**Section 3: Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps**

The purpose of identifying strategies and resources to support implementation is to ensure that local education agencies (LEAs) are taking actions that are likely to produce the desired impact. When this important step is skipped, schools, districts, and states run the risk of choosing strategies that are not likely to decrease the prioritized equity gaps in the desired timeframe.

To identify promising strategies for eliminating equity gaps (and for the overall LEA Equity Plan), best practice is to engage a variety of stakeholders throughout the process, such as

(a) teachers and teacher leaders, (b) principals and principal supervisors, (c) parents, (d) district leaders, (e) students, (f) board members, (g) local business leaders, and (h) community members.[1](#_bookmark0)

The steps presented on the following pages will allow an LEA to complete “Section 3: Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps” of the *2018 LEA Equity Plan Template,* which includes the following section components:

* Develop the strategies that the LEA and/or schools will implement to address the root causes that have been identified. List the action steps needed to implement each strategy. If applicable, describe any LEA policy changes that are needed to implement the strategy.
* Describe the timeline and milestones for implementing each strategy. Identify any anticipated challenges.
* Identify the resources (e.g., financial, human capital) that the LEA will use to support each strategy. Describe how the LEA will use Title II funds to do so. (*Note:* LEAs are not required to set aside a specific percentage of their Title II funds, but they must demonstrate the strategic use of Title II funds with the goal of addressing identified root causes of equity gaps before using the funds for other purposes.)

1 For more information on stakeholder engagments, please see the [Moving Toward Equity Stakeholder Engagement Guide](https://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/GTL_Moving_Toward_Equity.pdf) from the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center).

# Step 1: Move From Root Causes to Strategies

To begin determining how to address the root causes, LEAs should begin by gathering a brainstorm of potential strategies, considering the following questions:

* What strategies, known from research to have been successful in other contexts, might address the root cause?
* What do stakeholders believe is needed to address the root cause?
* What exemplars exist within the LEA (or within peer LEAs) to use as a model?

**Step 1 Sample Worksheet**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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|  |
| --- |
| **Potential Researched Stakeholder****Root Cause Strategies Perception Potential Exemplars** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# Step 2: Narrow the Strategies

LEAs should consider the following questions when assessing a strategy and determining its potential within the LEA’s context.

* Does the strategy align with existing initiatives?
* Does the LEA have the resources necessary to implement the strategy (e.g., human, financial)?
* Are systems in place to support the strategy?
* Does current policy allow for and support the strategy?
* Can the strategy be implemented in the desired timeline?
* Does the LEA have the knowledge and capacity to implement the strategy with fidelity?

For a list of potential strategies, consider reviewing [*The Equitable Access Implementation*](https://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Implementation_Tips.pdf)[*Playbook: Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Teachers: Research-Supported*](https://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Implementation_Tips.pdf)[*Implementation Tips for Equitable Access Plan Strategies*](https://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Implementation_Tips.pdf) and the [*Moving Toward Equity*](https://gtlcenter.org/learning-hub/equitable-access-toolkit/moving-toward-equity/taking-action) tool. Use the Step 2 Sample Worksheet to determine the strength of each strategy and the LEA’s ability to implement.

**Step 2 Sample Worksheet**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Potential Strategy** | **Alignment** | **Resources** | **Policy** | **Timeline** | **Fidelity** | **Notes for Any “No”** |
| *Improve and expand the induction and mentoring program* | *Yes* | *No* | *Yes* | *Yes* | *No* | *LEA needs to hire an induction coordinator for implementation.* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Step 3: Test Your Strategies

Now that your team has chosen one or more strategies to address equity gaps, explain each strategy as a theory of action. How will this strategy/change idea work? Use the Step 3 Planning Diagram to help think about how this strategy will lead to the overall intended outcome(s).

**Step 3 Planning Diagram**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Now** | **Short-Term Changes** | **Long-Term Outcomes** |

If our district implements strategy X ...

Then teachers and/or principals will do Y ...

And the outcome will be Z.

This diagram depicts your team’s working theory of action for the strategy. Using the diagram, discuss the following questions:

* Why are we prioritizing this strategy?
* What, specifically, are we asking all the actors involved in this theory of action to do or do differently?
* What makes us think that if we implement the proposed strategy, it will ultimately address the equity gap we identified? How will the strategy work to achieve the outcomes we expect to see?

For more information on developing a theory of action, see Step 6 on page 9 of the GTL Center’s [*Root-Cause Analysis Workbook*](https://www.gtlcenter.org/learning-hub/equitable-access-toolkit/root-cause-analysis-workbook) or the Center for Educational Leadership’s [*Creating a Theory of*](http://info.k-12leadership.org/hs-fs/hub/381270/file-2166618739-pdf/documents/webinar-presentation-pdfs/creating-a-theory-of-action.pdf)[*Action for Improving Teaching and Learning*](http://info.k-12leadership.org/hs-fs/hub/381270/file-2166618739-pdf/documents/webinar-presentation-pdfs/creating-a-theory-of-action.pdf)*.*

# Step 4: Implementation of Selected Strategies

LEAs can use the sample Step 4 Strategy Worksheet to describe the timeline and milestones for implementing each strategy. See the Sample LEA plan for more examples.

**Step 4 Strategy Worksheet**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Identified Root Causes** | **Selected Equity Plan Strategies** | **Description** | **Timeline and Milestones** |
| **Attract and Prepare** |
| *Lack of necessary content knowledge* | *Partner with preparation programs to offer professional learning about school settings* | *Teacher and leader effectiveness in Victory PCS will be strengthened if our teachers are prepared to teach all students to high standards. To ensure this capability, Victory PCS will seek to partner with state- approved programs and embed authentic teaching practice in our high-need schools in their programs. Partnering with programs to receive teachers who have experience in the unique settings and characteristics of Victory PCS will mitigate current gaps in preparation.* | * ***By November 2018:*** *The Victory PCS team of teachers, leaders, and central office staff will meet with at least two preparation programs to discuss collaboration.*
* ***By May 2019:*** *Establish a partnership with at least one program.*
* ***By October 2019:*** *Begin hosting teaching candidates for in-school experiences.*
 |
| *Underexposure to high-need school settings* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |