



Report: Quarter 4 of Year 1 Quarter 1 of Year 2

July - December 2009

CFDA 84.004D: Civil Rights Training and Advisory Services
Equity Assistance Centers Program
U.S. Department of Education Award #S004D080027





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Leadership

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The Equity Alliance at ASU has been funded for three years (October 1, 2008 through September 31, 2011) under a cooperative agreement #S004D080027 issued to Arizona State University by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.



The Equity Alliance at ASU

The Equity Alliance promotes the development of culturally responsive, inclusive educational systems.

The Equity Alliance at ASU is a regional Equity Assistance Center (EAC) supported by a \$2.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, awarded through the Department's initiatives to support Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act through rights training and advisory services for schools and communities to address equity and access issues in public education. In all, there are ten regional equity assistance centers in the U.S. The Equity Alliance at ASU is the Center for Region IX, the southwestern region comprised of Arizona, California, and Nevada. Equity Assistance Centers provide technical assistance (TA) and training, at the request of school boards and other responsible governmental agencies for the preparation, adoption, and implementation of plans for the desegregation of public schools in Arizona, California, and Nevada. As defined by program guidelines, desegregation refers to equity—including desegregation based on race, sex, and national origin and the development of effective methods of coping with special educational problems occasioned by desegregation.

Building on the educational theory, cutting-edge research, and the momentum of the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCRESt), the National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI), and NIUSI-*LeadScape*, the mission of the Equity Alliance at ASU is to promote equity, access, and participation in education by supporting the capacity of States and local school systems to provide high-quality, effective opportunities to learn for all students, regardless of race, gender, or national origin, and to reduce disparities in academic achievement.

This Center's approach is grounded in emphases on civil rights and cultural responsiveness, as well as the belief that all students can excel in academic endeavors if they are provided with access to high-quality teachers, curricula, instruction, programs and resources, and their cultures, languages, and experiences are valued and used to facilitate their learning. Guided by a thematic focus on enhancing understanding of equity in classrooms, schools, and school systems and the use of scientifically-based solutions, our approach addresses the gaps and priorities identified in recent, major policy and research equity reports (Artiles et al. 2005; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Ferguson et al., 2003; Harry & Klingner, 2006; Klingner et al., 2005; Skiba et al., 2008; Losen & Orfield, 2002).

Rather than view race, class, and gender as isolated factors, this perspective suggests that the current inequitable conditions of schooling are connected to historical legacies of exclusion and inclusion based on normative assumptions about race, class, gender, and national origin that define who is considered competent or different (Minow, 1990). Indeed, schools engaged in equity work need to critique and transform such assumptions and focus on belonging, nurturing, and educating all students, regardless of differences in race, gender, cultural, language, ability, or class (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007). This kind of work must be transformative to change systemic contributors to inequity. Both inclusivity and cultural responsiveness are grounded in transformative equity and social justice. Understanding how this perspective informs classroom practice, school organization, and district policy is a hallmark of the successful work of the Equity Alliance at ASU. In supporting state, district, and schools' work to create equitable school systems, the Equity Alliance at ASU promotes the development of culturally responsive, inclusive educational systems.



A major purpose of the Equity Alliance at ASU is to assist schools in complying with federal civil rights requirements through the adoption or improvement of policies and practices and to help parents, students, educators, and community members to understand their rights under federal law. The Center is responsive to states and school boards where students are at risk for language, racial, gender, and national origin equity issues that affect student achievement and respond by working with districts, schools, and practitioners who are struggling to serve ALL their students equitably through onsite TA and coaching. Our relationships with Regional Resource Centers, Regional Educational Labs, Comprehensive Centers, the New Teachers Center, content centers, and other equity networks and professional organizations make us well poised to provide TA to Region IX because we can create synergies between efforts.

The Equity Alliance at ASU serves as a resource to the Office of Civil Rights and Department of Justice in ensuring equity for all students, regardless of race, gender, or national origin, by pursuing the following outcomes:

1. Reduce the over-representation of minorities in special education;
2. Increase the representation of minorities in gifted and talented and advanced placement programs;
3. Increase the use of scientifically-based, culturally responsive curricula and instructional practices in classrooms, schools, and districts including the provision of resource materials, professional development and training on successful strategies for providing Limited English Proficient (LEP) students with equitable access to a high-quality education;
4. Build local coalitions between higher education, preK-12 systems, communities, and families to provide equal access to highly qualified teachers, especially for students who are economically disadvantaged;
5. Support, develop, and disseminate effective approaches to school dropout prevention and reentry;
6. Promote equity by addressing the special needs of high-risk students, including students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds; and
7. Support districts transitioning to unitary status in desegregation cases.



Introduction

Transformative equity assistance work requires coordinated efforts that build capacity and nurture ongoing professional development, supported with the use of cutting edge tools. In addition, transformative equity work is institutionalized and scaled up through a distributive model of organizational change in which effective practices are systematically disseminated through school networks. The Equity Alliance at ASU's approach centers on four key change levels:

GOAL 1: On-Demand Technical Assistance and Professional Development

GOAL 2: Networks of School Systems Engaged in High-Quality Equity Work

GOAL 3: A Virtual Clearinghouse

GOAL 4: Continuous Improvement and Evaluation.

This four pronged approach (1) provides the impetus and skills to make organizational change for social justice and equity outcomes, (2) creates access to tools that will capture progress on critical equity issues pressuring change for those who lag behind on educational achievement based on gender, national origin, and race, (3) demonstrates how a focus on improving results for ALL students improves results for particular groups as well, (4) provides resources and training in the areas of hate crimes, racial prejudice, disproportionality, ELL instruction, school completion, bullying, and sexual harassment, and (5) underscores our commitment to continuing to improve results.

Goal 1: *Technical Assistance & Professional Learning*

Leverage continued improvement in research-based practices in schools through regional Technical Assistance and Professional Development supporting school, district, and state-wide development of assessment, referral, and instructional practices that address disparities related to race, national origin, and gender, as well as eliminating hate crimes, racial prejudice, and bullying/harassment.

- 1.1. Provide personalized, context-driven, scientifically-based technical assistance and professional development at the request of responsible governmental agencies.
- 1.2. Develop a variety of platforms for providing technical assistance.

