

Your Question:

You asked for examples of how states have defined equity in code or rule.

Our Response:

We do not have a full 50-State Comparison on state definitions of equity in code or rule. Although legislation may not explicitly create a definition of equity within an education policy context, recent bills regarding equity, equitable policy or efforts to combat inequity have often been paired with a discussion of impacts for certain student populations. Race was the leading primary factor in these considerations.

Below we have compiled legislation enacted since 2019 that have both explicitly focused on equity and provided some lens as to how that term should be interpreted or which student populations must be included in considerations of equity. From these six bills, five specifically identify race as a consideration, four identify family income, one identifies first generation student status, one identifies migrant and bilingual student status and one identifies disability status in considerations of equity.

Recent State Policies Regarding Equity

2021 **Illinois** [HB 2170](#) identifies race as a primary factor in considerations of equity.

This bill states that “the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted preexisting **inequities** in school disciplinary practices that disproportionately impact **Black and Brown students**”. The bill also creates a grant program for “Freedom Schools” which are tasked to “intentionally and imaginatively implement strategies that focus on ... **racial injustice and equity,**” among others. The bill also has provisions calling to ensure that “**racial equity** within the Evidence-Based Funding formula is explicitly explored and advanced,” and prompts a panel to consider that “changes ... may be required to better promote **racial equity and eliminate structural racism** within schools”.

2020 **Delaware** [SB 260](#) identifies race as a primary factor in considerations of equity.

This bill created the African American Task Force to report on “its findings and recommendations regarding the conditions that highlight the **inequities** within **socioeconomically marginalized African American communities in this State**, including as it relates to all of the following: (1) education ...” and several others.

2020 **Louisiana** [HB 734](#) identifies family income, race and first-generation college student status as primary factors in considerations of equity.

This bill states that “facilitating **equitable access** for all students, including **low-income, diverse, and first-generation college students**, is critical to increasing participation in dual enrollment” and creates a Dual Enrollment Innovation and Equity Grant toward this end.

2020 Washington [SB 6168](#) identifies migrant and bilingual student status, race and family income as primary factors in considerations of equity.

This bill appropriated \$250,000 to contract with an organization to “promote **equitable access**” in STEM education “**for historically underserved students and communities**” including a requirement to create special programming for “**migrant and bilingual students**”. An additional \$250,000 is appropriated toward a public secondary education institution which must ensure “an **equitable** percentage of ...**students of color or students with limited access to resources**”. Another \$76,000 is appropriated for a student achievement council report regarding child savings accounts that must include “progressive incentives to help reduce **inequities...between children from lower-income families and higher-income families**”.

2020 Washington [HB 1660](#) identifies family income as a primary factor in considerations of equity.

This bill included a legislative declaration of intent to “reduce the obstacle to participation in extracurricular activities caused by the fees charged to **students who are low income** by creating **equitable access** to opportunities” that improve various outcomes.

2019 Maryland [SB 1030](#) identifies income, race, ethnicity, disability status and other characteristics as primary factors in considerations of equity.

This bill created a “Blueprint for Maryland’s Future for Education” and created principles “intended to transform” education in the state. One of these is “**equitable** learning outcomes regardless of a **student’s family income, race, ethnicity, disability, or other characteristics**”

[Additional ECS Resources](#)

- [State Education Policy Tracking tool](#)
 - This interactive tool provides information and summaries on enacted and vetoed education policy related to equity. Select the year(s) of interest and select “Equity” from the issue area to see relevant bills.
- [State Information Request: School Funding Equity, February 2021](#)
 - This State Information Request includes background information on school funding equity, how states address funding systems and legislative examples on how states have integrated equity into their funding systems.
- [Ed Note blog post: Cracking the Code on Funding Schools Equitably, January 2021](#)
 - This blog post provides an overview of school funding mechanisms and considerations of equity.
- [COVID-19 Series: Funding Equity Policy Outline, October 2020](#)
 - This Policy Outline reviews the topic of funding in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and provides both policy considerations and policy examples for state leaders looking to alleviate current challenges.

[Additional External Resource](#)

- [States Leading for Equity: Promising Practices Advancing the Equity Commitments](#), by America’s Promise Alliance, the Aspen Education and Society Program and the Council of Chief State School Officers, February 2018
 - This resource highlights many examples of state practices seeking to advance equity in education.