

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY IN GREATER L.A.

*A Research Agenda
in Service to Practice*

Patricia Burch
Susan McKibben
Julie A. Marsh
Morgan S. Polikoff

August 2019

Members of the Research Team

Taylor N. Allbright
Eupha Jeanne Daramola
Taylor Enoch-Stevens
Kate Kennedy
Shira Korn
Laura S. Mulfinger
Haley Nelson
Akua Nkansah-Amankra
Daniel Silver

USC Rossier

School of Education
*Center on Education Policy,
Equity and Governance*



Educational Equity in Greater L.A.

A Research Agenda in Service to Practice

INTRODUCTION

The USC Rossier Center on Education Policy, Equity and Governance (CEPEG) seeks to develop mutually beneficial relationships with local districts in order to help these systems and schools develop and extend their own equity work. To advance these goals, CEPEG organized seven dialogues between February 2018 and May 2019 with 149 school and district leaders, members of community organizations, and scholars from across Southern California.

We asked:

- (1) How do you define equity?
- (2) What are the biggest challenges to equity in your district/districts you work with?
- (3) How are you addressing these issues? and
- (4) What one question do you have regarding these initiatives that would benefit from research (i.e., where do you need more information)?

We took notes on participants’ responses and identified salient themes, as well as the frequency with which they arose. In addition to cataloguing participants’ definitions of equity, we linked these definitions with a typology of conceptualizations of equity (see Fig. 1). The typology, adapted from Allbright et al., (2019) describes assumptions underlying different definitions of equity about the meaning of inequity, processes for allocating resources, and to whom resources are directed. The idea is that people interpret the term equity in different ways and act on these interpretations in how they try to achieve educational equity - who they target, how they distribute resources, and the decision-making processes they employ. This creates substantial differences within and across the umbrella of equity-related policies.

Figure 1. Typology of Four Perspectives on Equity (adapted from Allbright et al., 2019)¹

	TRANSFORMATIVE	DEMOCRATIC LIBERAL	LIBERAL	LIBERTARIAN
The goal is...	Freedom from oppression	Universal high performance	Equal opportunity	Fair competition
Inequity means...	Oppression and social stratification (including White supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and economic injustice)	Outcome gaps among social groups, such as racial, SES, or gender groups	Unequal opportunity or access due to background characteristics (typically SES and other non-racial factors)	Some unfairly receive advantages that are not earned or deserved
Inputs are distributed...	In ways that challenge historical and societal power dynamics	Adequately to support universal high outcomes	Equally except when some need more	Equally except when some earn more
Greater resources go to...	Marginalized students	Under-performing students	Disadvantaged students	Gifted and advanced students
Processes should...	Empower marginalized students; Recognize intersectionality; Develop critical consciousness; Change oppressive beliefs and practices	Support high levels of achievement and close outcome gaps among groups	Be fair to all students, meeting needs to create a level playing field	Be fair to all students in order to accurately determine merit
Outcomes should...	Include students’ empowerment and humanization; Achievement gaps should be socially and historically contextualized	Meet a universal high academic performance standard	Vary based on students’ merit but <i>not</i> based on students’ needs	Vary based on students’ merit

¹Allbright, T. N., Marsh, J. A., Hall, M., Tobben, L., Picus, L. O., & Lavadenz, M. (2019). Conceptualizing Equity in the Implementation of California Education Finance Reform. *American Journal of Education*, 125(2), 173–200.

Key Findings

In what follows, we identify major themes in participants' comments in four areas:

- (1) Defining Equity,
- (2) Challenges to Equity,
- (3) Strategies Used to Promote Equity, and
- (4) Areas of Practice That Could Benefit From Research.

Common themes emerging across the dialogues provide the basis for research priorities at the conclusion of the brief. Finally, readers interested in additional resources related to some of the themes identified in this brief can find a link to those resources after the research priorities.

1. DEFINING EQUITY

Participants struggled to define equity. Some districts and community organizations had adopted an official definition; others had not. Some indicated that there was variation or inconsistency within their organization or across administrative levels, asking, for example, *“Even if the state is thinking about equity in certain ways, are school staff?”* Defining equity was sometimes a contentious process. One district leader noted that adults' discomfort with equity talk got in the way of progress on the issue, saying they *“make it about themselves, suck all the air out of the room, and we don't talk about those issues anymore.”*

Alongside evidence of contention or confusion, common patterns did emerge. Broadly, district leaders' conceptualizations of equity largely reflected liberal or democratic liberal understandings, although there was some reference to transformative and libertarian conceptions. Community organization leaders were more likely to articulate a transformative conceptualization of equity, though not exclusively so. Overall, participants' definitions of equity fell into four somewhat overlapping categories: a. equity as meeting the needs of particular groups of students, b. equity as addressing gaps, c. equity as distinct from equality, and d. equity as an effort to address systemic, structural and historically long-standing inequities.

A. EQUITY AS MEETING THE NEEDS OF PARTICULAR STUDENT POPULATIONS, OFTEN—THOUGH NOT ALWAYS—OPPRESSED GROUPS.

Participants across regions and stakeholder groups referred to equity as meeting students' needs. They referred to the needs of specific groups of students by race, income, language learner status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. For example, we heard concerns from district leaders about appropriate rigor for students with disabilities, and about a culture of pull-out (rather than inclusion) for English learners. A community organization leader emphasized the needs of diverse groups of students, saying, *“We need to be talking more specifically about English learners, students with disabilities, LGBTQ, immigrant communities. We need to be talking realistically about what we can do as a community.”* In relatively wealthier districts we also heard a concern that changes in the funding for gifted students meant that they may not be getting the resources they need to reach their potential.

B. EQUITY AS ADDRESSING “GAPS.”

Participants described equity as addressing various disparities or “gaps,” including gaps in outcomes, access, opportunity, and resources affecting groups along the lines of gender, race, language status, disability, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, and gender identity. In some cases, this meant a focus on closing achievement gaps. In other cases, the focus was on providing *“equal access to high level instruction and opportunities for all students.”* Some district leaders and many community organization leaders talked about “opportunity gaps” more than “achievement gaps,” but both terms were widely used. One community organization leader told us,

“We're not looking at an achievement gap, we're looking at an opportunity gap. We're looking at decades of disinvestment and not supporting our people of color.”

C. EQUITY AS DISTINCT FROM EQUALITY.

Several participants across stakeholder groups asserted that equity is different from equality, or as one group of district leaders put it, equity is “every student getting what **they** need to be successful and advance.” One leader of a community organization who was previously a teacher described it this way:

“How do I get all the kids to the same goalpost when they’re all coming in at dramatically different levels? For newcomer English learner students, it meant after school relationships and support for them, attending a two-hour English class after school ... It meant therapy and support for some students. Equity means meeting students where they’re at ... We don’t lower the standards, but we figure out how to get all students there.”

D. EQUITY AS AN EFFORT TO ADDRESS SYSTEMIC, STRUCTURAL AND HISTORICALLY LONG-STANDING INEQUITIES.

While most district leaders spoke of educational equity as a function of classroom, school and district practices, some spoke of the need to address equity at a systems level. Community organization leaders, as a group, were particularly and explicitly focused on systemic approaches to educational equity. They spoke of the importance of engaging communities as voters, asserted the need to address decades of disinvestment in schools, and named a need to build social movement power within marginalized communities.

2. CHALLENGES TO EQUITY

Reported challenges to advancing equity fell into three broad categories: a. the social and political context surrounding schools, b. human and technical capacity to do equity work, and c. funding.

A. SOCIAL & POLITICAL CAPACITY

Larger social and political conditions outside schools contribute to inequity. Participants across regions noted that community conditions, such as poverty, trauma, student mobility, homelessness, incarceration, unemployment, and community violence, affected equity for students. For example, district leaders in one region noted that a local wellness fair was organized for families, but that some immigrant parents left the event because of police presence. In another region, a district leader highlighted the inequity faced by poor students in a relatively wealthy district where teachers often sent home a list of suggested classroom supplies to donate. Community organization leaders in particular noted the importance of addressing and accounting for long-standing systems and structures in order to advance equity. As one said, “*The main thing we need to remember is we are achieving equity in a system of gross inequity.*” They went on, “*At the end of the day, we’re looking at systems and institutions.*”

Solutions to entrenched inequities are often evaluated along an inappropriate timeline. Community organization leaders noted that educational inequities were built up over decades or centuries. Yet policy makers and members of the public sometimes want to evaluate equity interventions based on only a few years’ worth of results. They cited a need to build support for a longer-term view.

Participants noted disparities in outcomes, access, opportunity, and resources affecting different groups of students. For example, we heard about resource gaps between poor and non-poor families. There was general concern for vulnerable populations affected by social inequity, who were identified as being in greater need, having less access, or being overlooked, but there was variation in which groups of students were highlighted. For example, some participants were more focused on the needs of students with disabilities, while others wanted to improve their support of transgender students.

Schools and districts don’t always engage parents meaningfully, and marginalized parents may lack political power and skills to advocate for educational equity. Leaders of community organizations noted that district outreach to parents was sometimes perfunctory. As one participant put it,

“We need to ask parents for their input. Sometimes when we ask we’re just telling them to check off a box to say that’s ok with you. We need to do more about valuing families in ways that say that their contributions matter and we care about what they think. We’re talking about meaningful engagement, not compliance.”

Another community organization leader spoke of an “education navigation gap” many parents face, giving the example of parents wanting to participate in funding decisions that affected their child’s school or district. While parents may understand and participate in this decision-making at the school site, they may not be aware of state-level limitations on how monies can be spent.

Communities and institutions must build political will for educational equity. Broad concerns around political structures and political will came up in various ways. Several community organization leaders explicitly stressed the need for political strategies, from helping parents and community members become informed and engaged voters, to advocating for reform at the state level, to communicating with the public. Effectively communicating to non-parents and to parents whose children are not in public schools about the importance of investing in public education was a source of substantial concern among community organizations.

B. HUMAN & TECHNICAL CAPACITY

Biases and beliefs among teachers, staff, and administrators impede equity. A number of participants across stakeholder groups noted that teachers, staff, or school leaders held deficit perspectives about students that thwart attempts to close achievement gaps or make other changes. As one district leader observed, *“Without a culture of belief that you can and will close the gap, nothing is ever going to happen, no matter what strategies you try.”* A community organization leader also noted that parents and family members face these attitudes when trying to engage with schools. For example, this participant pointed out that office staff sometimes do not pay attention to families when they show up at the school with a question or concern.

Many teachers and school administrators lack the knowledge and skills to implement equitable practices. Several participants across sectors and regions told us that teachers in their districts do not have the skills to promote equity effectively in the classroom. In some cases, neither teachers nor school administrators were aware of available community resources to address issues such as trauma, or to equitably address discipline challenges. As one participant told us, *“Teachers don’t come into the school system saying students can’t learn. Often, it’s a capacity issue, or the teachers don’t have the understanding or skill sets to [engage with families from other cultures].”*

Participants want more or different data than they have to address equity. District leaders reported needing data that are more locally relevant and more fine-grained (e.g., breaking racial group achievement data down by gender). Others noted that incomplete structures or a lack of timeliness at the state level cause a lag, meaning it can take years to identify low-performing schools. Administrators in some relatively wealthy districts wanted to support students in poverty, but struggled to identify them because federal school lunch laws prohibit tracking that data. As one district leader said, *“With low-SES kids, we aren’t supposed to know who those kids are and track them in a student information system and identify them. Federal school lunch requirements prohibit that.”* Community organization leaders wanted to see the development and use of data that track outcomes such as well-being, or the development of students’ critical consciousness, not simply the more conventional academic measures.

Filling positions can pose equity challenges. Some districts struggled to recruit or retain faculty, while existing personnel are frequently absent or experience low morale. One participant noted that teachers in their district, who are mainly white, are *“not necessarily reflective of the clientele we serve,”* who are predominantly children of color -- a common problem that has significant consequences for students of color, according to research. Another lamented the ways that changes in district leadership could negatively impact progress toward equity in schools.

Institutions often struggle to learn and collaborate. Community organization leaders felt that organizational cultures or beliefs can impede learning, improvement, and the advancement of equity. Community organizations, they posited, sometimes see one another as competitors. They also observed that schools and districts sometimes resist sharing information that suggests their students are not doing well, or that the staff or institutions have biases, for example. These mindsets create barriers to collaboration and to seeing challenges or “bad” news as opportunities to learn and improve.

C. FINANCIAL CAPACITY

Districts and schools lack sufficient resources to address the above concerns. Funding challenges surfaced across regions, including challenges to hiring sufficient staff, providing needed supports for families, and providing additional instructional or social and emotional supports to historically disadvantaged students (e.g., English Learners).

Participants were concerned about how funding streams were structured. Several saw the state’s new funding system, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), as a positive turn toward equity. However, districts that do not qualify for extensive supplemental or concentration grants via LCFF (funds generated by students who are low-income, foster youth, or English Learners) reported struggling to build robust programs to support those populations. Others noted the challenge of meeting the needs of gifted students or students with disabilities without a dedicated funding stream.

3. STRATEGIES USED TO PROMOTE EQUITY

Reported strategies fell broadly into three main areas: a. addressing the social and political context, b. addressing capacity issues, and c. building on promising practices or processes. Across the board, participants had relatively less to say about the strategies they employed to advance equity, as compared to the challenges. Moreover, strategies varied across stakeholder groups, highlighting the importance of leveraging assets and strategies across these stakeholders. Strategies named by district leaders emphasized professional development or were framed in terms of existing policies, such as LCFF. Community organization leaders emphasized more transformative approaches that targeted systemic inequity, and explicitly endeavored to build students’ and communities’ social and political power to advance equity.

A. SOCIAL & POLITICAL CONTEXT

District leaders did not generally name strategies that attempt to address directly the social and political context of students and schools. In some cases, however, school and district strategies did appear to be aimed at those students most likely to be affected by social and political factors. In the case of poverty, these social factors were named explicitly. Racism was generally not explicitly mentioned. Leaders of community-based organizations, in contrast, explicitly addressed social and political factors affecting equity, and they often reported adopting strategies that focused on building political (electoral and social movement) power and skills. One described their organization this way:

“We engage families in advocating for high-quality public schools in their own neighborhood. We focus on the political/resource barriers in the way of families having high quality schools. We engage families to set up parent leadership teams so families can understand these barriers so they can drive the [advocacy for high-quality schools]. We’re talking about voter engagement and how to hold elected officials accountable in positive ways.”

A key element of this strategy for some organizations was youth voice. As one community organization leader told us, *“The importance of youth voice/youth leadership is critical. We’re making decisions about high school students, so we need to have them at the table.”*

B. FINANCIAL, HUMAN & TECHNICAL CAPACITY

Districts used a variety of strategies to increase their financial resources for equity-promoting work.

District leaders reported leveraging LCFF dollars, school bonds, parcel taxes, and grants from state and county agencies to obtain resources for students.

Districts hired staff or directed staff time to equity-promoting work. Strategies included placing equity coaches on campuses to give feedback and build on observations, employing data support teams at schools that meet regularly with site administrators, and hiring an EL director and team devoted to English learners’ needs. In two regions we heard about long-term networks or formal advisory boards being used to promote equity.

Some schools and districts brought in external organizations to do this work, or to train their own staff. These organizations included the Arenda Consulting Group, Cambio Group, Youth Trusts, Boys Town, Circle of Friends, and the Association of California School Administrators Equity Initiative. Organizations that participated in our dialogues also worked with school leaders to build a movement around the best practices implemented by schools. One community organization also developed short, user-friendly materials for teachers on topics such as strategies for interrupting implicit bias.

Community organizations worked with students, parents, and school leaders to build communities' capacity to advocate for equity. Members of community organizations described building the capacity of individuals and communities to advocate for their needs and rights, using asset-based models and mindsets. Examples include helping parents become informed and engaged voters, training parents to lead equity advocacy campaigns to ensure high-quality schools in their neighborhoods, developing curricula for parents on the ins and outs of district budgets, and working with high school students to advocate for more equitable schools. One organization leader gave the example of a student-led professional development for teachers on implicit bias that was all the more powerful because students shared their perspectives on how implicit bias affected them.

C. IDENTIFYING AND BUILDING ON BEST PRACTICES TO PROMOTE EQUITY

At the classroom level: Many district leaders mentioned instructional strategies or programs intended to address the needs of students who faced additional barriers to access or success, such as individualized instruction for students with disabilities. Community organization leaders, as well as district leaders in one region emphasized the importance of student-teacher relationships and trust.

At the school level: Schools across regions used frameworks such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS), as well as academic and non-academic data, to provide differentiated instruction and to target academic interventions for struggling students.

At the district level: Some districts adopted PBIS or similar frameworks at the district level, as well as programs such as Capturing Kids' Hearts. Other districts provided training and professional development for teachers and staff.

At the community level: Community organizations also promoted the use of data to address equity, but told us they wanted to see new measures emphasized to get at equity issues more directly. One organization developed, and successfully encouraged LAUSD to adopt, a student equity need index that includes information on community conditions. Finally, community organization leaders worked to ensure that relevant data was understandable and accessible to all stakeholders, including students, parents, and community members.

4. AREAS OF PRACTICE THAT COULD BENEFIT FROM RESEARCH

Participants wanted more practice-relevant research in building capacity in the following areas: a) social and political capacity, b) human and technical capacity, and c) financial capacity.

A. SOCIAL & POLITICAL CAPACITY

How students, parents, community members, and community organizations can build social movements to advance educational equity. Community organization leaders told us that “[it] takes a movement to build equity in education,” and that they wanted organizing models to build these movements. They also communicated the importance of student voice in particular. They were thinking about leadership as well, including ways to redefine it in order to build a different idea of power that centers the community and is defined in terms of mobilization. Finally, they identified a need for greater understanding of their role, and the role of civic agency broadly, in making systemic changes toward educational equity.

How to use communications to create a sense of urgency around investment in equitable public education. Community organization leaders noted that compelling storytelling regarding successful schools, teachers, and contexts is essential to embedding the idea that achievement gaps are not intractable. They wanted to know how to shape compelling narratives; how to shift media framing away from contentious

political questions and toward students and learning; and how to convince adults who do not have children in public schools that public education affects them, too. Participants suggested finding ways to leverage the entertainment industry in Los Angeles, and urged researchers to create user-friendly articles, videos, and digital media to share research findings.

B. HUMAN & TECHNICAL CAPACITY

How to involve teachers and students in ongoing assessment of equity reforms. Some stakeholders felt that evaluating current work was even more important than adopting new initiatives. They urged more participatory approaches, such as Participatory Action Research and Youth Participatory Action Research, to evaluate current equity efforts. We heard that *“Implementation research is not really aligned with how real life education systems function,”* and that involving teachers and students in research design and implementation could bridge that gap.

How to reduce staff bias and improve staff skills to increase equity in the classroom. This concern was common across sectors. Stakeholders wanted to know how to sustain and improve bias reduction and staff skills over time. They also wanted more research that demonstrates the concrete results of implicit biases.

How to identify and scale successful interventions, schools, or districts. District and community organization leaders told us that they need research evidence in order to convince policy makers and fellow practitioners to scale successful programs and interventions. District leaders also wanted to identify--and some community organizers have been sharing—best practices, including the most cost-effective interventions, for advancing equity in light of budget limitations. For those districts just beginning to focus explicitly on equity, there was also a desire for guidance and evidence around how to prioritize equity-related needs and practices. One district leader commented, *“Everything can be tagged as an equity issue that we ‘need to do,’ but they may not be the most important thing to do first.”*

How to sustain and improve equity initiatives over time. As one district leader told us, *“Sustainability is the issue; it can’t be flavor of the month.”* Several individuals noted that both research and funding tend to focus on initial implementation, rather than on sustaining initiatives or making continuous improvement.

How to use data, and where to get more relevant data, in order to allocate scarce resources and put resources toward high-need populations. District leaders cited a need for local data, longitudinal data, and data on vulnerable student populations that are more fine-grained (e.g., racial data broken down by gender). Community organization leaders especially wanted to see more emphasis on measures such as academic growth, which schools are closing achievement gaps, social-emotional learning, critical consciousness development, and well-being.

How leadership is enacted in districts, and how best to enact both official leadership roles and leverage informal leadership existing in districts. Participants across groups identified leadership turnover in districts (and schools) as a challenge. Community organization leaders asserted the importance of learning more about how persons in schools and districts who may not hold official leadership positions may nevertheless exert leadership in these institutions. They also noted the importance of understanding how school boards operate to help or hinder districts’ efforts to advance equity.

How to meaningfully engage parents and community members with schools and districts. Community organization leaders wanted to find additional ways for schools, districts, and researchers to get high quality (accurate, complete, understandable, and usable) information to parents.

C. FINANCIAL CAPACITY

How and where to best target available resources based on evidence of interventions’ cost-effectiveness. District leaders wanted to know what the best and most cost-effective interventions are so they can target scarce funds to their highest priorities (e.g., closing achievement gaps). As one participant commented,

“[T]here’s not enough money. So, what’s the return on investment? If I have \$100k, where do I spend it? . . . Is it curriculum? Class size? Mentoring? Extra hours? If I’m short on resources, or if I have a bit left over, where do I get the most bang for my buck?”

Research Priorities

Based on the evidence gathered, we identified five priorities for future research. We believe studies addressing these topics offer great hope for advancing equity in the L.A. area and beyond.

1. Build capacity for equity work.

Research is needed that can provide practitioners and policy makers with the information they need to build the human, financial, social, and political capacity to engage in and sustain equity work over time. What are the capacity needs, and where are they most pressing? How can local, state and federal funding be leveraged to support critical activities at every level of the system? How can advocacy organizations, school and district staff, and other stakeholders collaborate most effectively to build system-level capacity and sustain efforts over time? This research is important because the best-designed equity reforms still require know-how, money, networks, and specific kinds of expertise. Researchers working in this area can assess policy effectiveness and, based on these assessments, propose new policies that keep capacity up to date given the changing face of poverty and racial inequality. They can help identify which comprehensive and redistributive investments are paramount, determine the prevalence of practices identified as exemplary, and gather data on patterns of participation in equity interventions.

2. Examine underlying beliefs about equity and the Mindsets needed to move beyond symbolic, surface-level change.

What patterns do we see in how district administrators make sense of equity challenges in their districts, and how do they act or fail to act on these interpretations? What assumptions exist about what counts as successful equity reform and how best to measure it? How do we design for equity-focused policies that build in the need for advancing consistent equity mindsets among all stakeholders? Researchers working in this area can work to understand the impact of mindsets on implementation, how to influence mindsets, and under what conditions. Researchers can also examine how norms and routines of schooling act as barriers to deep involvement in equity work.

3. Interrogate dynamics of power within and across communities and education systems.

Beyond specific policies, what does it mean to approach educational equity as a social movement? Who is and is not at the table when designing and implementing equity reforms? These are important matters because they shape how equity problems are defined and agendas set. Researchers working in this area can detail the conditions in which community members, parents, students, and teachers can be authentically involved in designing equity reforms. They can also illuminate ways of supporting broad-based, community-centered involvement in equity with the goal of producing policy that is more responsive to the students and communities it is designed to benefit. As much as possible, researchers should also involve students, teachers, and parents in participatory research. These approaches are important for better connecting the goals and designs of research to the lived realities of schools and communities. These and other studies can illuminate the vital importance of family and community engagement in equity work and the role of organizing in building that engagement.

4. Investigate race-conscious and race-blind approaches to equity and their implications for educators and students.

How can educators address systemic racial gaps and structural racism in the context of education policies that are typically race-blind? What are promising ways to bring racial equity to the forefront in school and district reform efforts? Researchers can identify accountability models that acknowledge that schools alone cannot overcome broader social and economic conditions to which racism is attached.

5. Evaluate which policies, programs and practices are most effective, for whom, and why.

What are the impacts of education policies, programs, and interventions on under-served student populations? What are the impacts on a variety of outcome measures, including academic, social/emotional, and other broad indicators of “success”? How do programs affect equity gaps, and what are the reasons policies are or are not effective for diverse student groups? How can we scale successful programs effectively? How can districts make

tough choices about resource allocation in light of program costs and benefits? Researchers working in this area can use quantitative and mixed methods to provide district leaders and policymakers with timely evidence about what works, for whom, and under what conditions, in order to inform decision making. They can also develop new metrics and measurement tools—or use metrics developed by community organizations working in this area—that capture outcomes, such as critical consciousness and well-being, that practitioners and community members are seeking.

Additional Resources

Links to information and training on some of the themes that emerged during the dialogues from which this brief is derived can be found at cepeg.usc.edu/equityresources.

**We are grateful to everyone who participated in these dialogues
for sharing your insights with us.**

**This project was made possible through the generosity of the
California Community Foundation.**



The mission of the Center on Education Policy, Equity and Governance is to conduct rigorous, practice-relevant research that advances educational equity for California K-12 students—with an emphasis on greater Los Angeles – and to create partnerships that ensure education policies, practices, and governance structures are guided by evidence and careful analysis.

We recognize that stakeholders’ definitions of equity vary, both among CEPEG affiliates and in the education field more broadly. Our equity work at CEPEG is united by goals of addressing unjust social stratification and challenging oppressive educational beliefs, practices, and structures to advance academic achievement and social-emotional development across social groups (for example by race/ethnicity, gender, and social class).

USC Rossier

School of Education
*Center on Education Policy,
Equity and Governance*

cepeg.usc.edu ▪ [@usc_cepeg](https://twitter.com/usc_cepeg)