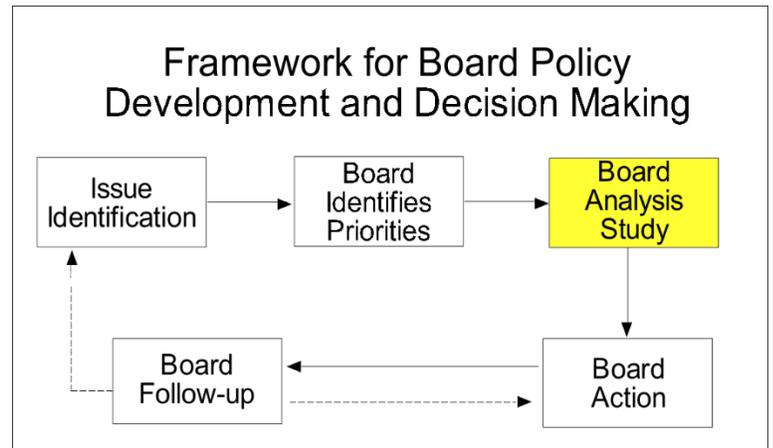


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

August 5, 2020



**Agenda Item:** Work Session: Iowa Department of Education Equity Series

**State Board Priority:** All

**State Board Role/Authority:** State Board of Education Priorities

**Presenter(s):** Isbelia Arzola, Consultant  
Bureau of School Improvement

Thomas Mayes, Attorney

Jeanette Thomas, Consultant  
Bureau of Career and Technical Education

**Attachment(s):** One

**Recommendation:** The board should listen, consider and contribute to the Department of Education's plan for providing professional learning and support regarding equity to Iowa educators.

**Background:** The Department has a responsibility to promote equitable education for all students. This year, the Department will engage this responsibility differently than we have in the past by providing a sequence of opportunities for educators to engage important equity topics and take back to their districts activities that can be used more broadly. The Department will present draft plans for this year's series and will solicit input and ideas from the State Board.



## Purpose:

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The Iowa Department of Education (Department) is launching a new professional development series focusing on social justice issues and equity in education. These interactive virtual sessions will be hosted up to twice each month and will be delivered by local and national leaders in equity with a proven background in diversity, multiculturalism, and racial consciousness. These sessions will provide a strong foundation for building toward the 2nd annual Social Justice in Education conference, tentatively scheduled for spring 2021.

## Tentative Training Topics:

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The new Social Justice in Education series will provide professional development and interactive activities covering a range of topics throughout the year, including:

- COVID-19 and Class Disparities
- Immigration Issues in Education
- Poverty and Homelessness in Education
- Race/Racism 101
- Sex, Gender, Gender-Based Violence
- School to Prison Pipeline and Disparities in Special Education
- Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health
- Teaching History in Multicultural Classrooms
- Teaching LGBTQ Youth: Creating Inclusive Classrooms
- White Fragility

## 2021 Social Justice in Education Conference:

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Pandemic permitting, the face-to-face conference will build off of the Social Justice in Education series and serve as a capstone for educators, practitioners and industry experts to make connections and build new skill sets that they can take back to the classroom.

The conference theme, “From Conversation to Practice - A Call to Action”, will serve as a platform for stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue to create a forum for sharing promising practices and research-based strategies focusing on the needs of disenfranchised students. Additional training will be conducted for equity coordinators and administrators responsible for overseeing grievance procedures and processes, training, compliance and regulatory issues.

## Equity Committee:

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The Department’s Equity Committee, led by education consultants Isbelia Arzola from the Bureau of School Improvement, Jeanette Thomas from the Bureau of Career and Technical Education and attorney Thomas Mayes, is guiding this work and curating content and resources to provide robust professional development, training and awareness for educators to support educational equity and to ensure students have what they need to reach their full potential.

**Contact:** project lead Isbelia Arzola at [isbelia.arzola@iowa.gov](mailto:isbelia.arzola@iowa.gov) or at 515- 326-5962.