**Guidance for Forming an Equitable Inclusive Leadership Team**

**Purpose:** The Equitable Inclusive Leadership Team (EILT)leads the work of needs assessment, action planning, and implementation for the purpose of building equitable and effective inclusive education systems for all students with an *explicit but not exclusive* focus on students with significant cognitive disabilities.

**Foundational Statements Regarding Inclusive Education:**

* Students with a variety of skills and abilities can effectively learn together in general education classrooms.
* All students are seen as general education students first. Some students need special education support and services to have access to general education.
* Access to general education standards and curriculum in inclusive classrooms is an evidence-based best practice for students with disabilities, including students with significant cognitive disabilities.

**Guiding Questions:**

1. Can you repurpose or add to the responsibilities of an existing team (equity team, instructional leadership team, etc.) or is a new team needed?
2. How will you ensure [representation](#bookmark=id.30j0zll) of all [stakeholders](#bookmark=id.gjdgxs) present in the school community?
3. What [knowledge and skills](#bookmark=id.1fob9te) will the team need in order to move inclusive educational initiatives forward (for example, evidence-based practices in inclusive education, local administrative infrastructure, family perspectives, implementation strategies)?
4. Are there potential gaps in team knowledge and skills? If so, how will you fill those gaps

(for example, Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) faculty, state department of education staff, inclusive education consultants)?

1. How will you configure your EILT? How many members should be on the team? Levels of a system organize differently given the scope of their work. See state, district, and school examples below:
2. Does the team include at least one [champion of inclusive education](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ847470.pdf)? If not, how can you recruit one or more champions?
3. How will you evaluate the [effectiveness of the team](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ckrnIUPy2Fz3XS5g3a-nEIDAgObpsVV0lrd2IYwVv1Q/edit)?

**For information specific to** [**STATE Equitable and Inclusive Leadership Teams**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1blrmQc7SlW5Eg4XBrdfs3Fl303lyHsLiJ0gIADZaGvg/edit)

**For information specific to** [**DISTRICT Equitable and Inclusive Leadership Teams**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IQki4HYHSEcjY_o6hlgBzTPI_g2r-PMD16xM2wcoXgY/edit)

**For information specific to** [**SCHOOL Equitable and Inclusive Leadership Teams**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-ZR4_GB1B5pkttaWL-dU0k46nb7m0IchZOtRTcFAkx0/edit)

**Essential Stakeholder groups**

* Decision makers- Special education and general education administrators or designees **who have the authority to make decisions** regarding changes to policy, procedures, and practices
* Administrators- Representatives of this group may include members of the superintendency, building principals and district special education coordinators/directors or designees
* General education teachers- This group should represent classroom teachers across grade levels and a “specials” teacher
* Special education teachers- This group should represent all types of special educators (inclusion facilitators, resource room, self-contained classroom)
* Specialized support personnel - This group should represent related service providers such as speech and language pathologists, counselors, physical or occupational therapists, social workers)
* Paraprofessionals- those designated as general education paraprofessionals as well as those designated as special education paraprofessionals
* Self-advocates- adult or high school student with a significant disability
* Family members- this group should represent parents of students with and without disabilities

**Representation of Stakeholders**

* Racial representation similar to that in the school, district or community
* Persons with disabilities
* Members of other historically disenfranchised groups
* Socio-economic diversity
* Geographic diversity
* Champions of inclusive education

**Membership Skills and Knowledge**

* Expertise regarding inclusive education for all students, being explicit to include students with significant cognitive disabilities
* Expertise regarding instruction of students with significant cognitive disabilities
* Expertise in general education instruction and classroom management strategies
* Knowledge of multi-tiered systems of support as a means to provide inclusive education
* Knowledge of local systems, policies and supports
* Access to relevant data systems
* Expertise in school reform or systems change in education

**Champions of Inclusive education**

* Described in: Henderson, B. (2006). [Champions of inclusion](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ847470.pdf). International Journal of Whole Schooling. 3(1), 7-12.