

I. Student Support Review and Assessment Follow-up

A. USP Language

The Unitary Status Plan (USP), section V(E)(2)(a-b) states:

a. By April 1, 2013, the District shall hire or designate an employee to be the academic and behavioral supports coordinator (“ABSC”), responsible for the review and assessment of the District’s existing academic and behavioral support programs, resources, and practices, including, but not limited to, those currently provided through the District’s student services departments. The ABSC’s review and assessment shall focus on the District’s efforts to provide individualized assistance and mentoring to students with academic or behavioral challenges and to students at risk of dropping out.

b. By July 1, 2013 September 1, 2013, the ABSC shall develop: (i) an assessment of existing programs, resources, and practices, disaggregated by school site(s), grades served, number of students served, ELL status, and resources (e.g., part-time or full-time personnel assigned, annual budget); (ii) an analysis, based on the data identified in this Section, of any additional resources or programs that may be needed, by grade and school site; (iii) an analysis of the school sites with the highest concentration of students in need of such programs and resources; (iv) annual goals, in collaboration with relevant staff, for increasing graduation rates for African American and Latino students, which shall be shared with the Parties and the Special Master and used by the District to evaluate the effectiveness of its efforts; and (v) procedures to ensure follow up when Mojave automatically flags a student for attention.

B. Court Order Language

The Court Order approving the 2013-14 USP Budget (*Fisher-Mendoza*, US District Court Case No. 4:74-cv-00090-DCB, Doc. 1477, filed June 7, 2013) states:

3. The District, Plaintiffs, and Special Master shall work together to develop, by December 2013, research based criteria to be used in the assessment of student support programs to be implemented as soon as possible...

C. Definitions

Program	Consists of actions targeted to deliver a service/product or achieve a specific broad outcome. It represents an umbrella under which a cohesive, interconnected set of actions could be organized.
Strategy	A plan of action to achieve a goal, or the art of developing or carrying out such a plan. A set of activities with a specific goal: a system of procedures or activities that has a specific purpose.
Resource	Something that can be used for support or help.
Practice	General principles and guidelines that are supported by research.

D. Executive Summary

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In SY 13-14, the USP directed TUSD to improve the academic achievement and educational outcomes of African American and Latino students, using strategies to seek to close the achievement gap and eliminate racial and ethnic disparities for these students. TUSD was required to develop a plan to provide African American and Latino students with the necessary student support services that will allow them to improve their educational outcomes while introducing preventive methods to reduce dropout rates, increase retention rates, reduce discipline and provide equal access to Advanced Learning Experiences (ALEs). As a result of an internal review and assessment, review of student support criteria and submittal of the reviews to a third-party assessor, TUSD implemented several strategies to improve the academic achievement and educational outcomes of African American and Latino students in SY 14-15.

E. Goals

- **Graduation Goal:** In SY 2014-15, TUSD established a graduation goal to increase the African American and Latino graduation rate by 3% (not 3 percentage points). In addition, the district set a graduation rate goal for African American English Language Learners and Latino English Language Learners (ELL). The goal for African American ELL students was set at a 100% increase in graduation rates, and the goal for Latino ELL students was set at a 50% increase in graduation rates; or to increase the graduation rate by 10 percentage points.
- **Dropout Goal:** In SY 2014-15, TUSD established a dropout goal for African American, Latino and English Language Learner (ELL) students. The goal for African American and Latino students was to reduce the dropout rate for 7th – 12th grade students by .2%. The goal for ELL students (African American and Latino) was to maintain a dropout rate that is lower than each groups non-ELL dropout rate.

F. Strategies Implemented

As a result of the review and assessments in SY 13-14, TUSD implemented to following strategies to support the academic and behavioral needs of students, and to reduce the dropout rate and improve the graduation rate. In SY 14-15, TUSD did the following:

- **Dropout Plan:** Developed a district-wide dropout prevention and graduation plan that was vetted by dropout prevent expert, Dr. Russell Rumberger. Dr. Rumberger was recommended by Special Master, Dr. William Hawley.

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- **Multi-Tiered System of Support:** Implemented the district-wide Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Model. MTSS is a multi-tiered framework designed to maximize achievement for all students and focuses on outcomes through the systematic gathering of data to guide educational decisions. MTSS is also designed to assist with implementing individualized assistance and mentoring to students with academic or behavioral challenges, students at risk of dropping out and is a preventative method to reduce dropout rates. MTSS was the process and vehicle used to provide a series of academic interventions and supports for African American and Latino students. The process for MTSS behavior teams was also established. All schools (principals) were required to implement the MTSS Model and coordinate an MTSS intervention team to address interventions and supports. Learning Supports Coordinators (LSC) served as the lead person for all MTSS intervention team meetings. The MTSS meetings were held weekly, bi-monthly or monthly depending on the school site. As part of the MTSS team, in identified schools, a representative from the student services equity departments served on the MTSS team to assist with interventions as an alternative to suspension. For example, members of the AASSD and/or MASSD teams attended MTSS meetings, met with students, made recommendations for support and when possible, served on long-term suspension hearings in an effort to reduce the number of days a student would be out of school (see *Appendix section 01 IP Evidence: VI.6 Corrective Action Plans – document M.S. Doolen REDACTED VI 6* for an example showing the AASSD and MASSD representative serving on the Doolen Middle School MTSS team).
- **4-Pronged Approach:** In SY 14-15, TUSD Student Services implemented the 4-pronged approach focused on 1) Attendance, 2) Behavior/Discipline, 3) Credits and 4) Grades. The 4-pronged approach narrowed the focus for student services specialists in an effort to target key indicators that impact a student's success in school.
- **Abeyance Contracts:** Abeyance contracts served as a positive alternative to out-of-school suspensions. An abeyance contract offers a student the opportunity to remain in school and/or the length of the potential suspension to be significantly reduced. Students that are placed on an abeyance contract continue to receive direct instruction from the teacher and allowed to remain with their cohort. In the SY 14-15, 731 abeyance contracts were given, resulting in 13,361 instructional days retained by students.

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- **Steps to Success:** In SY 2014-15, TUSD implemented Steps to Success, a program designed to make visits to homes of students who had dropped out of high school or were in jeopardy dropping out of high school. The Steps to Success was implemented in July, 2014 and again in January, 2015 to recover students who had dropped out of school. As a result, the Steps to Success were one effort that helped improve overall graduation rates in TUSD. For African American students, graduation rates improved from 72% in SY 13-14 to 78% in SY 14-15. For Latino students, graduation rates improved from 79% in SY 13-14 to 80% in SY 14-15.
- **Quarterly Discipline Review:** In SY 14-15, TUSD, through Student Services, established a quarterly data dialogue meeting between the student services/equity departments and the respective academic leadership departments. During the aforementioned meetings, the equity directors, Charlotte Brown and Eugene Butler reviewed the district discipline data by school level (i.e., elementary, middle high) to discuss discipline disparities, trends and outlier schools whose data were disproportionate to other schools, disproportionate by ethnicity and/or excessive in various identified categories (see *Appendix VI.5 2014-2015 Quarterly Review Schedule* and *4th Quarter Discipline Review-PPT 6 17 2015 Draft*). The elementary and secondary leadership departments subsequently engaged the leadership teams at the school sites where improvements were warranted. The leadership offices worked collaboratively with the site administrators to draft their school-based corrective action plans. In some instances, members of the student services/equity department were included in collaboratively making recommendations for corrective action plans. For schools with a corrective action plan, the student services/equity directors supported schools by providing supportive and inclusive learning environments training (SAIL), restorative practices training and training addressing culture and climate. The student services/equity directors also provided behavior support by moving a department specialist to assist when feasible.