

APPENDIX V – 77

Final Report

African American Academic Achievement
for the
Tucson United School District
Tucson, AZ

Presented by
Trayben and Associates

July 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Trayben and Associates was hired by the Tucson Unified School District in response to Request for Proposal #18-67-19: Consulting Services for African American Academic Achievement. The purpose of the evaluation was to examine the district's systems, services, and processes to close the achievement gap between Anglo and African American Students.

The top recommendations from Trayben and Associates include explicit confirmation of the district administration's commitment to implementation of the final plan through various leadership transitions. According to the assessment of evidence provided for review, this commitment has not been demonstrated in the past.

Also included among the top recommendations is improved communication between the African American Student Services Department and other departments, uniform implementation of discipline procedures, district and local school ownership to include academic achievement for African American students, and a redesigned marketing campaign for recruitment of African American teachers and administrators.

Finally, the Trayben team strongly recommends attention to culturally relevant or responsive practices, curriculum alignment, and expanded professional learning opportunities for all educators. In addition to the summary of recommendations provided below, more in-depth information regarding evidence reviewed, observations, and all recommendations can be found in the full report.

LIST OF PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Ensure that recommendations from the report are implemented according to the timeline provided, with continued implementation during and following leadership transitions. Additionally, the team encourages the school board to include reviewing the report as a requirement when new leadership is hired.
2. Improve communication between the African American Student Services Department and other district departments. One way to accomplish this end is to have the AASSD Director submit monthly reports to the superintendent and designated associate superintendent.
3. Provide ongoing training, coaching, and monthly updates related to implementation of the African American Student Services report for board members and community stakeholders.

4. Encourage schools to work with the AASSD to develop group-specific strategic plans based on a short but significant list of identified goals shared with the entire staff including all teachers and counselors.
5. Consider developing a fresh marketing plan that is appealing to young people and presents Tucson as a destination city because of the nightlife, university town atmosphere, cost of living, and proximity to Phoenix, Las Vegas, Grand Canyon, mountains, and other appealing sites.
6. Develop a collaborative partnership with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Universities (MSUs) with strong teacher preparation programs and use the partnership to strategically recruit African American teachers.
7. Reconsider designing and implementing a Preparatory Middle School that targets African American students from low performing elementary schools with a focus of preparing them for University High School admissions or other dual enrollment opportunities.
8. Consider stronger and deeper collaboration between the “offices” of the multicultural team and the CRPID to better consolidate and leverage resources, institutional knowledge, and efforts related to culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy.
9. Design a specific, team-based, and student-centered framework used to identify African American students who both possess AP potential and who are identified by their teachers for long-term support in preparation for advanced coursework. This framework should include a multi-year plan with grade level-specific interventions.
10. Rebrand ALE opportunities, and enlist AASS leaders to include the plan as a part of their engagement with African American students/families as early as possible. Along with the responsibilities of the AASSD, teachers should work with these specialists to recommend students for further conversations.
11. Consider stronger collaboration between AASS staff and dropout prevention specialists in order to develop proactive measures that will continue to decrease the number of African American dropouts.
12. Ensure monitoring for consistent PBIS guidelines across schools by using variables such as school size and population to facilitate data-gathering focused on the configurations that work best.
13. Disaggregate discipline data by gender in addition to race and ethnicity.

14. Consider job-embedded training around culturally responsive pedagogy which also will focus on creating both a classroom culture and practices that support CRP.
15. Continue district-level designation of an individual to oversee all professional learning in the district. Additionally, each school should identify a professional learning facilitator within its building if this is not the current practice.
16. Ensure that school counselors are aware of scholarship opportunities beyond universities in Arizona, specifically funding targeted for African American students.
17. Conduct surveys of a sample of African American students periodically in order to gain qualitative data on their school experiences, including quality of engagement with adults in the building, opportunities for academic success, and challenges that require assistance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
TUSD Context	5
Leadership, Structure, and Talent	8
Curriculum and Instruction	15
Culture and Climate.....	24
Professional Development.....	28
Parent Engagement and Advocacy.....	31
Student Interview Results	33
Plan for Restructuring the Tucson Unified School District African American Student Services Department for School Year 2018-19	40
Implementation Chart.....	49
Survey Results	51
Appendices.....	67

TUSD Context

Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) is southern Arizona's largest school district. As of 2017-18, TUSD had less than 46,000 students. In fall 2012, TUSD had 51,000 students and 93 comprehensive schools. District enrollment has declined over the last 10 years and TUSD lost 1,700 to 2,000 students per year for the two or three years prior to 2012. There are many reasons for the change, including the population in general becoming more suburban and changes in school choice including increasing availability of charter schools and the approved ability to cross districts for school selection.

In 2016, Arizona had 79.5% of public high school students graduating on time, ranking sixth out of the 10 western states. Texas ranked highest with 89.1% of public high school students graduating, while New Mexico fell at the bottom with only 71.0% of students graduating. Within Arizona, Greenlee County had the highest graduation rate, with 92.2% of students graduating with their peers. Pinal County placed last among Arizona counties with 71.7% graduating on time.

Arizona followed the same general pattern as the U.S. in 2016, with respect to graduation rates by race and ethnic origin. In both Arizona and nationwide, more Asian/Pacific Islander students graduated on time than students of any other race or ethnicity. Arizona had 76.4% of Hispanic students and 75.5% of Black or African American students graduating on time, compared to nationwide figures of 79.3% and 76.4%, respectively.

In 2016, Tucson Unified School District had 83% of all students graduating on time. Disaggregated by race/ethnicity, the on-time graduation rate was 81% for African American students, 67% for Native American students, 88% for Asian American students, 82% for Hispanic students, and 87% for White students. These graduation rates are higher than the state rates for students of all races/ethnicities with the exception of Native American and Asian.

The high school graduation rate for the U.S. rose from 79.0% in 2011 to 84.1% in 2016, an increase of 5.1 percentage points over five years, the highest graduation rate recorded since 2011, when the Department of Education began requiring schools to report rates in a standardized way. During the same five-year period, the percent of high school students graduating on time in Arizona increased by only 1.5 percentage points from 78.0% in 2011 to 79.5% in 2016.

Nationally, all minority groups saw a rise in on-time graduation rates in 2016, but gaps persist. Only 76% of black students and 79% of Hispanic students graduated on time, compared to 88% of White students and 91% of Asian/Pacific Islander students.

“Although students of color and low-income students are graduating at higher rates, we must be mindful that there are still significant gaps for historically underserved students which translate into lost potential for our communities and our country” (John B. King Jr., Secretary of Education, 2016-2017). Mr. King now heads the Education Trust, which works to close the achievement gap. “The urgent work to close these graduation rate gaps must be a national priority.”

The TUSD Superintendent’s goals, listed below, reflect the need to continue to close the Achievement Gap. Goals 2 through 5 correspond to areas addressed in this report, such as curriculum and instruction, teacher recruitment/induction/retention, and discipline.

Superintendent's Goals - 2017-18 and 2018-19

1. Increase student enrollment
2. Increase student academic achievement
3. Increase the amount of district dollars associated with classroom instructional spending in line with the Arizona Auditor General’s criteria
4. Decrease the number of classrooms without certified teachers of record
5. Improve school climate and safety

As TUSD moves forward, the district will have an opportunity to build on the Top Ten Achievements that it has identified. Supportive data for these achievements provided by the district are presented in Appendix A.

TUSD TOP TEN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Reduced discipline disparity (Figure A-1)
2. Improved graduation rates (Table A-1)
3. Reduced drop-out rates (Table A-2)
4. Increased extracurricular participation (Table A-3)
5. Advanced Learning Experiences (ALE) participation in areas that improved for student enrollment (Table A-4)
6. Increased student enrollment in Culturally Relevant Curriculum (CRC) courses (overall enrollment & enrollment) (Table A-5)
7. Increased number of African American Enrichment experiences
8. Increased number of African American Academic success events
9. Increased number of students in highly diverse or integrated schools (% of African American students in highly diverse or integrated schools) (Tables A-6 & A-7)
10. Improved teacher training in Culturally Responsive Practices in schools

Leadership Structure and Talent

Central Administration

Evidence

Organizational charts, interviews, and job descriptions.

Observations

1. The district has experienced six superintendents in 10 years, representing tenures of approximately 2.5 years per leader. The Council of Great City Schools reports the average tenure of urban school superintendents was 4.5 years in 2014. The repeated change in TUSD leadership has had a destabilizing effect overall, including negatively influencing the implementation of previous recommendations for improvement of services for African American students.
2. District leadership lacks diversity in terms of African American representation in both the superintendent's cabinet and the Board of Education. This lack of African American diversity is also evidenced in principal and teacher positions in TUSD.
3. There is no succession plan for filling positions vacated by leaders who leave the district, which is reflected in overall poor communication and implementation.
4. Despite the major importance of the desegregation court order and the Unitary Status Report, the Director of African American Student Services Department does not seem to have a sufficient line of communication to the Superintendent. Our team understands that lines of communication could be impacted by vacancies in assistant superintendent positions.

Recommendations

1. Ensure recommendations from the report are implemented and in place after leadership transitions and encourage the school board to include the report as a requirement when new leadership is hired. The team also recommends these recommendations remain active after the district obtains release from Unitary Status.
2. Though there is a plan in place to recruit more diverse talent at the central administration level, the team recommends the plan be revisited with a timeline in place and the plan should strongly focus on a model for Aspiring Leaders from within the district. The District should consider writing federal government and foundation grants to support leadership development and recruitment. Possible

sources of funding are the Wallace Foundation and the Office of Innovation and Improvement in the U.S. Department of Education.

3. By implementing plans for talent development and recruitment, the district will also be able to ensure a succession plan is in place.
4. The team strongly reinforces the district's recent recommendation for the Director of the African American Student Services Department to have a sufficient line of communication to the Superintendent or his or her designee. This structure will not only elevate the status of the work of the AASSD but also create a clear level of accountability. The team also recommends the Director be a member of the Superintendent's Cabinet.
5. All Board members and Central Level Administrators should receive ongoing training, coaching and monthly updates related to implementation of the African American Student Services report.

Principal Leadership

Evidence

Surveys, onsite interviews, professional development documents,

Observations

Out of 85 principals in the district, there are currently 6 principals who identify as African American (7%). The principals interviewed by the consulting team were vocal, and they clearly understood the challenges and concerns regarding the desegregation court order and the unitary status report. Some principals were frustrated about issues, such as discipline, student policing, and African-American-focused student activities, such as step clubs, African American music presentations, and culture clubs.

Interviews at HS. Following the dialogue with African American students at one high school, the administration debriefed with the interview team and shared insights on this school and the success of African American students. Based on these interviews, the following observations were made:

- a. The principal appeared to possess thorough knowledge of the community and demonstrated genuine care and concern for his students.
- b. African American students communicated a healthy level of respect for their principal.
- c. The principal has led the way in promoting relationships in the building. While this has not reached the entire faculty and staff, his vision included a focus on building relationships with African American students.

- d. Outside of AVID, the principal was not able to articulate specific, targeted efforts designed to increase student achievement outcomes for the school's African American student population.

Interviews with Middle School Leadership Team and High School Leadership Team. Interviews with administration from both Middle School A and High School A provided further opportunities to discuss successes and challenges associated with meeting the needs of African American students.

- a. When speaking on how African American students are supported in schools, administrators assigned responsibility only to certain people. It appeared as if limited groups and individuals were counted on to assist the school in providing support to African American students. Interviews with AASS specialists and administrators revealed a framework that seems to supplement but not complement the work of the school. Outside of the MTSS framework, there was no evidence of a team approach to supporting the improvement of outcomes for African American students.
- b. There was evidence of leadership capacity to use data to make sound decisions on what is best for African American students. However, there were no clear examples provided on how African American student data are consistently used to inform teachers and staff or to engage them in healthy analysis and dialogue in order to adjust supports and interventions.
- c. There is limited African American student participation in Advance Placement courses, and student readiness is a clear challenge.

Recommendations

1. If the District expects schools to improve outcomes for African American students, schools should work with the AASS to develop group-specific strategic plans based on a short but significant list of identified goals. These goals should be shared with the entire staff for accountability's sake so that ownership of said goals is a shared entity. Specifically, all teachers of African American students should be involved in assisting the school in reaching the identified goals. Once the AASSD has identified the target schools, these schools should be the focus for identifying goals and developing shared accountability. These schools will serve as model schools for the district with scale up to follow.

African American Teacher/Leader Recruitment and Retention

Evidence

Surveys, human resources data, interviews

Observations

TUSD has presently noted an increased effort to diversify the current teacher and leader talent within the district; however, there are still more options that could be explored in an effort to meet the provision of the USP in the area increasing African American staff at the school level to include teachers and school administrators.

While the proportion of the African American applicants has increased from 4% to 8.2%; African American teachers are still employed at extremely low rates. The perception of current staff and community members is that more emphasis is being placed on attracting and hiring Hispanic staff. The Trayben Team did not review the total number of African American applicants and the percentage hired from the total number of applications.

Recommendations

1. The district should consider a fresh marketing plan that is appealing to young people and that presents Tucson as a destination city because of the nightlife, university town atmosphere, cost of living, and proximity to Phoenix, Las Vegas, Grand Canyon, Mountains, etc.
2. There is a need for a strategic recruitment plan that includes specific strategies to recruit African American teachers. The strategy should include plans to partner with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (1) strategically recruit from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, (2) partner with national organizations that emphasize recruiting, selecting and developing diverse teacher candidates, and (3) develop an internal academy for future teachers program that targets the development of current TUSD middle and high school students.
3. Strategic Recruitment at Historically Black Colleges/Universities and Minority Serving Universities. As a recruitment strategy, current African American principals are now being deployed to colleges and universities, specifically Historically Black Colleges and Universities, along with Minority Serving Universities, to recruit African American teachers. However, there is still a need to create a decision matrix to assess if the current selected institution visits actually yield a significant numbers of graduates to meet the needs of the school district; as well as determine if the current return is related to the number of teachers that are hired as a result of the recruitment visits. This would ensure

that the efforts have a strategic focus and are more likely to yield a better return on the investment. There is also a need for recruiters to have marketing materials that are more attractive and specifically suited to attract the population of African American candidates in which they are recruiting.

4. Targeted Induction Program. The district should continue to invest in a Targeted Induction Program specifically designed for first through third year teachers, with a major focus on African American Teachers. This focus might include matching African American teachers with other African American teachers and ensuring that novice teachers and mentors are matched according to content and/or grade level. The induction program will need to ensure that mentors are trained in research-based mentoring and coaching strategies and allotted time to serve as a mentor—not simply a “buddy”—to make certain that mentors are able to support novice teachers effectively.
5. Develop and Incentivize Retention Programs for African American Teachers. Examples of incentives might include a bonus after 3 years, tuition support for a Master’s degree or an endorsement add-on. An analysis of exit data of all new teachers and the data of teacher and leader subgroups may indicate additional opportunities for retention strategies and other support strategies that target specific groups.
6. Academy for Future Teacher. TUSD should consider a partnership with local colleges or other organizations to offer a learning program designed to identify students who may be considering education as a profession. The program offers middle and high school students an opportunity to participate in several activities throughout the school year and summer to experience education through the lens of an educator, as well as teach and mentor younger students. High school students could also potentially earn college credit for their experiences. The program could grow to become a career pathway option offered to students.
7. Partnerships for Teacher Recruitment, Selection, Development. There are service providers across the country that specialize in teacher recruitment, selection, and development. Though TUSD currently partners with Teach for America and Pima Community College, there are other organizations such as Urban Teachers, The New Teacher Project, and Relay Graduate School of Education offering solutions for supporting school districts in meeting specific needs associated with attracting, developing and retaining top teacher talent. Partnerships with organizations like the aforementioned may provide TUSD with opportunities to increase the number and quality of African American leaders and staff in the district. There may also be an opportunity to partner with the local colleges and universities to create a Professional Development School (PDS) model that

specifically meets the needs of TUSD. PDS partnerships are established to create opportunities to prepare teachers specifically for the context of TUSD, develop the existing faculty of schools in some of the most current research based teaching and learning strategies, and provide opportunities for the higher education community to become more directly invested and present in the local school context.

8. A second potential pipeline for African American teachers for the TUSD would be to establish a TUSD Teacher Fellowship Program that would pay tuition for career changers or those with associate's degrees who want to teach and do not have the financial support to return to school. The admission process for this program would require an interview and previous transcripts. The school district should use recruitment methods that target qualified African American potential applicants to participate in the program. The TUSD Teacher Fellows would sign a contract agreeing to work in the district for three years to pay back the system for the tuition, fees and books through service. The participants would either complete their teacher certification (career changers) or their bachelor's degree (for those holding associate's degrees).

Career Changers. Nationwide, colleges and universities, including Georgia State University, have had great success in recruiting and educating career changers that want to go into teaching. Frequently, career changers are older, more mature, "life-experienced" people who come from the community and work well with students. In the Career Changer Model, the Fellow would have a choice of going to school at night and continuing their day job until finished or working as a dedicated substitute teacher for TUSD. This would allow principals to get to know the Fellow and determine if he/she might be a good fit for the school. In the Georgia State model, fellows (called "teacher residents") have a 90% retention rate after five years, and we believe that TUSD could experience similar success. Preparing career changers to become teachers only takes about four semesters and can be completed summer to summer. If effectively implemented, this program could provide TUSD with new African American, certified teachers each fall.

Associate's Degree to Bachelor's Degree. A second pipeline would help individuals with associate's degrees to earn bachelor's degrees in a teacher certification field. Again, identifying and recruiting African American persons from the community who would like to return to school and complete the teaching degree would be advantageous to the district and the community. Participants already a part of the community would potentially stay with the district throughout their careers.

Both of these programs require resources upfront, in the form of tuition, fees and books. However, the potential return on investment is priceless in terms of academic achievement and teacher retention. Consider the importance of having teachers that look like the students they are teaching, can advocate for the students and provide a high quality meaningful culturally relevant education for all students in an inclusive environment.

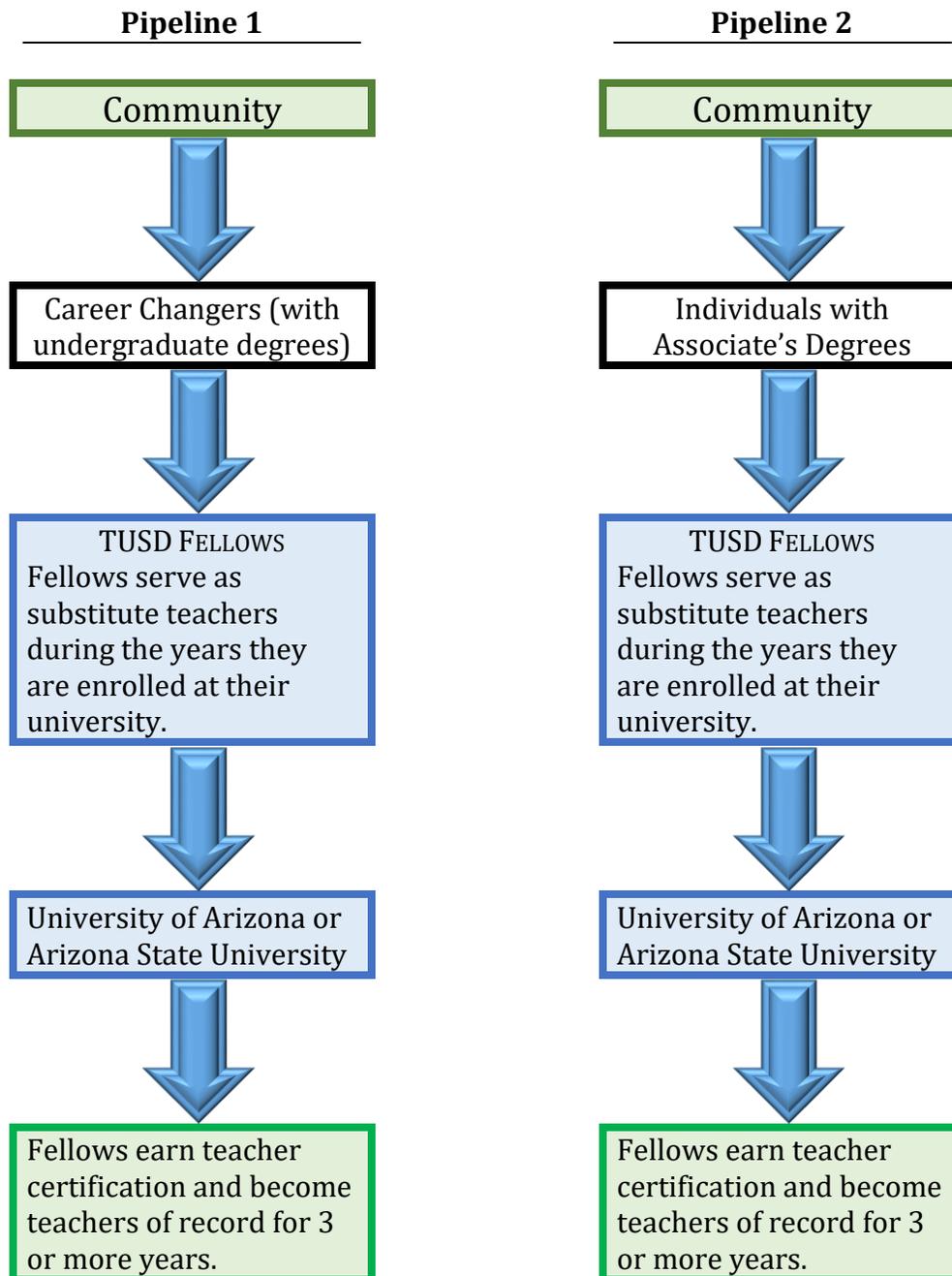


Figure 1. Career Changers (1) and Associate's-to-Bachelor's (2) Certification Pipelines.

Curriculum and Instruction

Culturally Relevant Curriculum and Pedagogy

Evidence

Professional development data, sample curriculum, interviews, surveys

Observations

After focus groups and conversations with TUSD staff at multiple levels, we found disparate understanding of the work being implemented to create culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy. TUSD seems to have two teams responsible for creating, implementing and revising culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy: the Department of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Instruction (CRPID) and the Multicultural Team, which sits within the larger Department of Curriculum & Instruction. Specifically, across several conversations, we heard clearly that “Teachers who aren't teaching culturally relevant courses feel like they no longer need to do culturally responsive pedagogy because the kids can just go to the culturally relevant courses to get that.”

The CRPID seems to have two separate strands of work being conducted, both of which are conflated in stakeholders' minds. One strand of work, is implementing “culturally responsive practices (CRPs),” that focuses more on the pedagogy and the relationships that teachers across the board are forming with their students.” CRPs include training modules being provided district-wide on “issues of bias, micro-aggressions, teacher expectations and their impact on student achievement.” While we heard about these trainings at each school we visited, feedback on the quality and timing of the courses was mixed. We were also informed that two professors from the University of Arizona were hired as lead consultants to develop four training modules and provided on-site training to principals. However, we did not review documents related to the quality of the professional learning opportunities provided and how the outcome of the training helped principals navigate the previously mentioned topics with diverse groups.

The second major strand of work is “culturally relevant courses (CRCs),” created to “reflect the experiences of African American students and people, the African American community as well as the Mexican American community.” CRCs are said to utilize critical pedagogy and are essential elements of instruction (EEI). A number of national and international experts have been engaged “in consultation in validating the CRC approach for TUSD.” Outcomes were shared for those students participating in the courses. However, comparison to similar students who had not participated in the coursework was not available. We also were not provided information related to

recruitment strategies that might garner interest in the courses, despite hearing from several staff and community members during our visit that the courses are unpopular with students of color. Similarly, while expert consultants have been engaged in some manner related to CRPs, we do not know how or if their input was incorporated, how often or systematically they were engaged in the work, nor what aspects of the work they were called upon to support.

Separate from the CRPID, there is also a Multicultural Team, and both of these report to the Department of Curriculum & Instruction. The Multicultural Team is responsible “to look at the curriculum and reconstruct it so that it really addresses the diverse needs of our student population by really infusing multiple perspectives...their histories, their cultures are what we use to make it more accessible and relevant to our kids.” The Multicultural Team has created a framework for CRPs. We could not determine why the Multicultural Team works separately from CRPID since they both fall under the larger Curriculum department. No one outside of senior district-level leaders spoke to us of the work of the multicultural team, nor did anyone tell us about CRPs embedded into the general curriculum provided to all students.

According to our interview results, a bright spot in the future state training scope is a strand focused on “student-teacher relationships, ways of dealing with inappropriate behavior, the restorative practice approach, and the restorative justice approach. Understanding why this was done, how we can address the harm that was committed, as opposed to you know, ‘Get out of my class. Go to the principal's office.’” The district’s plan is to identify content area experts from each grade band who will be trained by “experts from the university.” However, this is not a stipend position, and we heard from multiple stakeholders that teacher turnover because of salary is a major problem for the district. We are unsure if investing this level of resource into individual teachers, without providing a financial incentive to mitigate the district’s low salaries comparative to surrounding districts, will actually address site-based capacity.

The evaluation team was also concerned that we did not receive any documentation, nor were we able to draw out from our focus group conversations, the expected impact for African American or other students as a result of these changes. There appears to be no logic model guiding the different teams’ work, nor did we hear of any strategic goals or other big picture plan for teacher and staff outcomes as a result of the work. Questions raised by our team discussion included, what baseline data are being used to inform the teams’ scope and sequence? How might the CRPID and multicultural teams collaborate more intentionally and regularly to leverage knowledge and resources and ensure alignment in both pedagogical approaches as well as messaging and dissemination?

Recommendations

1. Consider stronger and more intentional collaboration between the multicultural team and the CRPID to better consolidate and leverage resources, institutional knowledge and efforts related to culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy. As CRPID and the multicultural team's work both create curriculum and professional learning resources, consider having the two teams work jointly within the Curriculum & Instruction and Professional Learning teams so that, again, resources are allocated most efficiently and all work done related to culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy is fully integrated into the larger vision of excellence for the department.
2. Create a research-based logic model for the work that incorporates inputs, outputs, short- and longer-term outcomes for both teachers and students. It was clear from our discussions with leaders that the philosophical underpinnings for this work are commendable. To ensure that the significant resources being allocated to this work have their intended impact, the team must do the work to define their intended impact and hold themselves accountable to outcomes for students and teachers. (See examples in Appendix B.)
3. Work with communications or marketing team to create an internal communications plan that clearly describes the vision, goals and work of the CRPID and multicultural team to site-based staff, students and families. This communication plan should be multifaceted (verbal, visual and written), utilize many different dissemination strategies (in person, email or Intranet, webinars or online trainings, social media, etc.), and should engage students, families and site-based staff in its development, to ensure that the maximum number and most diverse set of stakeholders understand the big picture and how to engage with various pieces of the work.
4. Reach out to curriculum leaders in additional districts or states that have enacted similar culturally relevant curriculum work to learn from their successes and challenges. For instance, the state of New Jersey enacted the "Amistad Bill" in 2002 and created a commission of African American educators and scholars to create an online curriculum resource to center African American history as American history (<http://www.njamistadcurriculum.net/>).

Advanced Learning Experiences

Evidence

Student data, interviews, surveys

Observations

Participation in Advanced Learning Experiences (ALE) rests heavily on students' and families' interests. Consequently, participation is relatively low for African American students.

Recommendations

1. Though there is extensive marketing of ALEs, our team recommends creating a marketing plan that rebrands ALE opportunities, and enlist AASS leaders to include the plan as a part of their engagement with African American students/families as early as possible. Along with the responsibilities of the AASS, teachers should work with these specialists to recommend students for further conversations. This same marketing plan should be a function of the lower grades so parents and students have sufficient time to consider their participation.
2. Whether a part of yearly leadership goals or a formal evaluation tool, lift the responsibility of increased African American student participation in ALE to the principal level. Building leaders should have a reviewable goal associated with improving participation for African American students in ALE that covers all levels.
3. Once determined by the district, engage all schools and relevant staff in training on how to appropriately identify potential for ALE. Though some training is in place, we recommend further training should also include development on how to use classroom experiences, assessments and assignments in order to seek talent that can be coached towards success in this area.

Advanced Learning Experiences: University High School

Evidence

Interviews, student data, surveys, sample curriculum, TUSD website

Observations

Though some information gathered from interviews might not be factual, an interview with the Leadership Team of University High School suggested students from underperforming schools are not academically prepared to attend UHS, which affects the number of African American Students and their eligibility for admission to the school. In the 2017-18SY, out of 1122 students, 3% or 35 students are African American

and 35% or 389 are Hispanic. In 2017-18, fifteen UHS African American students out of 35 received free and reduced lunch.

The eligibility criteria for UHS is determined by admission points. These points are based on CogAT test scores and calculated GPA (see admission point allocations). Students who earn 50 or more admission points are automatically offered placement at UHS. In 2015-16, more points were awarded to meeting the test scores, resulting in more students qualifying with 50 points.

GPA	Points
4.00	36
3.99-3.86	34
3.71-3.58	32
3.71-3.58	30
3.57-3.44	28
3.43-3.30	26
3.29-3.15	24
3.14-3.00	22

CogAT Stanine Test Score	Points
9	29
8	26
7	23
0-6	0

Students who score between 45 and 49 points (meeting the minimum criteria of a test score at 77 percentile or above, and a calculated GPA of a 3.0 (B average) in core subjects) are offered the opportunity to take an additional assessment. This additional measure was originally a short answer essay option (13-14 through 15-16 SY). In 2016-17, the essay was replaced by the ACT Engage a nationally normed and recognized attitudinal assessment.

Our team was made aware that a number of middle school students from charter and private schools apply and are accepted into the University High School. According to data reviewed, out of the 316 freshman students at UHS in 2017-18, 174 (55%) students were not enrolled in TUSD schools as eighth graders. Of these 174, 74 (43%) lived outside of TUSD boundaries.

Recommendations

1. The District should consider more accessibility to current test preparation opportunities, specifically for African American students in low performing schools. The district should also consider providing targeting tutoring services during the 6th through 8th grades to improve the GPA of African American students who may meet the testing qualification but not the GPA requirement. Best practices also suggest enhanced use of multiple intelligences and an interdisciplinary team approach to determine student eligibility.

2. The AASSD should consider more involvement in the test preparation opportunities, provide counseling to middle schools students about high school options, work with middle school parents about UHS as an option, and serve on an interdisciplinary team to determine eligibility and admission of African American Students to University High School.
3. Though we are aware that this recommendation has not been previously approved, the district should strongly consider a preparatory middle school that targets African American students from low performing elementary schools with a focus on preparing them for University High School admissions.

Admission Outcomes for Incoming African American Freshman – TUSD Schools only

Admission Cycle	Tested	Met test criteria	Met Test and GPA criteria	Qualified for Admission 50 points	Eligible to take non-cognitive assessment	Qualified under the threshold criteria
2013-14	67	18	12	8	4	3
2014-15*	160	9	5	5	0	0
2015-16	239	22	13	13	0	0
2016-17	220	13	8	8	0	0

*1st year all 7th grade tested

College and Career Readiness/Drop Out Prevention

Evidence

Interviews, survey results, student data, state and local reports

Observations

High School Course Offerings. Some smaller schools offer-limited courses outside the core. Students also identified this as an issue; they communicated a desire to have more course offerings at their schools that were in line with other schools' offerings. The difference in offerings revealed a feeling of inferiority communicated by students. Students were able to identify specific schools with a more robust offering of courses outside the core.

Drop Out Prevention, Intervention and Recovery. TUSD historically is at 3% or lower for African American dropout rates. Additionally, on-time graduation rates for African American students was 81%, for Native American students 67%, for Asian American students 87%, for Hispanic students 82%, and for White students 87%. These graduation rates are higher than the State rates for students with the exception of Native American and Asian students. These lower dropout rates can be attributed to the work

of 10 Dropout Prevention Specialists, and a Coordinator for the entire district. There are a total of 12 high schools, and one online school, in TUSD and all of them do not have Dropout Prevention Specialists. Interview responses indicated this is because of lack of funding. Schools are selected based on the needs of the high school. A middle school dropout prevention program was implemented based on the premise that factors causing students to drop out of school begin at the middle school level and carry over to high schools. The middle school initiative ended when the previous superintendent mandated the return of dropout personnel to the high school level. The mandate of the state supported drop-out prevention specialists is to work with students in grades 4-12. Students in the lower grades are referred to Dropout Prevention through an online referral process that generates a home visit by a dropout prevention specialist. Eleven middle schools (based on needs) received direct, on-campus services from Dropout Specialists in SY 2017-2018. Middle schools without on-site services use the online referral to request drop out assistance. Though these limited services are provide to students 4-8, the team suggests a potential issue in meeting the letter and the spirit of the law.

Based on data gathered through interviews, there is a lack of consistency in understanding of the role of Student Support Specialists and how they might interact with the Dropout Prevention Specialists to increase graduation rates and prevent dropout rates. Though the two positions are distinctly different, specific roles should not prevent the two support personnel positions from coordinating efforts and working more closely together going forward. The Dropout Prevention Specialists have traditionally worked on **prevention** of dropping out and **retrieving** students who have left school prior to graduation. The Student Success Specialist work from an **academic** support perspective. Both positions have the goal of supporting students in academic growth, graduation, and entry into post-secondary education.

Since its inception in July 2014, "Steps to Success," a program that includes 220 home visits in one morning, has visited over 1,173 students and 600 or 51% have returned to an educational environment. The bi-yearly community walk includes the Mayor's office and numerous community stakeholders. The Student Support Specialists, along with other TUSD participants step in and serve as drivers, in addition to speaking with students and family members. There is support across the school district and the community. The purpose is to get students who have dropped out of school to return. While students who have dropped out are not the primary target, other groups of students may receive visits as well. For example, these groups may include students with a large number of absences or students who are severely credit deficient. Data provided indicate from the eight walks completed, 1,173 students received visits, 52.6% returned to school and 15.4% graduated.

Recommendations (College and Career Readiness)

1. Revise the course selection process to include a timeline that allows students to share course interests from a menu of possible offerings. These data should be used to coordinate with Finance and HR so adequate staffing decisions can ensure that courses meet students' interest.
2. While all interests cannot realistically be met with adequate staffing in one year, the District should continue implementation of a multi-year plan that gradually increases course offerings year after year with the ultimate goal of achieving equity across schools.
3. The district has established online courses in order to increase offerings in a timelier, more cost effective manner for students at schools where face-to-face options are not available. The team recommends consideration of real time video feed for students who are in schools that do not have enough students to constitute a course. Families tend to decide on schools to attend based on their residence, so the District should continue to ensure students have more options outside of leaving their neighborhoods in order to receive adequate course offerings.
4. Create more career and internship opportunities for African American students through partnerships with community businesses.
5. The district has an established partnership with Pima Community College and should consider expanding the partnership to create an Early College High School, which is a totally different model from University High School.
6. Consider developing and offering a summer bridge or boot camp programs for rising African American 11th and 12th graders to prepare them for post-graduate opportunities.
7. AVID in TUSD works to recruit African American students and will work more collaboratively with AASD in this recruitment. Given the focus on college options, AVID should be leveraged as a specific intervention tool to better engage African American students in their coursework pursuant to future goals.

Recommendations (Dropout Prevention)

1. Continue to ensure that the 10 dropout prevention specialists are assigned to the schools with the highest dropout rates.
2. Consider reimplementing dropout prevention specialists assigned to middle schools. This may require hiring of additional dropout prevention specialists or

considering how counselors and social workers in middle schools contribute to dropout prevention.

3. Continue to schedule joint monthly meetings between AASS staff and dropout prevention specialists to familiarize them with the roles and responsibilities their positions involve, specifically as related to the reorganization of the AASSD, thus encouraging them to work collaboratively to decrease African American dropout rates. This is especially important as new staff members are hired.
4. Consider stronger collaboration between AASS staff and dropout prevention specialists in order to develop proactive measures to decrease the number of African American dropouts, which is currently at 3%.
5. Continue to collect and share specific data on the impact of the “Steps to Success” initiative to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program in increasing the number of students who return to school through a seamless integrated reentry process. The reentry process currently used should be validated for continued ease of reentry as a primary focus.
6. Continue to institute a credit recovery program for students who need support to matriculate through completion of their high school programs. As the district is aware, successful credit recovery programs are generally offered during the summer session.
7. Share the district’s early warning dropout prevention system or database in order for dropout prevention specialists, student support coaches, behavior specialists, and other middle and high school personnel can easily track students in need of additional support.

Culture and Climate

Processes and Procedures

Evidence

Interviews, 2016-2017 AY Annual Report; Appendix VI-52 & 300; Principal Discipline Questionnaire 3

Observations

- PBIS training is offered across select staff members. This should facilitate effective implementation for other staff in a train the trainer model. However, no data on effectiveness are available, as training apparently occurred after the summer 2017, suggesting that there has not been enough time to compile these data.
- The role of the RPPF in this disciplinary model is not clearly specified.
- The role of the MTSS facilitators is extensive and varied in the disciplinary process. Their work encompasses both academic and behavioral interventions. It was noted that the MTSS facilitators were spread thin. The district is aware of this and has initiated a process to make corrections.
- Restorative Practices represent current best practices in schools. There is an extensive research base to support their use. They are reportedly being used effectively in TUSD, while discipline disparities have decreased for all students, a disproportionality of African American student discipline representation still exists.
- No raw data were presented for DAEP, a positive alternative to suspension, to allow evaluation of this important behavioral response.
- The Principal Discipline Questionnaire indicates that while training was reported in the annual report, the perspective of the principals interviewed is that the training is inconsistently provided and implemented. One administrator indicated that principals are provided training but frequently choose not to participate.
- Though there is disagreement regarding this observation, through our interview documentation there appears to be little consistency across schools. There is little consistency across schools in disciplinary practices; all agree that restorative practices are being used, but these practices are the only consistent method across schools. Referral rates by schools vary widely, with some schools rarely

referring African American students and others with significant referral rates for African American students.

- According to data reviewed, based on school demographics, African American students are overrepresented in disciplinary referrals at all high schools.

Recommendations

1. Though the district indicates each school has a discipline team and a PBIS plan, schools were allowed to develop school-specific implementation plans for discipline teams. The district should monitor for consistent implementation of guidelines by using variables such as school size and population to facilitate data-gathering focused on which configuration works best.
2. More integrated use of the site teams is recommended. Though each team has a different focus (student, staff or school culture), these foci are not mutually exclusive and could be more supportive of each other.
3. TUSD has developed extensive processes and documentation of disciplinary practices. These include training, monitoring, and swift corrective action. However, metrics that confirm their effectiveness as they relate to changes in the school culture and climate are lacking. Currently, a reduction in referrals and suspensions are the primary metric used to document effectiveness. Positive disciplinary data are not synonymous with changes in culture or climate; they are only one indicator. The extensive documentation and training are not sustainable over the long term. Accordingly, a focus on improving the school culture and climate, including addressing explicit bias and identifying specific changes that demonstrate improved culture and climate, would be beneficial and should serve to mitigate the need for the current intense time and effort spent on disciplinary processes. For example, a focus on the socioemotional needs of students in the alternative setting reportedly has been effective. Perhaps a similar focus on the socioemotional needs of teachers and students in the mainstream schools would enhance the effectiveness of the District's efforts and the climate of these schools. Current research suggests that trauma-informed practices enacted with teachers are as beneficial as those used with students. The increased participation and engagement of African American students in the life of the school should also be considered a key indicator of change in school culture and climate. Based on data provided by the district, participation is changing slowly, and this change is positive. The fact that African American students are unanimously identified as problematic at the high school level suggests some implicit bias, and this is both

negative and impactful with regard to treatment and referral of students. Participation data suggest that, except for sports, African American students are not highly participatory at the high school level.

4. A flow chart that demonstrates potential points of intersection and integration of the site team approaches is important, including the interaction with families. They appear to operate in silos.

Equity/Disparity

Evidence

2016-2017 AY Annual Report; Principal Discipline Questionnaire 3; Interviews; 2017-2018 Suspension reports

Observations

- Total discipline rates for African American students have decreased considerably over the four-year reporting period. However, these rates continue to be disproportionately high when compared to the percent representation of African American students in the TUSD. Conversely, White and Hispanic students are underrepresented when their proportional representation is considered.
- Suspension rates for African American students far outpace all other ethnic and racial groups. Except for a measurable decline in the 2015-2016, these rates remain largely unchanged since 2012. According to the likelihood ratios presented in Table 6.10 and 6.11 of the annual report, African American students are twice as likely as White students to receive both short-term and long-term suspensions. This represents an improvement, but it is still disproportionately high for a district the size of TUSD with such a small African American student body.

Recommendations

1. Current discipline data should be disaggregated by gender in addition to race and ethnicity. Examination of suspension data suggest a gender bias, such that girls were more likely to receive less harsh discipline for the same offenses as boys. Is there also a gender by race interaction? The district should consider this question.
2. In addition, data should be disaggregated to examine whether there is an interaction between race and number of days suspended for the same offense.
3. Though collaboration is currently going on among those responsible for these areas of training, culturally relevant approaches to discipline were not discussed

in reports but were raised in interviews. In addition to classroom practices, it is important to utilize disciplinary and interaction approaches that affirm African American sociocultural practices. Outcomes from collaborative meetings should include addressing the importance of culturally relevant approaches to discipline directly and intentionally.

Professional Development

Needs Assessment for Teachers and Leaders

Evidence

Interviews, surveys, PD reports

Observations

While implementation of PBIS rests at the school level, there seems to be inconsistent implementation across the district based on interview data. Because of this, there seems to be limited implementation of the framework throughout the school district in spite of comprehensive PBIS training by TUSD.

Principals noted the power of building relationships with African American students and acknowledged the need to grow their faculties in this area. Success and lack thereof was linked to school-level emphasis on the academic subject area and less focus on the needs of individual students. There is a need for more emphasis on building teacher capacity for developing positive relationships with African American students that result in improved student outcomes. Some administrators admitted the need for more productive relationships between African American students and their teachers.

Teachers have been trained in culturally responsive pedagogy on varying levels. Some training has been offered and not well-supported with clear ways to observe and provide feedback to teachers on a consistent basis.

School leaders provided surface-level answers to questions about how they are meeting the needs of African American students. Specifically, one school mentioned professional development that only focused on definitions of culturally responsive pedagogy. There is evidence of a need to dig deeper into these concepts in order to increase the impact of teaching and learning for African American students.

Given the focus on culturally responsive pedagogy, school-level leadership needs to ensure they have a lens of observation and feedback focused on specific and value-added look-fors. Some administrators spoke to how it is difficult to consistently provide feedback and did not indicate whether or not they give specific insights to teachers in the area of culturally responsive pedagogy when they do visit classrooms.

Recommendations:

Overall, it should be clearly communicated that a goal of professional learning is to build and sustain school-level capacity to perform an identified and agreed-upon set of competencies. From the principal down, all faculty members should know and be

held accountable to an increased capacity to perform their duties connected to the professional learning provided.

1. The Special Master's Report identifies culturally responsive pedagogy as a focus for professional learning. This training, in accordance with recommendations from the report, should be job-embedded and focused on creating both a classroom culture and practices that support CRP. Training should also include how to effectively and collaboratively plan for CRP.
2. Include core area-specific training in CRP. Training should consider the most challenging standards based on AzMerit data by each subject.
3. Train school leaders on how to observe and provide feedback for CRP. This training should include the administrator's role at the PLC table. A rating scale should be identified and implemented.
4. Continue to engage teachers and staff in implicit/explicit bias training in a variety of delivery modes. This training should not be an indictment on adults' biases but more of an opportunity for insightful self-analysis and self-reflection designed to empower staff members to think more about how they engage with African American students inside and outside the classroom.
5. The Special Master's Report identified reducing student behaviors as a focus for professional learning. Though the district is addressing these areas, consideration should be given to revisiting PBIS training to ensure development is tied to pre-determined and locally developed goals for improving school culture. If not currently functioning, each school should review their PBIS team and revisit their responsibility to develop and monitor PBIS plans for the local site. The PBIS team should continue to be centrally trained based on national best practices for implementation and regularly report progress on locally developed goals both to school-level administration and central office.
6. To accompany the recommendation in the Special Master's report, the district should continue to support the designation of an individual to oversee all professional learning in the district, just as schools should identify a professional learning facilitator for each building. The district should ensure this person serves as part of a District team in order to promote fair and consistent professional development practices in all schools. The District designee should continue to oversee this group of faculty members and regularly convene the group in order to provide training and support on planning and implementing quality professional learning and to review the progress of professional learning in each school.

7. The designated Professional Learning Director/Coordinator should be responsible for identifying resources and training opportunities that speak specifically to meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of African American students.

Parent Engagement and Advocacy

Parent Involvement at School and District Levels

Evidence

Interviews, Surveys, documentation of meetings

Observations

Members of the teams met with a group of parents who voiced their concerns about schools being welcoming environments and listening to their concerns regarding their children. There was consensus about the lack of communication between the schools and the parents. Many parents voiced their concerns about the lack of diversity of the teaching staff and sensitivity to the needs of African American students. Specifically, one parent mentioned how teachers were not reprimanded or any action taken when using racial slurs in the classroom. They attributed this to the insensitivity of the school leadership and the overall lack of quality teachers available for hire.

Parents also spoke of unfair disciplinary treatment when compared to other students. For example, one White student and one Black student brought drugs into the schools. The issue of implicit bias was clearly a part of the decision making process when the White student was given a second chance while the Black student was suspended. Black students' book bags were searched when other students' book bags were not.

Some parents stated that they had positive school experiences because they made it their business to visit the school daily to ensure that their children were being provided with an adequate and equitable education.

Parents were concerned that counselors were not knowledgeable about Historically Black Colleges and Universities, in addition to Minority Serving universities and were not recommending colleges and universities outside the State of Arizona. This lack of awareness of African American scholarship opportunities negatively affects where African American students attend college/university on scholarships.

Recommendations

1. Expand and continue to provide professional development for school leadership on how to encourage and embrace parental engagement through clear communication and by providing welcoming school environments.
2. Consider stipends for parent liaisons who serve as parent trainers/advocates from local schools to encourage positive parent engagement.

3. Continue to establish school councils with parent members in key roles, as this helps with clear communications regarding teacher and student issues.
4. Continue to ensure African American parents understand and have input into discipline policies to circumvent unfair and biased treatment of African American students.
5. Though the district is providing implicit bias training for some staff, all TUSD employees should receive the training. Training opportunities should be inclusive of academic and career counselors as well as teachers, bus drivers, secretaries and lunchroom personnel.
6. Considering the lack of diversity among school counselors, we recommend that implicit bias training be provided for counseling staff district wide. Counselors should also be exposed to universities outside of Arizona, specifically Minority Serving Institutions and HBCUs.
7. Counselors should be made aware of scholarship opportunities outside of universities in Arizona. This could be done through professional development provided by other counselors outside of TUSD who have been successful in assisting African American Students to complete FASFA documents for college and scholarship applications. AASSD could also take on some these responsibilities and work with the counselors to assist juniors and seniors.

Parent Resource Centers

Evidence

Interviews, Resource Center data

Observations

There appears to be an adequate number of parent resource centers that offer a wide variety of parent workshops, such as GED completion, career counseling, and resume building. However, all centers are not created equally. Additionally, there is no data management system in place, beyond Excel spreadsheets, to capture enrollment in classes, demographics of participants, and impact of participation in classes.

Recommendations

1. Though the district indicates use of an Excel spreadsheet, the Director indicated she was keeping handwritten data and had requested a better system. The team suggests including a simple database beyond an Excel spreadsheet, specifically used to capture the demographics, number of parents enrolled in classes and workshops, including follow-up data that can be disaggregated.

Student Interview Results

Interview with African-American Students at Palo Verde HS

A group of African-American males engaged in dialogue about their experiences in school. Conversations from this focus group revealed some valuable insights that will prove to be helpful if addressed among adults in the TUSD:

Observations

- a. African American males feel they are sometimes treated the same in school as they are in society; this translates to a negative experience. There is evidence their treatment is less positive than other students are, and they communicated a level of acceptance of said treatment.
- b. African American students are able to articulate future goals but would benefit from more specific support that helps them navigate their way to post-secondary options. This is something they specifically asked for during the focus group.
- c. Although African American students report positive experiences with their teachers and administrators, there is a question about expectations adults have for them in their everyday interactions and class sessions. This overall positive expression of experience contradicts how they feel they are treated compared to the “street,” illuminating the concern about how they may have come to accept how they are viewed as “just the way it is.”
- d. Some African American students feel they are viewed based on past mistakes and not on how they have changed for the better.
- e. There is limited evidence that student voice is considered when making decisions about African American students and their needs. While there have been focus groups conducted with African American students, there is a question about how much the information has been used to influence practice.
- f. The course selection process for students seems to focus more on a process than an inclusionary framework. A framework that considers student interests and seeks to meet those needs so students are able to participate in courses that meet their long-term interests.
- g. Each student interviewed was able to identify with one adult in the building who makes the school experience meaningful for them. These identified

individuals demonstrate a genuine interest in the well-being of the interviewees.

Student Perceptions

In four separate focus groups, team members met with 33 current students and alumni representing Cholla High School, Tucson High School, Palo Verde High School, Sahuaro High School, Pueblo High School and University High School. Four of the 33 student participants were graduates, including a 2010 graduate, two 2016 graduates and a 2017 graduate. Two of the graduates were former athletes. When appropriate, comments of graduates will be addressed separately.

Student perceptions of school-level engagement of African-American students were mixed. During one of the largest focus groups representing an African-American male mentoring group, students were asked “On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your experience with your teachers as an African-American male?” with 1 representing the most negative experiences and 10, the most positive. Most students offered a rating of 10 followed closely by ratings of “7/8.” The lowest rating was a 6; however, this student claimed partial responsibility for his experience thusly: “Part is my fault because I can do better.” During this focus group, many of the young men made reference to personal accountability. This likely reflects a central theme of this mentoring group.

Without exception, currently-enrolled students valued the role of AASS (African-American Student Services) personnel in their schooling experiences and knew school-level AASS personnel. Students regarded these personnel as responsive, attentive, and proactive in relation to their success in their schools. While one AASS staff member participated in one focus group, this general sentiment was consistent with that shared by the other focus group with currently-enrolled students.

Beyond their role in delivering the paucity of programs targeting African-American students (addressed in the following), AASS personnel often intervened on behalf of students with school personnel to de-escalate conflict. Perhaps most importantly, AASS personnel served as an all-around source of support for students. This support included personal advice, job assistance, course-selection assistance, tutoring and academic support and, when necessary, informal discipline, such as identifying counterproductive behavior and holding students accountable for such behaviors. It is clear that students regard AASS as an important resource. AASS embodies many best practices associated with mentoring and broader social support networks for students (Allen, 2015; Knight-Manuel et al., 2016; Marciano, 2017; Watson, Sealey-Ruiz, & Jackson, 2014). However, there were a number of complaints shared by many of the participants. These complaints are explored in the following sections.

Course Availability. When themed African American courses are offered, they are often taught by White teachers. (For a recent discussion of this phenomena see Goldenberg, 2014). Of course, this is a consequence of the continued paucity of African American educators in TUSD. This creates some doubt among students about the degree to which these courses will be truly reflective of their experiences. The point here is not that White teachers cannot successfully deliver these classes but rather that this potentially discourages these students' curricular engagement and ultimately their academic success (Dee & Penner, 2017; Durden, Dooley, & Truscott, 2016; Goldenberg, 2014; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015). Considering the fact that African-American students represent such a small percentage of enrolled students, this is, at least symbolically, particularly problematic.

During student focus groups, two additional areas of concern emerged. One 2016 graduate was not at all aware of these courses. One of these graduates actually attended two separate TUSD high schools. That students can complete high school without any awareness of the availability of these courses is a troubling indication that TUSD is not doing enough to promote or integrate these courses into students' curricular trajectory. The second area of concern is that the two remaining alumni (2010 and 2017) agreed that these courses are generally regarded as easy courses without the same rigor as other courses. In fact, the 2017 graduate purposefully avoided these courses because of the student's interest in preparing for college. Her school counselor agreed with her assessment. Consistent with this area of concern is the fact that both alumni agreed that athletes disproportionately enroll in these classes. While this is not an objective indication that the courses are less rigorous, students had no doubt that athletes either enrolled or were enrolled in these courses because of comparatively less rigor. As one of the two former athletes shared, "We are left on our own except on the field."

School-based Activities. Students also expressed concern about the availability of clubs, programs and activities that attend to the specific realities and experiences of African-American students. As students seek to find "space" within their schools, such activities are associated with improved student engagement and achievement (Barnes, Riggs, Ngo, Ettekal, & Okamoto, 2017; Cummings, Cheeks, & Robinson, 2018; Larson & Ngo, 2017; Murray & Milner, 2015; Ngo, 2017; Whalen et al., 2016).

One highlight in this area is the college tour organized by personnel associated with AASS. Several students, including two of the graduates, spoke to

the importance of this event. One of the graduates actually participated in the tour twice. This tour is obviously a labor-intensive effort that represents the investment of AASS staff. However, the scale of this particular program is unclear as 19 students participated in the most recent trip. While important, this represents an extremely small subset of all African-American TUSD high school students.

When such activities were available (examples include Heritage Day, African-American Cultural Club and Delta Gems), they are often scheduled during Black History Month (February) or are otherwise isolated. Further, these events are often associated with individuals that are invested in the success of African American students rather than endorsed or sponsored by the school itself. When such personnel leave or move to another school, these programs either move with them or vanish. Multiple students mentioned the appeal of school-based step teams and bemoaned the fact that many schools no longer support such activities. One of the graduates was surprised to hear that step teams are not as available as they once were and recalled how popular they were, often bringing hundreds of African-American students to interscholastic step shows.

Students also shared that schools are not as inclusive as they might be in school-wide programming. A student mentioned a Mariachi Band performance during freshman orientation which signaled this student's outsider status and by extension, the outsider status of all African American students. Students all indicated that when programs for African-American students are offered, they are not sufficiently promoted. Further, students indicated that they are rarely asked about their interests to inform programming.

School-Based Behavior Monitoring. Many of the young men reported feeling "policed" and under unwarranted suspicion. However, most of the instances that they shared reflected experiences with individual school personnel rather than a sense that there was unfair institutional surveillance of their behavior. Across schools, students were able to identify the same school personnel that unfairly surveilled, misrepresented, or punished their behavior.

One should not infer that this means that there are no institutional problems in TUSD in this area for it may be true that students have become desensitized to unwarranted suspicion and may no longer recognize it when it occurs. In this regard, one student suggested that young Black men should be "used to it by now" and stated "we are treated the same here as we are on the street." Another student recounted a moment during which many African American male students were searched for weapons based on a report that "an African American male" had a weapon.

Of course, this potential desensitization is a consequence of broader societal patterns of racial stereotyping and surveillance. However, schools, at their highest aspiration, should disrupt these patterns so that students are not burdened by them (Carter, Kolts, Arredondo, & Gilmer, 2017; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Losen, 2014; McIntosh, Girvan, Horner, & Smolkowski, 2014; Morris & Perry, 2016; Okonofua & Eberhardt, 2015; Rudd, 2018). It is not the purpose of this report to speak for these students but rather to encourage TUSD to be proactive in addressing any patterns of school-level interaction that make students feel like outsiders in their own schools.

Finally, there were several instances in which students were disciplined without parental notification. Whether this reflects what is allowed under TUSD disciplinary policy or not, it is a practice that prevents parents from intervening and advocating for their children in the face of potential unwarranted attention during school hours.

Recommendations

1. Conduct surveys of a sample of African American students periodically in order to gain qualitative data on their school experiences. The focus group engagement should include addressing the following areas: (a) quality of engagement with adults in the building, (b) opportunities for academic success, and (c) challenges where assistance may be needed.
2. The district should continue to refine a set of metrics to monitor throughout the school year, relevant to the different school levels and focused on school-specific goals. For example, high schools should continue to monitor the following data for African American student progress: (a) failure rates, (b) discipline incidents, (c) cohort graduation rate, and (d) attendance.
3. While not an exhaustive list, each school should choose from a list of metrics that speak to the most advantageous data points to set goals for and align with observable practices/strategies. Each metric should be assigned a local owner whose responsibility is to work with the AASS and other identified staff members to track.
4. Connect each African American student with a counselor or advisor during their freshman year whose sole responsibility is to assist them in navigating to post-secondary options. This contact with the African American students should specifically align each students' goals with their academic performance and post-secondary possibilities, including all of the necessary steps needed to prepare for entry into the post-secondary world.

5. The district should continue to refine the course selection process to include early identification of interests for students along with the ability to choose courses based on these interests. Both counselors and advisors should continue to be involved in this process and continue to allow parents an opportunity to engage with the school as well. At the least, the pre-registration and course selection process needs to be clearly articulated and communicated to families and students.
6. For schools without a formal mentor program the district is currently soliciting staff members and community stakeholders to become mentors for interested and identified African American students. The district should continue to train mentors with information regarding students that should aid them in helping students achieve their short and long-term goals. These mentors should continue to work with the AASSD to ensure consistency of interventions on behalf of students being mentored.

Plan for Restructuring the Tucson Unified School District African American Student Services Department for School Year 2018-19

The Department shifts direction from 100% direct services to a balance between direct services to students and direct support for departments and schools by building institutional capacity of teachers and other support staff. Some direct services will continue at targeted schools, using asset-based approaches designed to meet students where they are through culturally responsive practices.

Specialist positions will require a minimum BA. Coaches will require a minimum BA or equivalent, relevant experience.

AASSD Proposed Structure - based on current staffing			Trayben Proposed Structure	
FTE	Position	Status	FTE	Position
1	Director	Continuing	1	Director
1	Program Coordinator (was CSP)	Continuing	1	Asst. Director
1	Administrative Assistant	Continuing	1	Admin. Asst.
2	Behavior Specialists	Continuing	2	Behavior Specialists
4	Program Liaisons	New	4	4 Program Liaisons
6	RTI Specialists	New	4	4 ES RTI Specialists
9	Student Success Specialist	Eliminating		
		New	1	Research Project Manager
		New	8	Student Success Coaches
	Part-Time			
3	Certified Academic Tutors (Added Duty)	Continuing	3	Certified Academic Tutors (Added Duty)
2	Activity Helpers (College Students)	Continuing	2	Activity Helpers (College Students)
		New	3	Certified Academic Tutors (Added Duty)
		New	4	Activity Helpers (College Students)
	Total			
20	15 Full-time & 5 Part-time		34	22 Full-time & 12 Part-time

Table 1 outlines the tasks, responsibilities, and timelines under this proposed reorganization, by task.

Table 1: Measurement Plan including Tasks, Responsibilities and Timelines (By Task)

Task	Person Responsible	Benchmark Schedule	Required Data
<i>Tasks 1-6 directed primarily towards students in grades K-5.</i>			
1. Establish a system of benchmarks to monitor growth of students on a quarterly basis to identify students not making progress in reading, mathematics and writing.	Director Research Project Manager (RPM)	August 2018	Reading, math, and writing student progress reports
2. Work with teachers to create a plan of targeted intervention in targeted schools.	Director Assistant Director Specialists/Liaisons	September 2018	Intervention plans
3. Create before and after school tutoring sessions to extend learning time.	Assistant Director Academic Tutors Activity Helpers	September 2018	Before-school and after-school tutoring plans
4. Foster family communication and home-school connections via telephone contact, email messages and home visits.	Director SS Coaches Specialists/Liaisons	Ongoing	Parent communication logs
5. Monitor discipline of African American students and participate as an advocate as suspension hearings.	Director Specialists/Liaisons SS Coaches Behavior Specialists	Ongoing	Discipline referrals, notes from suspension hearings
6. Create a personalized plan for each student not making progress towards graduation at targeted schools	Director Assistant Director Specialists/Liaisons SS Coaches	October	Personalized graduation plans
<i>Tasks 7-9 directed primarily towards students in grades 6-12.</i>			
7. Identify incoming 9th graders who are performing below grade level on AZMerits and/or did not pass all core subjects in 8th grade	Director Assistant Director Specialists/Liaisons Research Manager	Summer 2018	Incoming 9 th graders' AZMerits data and pass rate data for 8 th grade core subjects
8. Set up parent conferences to review the students' middle school and/or achievement levels and develop monitoring plan	Assistant Director Specialists/Liaisons	Summer 2018	Log of parent conferences for middle school achievement reviews and monitoring plans
9. Collaborate with Dropout Prevention Specialists to create regular contact with student in order to develop four-year plan and review progress towards graduation.	Director Assistant Director Specialists/Liaisons	Summer 2018	Documentation of regular contact with students, 4-year graduation plans, and progress reports

Tasks and Responsibilities (By Position)

Director

- (Task 1) Establish a system of benchmarks to monitor growth of students on a quarterly basis to identify students not making progress in reading, mathematics and writing.
- (Task 2) Work with teachers to create a plan of targeted intervention in targeted schools.
- (Task 4) Foster family communication and home-school connections via telephonic contact, email messages and home visits
- (Task 5) Monitor discipline of African American students and advocate for students at hearings.
- (Task 6) Create a personalized plan for each student not making progress towards graduation at targeted schools
- (Task 7) Identify incoming 9th graders who are performing below grade level on AZMerits and/or did not pass all core subjects in 8th grade
- (Task 9) Collaborate with Dropout Prevention Specialists to create regular contact with student in order to develop four-year plan and review progress towards graduation
- Supervise department staff
- Foster African American Parent and Student Advisory Councils
- Serve as a conduit connecting the African American community to TUSD
- Coordinate collaborative efforts to implement a reading support program at elementary schools and a math support program at middle schools targeting African American students.

Program Coordinator/Assistant Director

- (Task 2) Work with teachers to create a plan of targeted intervention in targeted schools.
- (Task 3) Create before and after school tutoring sessions to extend learning time.
- (Task 6) Create a personalized plan for each student not making progress towards graduation at targeted schools

- (Task 7) Identify incoming 9th graders who are performing below grade level on AZMerits and/or did not pass all core subjects in 8th grade
- (Task 8) Set up parent conferences to review the students' middle school and/or achievement levels and develop monitoring plan
- (Task 9) Collaborate with Dropout Prevention Specialists to create regular contact with student in order to develop four-year plan and review progress towards graduation
- Data analysis and collection to ensure student progress at targeted sites, including analyzing data on the impact of Task Force-related initiatives
- Developing and coordinating district-wide events and family engagement in collaboration with schools and relevant departments (e.g. FACE, CRPI, Multicultural, etc.)
- Collaborate with District and community resources (e.g. ALE, Child and Family Resources, etc.)
- Participate in training on culturally responsive practices
- Train Student Success Coaches in strategies to use when working with students individually and in small groups.
- Observe Student Success Coaches at work with students and provide feedback.
- Collaborate with the Student Success Coaches and classroom teachers to develop intervention strategies.
- Facilitate subject area training for Student Success Coaches.
- Work with relevant staff to develop student success plans for identified at-risk students

Program Liaisons [4]

College and Career Readiness; Mentoring and Tutoring

- Develop and distribute promotional materials on college and career readiness, credit recovery opportunities, social development, community partnerships, and parent quarterly events
- Coordinate efforts and serve as a collaborative consultant to improve academic achievement, provide mentorship and guidance, increase student retention and the college-going rates

Family, Parent, and Community Engagement and Outreach

- Develop community partnerships including local colleges and universities
- Conduct quarterly events; leadership conferences
- Organize student and parent leadership conferences
- Increase communication with parents, and participation of parents at parent conferences, site councils and PTAs
- Collaborate with District and community resources (e.g. ALE, Child and Family Resources, etc.)
- Serve as a conduit connecting the African American community to TUSD

ALE/AVID

- Develop and distribute promotional materials on college and career readiness, ALE, social development, community partnerships, and parent quarterly events
- Serve as the AVID liaison
- Support increased GATE and ALE enrollment

CRC/CRPI

- Serve on the internal Culturally Responsive Practices (CRP) committee along with the Director; work to assess and implement recommendations from the committee to ensure the alignment of AASSD activities and CRPI in multiple areas

Behavior Specialists [2]

- (Task 5) Monitor discipline of African American students and advocate for students at suspension hearings.
Identify at-risk African American students and implementing interventions
- Work to prevent the overrepresentation of African American students in special education classes and participate in child studies and IEP meetings
- Collaborate with site MTSS teams to identify and strategize for student needs through Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions
- Assist in mediations and trainings with Restorative and Positive Practices

- Facilitators
- Communicate progress and educational options with all African American students and parents
- Respond to requests for support services online form

RTI Specialists [4] [4 Elementary and K8]

- (Task 2) Work with teachers to create a plan of targeted intervention in targeted schools.
- (Task 4) Foster family communication and home-school connections via telephonic contact, email messages and home visits
- (Task 5) Monitor discipline of African American students and advocate for students at suspension hearings.
- Academic Achievement/Engagement (RTI, Enrichment)
- Coordinate collaborative efforts to implement a reading support program at elementary schools and a math support program at middle schools targeting African American students.

Success Coaches [8]

- (Task 4) Foster family communication and home/school connections via telephonic contact, email messages and home visits
- (Task 5) Monitor discipline of African American students and advocate for students at suspension hearings.
- (Task 6) Create a personalized plan for each student not making progress towards graduation at targeted schools
- Mentor African American students academically, socially, and behaviorally to increase achievement rates
- Monitor the academic progress of African American students with failing grades or substandard performance on state and district assessments and work collaboratively with sites on developing student plans that are appropriately address academic deficits
- Communicate effectively with African American parents about District educational resources and opportunities to promote academic achievement through site-based parent information events

- Provide behavioral interventions; provide parent and student advocacy
- Act as an advocate and resource at designated sites for MTSS, RP, PBIS, and Discipline committees
- Coaches working at the elementary and K-8 level will be trained in reading, writing and math strategies/programs currently utilized in the schools where they are assigned
- Coaches working at the middle and high school level will (a) collaborate with Dropout Prevention Specialists to create regular contact with student in order to develop four year plan and review progress towards graduation and (b) set up parent conferences to review the students' middle school and/or achievement levels and develop monitoring plan

Research Project Manager [1]

Work with the Director, Program Coordinator/Asst. Dir., and Specialists to collect and analyze data to ensure student progress at targeted sites, including:

- (Task 1) Establish a system of benchmarks to monitor growth of students on a quarterly basis to identify students not making progress in reading, mathematics and writing.
- (Task 7) Identify incoming 9th graders who are performing below grade level on AZMerits and/or did not pass all core subjects in 8th grade
- collecting and analyzing data on the impact of the AASSD
- collecting and analyzing data on the impact of Task Force related initiatives

Table 2: Expected Outcomes (By Task)

Task	Expected Outcomes for the 2018-19 School Year
1. Establish a system of benchmarks to monitor growth of students on a quarterly basis to identify students not making progress in reading, mathematics and writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the system by August 2018 • Implement by August 2018 • Monitor progress throughout the year • African American students will make progress in reading, mathematics, and writing
2. Work with teachers to create a plan of targeted intervention in targeted schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the plan by September 2018 with site administration and teachers • Implement the plan by October 2018 with site administration and teachers • Monitor progress throughout the year • African American students will make progress in reading, mathematics, and writing
3. Create before and after school tutoring sessions to extend learning time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the plan by Sept. 2018 with site administration • Implement the plan by Oct. 2018 with site administration • Monitor progress throughout the year • Participating African American students will make progress in reading and math
4. Foster family communication and home-school connections via telephone contact, email messages and home visits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased communication and outreach • Improved survey and other feedback
5. Monitor discipline of African American students and participate as an advocate as suspension hearings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District will continue to reduce discipline disparities • Review monthly discipline data reports in conjunction with the Discipline Review Team • AASSD Staff will serve on at least 80% of all long-term suspension hearings for African American students
6. Create a personalized plan for each student not making progress towards graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the plan by the end of the first quarter at targeted schools • Implement the plans in the second quarter • Monitor progress throughout the year • Participating African American students will make progress towards graduation
7. Identify incoming 9th graders who are performing below grade level on AZMerits and/or did not pass all core subjects in 8th grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the plan during the summer of 2018 • Implement the plans in the first quarter • Monitor progress throughout the year • Participating African American students will make progress towards graduation
8. Set up parent conferences to review the students' middle school and/or achievement levels and develop monitoring plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan and schedule for parent conferences by August 2018 • Hold parent conferences from August to October 2018
9. Collaborate with Dropout Prevention Specialists to create regular contact with student in order to develop four-year plan and review progress towards graduation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan and schedule for regular contact with students in jeopardy of dropping out (and their parents) • Set up conferences with parents by September 2018

Proposed Budget for Restructuring Plan

AASSD Proposed Structure based on current staffing			Trayben Proposed Structure		
FTE	Position	Status	FTE		AAAATF\$
1	Director	Continuing	1	Director	Current AASSD Funding
1	Program Coordinator (was CSP)	Continuing	1	Asst. Director	Additional \$10,000
1	Administrative Assistant	Continuing	1	Admin. Asst.	Current AASSD Funding
2	Behavior Specialists	Continuing	2	Behavior Specialist	Current AASSD Funding
4	Program Liaisons	New	4	Program Liaisons	$\$41,276.66 \times 4 = 165,106.64$
6	RTI Specialists	New	4	4 ES RTI Specialists	$\$41,276.66 \times 4 = 165,106.64$
9	Student Success Specialist	Eliminating			
		New	1	Research Project Manager	Work with A&E Dept.
		New	8	Student Success Coaches	Current AASSD Funding
	Part-Time				
3	Certified Academic Tutors (Added Duty)	Continuing	3	Certified Academic Tutors (Added Duty)	
2	Activity Helpers (College Students)	Continuing	2	Activity Helpers (College Students)	
		New	3	Certified Academic Tutors (Added Duty)	$\$25/\text{hr} \times 175\text{hrs} \times 3 = \$13,125.00$
		New	4	Activity Helpers (College Students)	$\$10.50/\text{hr} \times 175\text{hrs} \times 4 = \$7,350.00$
	Total				
20	15 Full-time & 5 Part-time		34	22 Full-time & 12 Part-time	AAAATF = \$360,688.28

Implementation Chart

<i>Trayben and Associations Recommendations</i>	<i>Personnel Responsible</i>	<i>Benchmark Schedule</i>
<i>I. Leadership Structure and Talent</i>		
1. Central Administration 3 Year Implementation Assurance Diverse Talent Recruitment Plan Line of Communication for AASSD Ongoing training for Board Members	Superintendent Human Resources AASSD Director Superintendent Designee	August 2018
2. Principal Leadership Diverse Aspiring Principal Plan Strategic Plan for Local Schools Increase inclusion of AA student in AVID	Human Resources Leadership Team AASSD	September 2018 December 2018 January 2019
3. Staffing Develop Strategic Recruitment Plan for AA Teachers Academy for Future Teachers Design University Partnerships	Human Resources Director AASSD AASSD	September 2018 October 2018 September 2018
<i>II. Curriculum and Instruction</i>		
1. Assessment Structures	Assessment and Evaluation Director	December 2018
2. Alignment of Curriculum and Instruction	Curriculum Director	December 2018
3. Culturally Relevant Curriculum and Pedagogy	Curriculum Director	December 2018
4. Academic Achievement	District Leadership Team	December 2018
5. College and Career Readiness/Dropout Prevention	Deputy Super- intendent of High Schools and Director of Dropout Prevention	December 2018
<i>III. Student Discipline</i>		
1. Processes and Procedures		December 2018
2. Equity and Disparity		October 2018

<i>Trayben and Associations Recommendations</i>	<i>Personnel Responsible</i>	<i>Benchmark Schedule</i>
<i>IV. Professional Development</i>		
1. Needs Assessments for Teachers and Leaders	PD Director at District Level	September 2018
2. Personalized Professional Development Plans/Delivery Model	PD Director at District Level	September 2018
3. Second Tier Teacher Interventions Plans	PD Director at District Level	September 2018
<i>V. Parent Engagement and Advocacy</i>		
1. Parent Involvement at School and District Level	District Leadership Team	September 2018
2. Parent Resources	Director of Parent Resource Centers	September 2018
<i>VI. Student Initiatives</i>	AASSD Director	September 2018
<i>VII. Reorganization of AASD</i>	AASSD Director	September 2018

Survey Results

As part of this evaluation, we analyzed results from two surveys, one administered to TUSD employees and the other administered to TUSD parents. The surveys examine perceptions about school engagement and communication.

Employee Survey

The TUSD employee survey was designed to be emailed to all employees; however, because of FERPA concerns, the survey was sent out to TUSD employees as an anonymous link. There were 577 responses to the survey link from April 25, 2018, to May 29, 2018. Of those responses, 55 respondents declined to participate in the survey. Another 25 of the survey responses were incomplete. Some teachers did not complete more than the demographic portion of the survey. Though the TUSD employee survey response rate was likely about 25%, we have analyzed and reported the results that we received.

Teacher Perceptions. The sections which include Teacher Efficacy Items were analyzed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Of the 22 items in Woolfolk and Hoy's Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES), the items typically load into 2 factors. These latent constructs are interpreted as Teaching Efficacy and Personal Efficacy. However, the responses to the items loaded into 3 factors in this analysis. The assumptions of sphericity were confirmed through Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the KMO was .863, indicating sufficient data for EFA. The loading of the first factor indicates the reported level of Teacher Efficacy and accounts for about 26% of the variation of responses within that dimension or construct. However, Personal Efficacy loads across two factors. This is using Principal Axis Factoring as the eigenvalue extraction method and an oblique factor rotation (Promax) because of correlation values in the matrix, which exceed .4. The splitting of the Personal Efficacy dimension indicates that teachers are personally sensitized to the perceived level of personal efficacy within the district. The responses seem to separate in regard to the extent of effort. For example, items that indicate a level of personal efficacy prevalent in all teachers load separately from items that indicate an extra effort of personal efficacy applied in more extreme classroom situations. This may be a positive action resulting from targeted professional development or it could represent a level of frustration with a perceived expected higher level of personal efficacy for teachers within the district. This phenomenon may also be related to the level of compensation allocated for teachers.

Overall, considering the 2 typical dimensions, the average TUSD teacher in our sample indicated that they "somewhat agree" ($M = 4.23$) with the overall concept that teaching can contribute to a child's learning process regardless of other factors that may inhibit that process (Teacher Efficacy). This indicates that the average TUSD teacher in our

sample has an overall belief that all children can learn and that that teachers can make a significant difference in the classroom through supporting student learning.

Personal Efficacy was rated “agree or somewhat agree” ($M = 4.50$). This is a strong indicator that the average teacher in our sample perceived a personal efficacy slightly more than an overall Teacher Efficacy. While both dimensions are positively reflected in the responses, the personal dimension is reflected slightly more strongly in the responses, which is not uncommon. Overall perceptions of teacher and personal efficacy are important to determine the probability of detecting transformative teaching perceptions in the TUSD. If the teachers reflect perceptions that support efficacy, typically, the district can proceed with plans that involve transformative change within the community. While TUSD has a number of teachers who may resist change, the majority indicated that their perceptions of teaching efficacy and personal efficacy support transformative change within TUSD.

Figures 2 and 3 show the responses of staff members to the efficacy items. While some respondents perceived that a teacher has limited influence because of the student’s home environment, there are a few who disagree with that perception. An item indicative of the efficacy shown by the teacher responses is “If parents would do more for their children, I could do more.” Most of the respondents disagreed with that item, showing that most TUSD staff members in our sample believe in teacher efficacy regardless of a student’s home circumstances.

Administrator Perceptions. Thirty-two 32 school administrators completed the TUSD Teacher-Leader Survey. Though this was a small portion of the school leaders within the 86 district schools, the responses did not indicate a specific bias or identifiable trend that may render the survey results as non-representative of the population. Therefore, the results of the administrator section (see Figures 4 & 5) can be used to inform TUSD regarding the general perceptions of the school administrators within the district.

Overall, the TUSD school administrators that responded to the survey items indicated they had the ability, resources, and opportunity to address these critical factors that pertained to job performance within the district. About 78% of administrators indicated they did all of the factors “all the time” or “frequently”. A few of the administrators indicated that coping with the stress of the position was a challenge and that they could not maintain their own schedule within TUSD. While many administrators seem to be instructional leaders who maintain a positive image within the community and school, a few are challenged by the work load imposed by TUSD.

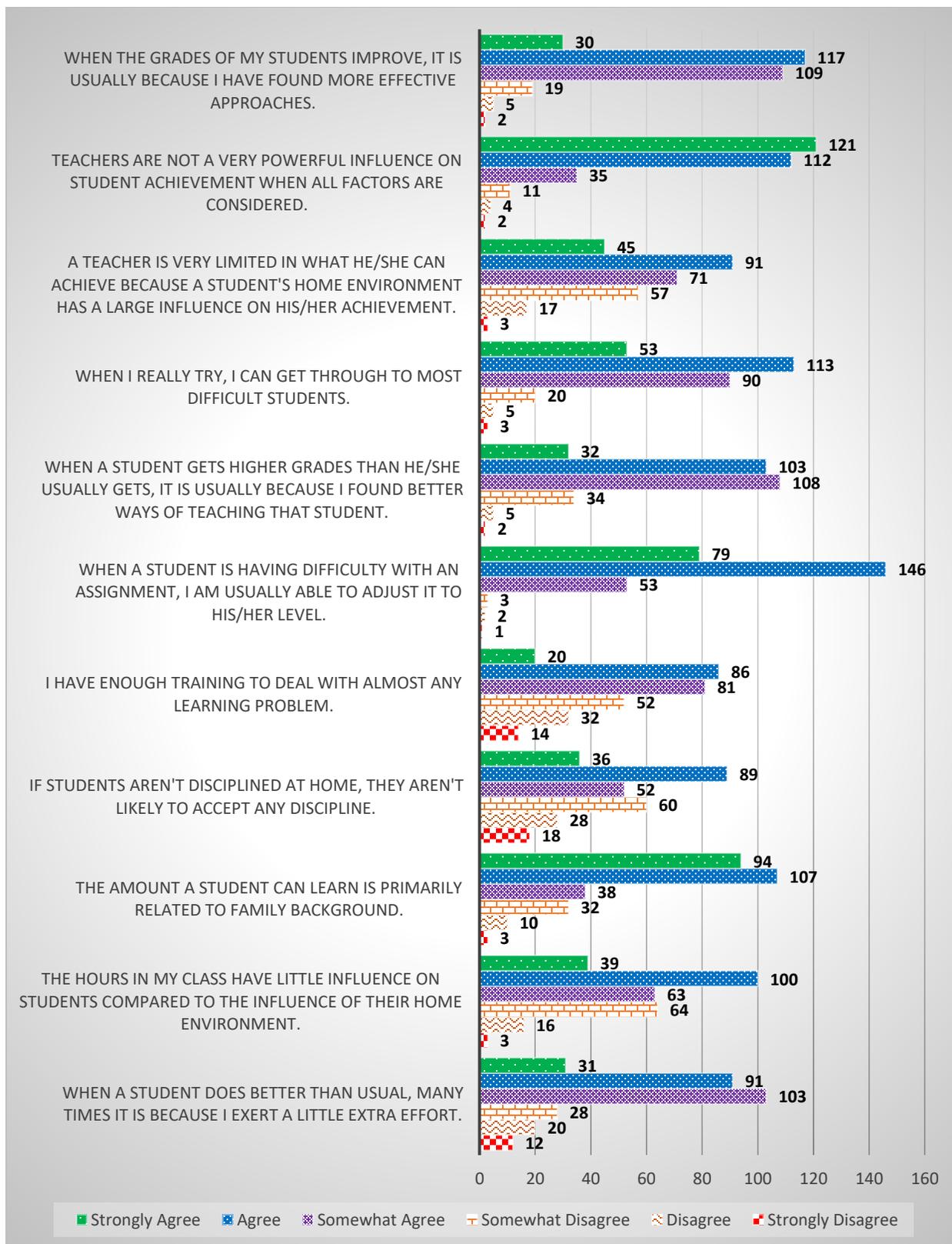


Figure 2. TUSD Efficacy Items (1 of 2)

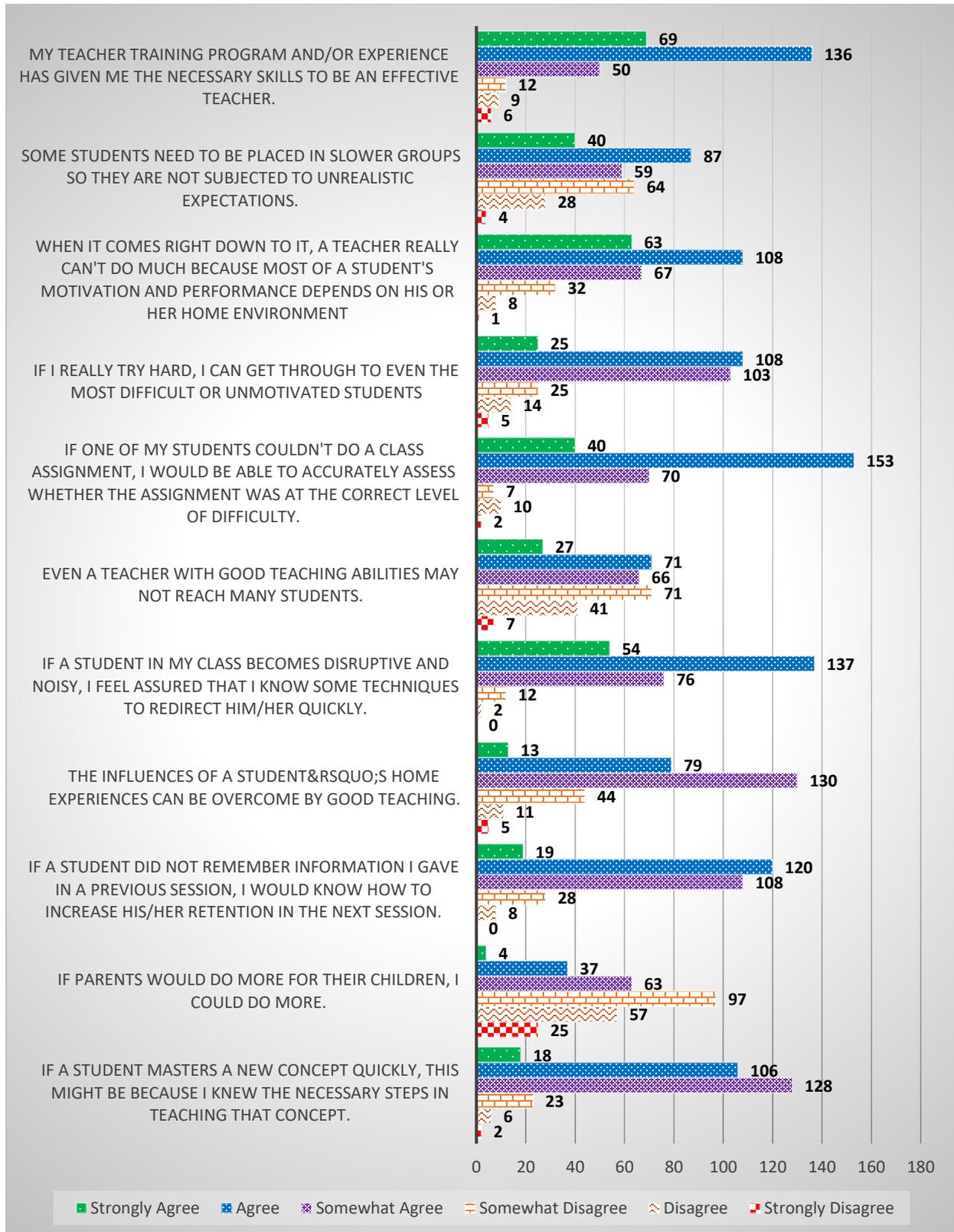


Figure 3. TUSD Efficacy Items (2 of 2)

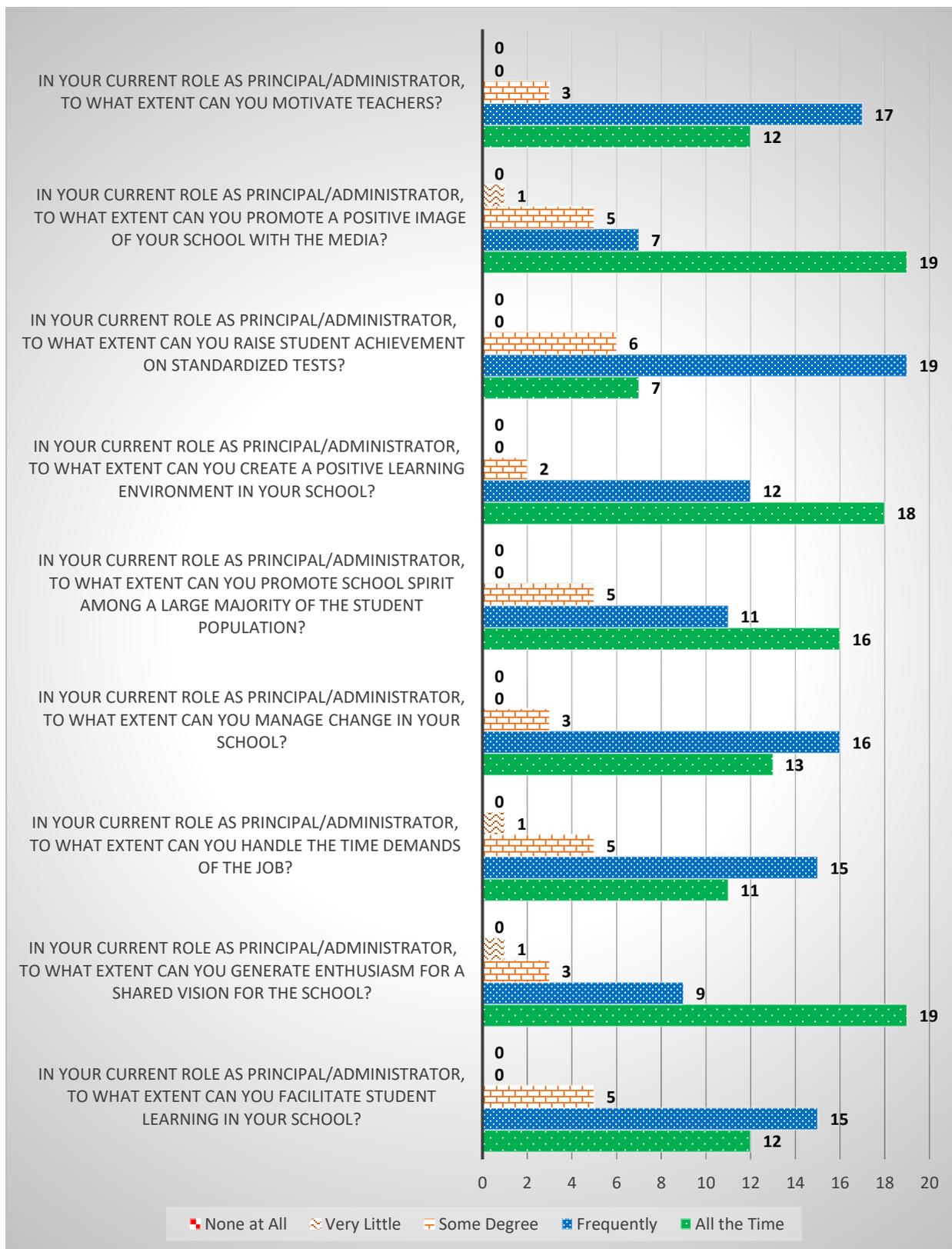


Figure 4. TUSD Administrator Perceptions (1 of 2)

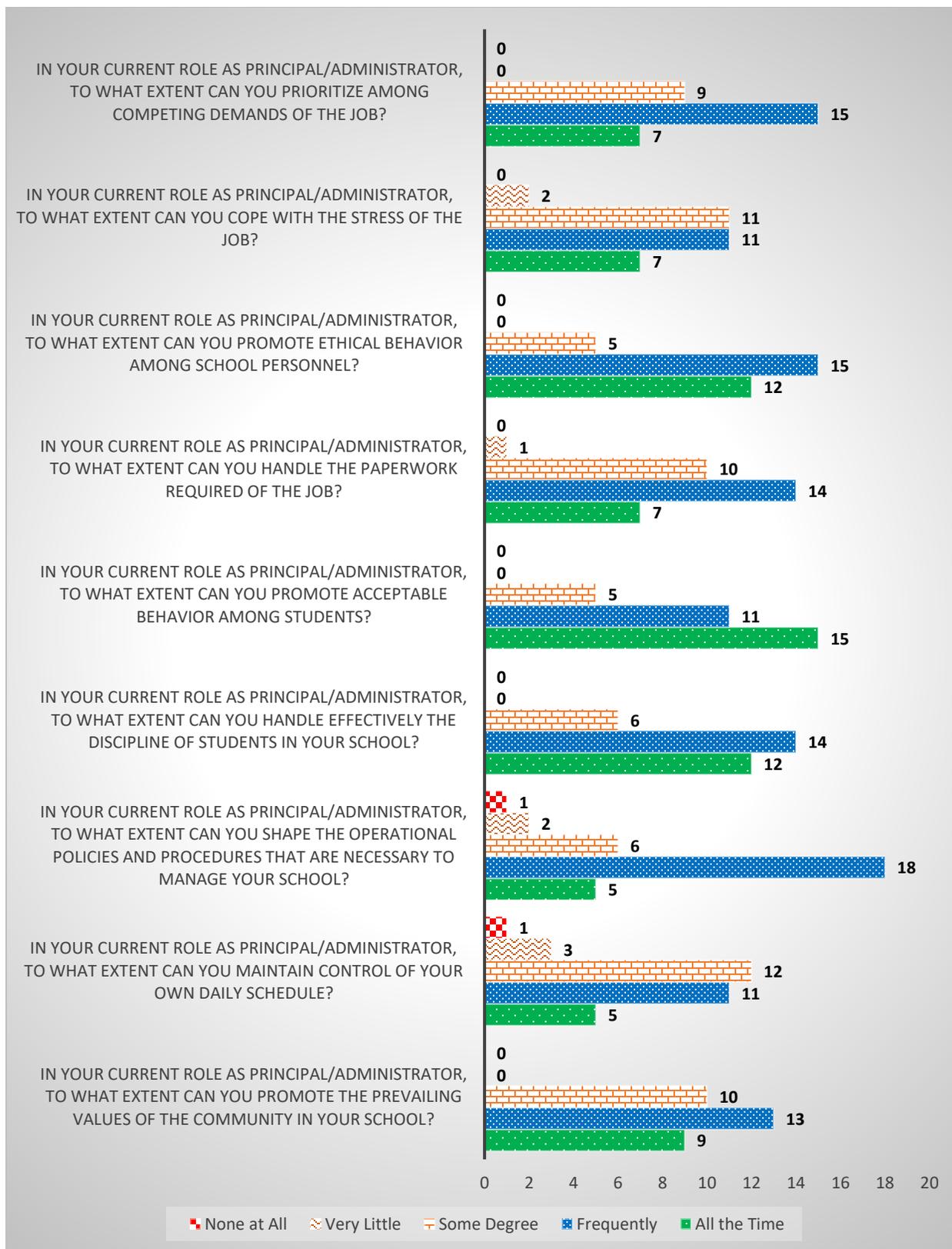


Figure 5. TUSD Administrator Perceptions (2 of 2)

A small number of administrators provided narrative responses to open-ended items on the survey:

“Our Admin positions are under staffed and overworked. I can work with any child to help them be successful if given the time to do so. I am not given that time.”

“...shaping operational policies and procedures... Great doing what I have control over at school but much of it comes from the district.”

“There are more expectations than ever on Admin and less support. I have a good director and she/he gives me all the support possible in ideas, suggestions, and cheer-leading pep talks but the reality is that administrators, in the end, have to do the work pretty much alone.”

“You ask if how often I am able to handle the paperwork involved with the job, and I do, however it is at the expense of my own time. I spend many days being at the school site 11 and 12 hour days to complete the massive amounts of reports/ etc. that is expected of principals. The stress is unbearable at times. School leaders need the district departments to have the mentality that they are here to support the schools, not the other way around.”

Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale. The next section of the TUSD Survey was taken from the Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale, MTCS (Spanierman, 2011). These 16 items used a 6-point Likert-type agreement scale similar to the TES. Coefficient alpha for the responses of the MTCS are .88 and generally higher ratings indicate greater competency. The MTCS was administered to 284 TUSD teachers within the TUSD Teacher-Leader Survey. Results indicate a high agreement rating from TUSD teachers in our sample (See Figure 6). For example, for the item “I have a clear understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy,” 95% of teachers strongly agreed, moderately agreed, or slightly agreed.

The mean ratings of the items, ranging from 1 to 6 with 6 indicating “strongly agree,” is 4.68, which is slightly higher than the typical results. This indicates a strong level of self-report competency regarding multicultural teaching by TUSD teachers in our sample.

To analyze the dimensions address by the TUSD teachers on the MTCS section, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted. Parameters for the EFA were taken from Spanierman (2011) to test if the items would load into a 2 factor structure. The KMO was .943 and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant, showing the sphericity assumption is met. The items loaded into a 2 factor structure indicating the latent knowledge factor and the latent skill factor identified within the 16 items. The total variance accounted for was 57% for both factors. For analysis, the item “I rarely examine the instructional materials I use in the classroom for racial and ethnic bias,” was reverse scored. Overall, the TUSD teachers show a moderate to strong level of agreement with the MTCS items.

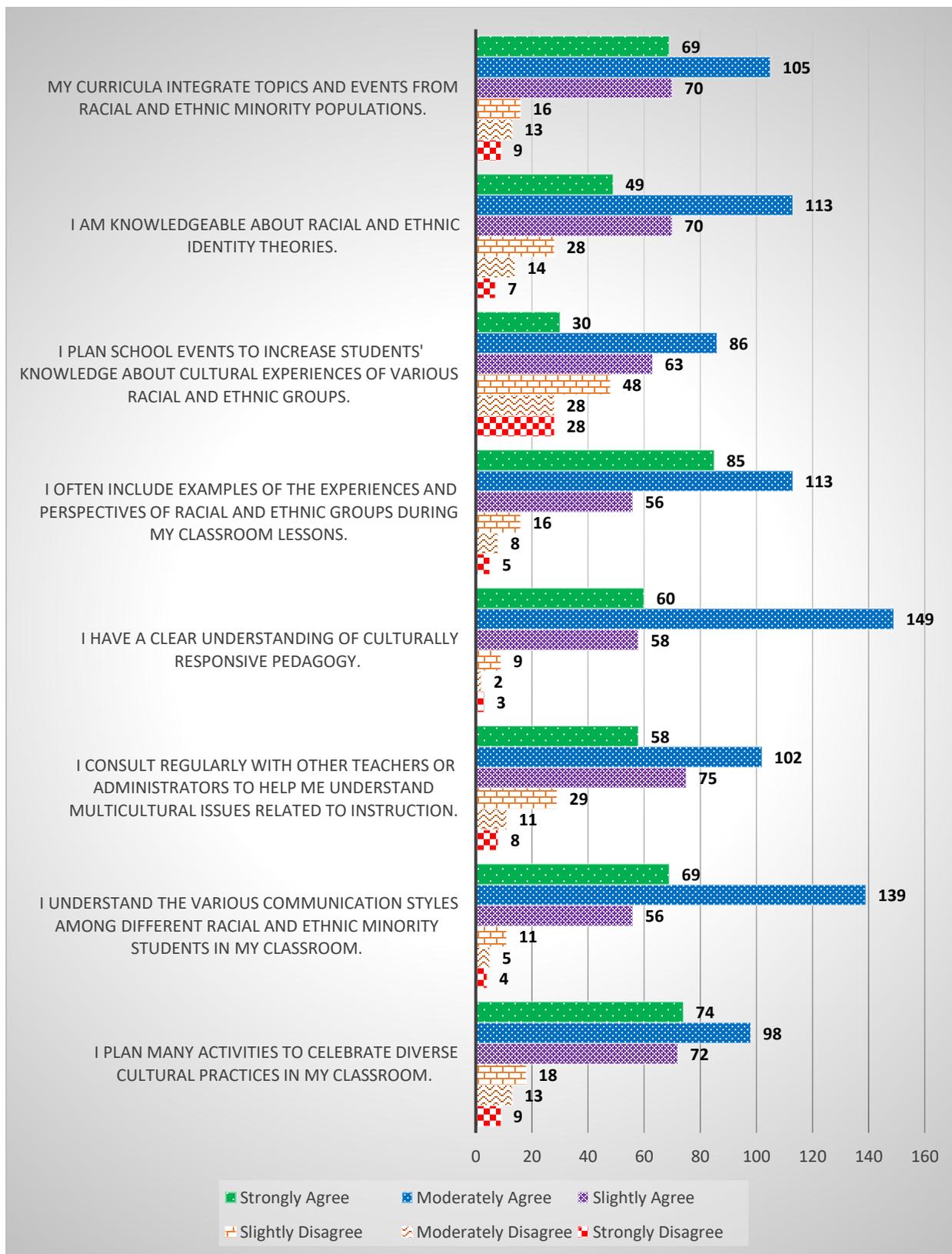


Figure 6. Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (Part 1 of 2)

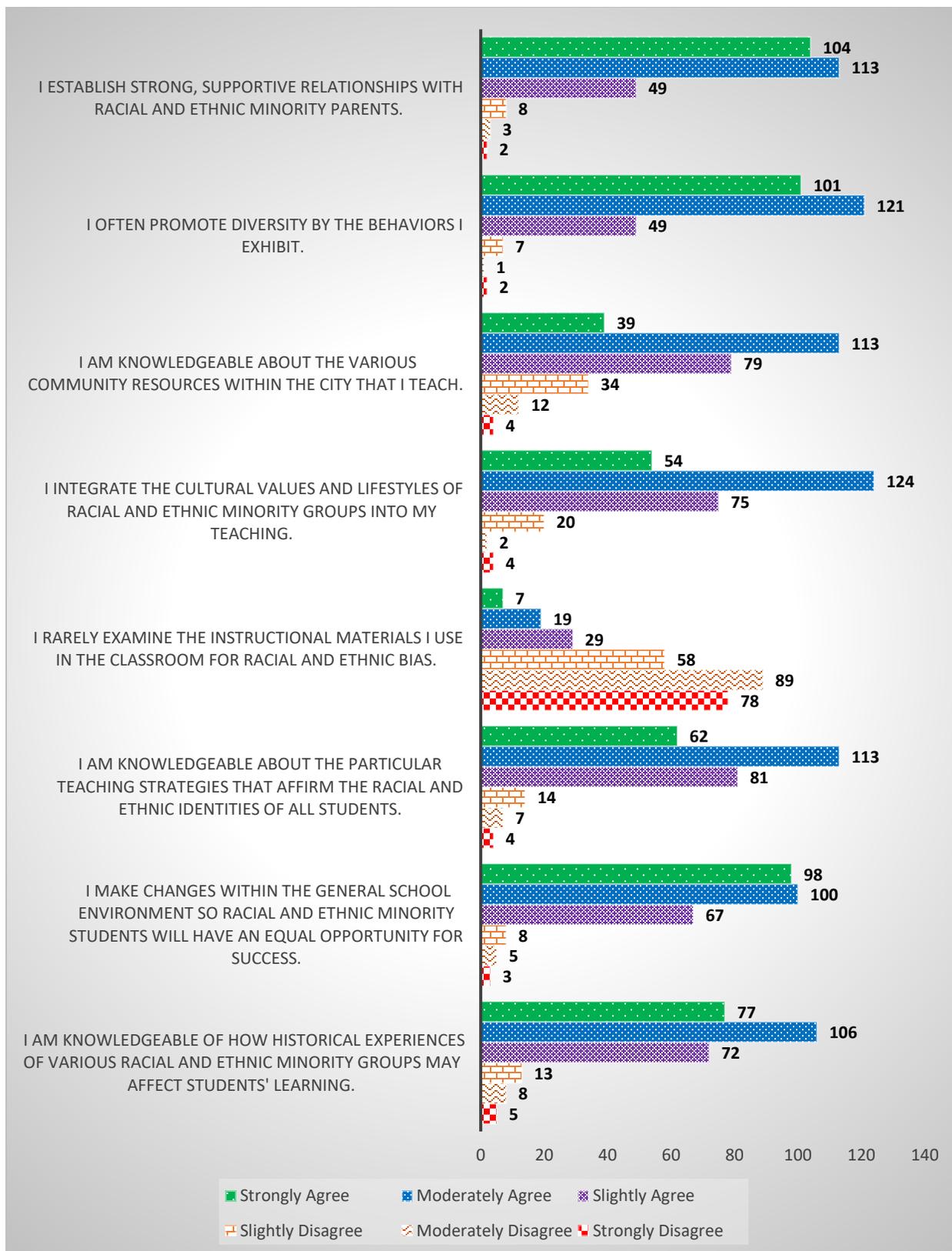


Figure 7. Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (Part 2 of 2).

The last section of the TUSD Teacher-Leader Survey addressed Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and the perceived implementation of the program within TUSD. For this section, teachers, administrators, and other educators or workers were able to participate. A total of 370 responses to the section indicates a small but adequate sample for the survey. Nine items were presented to the participants regarding PBIS and related improvement to instruction, disciplinary referrals, and school climate enhancement. As indicated, a large number of participants had PD sessions at their school (90%) and teachers have been shown evidence that positively supports PBIS implementation (83%). In the TUSD implementation of PBIS 73% of participants perceived a reduction in disciplinary referrals, 81% perceived that administrator have used PBIS effectively to reduce suspensions, and 76% perceive that teachers have benefited from de-escalation or positive behavior supports. Overall, the participants show a good participation in PBIS training and attribute positive change to the PBIS implementation in TUSD.

Summary and Demographics. In summary, the TUSD Teacher-Leader Survey indicates an overall awareness and readiness of teachers who many have participated in PBIS professional development, engaged in multicultural teacher competency training and implementation, and whose self-reported self-efficacy is evidenced by the PE mean of 4.50 and the TE mean of 4.23 (levels are typical of adequate teacher efficacy). However, these results should be considered in the context of the low response rate (25%) to the survey. One way to improve the meaningfulness of the results reported here would be to compare the demographic information gathered from respondents and compare it to the demographic information about the school district as a whole. At the time of this writing, we do not have the school district demographic information, but we provide the following survey demographic information so that the district can make the comparison.

Current Position. Teacher ($N = 388$, 78.4%), Administrator ($N = 37$, 7.5%), Staff ($N = 12$, 2.4%), Counselor ($N = 7$, 1.4%), Media Specialist ($N = 3$, 0.6%), and Other ($N = 48$, 9.7%).

School Level. Elementary K-5 ($N = 208$, 42.2%), Elementary K-8 ($N = 89$, 18.1%), Middle School 6-8 ($N = 65$, 13.2%), and High School 9-12 ($N = 131$, 26.6%).

Mobility. 413 (83.6%) respondents said that they also worked in their current school during the previous school year, and 81 (16.4%) said that they did not. Of those who had worked at their current school during the previous year, 383 (95.5%) indicated they had worked the entirety of the previous year at the school.

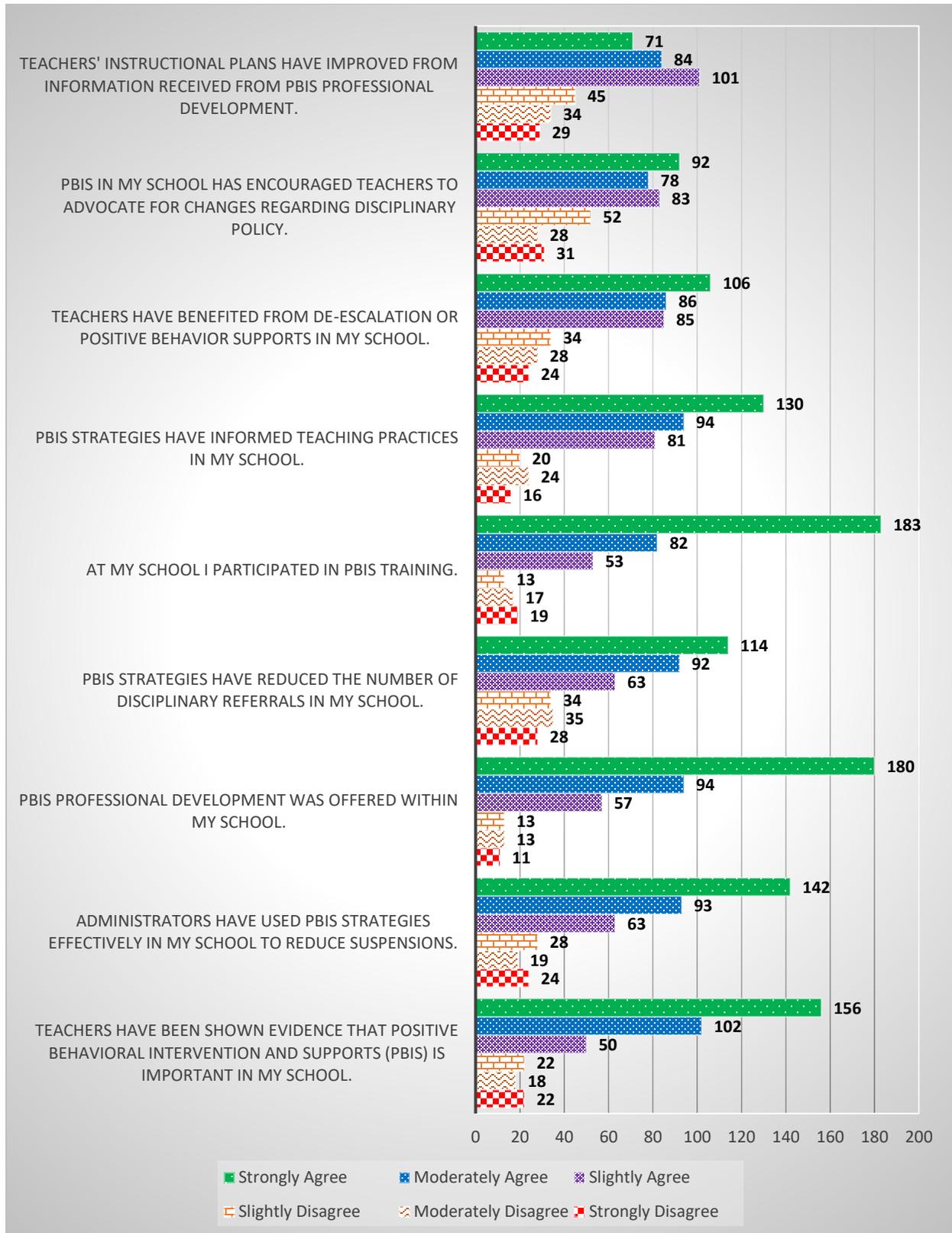


Figure 8. Perceptions of PBIS Implementation.

Length of Time as an Educator. Most of the respondents have been educators for 15 or more years. From 0-3 years ($N = 38$, 7.9%), 3-6 years ($N = 21$, 4.3%), 6-9 years ($N = 44$, 9.1%), 9-12 years ($N = 59$, 12.2%), 12-15 years ($N = 56$, 11.6%), 15-18 years ($N = 47$, 9.7%), 18-21 years ($N = 53$, 10.6%), and 21 or more years ($N = 166$, 34.3%).

Gender. Female ($N = 393$, 80.5%) and male ($N = 95$, 19.5%).

Race/Ethnicity. African American or Black ($N = 6$, 1.2%), Asian ($N = 7$, 1.4%), Caucasian ($N = 322$, 65.6%), Hispanic ($N = 94$, 19.1%), Native American ($N = 7$, 1.4%), Multiracial ($N = 19$, 3.9%), and Other ($N = 36$, 7.3%).

Generalizability of Results. For these sample demographics to be generalizable to the population, the sample must be representative of the TUSD population. For example, the sample is about 80% female so, if the sample were representative of the population, one would expect that about 80% of TUSD employees are female. In further describing the sample, it is 66% Caucasian, 60% of the workers are at the elementary level, and 40% of the workers at the secondary level, 67% of the teachers have 12 years' experience or more, and there is low employment mobility within TUSD (16%). If this is indicative of TUSD total demographics, then the survey results may be representative of the district. Since Trayben and Associates were not able to control the recruitment for the survey, representativeness and generalizability of the survey results are questionable.

Parent Survey

For the TUSD parent survey, an anonymous link was shared with leadership at TUSD to be distributed at the parent engagement centers and by parent liaisons within the schools. Between April 16, 2018, and May 9, 2018, 44 TUSD parents or guardians completed the survey. This number indicates a very low response rate considering the size of the school district; however, we have analyzed and reported the responses of these parents as they provide feedback the district can use to suggest avenues for further investigation.

Over 52% of the respondents in the parent survey most identified as Black or African American. This is not representative of the parent population, but it may be beneficial in assessing the opinions of parents that identify with this ethnicity. The parents claimed a broad range of income and most had college degrees. The parents gave opinions related to about 30 of TUSD schools. Generally, the parent responses regarding TUSD and the work the district has done in the area of diversity is favorable; however, the parents respond to one item "There is more that TUSD can do to enhance student diversity," with about 70% of the parents surveys agreeing that TUSD can do more. Also, these parents indicated that they are involved in their student's schooling and most regularly

volunteer at their student's school. This survey may not reflect the opinion of parents who are unable or unwilling to engage with their children's schools, for example, because of work or transportation circumstances.

As shown in Figure 9, the sample of parents did not share the perceptions of the majority of educators regarding PBIS. Many of the parents (68%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, "Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) is working to reduce suspensions at my school." While this is a different result from the TUSD Teacher-Leader Survey, the difference may be a lapse of communication or a lag in the communication to parents. It is safer to claim that the parents did not know about the results of PBIS on school suspensions. Of the indicators for the parent survey, the low parent response made the results difficult to interpret and connect with the TUSD Teacher-Leader Survey. Some parents agreed that their student gets an excellent education at TUSD (48%), agreed that the disciplinary process is fair and equitable (52%), and agreed that their student has access to ALE (55%).

