices to advance equity and improve outcomes.

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The OLE review is unlike other reviews that often begin with an evaluation of an organizations' documents and policies. Policies represent intentions, not outcomes. Instead, the OLE review begins with an examination of data to reveal the organizations' outcomes. Then, the equity review explains the outcomes through the policies and practices that contribute to them. Through a research-based inquiry of the potential drivers of inequality, we begin to identify the actual practices that may contribute to those outcomes. Only after findings and conclusions are made about each specific inequality in the organization, do we examine policy documents to compare the stated intentions with the outcomes and to identify the opportunities for improvement in organizational practices, policies, cultures, and systems. The OLE review allows for a laser-like focus on results.

The OLE review uses strategic data collection and analysis to help identify gaps. The equity review is not restricted to reviewing just the work of a particular organization. Instead, the review goes where the data takes it.

## 2

## Conduct Stakeholder-Led Inquiry

Stakeholder engagement is a critical part of our process from start to finish. Research shows diverse groups often face significant barriers to engagement. As a result, many public policy efforts fail to incorporate

diverse perspectives when designing policies and programs. Other efforts may bring diverse faces to the table, but may fail to create effective spaces for safe and difficult conversations, resulting only in diverse faces instead of diverse

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voices and perspectives. Our approach rests on a proactive engagement philosophy where our responsibility is not limited to inviting the public to participate but strives to

achieve diversity and inclusion in engagement through "radical hospitality<sup>1</sup>." Radical hospitality is defined as "intentionally inviting people to have difficult conversations and setting the stage for them."

## 3

## Focus on the Possible

There are many drivers of inequality. Some of these drivers reside under the direct responsibility of the organization, school district, government agency, or foundation undertaking the review, while others reside externally. For example, inequality in educational outcomes is partly a result of education practices, leadership priorities, existing organizational

Our review will focus from day-one on inequality drivers the organization can immediately address

cultures, and other social factors that may be outside of the school system's control. However, our organizational review will focus from day-one on inequality drivers the organization can immediately address. Furthermore, our review will provide recommendations that are accessible and feasible; consider the local social, budgetary, and political contexts; and produce immediate results.

## 4

## Provide Data and Findings Accessible to Everyone

While our review is guided by research, data, and lived experiences, we believe that insights should be easily drawn by everyday

We describe the findings early and simply so insights are accessible to all

members of the community. We tailor our data and findings to be accessible for everyone. We answer the guiding review questions with a series of charts and illustrations that describe the findings clearly and simply, and we seamlessly begin planning around these

findings. In our approach, wide accessibility of reports, findings, and recommendations as a top priority.



<sup>1</sup> Holley, K. (2016) [The Principles for Equitable and Inclusive Civic Engagement: A Guide to Transformative Change](#) Columbus, OH: The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the Ohio State University.