

Equity Tier Calculation Methodology 2019-20



Seattle Public Schools is committed to equity and eliminating opportunity gaps for historically underserved student groups. To help protect and support highly impacted schools during school budgeting processes, SPS has developed a method to identify schools that serve large numbers and/or high proportions of historically underserved students, and for which the achievement of these student groups is below district averages.

What student groups are considered in the calculation?

The Equity Calculation considers data for the following **six student groups**:

1. **Underserved Students of Color** = Non-white student groups with historically lower achievement in SPS
2. **Low Income Students of Color** = Non-white students who qualify for free/reduced priced meals.
3. **Low Income Students** = All students who qualify for free or reduced priced meals
4. **English Language Learners** = Students served by the ELL program or exited within the last two years.
5. **Immigrant Students** = Students not born in the United States
6. **Homeless Students** = Students who are recorded as currently homeless

Although students are often included in more than one of these groups, examining data for each separately helps to account for the separate and combined effects of race, poverty, and language and culture on historical opportunity gaps.

What measures are included?

The Equity Calculation includes **three types of measures** for each student group:

1. **Count of Students Enrolled** = Total count of students enrolled at the school on October 1.
2. **Percent of Students Enrolled** = Percent enrolled at the school on October 1.
3. **Percent Meeting Standard** = Percent of students enrolled on October 1 who passed the ELA Smarter Balanced assessment in the previous year.

Calculating these 3 measures for each of the 6 student groups yields up to 18 measures for each school

How Equity Tiers are determined based on Measures

The 3-step methodology identifies **four Equity Tiers (1-4)** from the 18 measures calculated for each school:

- **Step 1:** Each of the 18 measures for each school is converted to a decile (1-10) based on the districtwide distribution
- **Step 2:** The converted decile scores (1-10) are averaged to create an **Equity Index (1.0 – 10.0)** for each school
- **Step 3:** Each school's Equity Index is converted to an **Equity Tier** using the following conversion table:

Equity Tier	Equity Index	Basis of Cutpoints
1	8.5 or higher	Approx. 1.5 standard deviations above average
2	7.5 to 8.4	Approx. 1.0 standard deviations above average
3	6.5 to 7.4	Approx. 0.5 standard deviations above average
4	6.4 or lower	n/a

SPS prioritizes Tier 1 schools for support and/or protection. SPS may provide support or protection in some cases for Tier 2 schools and Tier 3 schools depending on annual budget projections. The Equity Index may serve as a tiebreaker.

(Note: Final Equity Tiering for WSS school budgeting is based on a rolling 2-year average of Equity Index scores)