



# Equity Profile Dashboard Toolkit

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## MISSION

The Dudley Flood Center for Educational Equity & Opportunity works collaboratively to take action toward addressing issues of systemic racism by advocating for structural changes in policy and practice to build an equitable education system that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of NC's diverse student population.

## VISION

The Dudley Flood Center for Educational Equity & Opportunity envisions an education system that provides every student in North Carolina with access to equitable, culturally responsive, and high-quality educational opportunities that lead to success in college, career, and citizenship.

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### Purpose of the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to accompany the Dudley Flood Center's **Equity Profile Dashboard**, a dynamic and interactive platform that provides visual, equity-focused data for every Public School Unit in North Carolina. The **Equity Profile Dashboard** leverages publicly available data to offer a snapshot of critical equity indicators, helping educators, policymakers, and advocates explore systemic inequities and take action to address them.

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### What is the Equity Profile Dashboard?

The Equity Profile Dashboard is an accessible tool that visually presents key equity data for schools and districts across North Carolina. It allows users to analyze disparities, trends, and progress in critical areas that influence educational outcomes. The dashboard serves as both a data repository and a conversation starter, encouraging deeper reflection and collaboration around equity-driven solutions.

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### What is Equity?

Equity reflects a state in which every person's identity, power, opportunity, and potential are fully realized and life outcomes are no longer predicted by characteristics such as race, economics, ethnicity, location, gender, sexuality, nor disability.



## What Informs the Equity Profiles?

The Equity Profiles are rooted in the **seven domains of educational equity**, as identified by the [Study Group XVI report](#). These domains highlight critical systemic inequities and opportunities for intervention, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding and addressing disparities in education.

### The seven domains include:

**Resegregation** Identifying patterns of racial and socioeconomic segregation.

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**Discipline Disparities** Highlighting inequities in disciplinary actions across student groups.

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**The Opportunity Gap** Examining access to resources that promote academic success.

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**Overrepresentation of Students of Color in Special Education** Analyzing trends in special education identification.

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**Access to Rigorous Courses and Programs** Evaluating participation in advanced academic opportunities.

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**Diversity in Teaching** Comparing teacher demographics to student populations.

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**Culturally Responsive Pedagogy** Assessing whether teaching practices affirm and reflect diverse cultural backgrounds.

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By anchoring our work in these seven domains and leveraging the power of data, the Equity Profile Dashboard aims to inspire and inform the actions necessary to achieve educational equity for every student in North Carolina.

## WHERE DOES THE DATA COME FROM?

The Equity Profile Dashboard relies on publicly available data from trusted sources such as state and federal education databases. This data is curated and analyzed to provide a clear and actionable overview of equity-related indicators. The resulting data points present key information tailored to individual districts, enabling stakeholders to focus on the unique challenges and opportunities in their local context.

# Key Features of the Toolkit



This toolkit is designed to complement the Equity Profile Dashboard by providing practical guidance and resources for understanding and utilizing equity-focused data effectively. It bridges the gap between data visualization and actionable steps, empowering users to interpret, reflect on, and apply the data in meaningful ways. Below are the key features of the toolkit:

## Overview of Equity Data Points and Sources

- The toolkit provides a detailed explanation of the equity indicators featured in the dashboard, offering clarity on what the data represents and why it matters.
- Each data point is tied to one or more of the **seven domains of educational equity**, ensuring alignment with a proven framework for addressing systemic inequities.
- Users can explore the sources of the data, including state and federal education databases, and understand the methodology behind the Equity Profiles.

## Tools for Interpreting Equity Data

To support critical analysis and engagement, the toolkit includes a suite of tools that guide users in examining equity data from multiple perspectives. These tools help districts and schools connect data to their unique contexts, uncover underlying systemic issues, and develop actionable strategies for growth and improvement.

### Tools Include:

- **Reflection Questions:**

Targeted prompts encourage users to think critically about trends, systemic issues, and opportunities in the data.

*Example Questions:*

- What patterns or trends are most surprising or concerning in the data?
- How do these equity indicators reflect or differ from our experiences in the district?
- What additional questions does this data raise about equity in our schools?

