

NAVIGATING EdEquityVA

KEYS TO EQUITY IN GIFTED AND ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

5 KEYS TO ENSURING EQUITY IN ADVANCED PROGRAMS

Advanced Academic Programs in Virginia include; Gifted, IB, AP, Dual Enrollment, Academic Governor's Schools, and other advanced specialty programs.



The Education Trust

The strategies listed here are adapted for local school division leadership from 5 Things State Leaders Should Do to Advance Equity: Access to and Success in Advanced Coursework published by The Education Trust. 2019. Thank you to EdTrust for your partnership and support of EdEquityVA.

1. IDENTIFY BARRIERS

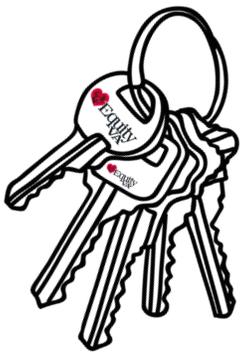
Use data to identify the barriers that prevent students of color and students from low-income families from enrolling:

- Examine representation in advanced coursework, including AP, dual enrollment, IB, gifted and talented programs, Gifted ID in K 3, and eighth grade algebra.
- Publish this data annually for each school by student group.
- Collect information to diagnose the various barriers that different groups of students face to accessing and succeeding in advanced coursework. This includes data about whether students of color and students from low income families attend schools that offer advanced courses, whether there are enough seats in the courses, if these students are being given a fair chance to participate in the courses, or if they are being given the supports they need to be successful.

2. ESTABLISH GOALS

Set clear and measurable goals for advancing access to and success in advanced academic settings:

- Use data to set public goals that, within an ambitious number of years, Black and Latino students and students from low-income families will be fairly represented in access to and success in advanced coursework from elementary school through high school, including gifted and talented programs, eighth grade algebra, IB, dual enrollment, and AP courses.
- Clearly communicate these equity goals – including to underserved families and communities – and publicly report against intermediate targets to monitor progress toward these goals regularly.
- Include these goals in highly visible communications, such as back-to-school messages and state-of-the-schools addresses.



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3. EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES

Expand advanced coursework opportunities – both courses and seats:

- Provide additional funding to recruit and train teachers (especially teachers of color) to teach advanced courses.
- Provide transportation to students in isolated or underserved schools.
- Purchase necessary curricular and instructional materials to support student success.

4. EXPAND ELIGIBILITY

Expand eligibility for advanced courses:

- Reduce the influence of bias by implementing universal screening for gifted and talented programs and to use multiple measures to identify students for advanced coursework. All exams used to identify students for advanced opportunities, especially for gifted and talented programs, must be culturally responsive.
- Require that information about all advanced courses (including waived fees, course offerings, benefits of enrolling, details on admissions test, and course requirements) be shared with students and families and be made available in families' home languages.
- Adopt policies where students identified for advanced coursework through any of the multiple measures above are automatically enrolled in advanced courses, unless their families opt them out.

5. SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS

Support Black, Latino, and low-income students' success in advanced courses:

- Require subject matter expertise in teachers who teach advanced courses and prioritize supporting diverse teachers in obtaining such expertise.
- Support teachers while they are teaching advanced courses, including real time, ongoing support from school leaders or master educators and time for teachers of advanced courses to collaborate with their colleagues across the school and district.
- Implement an instructional program that provides an aligned curriculum and teacher professional development that prepares all students for enrollment and success in advanced coursework.
- Provide additional advanced coursework preparation and support for students who need it. This may include free after school or summer school preparation courses, as well as additional during course supports like tutoring.
- Adopt a rigorous, culturally relevant, and engaging curriculum that creates pathways where students are prepared for advanced coursework.