Equity Audit Report

Consolidated Community School District 89

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary is a brief synopsis of the Equity Audit findings only. The full Equity Audit report provides comprehensive information about the purpose and research of an equity audit, its features, process, extensive quantitative and qualitative details and the overall findings. Those findings lead to recommendations grounded in research. The final recommendations are categorized into one of five strands – *Systems, Teaching and Learning, Student Voice, Climate and Culture, Professional Learning and Family and Community as Agency* - for clear alignment to systemic equity.

STRAND 1

Systems: To ensure a systemic and continuous development toward advancing equity within all policies, processes, procedures, initiatives, decision-making and fiscal responsibility.

1.1   District develop common language around equity, diversity and inclusion.
1.2   District develop a long-term plan to increase diversity among teachers and administrators with a focus on people of color.
1.3   District develop a long-term and measurable plan to demonstrate its commitment and growth to educational equity.

STRAND 2

Teaching and Learning: To intentionally embed equity-driven pedagogy in the curriculum, resources, instructional approaches, use and consideration of assessments and academic programming for the purpose of advancing equity for each student.

2.1   District critically examine their programming with an equity lens.
2.2   District develop systemic expectations of culturally responsive practices.
2.3   District internally evaluates and regularly reviews their curriculum and resources for appropriate inclusion and diverse representation in its efforts to embed culturally responsive pedagogy and practices.

STRAND 3

Student Voice, Climate and Culture: To consistently seek students' feedback and experiences and nurture a positive, authentic and meaningful organizational culture and climate.

3.1   District develop process to regularly survey staff on their employer satisfaction and areas of needed attention.

3.2   District develop long-term, proactive solutions to student behaviors and adult mindsets surrounding school expectations.

3.3   District advise schools to develop a student leadership committee and/or include students in the district-level equity advisory committee.

STRAND 4

Professional Learning: To provide a continuum of professional learning and growth opportunities for all staff in pursuit of fully understanding and embracing educational equity.

4.1   District develop mandatory professional development continuum for all staff on issues of equity.

STRAND 5

Family and Community as Agency: To partner with families and the community for authentic opportunities to serve the students, the school and district.

5.1   District assembles an equity advisory committee to effectively collaborate and communicate its commitment and work to advance equity.

Section 1

During school year 2019-20, Community Consolidated School District 89 engaged in an equity audit. An equity audit is a proactive opportunity for districts to critically examine the ways equity has been advanced in their district while it also aids in the identification of needed improvement. This report is a detailed culmination of the equity audit process, findings and research-based recommendations.

What is equity?

There are numerous definitions of equity and each district would decidedly choose which adhere to their values. The consistent theme in quality equity definitions include language that clearly state school systems are responsible for their own inequities, particularly among historically marginalized populations. Those populations include, but are not limited to people of color[1], differently-abled individuals, English Language Learners, immigrants, religious minorities, and other minoritized affinity groups.

The Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center (MPEAC), which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, defines educational equity as:

> When educational policies, practices, interactions, and resources, are representative of, constructed by, and responsive to all people such that each individual has access to, can meaningfully participate, and make progress in high-quality learning experiences that empowers them towards self-determination and reduced disparities in outcomes regardless of individual characteristics and cultural identities.

> MPEAC, *Equity Dispatch Classic Education,*
> January 2012.

The American Institute for Research recognizes a similar definition. It states, "Educational equity is achieved when *all* students receive the resources, opportunities, skills and knowledge they need to succeed in our democratic society" (2018). Several research-based entities such as The Education Trust, The National Equity Project, Teaching Tolerance and Rethinking Schools advocate that equity must disrupt any forms of "-ism's" That is, racism, classism, sexism, normative beliefs associated with heterosexuality, cisgender, national origin and other forms of superiority based on dominant social constructs of race, gender, gender identity, socio-economic status, religion, language, abilities and so on. As educational equity mandates committed, systemic transformations at all levels in order to leverage access, opportunity and outcomes for every student, particularly cognizant to marginalized populations, scholars have

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[1] All non-White individuals.

determined that equity-focused action is necessary (Freire, 1970; Kincheloe, 2008; Gorski, 2018). To understand equity, one must understand inequities and how every major U.S. institution, including education, has been designed to be inequitable; thus, to achieve equity must also by design. By doing so, we actively work to transform systems to ensure each student obtains what is needed to achieve (Shields, 2013; Blankstein et al, 2016; Gorski, 2018). Fullan (2003, p. 47) lists these whole system transformations as follows:

1. Foster deep commitment to the moral imperative.
2. Small number of ambitious goals relentlessly pursued.
3. Establish a developmental culture and investment in capacity building.
4. Build leadership at all levels.
5. Cultivate district wide engagement.
6. Learn from the work.
7. Use transparent data to improve practice for innovation and improvement

Over the last few decades, school districts across the country have committed to educational equity. Despite the growing attention, educational equity should not be viewed as the latest initiative. It is not an initiative at all. It is a transformative mindset shift that encapsulates the ways schools should operate. We cannot do school well without authentic reflection and action toward equity for all students. If the primary premise of schooling is to shape future citizens to be contributing members of greater society, then the principles of equitable human development and societal environments are embedded (Howard, 2010; Shields, 2013; Gorski, 2018). Educational equity is critical, and it cultivates courageous unraveling of power and privilege among individuals and within institutions. The increasing popularity around equity over the last several years has led to a number of visual illustrations to describe its complexities. A quick internet search yields many images including the[2] popular one below.

The image on the left represents *equality* where all receive the same access and opportunity despite individual needs; while, the image on the right represents *equity*, in which individuals may receive accommodations, resources and such based on unique circumstances. In schools across the country, students are legally and justifiably able to ascertain additional supports to aid in their learning, such as in Special Education (SPED) and English Language Learners (ELL) programs. However, national data has shown that despite these efforts too many students

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[2] Creator, Craig Froehle, Ph.D., University of Cincinnati

continue to academically struggle in comparison to their mainstream peers. Educational equity advocates for these programs to exist, but it goes deeper than programmatic structures. Educational equity also impacts a much larger group than SPED and ELL students. Educational equity demands understanding to the conditions that marginalize SPED and ELL students, but also other historically disenfranchised students (e.g. students of color, LGBTQ+). Scholars understand that legal protections for these groups is insufficient to reach equity. Thus, an urgent investigation to how society and institutions perpetuate inequities by examining biases, explicit and implicit, is necessary to unpack narrow or limited mindsets, beliefs and practices. Equity begs the question whether certain district policies and procedures are exclusionary or catered to dominant views, whether academic supports are effective, whether students' needs are being met, whether students are being heard, whether other factors are contributing to disparities or a combination of all the above and more. In other words, have we examined all with an equity lens?

Equity is considered one of the fundamental dynamics in the creation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) aimed to leverage resources to close the opportunity gaps and improve learning outcomes for all students. In May 2018, The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) adopted ESSA and released in its purpose in the Executive Summary (p. 2-3):

> Supporting students in achieving our state goals begins and ends with equity. The Illinois ESSA Plan represents the belief of ISBE and our stakeholders that the students with the greatest needs deserve the greatest share of our public education resources. Grounding our work in the practice of equity will ensure that we provide all students with the supports they need to succeed from pre-K through high school and onto purposeful lives. All students need safe and inclusive schools and challenging and individualized curriculum and instruction. Even so, each student comes to the classroom with different strengths. Equity requires that each child receives the attention, resources, access, and supports he or she needs to become socially and economically secure adults. Equity must occur as we create the inclusionary conditions for whole schools, whole communities, and whole systems to work together. Students and schools are nested in communities with vastly different histories and resources. Achieving our goals requires a comprehensive approach to supporting students' cognitive growth, social and emotional development, and physical well-being. Illinois is committed to providing integrated, differentiated, transparent, and equitable supports to school districts.

As mentioned previously, one of the most fundamental urgencies about educational equity is that every area must be examined with an equity lens. It requires attention to demographic conditions of disenfranchised populations. The first and possibly the most challenging shift toward prioritizing educational equity is the attention to attitudes, behaviors and actions to consider all aspects of schooling with an equity lens (Schuerick and Skrla, 2003; Dweck, 2007; Lewis & Diamond, 2015). For instance, when standardized assessments are reviewed, we must disaggregate such data by demographics and subgroup and its intersectionality in order to investigate the underlying conditions (Johnson, 2002; Williams, 2003; Ross, 2014; Kendi, 2016). When we scrutinize racial discipline data, we must do so with an understanding of root causes to certain behaviors and actions authentically exerting energies to combat inappropriate assumptions to transform historical power and privilege (Tatum, 1997; Howard, 2010; Ross, 2014; DiAngelo, 2018). When we review the student populations participating in rigorous opportunities and those identified as readily able to partake, we must genuinely practice such considerations void of any deficit thinking (Sleeter, 2012; Kendi, 2016; Gorski & Pothini, 2018). In order to keep educational equity at the forefront of all deliberations, there must be intentional and continuous conversations about it in every aspect of schooling (Kozol, 1991; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Gorski & Pothini, 2018).

