

Cambridge Education Quality Review Main Findings July 21, 2021



Introductions

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Objectives for this session:

- Background
- Outline the purpose and process of the Quality Review with an Equity Lens
- Discuss the factors that support equity and excellence in the district
- Discuss the factors that limit access and opportunities for some in the district
- Recommendations for high-leverage areas for improvement
- Next steps
- Answer any questions

About Cambridge Education and L&P Education Services

Cambridge Education is a leading provider of education services at all levels in the United States. Since 2002, we have led projects in 38 states, more than 570 districts, and more than 6,500 schools.

L&P Educational Services helps to build the capacity, confidence, and expertise of educators to teach, lead, and sustain equitable and culturally responsive classrooms and institutions.

- We are K-12 educators.
- We have extensive review experience with a focus on learning and improved outcomes for students.
- We partner with our clients to engage all stakeholders in the process.
- We have a proven process for creating, managing, and evaluating improvement efforts.
- We are experienced providers of professional learning toward equity.

Fact-finding opens route to better pupil outcomes

School Review experience

20
States

100+
Districts

3,000+
Schools



Partnering with stakeholders to engage in a thorough process of review

1. Planning and project management

Agree the processes and instruments with MPS leaders

4. Stakeholder surveys, focus groups, and Interviews

Collect stakeholder perception data; talk to individuals and groups about their experiences

2. Self-evaluation

District engages in self-evaluation

5. Site or remote observations

Visit classrooms and observe school and district meetings

3. Document and policy review

Document collection and desktop review of administrative and policy data

6. Analyze root causes, report, and make recommendations

Provide data on current state and make recommendations for improvements

What Is the Difference Between Equality and Equity?

The distinction between equality and equity is an important one for achieving a quality education for all students.

Equality means offering everyone the same thing. It makes assumptions that everyone has had the same opportunities and experiences, speaks the same way, learns the same way and has had access to the same resources.

Equity gives each student what they need to be successful in school and beyond, and is culturally responsive to diverse backgrounds, especially those who have been socio-economically, linguistically, and culturally marginalized.

Why do we care about equity?

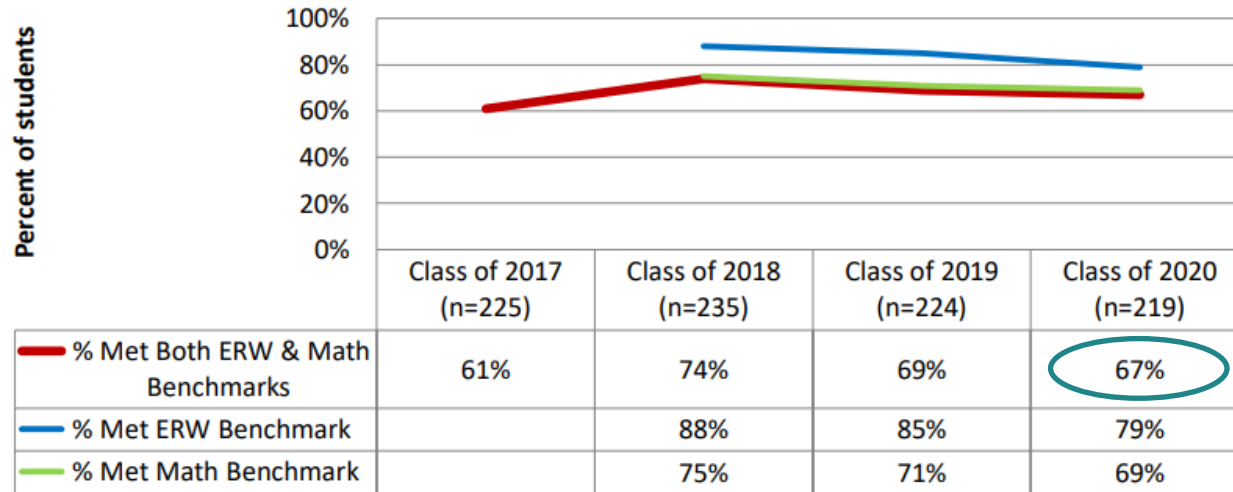
- Before the No Child Left Behind Act became law in 2002, most state education agencies and school districts only collected aggregate data on students enrolled in public schools.
- States are now required to report on the academic achievement and educational attainment across the major student subgroups.
- In the United States, the federally defined set of student subgroups: economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with medical or learning disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency.

Why do we collect data on our subgroups?

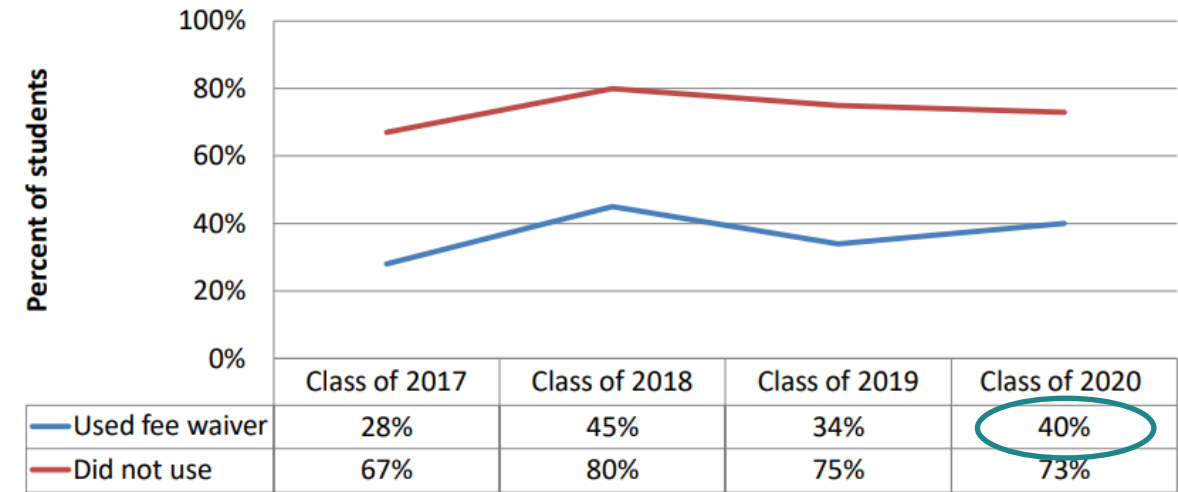
- Schools and districts are required to collect data on student subgroups for the purpose of exposing underlying trends and issues such as **achievement gaps**, **opportunity gaps**, **learning gaps**, and other inequities in the public-education system.
- District leaders and teachers have more detailed information about the performance and learning needs of specific groups of students, which allows them to design more appropriate or effective educational experiences and **academic support**.

