

A Map of the Making Equitable Schools Audit Approach

The **Making Equitable Schools Audit (MESA) partnership** strives to ensure that all members of a school community—including students, teachers, and staff—experience a safe and supportive school environment.

MESA is a yearlong facilitated and collaborative approach to conduct an equity audit through Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest. The MESA approach provides **ongoing coaching and resources for school leaders** as well as support for a **facilitated equity audit** that includes representatives from the broader school community. The MESA approach is designed to help schools leverage community-wide relationships and existing data to build more equitable and welcoming experiences for all individuals in a school community.

What are school staff saying about their experience with MESA?

One staff member called the equity audit a “milestone” of the year. The MESA partnership and its focus on equity, she explained, became “part of my development in keeping me going in the educational field, inspiring me, reminding me of where I’m at, how I got here, and why I want to stay.”

THE APPROACH INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

A full-day, in-person **EQUITY AUDIT** with school leaders, teachers, staff, parents, students, and community members to make meaning of data and identify priorities for action. Preparation and debrief virtual sessions (two total) are held before and after the full-day audit.

Two **ONBOARDING SESSIONS** and three **COACHING SESSIONS** for school leaders to begin planning for the equity audit. Ongoing consultation with school leaders is provided during the equity audit process.

Five virtual **COACHING SESSIONS** and two **ACTION AND MONITORING SESSIONS** for school leaders to identify policy and practice changes and support implementation and monitoring.

MESA Approach Details

CREW Who is involved?	ROUTE What will be accomplished?	DESTINATION What will be the results?
Onboarding 2 sessions		
School principal District-level partner REL Midwest staff	The school principal will learn about MESA, build readiness for systems change, schedule coaching and equity audit sessions, and coordinate leadership team recruitment.	The school principal identifies a leadership team for year-long coaching and support. The school principal and REL Midwest staff develop a schedule for the equity audit and coaching sessions.
Leadership Coaching 3 sessions prior to equity audit (8 total)		
School principal School leadership team REL Midwest staff	A diverse school leadership team will participate in three coaching sessions to prepare for the equity audit. Session facilitators will introduce MESA, center participant identities in our work, guide learning related to data-informed systems change, and prepare participants for challenging equity conversations. School leaders will recruit additional participants for the equity audit. Ongoing consultation with school leaders is provided during the equity audit process.	School leadership team members are prepared to participate and engage in the equity audit and have recruited equity audit participants.
Equity Audit 1 virtual prep session, 1 in-person session, and 1 virtual debrief session (3 total)		
School principal School leadership team Teachers and school staff Students and parents Community members REL Midwest staff	Participants will review and analyze school data for equity gaps. Participants will actively engage in discussions with a diverse group of school staff, students, family members, and community members about equity priorities and root causes.	Participants gain familiarity with equity-focused data, develop key findings, and identify priorities and root causes for action. REL Midwest staff draft an equity audit report that details the key findings and root causes identified in the equity audit. Equity audit participants review the report for clarity and accuracy. REL Midwest staff finalize the report.
Leadership Coaching 5 sessions after the equity audit (8 total)		
School principal School leadership team REL Midwest staff	A diverse school leadership team will plan for policy and practice changes related to the equity audit. School leaders will develop clear next steps for school change relating to the equity audit key findings and identified root cause areas.	School leaders develop a plan to implement and monitor school-level policy and practice changes that address priorities and root causes identified during the equity audit.
Action and Monitoring 2 sessions		
School principal REL Midwest staff	The school principal will engage in change management planning, including how to communicate work to the full school staff and how to monitor progress.	The school principal develops communication and outreach materials to launch policy change initiatives. The school principal develops progress monitoring steps to assess impact of change initiatives.

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