



Southern Education Foundation Racial Equity Leadership Network | Fellowship Overview

The Opportunity & Aim

In districts all over the United States, race and class remain among the most reliable predictors of student success in school. Currently, in southern states, more than half of all the students enrolled in public school are from low-income families, with a growing number of families living in extreme poverty. The majority of public school students in the South are also children of color, rapidly changing the demographics of large and small districts. The increasing diversity and inequities students and families confront, creates an imperative for us to reimagine how we create a system that increases access and opportunity for all children to learn, develop, and thrive.

We think the system we need now requires a bold and significant shift in educational leadership and practice. Leaders in every corner of our nation are being called to think, engage and act differently in the face of the complex challenges they navigate. Strengthening the will, skill and capacity of district leaders and their teams is an important lever for advancing authentic and enduring equity-centered system change.

The Southern Education Foundation is answering this call by launching an innovative **Racial Equity Leadership Network** to advance the capacity of district leaders committed to enduring equity-centered systems change as a solution to addressing racial, economic and academic disparities in districts across the South.

Fellowship Overview

The **Racial Equity Leadership Network** is an 18-Month Fellowship Program for Executive Leaders in districts who are committed to addressing persistent disparities in their systems and ensuring that race and class are no longer the most reliable predictors of student success.

Fellows will attend five (5) two-day network convenings focused on the essential levers for equity leadership and system transformation. In between network convenings, Fellows will have access to a comprehensive menu of services and technical support including on-site coaching and strategic consultation to support implementation of their strategies in their home districts.

Each cohort of the **Racial Equity Leadership Network** will be comprised of 12-15 leaders (i.e., Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, Chief Academic Officers, etc.) – who are making an impact on disparities in their district.

As members of the **Racial Equity Leadership Network**, fellows will:

- **Deepen** awareness and understanding of the historical and contextual drivers of racial inequity in schools and make connections to present-day education policies and practices that perpetuate racial disparities in student opportunity and outcomes.
- **Challenge** to examine their own attitude, beliefs, and assumptions about students’ ability to learn, regardless of background.
- **Establish** clear steps for an explicit racial equity vision for their systems and establishing racial equity as a fundamental value that is clearly articulated and championed by all school community members, who work collaboratively to advance sustainable, equitable opportunities and outcomes for students.
- **Strengthen** ability to diagnose, and ultimately create solutions to address, the inequities that they witness in their system.
- **Gain** a peer network and professional learning community of equity-oriented district leaders throughout the South.
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Network Benefits

- **Time & Space:** Fellows will have a chance to step away from the daily pressures and demands of their roles to engage and reflect thoughtfully and share intellectually and practically as educational leaders.
- **Peer Networks:** Fellows will have an opportunity to share and receive lessons and support from peers who understand the complexity of the challenges leaders confront, while capitalizing on opportunities for peer learning, support and advising, and building alliances.
- **Access to Exclusive Networking & Learning Opportunities:** Fellows and their district colleagues will be invited to participate in exclusive **Racial Equity Leadership Network** events (ex. Speaker Series, Regional Development Events, Symposiums, District Learning Visits, etc.), that allow them to engage with other thought leaders, policymakers and innovators in the field of education.
- **Problem & Practice:** Fellows will receive support identifying a challenge, designing an approach, executing a strategy, and reporting back on progress and lessons learned. Fellows will also have access to other resources that will enable effective implementation.
- **Coaching & Technical Assistance:** Fellows will work with SEF Network Faculty to co-design and customize coaching and technical assistance designed to support district teams to advance an equity agenda. Visit www.SouthernEducation.org/RacialEquityLeadership for further details.

Network Convenings At-a-Glance

| CONVENING 1 JAN 2022 | CONVENING 2 APR/MAY 2022 | CONVENING 3 AUG/SEPT 2022 | CONVENING 4 JAN/FEB 2023 | IN-DISTRICT | CONVENING 5 JUN 2023 |
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| Fellowship Launch Taking Leadership for Equity in Complex Systems | Diagnosing and Designing New Approaches to Advance Racial Equity in Your District | Partnering with Families & Community to Advance Racial Equity | Leveraging Policy to Interrupt and Address Systemic Inequities | Dedicated Coaching & Technical Assistance | Sharing Lessons & Results of Racial Equity-In-Action Cycles |

**Convening topics are in development and subject to change.*

Eligibility

The **Racial Equity Leadership Network** is targeted at executive leaders in school districts in the South that are committed to reducing inequities in their districts and exhibit readiness to implement innovative, transformational change in their system. Special consideration may be given to candidates from states outside the South on a case-by-case basis.

Fellowship Application

Applications for Cohort 4 are now open until **October 1st, 2021**.

Further details regarding the **Racial Equity Leadership Network** may be found at www.SouthernEducation.org/RacialEquityLeadership. Please forward all inquiries to Kenita Williams, Chief of Staff and Director, Racial Equity Leadership Network, at KWilliams@southerneducation.org.

*You may meet our qualifications for an extension or priority consideration.
Contact us TODAY!