- **Frameworks for Analysis:**

Structured approaches, such as the **Ladder of Inference**, **Cultural Community Wealth**, and **Asset/Deficit Frames**, guide users in interpreting and reframing data equitably.

- These frameworks:

- Help identify assumptions and biases.
- Shift deficit narratives to asset-based thinking.
- Highlight community strengths that can inform equity strategies.

- **Visual Analysis Tools:** Visual aids like the **Fishbone Diagram** help users systematically organize observations, identify root causes, and prioritize action steps to address inequities.



# Key Features of the Toolkit

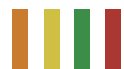


## Best Practices for Working With and Using Data for Equity

- The toolkit offers actionable strategies for leveraging equity data to inform policy, practice, and advocacy efforts.
- Topics include using data to guide decision-making, engaging stakeholders in data-driven conversations, and avoiding common pitfalls like deficit-based framing.
- Best practices emphasize collaboration, transparency, and the importance of using data as a tool for systemic change rather than as a means of assigning blame.



Together, these features provide users with a comprehensive guide for exploring and applying equity data, making the Equity Profiles an essential resource for driving systemic change in education. By combining data visualization with reflection and actionable strategies, the toolkit ensures that equity work is grounded in evidence, context, and a commitment to progress.



# Overview of Equity Data Points



This section outlines the key data points used in the Equity Profile Dashboard and their sources. Each data point is linked to specific indicators of educational equity, providing districts with valuable insights into their progress toward equity for all students. By analyzing these data points, schools and districts can identify disparities and develop targeted strategies to address inequities in their systems. The data sources listed below ensure that the information presented is reliable, comprehensive, and directly relevant to the seven domains of equity.

## **The Opportunity Gap**

The Opportunity Gap highlights the inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities that are influenced by social constructions such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. These inequities result in limited access to high-quality learning opportunities, lower graduation rates, and lower post-secondary attainment for marginalized students.

Data Points: Student Demographics: Race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status. Graduation Rates: Four-year cohort graduation rates by subgroup.

Sources: [Student Demographics: NC Department of Public Instruction](#), Table 10, [Graduation Rates: NC Department of Public Instruction](#).

## **Diversity in Teaching**

Research demonstrates that a diverse teaching workforce has a positive impact on students, particularly students of color, improving academic achievement, access to advanced coursework, and reducing discipline disparities. Despite its benefits, North Carolina's teaching workforce remains predominantly White, highlighting the need for targeted recruitment and retention efforts.

Data Points: Teacher Demographics: Diversity of educators, experience levels.

Source: [NC Statistical Profile, Table A6](#).

## **Resegregation**

Resegregation is assessed through student demographic data, focusing on the concentration of White students in schools. Metrics include hypersegregated schools (99%-100% White students), intensely segregated schools (90%-98% White students), and majority White schools (50%-89% White students).

Data Points: Resegregation Metrics: School composition by race and segregation thresholds. Source: [National Center for Education Statistics](#).

## **Segregation at the School Level**

Segregation at the school level is assessed by comparing each school's demographic composition to that of its surrounding county. Metrics include Highly Proportional schools (<0.10 disproportionality score), where student demographics closely reflect county-level data; Somewhat Proportional schools (0.10-0.25), with mild demographic differences; Moderately Segregated schools (0.25-0.50), where notable disparities exist; and Highly Segregated schools (>0.50), where student composition significantly deviates from the county's demographics.

Data Points: Table 10.1 – PUPILS IN MEMBERSHIP BY RACE and SEX (at School Level), Table 37 – Membership by Race and Sex. Source: [North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile](#)



# Overview of Equity Data Points



## ***Access to Rigorous Courses and Programs***

Students of color are underrepresented in advanced academic opportunities, such as AP, IB, and AIG programs. Tracking enrollment in these programs by race and socioeconomic status is key to addressing the inequities in access to rigorous coursework.

Data Points: Access to Rigorous Coursework: Enrollment in AP/IB courses by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.  
Source: [NC School Report Cards](#).

## ***Overrepresentation of Students in Special Education***

Students of color, particularly African Americans, have historically been overrepresented in special education programs. This metric explores the proportion of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) compared to state funding caps and district-level demographics.

Data Points: Student Demographics: Race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status.  
Source: [NC School Report Cards](#).

## ***Discipline Disparities***

Discipline disparities reflect the disproportionate representation of students of color in suspensions, expulsions, and other disciplinary actions. These disparities persist despite statewide reductions in suspension rates.

Data Points: Disciplinary Data: Suspension/expulsion rates by demographic groups.  
Source: [NC School Report Cards](#).

## ***Per-Pupil Spending***

Per-pupil expenditure (PPE) is a critical measure of resource allocation in districts. Higher spending per student often correlates with access to high-quality teachers, advanced coursework, and diverse learning opportunities.

Data Points: Per-Pupil Expenditures (PPE): Local, state, federal, and total spending.  
Source: [NC Statistical Profile, Table 24](#).

**This data overview provides the foundation for exploring systemic inequities in education and enables stakeholders to take targeted, data-driven action to foster equitable learning environments for all students.**



# Tools for Analyzing Data



This section provides resources and frameworks to help users critically engage with the data presented in the Equity Profile Dashboard. The goal is to support districts and stakeholders in interpreting data, identifying systemic inequities, and designing actionable strategies for change. The section is divided into three components: **Reflection Questions**, **Frameworks for Analysis**, and **Visual Analysis Activities**, offering a range of tools to deepen understanding and guide equity-focused decision-making.

## I. Reflective Questions

Reflection questions encourage users to think critically about the data, uncover trends, and connect insights to broader systemic challenges. These prompts are organized by data point to guide interpretation and foster meaningful analysis.

A

### Student Demographics

- What trends do you notice in student demographics over time?
- How do these trends reflect broader community changes, economic shifts, or disparities?
- Are specific subgroups growing or declining in representation? Why might this be happening?

B

### Teacher Demographics

- Does the diversity of teachers reflect the diversity of the student population?
- How might teacher demographics impact student outcomes, representation, and cultural responsiveness?
- What recruitment or retention practices might influence these trends?

C

### Disciplinary Data

- Which student groups are disproportionately represented in suspension/expulsion rates?
- What policies, practices, or implicit biases might contribute to these disparities?
- Are there alternative discipline strategies, such as restorative practices?





D

## Access to Rigorous Coursework

- Are there disparities in AP/IB course enrollment or AIG program participation across student groups?
- What systemic or structural barriers might exist for underrepresented students?
- What strategies can increase equitable access to rigorous courses?

E

## Graduation Rates

- How do graduation rates vary across subgroups such as race, socioeconomic status, or students with disabilities?
- What interventions or supports might improve outcomes for students with lower graduation rates?
- Are there early indicators (e.g., attendance, academic performance) that predict graduation success?

F

## Per-Pupil Expenditures (PPE)

- Are funding disparities evident between schools or districts?
- How do funding levels correlate with access to resources, quality teachers, and rigorous courses?
- What policies or funding structures contribute to these disparities?

G

## Per-Pupil Expenditures (PPE)

- Are schools becoming more segregated or diverse over time?
- How does school composition influence access to resources, peer networks, and opportunities?
- What historical or current policies contribute to segregation patterns?



# Tools for Analyzing Data

## II. Frameworks for Analysis

Frameworks provide structured approaches to engage with data, uncover systemic inequities, and generate actionable insights. These tools help users interpret data beyond surface-level observations, enabling deeper critical analysis and equity-focused decision-making. Below is an overview of three key frameworks included in this toolkit, with appropriate citations and visuals.

### A. Ladder of Inference

The Ladder of Inference, introduced by Chris Argyris and Donald Schön (1974), helps users critically examine the assumptions and biases that influence their interpretation of data. It guides users through seven steps, from observing raw data to taking action based on conclusions:

Observable Data  
Selecting Data  
Adding Personal Meaning  
Making Assumptions  
Drawing Conclusions  
Adopting Beliefs  
Taking Action

**Overview:** This framework ensures that decisions and insights drawn from data are rooted in evidence rather than preconceived notions or incomplete understanding.

#### Key Questions:

- What patterns or trends do you observe in the data?
- What assumptions might you bring to interpreting this data?
- How might systemic inequities explain the disparities?

# Tools for Analyzing Data

## II. Frameworks for Analysis

### B. Cultural Community Wealth

The Cultural Community Wealth framework, developed by Tara J. Yosso (2005), challenges traditional deficit-based perspectives by emphasizing the strengths and assets of marginalized communities. It identifies various forms of cultural capital that marginalized groups use to navigate and thrive in systemic inequities.

**Overview:** Yosso identifies six forms of capital: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant. These forms of wealth can inform strategies for advancing equity by leveraging the inherent strengths of communities.

Forms of Community Wealth	Examples
Aspirational Capital	High aspirations despite barriers.
Linguistic Capital	Multilingual skills and communication richness.
Familial Capital	Support systems within families and communities.
Social Capital	Networks and connections within the community.
Navigational Capital	Skills for navigating institutions and systems.
Resistant Capital	Advocacy and resistance against systemic inequities.

#### Application:

- Use the data to pinpoint areas where community assets (e.g., familial support, social capital, aspirations) are evident.
- Develop equity strategies that amplify these strengths and integrate them into school or district practices.

#### Key Questions:

- What strengths and resources do these communities have?
- How can these strengths inform equity-focused strategies?
- How does recognizing cultural wealth shift the narrative around the data?



# Tools for Analyzing Data

## II. Frameworks for Analysis

### C. Asset/Deficit Frames

The Asset/Deficit Frames framework is influenced by Gloria Ladson-Billings' work on culturally relevant pedagogy and systemic analysis (1995). It pushes users to move beyond deficit-based interpretations of data to focus on systemic challenges and community strengths.

**Overview:** This framework helps identify deficit-based narratives, challenge their validity, and shift the focus to systemic issues that create inequities. It encourages centering community assets to design effective interventions.

Deficit Frame	Reframed as Asset-Based
"Low test scores mean students fail."	"Students lack access to rigorous coursework."
"Families don't value education."	"Families advocate in ways not recognized by schools."
"Students struggle in the classroom."	"Students need culturally responsive teaching."

#### Application:

- Identify deficit narratives.
- Reframe the data to highlight systemic challenges.
- Center community strengths.

#### Key Questions:

- Are there deficit narratives implied in this data?
- How can you reframe it to focus on systemic challenges and community strengths?
- What opportunities does this reframing reveal for intervention?



# Tools for Analyzing Data

## III. Visual Analysis Activities: Fishbone Diagram

Visual tools like the **Fishbone Diagram** are powerful for organizing insights and mapping the root causes of systemic challenges. By breaking down a complex issue into contributing factors, participants can identify actionable strategies for addressing inequities.

