



## The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County Equity Impact Statement for Decision Making

**Note:** *this is a working document which ECPAC staff, board and partners will work to implement and make adjustments as lessons are learned. The Board supported finalization of this working document on 1/21/21; Minor revision 1/26/23.*

The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County's mission is to *build a community where every young child and their family can reach their full potential.* It is recognized that this can only be achieved with a strong and intentional commitment of ECPAC (Board, Staff, and Partners) to promote equity and reduce disparities so that all children and families have access to the high-quality, affordable services, supports, resources, and opportunities they need to be *valued, healthy, and thriving,* towards ECPAC's vision.

ECPAC defines its efforts as working to promote racial and social justices and reduce disparities that are based on lack of equitable access to opportunities to thrive due to race/ethnicity, language, gender, gender expression, gender identity, educational attainment, culture, immigration status, social-economic status, ability, mental health, substance use, or other needs, age, and/or family composition. This includes consideration for our primary stakeholders of children/families, early care and education providers, and community partner service organizations.

- ECPAC recognizes the central role that race/ethnicity has played in contributing to persistent inequities and is committed to addressing the resulting structural racism and inequities (*when organizations, institutions, systems or social networks contain an embedded bias which provides advantages for some members and marginalizes or produces disadvantages for other members*) and are committed to undoing policies and practices that have contributed to these inequities.

As a result of these commitments, ECPAC has developed the following **guiding principles** for decision-making in the **key areas of:** governance, organizational staff and culture, programming, policy and advocacy, funding, evaluation, communications, strategic planning, and external partnerships.

**1. Authentic Stakeholder Engagement and Leadership:** When making decisions, ECPAC will ensure community/family members have equitable opportunities to authentically and actively engage in solutions that impact their community. Particularly people of color and other marginalized groups, and those most adversely affected by relevant issues are engaged in planning, implementation and evaluation of decisions that impact the key areas noted above. Stakeholder engagement represents our community. Furthermore:

- Community/family members are adequately supported and incentivized for their expertise and contribution
- Community/family members are provided ample opportunities to authentically contribute and provide leadership
- Community/families experience is culturally meaningful through environments and interactions that are culturally responsive

### Questions to ask:

- Who are the most affected community members who are concerned with or have experience related to this proposal? How have we involved these community members in the consideration of this decision? What has your engagement process told you about the burdens or benefits for different groups? What has our engagement process told us about the factors that produce or perpetuate racial inequity related to this decision? How can families be involved on-going in the implementation and evaluation of this decision? Have we adequately implemented and supported capacity building and advocacy skills of community/family members?

**2. Identify and Document Racial Inequities:** When making decisions, ECPAC will examine root causes of inequities and develop solutions that will seek to dismantle these oppressive practices or systems. ECPAC uses a data-driven decision-making process that includes quantitative and qualitative data. ECPAC will consider which "groups" are experiencing advantage vs disadvantage by current situations and how decisions can close those gaps.

### Questions to ask:

- Will the decision have impacts in specific geographic areas (neighborhoods, areas, or regions) or for specific demographics? What does population level data tell us about existing racial inequities? What does it tell us about root causes or factors influencing racial inequities? Are there data gaps? What additional data would be helpful in analyzing the decision? How can we obtain better data?

3. **Consider Impacts:** When making decisions, ECPAC will consider either explicit or unintended consequences for particular groups and how this may perpetuate existing or create new inequities. Additionally, ECPAC will consider how decisions will advance equitable outcomes. Based on both considerations, ECPAC will examine alternatives/improvements as needed.

Questions to ask:

- Given what we have learned from the data and stakeholder involvement and available data on root causes and population level indicators, how will the decision increase or decrease racial equity? Who would benefit from or be burdened by this decision? What are potential unintended consequences? How does organizational oppression and structural racism, in particular, contribute to these inequities? What are the ways in which the decision could be modified to enhance positive impacts or reduce negative impacts? Are there complementary strategies that we can implement? What are ways in which existing partnerships could be strengthened to maximize impact in the community? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change?

4. **Identify Success Indicators:** In making decisions, ECPAC will identify how to measure progress and impacts of decisions based on improvements in equity and reduction of inequities. Short- and long-term indicators are important as it is recognized that change in structural systems takes time. Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected. The ECPAC equity definition will be considered to guide what types of data will be tracked and evaluated. Impacts of gathering data and alternative options will be considered. Timelines will be set for evaluation review so continuous quality improvements can take place as needed. Community/Family members are actively involved in planning and evaluating outcomes of decisions.