Items more within the parents' purview are items which directly deal with their relationship with the teacher or school. Seventy-five percent of parents indicate they attend parent involvement activities at their school, 80% of parents have the resources needed to help their students with schoolwork, 80% of parents also indicate they have good relationships with teachers. The schools and TUSD also reach out to the parent through electronic communication systems regarding academic grades (82%) and when the student is absent or tardy (93%). TUSD is trying to address equitable educational opportunity, but parents indicate that typically means that their student must travel to another school outside the neighborhood. Fifty-two percent of parents claim their students do not attend a school in their neighborhood. The result of moving students from their communities may be an effort to provide more diversity within TUSD, but it may be having a detrimental to the family and communities. Alternative methods to achieve diversity may be warranted.

As stated, the sample does not appear to be representative of the parent population. The demographics of the sample are provided below:

Race/Ethnicity. Black or African American ($N = 23$, 52.3%), White ($N = 10$, 22.7%), Hispanic/Latino ($N = 4$, 9.1%), and other ($N = 7$, 15.9%).

Household Income before Taxes. Less than \$10,000 ($N = 3$, 6.8%), \$10,000 to \$29,999 ($N = 11$, 25.0%), \$30,000 to \$59,999 ($N = 11$, 25.0%), \$60,000 to \$89,999 ($N = 9$, 20.5%), and more than \$90,000 ($N = 10$, 22.7%).

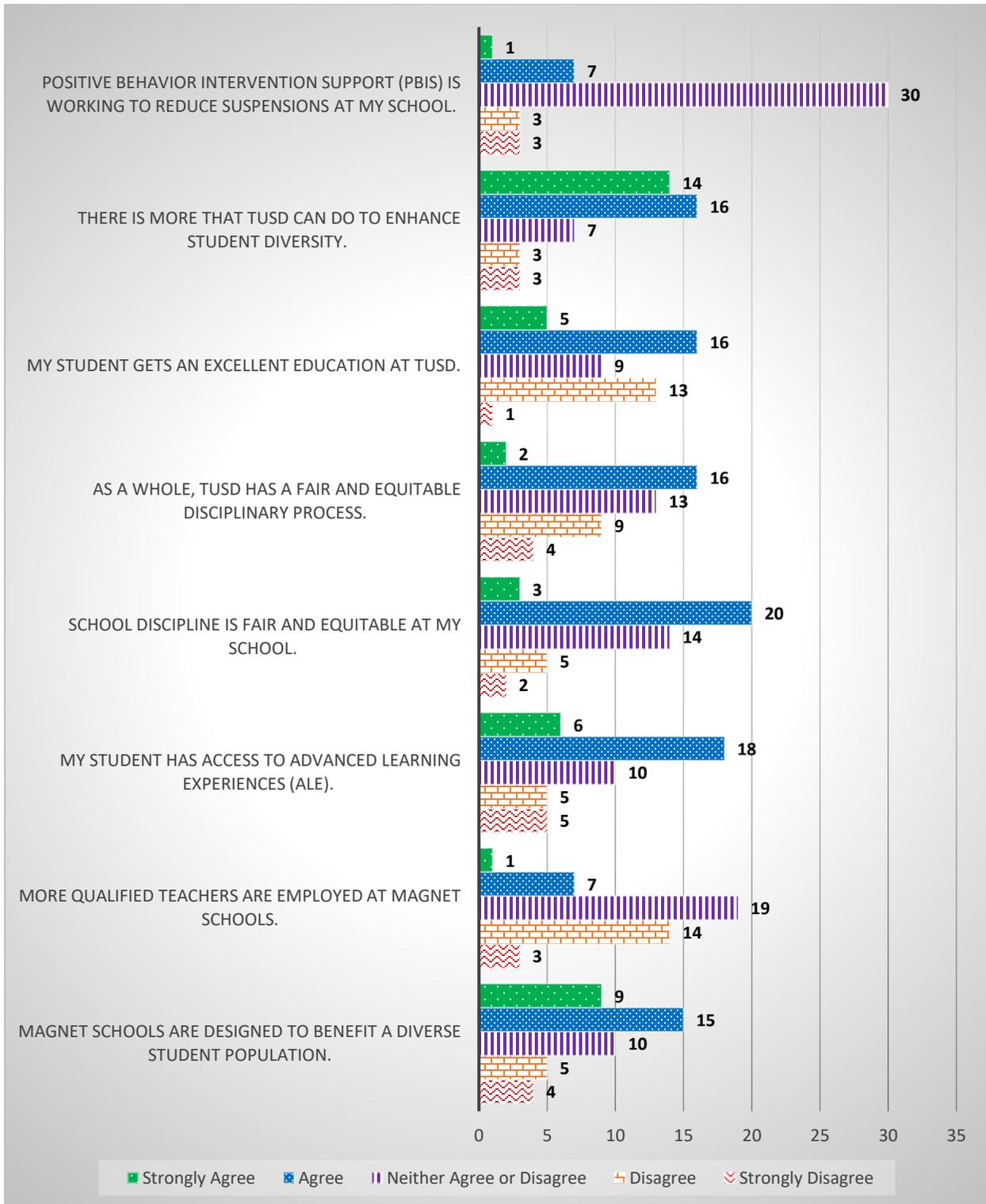


Figure 9. Parent Survey Responses (1 of 2).

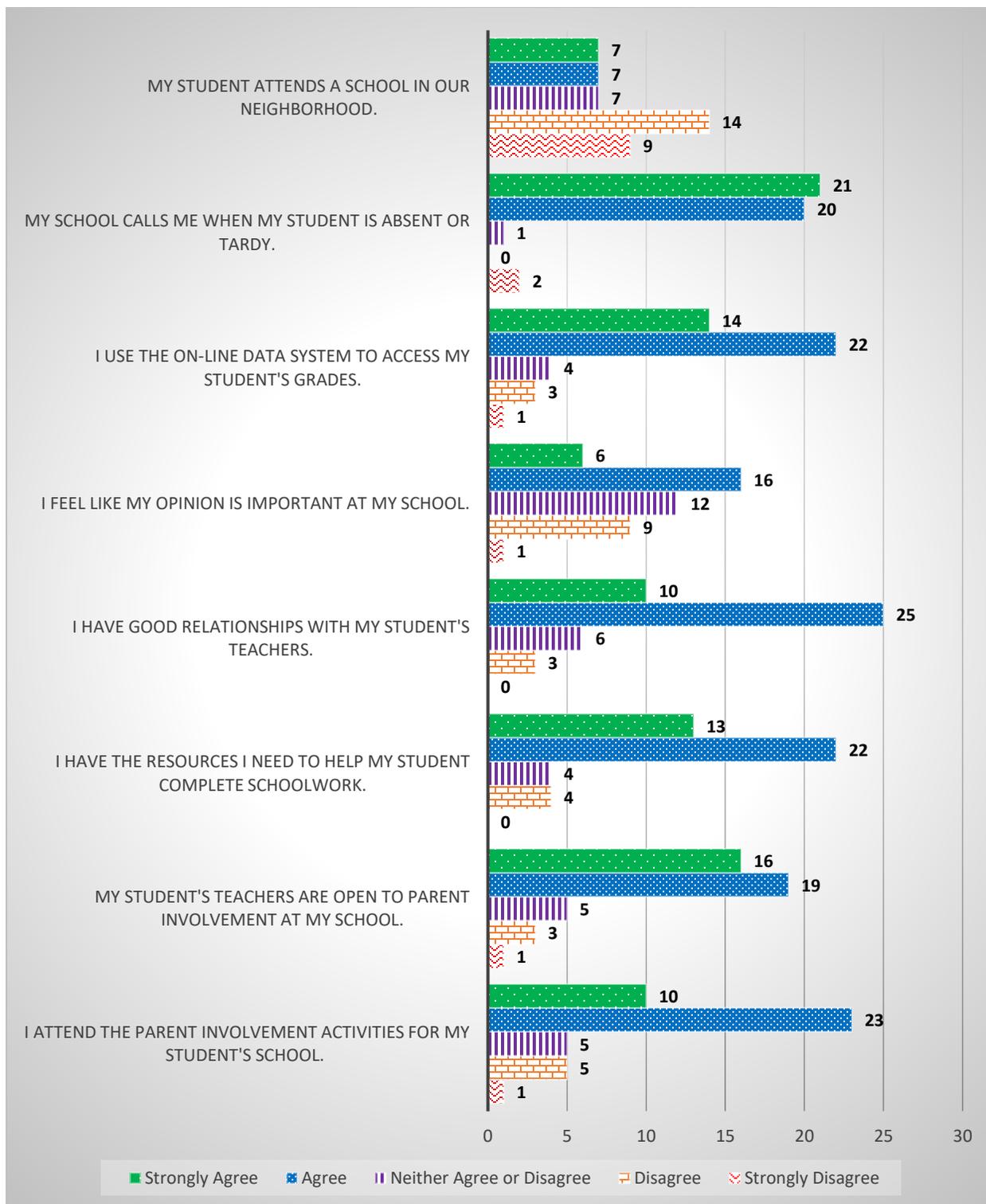


Figure 10. Parent responses to Survey (Part 2 of 2).

Highest Level of Schooling Attained. High school ($N = 2$, 4.5%), some college ($N = 11$, 25.0%), college degree ($N = 17$, 38.6%), and graduate degree ($N = 14$, 31.8%).

School Involvement. The parents responding to this survey were also involved in their students' schooling, through volunteering at the school, attending parent involvement activities, or supporting TUSD through working with students. The results of the next section of the survey do not seem to reflect the perceptions of the parent population. Specifically, the involvement of parents reflected in these responses may be correct for these parents, but is clearly not indicative of the parent population of TUSD. Due to the low response rate, there may be other data collection processes necessary to gather valid or trustworthy data pertaining to parent perceptions.

	How likely are you to read communication correspondence (newsletters, emails, memos, and etc.) from your student?		How likely are you to volunteer at your student's school in an area that interests you?	
<i>Answer</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Count</i>
Extremely likely	72.73%	32	38.64%	17
Moderately likely	20.45%	9	38.64%	17
Slightly likely	2.27%	1	11.36%	5
Slightly unlikely	0.00%	0	2.27%	1
Moderately unlikely	0.00%	0	6.82%	3
Extremely unlikely	4.55%	2	2.27%	1
Total		44		44

	How confident are you in supporting your student's schooling?	
<i>Answer</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Count</i>
Extremely confident	81.82%	36
Moderately confident	18.18%	8
Slightly confident	0.00%	0
Slightly less confident	0.00%	0
Moderately less confident	0.00%	0
Extremely less confident	0.00%	0
Total		44

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Summary Reports of Data from TUSD to Support the Top Ten Achievements Identified by the District.....	68
Appendix B. Sample Logic Models	75
Appendix C. Best Practices.....	78

APPENDIX A

Summary Reports of Data from TUSD to Support the Top Ten Achievements Identified by the District

1. Reduced discipline disparity (Figure A-1)

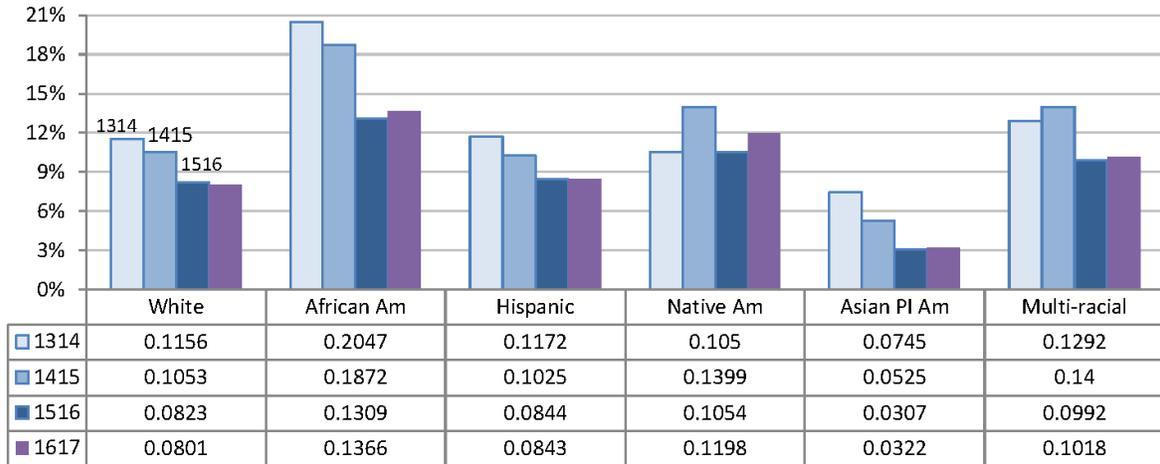


Figure A-1. Discipline rates by USP Ethnicity 13-14 through 16-17 SY.

2. Graduation rates (Table A-1)

Table A-1

Four Year Graduation Rates by USP Ethnicity (nonELL)

Year	White	African	Hispanic	Native	Asian/ PI	Multi	Total
2012-13	86.50%	80.70%	77.50%	60.20%	89.10%	85.00%	80.80%
2013-14	85.30%	77.40%	79.30%	65.60%	88.30%	71.40%	80.80%
2014-15	85.30%	82.00%	80.00%	66.70%	89.60%	82.10%	81.70%
2015-16	85.00%	76.50%	80.60%	68.80%	88.60%	84.20%	80.60%
2016-17	86.00%	84.00%	84.50%	76.70%	89.00%	89.70%	84.90%

3. Drop-out rates (Table A-2)

Table A-2

Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity (nonELL)

Year	White	African American	Hispanic/Latino	Native American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	District Dropout Rate
2012-13	1.80%	2.50%	2.40%	5.10%	0.40%	2.40%	2.40%
2013-14	1.90%	2.00%	2.00%	3.10%	0.40%	1.10%	1.80%
2014-15	1.60%	2.50%	2.00%	3.10%	0.60%	0.90%	1.80%
2015-16	1.40%	2.50%	1.80%	2.70%	0.60%	2.30%	1.80%
2016-17	2.60%	3.30%	2.20%	2.90%	0.40%	1.70%	2.40%



4. Extracurricular participation (Table A-3)

Table A-3
Students Participating in at Least One Extracurricular Activity (Athletics, Fine Arts, Clubs) - Unduplicated Student Counts

Year	Grade	White		African American		Hispanic		Native American		Asian/Pacific Islander		Multi-racial		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2016-17	K-8	1,161	26%	425	9%	2,572	57%	111	2%	75	2%	185	4%	4,529	
	HS	1,504	26%	552	10%	3,248	56%	135	2%	133	2%	183	3%	5,755	
	Total	2,665	26%	977	10%	5,820	57%	246	2%	208	2%	368	4%	10,284	
2015-16	K-8	1,400	26%	500	9%	3,147	57%	153	3%	71	1%	205	4%	5,476	
	HS	1,590	28%	527	9%	3,160	55%	139	2%	171	3%	193	3%	5,780	
	Total	2,990	27%	1,027	9%	6,307	56%	292	3%	242	2%	398	4%	11,256	
2014-15	K-8	448	20%	249	11%	1,339	61%	78	3%	32	1%	70	3%	2,266	
	HS	1,505	28%	533	10%	2,895	54%	96	2%	136	3%	177	3%	5,342	
	Total	1,953	26%	782	10%	4,234	56%	174	2%	168	2%	247	3%	7,608	
2013-14	K-8	520	21%	239	10%	1,471	60%	90	4%	38	2%	75	3%	2,433	
	HS	1,697	31%	536	10%	2,849	52%	104	2%	140	3%	175	3%	5,501	
	Total	2,217	28%	775	10%	4,320	54%	194	2%	178	2%	250	3%	7,934	

5. Advanced Learning Experiences (ALE) participation in areas that improved for student enrollment (Table A-4)

Table A-4
Student Participation in ALE Programs

Type of ALE	ELL or Non	Class Year	White	W ⁹ %	AA	AA%	Hisp	H%	Native Amer.	NA%	Asian/P.I.	A%	Multi-racial	MR%	Total
Self-Contained GATE	ALL	12-13	378	36.8%	44	4.3%	485	47.3%	16	1.6%	42	4.1%	64	6.2%	1026
Self-Contained GATE	ALL	13-14	400	37.4%	54	5.0%	505	47.2%	17	1.6%	40	3.7%	58	5.4%	1070
Self-Contained GATE	ALL	14-15	391	37.5%	50	4.8%	517	49.6%	15	1.4%	32	3.1%	52	5.0%	1043
Self-Contained GATE	ALL	15-16	382	38.5%	44	4.4%	471	47.5%	19	1.9%	25	2.5%	60	6.0%	992
Self-Contained GATE	ALL	16-17	463	40.2%	51	4.4%	535	46.5%	17	1.5%	27	2.3%	67	5.8%	1151
Self-Contained GATE	ALL	17-18	483	40.1%	73	6.1%	531	44.1%	15	1.2%	25	2.1%	77	6.4%	1204
MS for HS	ALL	12-13	336	28.0%	70	5.8%	704	58.7%	30	2.5%	29	2.4%	30	2.5%	1199
MS for HS	ALL	13-14	311	26.5%	69	5.9%	703	60.0%	25	2.1%	33	2.8%	31	2.6%	1172
MS for HS	ALL	14-15	306	24.7%	55	4.4%	780	63.1%	19	1.5%	43	3.5%	34	2.7%	1237
MS for HS	ALL	15-16	273	22.9%	77	6.5%	749	62.9%	21	1.8%	34	2.9%	37	3.1%	1191
MS for HS	ALL	16-17	272	22.6%	61	5.1%	773	64.4%	23	1.9%	31	2.6%	41	3.4%	1201
MS for HS	ALL	17-18	305	21.1%	84	5.8%	921	63.7%	57	3.9%	27	1.9%	51	3.5%	1445

Source: Tucson Unified School District, December 16, 2017.

Note. Student participation in ALE programs based on the designation of court order ALE 1771 by 40th day for school years 2012-13 through 2017-18, disaggregated by ALE, year, and race/ethnicity. Student is counted once in each ALE, but a student may participate in more than one ALE.

* includes qualified self-contained students enrolled in self-contained programs as well as attending Tully and the Cluster classrooms.

6. Student enrollment in Culturally Relevant Curriculum (CRC) courses (overall enrollment & enrollment) (Table A-5)

Table A-5

Total Student Enrollment in CRC Courses by USP Race/Ethnicity - 40th day - 3 Year								
School Level	Year	White	AA	Hisp	NA	API	MR	Total
Elementary Schools	2017-18	35	28	102	11	8	6	190
	2016-17	13	9	90	9	8	4	133
K-8 Schools	2017-18	131	90	1179	157	9	53	1619
	2016-17	60	34	313	19	5	12	443
Middle Schools	2017-18	207	70	379	19	16	23	714
	2016-17	108	35	316	20	5	15	499
High School	2017-18	138	207	1160	50	16	42	1613
	2016-17	108	165	991	36	16	33	1349
	2015-16	54	118	1012	35	5	19	1243

7. AA Enrichment experiences

The AASSD host events throughout the year to support and enrich the educational experiences of African American students. In school-year 17-18, the AASSD hosted 13 events (i.e., Harambee, African American Youth Heritage Day, Stem Summit, Summer LIT, STEM Summer Camp, Black College Tour, U of A Academic Outreach)

8. AA Academic success events

The AASSD honored over 650 elementary students and 450 HS students in spring, 2018 for maintain a B average during the school year (ES rubric 3 or higher; HS = 3.25 or higher) and/or perfect attendance. A minimum 26% of African American students achieved at least a B average and/or perfect attendance in school year 2017-18.

