



Guide to the Mass Insight Advanced Placement® Equity Self-Assessment

Prepare Your Team and Spark Conversations
Around AP Best Practices

We created this guide as a resource for teams to review all the survey items before your team completes the Advanced Placement® (AP®) self-assessment [online](#).

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Self-Assessment Overview:

The AP Equity Self-Assessment is an important step in seeking to ensure that all students in your school/district have equitable access to your AP program. This tool will help your team identify the extent to which your school/district uses money, time, program, policies, and people to meet the needs of historically underserved students including those who identify as Black, Latino, and those experiencing poverty.

The self-assessment will help AP coordinators, administrators, and/or teachers examine structural conditions that can create unseen barriers to access and success for historically underserved students to highlight where your AP programs are strong and where opportunities lie to make them stronger.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Considerations:

We recommend that you consider the following before reviewing the survey items.



Time

To ensure adequate thought is given to each of the five structural conditions and 28 best practices highlighted in the self-assessment, we estimate that your team will need 90-120 minutes to discuss all the items, depending on your school/district.



Team

To ensure all voices are reflected in this process, we recommend gathering a diverse team of stakeholders to discuss the survey items; at a minimum this should include a school administrator familiar with the school's budget, and AP coordinator, AP teacher(s), and a counselor.



Data

We recommend having several data sources readily accessible as you review the survey items. Examples of relevant data include but are not limited to schoolwide and AP demographic data, staff, student, and family feedback surveys, annual district and school budgets, and AP coursework scope

Next Steps:

As a reminder, reviewing the survey items in this guide does not replace taking the self-assessment online. Your team must complete the self-assessment [online](#) in order to receive a customized findings report.

Once you submit the self-assessment online, you will receive an email with a downloadable, fully customized findings report based on your survey answers. Your report summarizes your school's/district's strengths, areas of opportunities, and actionable findings. This report could serve as the basis for a targeted action plan that delineates specific and measurable goals towards more equitable AP outcomes in your school. We recommend convening the same team to review your report in-depth and plan for next steps.

The Mass Insight team offers a free initial consultation should you want to pursue on-going strategic planning support based on your AP Equity Self-Assessment findings.

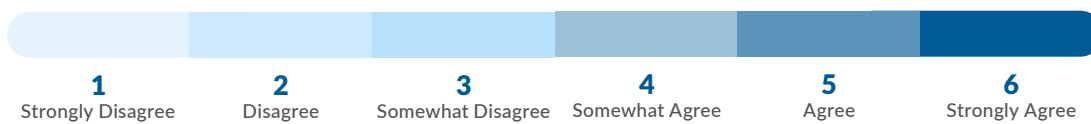
If you have any questions regarding this guide, the completion of the self-assessment, or want an initial free consultation, please [contact](#) Mass Insight to learn more.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

AP[®] Equity Self-Assessment Survey Items

Answer Format

All questions should be answered using the following format:



Questions

Structural Condition: Money

Sufficient budget authority allowing for allocation of resources to maximize student learning and align the school's mission with local circumstances.

Recommended Data Sources:

- Annual district budget
- Annual school budget

Best Practice: Secure Financial Resources

The school district secures and maximizes financial resources to ensure Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds are prepared for and succeed in AP coursework.

1. If you reviewed our school's annual budget, you would see AP academic programming as prioritized line items.
2. If you reviewed our school's annual budget, you would see AP operational funding as prioritized line items.

Best Practice: Compensate Teachers

If teachers are providing additional AP support for students, they are compensated appropriately in alignment with their contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

1. In our school/district, we provide compensation to AP teachers for hours of additional support to Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Provide Exam Fee Subsidy

Exam fees are not a barrier to AP course access for Black, Latino, and low-income students. The school/district has available funding to cover all AP exam fees for students or for students for whom the fee is a barrier to taking the exam. Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds, families and guidance counselors are aware of exam fee subsidy options.

1. In our school/district, families are informed in their native language about the availability of exam fee subsidies.
2. If you ask school staff about exam fee subsidies, they can share detailed information.