### Overview of the Fishbone Diagram

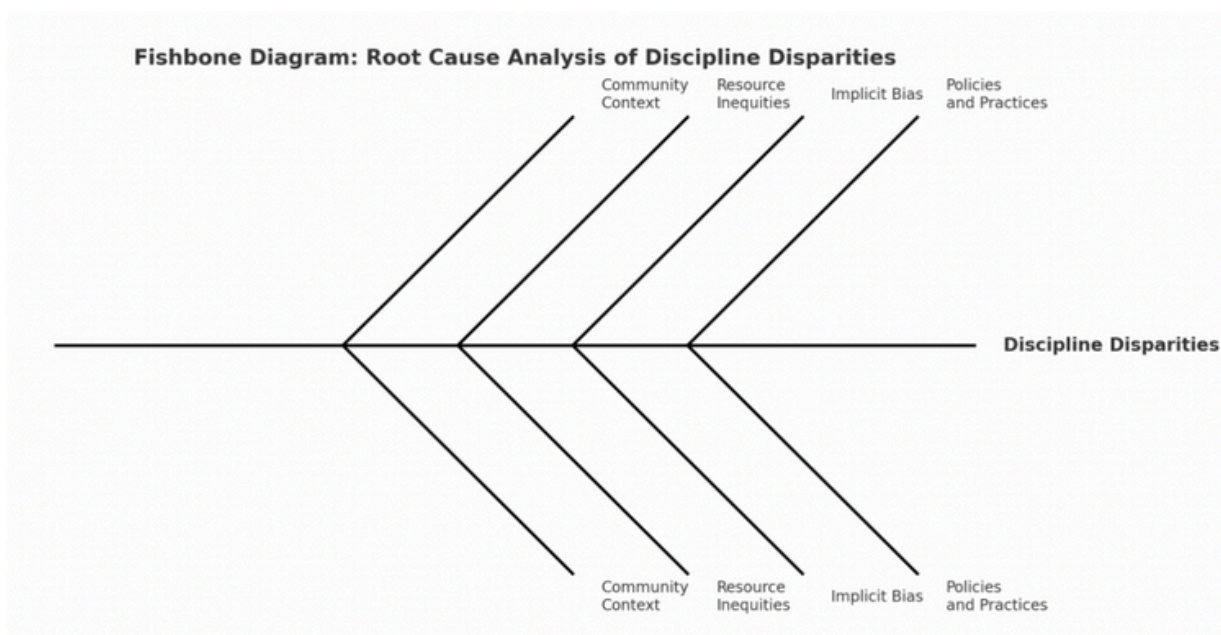
- **Purpose:** To identify and organize the root causes of a specific issue or inequity.
- **Structure:** A central "spine" represents the primary issue, with "bones" branching off to represent contributing factors.
- **Application:** Use this tool to analyze data from the Equity Profile Dashboard, focusing on disparities like discipline rates, resource allocation, or access to advanced coursework.

#### Example: Discipline Disparities

**Primary Issue:** Disproportionate suspension rates for students of color.

#### Contributing Factors:

1. **Policies and Practices:** Zero-tolerance policies, lack of restorative practices.
2. **Implicit Bias:** Stereotyping, differential treatment based on race or behavior.
3. **Resource Inequities:** Lack of trained counselors, insufficient funding for behavioral interventions.
4. **Community Context:** Socioeconomic challenges, historical inequities.



# Best Practices for Reviewing & Using Equity Data



When reviewing and utilizing equity data, it is essential to approach the process with intentionality and a focus on driving meaningful change. Below are the key practices to ensure data is used effectively to address systemic inequities:

- 1. Approach Analysis with an Equity Mindset:** Begin with a commitment to understanding and addressing systemic barriers rather than reinforcing deficit-based narratives. Center the focus on structural issues and opportunities for transformation.
- 2. Consider Multiple Data Sources:** Use a variety of data points to gain a comprehensive understanding of equity challenges. Triangulate quantitative data with qualitative insights to capture the full story.
- 3. Disaggregate Data by Demographics:** Break down data by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and other relevant demographics to uncover disparities that might otherwise be hidden in aggregate reporting.
- 4. Identify Root Causes of Disparities:** Go beyond surface-level trends to explore the underlying systemic factors that contribute to inequities. Use tools like root cause analysis to guide this process.
- 5. Engage Stakeholders in Interpretation:** Include diverse voices—students, families, educators, and community members—in data analysis and interpretation. This ensures multiple perspectives are considered and fosters shared ownership of equity efforts.
- 6. Use Data to Inform Actionable Strategies:** Translate insights from data into specific, targeted strategies that address inequities. Align these strategies with your organization's broader equity goals to ensure they drive systemic change.
- 7. Be Mindful of Potential Biases:** Recognize and address biases in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Consider how data systems, metrics, or methods may unintentionally reinforce inequities or misrepresent marginalized communities.

By adhering to these best practices, educators, policymakers, and advocates can leverage equity data to create meaningful, lasting improvements in educational systems, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

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*"The greatest motivator is possibility... we're not there yet. We will get there, but we will only do that if we keep the faith and believe that there is a destination."*

- Dr. Dudley Flood





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