

# EQUITY LENS

---

An equity lens is a tool that school boards can use to focus their work on improving the learning of every student by ensuring that educational equity is at the center of all decision-making and evaluation of policies, programs, practices, resource allocation, and decisions. As stated in NSBA’s *Reimagining School Board Leadership Guide* (2021), “Operating with an equity lens empowers school board members to intentionally allocate resources, instruction, and opportunities according to need, requiring that discriminatory practices, prejudices, and beliefs be identified and eradicated.”

In addition to other educational equity resources available on the Vermont Agency of Education website, below is an example of an equity lens template:

**Definition:**

Educational equity means that every student has access to the resources, opportunities, and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education, whatever their **race, gender/ identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, language, disability, family background, or family income may be.** *(Adapted from CCSSO, Leading for Equity)*

**Protocol:**

For any policy, program, practice or decision, consider the following questions as they pertain to the bolded group characteristics above:

**Policy/Program/Decision to Review:** [Identify the item you are reviewing]

Questions for Consideration	Responses
Who are the groups affected by this policy, program, practice or decision (PPPD)?	
What assumptions and/or biases regarding the stakeholders/ communities/students/groups affected by this policy, program, practice or decision have you surfaced/ considered?	
What equity gaps* currently exist for these stakeholders/ communities/ students/ groups?	
What are potential impacts of the PPPD on this group or groups?	
Does this policy, program, practice, or decision have the potential to create, ignore or worsen existing equity gaps or produce other unintended consequences? If yes, how?	
What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes that you have identified (e.g., mandated/legal, political, emotional, financial, programmatic, or managerial)?	
If barriers or equity gaps persist, what new policies, programs, practices, and decisions must be made to ensure equitable outcomes?	
In using this protocol, what questions were raised and remain unresolved regarding the policy, program, practice or decision?	

*(Retrieved on 12/28/2021 at <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-multi-tiered-system-of-supports/educational-equity>)*