Structural Condition: People

The ability to create staff configurations and work assignments in alignment with the school's instructional model, design the right positions, and fill positions with the right people to do their most effective work.

Recommended Data Sources

- Student demographic data
- AP demographic data
- AP instructional team
- Student & Family feedback surveys

Best Practice: Hire & Place High Quality Teaching Staff

The school district has systems in place for the hiring and placement of high-quality, diverse teachers in AP courses and AP pathway courses. Best Practice: Monitor AP Program Equity and Quality

1. If you review our hiring and retention processes, you would observe intentional action steps to ensure AP staff demographics reflect student demographics.
2. In our school/district, school leaders place AP teachers according to their content knowledge and instructional expertise.

Best Practice: Practice Collective Responsibility

All stakeholders have a shared understanding of what is expected for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds to be successful in AP courses. There is a culture of collective responsibility for the learning and success of all students.

1. In our school/district, all staff members would state that they strive for equity in AP participation and success for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.
2. In our school/district, staff members are able to provide detailed information about AP course offerings and policies.
3. In our school/district, staff members would state that "All students are capable of participating and succeeding in AP coursework."

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Implement an AP Teacher Substitute Plan

A strategic AP substitute teacher plan is in place for planned and emergency absences of regular AP teachers.

1. In our school/district, AP teachers have substitute plans in place for planned and emergency absences.
2. If you review AP substitute teacher plans, you would observe clear alignment with the course's current scope and sequence.
3. In our school/district, AP teaching staff are available to support the substitute in implementing plans.

Best Practice: Ensure AP Family Awareness & Understanding

Families are regularly informed of AP course offerings, the elements of AP coursework, the costs and benefits of AP coursework, their children's AP potential, their opportunities to participate in AP coursework, their progress once enrolled in AP courses, and supports available to students. Communication is accessible for all families.

1. In our school/district, detailed AP information is communicated in families' native languages.
2. In our school/district, AP Information Sessions, AP Prospective Students Sessions, and Open House Nights are held for students and families that provide detailed AP information.
3. In our school/district, students and families would say they have multiple opportunities throughout the school year to share feedback on AP participation and programming.

Best Practice: Support Counselors

Counselors receive professional development and a variety of supports for promoting AP participation and success for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.

1. In our school/district, counselors provide information about AP pathways and scheduling requirements to students, families, and staff.
2. In our school/district, counselors attend AP-specific professional development.
3. In our school/district, counselor caseloads are structured such that Black, Latino, and low-income students receive equitable support for AP participation.
4. In our school/district, counselors collaborate with school leaders and staff to ensure all students have equal opportunities to participate and succeed in AP.

Structural Condition: Policy

A school/district's AP guidelines and policies that are in place to support students, educators, and families for success.

Recommended Data Sources

- AP enrollment policies
- School enrollment demographics
- AP enrollment demographics
- Counseling policies and practices
- Student support policies

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Have an AP Open Enrollment Policy

AP enrollment policies support open access and limit prerequisites to what is necessary for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds to participate and succeed in AP; policies mitigate bias.

1. In our school/district, AP course enrollment demographics match the overall school enrollment demographics.
2. In our school/district, students meet with school counselors individually to enroll in AP courses.
3. In our school/district, potential AP students have opportunities to learn about AP course offerings, expectations, and information prior to enrolling.
4. In our school/district, AP student placement is the result of a wide variety of criteria beyond previous academic performance.

Best Practice: Have Supportive Add/Drop Policies

Add/drop policies are designed to retain and encourage the success of Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.

1. In our school/district, students meet with school counselors to discuss academic needs/concerns before dropping a class.
2. In our school/district, interventions are implemented before a student drops an AP course.

Structural Condition: Time

The flexibility to use time differently allowing for more deliberate use of instructional time, and sufficient time for staff collaboration, data analysis, planning, and professional development.

Recommended Data Sources

- Master schedules
- AP coursework pathways
- Teacher planning and collaboration structures/policies

Best Practice: Secure Time for Teacher Planning and Collaboration

The school district ensures there is time in the schedule for teachers to collaborate with other AP teachers and that AP teachers have sufficient planning time to adequately plan for their AP courses.

1. In our school/district, there is dedicated time in the master schedule for AP teacher collaboration time.
2. In our school/district, AP teacher schedules allow for daily and weekly planning time based on the number of AP classes they have.
3. In our school/district, AP teachers have common planning time with other teachers in the same department or content area.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Maximize Master Schedules for AP Access

The master schedule is maximized to ensure that Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds who want to participate in AP are able to and that AP pathway courses have sufficient capacity to accommodate all students.

1. In our school/district, we schedule AP courses throughout the school-day with sufficient time given for each course.
2. In our school/district, we have multiple course pathways that culminate in AP coursework.

Structural Condition: Program

Sufficient authority to shape school teaching approaches and related services around the mission and their local circumstances.

Recommended Data Sources

- Student demographic data
- AP demographic data
- School Improvement Plans
- Academic coursework scope & sequence
- Pedagogical practices
- Training scope and sequences
- HR recruitment/hiring/certification policies and processes

Best Practice: Monitor AP Program Equity and Quality

The school/district has a designated school team (AP team) that monitors equitable outcomes for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds. The AP Team regularly examines achievement data to track disparities in AP access and achievement across subgroups. The school district uses achievement data to set clear, measurable goals and develops an aligned action plan to increase AP course participation and success for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds; progress toward goals is monitored regularly.

1. In our school/district, we have assembled an AP team that consists of at least: school leadership, AP teachers, guidance counselors, and other support staff (student support services).
2. In our school/district, the AP team examines disaggregated enrollment, achievement, and behavioral data to track disparities in AP access and success across subgroups at least twice per school year.
3. In our school/district, we use AP enrollment, achievement, and behavioral data to set clear, measurable goals to increase AP course participation and success for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.
4. In our school/district, the quality of the AP Program is monitored through multiple measures, at least quarterly.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Ensure Proper Course Sequencing

AP pathway courses and curriculum are sequenced in a manner that optimizes access to and participation in AP courses for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.

1. In our school/district, we thoughtfully sequence AP pathway courses so that all students have the opportunity to build a strong academic foundation for the AP courses of their choice.
2. In our school/district, AP pathway courses are not restricted to an Honors track.

Best Practice: Ensure AP Teacher Quality (Conceptual Knowledge)

AP teachers have a deep conceptual understanding of their subject and considerable experience in the discipline.

1. In our school/district, AP teachers have been trained in the discipline they teach.
2. In our school/district, AP teachers have adequate experience in the discipline they teach.
3. In our school/district, AP teachers have opportunities to engage in professional development with teachers in their content.
4. In our school/district, it is common for AP teachers to pursue advanced degrees and/or additional professional development opportunities.

Best Practice: Ensure AP Teacher Quality (Instructional Knowledge)

AP teachers have the pedagogical skills to meet the needs of all students in an AP course and are ready to meet the demands of instruction needed to hold a successful AP course.

1. If you were to walk through AP classrooms in our school/district, you would observe high-quality instruction.
2. In our school/district, AP teachers have had considerable training on differentiated instruction in order to be prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners.
3. In our school/district, AP teachers have regular opportunities to discuss and refine their instructional strategies at least once a month.

Best Practice: Ensure AP Instruction is Culturally Responsive

Teachers meet students where they are culturally and linguistically to empower them intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

1. In our school/district, AP teachers are trained to affirm students' identities.
2. In our school/district, AP teachers are trained to value and utilize students' lived experiences and previous knowledge to support learning in the classroom.
3. In our school/district, AP teachers are trained to tap into students' cultural capital.
4. In our school/district, AP teachers have been trained in antiracist practices.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Ensure AP Teacher Quality (Professional Learning)

AP teachers exhibit investment and commitment toward continual learning and growth. AP teachers regularly receive feedback from instructional coaches and leaders aligned to strengths and areas of growth on their development plans.

1. In our school/district, teachers exhibit investment and commitment toward continual learning and growth.
2. In our school/district, AP teachers and staff participate in continual AP-specific professional learning opportunities.
3. In our school/district, AP teachers receive feedback from instructional coaches and leaders at least once every quarter.

Best Practice: Support Transition into AP

There are supports in place for the academic transition from middle to high school to maximize access to AP pathway courses. There are supports in place for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds that maximize their access to and participation in AP coursework.

1. In our school/district, there are supports in place for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds transitioning from middle to high school to maximize their access to AP pathway courses.
2. In our school/district, there are supports in place for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds to maximize their access to AP pathway courses at any point during the high school years.

Best Practice: Limit Summer Assignments

Summer assignments are eliminated or limited as they often serve as a barrier to entry for students with additional responsibilities.

1. In our school/district, teachers do not provide summer assignments or limit them to a minimum.

Best Practice: Provide AP Academic Supports

There are academic systems to support Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds who may be struggling with AP curriculum.

1. In our school/district, there is time built into the master schedule to provide Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds with academic support.
2. In our school/district, Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds can receive additional academic support outside of school hours.

Best Practice: Support College Readiness

AP coursework intentionally prepares Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds for college coursework by having them practice the required skills and mindsets for college persistence and success.

1. In our school/district, AP teachers agree upon the required mindsets and skills for college persistence and success.
2. In our school/district, AP teachers integrate the required mindsets and skills for college persistence and success into their daily coursework.
3. In our school/district, AP pedagogy emphasizes skills such as inquiry, analysis, and problem solving.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Champion the AP Program

The school district advocates for high-quality AP programming and intentionally plans for equitable access to AP programming for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds. The school district prioritizes and champions efforts that prepare Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds for AP coursework success.

1. In our school/district, we have a clearly stated commitment and plan to ensure equitable access to AP programming for Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.
2. In our school/district, there are resources and policies to support Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds to participate and succeed in AP coursework.

Best Practice: Provide AP Social Emotional Learning Supports

AP teams provide AP specific social-emotional learning supports to prepare Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds prior to and during AP coursework. Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds believe they are capable of succeeding in AP coursework.

1. In our school/district, there is explicit and intentional work on developing the executive functioning and emotional regulation skills of Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.
2. In our school/district, Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds receive education and career counseling from a school counselor at least monthly.

Best Practice: Use AP Potential for Equity

There are systems and structures to identify, recruit, and enroll Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds who have potential to succeed in AP coursework.

1. In our school/district, we check class rosters to identify Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds with a trajectory of prior academic success and persistence who may not yet be enrolled in AP coursework.
2. In our school/district, school staff use multiple, culturally relevant strategies to encourage Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds to register for AP coursework.
3. In our school/district, teachers, administrators and counselors collaborate to identify Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds with AP potential through College Board's AP Potential list based on PSAT scores.

Best Practice: Assess Student Progress

Formative and summative assessments are administered at regular intervals throughout the school year to assess the progress of Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds and inform teacher instruction.

1. In our school/district, formative and summative assessments are administered at least weekly to assess the progress of AP Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds and inform teacher instruction.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.

Best Practice: Secure Strategic AP Partnerships

The school district has strategic partnerships that support the academic preparation of Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds in courses prior to AP and promote success during AP coursework.

1. In our school/district, we establish partnerships with universities and organizations that intentionally support and promote AP participation and success of Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds.

Best Practice: Optimize Use of College Board Instructional Materials

AP teachers and school staff utilize College Board materials for courses to ensure Black, Latino, and students from low-income backgrounds are prepared for the AP exam.

1. In our school/district, AP teachers utilize College Board materials in preparation for AP exams.

Next Steps

As a reminder, your team will need to fully complete the AP Equity Self-Assessment online in order to receive a full report summarizing strengths, opportunities, and actionable findings for each condition. This report will help you and your team delineate next steps for equitable AP participation and success in your school and/or district. We recommend that you review results with the same team who worked on completing the AP Equity Self-Assessment.

If your team is interested in a facilitated action planning process, please contact Mass Insight to learn more. If you have any questions regarding this guide, the completion of the self-assessment, or want an initial free consultation, please contact: info@massinsight.org.

Please note that this document does not replace taking the self-assessment.