Journeying to Advance Equity in San Mateo County

Shireen Malekafzali (she/her) | Chief Equity Officer
County Foundational Framework and Approach
Defining Equity

Equity is the goal of *just and fair inclusion* into a society in which *all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.*

- PolicyLink

To achieve equity, we must *create the conditions* that allow all to reach their full potential.
Equity versus Equality

Different Barriers

Different Needs = Different Resources

Journey to Justice: Remove barriers and level the playing field
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity</th>
<th>Equity</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Belonging</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity</strong>: a fact – people being different from one another.</td>
<td><strong>Equity</strong>: a goal – where everyone can reach their full potential.</td>
<td><strong>Inclusion</strong>: a practice – to make space for people and ensure people are included</td>
<td><strong>Belonging</strong>: a sense of authentic participation and power in the design or development - to not just be included in other people’s spaces but to be a welcomed agent in the creation of the space with equitable distribution of power</td>
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</table>
Belonging versus Inclusion

- We recognize that our systems are inequitable.
- Inclusion welcomes people into existing structures without questioning whether people feel like the structures are supportive or whether they feel they belong.
- Building systems that are truly welcoming to all requires co-creation of systems.
Narrative: Who Belongs and Who Doesn’t

• At least 64% People of Color
  • Approximately 67% People of Color per Dr. Benner (UC Santa Cruz)

• Large Immigrant Community
  • 35% foreign born. 21% of immigrant population undocumented.
  • 46% speak another language at home
  • 57% of children have immigrant parents

• Approximately 30,000 residents are LGBTQ+

• People with disabilities: 4.3% 65 and under; 29.3% of 65+
Root Causes of Inequities: Oppression

- White Supremacy
- Patriarchy
- Colonialism
- Transphobia
- Heterosexism
- Cisgendersim or Cisnormaty
- Ableism
- Ageism
- Nativism
- Anti-Blackness
- Classism
- Racism
- Sexism
- Nueronormative
Root Causes of Inequities: Discriminatory Policies and Practices

- Slavery
- Indigenous Genocide
- Racial property deed restrictions
- Home loan discrimination (redlining)
- Urban renewal
- Exclusion from the GI Bill Benefits
- Deindustrialization
- Housing discrimination
- Employment Discrimination
- School segregation
- Residential segregation
- Immigration policy racial discrimination
- Incarceration inequities
- Implicit bias
- Zero tolerance disciplinary policies
- Predatory lending
- Complaint-based systems
- Voter suppression
- Limited pipelines into leadership
- Internment camps
County of San Mateo brings an equity lens into all its operations and transforms its systems with explicit intention to advance equity.

How: Normalize, Organize, Operationalize, Accountability

which help achieve equitable outcomes in key priority areas

External Influences:
- Community advocacy and expertise
- Resource requirements
- State and Federal laws
- City expertise

which change how the community influences this cycle

Key Areas of Impact within the County

Equitable Culture

Equitable Resource Allocation

Equitable Policies

Equitable Service Provision

Equitable Processes

Equitable Democracy

Input: County Transformation

EQUITY

People experience the conditions they need to reach their full potential

Disparities by race, income, and other characteristics are eliminated.

Shift in narrative and sense of belonging in SMC.

Other jurisdictions and organizations also commit to equity.

All have power and space to share their aspirations and needs.
Chief Equity Officer

Purpose: Support and engage San Mateo County to build and drive more equitable and accountable systems, in order to produce more equitable outcomes for our communities.

Countywide Equity Infrastructure

Legend
- In Development
- Complete

Committees:
- Boards and Commissions
- Capacity Building
- Community Engagement
- Data
- Performance
- Planning
- Policy
- Staff Wellbeing
- Tools

Chief Equity Officer + Office of Racial & Social Justice

Boards, Commissions, Health Equity Initiatives

Equity Forums

Departmental Equity Teams

Departmental Equity Teams

Core Equity Team + All-Staff Equity Survey + Countywide Equity Action Plan
• Countywide Racial and Social Equity Action Plan 1.0
  • 25 departments catalog specific actions and metrics
  • 8 Interdepartmental priorities with actions identified
### Key Impact Areas: Sample Actions and Tools to Advance Impacts

<table>
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<tr>
<th>EQUITABLE CULTURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Racial Equity Reso. (S. Slocum &amp; S. Canepa)</td>
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<td>• BOS BIPOC Experiences Presentations (S. Horsley)</td>
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<td>• Equity through Art (Library, BHRS ODE)</td>
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<td>• Staff Equity Training &amp; Resource Hub</td>
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<td>• Staff Affinity Groups</td>
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<td>• Inclusive Boards &amp; Commissions application</td>
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<td>• Equity impact statement on Board memos</td>
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<td>• Community engagement toolkit and guidance document</td>
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<td>• Equity Data Portal</td>
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<td>• Equity Impact Assessment Tools</td>
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<td>• Anti-racist Results Based Accountability Pilot</td>
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<td>• Countywide Racial and Social Equity Action Plan</td>
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<td>• Inclusive Procurement RFI</td>
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<td>• Anchor Institution Resolution (S. Slocum &amp; Groom)</td>
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Our Journey

PHASE I
June 2021 - Oct. 2022
- Build Infrastructure & Tools

PHASE II
- Pilot and Improve

PHASE III
Oct. 2023 - Oct. 2024
- Operationalize at Scale

Normalization
- Discussions
- Commitment and expectations

Learning
- Staff survey
- Community outreach
- Feedback

Deepening
- Turning learnings into action
- Deepening commitments and discussions

Equitable Culture
Equitable Democracy
Equitable Resource Allocation
Equitable Services
Equitable Processes
Equitable Policies

RINSE, REPEAT, DEEPEN EXPAND
Continue to Build, Deepen, Grow

• **Phase II:** Implement – learn, adjust, expand (Phase III)
• **Phase I:** Build New Tools/Programs:
  • Community Equity Advisory Committee
  • Language Style Guide & Access Policy and Implementation
  • Inclusive Procurement Practices
  • ESS: Equity Module

PHASE I: Build Infrastructure & Tools

PHASE II: Pilot and Improve

PHASE III: Operationalize at Scale
Bringing our heads and our hearts to this work.
Organizational & Personal Journey
This is just the beginning.