Example – disaggregated data

Overall Cohort Performance: % Meeting College & Career Benchmarks*



Percent Meeting College & Career Benchmarks by Fee Waiver Status



What do we know about equity in schools?

- **Test scores alone don't tell the full story about a school.**

Low test scores can indicate more about a student's lack of opportunities than about how effective a school is.

- **It is possible to lose the struggling students within the averages.**

Schools with high ratings on standardized tests may have student groups that are underperforming, but the numbers are small enough that it doesn't affect the district's overall performance.

- **Schools that are successfully closing gaps are doing a good job for all students.**

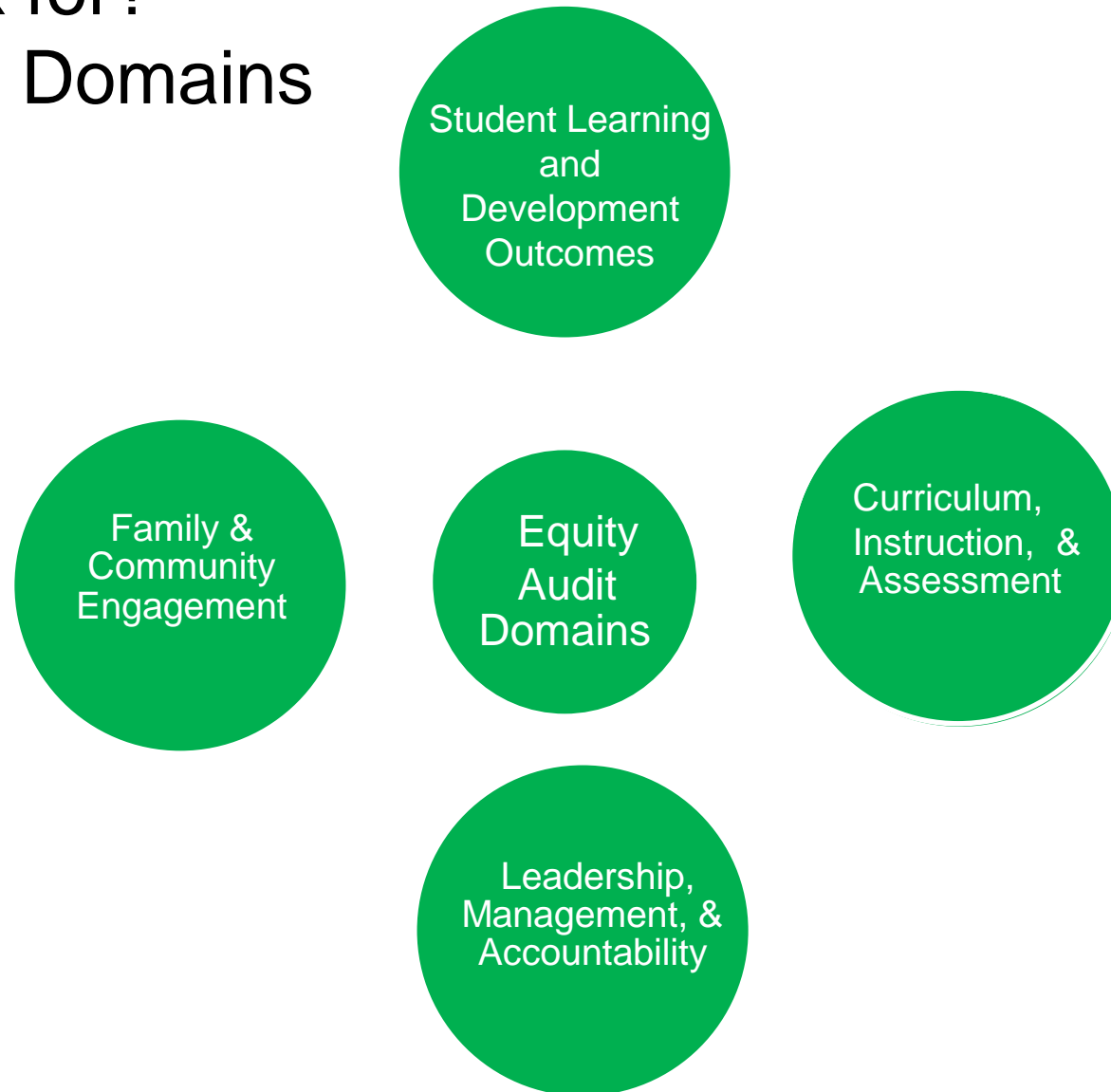
Strategies that have been shown to help disadvantaged students succeed are good for all students. These include targeted instruction that meets each student where they are and intervenes when they struggle; improving engagement; an emphasis on advanced coursework and college preparation; and creating a culture of high expectations.

- **Equity extends beyond the school buildings.**

Parents and community advocacy organizations can be key players in improving the overall school climate and outcomes for all students.

What do we look for?

The Equity Audit Domains



The Review Process

The QREL process is designed to:

- Enable the leadership and staff at all levels in the district to gain a clear understanding of the quality of education currently being provided in relation to clearly articulated equity standards that define a quality school.
- Guide a process of self-reflection and directed practice.
- Develop a shared understanding within the school community of the areas that promote equity and the priorities for improving student learning.
- Identify needs with reference to a clear rubric using a structured process.
Enable the district to identify common patterns of professional practice across schools so that they can better support improved student outcomes for all.

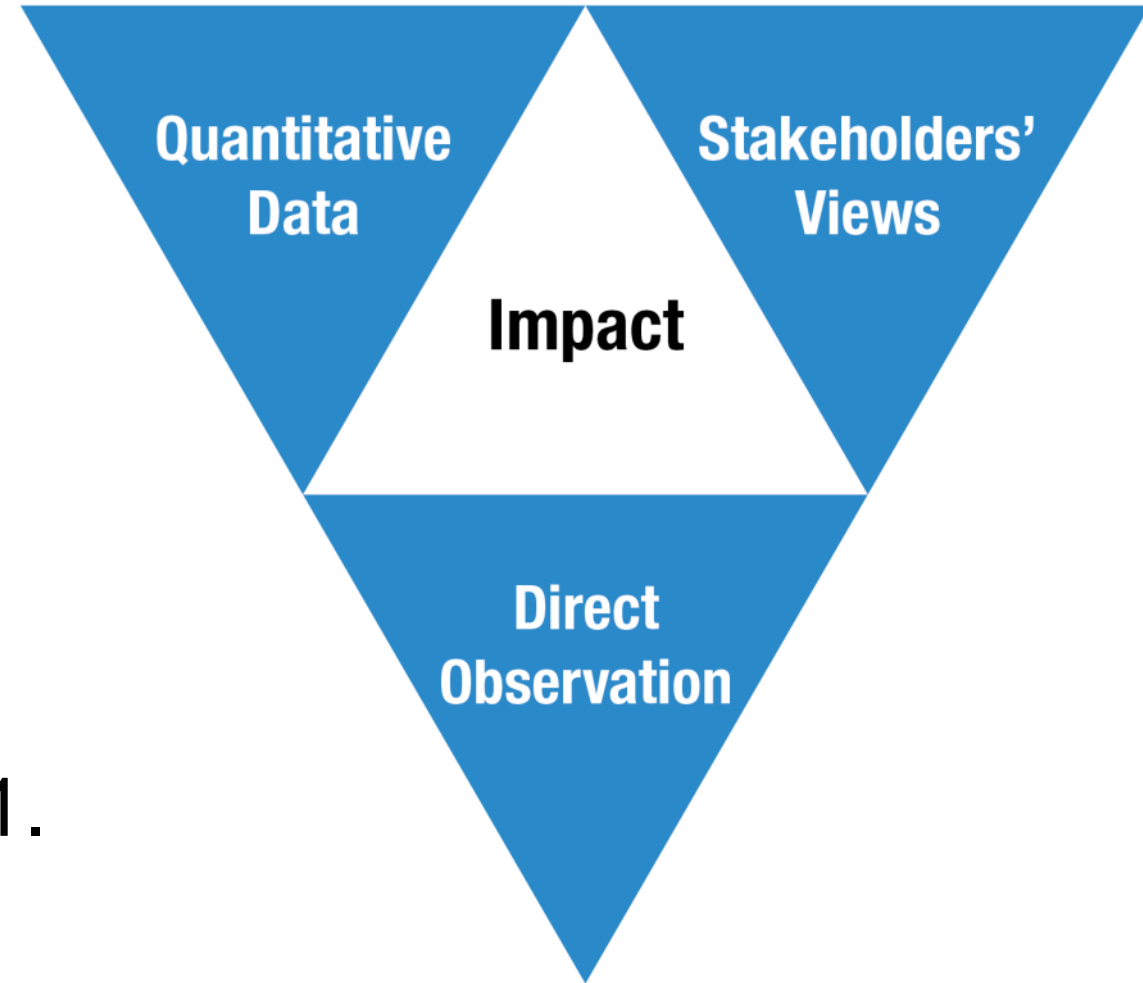
January through May - Data Collection

- 22 interviews with district and school leaders
- 15 focus groups
- 100 + data sheets and documents
- 6 virtual school “visits”
- 3,000 + surveys sent to parents (12% response), staff (25% response), and students grades 6-12 (45% response rate)



Triangulation of Data

For the purpose of today's presentation, Cambridge Education will present high leverage broad factors that support and limit district effectiveness, with a more granular and detailed report delivered by the end of July 2021.

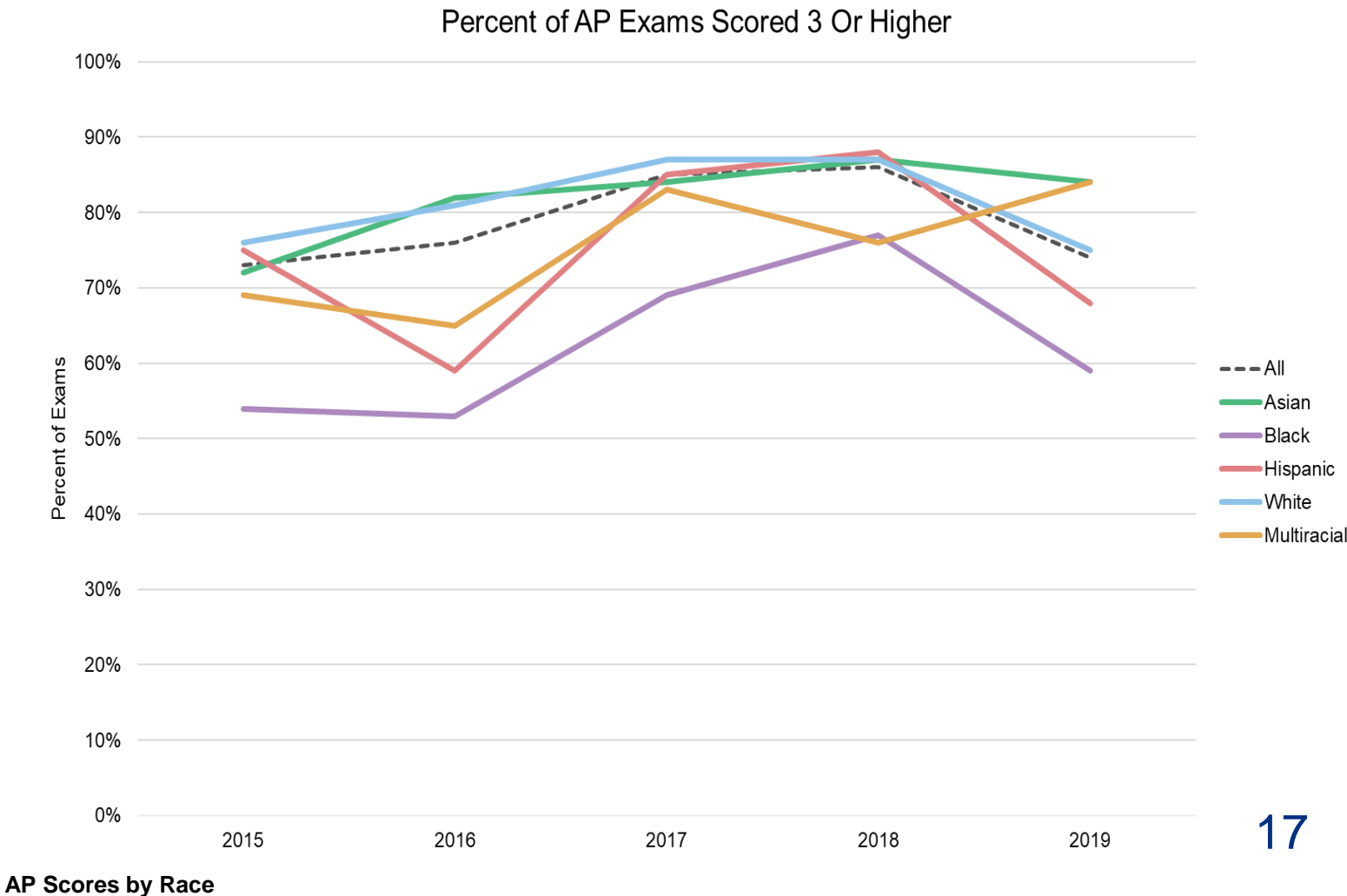


Factors that support district effectiveness.



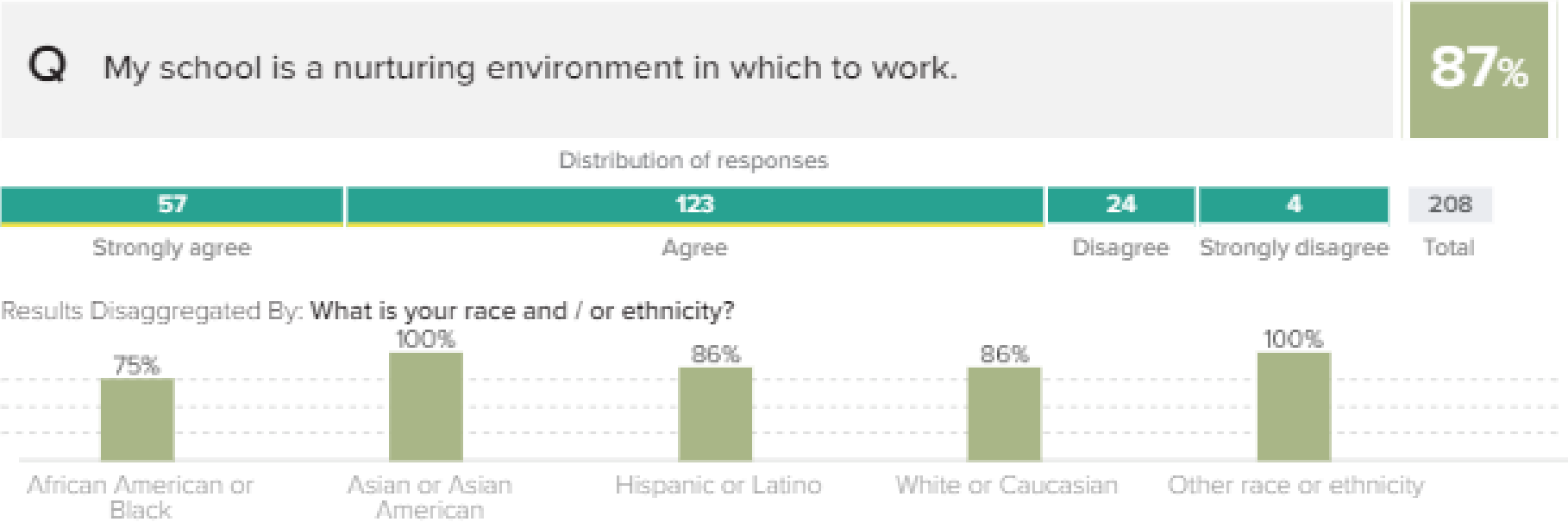
Factors that support equity and excellence

Milton Public Schools is a high-performing district, with graduation rates and test scores that exceed the state average. Teachers have high expectations and provide rigorous instruction. Nearly 90% of students attend two- or four-year colleges after graduating from high school.



Factors that support equity and excellence

The district has high-quality, experienced teachers and administrators in every school. Nearly 90% of teachers report that their school is a nurturing place to work.



Teacher survey response, disaggregated by race

Factors that support equity and excellence

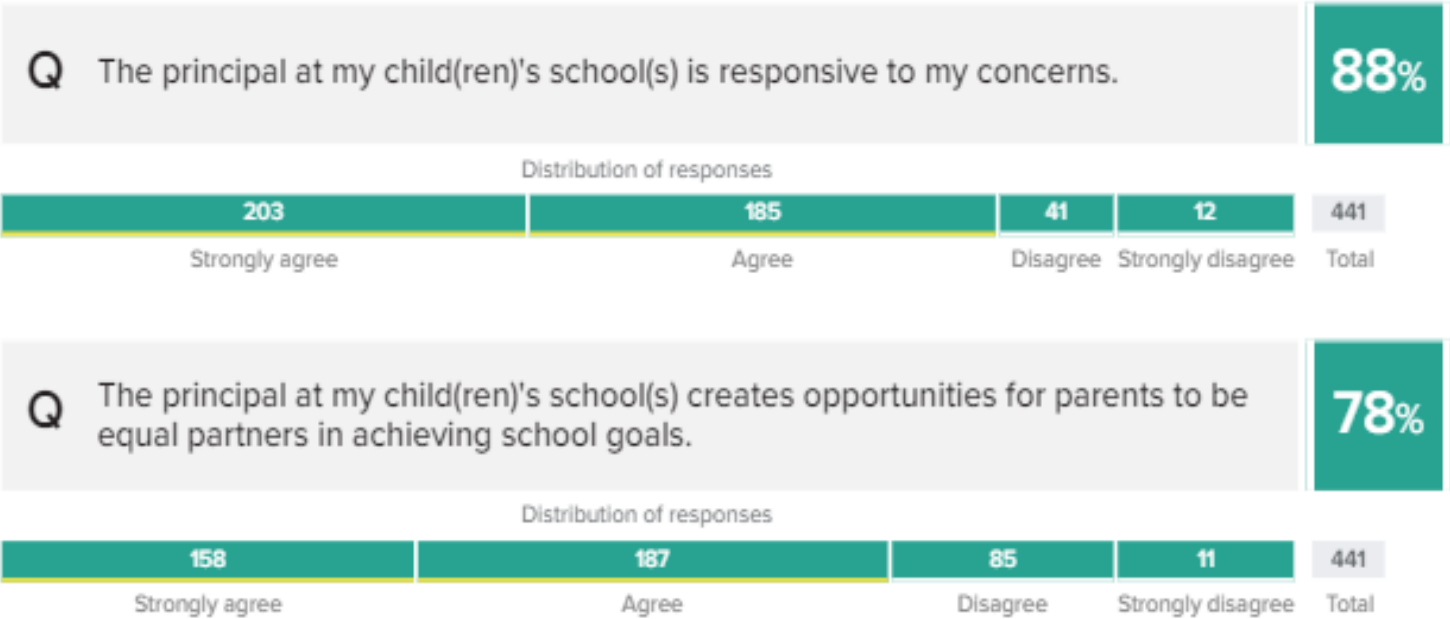
District and school strategic plans have goals associated with equity, diversity, and inclusion. The district has undertaken many recent initiatives to build equity in the schools, such as introducing a more culturally responsive curriculum and resources, implementing programs to support social and emotional learning for students, and training on restorative practice.

Milton Class of 2021 TCP Outcomes																							
								All Black/Hispanic students (including TCP)															
All students							10th grade Math MCAS						TCP						10th grade Math MCAS				
							E	M	PM	NM	Grand Total								E	M	PM	NM	Grand Total
8th grade Math MCAS	Exceeding	27	10	0	0	37	8th grade Math MCAS	Exceeding	3	0	0	0	3	8th grade Math MCAS	Exceeding	1	0	0	0	1			
	Meeting	30	83	0	2	115		Meeting	4	16	2	0	22		Meeting	3	9	1	0	13			
	Partially Meeting	0	0	3	7	10		Partially Meeting	0	8	21	1	30		Partially Meeting	0	4	3	0	7			
	Not Meeting	0	38	3	45	86		Not Meeting	0	0	5	2	7		Not Meeting	0	0	1	0	1			
	Grand Total	57	131	6	54	248		Grand Total	7	24	28	3	62		Grand Total	4	13	5		22			
% E/M in G10		75.8%						% E/M in G10		50.0%						% E/M in G10		77.3%					
highest level		10.9%						highest level		4.8%						highest level		4.5%					
improved level		28.6%						improved level		27.4%						improved level		36.4%					
maintained level		52.8%						maintained level		62.9%						maintained level		54.5%					
declined level		7.7%						declined level		4.8%						declined level		4.5%					

The Calculus Project Outcomes

Factors that support equity and excellence

Most parents and students feel respected by adults at the school and district levels. Parents and caregivers are fully engaged, highly involved, and supportive of the schools and their children’s learning. Families feel welcome, and teachers and administrators support two-way communication to keep parents informed on their children’s progress and to understand their concerns.



Factors that support equity and excellence

The district has built partnerships with many community organizations to support the academic and social and emotional needs of students and their families.

District partnerships include:

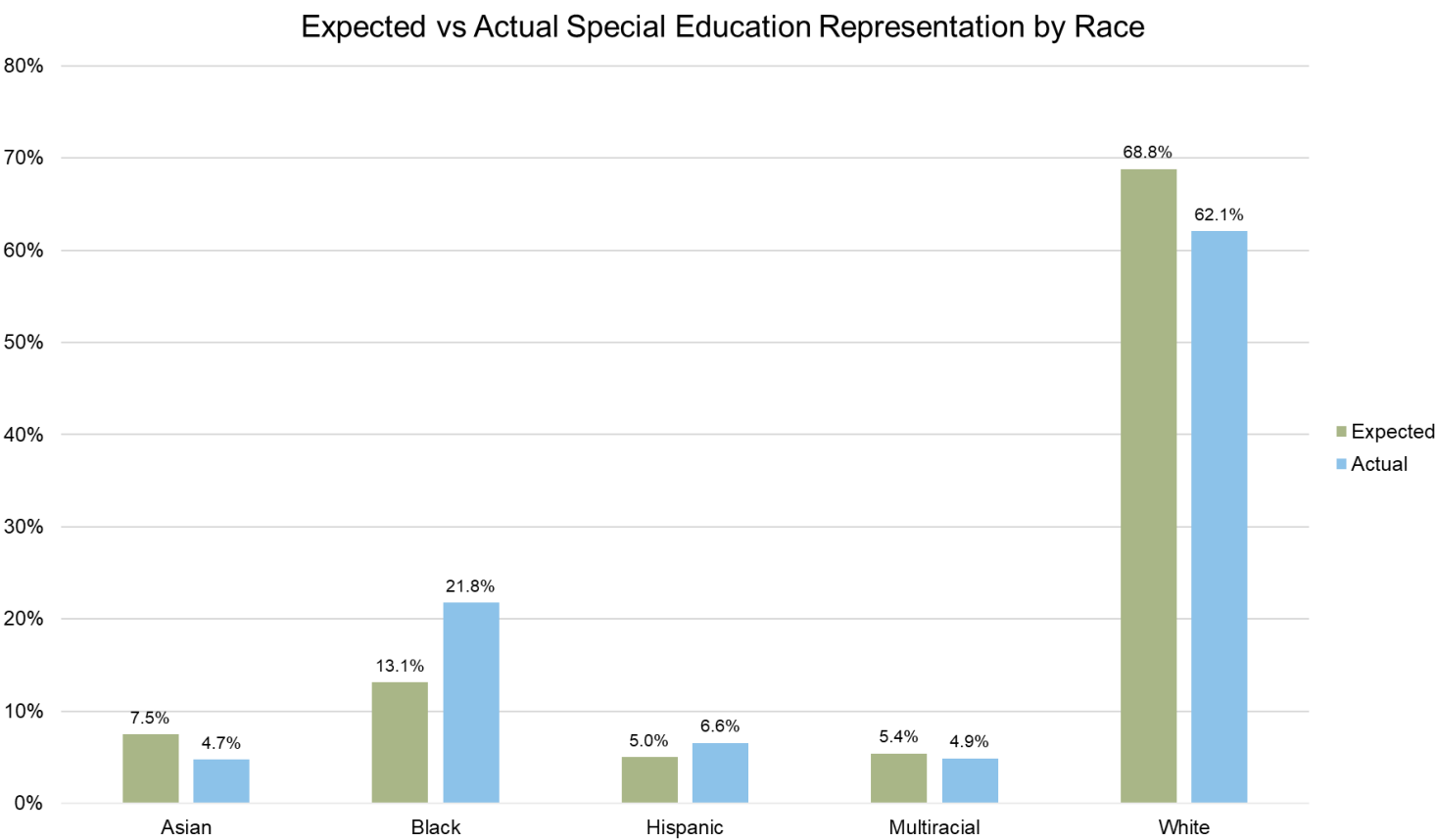
- Curry College
- Milton Interfaith Clergy Association (MICA)
- Milton Anti-Racist Coalition (MARC)
- Citizens for Diverse Milton (CDM)
- Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MSAPC)
- Boston University (social work interns at each school)
- BID Milton
- Milton Police Department
- Milton Foundation for Education
- Boston College
- Milton Academy

Factors that limit district effectiveness, with recommendations



Disproportionality

The numbers of African American/Black and LatinX/Hispanic students identified for special education is disproportional to their population numbers.



SWD Expected vs. Actual

Disproportionality

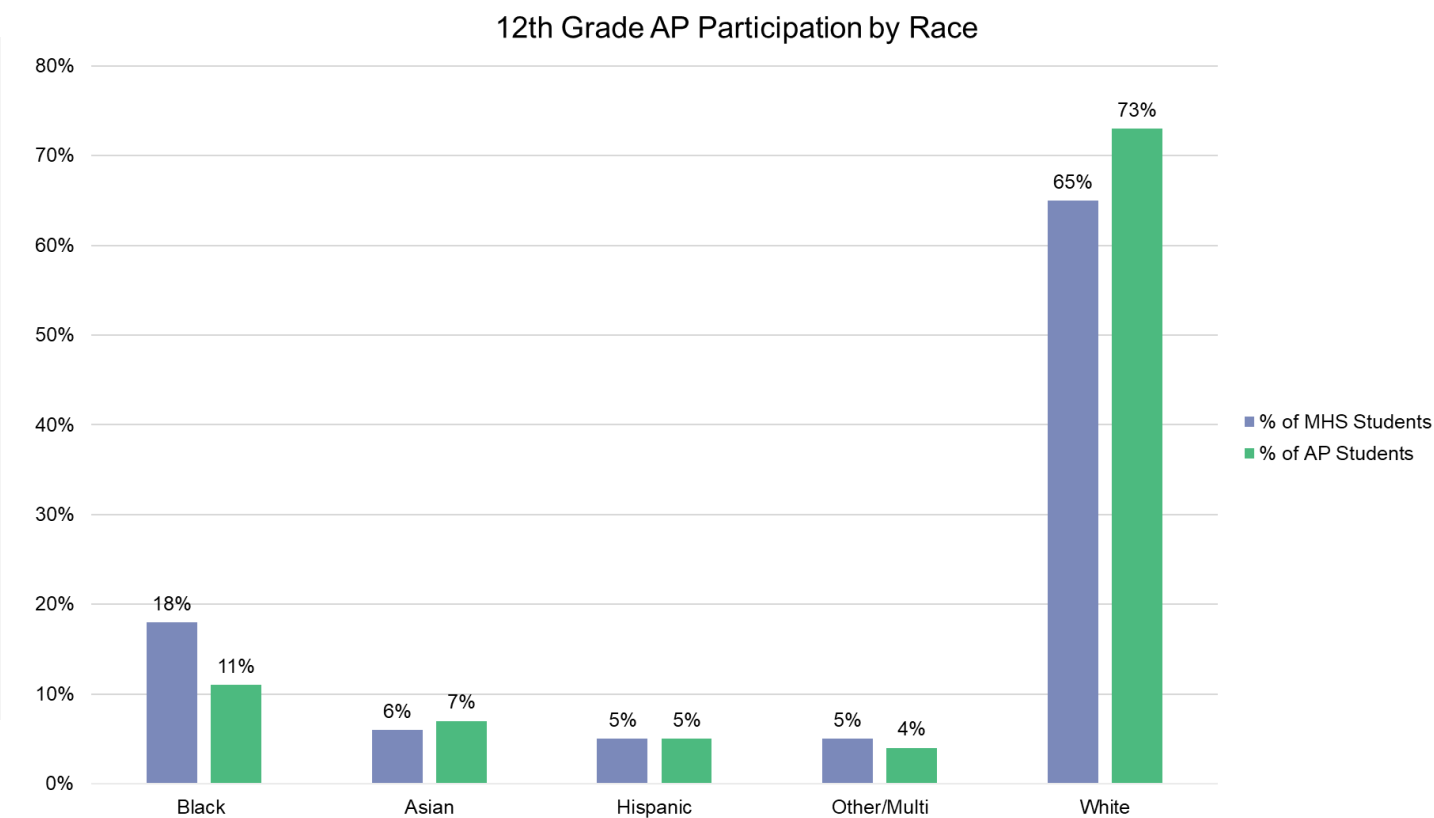
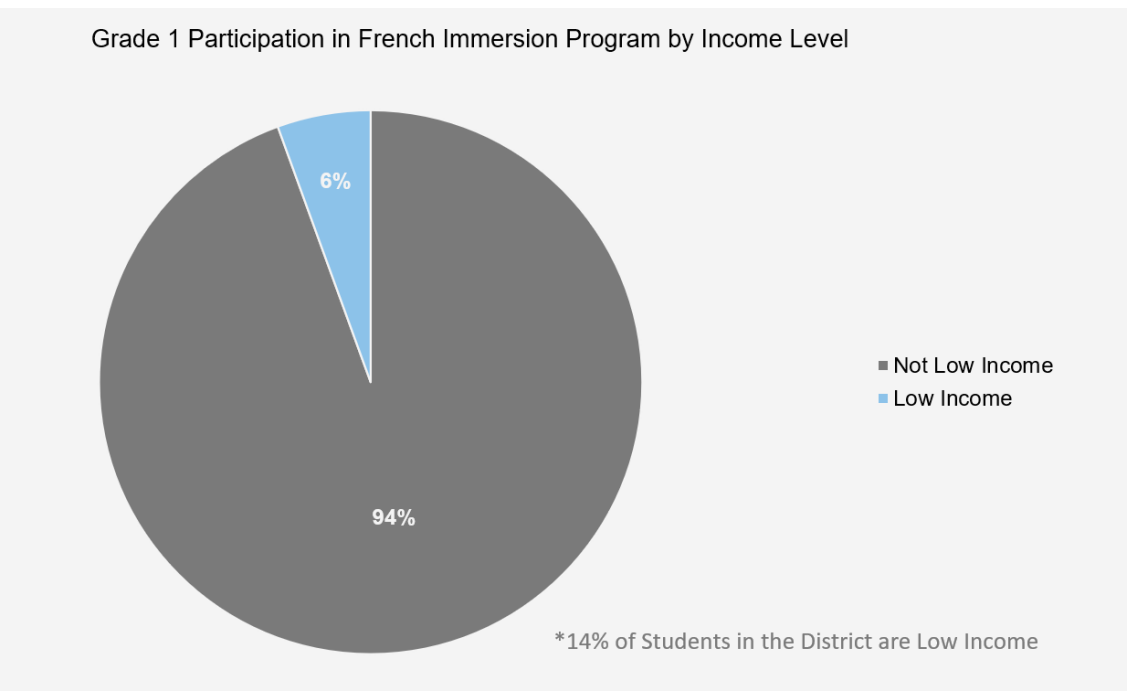
- FY 19, students with disabilities and students who are economically disadvantaged received in-school suspensions at almost 4x and 5x the rate of White students
- African American/Black students receive out of school suspensions over 4x the rate of White students.
- Of students with disabilities, African/American/Black students have over 3x the rate of a disciplinary removal than White students.

Student Discipline Data, 2019-2020

Student Group	# of Students	# of Students Disciplined	% of Students Disciplined	% In-School Suspension	% Out of School Suspension
All Students	4,504	52	1.15%	0.50%	0.80%
English Learner	117	0	0.00%		
Economically Disadvantaged	539	16	2.97%	1.70%	1.90%
Students with Disabilities	720	21	2.92%	1.40%	1.90%
High Needs	1,200	28	2.33%	1.30%	1.30%
Female	2,253	10	0.44%	0.30%	0.20%
Male	2,250	42	1.87%	0.70%	1.40%
American Indian/Alaska Native	5		0.00%		
Asian	319	1	0.31%		
Black	633	26	4.11%	1.60%	2.70%
Hispanic	222	2	0.90%		
Multiracial (non-Hispanic)	226	2	0.88%		
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3		0.00%		
White	3,096	21	0.68%	0.20%	0.50%

Disproportionality

- There are fewer students of color in AP classes and fewer economically disadvantaged students in the French Immersion program.



Recommendation:

Disrupt Disproportionality.

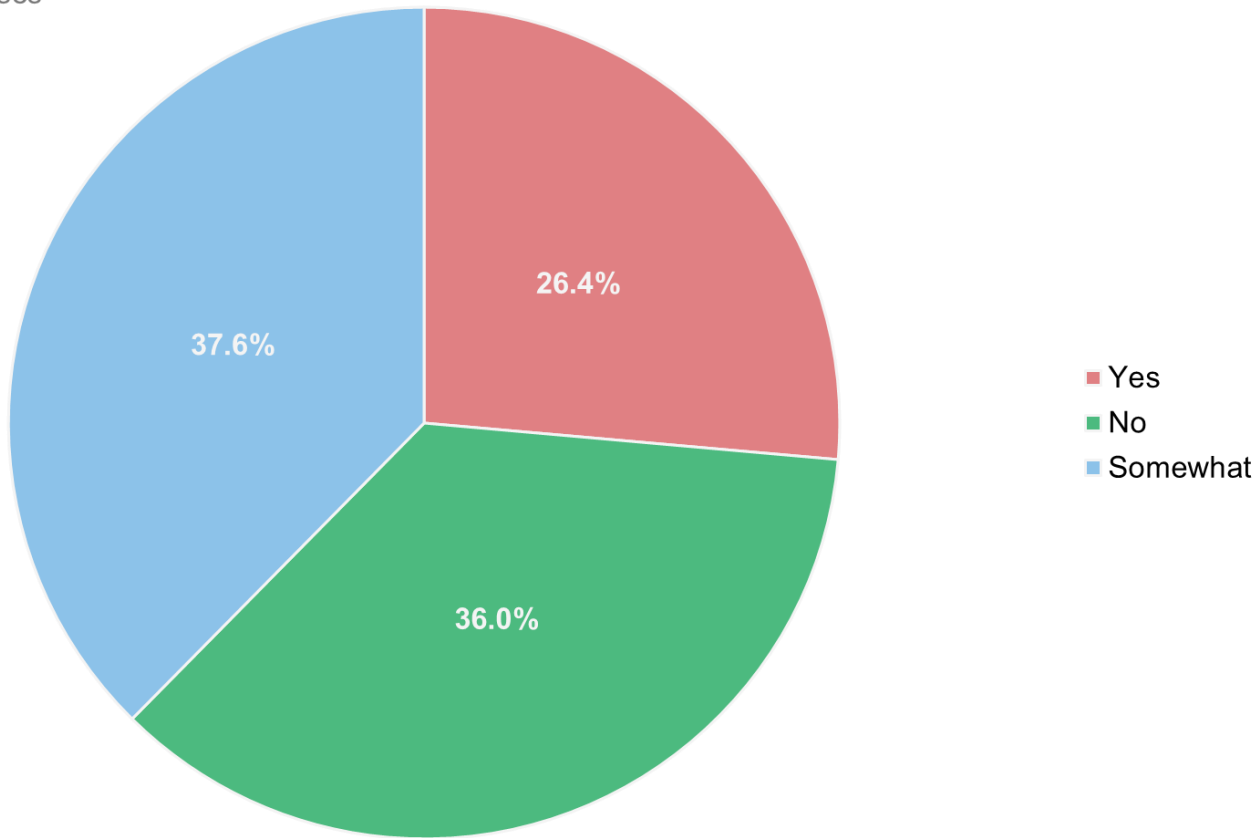
- Engage stakeholders to understand the root causes of disproportionality.
- Be Strategic and Intentional about Professional Development.
- Disaggregate Data.
- Center, deepen and embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Create the Requisite Guardrails and Gatekeeping Mechanisms.

Curriculum and instruction

- The curriculum is being updated and attention has been paid to increasing the cultural relevance in some subject areas. It is evident, however, that not all students are taking opportunities to engage in the highest-level classes at the high school. French Immersion program is disproportionately White in most schools.

Do you feel the district has prepared you to utilize culturally responsive practices?

125 Responses



Recommendations:

- **Develop a comprehensive professional development plan** for the district that is long-term, geared toward improving the learning of all students and skills of teachers, data-driven, research-based, with systematic session follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure improved skills for teachers and better outcomes for students.
- In addition to formal professional development opportunities, **develop structures for job-embedded professional learning** that incorporates curriculum leaders, building leaders, and teacher leaders as capacity builders. This includes supervising and supporting principals as instructional leaders who can advance the mission of the district.
- **Develop a plan to make the French Immersion program more inclusive.** Provide support to French Immersion teachers to enable accessible classrooms that utilize a variety of instructional formats to better address the learning needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning modalities, and abilities, and allow the setting up of special educator student support teams for French Immersion teachers.
- **Continue the program review of social studies curriculum** under the leadership of the social studies coordinator and the MHS social studies chair, under which grade level social studies curriculum would be written, based on the 2018 history/social science framework standards.
- **Continue to revise the curriculum with an equity lens.** Diversity, equity, and inclusion committees should meet to design a plan and protocols for assessing curriculum and instruction with an equity lens.

Accountability

- Accountability and monitoring are lacking in some areas. Monitoring of learning and teaching as well as regular evaluation and feedback are inconsistent.

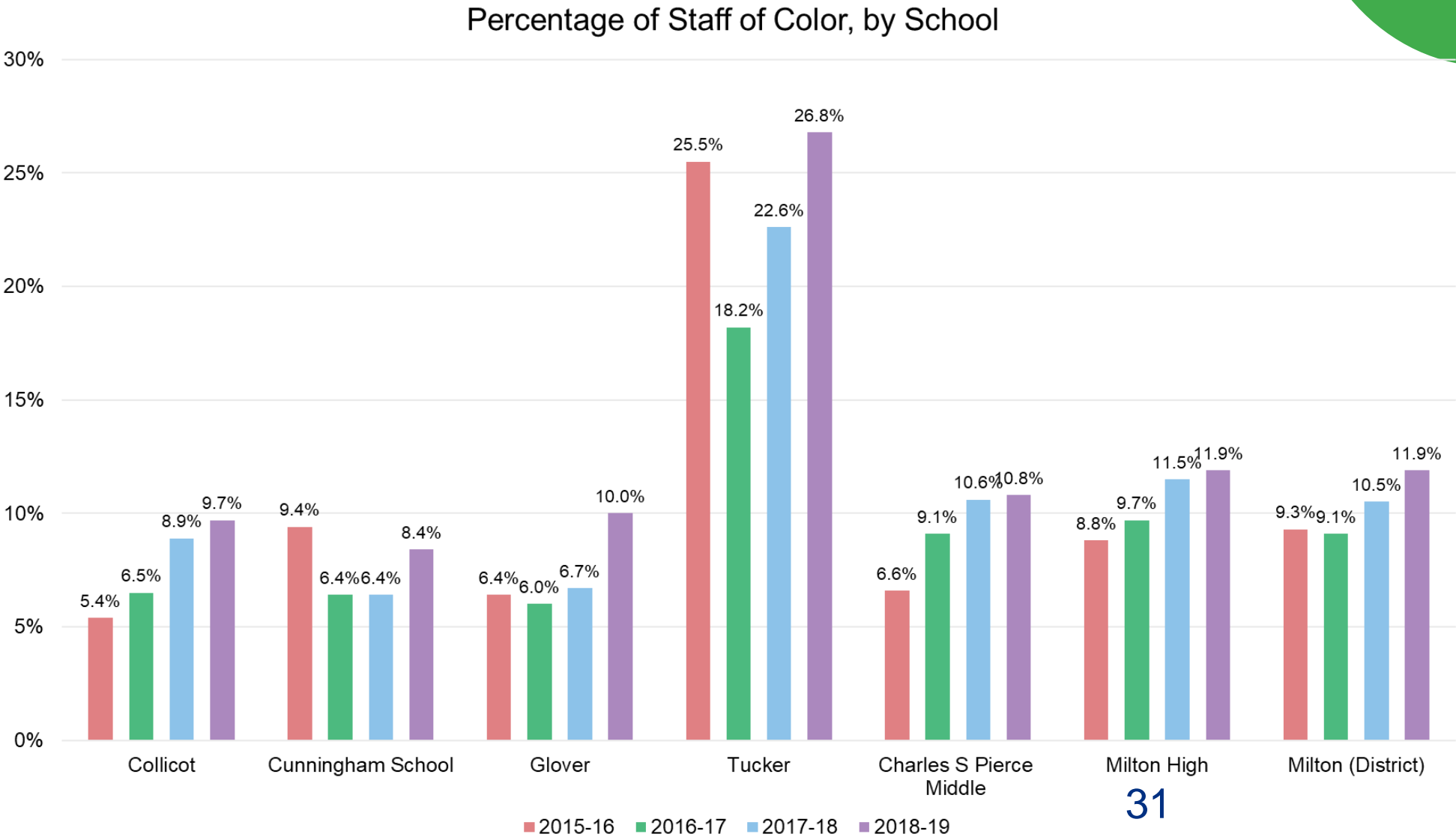


Recommendation:

- Use student data to inform decisions at all levels. The district should develop and implement a district wide protocol for using data in teacher team meetings to better support the individualized instructional plan for students.
- Devise a protocol for identifying, monitoring, and evaluating initiatives. Having too many priorities leads to a lack of clarity on what needs to be accomplished and when.
- Ensure accountability. To support both growth and impact of school leadership, it is critical that the Superintendent collaborate with principals each year to identify priority indicators and/or elements around which to focus principal evaluation.
- Involve school leaders in the budgeting processes. Reform the budgeting process with the town so that it is based on objective student characteristics and data, such as economic status, ELLs, SWDs, grade enrolled, low academic performance, or high academic performance/gifted status, among others. Support a budgeting process that has clear and easily understood policies for where, how, and why dollars flow.
- The district's strategic action plan should have equity goals and metrics throughout. Equity should not be independent from other goals, but part of each goal.
- School and district systems and practices should be transparent, implemented consistently and with fidelity, and involve input from stakeholders.

Culture

- School culture varies between schools, as does levels of diversity of staff and students.



Recommendation:

- The most important assets needed to build an equitable school district are commitment and accountability. Currently not everyone in the community is committed to this cause and plans do not identify those who are accountable and responsible for implementation. Many stakeholders see action as optional, someone else's job, or something to be postponed until after the pandemic. In order to gain commitment, include stakeholders in generating solutions. Hold all levels of staff accountable for achieving equity goals.
- Build a common understanding and definition of what equity is and what it looks like in MPS. Empower stakeholders with the data they need to discover where inequities are happening in their own schools and classrooms. Conduct root-cause analyses to determine why disproportionalities are occurring.

Action Planning

You are here!



- ❑ **Needs Assessment:** Conducting a quality review to determine areas of opportunity and areas of strength to build on.
- ❑ **Root Cause Analysis:** Determining why inequities are occurring.
- ❑ **Strategic Objectives:** Coherent group of overarching goals and key levers for improvement, embedded in the district and school strategic plans.
- ❑ **Stakeholder Engagement:** Determine the stakeholders who need to be part of the plan and solutions.
- ❑ **Theory of Action:** If/Then statement identifying what needs to happen to reach long-term, sustainable change.
- ❑ **Evidence of Impact:** Metrics to assess progress; student and adult outcomes.
- ❑ **Action Plan & Action Steps:** Action steps, leads, resources, deadlines, and identification of those who are responsible and accountable for implementation.
- ❑ **Resource Alignment:** Identify the personnel, community resources, and district resources that are needed to achieve the strategic goals.

Q & A:

