Equity Audit for the City of Winooski, VT

Submitted to Yasamin Gordon, Director of Equity, City of Winooski
June 29, 2021

Submitted by
IBG Consulting Group
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B. Statement about IBG Consulting

IBG Consulting Group is a Washington DC-based organization that works nationally with clients and partners across the country.

C. Organizational Qualifications and Experience

IBG Consulting Group is a woman- and minority-owned business committed to helping public service organizations build initiatives, conditions, and competencies to improve outcomes and opportunities for those whom our institutions and systems have historically underserved. Founded in 2014, IBG Consulting Group aims to transform systems into equity-focused organizations that meet their mission goals. We specialize in equity audits, anti-racism training and bias interruption, and equity and inclusion strategic planning. We also partner with organizations to assess their needs, build their capacity, develop initiatives, and design strategies to increase their impacts and help them align organizational actions with their values. We partner with clients to assess their needs, build their capacity, develop initiatives, and design strategies to increase their impacts and help them align organizational actions with their values.

We bring to this important project the right experience, expertise, and research-grounded approach to deliver a successful audit that would equip the city with tools to address and improve its outcomes. Our experienced team ensures high-performing engagement for each client that we partner with and for each project we undertake. IBG Consulting has a bench of qualified consultants to bring into various aspects of our projects led by seasoned and experienced equity consultants, Iris Bond Gill and Etai Mizrav. They have over 25 years of combined experience in delivering projects that address inequality in large systems, and significant experience in engaging with diverse stakeholder engagement. The team has experience using a variety of inclusive methodologies to engage key stakeholders in meaningful ways and to collect and analyze data to develop insightful findings and high-impact strategies and action plans. This is evidenced in the prior experience detailed in Section F.

The unique and proprietary approach that is proposed for Winooski is focused on outcomes rather than intentions and is grounded in decades of research on the potential drivers of inequality in public systems such as the city of Winooski. IBG will work side by side with you to jointly identify the more promising opportunities to better serve your diversifying community.
D. Proposed Work Plan

Background
Inequality in life outcomes in the United States is significantly rising. Researchers agree that academic and racial inequity leads to unequal outcomes including voting, health and other outcomes (Adam Smith & Pattabhiraman, 2020).

Research shows that this gap is not a result of natural differences in talent and ability, but rather of life experiences. For example, research documents how educational gaps begin to develop at age 1, suggesting that nurture rather than nature is behind them, and Black-White achievement gaps have closed substantially between 1970 and 2000. Thus, gaps are a product of life circumstances that are affected by systemic policies and practices (Mizrav, 2021). O’Day and Smith (2016) explain that race or income-based gaps are rooted in factors such as parental investment in their children's education, where gaps between low- and high-income parents are measured at $8,000 annually. This includes external factors that are not correlated in any way with talent and natural ability. For example, access to preschool, which was shown to be critical for future life outcomes, and is often denied to parents without the means to enroll their children and pay tuition. Additionally, there is broad agreement that gaps have likely been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic that exposed and worsened existing inequality.

With this understanding of the impact that city services can have on widening or shrinking gaps between residents’ opportunities and outcomes, the City of Winooski has decided to administer an equity audit and develop a plan to re-envision policies and practices to eliminate inequality in the city and improve outcomes for all its residents. We believe that the unique, systemic equity auditing approach offered by IBG Consulting Group would allow Winooski to achieve the goals set for this project.

Our Approach-- The Outcome Guided, Stakeholder Led Audit

The proposed approach lies on our proprietary Outcome Led Equity (OLE) audit approach, where we begin with a review of the data to understand inequality in city outcomes and then dive into its potential drivers and solutions to improve equity. The process is illustrated in Exhibit 1.

Research shows that the primary drivers of inequality in outcomes are systemic. These inequality drivers, such as inequitable access to city services, are often responsible for gaps between residents. To truly understand how the city is contributing to inequity, we must start with a review of outcomes. Only then, we can effectively audit policies and practices. Policies represent intentions, but outcomes unveil the realities and disparate impacts of intended and unintended results. Following the data and then reviewing the policies and practices that may be contributing to the inequity enables a more focused process that leads from symbolic change to structural change.
Step 1: Articulate the Motivation for the Audit by Identifying Inequality in City Outcomes. The audit begins with an equity-focused review of city outcomes. IBG will meet with Winooski’s team leaders to inquire about the outcomes in the city that appear inequitable and that served as the motivation for the audit. The team will agree on the main guiding questions for the audit.

Step 2: Isolating Potential City Factors Contributing to Inequality. The next step would be identifying the potential drivers of inequality that belong to the municipality’s jurisdiction and focusing on them. As outlined in the RFP, these may include inequities in voting, health, and workforce outcomes. IBG recommends adding education as a critical component with a direct impact on inequality in the city. The list of potential city-controlled drivers will be determined by Winooski with guidance from IBG.

Step 3: Auditing Inequality Drivers. This step will begin with a quantitative analysis of outcomes related to the potential drivers that were chosen. These will include easy to understand and accessible visualizations of inequality outcomes that IBG will prepare. In addition, interviews and focus groups will be conducted and analyzed to further identify areas of inequality in the experience of residents and city employees.

Step 4: Identifying Policies and Practices Contributing to Inequality. The interviews and focus groups will be further analyzed to identify the specific policies and practices that may be associated with the
inequality drivers that were observed in Step 3. Initial data from quantitative analysis will be used to develop interview and focus group questions that aim to shed light on these practices that may unintentionally result in inequality in Winooski. The inquiry will be developed in such a way that allows Winooski to seamlessly connect outcomes to inequity in policy and consider next steps for remedying.

Methodology: Combination of Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry

The audit will include a combination of quantitative analysis of administrative data from the city, with qualitative interview and focus group facilitation.

We offer a unique and different approach for administering equity audit that is an opportunity to identify the municipality’s contribution to inequality and the ways in which it can improve these outcomes. The approach rests on four guiding principles:

1. **Utilizing our Proprietary OLE Audit.** The Outcome Led Equity (OLE) audit is unlike others, that often begin with a review of agency documents and policies. Instead, the OLE audit begins with the outcomes, and then through a process of reverse engineering, explains them through policies and practices. Policies represent intentions, not outcomes, which are the center of this audit process. The audit thus begins with a detailed examination of inequality in city outcomes, how it looks like, and which residents are most significantly impacted by it. Then, through a research-based inquiry of the potential drivers of inequality in the city, we begin to identify the actual practices that may contribute to the outcome. Only after findings and conclusions are made on the specific inequality in the city, we examine policy documents, to compare the stated intentions with the outcomes and identify the opportunities to improve city practices. The outcome-guided review allows for a laser-focus on actual results and a real change in the experience of residents.

2. **Stakeholder-Led Inquiry.** Stakeholder engagement is a critical part of our process from start to finish. We believe that stakeholder involvement and engagement-- hearing, listening, and learning from those most impacted by inequality-- is central to understanding the challenges and solutions. Using the initial information on inequality in Winooski, IBG will develop focus groups and interview protocols.

   a. **Interviews:** Based on our conversations during the planning phase, IBG will submit a list of recommended individuals to interview. In general, we will want to interview up to 10 high-information individuals. This list would likely include agency directors, agency staff in key roles such as human resources and fiscal officers, city partners in key roles, and community leaders and liaisons. These interviews will help us understand and contextualize the data analysis and findings as well as point us in areas to probe more deeply. They will also help us better understand the city and its goals, progress, and history of efforts and challenges.
b. **Focus Groups:** We seek diverse voices and perspectives from across the city and conduct a total of approximately 5-10 focus groups representing stakeholder groups such as that rely on city services, new and long-time residents, BIPOC residents, immigrant populations, parents, community-based service organizations, faith-based leaders, and others based on the local context in Winooski. The focus groups will be guided by the overarching research questions and issue-specific questions that we develop in consultation with Winooski project leadership. We have experience successfully facilitating focus groups in-person and virtually using a variety of interactive tools. We also have the capacity to support Spanish-speaking communities by conducting focus groups in Spanish.

c. **Community Input and Feedback:** As we conduct analysis and develop findings, we will provide frequent updates to the Winooski project leadership team to check out assumptions and request additional information or clarification. However, perhaps one of the most important-- often missed-- steps in the process is community engagement around preliminary findings. Community engagement is best achieved through partnership and collaboration with community-based organizations (CBOs) that already have the trust of various stakeholder groups. Therefore, IBG Consulting Group would arrange community listening sessions with CBOs and attend 3 to 4 community stakeholder sessions to present findings and listen to stakeholder feedback. This feedback will enable us to dig deeper into areas or clarify our understanding of issues examined during the audit process.

3. **A focus on The Possible.** There are many drivers of inequality among city residents, and while some of them are under the direct responsibility of the municipality, others are external to it. Inequality in outcomes is partly a result of trends in poverty in the city, family circumstances and other factors that are not directly impacted by the municipality, at least not in the short term. From Day 1, our audit focuses on drivers of inequality that can be immediately addressed by the city and targets an implementation plan that the city can stand behind and is feasible, considerate of local social, budget, and political context, and likely to produce immediate results.

4. **Data and Findings That are Accessible to Everyone.** While our audit is guided by research and researchers, we believe that insights should be easily drawn by everyday members of the community. We prepare our data and findings by tailoring them to be accessible for everyone, including the city leadership, and the larger city community. We Answer the audit guiding questions with a series of charts and illustrations that clearly describe the finding in a way that anyone can understand, and seamlessly begin action planning around them. Example of a chart on inequality in voting registration is presented in Exhibit 2. The simplicity and accessibility of both the data that is produced and the eventual findings and report of the audit, are a top priority.
Deliverables

This proposed plan will result in the following deliverables (also noted in the Proposed Timeline):

- Monthly Progress Reports will be sent to project leadership (i.e. City Manager and Equity Director). Progress reports will include a summary of work performed, all costs incurred, and any challenges encountered.
- Final Equity Audit Report (professionally designed and printed as well as PDF) will be submitted, which details all findings and recommendations. The report will include:
  - Outline of scope and goals for equity audit review, including the domains under review (e.g. voting processes, health, education)
  - Description of methodology, including key research questions, data collection processes, and stakeholder engagement protocols
  - Data analysis in the domain areas under review, including analysis of existing policies under review and analysis of the qualitative data (i.e. focus groups, interviews, stakeholder community meetings)
○ Findings based on the analysis of policies, qualitative and quantitative data, and research. Our findings focus on opportunity gaps and barriers (including language access and other communication challenges) and the causes of those gaps
○ Recommendations for closing opportunity gaps in areas such as policy and programming community engagement, equitable voting processes, ongoing training opportunities, improved human capital practices for recruitment and retention of BIPOC employees, and other improvements based on data and research
● Formal presentations to the City of Winooski leadership, such as the Equity Director and City Manager, as well the Winooski City Council

E. Project Staffing and Experience

The project will be led by two experienced equity professionals.

**Etai Mizra** would serve as Project Director leading the overall engagement and audit analysis. He is Senior Consultant at IBG Consulting. He has significant experience and expertise in developing policies and implementing programs related to equity in policy and has led multiple equity audits, most recently for two large school districts in Colorado. He has designed several tools to identify equity gaps that have been used by practitioners in dozens of states, districts, and schools. Previously, Etai was a Senior Technical Assistant Consultant at American Institutes for Research, and the manager of education policy and equity for the Washington, DC, Office of the State Superintendent of Education. Etai is an expert on inequality in policy, he has a master’s degree in public policy from Georgetown University, and is working towards his doctorate degree in education from George Washington University.

**Iris Bond Gill** would serve as subject matter expert leading stakeholder engagement for this proposed project. She is founder and chief executive officer of IBG Consulting Group. An established leader with more than 20 years of experience, Iris is known for passion and experience toward inclusive and equitable policies, practices, and leadership. Iris has a strong background in education and youth policy, having served as a senior leader at the national level and as an Assistant Superintendent at the state education level. She is committed to closing opportunity gaps and never waivers in her commitment to continuous improvement. Iris believes that great leaders are lifelong learners and that better solutions come when we seek out and listen to groups with diverse backgrounds and perspectives. She currently provides training, coaching, and consulting across the country in addition to build culturally proficient leaders. Iris has a Bachelor of Science degree from Arizona State University and a Master of Science degree in Public Policy and Management from Carnegie Mellon University, and she is pursuing a doctorate degree in education from American University. She is trained in human-centered design techniques by IDEO and possesses a robust facilitation toolkit. She is also an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)© Qualified Administrator.

Resumes are provided in Appendix A.
F. Relevant Projects

- **School District Equity Audit: Colorado Springs School District 11 (2020-2021).** Etai Mizra was bided as the proposed project director for this work, has led a robust and large equity audit project for the Colorado Springs School District 11 in the state of Colorado, on behalf of the American Institutes for Research (AIR). The audit followed a similar approach to the one offered for this work, starting with the outcomes, and moving back to learn of policies and practices that may unintentionally result in inequality. It included a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis, visualizing district administrative data, and extracting findings from qualitative sources including interviews and focus groups. The findings were developed in a process of co-interpretation with district stakeholders. The work also included extensive stakeholder engagement led by Mr. Mizra, that included presentations at community forums, webinars, and testimonies to legislative bodies. The work resulted in a set of feasible action steps for the district that are now being implemented.

- **School District Equity Audit: Widefield School District 3 (2020-2021).** Etai Mizra also led on behalf of AIR an equity audit project for Widefield School District 3 in the state of Colorado. The equity audit focused on issues of diversity, representation, and cultural responsiveness in the school district. Focus groups, as well as quantitative data, were utilized through a process of co-interpretation to identify instances of inequity in the district. Mr. Mizra also led a subsequent root cause analysis discussion to identify root causes and then associate them with appropriate strategies. This work also emphasized robust stakeholder engagement throughout the entire audit project.

- **School District Equity Audit and Action Plan. Bensalem Township Public Schools (2021).** Iris Bond Gill of IBG Consulting Group (as a subcontractor to FourPoint Education Partners) led the equity needs assessment and stakeholder engagement portion of the equity audit and action plan work. The comprehensive needs assessment was aligned with the Pennsylvania Department of Education Equity and Inclusion Toolkit. The needs assessment focused on how to serve historically underserved student populations more effectively and comprise extant data analysis, online surveys of teachers and principals, and interviews and focus groups with a wide range of stakeholders.
G. Proposed Tentative Schedule

IBG had designed this project to be completed in 20 weeks or five months. This proposed schedule is flexible and would be reviewed and finalized in collaboration with the City of Winooski project leadership upon award.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time Completed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase I: Launch (4 Weeks)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold project kick-off meeting to discuss project approach, framework for work, project goals, priorities, and develop a common set of expectations.</td>
<td>Week 1-2 (scheduled within week of award)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with the Winooski leadership team to review research guiding questions, data and stakeholder engagement lists and requests, and project assumptions, and establish regular check-in routines.</td>
<td>Week 2-4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Submit a monthly progress report summarizing project status and costs.</strong></td>
<td>Week 4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phase II: Data Collection and Analysis (8 weeks)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct review of key data and interview key stakeholders.</td>
<td>Weeks 4-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct stakeholder focus groups and qualitative research analysis.</td>
<td>Weeks 6-8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Submit a monthly report summarizing project status, progress, and costs.</strong></td>
<td>Week 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyze findings from data review, interviews, focus groups.</td>
<td>Week 8-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review findings with the Winooski leadership team and develop draft findings and presentations for stakeholder feedback.</td>
<td>Week 10-12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Submit a monthly progress report summarizing project status and costs.</strong></td>
<td>Week 12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community and Stakeholder Engagement (4 months)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Present findings at a series of community stakeholder meetings for feedback and sense-making.</td>
<td>Weeks 10-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compile stakeholder feedback and based on feedback, re-draft audit key findings report.</td>
<td>Weeks 12-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finalize a report on key findings and recommendations.</td>
<td>Weeks 14-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit a monthly progress report summarizing project status and costs.</td>
<td>Week 16</td>
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**Communication on Findings and Recommendations (up to 4 weeks, depends on scheduling)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present findings and recommendations to the Equity Director and City Manager (and staff).</td>
<td>Weeks 16-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present findings and recommendations to the City Council so they may ask questions directly.</td>
<td>Weeks 16-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit professionally designed final report (2 printed copies and electronic/PDF) with visuals to share and post on the city website.</td>
<td>Week 20</td>
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</tbody>
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**H. List of Specific Exceptions**

IBG Consulting Group has no specific exceptions or exclusions to any and all items, conditions, and requirements contained in the RFP.

**Pricing Cost**

The cost for this project will be $25,000.

**Appendix A - Resumes of Key Personnel**

See the below the enclosed resumes for Etai Mizrav and Iris Bond Gill.
Etai Mizra

Education
Doctoral Student, Ph.D. in Education Policy at George Washington University, Washington D.C.
M.P.P 2014, Georgetown University, Public Policy/Education Policy
B.A.  2012, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Political Science (cum laude)

Professional Credentials and Certifications
Closing the Achievement Gap, Harvard University, 2015
School Turnaround, Harvard University, 2014

Present Position
Senior Consultant, IBG Consulting. (2021–Present)
Leads project and content development related to inequality in public systems, including administering equity audits, developing equity plans for states, cities, and school systems, and developing policies to improve equitable outcomes in the public sphere.

Professional Experience
Senior Technical Assistance Consultant, American Institutes for Research (AIR) (2018–2021)
Served as a content expert on issues of educational inequality. Provided expertise and technical assistance for a variety of projects and initiatives related to equity in education and teacher quality. Designed the organization’s approach for equity audits and led its equity audit projects. Served as a project director and advisor to district and state education leaders on issues including recruitment, preparation, placement, development, evaluation, and retention of excellent and diverse educators; keys for closing student achievement gaps; improving equitable outcomes and access to all students. Developed technical guides and research-based materials and resources for state and district education leaders.

Project Director, District Equity Audit in Colorado Springs and Widefield School District

Designed AIR’s approach for administering a districtwide equity audit and directs two AIR projects in the state of Colorado. led research work to identify district educational policy drivers of inequality, including inequitable distribution of resources and teachers, diversifying the teacher workforce, disproportionalities in assignment to special education, gifted and talented programs and discipline, and disparities in climate and culture. Led client engagement through a process of research and then development and implementation of strategies to close gaps in the district.

Project Consultant, Alexandria Public Schools Leadership for Equity (2020–Present)
Designed an equity-focused approach for improvement by identifying and focusing on school level gaps and inequality. Supports principal coaches and district leadership in identifying and addressing issues of school level discrimination, implicit bias and institutional racism by critically reviewing equity data and identifying appropriate action.

**Project Director, State and Local Planning for Equitable Access and Diversifying the Educator Workforce, Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, AIR (2018-Present)**

Leads the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders work on educator equity and diversifying the educator workforce. Work includes developing strategy to maximize national impact, overseeing the development of universal resources and tools and delivering intensive technical assistance to states. Leads a technical assistance teams to support states in diversifying the educator workforce and improving access to effective teachers in the state, including facilitating stakeholder meetings, developing materials and supporting strategy development.

**Project Consultant, Equity Audit in Iowa (2018-2019)**

Supported the Iowa Department of Education in reviewing equity programs and policies, developing and refining strategies to close achievement gaps. Developed a report focused on potential drivers of achievement gaps including on school budgeting, accountability, support, and access to teachers.


Directed state education K–12 policy design processes including policy analysis and research, data analysis, policy drafting, and stakeholder engagement. Utilized expertise in education policy, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and issues such as equity in education, the achievement gap, school segregation, and access to effective teachers. Led the implementation of several education policy initiatives.

**State Lead on Equitable Access to Excellent Educators, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (2014–2018)**

Led statewide efforts to develop long-term state-level policies on human capital. Writer of the DC plan to address inequitable access to excellent educators that was approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Managed the execution of the plan strategies, focusing on recruitment, placement, professional growth, evaluation, retention, and school leadership.


Initiated, designed, and managed a statewide partnership of 50 local education agencies on leveraging human capital data including a new teacher and leader survey, to attract and retain better teachers. The charter-traditional public partnership included sharing data on recruitment, preparation, development, performance, compensation, and working conditions of educators across districts and the state, resulting in reports, professional learning sessions, and data-driven insights that drove action.

Lead writer and manager of the development of a state education plan for Washington, DC. Led research and policy design and coordinated efforts of agency managers to develop sound policy on assessment, school improvement, and human capital. Led agency working group in reasessing and designing school accountability policy. Developed policies to improve education outcomes of disadvantaged students including English learners and students with disabilities. Presented policy decisions in public meetings and to the DC State Board of Education.

Employment History

2021–Present  Managing Partner, Opportunity.
2018–2021  Senior TA Consultant, AIR
2014–2018  Manager, Education Policy and Equity, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education
2014–2014  Graduate Fellow, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education
2013–2014  Teacher Quality Fellow, The Education Trust
2013–2013  Program Evaluation Fellow, NASPAA
2013–2013  Research Assistance Fellow, HigherEd Insight
2010–2012  Director of Staff and Operations, Peace Now Israel

Academic Publications


Academic Presentations


Professional Publications


Mizrav, E., & Lachlan-Haché, L. (2019). Flipping the Readiness Paradigm: Tailoring Programs to Address the Achievement Gap and Teacher Shortages in High-Need Schools Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at American Institutes for Research. Washington DC.


**Professional Presentations**

Mizrav, E., & Lachlan-Haché, L. (2019) Flipping the Readiness Paradigm: Tailoring Programs to Address the Achievement Gap and Teacher Shortages in High-Need Schools. Presented at the Mentoring Institute, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.


Mizrav, E. (2019, April). Insights on Diversifying the Educator Workforce: Data Tool for Practitioners. Presented at the Diverse and Learner Ready Teachers Summit, Omaha, NE.

Mizrav, E. (2018, November). Insights on Diversifying the Educator Workforce: Data Tool for Practitioners. Presented at the Southeast Comprehensive Center Equity Summit, Jackson, MS.


Mizrav, E. (2017, September). Data driven insights on attracting and retaining excellent educators. Presented at the DC Staffing Data Collaborative Convening, Washington, DC.


Mizrav, E. (2016, March). *Equitable access to excellent teachers: Is this our best chance to close achievement gaps?* Presented at the Young Education Professionals Annual Conference, Washington, DC.


Iris Bond Gill
Linkedin.com/in/iris007gill | iris@ibgconsultinggroup.com | www.ibgconsultinggroup.com

EDUCATION STRATEGY • CAPACITY BUILDING • DIVERSITY EQUITY INCLUSION

Executive leader with demonstrated history of envisioning, strategizing, delivering high-impact initiatives. A systems-change facilitator with expertise supporting districts and organizations to change create more equitable and effective practices and policies at the local, state, and federal levels.

- Education Policy & Leadership
- Federal Grants & Programs
- Instructional Design
- Strategy & Program Development
- Research & Policy
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

IBG Consulting Group, LLC, 11/2014 to Present
Chief Executive Officer

Helping public service organizations build initiatives, conditions, and competencies to improve outcomes for children and families who have been historically underserved by our institutions and systems. Partners with organizations to provide equity audits and training, strategy and program development, policy and research, and capacity-building.

Current and Past Clients Include: DC Department of Employment Services (DC); The Peace Corps; Washington Leadership Academy (DC); Maryland Department of Education (MD); Center for Educational Innovation and Improvement at the University of Maryland (MD).

DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education 08/2012 to 09/2014
Assistant Superintendent of Elementary and Secondary Education, 06/2013 to 09/2014

- Provided leadership in the development and implementation of the DC Every Student Succeeds Act ESSA, including working with stakeholders, city leaders, and task forces.
- Oversaw the divisions of school improvement; teaching and learning; and public charter school finance and support with a combined budget of $40 million.
- Collaborated with other cabinet-level officials and school districts in the transition to and implementation of the new state standards and aligned assessment systems.
- Planned and managed organizational change, provided leadership and supervised improved personnel programs, services, and activities.

DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Director of Federal Programs, 08/2012 to 06/2013

- Led the federal high-risk exit plan that successfully led to DC's release of federal high-risk status.
- Supervised the required audit of annual enrollment of more than 80,000 students throughout DC and oversaw $40 million in federal funds.
- Led efforts to monitor compliance with all policies, grant terms, procedures and guidelines of the various federal and state agencies, and private and public corporations.
- Liaised with program officers and risk-assessment specialists in the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies to keep current with changes and proposals to federal programs.
Deputy Executive Director and Policy Director
Campaign for High School Equity, 03/2010 to 08/2012
- Developed and led timely federal and state policy and advocacy strategy enabling the campaign to remain proactive while addressing current needs of the field.
- Set strategic priorities and objectives, managed staff and senior consultants, oversaw projects and deliverables, and managed daily operations and $2 million annual budget.
- Created and articulated key strategic connections and advocacy messages, collaborating with consultants, staff, and coalition members to translate messages into policy actions.
- Represented the campaign externally, managing relationships with national organizations, senior staff in Congress and the Administration, practitioners, researchers, advocates, and funders.

Senior Director
American Youth Policy Forum, 10/2005 to 10/2009
- Managed $500K grant over two years including budget, staff and products.
- Facilitated study tours to provide a learning forum for national and state policymakers.
- Authored promising practices publications and disseminated to all state policy leaders involved in the two-year study tours as well as funder and other advocacy grantees.
- Represented the organization at national conferences in presentations and panels.
- Assisted in building partnerships and establishing relationships with the funders.

Senior Policy Associate
Alliance for Excellent Education, 03/2003 to 10/2005
- Spearheaded an Adolescent Literacy Policy Initiative for federal investment in adolescent literacy, which informed the creation of the U.S. Department of Education’s “Striving Readers” program.
- Assembled, staffed, and collaborated with a national advisory board of leading experts in the field of adolescent literacy and high school reform.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching
George Washington University Graduate School of Education, Guest Lecturer, Education Policy & Leadership Series (2021)
Adjunct Faculty in Political Science, Strayer University, Raleigh, NC (2016 - 2018)
Seventh Grade Teacher, Orleans Parish Public Schools (1998 - 2000)
Taught under the auspices of Teach For America, a national teaching corps.

Other Consulting
Teach For America: Policy and Advocacy Leadership (2009 – 2010)
EDUCATION

American University (Washington, DC)
School of Education
Doctorate in Policy and Leadership, Expected May 2024

Carnegie Mellon University (Pittsburgh, PA)
H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management
Master of Science, Public Policy and Management, May 2002
Heinz Presidential Fellow

Arizona State University (Tempe, AZ)
School of Social Transformation
Bachelor of Science in Justice Studies and Economics, May 1998
AZ Community Foundation Scholar

VOLUNTEER & LEADERSHIP

- Board Chair, Associates for Renewal in Education: Washington, DC (2018 – Present)
- Education Transition Team, District of Columbia Councilmember Robert White (2021)
- Phone Banking, Biden/Harris 2020, Fight for NC
- Founding Board Member, Story of Our Schools: Washington, DC (2015 – 2020)

MEMBERSHIPS & CERTIFICATIONS

- Member, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.
- Qualified Administrator, Intercultural Development Inventory
- Nonprofit Management Certificate, Georgetown University
- Design Thinking Certificate, IDEO
- Facilitating Improvement Certificate, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching