



[Graphic image description: A person holding a section of their face and looking in to their mind through a magnifying glass.]



Equity by Design:
Complexities of the Self:
Inner Work for Equity Leaders

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Complexities of the Self: Inner Work for Equity Leaders

Since the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, more organizations have recognized a need to create more inclusive and anti-racist environments. While anti-racism continues to be a highly contested value, for some, it has become an en vogue purpose.

How do equity-focused school leaders, who are truly committed to constructing more justice-oriented and truly inclusive environments, distinguish themselves from those who claim to be anti-racist because it is the *in* thing to do? There are a myriad of relevant responses to that question, but one response that is underdeveloped in the research literature and in the field is the inner life of school leaders. While there has been an increase in attention to social-emotional learning (SEL) for students, and even for teachers, scant attention has been paid to the SEL needs and experiences of school leaders.

The purpose of this brief is to address these gaps in a way that supports equity-focused leaders to reflect on their internal life; understand how that internal life intersects with their public equity leadership; and then offer grounding principles for beginning a practice of *Conscious Praxis* (Radd, 2021).

In order to accomplish this purpose, this brief focuses on *the Self*. I first define what I mean by this term, and then describe three different aspects of the Self. Next, I describe how the Self shows up in leadership – especially equity-focused leadership – and describe challenges and opportunities that arise for equity-focused leaders in relationship to the Self. Last, the brief provides a set of Guiding Principles that leaders and educators can use to connect authentically, keep grounded, and live out their values.

Before proceeding, however, I offer an important note about positionality. The term *positionality* refers to the sociocultural identities a person holds, and how those identities result in privilege or marginalization in any given situation¹. My primary positionality related to this brief is as a white cisgender female with a significant amount of formal education. This is important to note, because although (1) I have spent decades studying and leading for educational equity; (2) much of my scholarship and practice address the impact of whiteness; and (3) my personal and professional circles are multi-racial, I still see the world through a white-informed lens. Even when I am persistent in considering the influence of my view, as I am in writing this brief, I may not notice its

¹For a deeper explanation of sociocultural identities, see p. 5 in this brief. For more on positionality, see Moore, T., Jackson, R. G., Kyser, T. S., Skelton, S. M., & Thorius, K. K. (2016). Becoming an equity-oriented educator through critical self-reflection. *Equity Dispatch*. Great Lakes Equity Center (GLEC). <https://greatlakesequity.org/resource/becoming-equity-oriented-educator-through-critical-self-reflection>

impact. Thus, while I write this brief with the intent that it can be useful for equity-focused leaders with a wide-range of identities, both privileged and marginalized, I recognize that some principles may not extend effectively across identities and seek the reader's engagement in considering effective, equity-promoting modifications.

Now, on to the main message!

Aspects of Self

Across different bodies of literature, the Self is described in many different ways. Most commonly, people think of Self as ways to describe themselves that include qualities they might have (e.g., shy, extroverted, confident, smart), roles they hold (e.g., teacher, principal, parent, sibling), or identities they have (e.g., race, gender, disability). While these descriptions are certainly an important part of the way each individual understands themselves, and their role and place in the world, they are peripheral – connected, but not synonymous – with the way this brief encourages you to consider your Self and its role in your equity leadership.

Specifically, I discuss three different aspects of Self that impact your equity leadership. First, I address the concept of the *Core Self*; this is who you are at your core, your truest sense of yourself. Next, I describe the notion of *sociocultural identities*- aspects of identity like race, sex, gender, etc. - and connect these identities to systems of inequality. Last, I unpack the notion of *ego*, the functional part of yourself that distinguishes you from other people and that acts as a medium through which the Self interacts with the world outside.

Core Self


The notion of the *Core Self* is in one way the most basic aspect of a person, and yet it is challenging to describe, and even more challenging for people to identify their own Core Self. Some might even say that discerning and connecting to your Core Self is a life-long practice of adulthood. Still, for the benefit of equity leadership, as well as quality of life, it is a highly valuable practice.

Think of your Core Self as your innate Self, who you are at your core. Many of the wisdom traditions (see for example, Ram, 2015; Rohr, 2013), as well as some forms of mental health practice and social psychology (see for example, Schwartz & Sweezy, 2020) believe that each person is born into this world a unique and whole individual. Importantly, as each individual is unique,



[Image description: Word cloud. Visible words: self-awareness, values, differentiate, younger, current, sense, time, different, surrounding, awareness, individuals, behavior, looking, individual, questions, oneself, able, self-conscious, pictures, identify, internal, qualia, mirror, previous, ability, self-aware, average, objective, brain, one's, and allows.]

and therefore no two people are the same, there is not a perfect version of a Self; this situation is well-represented in the statement, “each person is perfectly imperfect.”



Sources of Disconnection: From this perspective, people don't have strengths and weaknesses, but qualities. Those qualities present both advantages and disadvantages. For example, if a person likes to plan ahead, that can be an advantage sometimes when they are able to confirm an out-of-town event on their calendar, and then make arrangements well in advance so that they are able to secure the accommodations, travel reservations, and hopefully use their time in alignment with their priorities. At the same time, that same person may become frustrated and impatient with another person who doesn't share their style. Or, they may miss out on unique opportunities that arise at the last minute.

This notion of personal qualities goes much deeper, however, and has significant connections to the conceptualization of the Core Self, as well as to equity leadership. In relation to the Core Self, each person's unique qualities will be met in the world by other people who either value or degrade some of those qualities. People tend to accentuate their qualities that are met with positive feedback and/or are culturally affirmed, while they often try to hide or diminish the qualities for which they receive critical statements. For example, a person who is told they have a beautiful voice may tend to sing more often and more proudly, and a person who is told they are too loud may tend to become much more self-conscious and afraid to express themselves.

In addition to personal qualities, people also become disconnected from their Core Self by events that happen in their day-to-

day life and experiences, particularly those that are traumatic. For example, a female adult who was physically abused as a child will be more likely to feel shy, self-conscious, misunderstood, and/or disliked than an adult who was not abused as a child (Malinosky-Rummell & Hansen, 1993). More broadly, children who experience abuse also have negative impacts on their self-esteem that stretch into adulthood, and lead to increased rates of depression, anxiety, and stress (Berber et al., 2020). Even fame, a seemingly positive outcome, "alters [a] person's being-in-the-world...and the [famous] person develops a kind of character-splitting between the 'celebrity self' and the 'authentic self'" (Rockwell & Giles, 2009, in Rockwell, 2012, para. 5).

The Altered Self: I refer to these alterations to the Core Self as the *altered self* and recognize that when people operate from the altered self, it compromises their ability to be fully in the present moment and to accurately perceive the present moment as *it is*. Instead, the altered self produces patterns that become entrenched in the way a person interacts with their world. A person who is self-conscious and afraid to express themselves will have trouble stating their needs in a confident, boundaried, sensitive, and uneventful way. A person who believes that others routinely want to hear their singing may begin to feel their only value to the world occurs when they perform for others, causing them to want to prove their worth in other ways or making them afraid to *just be*.

These messages and alterations impact people in micro- and macro- moments, and are almost always below their level of consciousness. The challenge for equity-focused leaders is to consistently discern and connect to their Core Self. The theory of action here is that when equity-focused leaders are connected to their Core Self, they can subsequently listen, make

meaning, and discern effective action that is relevant to, and grounded in, circumstances as they truly *are*, rather than having their view of circumstances distorted by their altered self.

Pause & Reflect

Reflection Questions

Think back to your childhood:

- What, if anything, were you told about diminishing, hiding, amplifying, or featuring certain aspects of yourself? Or the way you show up in the world?
- How do those early messages impact you now in your life?
- What are the positive, empowering impacts of those messages for you today?
- In what ways do those messages lead to you feeling insecure, disempowered, or inhibited?

- * What significant events or circumstances in your life have changed how you understand yourself to be in relation to others in the world?
- * How did they change you?
- * How have your actions and interactions changed as a result?

- ⇒ Can you think of moments when you knew you were being true to your true self?
- ⇒ What did it feel like?
- ⇒ How did you know?
- ⇒ How do these moments contrast with moments when fear, pride, or self-consciousness drove your actions and decision-making?

Socio-Cultural Identities

The term *sociocultural Identity* refers to things like race, gender, sex, sexual identity, dis/ability, religion, etc. These are aspects of a person's identity that are socially constructed – in other words, what they mean within society, the significance it carries, and whether it leads to privilege or exclusion that *are not* inherently endowed, but instead have been determined by the cultural context and society in which a person lives.

Though there are endless categories, nuances, and intersection to the variety of sociocultural identities in the United States, the sociocultural identities requiring the most attention when it comes to equity leadership are those along which the greatest inequities occur. These include race; gender, sex, and sexual identity; dis/ability status; religion; first language; socio-economic status; age; and homeland, citizenship, immigration and/or refugee status (Radd & Reed, 2015). Importantly, this list is not exhaustive, nor should it be used to exclude other aspects of sociocultural identities related to equity leadership.

Sociocultural Identities and Privilege: The central question to ask when identifying this list is whether a particular aspect of identity is connected to patterns of advantage and disadvantage, inclusion and exclusion, and privilege and marginalization. For example, while an important aspect of my identity is as a yoga student, there are not distinct patterns in privilege and oppression based upon that identity (i.e., yoga students don't tend to have less or more access to wealth, employment, housing, etc., just by virtue of

their status as a yoga student). Instead, a person's access to yoga instruction and ability to participate in the United States is more a *result of* their wealth, formal education, and income (Park et al., 2015; Razmjou et al., 2017) than vice versa. Thus, when considering equity leadership, it would be more important for me to identify and reflect on aspects of my sociocultural identity than on my status as a yoga student; and in fact, if I were to focus on my status as a yoga student, that would be what Gorski (2019) refers to as an *equity detour*.

Sociocultural identities have two primary impacts on individuals. First, "they are central to peoples' sense of self and lived experience" (Radd et al., 2021, p. 55). They impact how people define themselves, and how they experience their life in the world and among other people. They can define who is in one's community and how a person experiences life in their community/ies. Further, they naturally lead to messages and experiences that disconnect people from their Core Self. For example, white cisgender males consistently experience a world that communicates that they are superior and central (Clements et al., 2022), while transgender females of Color are subject to multiple experiences of emotional, relational, functional, and physical marginalization and discrimination that threaten their sense of worth and belonging in the world (Smart et al., 2020).

Simultaneously, sociocultural identities "are the axes upon which inequity and injustice have been constructed" (Radd et al., 2021, p. 55). In other words, systems of inequity in the United States are directly related to

aspects of identity. Certain identities are privileged, meaning people who have those identities experience “unearned benefits” of having that identity. Privileged identities in the United States include white; cisgender straight male; Christian; English-speaking; middle and upper class; temporarily abled; and US citizen. People with these identities experience patterns of privilege in both tangible and intangible ways. Intangibly, they will experience fewer micro-aggressions and find that their ideas and credibility are more frequently treated with greater regard.

For example, it is commonly observed that white cisgender men are often given credit and accolades for ideas that were first spoken by a female colleague or a person with a racialized identity. Tangibly, people with privileged identities also experience material advantages, such as higher incomes, greater generational wealth, better access to healthcare, and better-resourced schools (Radd et al., 2021).

 **Pause & Reflect**

Reflection Questions

What are your socio-cultural identities? Which are privileged identities, and which are marginalized? List as many as you can think of, while centering the identities on the list above.

- How do you think your socio-cultural identities impact your equity leadership?
- How do they impact how others see you?
- What you are able to do and get done?
- Whether you are included or excluded?


Ego

There are many different ways of thinking about and defining ego. In popular terms, the ego is thought of as confidence, often over-confidence; we hear this when people say, “that person has a really strong ego.”

I draw from yoga to define ego as having two components. First, it is a functional structure that mediates the relationship between the Core Self and a person’s interactions in the world. As such, this functional structure also mediates the relationship between one’s whole self and other people.

Ego in Action: You can notice your ego when you find yourself comparing yourself to other people, which is your ego in action. And, whether you compare yourself favorably or unfavorably to other people – in either case, when your ego is active in this way, it creates a fracture in your relationship with the other person that does not serve your relationship, nor your sense of self.

Your ego is also often at work when you find yourself getting *hooked* (i.e., finding your emotional and/or physiological reactions activated in a way that hijacks your thinking)



(Bailey et al., 2020; van der Kolk, 2014). This can feel like your heart racing, feeling your body go into high alert, feeling a rush of emotional intensity, or a myriad of other strong emotional or bodily reactions. Sometimes these reactions are limited to the impact of previous traumas (van der Kolk, 2014); at other times, they are the ego at work, reacting to the meaning you assign to what an event or circumstance says about you – in other words, getting wrapped up in what you believe an external circumstance reflects on who or what you are (Rohr, 2013; Schwartz & Sweezy, 2020). This occurs when, for example, you make a mistake at work, and you believe it means you are a failure. Or, when someone forgets to meet you at the agreed upon time, and you create negative judgements about yourself or them.

Core Self as Stable, Ego as Reactive: This can get tricky because these processes occur naturally and almost automatically. In addition, there often is a degree of

rationality to them. For example, it is true that when you have a fancy title at work, you are likely to behave differently and feel better, and other people will react to you differently than they did before (Brown, 2017). Sometimes that reaction will be positive, admiration, and/or supportive; other times it may be negative, judgmental, and/or undermining. However, while we know that (1) others are likely to react to you differently – sometimes positively, sometimes negatively – based upon your job title; and (2) you have a professional and ethical obligation to use the authority of your position to create inclusion, which involves how you treat other people (Radd et al., 2021); it is also true that (3) your job title – or even an extraordinary accomplishment - may change *how* you are, but they don't actually change *who* you are, your inherent worth, or your quality as a human being.

 **Pause & Reflect**

Reflection Questions

What is your reaction to this material? Consider what thoughts it provokes and evokes for you?

What emotions come up for you when you read this?

Identify situations when you realize you got *hooked* (Bailey et al., 2020; van der Kolk, 2014)

- *What happened?*
- *What was going on for you emotionally? What about physically?*
- *What thoughts were you thinking?*
- *What patterns do you notice within yourself if you think across situations where you've gotten hooked?*

The Self and Equity-Focused Leadership

Next, consider, why does this all matter? Why think about yourself in this way, where you unpack different aspects of your Self and consider what those aspects of Self mean in the world, and how they influence your experiences and actions? And, central to the purpose of this brief: what does this all have to do with equity and equity leadership?

This next section attempts to answer those questions. Equity leadership is a complex and unique practice (Radd et al., 2021) and involves a wide variety of factors, contexts, and dynamics. Specific to the internal life and experiences of equity leaders and how that connects to their equity leadership, I focus on two components of equity leadership: Navigating and Using Power and Connecting Across Differences. For each component, I describe its relevance to equity leadership; identify the pitfalls that can occur when an equity leader ignores their Self; and explain the benefits specific to that dynamic when a leader is connected to their Self.

Navigating and Using Power

Whenever we talk about equity, we need to identify and examine power (Radd, 2022): Who has it? How is it used? What patterns of benefit and disadvantage result from the power? How can it be shared to create more inclusion?


Power takes many forms, but for the purposes of this brief, consider that power is on a continuum from formal and positional power on one end, to informal and social on the other end (for more on this, see Radd,

2022). Many times, positional and social power have a symbiotic relationship. In other words, one form of informal power is *privilege*; people with privileged identities are more likely to be placed in positions where they also have formal power. For example, the superintendency in the US is dominated by white males (Zippia, 2022a) and 68% of all school principals in the US are white (Zippia, 2022b). Further, positional power combined with privileged identities often quickly then becomes connected to material privilege; for example, female school leaders earn 93 – 95% of what male school leaders earn (Zippia, 2022a; Zippia, 2022b).



[Image description: A feminine-presenting person and a masculine presenting person of diverse racial/ethnic identities, meeting and viewing sticky notes on a window.]

In these ways, power builds on itself. At the same time, most people don't like to talk about power explicitly, especially their own access to power; but inattention to power weakens our collective ability to ensure power is used to advance more equitable systems and outcomes (Radd et al., 2021).



Equity-Focused Leaders and Power: Equity-focused school leaders must think deeply and critically about how they will use their multiple forms of power. However, recall that when one is operating from their altered self, when they are not conscious of the impact of their positionality, and/or their ego is activated, they will struggle to see things as they are, and struggle with competing priorities, often unconsciously. For example, a white school leader might be acting from a white savior mentality (Hughey, 2014), a frame of mind that actually replicates and embeds patterns of inequity and white supremacy. Equity-focused leaders who operate from their Core Self understand a situation and others more accurately. In addition, they can be more skillful in sorting through the complexities of competing interests, systems' inertia, and social constructions to discern effective and authentic action. Accordingly, they can be more realistic, strategic, and effective in discerning and taking action to create equity-focused change.

Further, leaders who keep aware of their ego avoid getting *hooked* (Bailey et al., 2020; van der Kolk, 2014) into power struggles, but instead, make intentional, well-considered decisions about when and how to seek, share, and take power. Last, leaders who have learned and reflected on their positionality recognize

how their sociocultural identities lend them power and privilege, or alternately, result in marginalization for them, in any given situation. By practicing this form of *critical consciousness*² (Radd & Kramer, 2016) they can be intentional and skillful in discerning how to be effective and influence change with the impact of their identities in mind.

Pause & Reflect

Reflection Questions

- How do you feel when you think about your own power?
- Do you think about it often or avoid it?
- How does the way you think about your own power compare and contrast to the way you think about others and their power?

What forms of power do you have, and in what circumstances? Be as thorough as possible in identifying your types and moments of power, both formal and informal. Then identify, how you use your power.

Do you tend to be conscious and intentional about your use of power, or do you tend not to notice when and how you use your power?

²For more on critical consciousness, please see:

- Critical Consciousness for Inquiry and Critique: The DAPP Tool: <https://greatlakesequity.org/resource/critical-consciousness-inquiry-and-critique-dapp-tool>
- Developing Critical Consciousness through Professional Learning (brief): <https://greatlakesequity.org/resource/developing-critical-consciousness-through-professional-learning>
- Developing Critical Consciousness through Professional Learning (podcast): <https://greatlakesequity.org/resource/developing-critical-consciousness-through-professional-learning-0>

Connecting Across Differences

Equity change requires groups of people – not just individual actors – in order to make a difference (Radd et al., 2021). It also requires the ability to engage oneself and others in thoughts and actions that go against well-worn paradigms, paradigms that perpetuate inequity with or without intention. To be an effective leader for equity, one must have the competencies to connect constructively with others who are different from oneself. To state the obvious: diversity is about *difference*, and inequity and injustice occurs across differences in sociocultural identities. Thus, leading with a focus on equity requires the ability to engage difference constructively and toward positive change.

Still, most people lack authentic experience, and are uncomfortable and unskilled at connecting genuinely with others who are different from themselves (Hammer, 2012). There are at least four reasons for this: first, people have a strong tendency to cluster and connect with others who are like themselves. Second, people have a strong tendency to see similarity and difference using a simplistic lens – for example, assuming that someone of the same race is like themselves, and someone of a race

other than their race is different from them, without understanding deeper complexities and nuances within a particular group of people. Third, people tend to seek to connect through similarities - what they have in common with other people - when encountering someone different than themselves. Last, the human brain is wired to react emotionally and strongly to differences in perspective and opinion, as it sees those differences as a threat to one's *rightness* (Bailey et al., 2020). Thus, perceived differences often result in unnecessary conflict

When an equity-focused leader is consciously connected to their Core Self, and aware of the impact of their ego, they can reduce their internal reactivity that would otherwise arise when they encounter difference. When an equity-focused leader is aware of the impacts of their sociocultural identities for themselves and others, they are better able to demonstrate sensitivity and skillful awareness of their positionality in their actions and interactions (Radd et al., 2021).

Pause & Reflect

Reflection Questions

- What is new learning for you in this section?
- How did this section make you feel?
- * How does this section reflect the way you see and understand yourself?
- * Where does it highlight areas that you can improve your ability and comfort to connect across differences?

Developing Healthy Self-Consciousness in Equity-Focused Leaders

Because equity-focused leadership is highly political and oftentimes complex, the equity-focused leader's ability to discern the current moment and circumstances exactly as they are is exceedingly important, without interference from ego or the altered self, and with consciousness of the impact, both internal and externally, of their positionality. I refer to this practice as *Conscious Praxis* (Radd, 2021). The reflection questions in the preceding sections are intended to support equity-focused leaders in reflecting on their internal life; these reflections questions can be used over and over again in order to continue to deepen one's attention to their inner life. In addition, I offer two habits and three grounding approaches to practice when seeking to operationalize greater attention to Self in one's equity-focused leadership. As this brief is focused on leadership, and leadership is grounded in relationship (Kouzes & Posner, 2013), these practices are intended to help equity-focused leaders keep grounded in their Core Self, connect authentically with others, and act in alignment with their value for equity.

The *two habits* are as follows:

1. **Clarify your purpose and priority:** Work to identify what is most important to you, and the purpose of equity. Remember to make and keep the most important thing, the most important thing. Staying tuned in to this can help you avert competing noise, whether it is internal or external.