Summary

Provide Technical Assistance and Professional Development On Request

Equity Alliance staff was active in responding to inquiries for factual, research based information to support equitable education. The following are examples of technical assistance and developing partnerships for long term support for systemic reform efforts.



Arizona

In September, staff met with the Director of Diversity, Phoenix Union High School District and explored ways the Equity Alliance can support them.

California

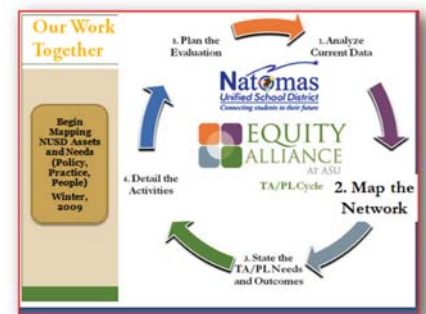
Staff held Bi-monthly conference telephone calls with the Natomas Unified School District and with the California Department of Education.

Staff began a long-term assistance process with the equity team from Natomas Unified School District in California. In the initial meeting, the team undertook the following:

- Outlined a Needs Assessment Process
- Completed a Needs Assessment Rubric
- Identified the District's Top 2 Priorities
- Began District Assets Mapping of Priorities

Staff facilitated a follow-up meeting which reviewed data created during the initial stages of the assistance. District team members reviewed graphic representation of demographic student reports on suspensions, and the ethnic diversity in student enrollment. A strategic planning process was initiated and the district leadership team discussed these next steps:

- Begin Strategic Planning Process
- Review Plan with Equity Alliance at ASU
- Submit to Superintendent for Approval
- Implement Strategic Plan
- Participate in Coaching Calls with Equity Alliance at ASU



Officials from the California Department of Education, Office of Special Education requested assistance in addressing the issue of disproportionality. Equity Alliance staff provided guidance on setting up a disproportionality work group.

Staff held bi-monthly meetings to review the content and the process of the online Moodle professional learning platform.

Also in November, Equity Alliance staff members were invited to consult with the California Department of Education Special Education Office regarding potential statewide approaches of Technical Assistance for addressing the disproportionate representation of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in special education. In December, staff joined the state level team to review two proposals for state-wide technical assistance.



Nevada

In August, Equity Alliance Staff responded to a request for assistance from Clark County, Nevada which is the 5th largest school district in the US. During a daylong visit staff held a conversation about collaborating with equity liaisons in planning a one day professional learning session for administrators. Staff also helped them design a way for providing ongoing professional learning opportunities for district administrators to address disparate student outcomes.

As part of the planning for further technical assistance, staff reviewed Clark County documents and materials for administration officials and provided guidance and ideas during the meeting and later sent materials to support their work.

Staff developed a working relationship with the Washoe school district.

Staff responded in November to a request for technical assistance from Washoe County Schools in Nevada. Conversations centered around three district concerns and needs:

- Improving the academic & graduation rates of underachieving minority students
- Professional development of staff around culture and equity issues as related to curriculum and instruction
- Recruitment, hiring and retention of minority staff

Provide Platforms for Professional Learning

On September 30 a webinar, *Professional Learning for Equity*, engaged 136 people. In addition 72 people viewed this webinar after the original date.

Staff developed a “certification training model” and supporting material which will be used in February of 2010.

In November, staff from the Equity Alliance met for a two-day beta test of a newly developed online module to be delivered on the Moodle platform, *Culturally Responsive Teaching in California* with representatives of the state’s Department of Education, consultants from West Ed and a state-wide representation of school district administration officials. Participants used criteria including: audience, accessibility, leadership, interpersonal supports, and buy-in as themes to structure their conversations during the test and following discussion.

Participants in the discussion provided feedback and new ideas to improve professional learning through the Moodle platform. Examples of the comments made during the meeting included the following:

- What happens when the computer is turned off? [We] need a coaching model that makes supportive people available when the computer is turned off and to provide support to turn it back on.
- Is there a way to create an assessment of district leaders that enables them to plug in and understand the work that already exists and what’s happening in their systems? For example, the assessment could be formatted using local language that is used in the district strategic plan.
- What can we provide for districts that have not explored the content of equity and cultural responsiveness? How can we support them?



Accomplishments

- Planned the Annual Equity Forum for February 2010.
- Provided technical assistance at a variety of systemic levels (e.g. state departments, district leadership, and school level) in Nevada, Arizona and California.

Next Steps

- Develop strategic goals with Clark County, Washoe and Reno School District in Nevada.

Goal 2: Networking & Dissemination

Engage regional clients, networks, and providers in peer-to-peer learning and inquiry to improve practice and results for social justice and equitable outcomes for all students.

- 2.1. Design, develop, and maintain a communications and technology infrastructure for the Center.
- 2.2. Develop and maintain a strong network of other TA providers, educators, community and professional organizations, and families.
- 2.3. Develop, implement, and monitor a strategic, proactive dissemination plan for the Center’s products and services.

Summary

Design and Maintain Communications Infrastructure

VOICE THREAD

A Voice Thread link is an interactive area of the webpage that provides an audio blog for visitors to listen to and – if they chose -- record a written or spoken response. Visitors to the Equity Alliance website were asked to “Join the conversation.” The purpose is explained as part of the link with the following statement, “Voice threads engage us in dialogue about matters of equity. Join in conversations about topics such as disproportionality, civil rights, inclusive classrooms, schools, and culturally responsive curriculum and instruction”. In November the topic was on GLBTQ. In December the voice thread was about how to promote an inclusive school community.





Equity Matters Newsletter

The September issue of the Equity Matters monthly newsletter explored data and how to use it to improve academic achievement, we looked at how using data and other evidence of student performance can effectuate full access to quality education, qualified teachers, challenging curriculum, full opportunity to learn, and appropriate support for learning for all of the students in our schools.

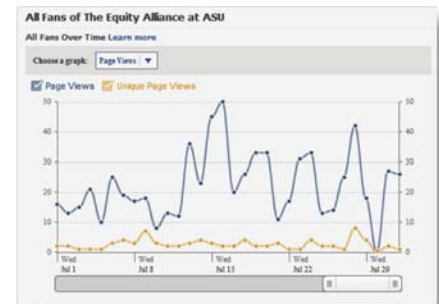
In October Equity Matters Early took up early intervening. Early intervening is a term closely tied to the ESEA Act of 2002 and is often confused with early intervention. These are two very different initiatives, although, to be fair, both are about intervening early. Early intervention is for babies and toddlers with disabilities; early intervening services are about catching early school-aged children’s struggles. Early intervening is aimed at grades K-12, with an emphasis on K-3.

Culturally Responsive Practice was the theme for Equity Matters in November. By bringing alternative ways of knowing and communicating into schools, the curriculum as well as the students benefit. Culturally responsive teaching creates these bridges and in doing so, offers the possibility for transformational knowledge that leads to socially responsible action.

Gifted and AP: Providing Equal Access was the topic in December, Principals should continuously assess, on a year-to-year basis, the racial, ethnic, gender, and linguistic demographics of students accessing gifted instructional programming, as compared with the demographics of all students.

Facebook: In July, staff initiated a facebook presence and provides regularly posted messages. Charts of the usage by fans is tracked and reviewed to monitor and increase participation. Friends of the Equity Alliance also post images and narratives on subjects relevant to the solution of equity issues in education.

The graphic representation on the right illustrates the data that is reviewed by staff to monitor the activity on the Equity Alliance Facebook pages.



[The New Digital Divide: Where are Our Girls?](#)
By Kimberly Scott

Kimberly A. Scott is an Associate Professor in the Mary Lou Fulton Graduate School and Institute of Education at Arizona State University in the Division of Advanced Studies of Education Policy, Leadership, and Curriculum...

[November 13, 2009 at 1:28pm](#) · Comment · Like · Unlike · [Share](#)

The Equity Alliance webpage contains internal reference links placed in the margin regarding the various webpage content are included to allow visitors to find topics and interest.

Staff began inserting questions for the Newsletter to increase participation.

An Equity Alliance Forum website was created for registration and lodging information, and which provided an overview for potential participants.



Develop and Maintain Networks

Staff made a keynote presentation at the Region VII TA Conference in Boise Idaho, The Promise and Possibility of Ripple Effects.

Staff participated in the Mountain Plains Collaborative meeting in Portland Oregon. All TA centers and RRC's and EAC have collaborated on creating an equity framework for delivery of TA to SEA's using an equity lens.

The key role of principals and their expectations was the focus of a presentation at the National Association of Elementary School Principals conference in San Diego.

“Leading from the Principal’s Level.” Presentation at the National Association of Elementary School Principals, San Diego, CA.

This presentation pointed out that a shift in perspective, from thinking about student failure to looking at how schools are failing their students, is necessary for leaders to begin transforming schools to become inclusive of all students. An integrated instructional model of response to intervention (RtI) was described as an effective way to meet the needs of special education as well as general education students. Such a model presents the promise of meeting legal federal guidelines, overcoming historical problems of marginalized student sub-groups, and enabling principles to transform their schools.



During the discussion following the presentation, staff suggested having exemplary teachers present at staff development meetings, outlined ways to approach resistant teachers, and provided techniques for effectively coaching school teams. Staff worked to give principals the skills needed for future transformative leaderships including tools that encourage reflection, action, and continuous improvement; coaching to build expertise for the future; and the ability to facilitate communities of practice.

Also during this period, project leaders presented Beyond Diversity Training: Systemic Professional Learning for Educational Equity at the National Staff Development Conference in St. Louis in December. Staff also met with representatives from the Arizona Division of National Staff Development Council about the coordination of local school district Professional Development.



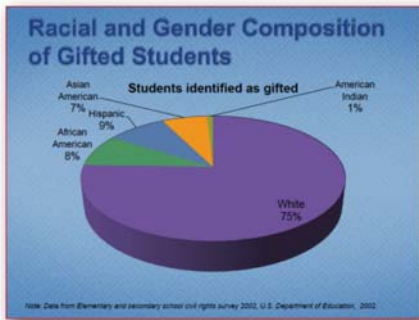
LeadScape, Presentation at the National Office of Special Education Programs Project Director’s Conference. Washington, D.C.

This presentation provided an in-depth view of the structure of NIUSI *LeadScape*'s learning resources and related tools for change. *LeadScape* structure is provided to principals through on-line tools such as data maps, school improvement planning, task tracker, forums, messages, and calendar. Participants were given visual examples of the learning resources accessible in numerous formats, including blogs, wordles, wikis, on points, RSS Feeds, Twitter, Facebook, and

professional learning modules.



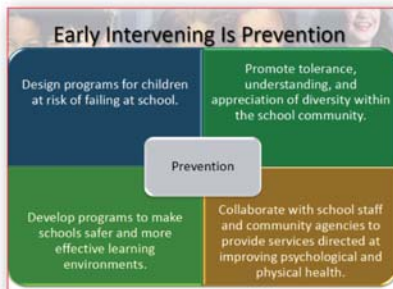
Equity Assistance Center staff made a presentation entitled, Including CLD Students in Gifted & AP, at the National Equity Assistance Centers Capacity Building Conference in October.



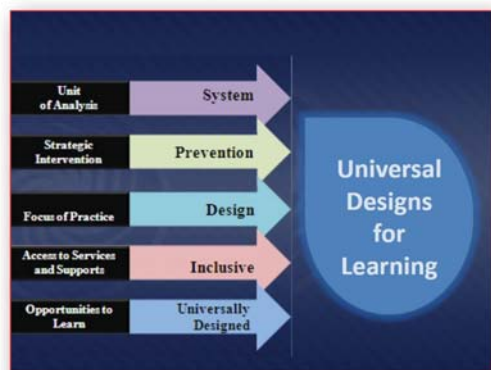
This presentation explored how common methods of identification of gifted students are based on analytical and linguistic skills, and how this results in an underrepresentation of students from language and racial minority groups. Only 8% of African American and 9% of Hispanic students were identified as gifted based on recent U.S. Department of Education data. Participants were given the following suggestions for addressing this issue:

- Adopt Culturally Responsive Theories and Definitions of Giftedness
- Adopt Culturally Sensitive Instruments
- Provide Gifted Education Preparation for Educators
- Provide Culturally Responsive Preparation for Teachers

Staff made a presentation Early Intervening as an Equity Imperative, at the National Association of School Psychologists in July. This presentation was organized around two central objectives: 1). Exploring a framework for the design and implementation of early intervening services, and 2). Translating these perspectives into classroom practices. The presentation suggested that school leaders shift their perspective and instead of asking “Why are students failing?” ask “How are the learning experiences provided by our district, school, or classroom failing these students?” School psychologists were urged to “Build culturally responsive instruction/ interventions for students not benefitting from current practices”.