9. Number of students in highly diverse or integrated schools (% of African American students in highly diverse or integrated schools) (Tables A-6 & A-7)

10. Teacher training in Culturally Responsive Practices in schools

86 school leaders and their administration teams participated in a minimum four hours of culturally responsive practices training. Most administrators participated in approximately eight hours as a result of District leadership meetings and site trainings. Teachers working in 85 schools (not Agave online) participated in a minimum two hours of training with most school teams participating in four hours of culturally responsive practices training

2014-2015	School	White		African American		Hispanic/Latino		Native American		Asian/Pacific		Multi-racial		Total
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Int	ES Banks	85	27%	12	4%	213	67%	3	1%	2	1%	4	1%	319
Int	ES Blenman	97	22%	77	18%	200	46%	11	3%	26	6%	24	6%	435
HD	ES Bloom	136	39%	65	19%	115	33%	11	3%	7	2%	15	4%	349
Int	ES Borton	87	20%	37	9%	274	63%	9	2%	11	3%	18	4%	436
Int	ES Cragin	91	27%	55	17%	155	47%	12	4%	5	2%	15	5%	333
Int	ES Davidson	61	20%	40	13%	164	52%	9	3%	16	5%	23	7%	313
HD	ES Dunham	100	44%	19	8%	94	42%	1	0%	4	2%	8	4%	226
HD	ES Erickson	153	29%	97	18%	221	42%	7	1%	10	2%	38	7%	526
HD	ES Ford	129	35%	59	16%	139	38%	9	3%	6	2%	25	7%	367
HD	ES Gale	208	52%	31	8%	121	30%	0	0%	9	2%	30	8%	399
HD	ES Henry	173	45%	35	9%	141	36%	3	1%	8	2%	27	7%	387
Int	ES Howell	68	21%	37	11%	167	51%	24	7%	10	3%	19	6%	325
Int	ES Hudlow	95	34%	26	9%	124	45%	8	3%	7	3%	18	7%	278
HD	ES Hughes	147	41%	23	6%	146	41%	3	1%	18	5%	21	6%	358
HD	ES Johnson	9	3%	4	2%	132	48%	124	45%	0	0%	5	2%	274
HD	ES Kellond	240	41%	56	10%	229	39%	10	2%	8	1%	39	7%	582
Int	ES Lineweaver	208	37%	38	7%	253	45%	6	1%	10	2%	45	8%	560
HD	ES Marshall	118	44%	28	10%	103	38%	4	2%	8	3%	9	3%	270
HD	ES Miles - E. L. C	107	37%	18	6%	139	48%	3	1%	7	2%	18	6%	292
Int	ES Myers-Ganou	40	10%	63	16%	246	64%	10	3%	13	3%	14	4%	386
Int	ES Sewell	83	26%	41	13%	169	53%	3	1%	9	3%	12	4%	317
HD	ES SolengTom	226	51%	36	8%	141	32%	4	1%	10	2%	24	5%	441
HD	ES Steele	116	37%	39	13%	122	39%	3	1%	13	4%	19	6%	312
Int	ES Wheeler	143	31%	75	16%	203	44%	11	2%	11	2%	19	4%	462
Int	ES Whitmore	103	28%	55	15%	177	48%	2	1%	14	4%	16	4%	367
Int	ES Wright	77	19%	84	21%	195	48%	7	2%	30	7%	17	4%	410
HD	K8 Dietz	111	25%	63	14%	225	51%	4	1%	8	2%	34	8%	445
HD	K8 Lawrence	7	2%	2	1%	149	43%	183	53%	0	0%	7	2%	348
Int	K8 Roberts-Nay	58	9%	137	22%	364	58%	17	3%	31	5%	21	3%	628
Int	MS Dodge	96	23%	29	7%	263	63%	8	2%	11	3%	14	3%	421
HD	MS Doolen	230	29%	128	16%	332	41%	24	3%	57	7%	30	4%	801
HD	MS Gridley	373	50%	58	8%	263	35%	5	1%	26	4%	26	4%	751
HD	MS Magee	274	46%	75	13%	203	34%	9	2%	12	2%	17	3%	590
HD	MS Secrist	212	35%	92	15%	255	42%	5	1%	11	2%	27	5%	602
Int	MS Vail	204	32%	70	11%	309	48%	19	3%	17	3%	23	4%	642
Int	HS Catalina	218	25%	159	18%	390	44%	16	2%	77	9%	24	3%	884
Int	HS Palo Verde	287	27%	191	18%	513	48%	21	2%	21	2%	44	4%	1077
Int	HS Rincon	256	24%	186	17%	527	48%	16	2%	60	6%	43	4%	1088
HD	HS Sabino	586	58%	57	6%	300	30%	5	1%	14	1%	47	5%	1009
HD	HS Sahuaro	806	47%	158	9%	635	37%	15	1%	45	3%	64	4%	1723
HD	HS Santa Rita	277	41%	89	13%	252	37%	6	1%	20	3%	32	5%	676
HD	HS University	520	50%	38	4%	328	32%	4	0%	89	9%	54	5%	1033
	Total Int/HD	7615	34%	2682	12%	9691	43%	654	3%	771	3%	1029	5%	22442
	ALL ES	4105	23%	1564	9%	10810	59%	700	4%	331	2%	744	4%	18254
	ALL K8	902	11%	663	8%	6008	72%	444	5%	111	1%	239	3%	8367
	ALL MS	1648	23%	621	9%	4222	60%	226	3%	151	2%	193	3%	7061
	ALL HS	3533	25%	1215	9%	8146	58%	383	3%	384	3%	419	3%	14080
	ALL District	10188	21%	4063	9%	29186	61%	1753	4%	977	2%	1595	3%	47762

Table A-7. TUSD Enrollment by Integrated/ Highly Diverse Schools and USP Race/Ethnicity 2017-18															
2017-2018		School	White		African American		Hispanic/Latino		Native American		Asian/Pacific		Multi Racial		Total
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Int	ES	Banks	82	25%	8	2%	229	70%	1	0%	0	0%	7	2%	327
Int	ES	Blenman	65	19%	67	20%	149	44%	12	4%	19	6%	25	7%	337
HD	ES	Bloom	96	32%	60	20%	124	41%	3	1%	8	3%	12	4%	303
Int	ES	Bonillas	57	15%	40	10%	262	68%	6	2%	5	1%	13	3%	383
Int	ES	Borton	96	24%	33	8%	251	62%	12	3%	4	1%	10	3%	406
HD	ES	Collier	95	56%	18	11%	48	28%	2	1%	1	1%	7	4%	171
Int	ES	Cragin	68	22%	50	16%	153	49%	12	4%	6	2%	23	7%	312
Int	ES	Davidson	60	23%	41	16%	121	47%	15	6%	4	2%	18	7%	259
Int	ES	Davis	61	21%	16	5%	202	69%	6	2%	0	0%	10	3%	295
HD	ES	Dunham	114	48%	27	11%	81	34%	0	0%	8	3%	10	4%	240
Int	ES	Erickson	83	21%	90	22%	193	48%	4	1%	3	1%	28	7%	401
HD	ES	Ford	115	30%	63	17%	155	41%	5	1%	12	3%	31	8%	381
HD	ES	Fruchthend	211	59%	22	6%	97	27%	2	1%	7	2%	20	6%	359
HD	ES	Gale	159	43%	25	7%	141	38%	0	0%	17	5%	27	7%	369
HD	ES	Henry	178	45%	53	14%	127	32%	2	1%	14	4%	20	5%	394
Int	ES	Holladay	12	6%	43	21%	128	63%	10	5%	0	0%	10	5%	203
Int	ES	Howell	77	26%	54	18%	132	44%	13	4%	3	1%	20	7%	299
Int	ES	Hudlow	62	27%	30	13%	111	47%	7	3%	4	2%	20	9%	234
Int	ES	Hughes	107	30%	28	8%	180	50%	2	1%	21	6%	22	6%	360
HD	ES	Johnson	5	3%	3	2%	100	53%	78	41%	1	1%	2	1%	189
Int	ES	Kellond	177	34%	65	12%	231	44%	4	1%	8	2%	39	7%	524
Int	ES	Lineweaver	195	36%	39	7%	262	48%	2	0%	8	2%	41	8%	547
HD	ES	Marshall	121	45%	22	8%	112	42%	2	1%	6	2%	7	3%	270
HD	ES	Miles - E. L.	83	29%	15	5%	166	57%	3	1%	8	3%	16	6%	291
Int	ES	Myers-Gano	59	16%	83	23%	197	54%	5	1%	5	1%	16	4%	365
HD	ES	Sewell	87	29%	50	17%	127	42%	5	2%	14	5%	20	7%	303
HD	ES	SolengTom	198	48%	42	10%	131	31%	4	1%	14	3%	28	7%	417
Int	ES	Steele	96	33%	39	14%	132	46%	4	1%	8	3%	10	4%	289
Int	ES	Tully	38	11%	57	17%	214	62%	20	6%	9	3%	6	2%	344
Int	ES	Wheeler	175	36%	52	11%	212	44%	9	2%	12	3%	23	5%	483
HD	ES	Whitmore	109	34%	45	14%	129	40%	1	0%	15	5%	21	7%	320
HD	ES	Wright	98	20%	144	29%	196	39%	10	2%	35	7%	14	3%	497
HD	K8	Booth-Ficke	215	25%	143	16%	436	50%	21	2%	20	2%	44	5%	879
HD	K8	Dietz	134	27%	110	22%	189	39%	5	1%	24	5%	29	6%	491
Int	K8	Drachman	63	18%	25	7%	238	67%	14	4%	2	1%	13	4%	355
HD	K8	Lawrence	11	3%	4	1%	137	42%	167	51%	1	0%	9	3%	329
Int	MS	Dodge	84	20%	37	9%	264	63%	10	2%	9	2%	14	3%	418
HD	MS	Doolen	177	25%	118	17%	305	43%	26	4%	46	7%	32	5%	704
HD	MS	Gridley	351	44%	76	10%	310	39%	2	0%	19	2%	34	4%	792
HD	MS	Magee	234	39%	70	12%	245	41%	10	2%	12	2%	24	4%	595
Int	MS	Mansfeld	137	14%	87	9%	656	68%	38	4%	19	2%	25	3%	962
HD	MS	Secrist	119	31%	72	19%	160	42%	5	1%	10	3%	20	5%	386
Int	MS	Vail	209	32%	59	9%	337	51%	8	1%	16	2%	30	5%	659
Int	HS	Catalina	188	25%	129	17%	342	46%	21	3%	49	7%	16	2%	745
Int	HS	Palo Verde	264	23%	211	19%	550	48%	18	2%	43	4%	53	5%	1139
Int	HS	Rincon	209	20%	142	14%	617	59%	9	1%	38	4%	39	4%	1054
HD	HS	Sabino	501	56%	59	7%	285	32%	4	0%	17	2%	35	4%	901
HD	HS	Sahuaro	702	40%	210	12%	714	41%	14	1%	48	3%	63	4%	1751
HD	HS	Santa Rita	149	34%	66	15%	194	44%	3	1%	11	3%	17	4%	440
HD	HS	University	520	46%	35	3%	389	35%	1	0%	115	10%	62	6%	1122
		Total Int/HS	7506	31%	3077	13%	11461	47%	637	3%	778	3%	1135	5%	24594
		ALL ES	3547	21%	1646	10%	9880	59%	596	4%	309	2%	671	4%	16649
		ALL K8	1109	13%	681	8%	5678	68%	436	5%	134	2%	263	3%	8301
		ALL MS	1463	22%	601	9%	4002	60%	231	3%	141	2%	226	3%	6664
		ALL HS	3147	23%	1215	9%	8362	60%	389	3%	392	3%	407	3%	13912
		ALL District	9266	20%	4143	9%	27922	61%	1652	4%	976	2%	1567	3%	45526

APPENDIX B

Sample Logic Models

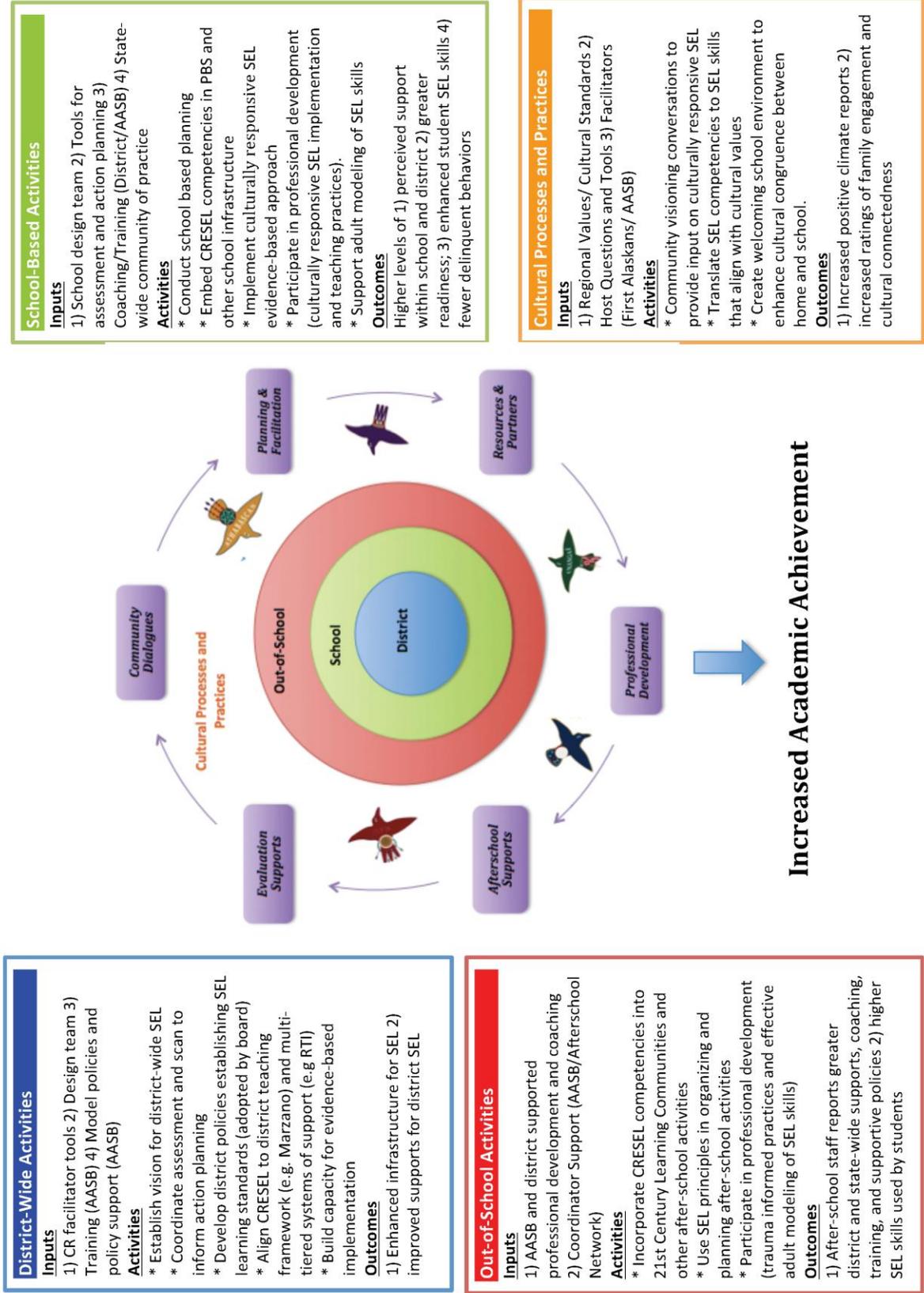


ABC STEM Logic Model

VISION: ABC STEM will increase and improve culturally responsive STEM out-of-school programming, aligned with in-school curricula, to prepare high-need middle-school students, academically and social-emotionally, for STEM postsecondary education and careers.

Resources	Strategies	Activities	Outputs	Short-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
ABC STEM Site Staff Grant and Match Funding ABC Public Schools (ABCPS) ABC After School Alliance Professional Learning Consultants VISTA personnel Corporate Partnerships ABC STEM Network	1) Employ a collaborative, continuous performance feedback cycle to encourage innovative, customized site-based strategies and supports within a framework for implementation 2) Implement culturally responsive STEM programming to increase students' STEM college and career aspirations and exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct site needs assessments Develop collaborative action plans Align STEM programming with school curricula Offer customized program-wide and site-specific PL and coaching Host Communities of Practice Recruit additional ABC STEM sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of sites that implement needs assessments with fidelity # of staff who receive PL # of PL opportunities customized as the result of the continuous performance feedback loop #/% of staff who implement strategies reflective of PL and who indicate positive impact from PL # of programs with implementation fidelity % of high quality Action Plans # of student participants in ABC STEM 	Increased student interest in STEM Increased student social-emotional skills Increased student attendance Increased grade promotion	Improved Student Achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student STEM achievement scores for ALL students Increased student postsecondary aspirations for STEM education and careers Replication and Scaling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sustainable and replicable model that capitalizes on existing assets and thrives in a multitude of settings

Culturally Responsive Embedded Social and Emotional Learning (CRESEL) Logic Model



Increased Academic Achievement

Project High Five – Culture, Collaboration, Commitment, Communication, and Community: LOGIC MODEL

The High Five long-term vision is threefold: (1) to develop a strong Professional Development School (PDS) partnership program between Central School District and Western Oregon University focused on the co-teaching approach and based on principles of culturally responsive pedagogy; (2) to strengthen and expand a contextualized English Language Development (ELD) model of instruction for English Learners by utilizing their “funds of knowledge” and intentional instructional practices; and (3) to actively involve pre-service and in-service teachers, as well as K-12 students, in self-reflection and community service activities framed toward advocacy for equity and social justice.

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact	
	Activities	Participation	Short	Long
<p><i>What we invest:</i></p> <p>Students</p> <p>Faculty & staff:</p> <p>Central School District (CSD)</p> <p>CSD High Schools</p> <p>Western Oregon University/College of Education (WOU/COE)</p> <p>WOU’s Teaching Research Institute Center on Educator Preparation & Effectiveness (WOU/TRI/CEPE)</p> <p>Ella Curran Food Bank</p> <p>Oregon Child Development Coalition (OCDC) Polk County Center</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Money</p>	<p><i>What we do:</i></p> <p>Define consortia partnership</p> <p>Establish Collaborative Design Team to design and plan activities and act as Advisory Board to project team</p> <p>Offer targeted professional development to address culturally responsive teaching</p> <p>Offer co-taught courses with in-service and pre-service teachers paired</p> <p>Community events to share project updates</p> <p>Data Collection</p> <p>Data Analysis</p> <p>Periodic check-in meetings</p> <p>Formative and Summative updates</p>	<p><i>Who we reach:</i></p> <p>Families</p> <p>High school students</p> <p>School district</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Institution of higher education</p> <p>Community organizations</p> <p>Wider community</p>	<p><i>What the short term results are:</i></p> <p>Establish consortia partnership</p> <p>Pre-service teachers gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum and more opportunities for self-reflection</p> <p>In-service teachers reach high need students</p> <p>Students have more opportunities for engagement and individual attention through co-teaching</p> <p>Strengthen and expand a contextualized English Language Development (ELD) model of instruction for English Learners –</p> <p>Establish continuous conversations</p>	<p><i>What the ultimate impact is:</i></p> <p>Culturally responsive pedagogy</p> <p>Higher achievement opportunities for students in CSD</p> <p>Closer relationships across educational systems (High schools - university) and community organizations</p> <p>Commitment for equity by university and school district educators</p> <p>Change in system</p>

Theory of Change Questions: 1) How will practitioners know they are utilizing culturally relevant practices that assist students in their education?; 2) How will practitioners know they are making learning personally meaningful for every child?; 3) What changes are necessary at the district, university and community level to ensure that every student meets educational outcomes?; 4) What needs to happen to ensure that educational and community leadership is involved and supporting culturally relevant teaching?

APPENDIX C

Best Practices

New Teacher Center Induction Model

The New Teacher Center (NTC) Induction Model is a comprehensive and systemic approach to support beginning teachers (i.e., teachers new to the profession). The induction model aims to accelerate the effectiveness of beginning teachers at increasing student learning by providing one-on-one mentoring and professional development in a supportive school environment. The NTC works with school districts and state departments of education to design, develop, and implement induction programs that are aligned with both district priorities and NTC standards.

IES PRACTICE GUIDE NCEE 2009-4060 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics:
Response to Intervention (RtI) for Elementary and Middle Schools Assisting Students
Struggling with Middle School

When Implicit Bias Shapes Teacher Expectations

By Mary Ellen Flannery

Research References: What is the research base on K-12 programs to support the academic success of Black male students?

1. Gordon, D.M., Iwamoto, D.K., Ward, N., Potts, R., & Boyd, E. (2009). Mentoring urban Black middle school male students: Implications for academic achievement. *Journal of Negro Education*, 78(3), 277-289.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2850445/>
From the abstract: “Researchers have called for innovative and culturally responsive intervention programs to enhance male, Black middle school students' academic achievement. Mentoring has received considerable attention as a novel remedy. Although anecdotal evidence supports the positive role of mentoring on academic achievement, these results are not consistent. The Benjamin E. Mays Institute (BEMI) builds on the ideals of mentoring to counter the effects of academic underachievement among adolescent Black males by building a model that is Afrocentric; uses prosocial modeling; and emphasizes cultural strengths and pride, and single-sex instruction in a dual-sex educational environment. From a sample of sixty-one middle school Black males, results revealed that students in the BEMI program had significantly greater academic attachment scores and academic success than their non-mentored peers. Additionally, racial identity attitudes of immersion/emersion and internalization and identification

with academics were also significantly associated with standardized achievement tests and GPA. Policy and practice implications are discussed.”

2. Gregory, A., Skiba, R., Russell, J., & Noguera, P. A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher*, 39(1), 59-68.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ886500>

From the abstract: “The gap in achievement across racial and ethnic groups has been a focus of education research for decades, but the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of Black, Latino, and American Indian students has received less attention. This article synthesizes research on racial and ethnic patterns in school sanctions and considers how disproportionate discipline might contribute to lagging achievement among students of color. It further examines the evidence for student, school, and community contributors to the racial and ethnic patterns in school sanctions, and it offers promising directions for gap-reducing discipline policies and practices.”

3. Henfield, M. S. (2012). Masculinity identity development and its relevance to supporting talented Black males. *Gifted Child Today*, 35(3), 179-186.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ986062>

From the abstract: “The purpose of the article is to provide a brief introduction to Black male masculine identity development and relate it to the field of gifted education. It will begin with information related to identity development that is applicable to Black males. Next, the phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST) will be explored and used as a framework for understanding how Black males develop identities that may enhance or impede the likelihood that they become willing participants in more challenging academic contexts. Finally, the article will end with a discussion of the implications of an increased understanding of Black male masculine identity development for gifted educators as well as recommendations for improved recruitment and retention of Black males in advanced academic classes and programs.”

4. Kelly, L. L. (2013). Hip-hop literature: The politics, poetics, and power of hip-hop in the English classroom. *English Journal*, 102(5), 51-56.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1017693>

From the abstract: “There is an educational disconnect between students' individual backgrounds and the instruction that they traditionally receive in school (Darling-Hammond 3). This division is even more severe for Black, Latino/Latina, and economically underprivileged students, who often lack the support, experience, or resources to fully engage in traditional classroom

instruction. Hip-hop pedagogy has grown in the past ten years, as scholars and educators have researched and experimented with the use of hip-hop music and culture to improve students' empowerment, cultural responsiveness, and skills of literary analysis and critical literacy (Petchauer 952). Hip-hop literature is now frequently introduced into English language arts curricula as a bridge to discussion of literary works and devices. Hip-hop texts can serve as a useful supplement or entryway into the traditional English curriculum; however, simply juxtaposing such texts with canonical texts in the classroom does little to rectify the cultural inequality that already exists in education. Rap can be a powerful tool for helping students to develop skills in critical analysis, but that power is diluted when the goal of its use is solely for reading and discussing canonical texts. In this article, the author argues it is necessary to establish a separate course that focuses on hip-hop texts as the central literary genre, and recognizes their power as creative, poetic, valuable, instructional, and cultural texts, worthy of academic study. By providing students with ways in which to engage their cultural interests in an academic setting, we are giving them the opportunity to embrace their individuality while also pursuing academic success (Emdin xii).”

5. Whiting, G. (2009). Gifted Black males: Understanding and decreasing barriers to achievement and identity. *Roeper Review*, 31(4), 224-233.

<http://campbellms.typepad.com/files/gifted-black-males-understanding-and-decreasing-barriers-to-achievement-and-identity.pdf>

From the abstract: “Black males as a group experience disproportionate amounts of school failure. Compared to Black females and White males, for example, Black males have the highest dropout rates, poorest achievement, and lowest test scores. Further, they are sorely under-represented in gifted education and over-represented in special education. Of those Black males who do succeed in school settings, certain characteristics seem to be evident. In this article, I share these characteristics in what I am calling a "scholar identity" model. First, however, I discuss achievement barriers that many gifted Black males seem to face. The article ends with some recommendations for educators as they work to improve the educational status of Black males identified as gifted.”

Additional Organizations to Consult

- The Campaign for Black Male Achievement:
<https://www.blackmaleachievement.org/>
From the website: “The Campaign for Black Male Achievement (CBMA) is a national membership network that seeks to ensure the growth, sustainability, and impact of leaders and organizations committed to improving the life outcomes of Black men and boys. CBMA is the only organization that both supports local

leaders on the ground while at the same time amplifying and catalyzing the movement for Black Male Achievement around the country. We are defining and building the future we want for ourselves today, where our brothers and sons are seen for the limitless assets they are. We measure our impact through the lens of High School Excellence.”

Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

Alternative routes to teacher certification are having a profound impact on K-12 education. What began in the early 1980s as a way to ward off projected shortages of teachers and replace emergency certification has rapidly evolved into an accepted model for recruiting, training, and certifying those who already have at least a bachelor's degree and want to become teachers.

In addition, these programs offer individuals, regardless of whether they have a background in education or not, the opportunity to become licensed/certified by meeting requirements prescribed by the state. Every state in the nation and the District of Columbia report they have at least some type of nontraditional route to licensure (*Source: National Center for Alternative Certification*).

The NEA recognizes that there are – and should be – multiple pathways for entrance into the teaching profession and for attaining full licensure. The pathways should provide options so that individual candidates may select the one that best provides them a pathway to full licensure. None should be considered superior or inferior to the other. Further, the NEA believes that alternative pathways must be equal in rigor to traditional programs and that every teacher candidate must meet identical standards and measures in order to receive a professional teaching license in a given state. These standards and measures should ensure that processes for teacher licensure adequately address the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed for effective teaching.

Most teachers entering the profession through alternative routes are recruited for areas where the demand for teachers is greatest – in large cities and rural areas – and in subject areas in greatest demand – special education, mathematics, and science. Alternative route programs are created and designed specifically to meet the needs in those areas, as well as the specific needs of prospective teachers who come from other careers and with considerable life experiences. These programs get prospective teachers into the classroom early, usually as a full-time teacher, earning a salary, while working with experienced teachers (*Source: State Policy Trends for Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification, 2005*).

Although the research on alternative routes to certification isn't substantial, there is enough to justify some modest conclusions and to provide guidance for policymakers. For instance, the research suggests that the following features are important to successful programs:

- Strong partnership between preparation programs and school districts
- Good participant screening and selection process

- Strong supervision and mentoring for participants during their teaching
- Solid curriculum that includes coursework in classroom basics and teaching methods
- Sufficient and relevant training and coursework prior to the assignment of participants to full-time teaching (Education Commission of the States, 2003)

Regarding the effectiveness of alternative route versus traditional certification programs, Linda Darling-Hammond et al.'s research on Teach for America recruits finds that those "who become certified after 2 or 3 years do about as well as other certified teachers in supporting student achievement gains; however, nearly all of them leave within three years. Teachers' effectiveness appears strongly related to the preparation they have received for teaching." (Education Policy Analysis Archives, 2005)

Amid the proponents and the opposition, what does seem apparent is that alternative certification programs have the potential to recruit more minority, male, and older teachers into urban and rural areas. With federal programs providing increasing support and oversight, alternative certification programs are not only evolving, but also gaining wider acceptance (Education Commission of the States, 2004).

References

- [National Center for Alternative Certification](#)
- [State Policy Trends for Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification](#) (National Center for Education Information, 2005)
- [Does Teacher Preparation Matter?](#) (Education Policy Analysis Archives, 2005)
- [A Growing Trend to Address the Teacher Shortage](#) (Education Commission of the States, 2016)

Research Spotlight on Community Schools

NEA Reviews of Research on Best Practices in Education

A community school is both a place - a public school - and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Research shows that its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.

The community school model allows schools to become centers of the community, where they are open to everyone – all day, every day, evenings, and weekends.

Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families, and communities.

Partners work to achieve these results:

- Children are ready to learn when they enter school and every day thereafter. All students learn and achieve to high standards.
- Young people are well prepared for adult roles in the workplace, as parents and as citizens.
- Parents and community members are involved with the school and their own life-long learning.

Community schools have two major advantages that schools acting alone do not:

- They garner additional resources to reduce the demand on school staff for addressing all the challenges that students bring to school.
- They build social capital – the networks and relationships that support learning and create opportunities for young people while strengthening their communities. (Barkin, Dryfoos, and Quinn, 2005)

NEA is an active participant in the work of the Coalition of Community Schools, a partnership that provides a forum for information sharing and collective action, including advocacy. The Coalition, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, D.C., has published a variety of research studies and background reports on the community schools strategy. Here are some references and related resources on community schools:

Reference

Barkin, C., Dryfoos, J., and Quinn, J. (2005). *Community Schools in Action: Lessons from a Decade of Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Related Links

- [**Coalition for Community Schools**](#)
The Web site provides information about the coalition and offers resources to schools and community organizations.
- [**All Together Now: Sharing Responsibility for the Whole Child**](#) ( PDF)
Martin Blank and Amy Berg (July 2006)
This paper provides a rationale for why schools and communities must work together. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- [**Community Based Learning: Engaging Students for Success and Citizenship**](#)
Martin Blank and Amy Berg (March 2006)
This report highlights the values of the community-based learning approach to improving academic outcomes, including test scores, attendance rates, and graduation rates, as well as civic, moral, personal, social, and work-related outcomes. Community Schools.

Research Spotlight on Cooperative Learning

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

by NEA staff researchers

Learning can be structured in three ways:

- Competitive learning - students work against each other.
- Individual learning - students work alone.
- Cooperative learning - students work together to accomplish shared learning goals.

While all three structures should be used, cooperation should play the dominant role in any classroom.

What Is Cooperative Learning? In their overview of the topic, Kennesaw State University defines cooperative learning as a teaching strategy where small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of the team is not only responsible for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn. Since students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it, this teaching strategy creates an atmosphere of achievement.

Benefits of Cooperative Learning. Why use cooperative learning? Research by Johnson & Johnson (1989) indicates that cooperation, compared with competitive and individualistic efforts, typically results in (a) higher achievement and greater productivity, (b) more caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and (c) greater psychological, health, social competence, and self-esteem.

Overuse of Cooperative Learning. Opponents of cooperative learning often point to problems related to vague objectives and poor expectations for accountability. Randall (1999) who has taught elementary, high school, and college level students, cautions against abuse and overuse of cooperative learning. She says that making members of the group responsible for each other's learning can place too great a burden on some students and that cooperative learning encourages only lower level thinking and ignores the strategies necessary for the inclusion of critical or higher level thinking.

Cooperative Learning Engages Active Learning. Perhaps the most compelling argument for cooperative learning is that it actively engages students in learning. Each student has an opportunity to contribute in a small group and is more apt to claim ownership of the material.

References

- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1989). *Cooperation and competition: Theory and research*. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.
- Randall, V. "Cooperative Learning: Abused and Overused?" *The Education Digest* 65, no. 2 (October, 1999): 29-32.
- [Roles and Social Interaction](#) - Essay about cooperative learning as a structured instructional strategy that emphasizes active learning through interpersonal interaction, where students act as partners with the teacher and each other. By Trudi Joubert, University of Pretoria, South Africa.
- [Classroom Compass: Cooperative Learning](#) (1998) - Includes an overview of cooperative learning, successful models, and a related reading list. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.
- [The Jigsaw Classroom](#) - This site provides an overview of the jigsaw method for cooperative learning in the classroom. Social Psychology Network Web site.

Research Spotlight on Peer Tutoring

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

Peer tutoring is a term that's been used to describe a wide array of tutoring arrangements, but most of the research on its success refers to students working in pairs to help one another learn material or practice an academic task. Peer tutoring works best when students of different ability levels work together (Kunsch, Jitendra, & Sood, 2007).

During a peer tutoring assignment it is common for the teacher to have students switch roles partway through so that the tutor becomes the one being tutored. Since explaining a concept to another helps extend one's own learning, this practice gives students the opportunity to understand better the material being studied.

What does the research say about peer tutoring? In reviews of peer tutoring programs, researchers found:

- When students participated in the role of reading tutor, improvements in reading achievement occurred
- When tutors were explicitly trained in the tutoring process, they were far more effective and the students they were tutoring experienced significant gains in achievement
- Most of the students benefited from peer tutoring in some way, but same-age tutors were as effective as cross-age tutors (Burnish, Fuchs & Fuchs, 2005; Topping, 2008)

Some benefits of peer tutoring for students include higher academic achievement, improved relationships with peers, improved personal and social development as well as increased motivation. In turn, the teacher benefits from this model of instruction by an increased opportunity to individualize instruction, increased facilitation of inclusion/mainstreaming, and opportunities to reduce inappropriate behaviors (Topping, 2008).

There is an old saying: "To teach is to learn twice." Peer tutoring is a beneficial way for students to learn from each other in the classroom. While one student may excel in math, another student may be top-notch in English. These two students can work together to help each other understand difficult concepts, while deepening their own knowledge of the subject.

References

Kunsch, C., Jitendra, A., & Sood, S. (2007). The effects of peer-mediated instruction in mathematics for students with learning problems: A research synthesis. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 22(1), 1-12.

Burnish, Fuchs & Fuchs (2005). Peer-assisted learning strategies: An evidence-based practice to promote reading achievement. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 15(2), 85-91.

Topping, K (2008). Peer-assisted learning: A practical guide for teachers. Newton, MA: Brookline Books.

Related Research

Cardenas, J. A., Harris, R., del Refugio Robledo, M., and Supik, J. D. Valued Youth Program Dropout Prevention Strategies for At-Risk Students. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, Chicago, IL, April 2003.

Research Spotlight on Project-Based Learning

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

What is Project-Based Learning (PBL) and how long has it been around? As far back as the early 1900s, John Dewey supported the "learning by doing" approach to education, which is the essential element of PBL.

Today, PBL is viewed as a model for classroom activity that shifts away from teacher-centered instruction and emphasizes student-centered projects.

This model helps make learning relevant to students by establishing connections to life outside the classroom and by addressing real world issues. In the classroom, PBL gives teachers an opportunity to build relationships with students by acting as their coach, facilitator, and co-learner. In the school and beyond, the model further allows teachers opportunities to build relationships among colleagues and with those in the larger community. Student projects can be shared with other teachers, parents, and others who have a vested interest in the students' education.

What does the research say about PBL? Below are links to the current research on the topic:

- [**Handbook: Introduction to Project-Based Learning**](#)
This article gives an introduction to PBL and a description of its benefits. It also identifies key elements of successful projects. (Buck Institute for Education, 2007)
- [**PBL in Your Classroom**](#)
This section of the handbook suggests "standards-based" projects as a central method of teaching and learning that replaces conventional instruction for a portion of a course.
- [**Project-Based Research**](#)
This page contains links to current research studies on PBL. (Buck Institute for Education, 2007)
- [**A Review of Research on Project-Based Learning**](#)
This review covers the underpinnings of PBL research and practice, evaluative research as well as research on the effectiveness of PBL. (John W. Thomas, 2000)
- [**Research Validates Project-Based Learning**](#)
This article highlights the growing body of academic research that supports the use of PBL in schools as a way to engage students, cut absenteeism, boost cooperative learning skills and improve test scores. (Edutopia, 2001)

- **[Web Resources: Project Examples](#)**

This site contains links to exemplary projects and structures for students to create and facilitate their own projects to fit their own particular classroom and curriculum needs. (Buck Institute for Education, 2007)

- **[Technology and Beyond: Teachers Learning Through Project-Based Partnerships](#)**

This article highlights a teacher partnership model for professional development that's effective in building technology, pedagogy, leadership skills, and collaboration practices that support teacher learning. (Karen A. Cole, Institute for Research on Learning, 1999)

Research Spotlight on Recruitment and Retention

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

As the baby-boomers begin to retire and more students enter school, America faces a serious dilemma: a shortage of teachers. Yet, the research suggests that teacher retirement and an increased number of students entering school are not the primary reasons for the impending crisis. It's retaining teachers that's the greatest problem.

Over 40 percent of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years. We must address these high levels of attrition or face a projected need to fill 2.2 million vacancies by 2010.

Much of the research shows that poor working conditions and lack of on-the-job training are the root cause of this situation. Many states and school districts offer incentives, professional development (which often lacks follow-up), and increased salaries, but the reality is that the factors that determine whether a teacher remains in the profession is dictated by what happens at the school site. The school is their world, not the state or district office.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS 2005) conducted recruitment and retention research based on eight questions:

1. What are the characteristics of those individuals who enter teaching?
2. How do those individuals who remain in teaching compare with those who leave?
3. What are the characteristics of schools and districts most likely to be successful in recruiting and retaining teachers?
4. What impact do the working conditions in schools have on their ability to recruit and retain teachers?
5. What impact does compensation have on the recruitment and retention of teachers?
6. What impact do various strategies related to teacher preparation have on teacher recruitment and retention?
7. What impact do induction and mentoring have on teacher retention?
8. What is the efficacy of particular recruitment strategies and policies in bringing new teachers into the profession, including specifically targeted populations?

These questions—and their answers—must be considered by education policy makers as they prepare to address the pending teacher shortage.

To learn more, read [Eight Questions on Teacher Recruitment and Retention](#) on the ECS Web site. This report is designed to help policymakers gain a better understanding of both the nature of the teacher workforce and of promising recruitment and retention strategies. The report is also available in PDF form as:

[Full Report](#)

Related Links

- [Mentoring and Supporting New Teachers](#) -State policymakers have directed much attention to programs aimed at recruiting new teachers but less attention to teacher attrition rates, the reasons teachers leave, and the policy strategies that could help retain them in the profession. National Governors' Association 2002.
- [Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools](#) - This research suggests that a major cause of inadequate school performance is the inability of schools to adequately staff schools with qualified teachers, due to the shortage of teachers. R. M. Ingersoll, Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, January 2001.
- [The Wrong Solution to the Teacher Shortage](#) - Loss of new teachers plays a major role in the teacher shortage, but pouring more teachers into the system will not solve the retention problem. R. M. Ingersoll & Thomas M. Smith, *Educational Leadership*, May 2003.
- [The Workplace Matters: Teacher Quality, Retention, and Effectiveness](#) -This brief describes workplace conditions in "learning centered" schools, where practices are consistent with the research about learning and its context. Its purpose is to support fundamental, long-term change by offering a vision of best practice for educators to consider, discuss, and adapt to their circumstances. Susan Moore Johnson, NEA 2006.
- [Professional Community and Professional Development in the Learning-Centered School](#) - Provides a research-based blueprint for teacher learning, including the goals it can serve, strategic content priorities, and effective approaches or strategies. The focus is on "learning-centered" schools where both the student and teacher are engaged in learning. Judith Warren Little, NEA 2006.

Research Spotlight on Recruiting & Retaining a Highly Qualified, Diverse Teaching Workforce

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

Over the next decade, schools in the United States will need to hire many new teachers. Four factors will affect the recruitment of these teachers:

- A shrinking teaching force
- A growing student population
- A lack of diversity among teachers to match the diversity of students
- A need for teachers in specific types of schools, geographic locations, and subject areas

In addition to recruiting new teachers, schools will also need to look at the retention of teachers already in the workforce and understand the reasons teachers leave. Some sources estimate that 50 percent of the teachers currently in our classrooms will either retire or leave the profession over the next five to seven years. The statistics for teacher turnover among new teachers are startling. Some 20 percent of all new hires leave the classroom within three years. In urban districts, the numbers are worse. Close to 50 percent of newcomers leave the profession during their first five years of teaching. See [The High Cost of Teacher Turnover](#) (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2007)

The problem of a dwindling teacher population will be compounded by the growing student population as well as the movement toward progressively smaller class sizes.

Filling the ranks of teachers also will require recruiting teachers for difficult-to-fill schools, particularly in urban and rural areas. Finding teachers for selected subject areas and for certain geographic regions. And encouraging more minorities to become teachers, as insufficient numbers of them are currently entering the profession.

With 40 percent minority students and 5 percent minority teachers predicted for 2010, a critical shortage of educators and role models who reflect their race and ethnicity may be at hand. This shortage could lead to a failure of all American students to acquire the academic, personal, and social skills they need in a multicultural society.

NEA believes that strong programs of teacher recruitment are necessary to maintain and enhance the teaching profession. These programs should emphasize the recruitment of underrepresented candidates and should include a policy of affirmative recruitment (NEA Handbook, 2008, Resolution D-2).

Resolving the teacher shortage is not strictly a numbers game. Much has been said about the need to bring more young people into the teaching profession, but too little attention has been paid to holding onto the quality teachers already hired -- both beginning teachers as well as more experienced ones.

NEA believes that retaining these teachers in our classrooms requires giving them adequate preparation, support, leadership, and autonomy as well as compensation that reflects their professional stature.

Here are some related articles and research on recruitment and retention:

- [Eight Questions on Teacher Recruitment and Retention: What Does the Research Say?](#) (Education Commission of the States, 2005) This article focuses on the characteristics of schools and districts that are most likely to be successful in recruiting and retaining a highly qualified and diverse teaching workforce.
- [Instructional Leadership and Monitoring: Increasing Teacher Intent To Stay Through Socialization](#) (National Association of Secondary School Principals: NASSP Bulletin, 2006) This study examines principal monitoring and beginning teachers' experiences through interviews. The findings indicate that socializing into an ineffective school will lead to ineffective instructional practices, thus setting up new teachers for failure.
- [A Possible Dream: Retaining California Teachers So All Students Learn](#) (California State University 2007) This report contends that unless California understands and addresses the problem of teacher attrition and turnover, thousands of additional students in the coming years will continue to enter classrooms without qualified and experienced teachers to instruct them.
- [Teacher Recruitment and Retention: A Review of the Recent Empirical Literature](#) (American Educational Research Association, 2006) This article critically reviews the recent empirical literature on teacher recruitment and retention published in the United States. It examines the characteristics of individuals who enter and remain in the profession.

Research Spotlight on Response to Intervention

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

Response to intervention (RTI) is a tiered approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs.

The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and screening of all the children in the general education classroom. As a result of this screening process, struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of comprehension. These services are often provided by a variety of personnel, including regular classroom teachers, special educators, and specialists. Students are closely monitored to assess both their rate of learning and level of performance.

The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and screening of all the children in the general education classroom. As a result of this screening process, struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of comprehension. These services are often provided by a variety of personnel, including regular classroom teachers, special educators, and specialists. Students are closely monitored to assess both their rate of learning and level of performance.

RTI seeks to prevent academic failure through early intervention, frequent progress measurement, and increasingly intensive research-based instructional interventions for children who continue to have difficulty. Students who do not show a response to effective interventions are likely (or, more likely than students who respond) to have biologically based learning disabilities and to be in need of special education (Cortiella, 2006).

In order for RTI implementation to work well (RTI Action Network, 2008), the following essential components must be in place:

- **High quality, scientifically based classroom instruction.** All students receive high quality, research-based instruction in the general education classroom.
- **On-going student assessment.** Universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually and in comparison with the peer group.
- **Tiered instruction.** A multi-tier approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction, offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs.

- **Parent involvement.** Schools implementing RTI provide parents information about their child's progress, the instructions and interventions used, the staff who are delivering the instruction and the academic or behavioral goals for the child.

For children with learning disabilities, RTI may assist schools in avoiding the so-called "wait-to-fail" method by providing intervention as soon as children exhibit difficulty.

References

- Cortiella, C. July 2006. [Response-to-Intervention - An Emerging Method for LD Identification](#). Great Schools.
- RTI Action Network. 2008. [Include Essential Components](#).

Other Publications

- Coyne, M. D., Kame'enui, E. J., Simmons, D. C., & Harn, B. A. 2004. [Beginning Reading Instruction As Inoculation or Insulin: First-Grade Reading Performance of Strong Responders to Kindergarten Intervention](#). *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 37 (2), 90-104. This study examines instructional strategies that affect the reading progress of first-grade students.
- O'Connor, R.E., Harty, K. R., & Fulmer, D. 2005. [Tiers of Intervention in Kindergarten through Third Grade](#). *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 38(6), 532-538. This study examines the effects of second and third tier interventions delivered as needed from kindergarten through third grade on students' reading development and placement in special education by the end of third grade.
- [Truth in Labeling: Disproportionality in Special Education](#). NEA 2007. This guide provides educators with basic information about disproportionality - what it is, what causes it, and what the implications are for students, schools, and the community.
- [Responsive Teaching](#) The "response to intervention" framework in Iowa is helping teachers better understand and address students' learning needs. Article from the *Teacher Professional Development Sourcebook* (Fall 2008).

Research Spotlight on Teaching and Learning

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education

Today, as educators feel the impact of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) on their teaching practice, they find it quite a challenge to remain true to what we know are exemplary teaching and learning experiences.

NCLB has forced many teachers to use prescriptive materials, particularly in classes or schools classified as "low-achieving" or "high-need."

Research shows that the demographics of these schools generally are similar: low socioeconomic community, large minority population, high mobility rate, many beginning teachers, and very little flexibility for the classroom teacher to practice what educators know creates a successful teaching and learning environment.

To reinforce what educators already know about teaching and learning, we have identified some attributes that describe what teaching and learning means for accomplished teachers. Accomplished teachers must:

- Be prepared to teach in culturally diverse classrooms
- Have an understanding of how people learn
- Have a knowledge of subject matter
- Know how to present content for different learning styles
- Use various ways to assess students
- Understand the power of mobilizing organizational change
- Possess the skills to ensure students that they are in a "safe environment"
- Understand how to utilize data
- Have high expectations for all students
- Be committed to their students and demonstrate this through their behavior
- Have the ability to conduct "situational" audits and respond appropriately, without overreacting, becoming tense or stressed, while ensuring that students understand they are accountable for their actions.

These attributes are in no way a comprehensive description of effective teaching and learning, but a list to stimulate your thinking about it. Below are some resources (articles, books, and Web sites) with more food for thought about three areas: cultural competency, accomplished teaching, and demographic changes in the United States.

NEA Working Papers

- [Theories of Learning and Teaching: What Do They Mean for Educators?](#) This report is based on up-to-date research about the learning process, the new concepts of learning and teaching emphasize "active construction of meaning," individual and collaborative work, use of student diversity as a resource for learning, and emphasis on both basic and advanced knowledge and skills. NEA, July 2006.

Related Links

- [Culturally Responsive Practices for Student Success](#)
- [Teacher Skills to Support English Language Learners](#)
- [Preparing and Supporting Diverse, Culturally Competent Leaders](#)