

PROPOSAL

Submitted to: Dr. Ed Condon, Superintendent
River Forest Public Schools District 90
September 14, 2022

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Project Duration: September 2022 - June 2023

Project Fees: \$26,250.00

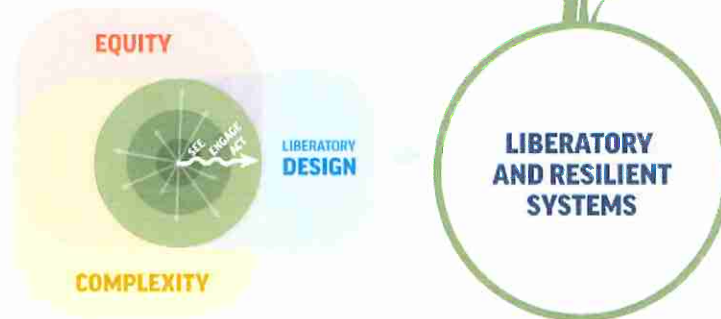
The National Equity Project partners with leaders to transform the outcomes, experiences, and life trajectories of young people and families who have been historically underserved by their public institutions. We offer a human-centered approach and provide sustained, embedded support to leaders, so that they can make effective, equity-based decisions and take informed action in their day-to-day work. We support our partners to work on both technical and relational challenges – supporting leaders to identify and develop necessary structures, patterns, and processes, while deeply focusing on too-often overlooked aspects of information sharing, relationships, and identity.

In our view, working towards equity entails:

- Removing the predictability of success or failure that currently correlates with race, socio-economic status, and any other social or cultural factor.
- Ending inequitable practices, addressing individual and systemic biases, and creating respectful, inclusive environments for adults and children to thrive.
- Discovering and cultivating the unique talents and interests that everyone possesses.

We believe anyone can be a leader for equity. Our [Leading for Equity™ Framework](#) enables leaders to navigate the complex territory of equity challenges and to develop the capacity to engage in purposeful leadership action. The National Equity Project offers an “inside-out” approach to leadership that creates a different set of possibilities for how we approach complex, equity work.

LEADING FOR EQUITY FRAMEWORK



Understanding Your Needs

Let's begin by saying that we are living through a very dangerous time. Everyone in this room is in one way or another aware of that. We are in a revolutionary situation, no matter how unpopular that word has become in this country. The society in which we live is desperately menaced, not by [external enemies], but from within. So any citizen of this country who figures himself as responsible - and particularly those of you who deal with the minds and hearts of young people - must be prepared to 'go for broke'.

James Baldwin, "A Talk to Teachers," 1963

In our partnership with River Forest D90 over the past 5 years, we have seen tremendous commitment, desire and aspirations to create an educational system that serves all students. It has been inspiring to work with leaders who are dedicated to educational equity and unapologetic about addressing racial and other forms of inequities in District 90. Over the years, we have witnessed an evolution of conviction and a greater level of engagement on the part of district leaders, School Board members, faculty and staff as well as community members and a willingness to study why some challenges persist and to continue searching for more effective strategies in an attempt to address them.

The National Equity Project has been supporting D90 leaders to identify the parts of the system that might not be serving all students well and to examine how to redesign or design new systems. In particular, we have appreciated the progress that D90 was able to make this last year, despite the continuing challenges of the pandemic. We value D90's commitment to amplifying student voice throughout the district, bringing the different equity groups together to begin to forge a common vision and foster mutual support, working with and adapting the Co-Pilot Elevate program (<https://www.perts.net/about>) to secure student feedback and the many other equity related efforts and learning taking place in the District

Thus, we believe that D90 can build on this momentum and move towards transformation of some key areas related to the structures and practices of the District that might not be serving the needs of every student and family in the community. In an effort to sustain and coordinate a comprehensive approach to equity values, we would benefit from a greater level of strategy, reflection and sustained action for learning through the See, Engage and Act part of our approach. This would allow us to build on the progress thus far and make significant strides towards the equity goals of the District. All along, we would maintain a focus on “the why” of the work and thereby inspire others to join the effort. As Simon Sinek says in his book Start With Why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action “Those who truly lead are able to create a following of people who act not because they were swayed, but because they were inspired” (p.6).

To support this effort towards inspirational transformation in D90’s structures and practices, NEP would offer a dosage of coaching and consultative support for a group of leaders committed to making meaningful progress in problem identification, strategy coherence, alignment of resources and deep reflection and learning from what we are hearing and feeling from the students experiencing the system to guide our efforts towards greater equity.

We would also support the District in maintaining a sense of community in all these efforts. Studies about how change happens show that success stories have something in common: the implementation of unlikely innovations where radical new ideas expand and spread happen through social networks. As Damon Centola in his book Change: How to make big things happen says, “with any social innovation, the real challenge is not developing the solution but convincing people to use it.” The best way for D90 to continue to produce and sustain meaningful change and spread innovation is through collaboration, thus, we will continue to create conditions for district and site level collaborations to work together to design schools for success for every student, regardless of race, socioeconomics, gender identity and any other identifier that prevents full inclusion and belonging.

Therefore, NEP proposes that we align with your deepest desires for equity and fairness in D90 and support you in continuing to make progress in that direction and harvest the fruits of this momentum towards transformation. Given the above learning from last year’s equity work, NEP is proposing the following services for school year 2022-2023.

Scope of Work

Equity Strategy Development Sessions

NEP would engage a set of leaders, including students if possible, to focus on equity problem identification, strategy coherence, alignment of resources and deep reflection and learning from student experience. This would include support for the implementation of D90’s Strategic Plan - With the pandemic focus fading, the Board of Education and administration have started re-engaging with the D90 Strategic Plan that was originally adopted in 2020. NEP facilitators would serve as thought

partners to encourage the development of strategies and tactics that explicitly target equity based outcomes.

New Teacher and Staff Anti-Bias Training

NEP would continue to support D90 in inviting new staff to engage in deep reflection and consideration of the equity values of the District through a half day experiential learning process towards the beginning of the school year. New staff would review relevant materials and engage in dialogue and reflection on the importance of incorporating these commitments in their teaching practice, but also in their relationships, mindsets and student centered approach.

Kindergarten Program Review/Investigation

The District will be conducting a comprehensive review of the current half-day kindergarten model this fall, with the goal of providing a recommendation to the Board of Education in early February regarding the suggested format for the program in the future. The review process will establish several working teams to investigate elements that impact programming, including a review of research/instructional practices, facility issues, financial resources, communication, personnel, achievement data, stakeholder feedback, and geodemographics. NEP would support this process by participating as part of the Program Review Committee to encourage the District to sustain its commitment to equity in conversations, analysis, and recommendations.

Expansion of Co-Pilot/Elevate Program

With several teachers piloting Co-Pilot last year, District 90 intends to expand the program across the District to involve all elementary teachers at both Willard and Lincoln Schools. This is particularly exciting since D90 went through the process of designing a parallel survey to the 6-12 instrument originally developed by PERTS. Since Co-Pilot/Elevate is being used by other NEP-affiliated school districts, NEP would offer its expertise to help D90 implement this initiative successfully in a way that truly fosters teacher capacity for relationship building in the coming year.

Development of D90 Equity Collaborative

The D90 Equity Collaboration Event last spring highlighted the many ways in which entities across the school community are pursuing equity-related goals and how many expanded opportunities might be available if the groups worked together more intentionally. The Board of Education Equity Committee is eager to develop the framework for an “Equity Collaborative” where a cross section of individuals from each of these entities could work together to identify and take action in support of areas of intersection. NEP would provide assistance in structuring this group and enabling a See, Engage and Act approach in their work.

Pricing & Scheduling

Service	Deliverable	Fee
Equity Strategy Development Sessions	4 two to three hour sessions with two NEP staff Planning, materials and facilitation included	\$12,500
NewTeacher and Staff Anti-Bias Training	1 Half day session with one NEP staff Planning, materials and facilitation included	\$2,500
Kindergarten Program Review/Investigation	7 one hour sessions with one NEP staff	\$4,375
Expansion of Co-Pilot/Elevate Program	4 one hour sessions with one NEP staff	\$2,500
Development of D90 Equity Collaborative	7 one hour sessions with one NEP staff	\$4,375
Total		\$26,250
Travel		Actual cost

Service fees include planning and travel time, materials development and production, and reflection and debriefing. Service fees do not include travel expenses, which will be billed based on actual expenses. Billing will commence at the start date of our contract and NEP will invoice in quarterly intervals. Additional services may be negotiated as needed.

In addition, we understand the importance of protecting time for our team to reflect, learn and collaborate internally; we encourage those we support to do the same. To this end, we designate time every Friday as an NEP internal learning and collaboration day. We commit to planning and scheduling our work with you in a manner that works for both you and our team in order to effectively fulfill the scope of work as outlined.

Project Team Leadership

Juan Alegria, Associate

Tom Malarkey, Director

Experience & Partners

We support educational, intermediary, community-based, and philanthropic leaders to authentically collaborate to transform the systems to which they belong. We have partnered with a range of organizations and foundations including the following recent clients:

Annie E. Casey Foundation	Baltimore, MD
Battle Creek Public Schools	Battle Creek, MI
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Seattle, WA
Camino Nuevo Charter Academy	Los Angeles, CA
Chicago Public Schools	Chicago, IL
City Of Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids, MI
Clark County School District	Las Vegas, NV
Educate78	Oakland, CA
Grand Rapids Public Schools	Grand Rapids, MI
Hewlett Foundation	Menlo Park, CA
Hood River County School District	Hood River, OR
Kenneth Rainin Foundation	Oakland, CA
Lumina Foundation	Indianapolis, IN
Madison Metropolitan School District	Madison, WI
Monterey County Office of Education	Salinas, CA
Nevada Department of Education	Las Vegas, CA
Oakland Unified School District	Oakland, CA
Partnership for Los Angeles Schools	Los Angeles, CA
Rockford Public Schools	Rockford, IL
Roseville Joint Union High School District	Roseville, CA
San Diego Unified School District	San Diego, CA
San Mateo Union High School District	San Mateo, CA
Santa Clara County Office of Education	San Jose, CA
Southern Education Foundation	Atlanta, GA
United Way Greater Atlanta	Atlanta, GA
Washington State Dept of Children, Youth & Families Olympia, WA	
W.K. Kellogg Foundation	Battle Creek, MI

Client references are available upon request.