



VIRTUAL EQUITY

S U M M I T • 2021
DEVELOPING SYSTEMS OF EQUITY FOR A NEW GENERATION

Monday, October 25, 2021 • 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

10:30 - 10:45 a.m.

General Session: Introduction & Welcome

- Nathan Mains, CEO, Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA)
- Dr. Art Levinowitz, Governing Board President, PSBA, School Board Director, Upper Dublin School District
- Dr. Heather Bennett, Director of School Equity Services, PSBA

10:45 - 11:50 a.m.

Featured Speakers

Youth Equity Stewardship (YES), an Effective Way to Amplify Student Voices

- Waldo Alvarado, Director of Equity, Reading School District
- Amber Marshall, Teacher, Reading School District

YES is rooted in arts-based methods that aim to bring the youth perspective, vision, creativity, and passion to the forefront of school improvement efforts. Knowing that democratic citizenship and active engagement in one's own educational experience are essential skills for today's youth, this program amplifies student voice and supports young people in understanding their personal journey and social accountability through a social justice lens that creates a living example of commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. The Youth Equity Stewardship program has proven effective as a sustainable creative facilitation process for youth to enthusiastically engage in their learning and advocate for culturally responsive learning environments.

11:50 - 11:55 a.m.

Break

11:55 a.m. - 12:55 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions: Case Studies: Developing a Systemwide Equity Program

The conversation in this session focuses on two districts' stories in embedding equity systematically into the structure of the district. This session will also include student presentations centered on student-led state-wide equity initiatives and advocacy.



Student Spotlights

- Mitchell Howard, recent graduate, South Fayette School District
- Jaden Harper, grade 9 student, Stroudsburg Area School District
- Taha Vahanvaty, director of The Acceptance Project (TAP), former student at Stroudsburg Area School District
- Santos Rosas, grade 11 student, East Stroudsburg Area School District

Session 1: Equity and School Improvement Addressing the Achievement Gap Through Governance and Leadership

- Dr. Lucretia Brown, Deputy Superintendent of Equity, Accountability and School Improvement, Allentown School District
- Melissa Smith, Executive Director of School Improvement, Allentown School District

The conversation in this session focuses on two districts' stories in embedding equity systematically into the structure of the district. This session will also include student presentations centered on student-led state-wide equity initiatives and advocacy.

Session 2: Equity and Empowerment for All

- Dr. Steven Yanni, Superintendent, Upper Dublin School District
- Jennifer Iannitti, Board Director, Upper Dublin School District
- Dr. Rita Perez, Director of Student Services, Upper Dublin School District
- Dr. Dan Ortiz, Principal, Sandy Run Middle School, Upper Dublin School District

Empower all students through equity and equitable practices is a team effort. Learn how the Upper Dublin School District is leading equity and empowerment work on behalf of our students from the perspective of the board, superintendent, central office administration, and school leader.

12:55 – 1:25 p.m.

Lunch

1:25 – 2:25 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions: Case Studies: Integrating All Voices

The conversation in this session examines two districts' stories that uplift the voices of students, community members, families, and staff in developing inclusive educational systems. This session will also include student presentations on the critical importance of inclusion in transforming educational systems that meet the needs of all students.

Student Spotlight

- Elijah Adu, grade 11 student, State College Area School District
- CJ McConnell, grade 11 student, Mt. Lebanon School District
- Zachary Betz, grade 12 student, South Fayette School District
- Aneaus Smith, grade 9 student, State College Area School District

Session 3: Valuing All Voices: Curriculum Design That Honors Students, Educators and Families

- Dr. Jessica Kilmetz, Curriculum Director, Phoenixville Area School District

A robust curriculum writing process had been in place at Phoenixville Area SD but missing from this process were experiences and perspectives of families, students, and teachers who were not



included on the curriculum writing committee. Learn how Phoenixville Area SD embarked on a journey to systematically incorporate these perspectives.

Session 4: Racial Equity in the School District of Lancaster: Equity Design Team Approach

- Dr. Damaris Rau, Superintendent, The School District of Lancaster
- Howard Hanson, Assistant Principal, McCaskey High School, The School District of Lancaster
- Joseph Torres, Dean of Students, The School District of Lancaster

The School District of Lancaster created an Equity Design Team (EDT) in September of 2018 to begin the process of identifying disproportionate outcomes in student achievement among our black and brown students. The Equity Design Team is an approach learned through the Racial Equity Leadership Network. The Team, composed of administrators, teachers, Board member, community member (NAACP local president) and a high school student reviewed a variety of data to identify a challenge, a concrete aspect of inequity that is more possible to focus on. The Design Team identified various challenges and selected reducing suspensions for black males as the challenge. The team conducted focus groups with various stakeholder groups. After the data gathering of quantitative and qualitative data, the EDT determined that equity and implicit bias training for staff was urgently needed, as well as mentorships for black middle school males to address disproportionate suspensions and lower academic outcomes. The model we will present enables districts to follow a process for addressing equity and identifying district levers for change.

2:25 – 2:30 p.m.

Break

2:30 – 3:40 p.m.

General Session: Equity Directors Panel – The Daily Struggle for Equity

This session comprised of equity directors from districts across the state will discuss the role, trials, needs and success of equity directors in the development of new systems for a new generation of students.

- Shawn Mooring, School Board Director, Lower Merion School District
- Dr. Kristopher Brown, Equity Officer, Abington School District
- Dr. Chuck Herring, Director, Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, South Fayette School District
- Dr. Cherissa Gibson, Director of Equity, Diversity and Education, Pennsbury School District
- Dr. Anthony Stevenson, Assistant Superintendent, Radnor School District

3:40 – 3:45 p.m.

General Session: Closing

Student Spotlight

- [Amelya Pinami, grade 9 student, South Fayette School District](#)