Two staff members of the Equity Alliance made a presentation on the subject of Universal Design for Learning for School Psychologists at the National Association of School Psychologists meeting.



The concept of universal design, which originated from the field of architecture, posits as a principal outcome, that the design of products and environments be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation. The presenters discussed application to education systems through the guidelines of universal design for learning: equitable use, flexibility, simple, intuitive design, perceptible information, tolerance for error, minimal physical effort, appropriate size and space for approach and use, and fully inclusive. The participants of this session were challenged to think about this question, “How does the social

environment of the classroom or school support multiple means of student participation?”



Networking & Dissemination Activities

- Continue development of the technology infrastructure of the Center.
- Continue to maintain a strong network with other TA providers and organizations working to support the development of educational equity.

Location	Date	Participants	Description
Washington D.C., National OSEP Project Directors Conference	July, 09	Project directors from across the nation.	<i>Leadership for Inclusive Schools</i>
San Diego, CA (NAESP)	July, 09	School psychologists and staff from school around the U.S.A.	Leading from the Building Level
National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)	July, 09	School psychologists and staff from school around the U.S.A.	Universal Designs for Learning for School Psychologists
National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)	July, 09	School psychologists and staff from school around the U.S.A.	Early Intervening as an Equity Imperative
Mountain Plains Collaborative Meeting, Portland Oregon	August, 09	Regional Equity Assistance and Comprehensive Center project directors.	Developed a theory of action and a common definition of Equity
National EAC Capacity Building Conference	October, 09	Equity Assistance center directors and staff.	Including CLD Students in Gifted & Advance Placement classes.
“Fiesta Educativa”, San Diego California	October, 09		Presented an all-day workshop on Culturally Responsive RTI
National Staff Development Council (NSDC)	December, 2009	School and district administrative staff from across the U.S.S.	Beyond “Diversity Training”: Systemic Professional Learning for Educational Equity

Develop and Maintain a Product Dissemination Plan

The staff meets regularly each week in four working teams organized to accomplish the goals of the project. During these meetings, an emergent dissemination plan and activities is formed and solidified, taking advantage of presentation opportunities. All products created for presentations are saved on a common server that is accessible to all staff, and are also catalogued and housed in the Learning Carousel, a searchable online repository that is used by clients and visitors to the web site. A special sub-team has the responsibility to monitor the quality of products and another one is responsible for disseminating products through all the communication mechanisms established for

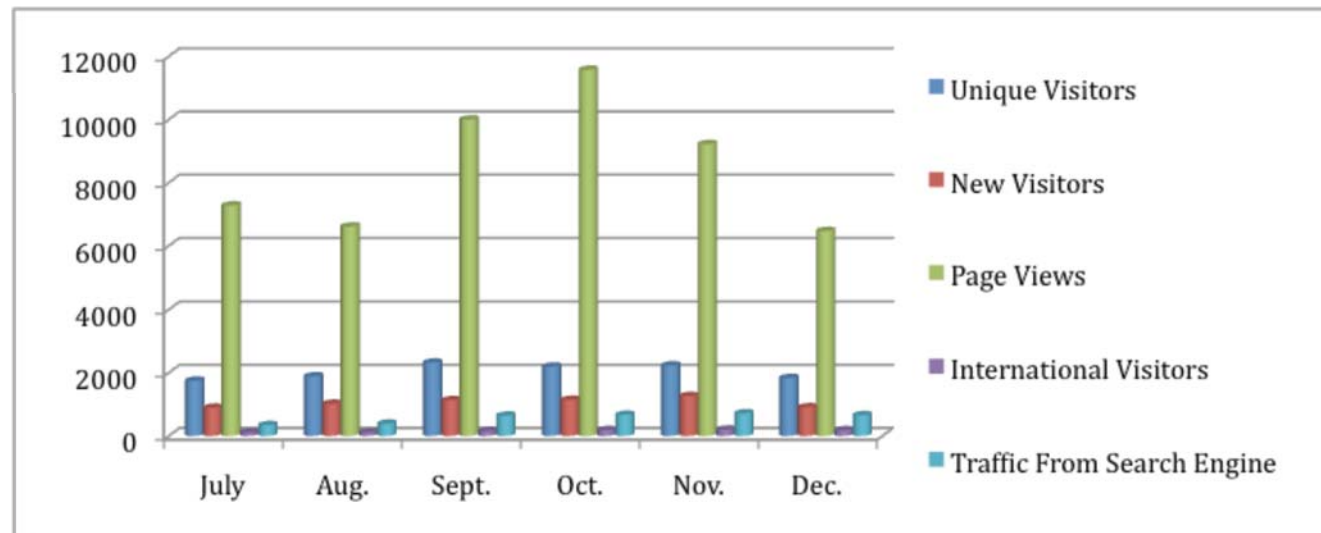


the Center (e.g. newsletters, e-mail blasts, blogs, webinars, face to face meetings, publications). A third team is responsible for documenting the Center’s continuous improvement, which includes reflecting on the work of these teams on the dissemination activities.

Electronic Monitoring of Website

Activity	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Unique Visitors	1749	1887	2320	2196	2232	1832
New Visitors	894	1017	1133	1140	1262	907
Page Views	7277	6611	10000	11574	9220	6466
International Visitors	111	111	154	182	198	180
Traffic From Search Engine	343	386	642	668	713	657

Equity Alliance Website Activity 1



Accomplishments

- Continued enhancements to the Equity Alliance webpage
- Maintained strong network connections with other TA providers and organizations working to support the development of educational equity
- Website activity included a total of 51148 page views, 12216 unique visitors, and 6353 new visitors.



Goal 3: Research & Development

Create, validate, and produce content-rich, cutting-edge scientifically-based resources that translate educational research for diverse learners into practice for practitioners, administrators, families, and policy makers intended to assist schools in providing effective learning environments for all students.

- 3.1. Develop and apply a conceptual framework for the analysis and synthesis of best practices in supporting outcomes for ALL students.
- 3.2. Develop a clearinghouse of resources, partnering with centers and organizations throughout Region IX and the nation, to provide access to products that meet the needs of our clients.
- 3.3. Develop and produce an accessible series of high-quality products that synthesize the existing research-base and practice-base.
- 3.4. Develop and produce new tools for assessing and addressing equity needs and leveraging school improvement.

Summary

Use Conceptual Framework for Synthesis of Best Practices

The Equity Alliance *What Matters Series* is a collection of short publications on common educational equity concerns. Each *What Matters* publication provides readers with a general understanding of a topic, the rationale for addressing this topic as a part of larger educational equity work, and concrete action-steps for doing so. *What Matters* publications are written with language and graphics that are accessible to a wide variety of readers, including students, parents, teachers, and researchers.

During this period, staff engaged in an ongoing process of planning the *What Matters* series by identifying the audience for these practitioner-oriented publications and then matching equity related topics to each of the identified groups. Once the publications team had an outline of the proposed plan, other Equity Alliance staff members were asked to contribute their ideas for additional topics. Always a work in process, the following chart gives an idea of the process and the plans as they appeared in the month of November.





	Individuals	Instruction & teachers	Schools	Districts
Disproportionality	Gifted?	What does equitable instruction look like?	Early Intervening	
CR Practice	Gender... Religion – Gifted? Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth Matters.	Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning What does quality instruction look like? What does quality content look like?	Response to Intervention	
ELL		A quick guide to ELL approaches		
Dropout Prevention				Dropout Prevention
Equity	Discrimination Matters Race Matters	Looking out for Privilege	Digital Divide	Gifted Programming
Inclusive Schools		Opportunities to Learn		
Leadership for Cultural Practices and Transformation	First Nation Peoples	Teacher Leadership for Equity	Power Relationships	
School Cultures and School Safety	Supporting Social Networks for Students in Schools	What teachers need to know about families and communities	What every school needs Prioritizing Equity	
Systemic Change				Who thought that was such good idea?
Difference	The social construction of dis/ability			

During the summer and fall months, staff worked on planning the 2010 Leadership for Equity and Excellence Forum. The purpose of the forum is to bring educators together to connect with leaders in educational equity from across the U.S. at the Equity Alliance at February 16 and 17 in Phoenix, AZ. This year's Forum is entitled *Reinvesting in Equity: Building Bridges and Tearing Down Walls*, and features hands-on workshops, case studies and presentations from nationally-recognized social justice leaders.



The staff created a Forum project task list which included planning activities such as hotel arrangement, logistical work and the completion of a forum request for proposals. The following are the forum outcomes:

- Build coalitions for everyday equity;
- Network with thought leaders in order to understand the complexities of transformation for social justice;
- Examine ways to build bridges and tear down walls in our own local setting;
- Learn new ideas and strategies for teaching and leading change; and
- Advance the agenda for equity so that all students receive a first rate education.

Develop a Clearinghouse of Resources



In August, the Equity Alliance Center placed its Learning Carousel online, a clearinghouse of materials developed over a nearly 15 year timeframe by the precursor and current programs in the Center. The Carousel makes a very large set of material available on the Equity Alliance webpage, with a searchable graphic that gives readers the choice of finding materials by searching through categories or by clicking on the various concentric circles of the framework for systemic reform, the Systemic Change Framework.

Staff added new materials to the Learning Carousel on a weekly basis through the dissemination team's efforts outlined below.

Monthly eBlasts are short news-related single item messages sent to our list of 8000 people. The eBlasts highlight issues that are timely, such as news of upcoming events, and articles that deal with current issues in equity. As each eBlast is sent, clients have a chance to opt out of our lists or send to others for them to opt in; this keeps our lists current and gives us confidence that we are actually reaching a reading audience. Each click within the message is tracked for user data, allowing us to estimate the depth of penetration of each message into our audiences.

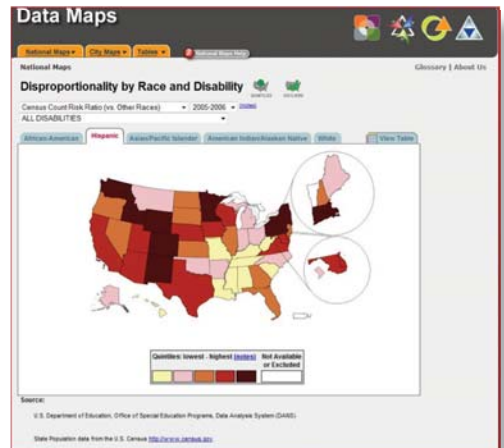


Blogs are invited short articles from renowned experts, who we ask to address a practitioner audience by summarizing their research and findings and leaving readers with a set of thoughtful questions for local discussion. These articles are catalogued and included on both the website and in the Learning Carousel.

Newsletters were produced and emailed to about 8000 people each month. The newsletters are also displayed on the website and stored in the clearinghouse, the Learning Carousel.



Data Maps are a special category of online resource, which are developed at national, state, and local school district levels. Principals have access to their protected school level data through the *LeadScape* platform; all other visitors to the web site can freely use the national and state maps. The state maps for CA, AZ, and NV have a wealth of information at the district level, which is constantly updated by the staff. The purpose of the data maps is for clients to use in assessing the needs of students in all categories, including those in special education, racial minority and English language learner groups. Also, the data can be used to measure and track improvements where there are discrepancies that show a need to improve student performance for specific groups of students.



The data maps are interactive and by selecting areas of the map, visitors to the site can access more detailed information about specific groups and the rates of participation in school programs. The selection in the map pictured here, for example, will provide a graphic or table representation of the rate of participation in special education for students of Hispanic heritage.

Develop a series of high quality products

During this period developed the following research based publications. They were designed to be relevant and accessible to educators at all levels, and to provide practical applications to research and best practice around inclusive education that meets the needs of all students.

- ***Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth Matters!***

Presents general trends in the social and emotional well-being of youth who identify as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (GLBTQ), followed by a guide of sexual orientation definitions. Additionally, readers learn a series of steps that schools must address in order to build inclusive, safe, and effective schools for all students, including those who identify as GLBTQ.

- ***Culturally Responsive Teaching & Learning Matters!***

In 2000, Professor Geneva Gay wrote that culturally responsive teaching connects students' cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles to academic knowledge and intellectual tools in ways that legitimize what students already know. By embracing the sociocultural realities and histories of students through what is taught and how, culturally responsive teachers negotiate classrooms cultures with their students that reflect the communities where students develop and grow. This is no small matter because it requires that teachers transcend their own cultural biases and preferences to establish and develop patterns for learning and communicating that engage and sustain student participation and achievement.

- ***Addressing Discrimination in Schools Matters!***

Every student has the right to an education free from discrimination that provides high-quality, equitable opportunities to learn. Unfortunately, sometimes individuals or systems may act in ways that violate this right. Discrimination occurs when people are treated unequally or less favorably than others because of some real or perceived characteristic. In every community and every school, discrimination exists in both intended and unintended ways. It may take the form of direct, overt discrimination, such as barring all members of a specific group from being admitted to an organization. Discrimination may also be indirect or less obvious, such as seemingly neutral admission policies that actually favor one group over another. All kinds of discrimination are wrong and can be harmful to those involved. In schools, discrimination can make it difficult for students to learn because they don't feel safe or accepted. As such, finding ways to fight discrimination is essential to ensuring students' educational opportunity.



- **Professional Learning for Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Professional learning for culturally responsive teaching has the potential to address achievement gaps across ethnic groups and disproportionate representation in special education for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This *Equity In Action* has a twofold purpose: (a) to demonstrate the need for rethinking current approaches to professional learning and (b) to provide guidelines for professional learning for culturally responsive teaching, as well as research-supported examples of schools and districts engaged in this process.

Develop Tools for Assessing Equity and Leveraging School Improvement

Visiting to Learn About Inclusive Education: A walk through guide.

HOW DOES THE VISIT GUIDE WORK?

The Visit Guide is organized into two parts and provides a framework for getting a good picture of a school in a short time.

Part One guides you through your visit and helps you to plan what you'll be looking for in classrooms, staff areas, and common areas. It also suggests questions to ask of teachers, students, and administrators in the school that will help you learn about things not immediately obvious. The questions on the Guide provide a way for you to start a conversation with people in the school that should help you learn more about the particular school you are visiting.

Part Two includes forms to organize your notes during your visit and helps you to organize them into a summary of your impressions. There are separate forms for recording your impressions of the school as a whole and for recording impressions in specific classrooms. Feel free to print multiple copies of these forms in order to be able to effectively capture your impressions as you visit.

- **Field notes Template.** This template was developed and is used to collect information about visits to schools and districts to provide technical assistance. The template provides a consistent format for documenting the date and contact information for each event. Also there is a rubric for assessing progress in areas of school and system improvement based on the systemic change framework. There is space provided for reflective comments that can serve as a way to plan the next steps for technical assistance.

Accomplishments

- Staff continued to upload expert blogs twice a month.
- Learning Carousel placed on the Equity Alliance web page.
- Continued Publication of weekly Newsletters

Publications

- PL Module Inclusive Education for Equity.
- What Matters: Addressing Discrimination
- Equity in Action: Professional Learning for Culturally Responsive Teaching.
- Facilitating Transformations: A Framework for Culturally Responsive Coaching in Schools.
- Culturally Responsive Coaching for Inclusive Schools: A Guide to Planning Your *LeadScape* Coaching Dialogues.



Research Presentations

- Kozleski, E. B., & Smith, A. (2009). The role of policy and systems change in creating equity for students with disabilities in urban schools. *Urban Education*, 44, 427-451.
- Kozleski, E.B., Artiles, A.J., Fletcher, T., & Engelbrecht, P. (2009). Understanding the dialectics of the local and the global in Education for All: A comparative case study. *International Critical Childhood Policy Studies Journal*, 2, 15-29. Retrieved from the web: <http://journals.sfu.ca/iccps/index.php/childhoods/index>

Next Steps

- Develop a 2 year publication plan for the *What Matters* series publications on School Choice and Gender Equity.
- Continue to work on the publication of State Profiles for Ohio and New Jersey.
- Clarify the format of the case studies reports of technical assistance partnerships.

Goal 4: Continuous Improvement

Engage in ongoing inquiry and program evaluation in order to continually improve efforts to support Region IX in providing high-quality opportunities to learn for all students.

- 4.1. Engage in ongoing assessment to ensure that our efforts assist states in providing effective instruction to all students in Region IX meeting their needs and producing results.
- 4.2. Assess the quality and impact of the Equity Alliance at ASU's services and products.
- 4.3. Engage in continuous refinement of existing products and services.

Summary

Engage in ongoing assessment

- Evaluation of all services and products is carried out with the use of surveys and rubrics for internal and external feedback.
- Staff uses templates for gathering data during initial assessment of needs for technical assistance.

Assess quality of products and services

A rubric has been developed and is used in the process of revision of products that will be published or distributed to clients. These are the rubric categories:



- **Quality** – Are our products and services rigorous and scientifically-based?
- **Understanding** – Do our products and services produce understanding?
- **Authenticity** – Do our products and services reflect the current and foreseeable realities of our audiences?
- **Accessibility** – Are our products and services accessible to families, students, and school boards in rural and suburban districts, small towns and cities? Hearing/visual impaired? Language?
- **Usefulness** – Are our products and services useful in developing and sustaining changes in practitioner behavior?
- **Market share** – Are we expanding our knowledge networks and reaching new audiences?

Engage in continuous refinement

July 2009: Staff submitted the annual performance report. This report provides examples of accomplishment, tools used for assessment of technical assistance needs, and a review of progress on project goals.

Accomplishments

- Data maps of educational data for Region IX were developed. The maps feature data related to the Equity Assistance Centers' goals and depict challenges and progress in providing equitable education to students in the southwest.
- Increase in client views of the Equity Alliance webpage - ongoing data was collected and reviewed on client use of the webpage through google analytics and facebook activity reports.
- Research based reports and practitioner related products were updated and the rubrics which are used in the editing process were revised.

Next Steps

- Create and send out client surveys to get feedback on Equity Alliance Products and Services.
- Data will be identified and entered into NVivo before, during and after evaluation meetings with staff.
- Continue to analyze data from Google Analytics and Facebook to increase web page traffic.
- Continue the development of the case study method for evaluation of partnerships for technical assistance to better understand and measure evidence of systemic change.



Appendix A: *Equity Alliance Webpage Content*

2009 Case Study Initial Interview Form

NOTE: This interview form, used in California with the Natomas school district, was based on an article, by Kathryn Bell McKenzie and James Joseph Scheurich, *Equity Traps: A Useful Construct for Preparing Principals to Lead Schools That Are Successful With Racially Diverse Students*. In the article, the authors state that, “These equity traps, as we are conceptualizing them, are patterns of thinking and behavior that trap the possibilities for creating equitable schools for children of color. In other words, they trap equity; they stop or hinder our ability to move toward equity in schooling. Furthermore, these traps are both individual and collective, often reinforced among administrators and teachers through formal and informal communication, assumptions, and beliefs.”

Introduction

We’re really glad to have a chance to follow-up from our visit to Natomas at the end of June. We learned a lot about the district, and got to know all of you better as a group. We’ll be meeting with you and the other members of the Equity Team in August. This interview is designed to help us prepare for that meeting. We want to get individuals’ thoughts about the equity work going on in Natomas. The purpose of our interview is two-fold—first, it will help us to better understand the work we do, and second, it will help us to tailor the technical assistance that we provide your district.

So today, we’re interested in listening to your opinions on and experiences as an administrator in Natomas. I have a series of question to ask you. My job as an interviewer is to listen, record what you say, and ask clarifying questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

The information you provide today will be confidential. While it may be used in reports, articles, or presentations, neither you nor your district will be identified. I am calling you because you have consented to this interview and have emailed me your consent form with electronic signature. We are taping this call so that we can transcribe it and combine your comments with those of the other interviewees. But your comments will not be linked to you and, if in the course of the interview you mention something that could identify you we will delete that from information we share in general with the group.

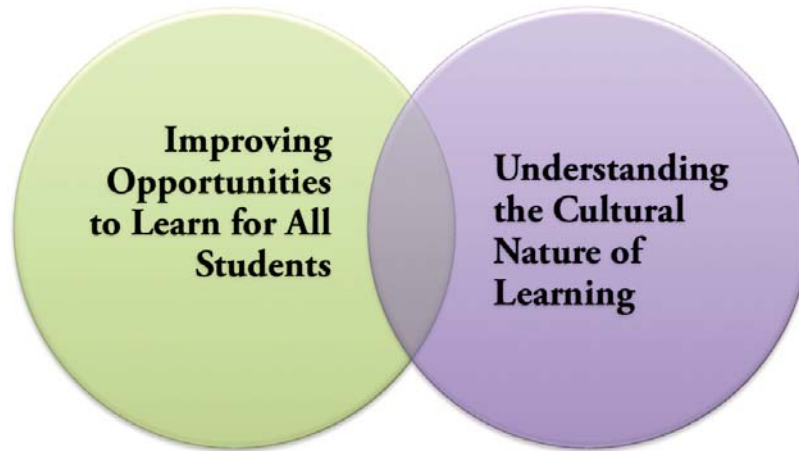
This interview will take a maximum of 45 minutes. Are you ready to get started? (note that the interviewee may decide to not participate or stop the interview at any time with our full understanding and support).

Questions:

Ask These Questions in Every Interview	These are potential Follow-Up Questions	Memorable or Important Reflections
1. Will you start by telling me a little about yourself? What do you do in Natomas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did you come to work in Natomas? What brought you here? 	
2. How do you fit into this equity team? Why are you a part of it?		
3. What are some of the rewards/challenges of working in Natomas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is different about working here with the students and families you described versus working in another district? 	
4. Please talk about the efforts that the Natomas district has taken on in addressing issues of equity and inequity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you feel about the quality and intensity of these efforts? 	
5. What kinds of topics related to equity and achievement are addressed through professional learning/development?		
6. What are the implications of what you know about students, families, and the community for the work you do and more generally, for the work of the district?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you describe the aspirations for student success among culturally/linguistically diverse families? 	
7. How are teachers assigned to schools in the Natomas district?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there reasons that teachers or principals would want to work at one school over another school in Natomas? If so, why do you think this is? 	
8. How are students assigned to schools in Natomas? In what instances do students not attend the school in their residence area?		
9. When we met in June, we spent some time talking about the achievement gap in Natomas between students of color and students who are white. Why do you think some students of color are not achieving comparably to their White peers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are some of the ways in which you embrace diversity? 	
10. What are your thoughts about teaching culturally/linguistically diverse learners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What role do you believe your attitudes and beliefs about students have in determining student success? 	
11. How do you feel about special programs that pull students away from the general education classroom?		
12. What ways of thinking or assumptions prevent educators from believing that students of color can be successful learners in the Natomas district?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What role do you believe cultural influences have in student learning? Teaching? What role does culture have in your planning, instruction, and assessment? 	
13. Will you please describe the environments for learning that you find in schools in Natomas, both generally, and in your own school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What responsibility do you believe the school/teachers/staff have for ensuring the success of <i>all</i> students? 	
14. What are some examples of inclusion and exclusion of students from general education that you've encountered while teaching?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the ways in which you go about equalizing resources, breaking-down barriers, combating segregation, and guaranteeing children an opportunity to learn? 	



Appendix B: *Professional Learning Menu*



The Center has found that transformative equity work is institutionalized and scaled up through a distributive model of organizational change in which effective practices are systematically disseminated through a system’s schools and their communities. The required organizational change will utilize a new Professional Learning model that broadly integrates two key arenas:

<p>Professional Learning for educational equity <i>attends to the long-standing disparities in opportunities to learn</i> for students of racially, ethnically, linguistically and economically diverse backgrounds and students with disabilities of all national origins, while attending to gender equity. Inequitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for traditionally excluded and marginalized groups are deeply embedded in U.S. history, and are certainly not problems of the past (Haycock, 2008).</p>	<p>Professional learning for educational equity requires that all involved in educational communities <i>understand the cultural nature of learning</i>. Those engaged in this type of professional learning critique and transform normative assumptions about race, class, gender, ability, and national origin that define who is considered competent or different (Minow, 1990), and focus on belonging, nurturing, and educating <i>all</i> students (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007).</p>
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Tools for Continuous Improvement and opportunities for *Professional Learning* designed by the Equity Alliance are grounded in a four-tier model. Our ultimate goal is to engage in well-defined, content-rich professional learning system in which knowledge and expertise are shared and lead to lasting systemic change, as well as personal reflection and growth. Below is an overview of the tiers, each of which has an abundance of Professional Learning opportunities, and Tools to assist the district in building their own opportunities.



Tier 1 resources are universally available, with the primary vehicle for delivery being the clearinghouse website for the Equity Alliance at ASU. Through our website, teachers, parents and school leaders have full unfettered access to up-to-date policy and research briefs and links on issues of equity of student outcomes maintained through ongoing Lexus/Nexus searches, connections to our policy networks and our relationships with national offices.

Tier 1 Professional Learning Menu:

- **Culturally Responsive District, School, and Self-Assessments** An array of survey tools, frameworks for planning and action, and measures used in school and classroom walk-through observations is utilized to create data for discovery, reflection and decision-making.
- **Expert Blogs:** Designed to engage users in ongoing conversations about a wide range of issues surrounding equity in education, our blog brings ideas and viewpoints from practitioners, researchers, and authors that provoke, inspire, and complexify the way we understand equity in our classrooms, schools, and communities.
- **Interactive Wiki:** The wiki is a place for visitors to our website to share information about their schools' equity work. Natomas teachers will be able to find peers from across the country who are working on similar issues.
- **Webinars:** Offered several times a year, these hour-long webinars offer professional learning on educational equity topics, and provide materials and content for participants to take away with them to keep the conversation going in their own settings.

Tier 2 services are available to a subset of the larger audience, specifically educators engaged in one or more of our peer-to-peer networks, ensuring that effective interaction around progress is maintained by all constituents. These networks tie leaders together across district and state boundaries, connect role-alike professional groups such as school counselors or school board members, support peer-to-peer mentoring, and offer opportunities to share information quickly across individuals focused on similar problems of practice.

Tier 2 Professional Learning Menu:

- **All of Tier 1 plus a password protected level of access to additional tools and information, and;**
- **Professional Learning Plan for District Leadership Team.** This item develops a long term strategic action team that builds and maintains a sharp focus on the equity agenda of the district and all of the district-wide resources available to implement, monitor and publicly report on the progress of the plan.
- **Professional Learning Modules.** In collaboration with schools and local universities, the Equity Alliance at ASU presents modules for pre-service and in-service educators of all roles and levels of experience. The approach includes careful consideration of the content for professional learning, application of



adult learning principles, and selection of teams from schools and districts that can support their team members' learning and practice. In this way, professional learning builds on converged needs, creates a sense of common purpose, and extends the creativity and skill of practitioners. Professional Learning for Equity Modules are designed to (1) engage adult learners in advancing their knowledge and skills about culturally responsive practices within organizations; (2) build communities of practice in which inquiry and public discourse are cornerstones of continuous improvement in culturally responsive systems; and (3) embody approaches to learning that affirm the sociocultural histories and experiences that all members of the academies bring to shared learning. Finally, the Professional Learning Modules for Equity create forums for open discussion to help school and community members think more broadly and systemically about culturally responsive schools and classrooms.

Tier 3 consists of targeted, on-demand assistance for schools seeking assistance in addressing particular equity-related issues. At Tier 3, a Professional Learning plan is developed between the each LEAs and the Equity Alliance at ASU to deliver a variety of technical assistance supports that will help the district meet emerging issues and deal with problems that have persisted over time.

Tier 3 Professional Learning Menu:

- *LeadScape* Principals Network
- School level Data Mapping

Tier 4 consists of collaborative working relationships between the Equity Alliance at ASU and specific districts and schools which have committed to long term partnerships towards systems change for equity and who have already engaged in Tier 3 services. Tier 4 is accessed when the need for a more focused and sustained effort is determined and agreed upon by both parties.

Tier 4 Professional Learning Menu:

- Classroom Observation and Feedback
- Teacher

Appendix C: Technical Assistance Field Notes Template

Name	Date	Contact	Meeting/Event
1. Items Discussed		2. Actions Planned	
3. Responsible Person			
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Target Activity	Level	4. Evidences	Level
Levels: 1=Beginning, 2=Developing, 3=At Standard, 4=Leading			
<input type="checkbox"/> Support for teachers' inquiry professional learning, and practices		<input type="checkbox"/> Governance and decision making practices are structured to ensure the participation and representation of all parties.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Support for student involvement in inquiry, learning methods, and teacher evaluation		<input type="checkbox"/> The school ensures that students with a range of abilities participate in all school resources with non-disabled peers (specials, recess, lunch, extracurriculars).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Support for collaborative problem-solving		<input type="checkbox"/> There is a culture that encourages and promotes innovation, action research, and collaborative initiatives.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Building leadership team		<input type="checkbox"/> Scheduling of classes, specials, and professional learning maximizes student participation and inclusiveness.	
<input type="checkbox"/> School improvement systems accountable for all students' outcomes		<input type="checkbox"/> School personnel encourage and use student feedback and ideas to improve the school climate.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Information systems used to support change		<input type="checkbox"/> Community partnerships are in place to link with social, spiritual, financial, or mentoring resources.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Structural changes support effort		<input type="checkbox"/> Practitioners ensure that learning goals for ALL students are challenging enough to prepare students for their next learning environment.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Equitable resource distribution		<input type="checkbox"/> Practitioners design and implement lessons, units, and themes using culturally responsive universal design principles.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of Center products		<input type="checkbox"/> Practitioners work collaboratively to understand, assess, reflect, and implement culturally responsive teaching practices.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive policies, procedures, and professional learning activities		<input type="checkbox"/> Classrooms are composed of a variety of students who represent the complete diversity of students who attend the school.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student distribution supports equitable access and participation		<input type="checkbox"/> Practitioners understand and create supportive, safe, inclusive environments for all students.	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Practitioners seek out, engage, and work with parents and families to understand and support each other's efforts to educate students	
5. Reflections: A place for your reflections of: 1) the changing uses of language or the development of a more coherent discourse about the Partnership themes, action arenas, site goals, etc; 2) the activities or educational practices you observe. How do these relate to the Center's beliefs? Your beliefs?, and 3) The relationships among those involved at your site and the changes in the organization.			

Report:

Quarter 4 of Year 1

Quarter 1 of Year 2

July - December 2009

CFDA 84.004D: Civil Rights Training and Advisory Services
Equity Assistance Centers Program
U.S. Department of Education Award #S004D080027