2. **Notice and pause when you get hooked (Bailey et al., 2020; van der Kolk, 2014):** It is human nature to get *hooked*, then react and take action immediately. However, that is often a recipe for a poor outcome, and given the complexity of equity leadership, can easily lead to actions and interactions that run counter to your equity values. By noticing and pausing when you get *hooked*, you can take the time to remember what is important to you and your values, and shift your actions toward something more constructive.

The *three grounding approaches* each start with *sincere* and *secure*. These words are so commonly used that you may forget what they actually mean. In addition, in this context they have very specific definitions.

Here, *sincere* means that you release any sense of pretense or deceit and come from a place of internal genuineness. It is important to remember here that this definition not only includes avoiding pretense and deceit in interactions with others, but also with oneself. In other words, it is very easy to deceive yourself, and you have to be on guard to remove pretense and deceit from your reflections on yourself! Importantly, it also means that while you are deeply and wholly honest with yourself, it doesn't require unrestrained candor in your external actions; instead, when you are fully honest with yourself, you can make wiser decisions about how you act and interact in the world.

Secure in this context is a close cousin of confident, but relates more closely to a state of being safe and knowing your

security is dependable. In other words, you know that you are safe rather than in danger when you practice curiosity, authentic connection, and opposing views, particularly if you are operating from a privileged identity (importantly, this is especially true when coming from a place of privilege and is not intended to imply a sense of security in the face of ongoing exclusion, marginalization, or other forms of harm). With that in mind, I describe these approaches as follows:

- ***Sincere and secure sense of curiosity:*** Curiosity is the attitude of *wanting* to learn and understand; it is operationalized in listening carefully and asking questions. This is for the purpose of knowing more and understanding others better. When equity-focused leaders come from a place of curiosity, they make space for others to be fully present and included. For the leader, the place of curiosity demonstrates and perpetuates internal groundedness.
- ***Sincere and secure interest in authentic connection:*** Relationships are an incredibly important part of equity-focused leadership, and yet leaders are almost always pressed for time in ways that make it hard to be fully present when interacting with others. Further, the role of leader can alter a person's sense of Self in relationship to others, prompting them to put a veneer on their interactions that is social and/or political, but not genuine. Instead, equity-focused leaders seek to connect with others in a way that honors their own and others' authentic self, when they are in touch with their internal self.

- ***Sincere and secure consideration of seemingly opposing views:*** As described earlier, the human brain is wired to react to opposing views as if they are a threat. This tendency is heightened in our highly polarized world today and fed through social media metrics. Equity-focused leaders must be very clear on their personal values that underlie their equity commitments, which includes engaging with difference. This is not for the purpose of changing one's own or another's mind, nor compromising one's equity commitments, but to embody them. Showing and exploring an opposing view reflects a strong sense of Self, increases learning, and strengthens relationships.



[Image description: Person sitting at a table, writing in a journal.]

Conclusion

The life of an equity-focused leader is demanding, complex, and politically charged. It can be difficult to focus on one's inner life, yet without doing so, the equity-focused leader's practice is even more challenging. The purpose of this brief is to provide an opportunity for equity-focused leaders to consider their internal life, strengthen their consciousness of their internal self, and subsequently make greater progress toward equity.

About the Author

Dr. Sharon Radd is Associate Professor and Program Director for the MA-Organizational Leadership Program at St. Catherine University. She is co-author of the book *Five Practices for Equity-Focused School Leadership* (ASCD), a Senior Partner with The Five Practices Group, and Principal Consultant with ConsciousPraxis, partnering with education, public, and non-profit organizations and leaders to foster effective and inclusive leadership.

Prior to her current work, Radd was a public school administrator, professional development facilitator, and school social worker for 23 years. Her research centers on the unique practice of leadership that aims to advance social justice, particularly in the public and non-profit sectors; she explores this practice from the theoretical, conceptual and empirical study of adult learning, organizational change, and discursive functioning of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.

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About the Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center

The mission of the Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center is to ensure equity in student access to and participation in high quality, research-based education by expanding states' and school systems' capacity to provide robust, effective opportunities to learn for all students, regardless of and responsive to race, sex, and national origin, and to reduce disparities in educational outcomes among and between groups. The Equity by Design briefs series is intended to provide vital background information and action steps to support educators and other equity advocates as they work to create positive educational environments for all children. For more information, visit <http://www.greatlakesequity.org>.

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