Questions to ask:

- What performance level data do we have available or need for the decision? How is/will data be collected by needed demographics to show progress towards equity?
  - ECPAC works to measure both outputs and outcomes and uses both programmatic and process level indicators. From Results-based accountability the following helps guide evaluation questions: Quantity—how much did we do? Quality—how well did we do it? Is anyone better off?

5. **Ensure Sustainability and Viability:** In making decisions, ECPAC will intentionally include considerations of capacity to successfully plan, implement, evaluate, and sustain outcomes. Capacity includes that of the board, staff, partners, as well as funding and policy.

Questions to ask:

- Is our plan: realistic, adequately funded, adequately resourced with personnel, adequately resourced with mechanisms to ensure successful implementation and enforcement, adequately resourced to ensure on-going data collection, public reporting, and community engagement? How will impacts be documented and evaluated?

6. **Culture of Practice:** In order to use these guidelines in making decisions, ECPAC will create a culture that works actively to address racial and other inequities within the organization and the work of the organization. This includes ECPAC using these guidelines as “the way we do business” by incorporating them into the everyday functioning, core activities, and culture of the organization. Additionally, ECPAC will work to ensure that decision-making includes an explicit review of individual and group privilege, biases, assumptions, beliefs, and values. ECPAC will work to support all Board, Staff, and Partners in supporting and implementing decisions regardless of personal viewpoints.

Questions to ask:

- Has an equity assessment been completed throughout all areas of ECPAC’s operations and programs? What do the results tell us? Where do we have areas of improvement? What are strategies to address these? What are our strengths? How can we build on these? How will we measure progress? Who are the allies

who experience privilege in the community that can help us advocate, and who are the key champions in the community that reflect the marginalized groups?

7. **Communicate Decisions:** ECPAC will proactively communicate the process and outcome of decisions, especially to those most impacted by the decision.

Questions to ask:

- What are your messages and communication strategies that will help advance racial equity? Who needs to receive communications about the decision and the later impacts? How will we continue to partner and deepen relationships with communities to make sure our work to advance racial equity is working and sustainable for the long haul?

Ideally, ECPAC will have the time to walk through these steps and consider these questions. However, it is recognized that **some decisions require a quick turn-around** - especially legislative decisions. With this in mind, ECPAC will use the organizational strategic plan and the following questions in making quick decisions and will take time to be most prepared for these decisions by strategically monitoring upcoming policies so that the full process can be completed. ECPAC's regular engagement of families will further support these quick decisions.

1. What are the racial equity impacts of this particular decision?
2. Who will benefit from or be burdened by the particular decision?
3. Who are key champions and allies that we can reach out to in a moment's notice to gain some insight?
4. Are there strategies to mitigate the unintended consequences?

Potential Next Steps:

- Dissemination of statement to Board, Staff, and Action Teams for use when making decisions
- Increase community/family engagement on Board and in ECPAC decisions
  - January Board meeting – discussion of additional member seats
  - January – ECPAC recruits current family partners to participate in “Training Institute” with Maiker and Growing Home
  - January – March: ECPAC works with Office of Early Childhood on new family leadership curriculum based on strengthening families framework
  - ECPAC considers creating new forum for family engagement that integrates within organizational decisions
- Race Forward Assessment template to assess current level of practices that promote justices and reduce disparities
  - February – June: ECPAC leadership and Board prioritize key areas to assess first and complete assessment
- Use of this statement in evaluation planning of new strategic plan with clear indicators/benchmarks
  - December – June – 2 meetings per month with evaluator and monthly leadership team meetings
- Use statement during legislative session (January – May)
- Consider how to look at funding through this lens prior to development of 2021-2022 budget (March – May)

References:

- [WFD ReadyForEquity Tool.pdf \(nkcareercenter.org\)](#)
- [RacialJusticeImpactAssessment v5.pdf \(raceforward.org\)](#)
- [Office of Health Equity | Department of Public Health & Environment \(colorado.gov\)](#)
- [Equity | The Center of Excellence \(CoE\) for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation \(IECMHC\)](#)
- [GARE-Racial Equity Toolkit.pdf \(racialequityalliance.org\)](#)

*ECPAC thanks the Board, staff, and key partners, including family partners in the development of this statement.*