Thoughtful, critical and systemic equity considerations ought to be embedded in all the work of an educational institution, including but not limited to curriculum development, assessments, professional development, discipline and programmatic structures (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Chenoweth & Theokas, 2012; Gorksi, 2018; Edley et al, 2019). These discourses and actions must be relentless and continuously allow for improvement contributing to equity as foundational and a moral imperative (Freire, 1970; Kincheloe, 2008; Gorski, 2018). It demands a continuous and heartfelt commitment for every child to be successful. A firm understanding of educational equity clearly imparts the knowledge that equity is transformative and good for all students (Shields, 2013). Even the most advantaged pupils do better in an equitable school setting (Boykin & Noguera, 2011; Shields, 2013; Smith et al, 2017; Gorski, 2018). This is important to point out as equity can be narrowly viewed as taking from one to give to another rather than the critical recognition that sameness for all does not equate to fairness. It also must be understood that individuality does not contribute to a holistic society. Collective voices foster harmony when individual

interests outweigh the betterment of a community, marginalized people will suffer. This is particularly relevant in schools.

Although an equity audit can provide a comprehensive view, it cannot fully capture all the efforts to advance equity. There are educator practices occurring daily throughout any district to ensure students are getting what they need to be successful, and to address inclusion and inequities ingrained in the system and structures. However, when districts create and monitor equity-driven plans with associated measurable indicators, then the opportunity and expectations gaps experienced by marginalized students may be narrowed (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003, Edley et al, 2019). The intent of an equity audit is to formulate a plan. Such a plan aids in identifying inequities in order to advance systemic improvements (Skrla et al, 2009; Skrla, et al, 2011; Edley et al, 2019). In doing so, the research is clear that there is no absolute manner to this work. There is no one size fits all or pre-packaged program to guarantee equity for all students. Strategies that suggest "best" practices to meet the needs of *all* students or one measuring tool or assessment to demonstrate fulfillment of educational equity should be approached with caution. Such suggestions perpetuate singular attitudes that all students will be successful by utilizing one or a few approaches. If there were one or even a collection of a few strategies to combat educational inequities, school districts across the country would have implemented such practices years ago.

Kim Anderson, the newly hired Executive Director for the National Education Association, the largest teachers' union, stated that the most important challenge facing public education today is equity (Peters, 2019). The American Federation of Teachers has a long history of commitment to equity and social justice:

> That the starting point of our work in the area of racial equity must
> be reflection and internal examination, whereby our union—at the local,
> state and national levels—will look for ways to engage our members
> in open and courageous conversations on racism, inequity and privilege.

Educational equity is a *continual* pursuit to enable all students to have equitable access and opportunity as demonstrated by outcomes (Macey et al, 2012; Blankstein et al, 2016; Smith et al, 2017). It is an approach constantly fluctuating based on the circumstances of each student while paying particular attention to a student's diverse background and experiences (Bartolome, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Tatum, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999; Lindsey et al, 2003; Kendi, 2018; Edley et al, 2019). All the recommendations in this equity audit report are firmly supported by research as well as unique considerations of **Community Consolidated School District 89.**

National Student Demographics

The increasing demand by federal and local governments call for state boards of education and school districts to address the academic and opportunity gaps among minoritized demographics, which is the fastest-growing population in the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there are approximately 56.6 million students enrolled in elementary and secondary school, with the projected enrollment to climb to 58.2 million by 2027. Of the current enrollment, 47.1% of students identify as White while 58.23% students identify as non-White (Black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Two or More Races[3]). NCES reported, White student enrollment is projected for continual decline through at least fall 2027 while the percentage of students of color and Two or More races increases with projections of 61.7%. (NCES, 2017 Tables and Figures). These demographic shifts should be valued as the U.S. begins to mirror global racial, ethnic and cultural diversity. Schools must become the epicenter of modeling sociopolitical context about social constructs, especially considering in a recent poll conducted by Pew Research Center, most Americans indicated this demographic shift would lead to increased conflicts between racial and ethnic groups (Wells, et al, 2019). As a society, we must reaffirm the benefits of racially and ethnically diverse communities and we can model this positive affirmation in schools.

Illinois Student Demographics

These statistics parallel the emerging demographic changes in Illinois. According to the 2018-19 Illinois Report Card, the race/ethnic diversity of students continues to increase while the White population decreases.

Table 1.1: Student Racial/Ethnic Diversity in Illinois		
Race/Ethnicity	2015	2019
White	49%	48%
Black	18%	17%
Hispanic	25%	26%
Asian	5%	5%
Two or more races	3%	4%

Data derived from 2018-19 Illinois Report Card

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[3] NCES, Table 203.60

The need to be increasingly responsive to students' equitable needs goes beyond race and ethnicity. Attention and resources are also necessitated for student subgroups: English Language Learners (ELL, EL or LEP), Free, Reduced Lunch (FRL) and Individualized Education Plan (IEP or SPED). The trend in Illinois indicates two subgroups (ELL and IEP) are rising while one (FRL) is decreasing.

Table 1.2: Student Subgroup Statuses in Illinois		
Subgroup Classification	2015	2019
ELL	10%	12%
FRL/Low Income	54%	49%
IEP	14%	18%

Data derived from 2015-2019 Illinois Report Card

Plenty of research and scholarship exists about the criticalness of equity audits as a tool to strategically identify inequities in systems and structures (Skrla et al, 2009; Skrla, et al, 2011; Smith et al, 2017; Edley, et al, 2019). Equity cannot be achieved if the organization does not deliberately identify the barriers that perpetuate biases. Intentional deconstruction of inequities and such biases require schools and all impacted stakeholders to relentlessly reflect and transform their beliefs. Developing equity literacy is a constant journey and requires critical and considerable reflection to our personal, interpersonal and structural unpacking (Gorski, 2018).

Equity literacy is the *knowledge* and *skills* educators need to become a threat to the existence of bias and inequity in our spheres of influence. The *knowledge* refers to developing those bigger understandings, [and] strengthening our abilities to recognize the inequities students experience in and out of school and how those inequities impact their school engagement. The *skills* refers to cultivating our abilities to act for equity, to advocate, to prioritize the education success of students experiencing the most inequity by reshaping policy and practice.

(Gorksi, 2018, p. 17)

As part of this Equity Audit, Community Consolidated School District 89 completed a historical background review that included achievements and challenges within each strand. The below is a non-exhaustive list of those equity-driven actions undertaken.

Systems

Achievements	Challenges
• Strong policy work on equity, ensuring equitable opportunities. Increased participation in recruitment that represents our student body - increased job fair attendance, broader posting of positions. Strategic plan and board goals include equitable experiences and focus on providing opportunities for all.	• Sustained change, finding qualified candidates for our teaching positions

Teaching and Learning

Achievements	Challenges
• Looking at bias in assessment and rewriting questions as needed, moving to screening all for gifted education, not just those recommended by staff, uses a non-verbal screening tool for G&T, Providing professional development on best practices for instructional approaches, instructional coaching for all staff, rigorous expectations for all, reduces "level" of classes at the middle school to allow for more pathways to at and above grade level content, use of co-teaching models to ensure high expectations for our students with disabilities.	• Increasing representation in our G&T to match our overall population, increasing representation in our advanced classes, time for PD to help support teachers on equity and instructional practices

Student Voice, Climate and Culture

Achievements	Challenges
• Addition of two student board members, addition of principal advisory councils in all schools, student government in all schools, feedback boxes in all schools, clubs and activities based on feedback from students, student voice in classroom instruction, SEL embedded in preK - 8th grade, with common outcomes defined. Responsive classroom training and practices in K - 8. Restorative practices in place K - 8.	• Expanding representation to mirror our student population.

Professional Learning

Achievements	Challenges
• Professional development offered for all staff, Instructional coaches trained in equity and instruction to embed in all their coaching cycles, staff led PD on how to provide equitable learning opportunities, staff directed book studies on equity, workshops available out of district	• Time for all to participate, understanding of importance by all staff

Family and Community as Agency

Achievements	Challenges
• Bilingual parent group, strong PTCs in all buildings, home/school communications, parent teacher conferences well attended, volunteer opportunities, GECRC expansion, parent education events • BPAC outreach and work of our EL families	• Outreach to all families, equal representation from all parent groups.

The Five-Phase Equity Audit© is a fact-finding quantitative and qualitative analysis that aids in identifying areas of growth and needed improvement to advance educational equity. The audit process provides an opportunity to critically review various data points and collect stakeholder perspectives, feedback and experiences. The purpose of an equity audit is to lead to actionable shifts to systemically advance equity. Following the Five-Phases of an Equity Audit©, the timeline to conduct is approximately one school year: Phase 1 (Summer or Early Fall); Phase 2 and 3 (Fall semester) and Phase 4 and 5 (Spring semester).

Illustration 1.1: Visual Representation of Five-Phases of an Equity Audit©

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Conduct needs assessment. Determine next Phase 2 and 3.	*Ascertain wide range of disaggregated data.*	*Conduct focus groups with stakeholders.*	*Analyze data and identify common themes.*	*Findings and recommendations aligned with strands*
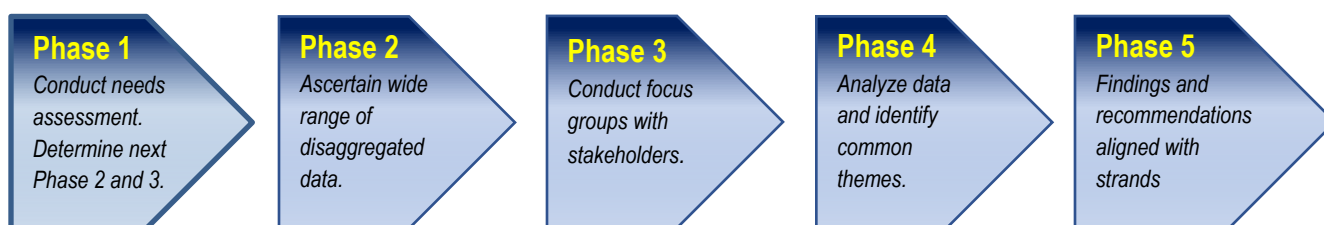
PHASE I

Upon the district forming a District Equity Leadership Team (DELT), they meet with the auditor. During this phase DELT members conducted a District/School Assessment on Systemic Equity© to discuss and rate areas of strengths and needed improvement in equity. The central results of that assessment are used as a data point in this report (see pages 15-22). A prioritization activity follows, and it provides an insight to the varying perspectives of what one believes is urgent to actionable equity. This is an important reminder the priorities fluctuate based on personal and professional views, yet collectively, a consensus must be reached to develop an actionable and accountable plan – a primary goal of an equity audit.

Also, during Phase I, DELT determines the direction of the equity audit in terms of quantitative and qualitative data it seeks. DELT is provided a list of quantitative consideration and decides which data to be analyzed in the audit (see page 20). DELT is then provided a bank of questions to consider for each of the stakeholder focus groups - (1) staff, (2) students and (3) parents/guardians/caretakers. For ease of reference, we will refer to the stakeholder group, Parents/Guardians/Caretakers as Families.

DELT then discussed the questions they prefer to be asked of each focus group and/or developed their own questions (see pages 21-22). About one hour is allocated per focus group. Focus groups take place by stakeholder role and there is no intermingling of stakeholders in one focus group. In other words, students participated with students, staff participated with staff members and so on. Based on cost and time, the focus groups were limited to three days and the following rules were set by the auditor,

- Staff: Any staff member may participate as long as adhere to the 5-8 Rule. This rule indicates that if DELT would like 8 staff members per focus groups, then they are limited to approximately 5 questions. If they would prefer 5 staff members per focus group, then 8 questions will be asked.
- Students: Up to 10 students may participate in student focus groups. Grade-level mixing is allowed. Up to 8 questions may be asked of students.
- Families: Up to 10 individuals may participate in this focus group. Up to 8 questions may be asked.

Once DELT commences the important logistics of Phase I, then the subsequent phases may proceed.

PHASE II

The district spends the Fall semester gathering the agreed-upon data. It is submitted to the auditor for analysis.

PHASE III

The auditor conducts on-site focus groups. The district determines if participation into any of the focus groups is first come, first serve basis, sign-up, by invitation or by a combination of the two. Logistically, about seven focus groups can be conducted in one day. Some focus groups take place in the evening to accommodate families and translation needs. All focus groups were voluntary and confidential.

PHASE IV & PHASE V

Phase IV is the extensive analysis where emerging themes are identified within the quantitative and qualitative data. During Phase IV, the Superintendent and district leadership are requested to complete a brief background survey to briefly highlight previous equity work. This is another data point that contributes to the final report. For a synopsis of that background survey (see page 11).

Phase V are the recommendations. Prior to finalizing the equity report, a draft is submitted to the District Superintendent for review. The purpose of the draft is to allow the Superintendent and/or designees to ensure accuracy in a number of district details, but no other edits or changes are allowed. After the review, a final report is submitted. This report serves as the full **EQUITY AUDIT REPORT**.

As part of Phase I of the Equity Audit, DELT completed a District/School Assessment on Systemic Equity© to provide context, deeper discussion and understanding about equity. The needs assessment provided an opportunity for self-reflection on ten components of equity against a given rubric. The rubric contained these four levels of attainment

- **Strong**: Systemic and committed throughout the district and all schools, widely communicated to all stakeholders.
- **Strong, but focus needed:** Developing stages across the district and schools, but clear expectations and directions are needed.
- **Progressing:** We're working on it, but not yet what we'd call strong.
- **Emergent:** We're just getting started on this work.

For each component, groups were tasked to provide a rating and rationale as well as make suggestions for next steps. DELT was divided into five groups. Each group rating is marked with an "X" in the preceding summary.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
1. COMMON UNDERSTANDING, CONSISTENT LANGUAGE: Our district has clearly defined equity, diversity and inclusion. We have communicated these meanings in a consistent language to our staff and community.	XXXX	X		

Rationale for Rating

Developing	• We are working on this. We don't have clearly defined meanings for equity, diversity and inclusion. We also haven't communicated this to the community. While we strive for inclusion and equity, we have work to do with this. • We are a work in a progress to communicate consistently to the staff and community with intention and purpose. • As a collective staff, we have not worked together to define the above words nor do we have consistency in language. There are probably many misconceptions held by staff members. • We feel that there needs to be more staff training and development on the definitions of equity, diversity, and inclusion. There have not been explicitly outlined definitions if these words and what they look like in our schools and community.
In Progress	• Equity, diversity and inclusion do not currently have district-wide common definition. They need to be clearly defined and communicated so that there is common understanding.

Suggestions for Next Steps

Developing	• Conduct an equity audit, define needs, review practices in order to plan next steps. A policy review to evaluate how diversity, equity and inclusion are addressed. • Identify what it is (equity, diversity & inclusion) and what it looks like to effectively define and communicate, understand and act upon to ALL stakeholders. • Need to develop and hold PD surrounding the topic of equity; clarify what misconceptions are held; share (rich, targeted communications) the work and intentions of the Equity Audit group (staff updates at faculty meetings, DLC, and/or Inside Track) • We should have an ongoing conversation about these words and their meanings.
In Progress	• Create a common definition and develop a plan for communication for all stakeholders. Professional development plan to ensure everyone is working under the same understanding and expectation.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
2. MISSION, VISION AND/OR STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT: Our district has a clear mission and vision for equity as evidenced in our strategic plan, Board policies and/or district goals.	X	XXXX		

Rationale for Rating

Developing	• We find that there are broad statements like 'hold high expectations for all students' but the word all is never defined. Equity as a goal is not explicitly stated.
In Progress	• Our district has a mission and vision as well as a strategic plan that incorporates the education of all learners. We need to be more intentional with equity as well as focusing on the diversity and inclusion. Our strategic plan is focused on SEL and Finance as well as high expectations - the update must be focused on equity. • Written in our Board Policies (Equal Education Opportunities) has clear mission for equity. • We have policies in place (although they may need to be viewed more closely with an equity lens), but are not

| | necessarily truly practicing those words with intentionality. |
| | • The mission and vision are there and equity is implied, but because there is not a clear understanding of what equity, diversity and inclusion mean, we have not been intentional about the needs with D89. |

Suggestions for Next Steps	
Developing	• The district should take a look at rewriting these documents to make sure that they all explicitly address equity.
In Progress	• Updating the strategic plan (which is scheduled for this year) and policy review. • Using the mission to actively implement as a district and making sure we have specific goals and actions to meet the needs of various learners. • District needs to revisit mission, vision, goals, and strategic plan with an equity lens and hash out what it will look like if we're truly focus on equity.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
3. EQUITY GOALS: Our district has a plan that includes short and/or long-term, equity-driven goals to hold us accountable for advancing systemic equity.	XXXXX			

Rationale for Rating	
Developing	• We don't have goals specifically equity driven. Our goals are general and include all students, but are not intentional and focused on our learning and opportunity gaps. Screen reader support enabled. • We do not have equity-drive goals and measurable objectives to hold us accountable for advancing systemic equity. • We do not have a plan. • While we have been taking a closer look at our IAR student group scores. There was a focused effort when the state flagged one of our student group scores, but is that same focus placed on achieving equity for all of our students. • Given that we are in the midst of an Equity Audit, we are in the developing phase of developing goals and measurable objectives to hold us accountable.

Suggestions for Next Steps	
Developing	• Defining clear goals within the strategic plan and align school improvement plans. We need to ensure that expectations are high for all students with systems that all kids access. • Data from stakeholders and what the district needs are. Incorporate into SIT plans and be broader than just student group scores. • We're hopeful that this process will bring us closer to an intentional plan that is continuous and becomes an embedded part of our district culture. • Student groups' data should be looked at throughout the year on all assessments. Equity should be discussed as a whole staff and at our PLC and 90 minute meetings. All staff, both certified and non-certified staff should be involved in writing and monitoring goals that will help us advance systematic equity. • We are developing an Equity Committee that is currently auditing our district and developing a plan for systemic equity.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: In each grade and among every content, we have curriculum and resources aligned with equitable pedagogical beliefs and culturally responsive instructional practices that promote elimination of implicit biases and affirmation of student self-identities.	XXXXX			

Rationale for Rating

Developing	• We have a horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum to the state standards. We don't have aligned culturally responsive resources or practices that promote equity and the elimination of implicit biases. • We are working on it • We do not feel as though we've begun the work on this, so we're developing. The ability to be stronger on this involves a level of awareness than many staff may not even know is available to them. • CCSD89 offers Responsive classroom training for teachers, however we see the need for more staff development and awareness of implicit biases. • Intentionality and systemic planning is not district-wide. It is implied that classrooms address diverse curriculum, but not necessarily taking place across the district.

Suggestions for Next Steps

Developing	• Professional development for staff, support for selection of resources, work with diverse groups to help us learn instructional practices that address equity. • Intentional with ALL resources (books, teachers, students etc...) that reach out to different beliefs and cultures to open and share out. Safe and comfortable environment to share out. • Conversations need to happen about what equity is, what implicit biases are, and how your view may impact the learning in your classroom. Conversations need to start where is staff is at currently, it will be uncomfortable. We want this work to be worked on from both directions, at the request of our leadership and also at the teacher-level organically. • Looking at the curriculum at each grade level with a critical lens for being culturally responsible. The resources we are providing for our families need to be addressed for accountability and equity. • Review the curriculum and unit plans to identify where equity is embedded and adjust where there can be more opportunity for students to connect and have student voice. With this, professional development will also be necessary so that there is understanding and implementation is successful.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
5. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING: Across the district, we have and continue to take a critical lens to our academic programming (e.g. ESL, SPED, Gifted/Honors/AP, etc.) to analyze proportionate representation, and have developed opportunities to expand representation.	XXX	X	X	

Rationale for Rating	
Developing	- ESL, SPED, Gifted enrollment is not representative of the total school population. We over identify in SPED and we under identify for gifted enrollment. - We had a rich conversation about how we may not be using a critical lens on equity when we identify students for gifted, SPED, foreign language access. - As of late, we are just starting to review student groups to be sure that they are getting potential opportunities to be more represented.
In Progress	Selection and criteria for SPED needs to be equitable regardless of circumstance or situation. Parents need to be informed of their rights for their students.
Strong, but structure needed	Clear expectations and direction. We do have that in place, but some support and structure is needed.

Suggestions for Next Steps	
Developing	- Evaluate how students access supports and review placement criteria. - Selection criteria for gifted identification; rush to the SPED Evaluation process so we may need to revamp the MTSS process; not all students have access to enroll in foreign language at the middle school (need support as to how to do this better). - Continue the equity work. Include those responsible for student group programs to be sure that they provide multiple rigorous opportunities.
In Progress	Revisit the selection criteria for Gifted program to ensure we are equitable.
Strong, but structure needed	What do we need to do to make it more diverse? We have the data, now what? How to use it, follow through, who's accountable and be intentional?

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
6. DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR/STUDENT SUPPORTS - Our district regularly analyzes student discipline data and disaggregates said data by race and subgroup categories, as well as intersectionality of known social constructs. We have proactive practices in place (e.g. restorative justice, trauma-informed resources, SEL approaches, etc.) to support all students, especially historically marginalized populations.	X	XXX	X	

Rationale for Rating	
Developing	• We feel like we have the ability/knowledge to be more proactive, but we're not pointing the arrows in the right direction because we're missing the evaluative step. The middle school is further along in this process than the elementary schools. Across the district, we don't feel like we have the data to review, let alone disaggregate.
In Progress	• SEL work has been systemic and is embedded in all classrooms. We have trained on trauma informed practices, restorative practices in place. We need more intentional support for equity with marginalized populations. • We have so many proactive practices in place. ALL new teachers go through responsive classroom. We can consistently work on this and improving our craft. • We have a system for analyzing discipline data.
Strong, but structure needed	• Current approaches to discipline and behavior can be reactive rather than proactive. Practices such as restorative justice are in place, yet regular analysis of discipline data to proactively plan are not necessarily practiced.

Suggestions for Next Steps	
Developing	• We need a designated time in order to dig into data. This needs to be made a priority to look at behavior data, not always focused on reading/math data. Midyear data retreat?
In Progress	• Needs assessment to identify clear needs and update needs and practiced through professional learning and updated policies and practices. • Disaggregate the data • We need to regularly review and analyze this data to provide supports for all students.
Strong, but structure needed	• Routinely visit data to plan proactively rather reactively.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
7. STUDENT VOICE, CULTURE AND CLIMATE - We consistently seek out ways to solicit students' feedback and experiences. We adjust our organizational culture and climate based on needs (e.g. extracurricular, activities, athletics, clubs, LGBTQ+ accommodations).	XXX	XX		

Rationale for Rating	
Developing	• We have structures in place that allow for student voice. We have principal advisory councils in all 5 buildings, student board members, clubs generated by student interest. Focus on equity hasn't necessarily been focus. • Student feedback and experiences are seldom taken into consideration when planning new activities and clubs. • We do have extracurricular activities, however, we do not gain student voice to determine what they would like to see as far as athletics, clubs, etc.
In Progress	• We are working on it, but not yet strong. More systems need to be in place, and going to implemented. • Middle schools feels like they're working on this and a little further due to the age of their students. Elementary schools are working on climate and culture through responsive classroom and morning meetings. Schools are starting Principal Advisory Councils to gather students for feedback. Student board members have begun and will be eliciting feedback from all schools this year.

Suggestions for Next Steps	
Developing	• Increase the access opportunities for all students. • Start seeking student feedback to create clubs in our buildings. • Continued BOE student voice representation. Student advisory groups added in each of the school buildings so that more student voice can be heard to help drive decisions.
In Progress	• Continue to improve and include student's voice through various avenues and levels (district level, community level, student to student, classroom etc.). • More education for staff as to how to be more intentional and grow a culture of acceptance within our classrooms/schools.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
8. EMPLOYMENT & RETAINMENT - We have implemented practices to attract and retain highly-qualified, diverse teachers and administrators at our district.	XXX	XX		

Rationale for Rating	
Developing	• We are in the process of partnering with more diverse universities for hiring needs and student teacher placements, we are participating in more job fairs and different job postings. Our staff is not reflective of our student body. • We are more conscious, aware, and actively trying to include more diverse teachers, staff, and administrators • We have conceptual plans to be more inclusive and attract more diversity to our classrooms, but none in action yet.
In Progress	• Seeking out universities whom implement diversity training in their programs. • We currently retain staff, yet we are not necessarily attracting diverse teachers and administrators.

Suggestions for Next Steps	
Developing	• Review of hiring policies and practices and expanded partnerships. • Be mindful, intentional, on your plan to pursue a diverse pool. Job Fairs. • Would like support in how to attract diverse candidates.
In Progress	• Host interview days in the district. Branch out employment from diverse universities. • Look for avenues to attract diverse teachers and administrations (job fairs, etc.)

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
9. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Our district has demonstrated its commitment to equity by providing specific professional development to all staff.	XXXX	X		

	Rationale for Rating
Developing	• Not all staff and not systemic. There is not a continuum of options in place. • We are beginning the equity process. We are fact-finding. • CCSD has offered PD, but not consistently to all staff. • There has been work in SEL curriculum development. This year was kicked off by visiting implicit bias, yet we have not taken deep dive or had true reflection to identify areas of equity need.
In Progress	• Equity has not been in the forefront of our PD. We have had trainings in educating about diverse identities and students, but we have not linked it back to equity; equity could be an umbrella topic

	Suggestions for Next Steps
Developing	• Professional development committee expanded and more representative of all positions in the district. Needs assessment to plan for future work with a variety of different options available. • We follow the process and thoroughly investigating how to proceed with next steps. • Provide more opportunities for MORE staff to attend conferences. Training provided for support staff including office staff. • Participation in an equity audit with Equity Committee members sharing, communicating and facilitating small group discussion. Hosting focus groups for stakeholders to have voice.
In Progress	• Framing equity as an umbrella term for the previous trainings we've had and to help drive additional professional development opportunities.

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
10. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: We have a structure in place to actively seek out and/or sustain communication and engagement with parents/guardians/caretakers on issues of equity.	XXXX	X		

	Rationale for Rating
Developing	• Not in place at this time. Glen Crest has a parent group focused on equity. Parents are on all district level committees - but equity isn't the focus. • We have great communication, but not on or related to equity. • Issues of equity are not necessarily addressed. 2-way Conversations with families need improvement. • We have avenues to seek out and sustain communication and engagement with parents, however D89 is lacking communication and engagement solely on issues of equity.
In Progress	• We have good community outreach opportunities for diverse families that have been staff-initiated, not necessarily from the district level

Suggestions for Next Steps	
Developing	- Focus groups, parents on committees who are representative of the community. We want to make sure that poverty is part of the equity conversation. - Openly accept and communicate any suggestions from equity audit from ALL parent stakeholders. Engaging with families that aren't ever at the school, or involved. What are the parents needs to participate in any and ALL school events. - Find out the following: Research what makes parents feel comfortable in the school setting. How do parents best communicate with teachers and staff? What modes of communication are most effective to engage parents? - Focus groups and develop structures for ongoing communication and engagement.
In Progress	Develop awareness of what initiatives already exist, and how we can make them more universal throughout all buildings in the district

Section 2

Quantitative Data (Numbered data selected by DELT; Data provided marked with an asterisk [*]		Recommended Timeframe
1 -3	Student demographic by race/ethnicity, subgroup and intersectionality of same*	3- 5 years
4 - 7	Student discipline (in and out-of-school referrals, suspensions and expulsions) by race/ethnicity, subgroup, gender and intersectionality of same*	3-5 years
8 – 10	Students enrolled or participating in gifted programming, Honors and/or AP by race/ethnicity, subgroup, intersectionality of same*	3-5 years
11	Student receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 (MTSS) support by race/ethnicity and subgroup status and intersectionality of same in each school building	3-5 years
12	Student receiving services for various (dis)ability levels (e.g. cognitive, learning, behavioral, etc.) intersectionality by race, gender, subgroup*	3-5 years
13	Students participating in extracurricular by race/ethnicity and subgroup as well intersectionality of aforementioned*	3-5 years
14	Districtwide growth assessments or grade-level benchmarks (e.g. MAP, STAR) by race/ethnicity and subgroup as well as intersectionality*	3-5 years
15 – 16	Standardized assessment scores for reading and math by race/ethnicity and subgroup as well as intersectionality	3-5 years
17	Final grades (semester/quarterly optional) by race/ethnicity, subgroup and intersectionality	3-5 years
18	Dropout rates by race/ethnicity, subgroups as well intersectionality	3-5 years
19	Student absenteeism and tardiness by race/ethnicity and subgroup and intersectionality of aforementioned*	3-5 years
20	Student truancies by race/ethnicity and subgroup and intersectionality of aforementioned*	3-5 years
21	Student transfers (in and out) within academic years by race/ethnicity and subgroup	3-5 years
22	Teacher and administrator demographic by race/ethnicity and gender	3-5 years
23	Staff licensure endorsements (Bilingual, ELL, IEP, Reading Specialists, Instructional Technology, Masters + degree, etc.) by each building*	1-3 years
24	The number and percentages of ELL and languages spoken 1-3 years*	1-3 years
25	Demographics of PTA, PTO and/or Homeschool Boards by race/ethnicity and gender	1-3 years
26	Board of Education diversity by race/ethnicity and gender	1-3 years

Data Selection: 1 - 3

Table 2.1: Multi-Year Demographic by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Two or More	White	TOTAL
2016	266	129	251	98	1320	2068
2017	313	155	263	97	1352	2187
2018	341	147	263	102	1331	2193
2019	378	142	269	118	1352	2268
2020	393	149	282	105	1374	2313

Chart 2.1: Multi-Year Demographic by Students' Race/Ethnicity
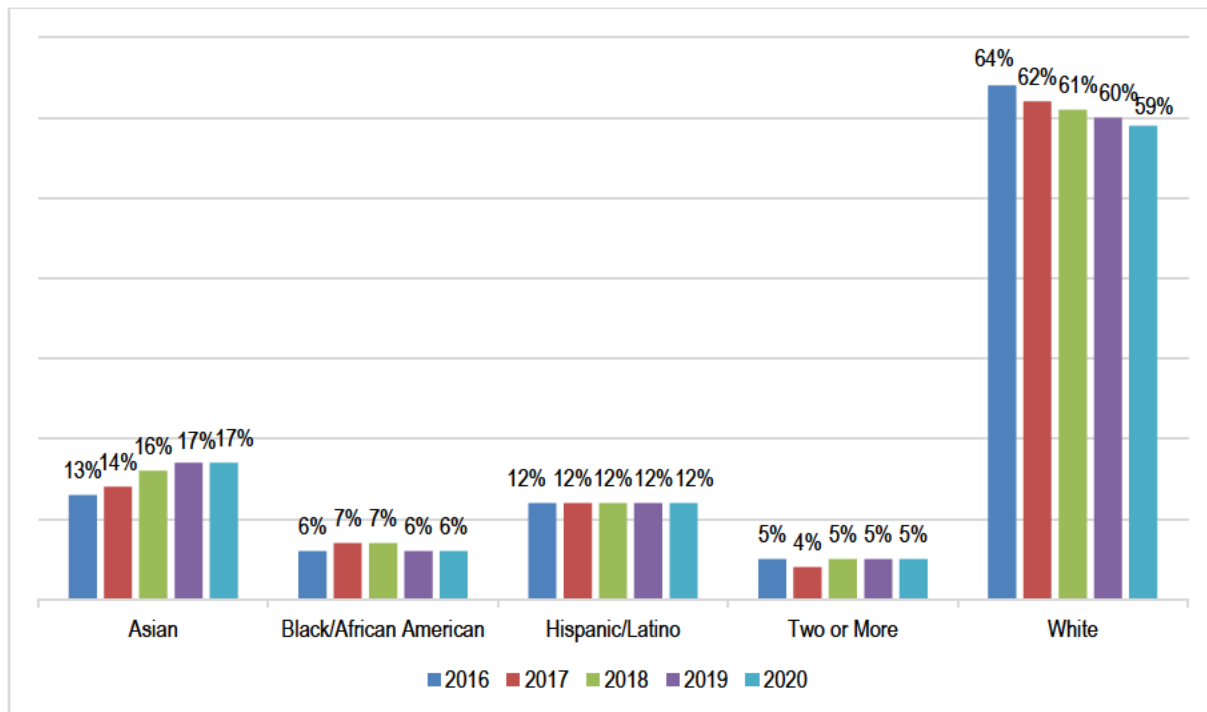
Table 2.2: Multi-Year Demographic by Students' Subgroups

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	209	433	269
2018	212	392	288
2019	212	442	298
2020	238	444	324

Chart 2.2: Multi-Year Demographic by Students' Subgroups
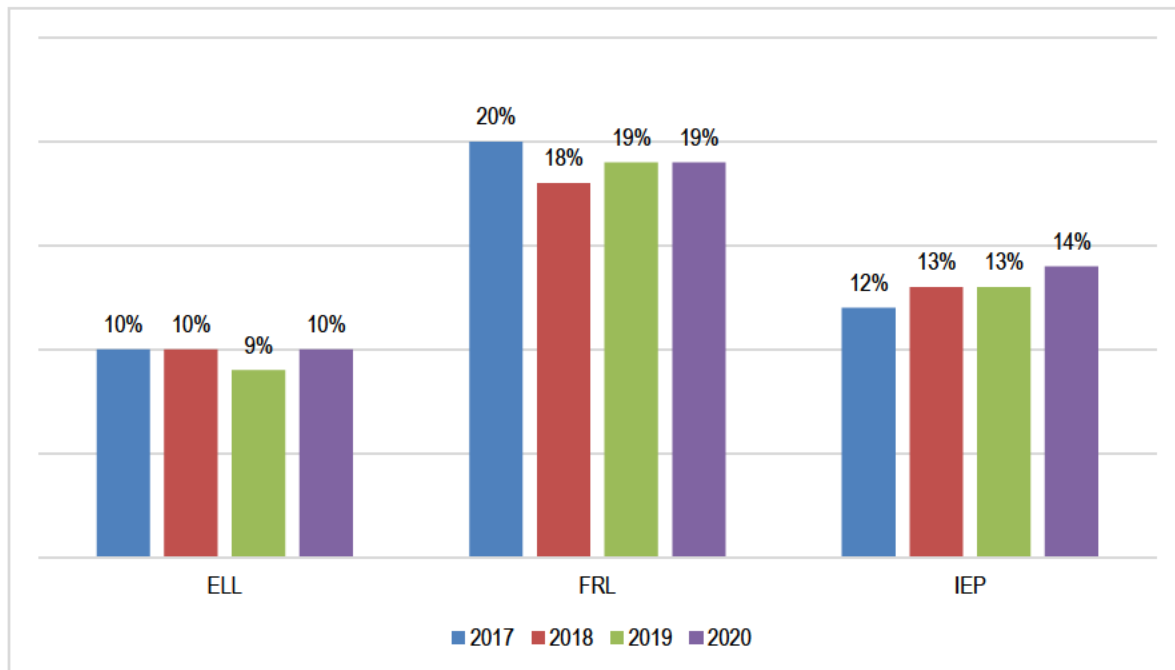
Table 2.3: Multi-Year Demographic by Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	88	50	23	12	106	34	66	110	43	1	14	5	40	151	163
2018	99	50	23	10	87	44	58	111	41	1	16	5	43	127	174
2019	107	63	28	8	93	41	51	105	45	1	25	8	45	155	176
2020	119	67	35	8	100	40	57	110	56	1	22	10	53	144	183

Chart 2.3: Multi-Year Demographic by Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
		Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latino			Two or More			White	
2017	28%	16%	7%	8%	68%	22%	25%	42%	16%	1%	14%	5%	3%	11%	12%
2018	29%	15%	7%	7%	59%	30%	22%	42%	16%	1%	16%	5%	3%	10%	13%
2019	28%	17%	7%	6%	65%	29%	19%	39%	17%	1%	21%	7%	3%	11%	13%
2020	30%	17%	9%	5%	67%	27%	20%	39%	20%	1%	21%	10%	4%	10%	13%

■2017 ■2018 ■2019 ■2020
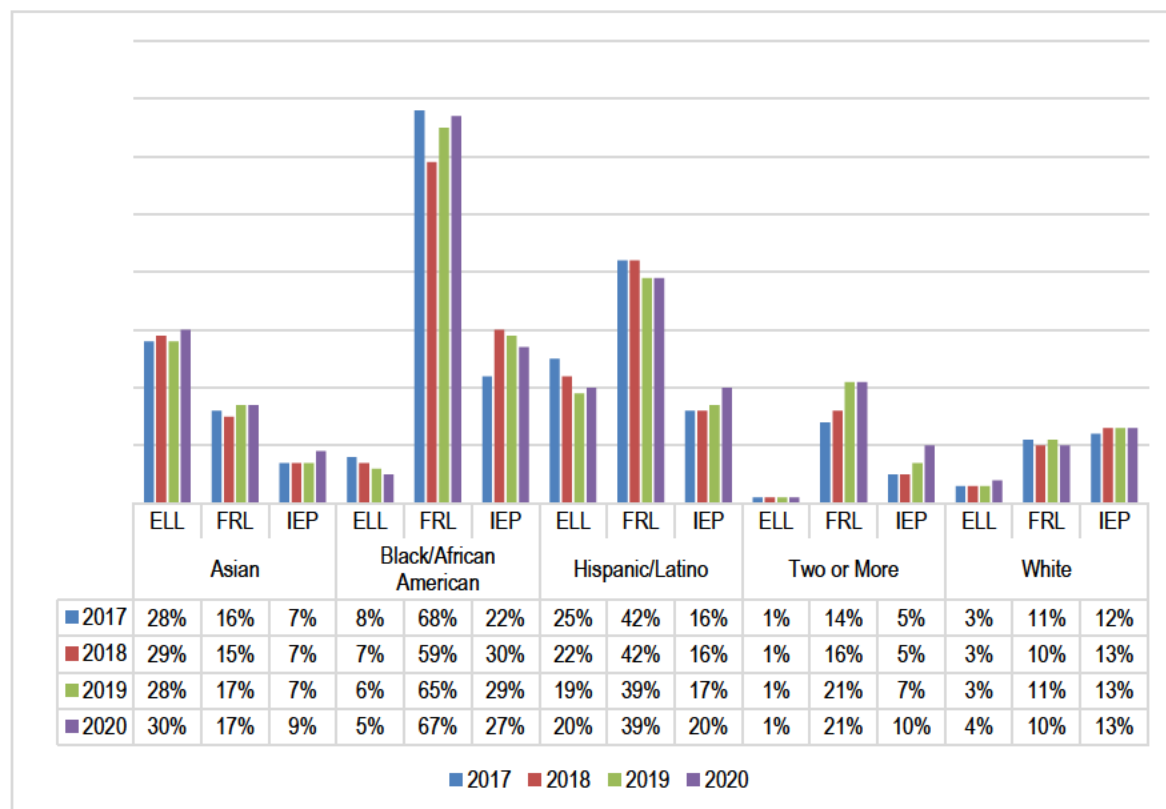
Table 2.4: SY 2018-19[4] Discipline by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Two or More	White	TOTAL
2019	18	110	71	0	205	404

Chart 2.4: SY 2018-19 Discipline by Students' Race/Ethnicity

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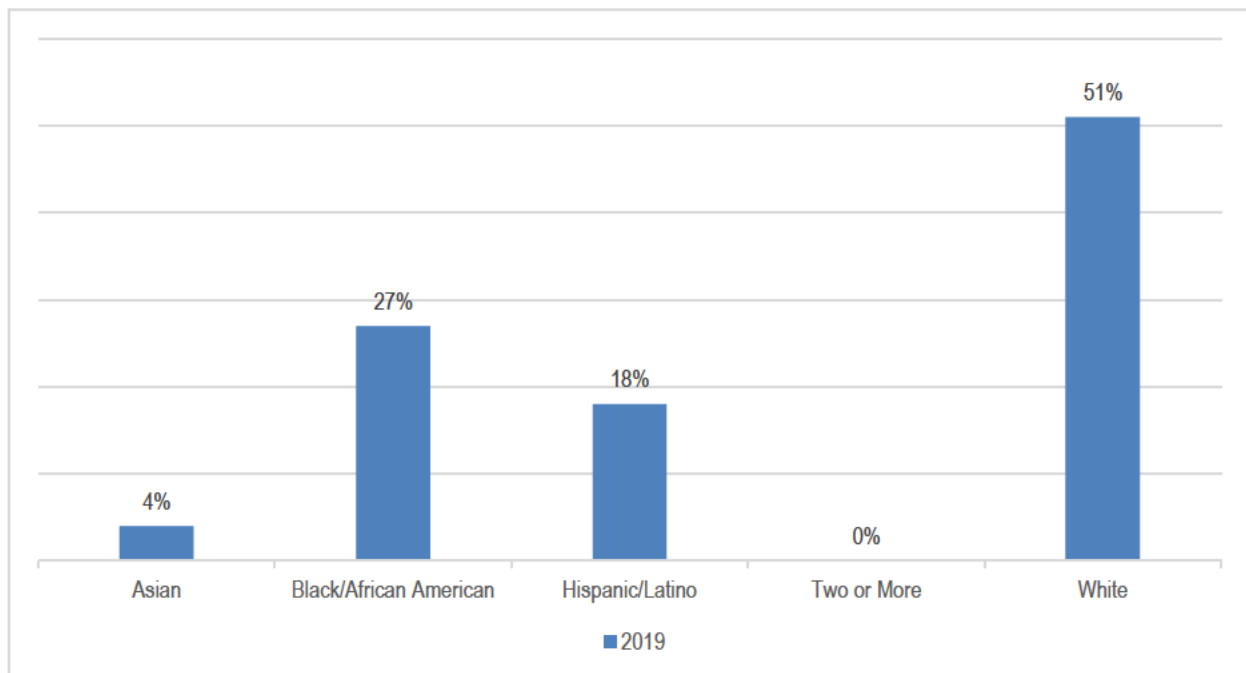
[4] District provided one year of this data

Table 2.5: SY 2018-19[5] Discipline by Students' Subgroup

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2019	35	192	117

Chart 2.5: SY 2018-19 Discipline by Students' Subgroup
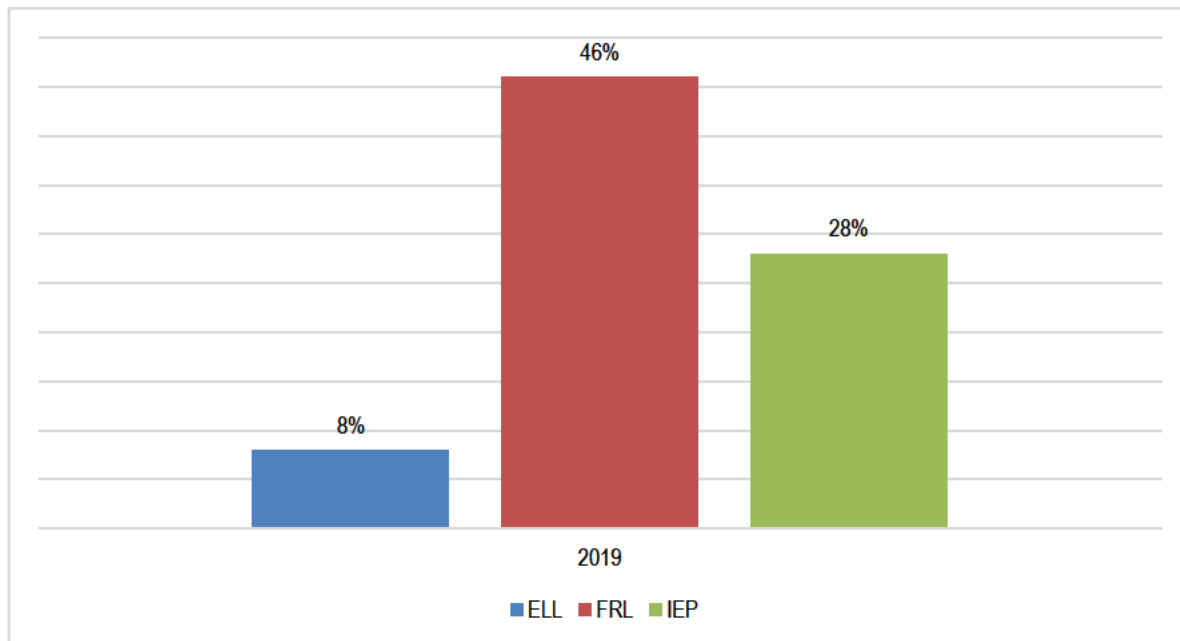
Table 2.6: SY 2018-19[6] Discipline by Students' Gender

	Female	Male
2019	50	365

Chart 2.6: SY 2018-19 Discipline by Students' Gender
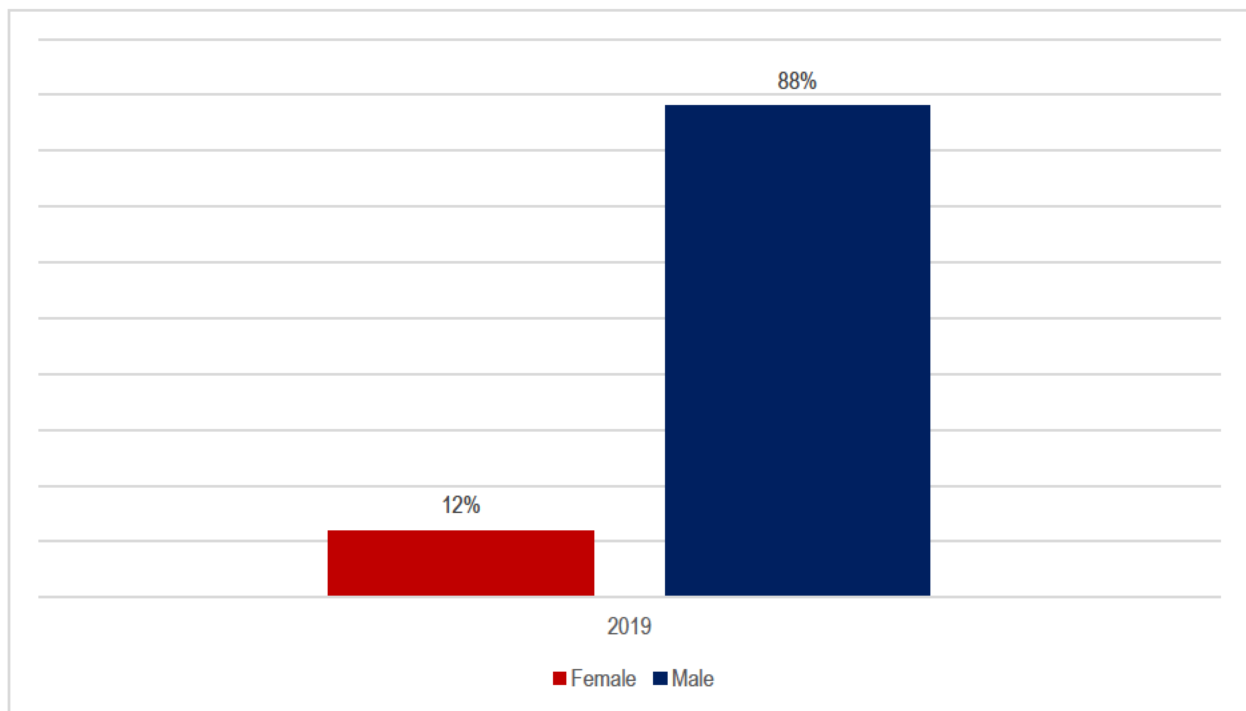
Table 2.7: Multi-Year Discipline by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	5	1	1	1	51	91	24	43	18	-	-	-	2	23	51
2018	0	2	4	10	72	76	17	32	17	-	-	-	7	103	132
2019	8	4	3	1	54	47	21	47	11	-	-	-	5	81	56

Chart 2.7: SY 2018-19[7] Discipline by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

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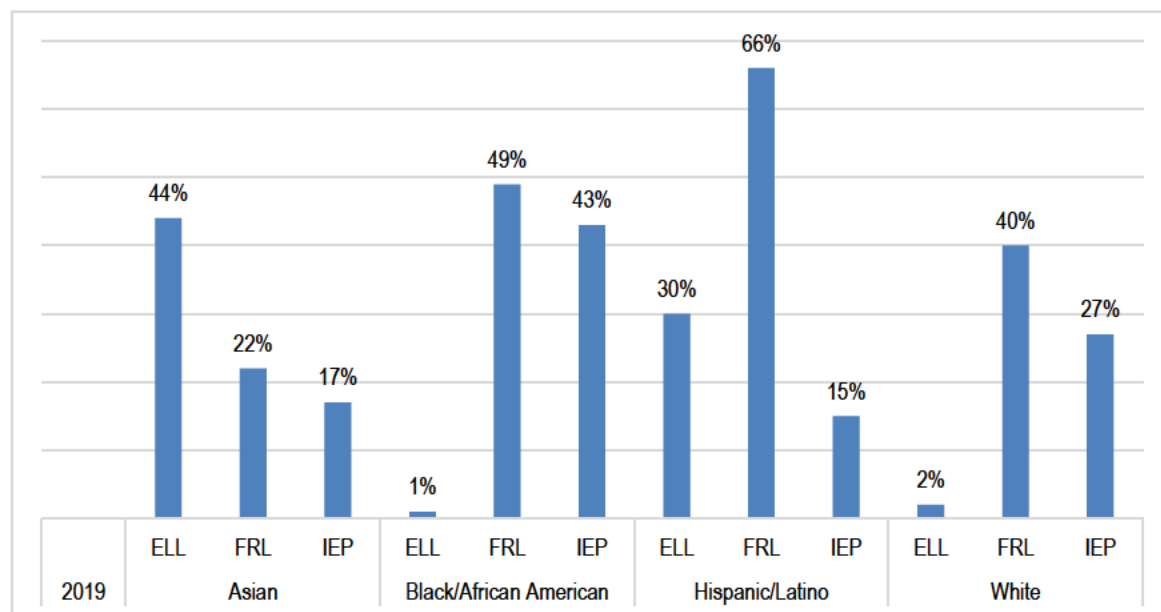
[7] Aligned chart provided for SY 2018-19 only as singular data sets for previous years not provided

Table 2.8: Multi-Year Discipline by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and FEMALE

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	1	0	0	0	17	3	6	15	2	-	-	-	0	2	2
2018	0	0	0	0	15	12	1	6	0	-	-	-	1	17	10
2019	1	0	1	1	9	4	3	7	4	-	-	-	0	7	9

Chart 2.8: SY 2018-19[8] Discipline by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and FEMALE
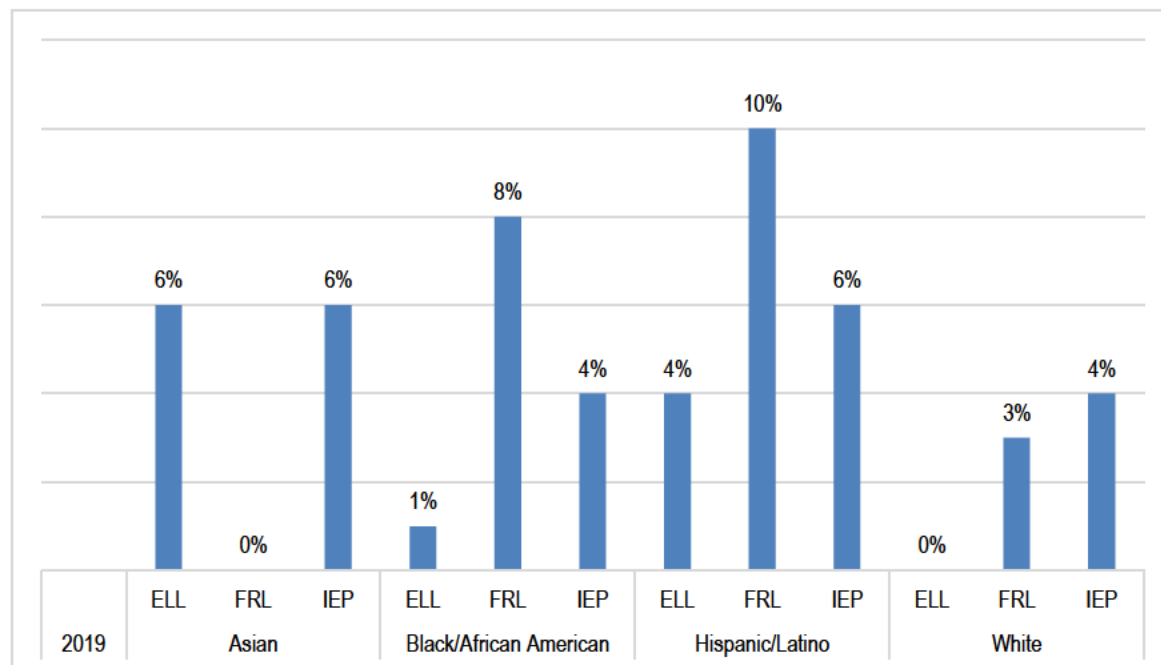
[8] Aligned chart provided for SY 2018-19 only as singular data sets for previous years not provided

Table 2.9: Multi-Year Discipline by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and MALE

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	4	1	0	1	74	48	18	28	16	-	-	-	2	21	49
2018	1	6	3	10	60	61	16	26	17	-	-	-	6	86	122
2019	7	4	2	0	45	43	18	40	7	-	-	-	5	74	47

Chart 2.9: SY 2018-19[9] Discipline by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and MALE

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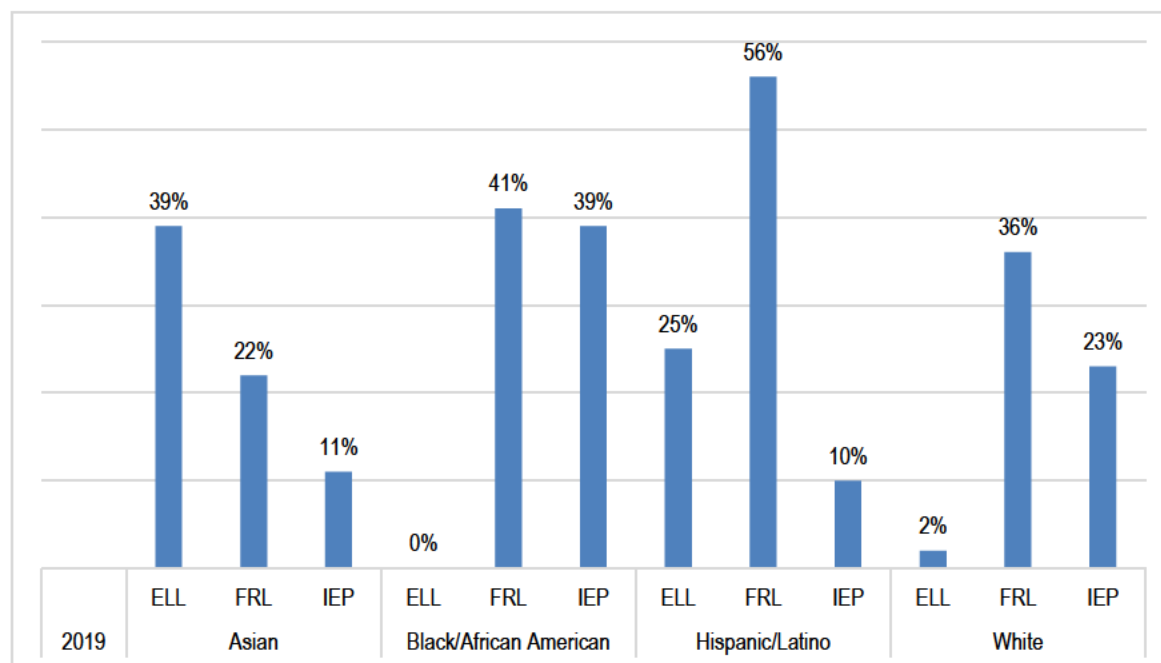
[9] Aligned chart provided for SY 2018-19 only as singular data sets for previous years not provided

Table 2.10: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Two or More	White
2017	34	0	13	-	180
2018	39	0	13	-	179
2019	40	0	15	-	173

Chart 2.10: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by Students' Race/Ethnicity
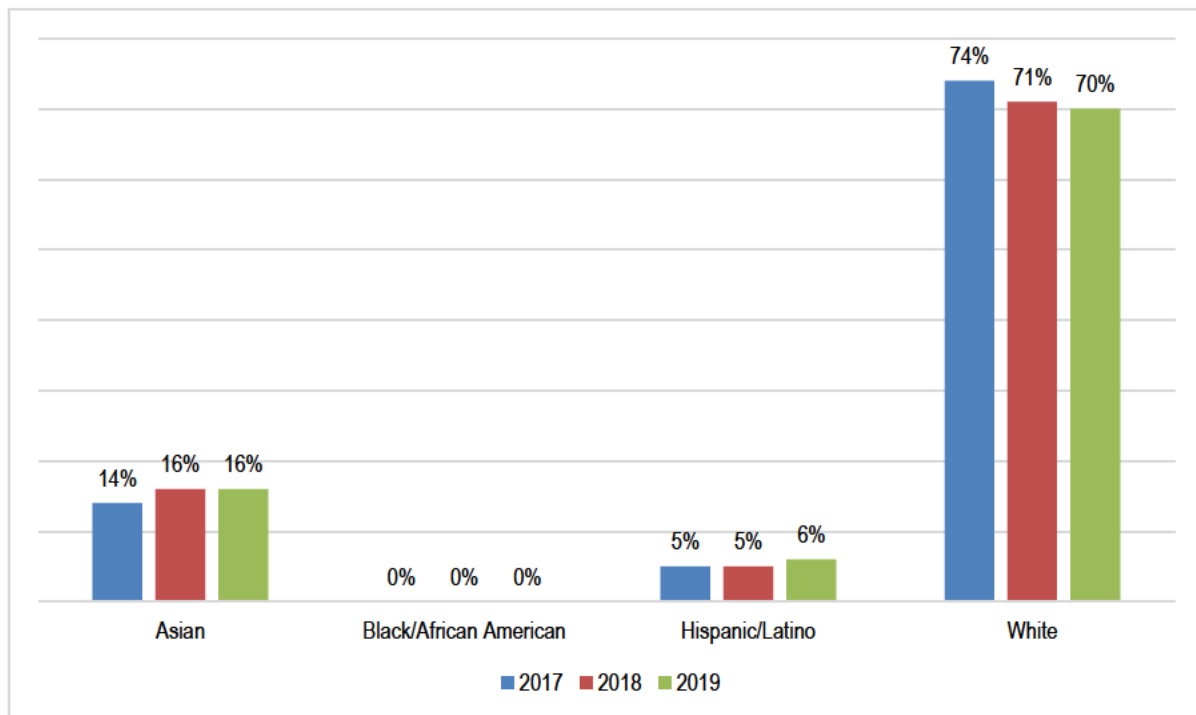
Table 2.11: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by Students' Subgroup

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	6	13	1
2018	1	12	2
2019	0	14	1

Chart 2.11: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by Students' Subgroup
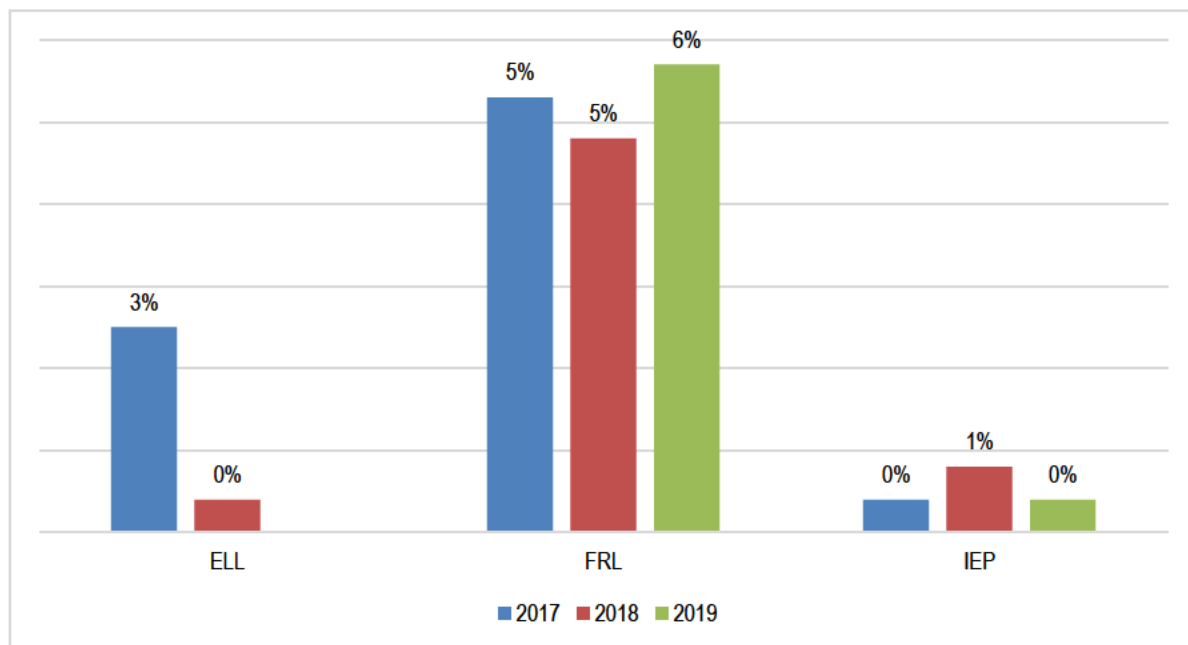
Table 2.12: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by the Intersectionality of Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	3	5	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	6	1
2018	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	5	2
2019	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	6	1

Chart 2.12: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by Intersectionality of Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

38
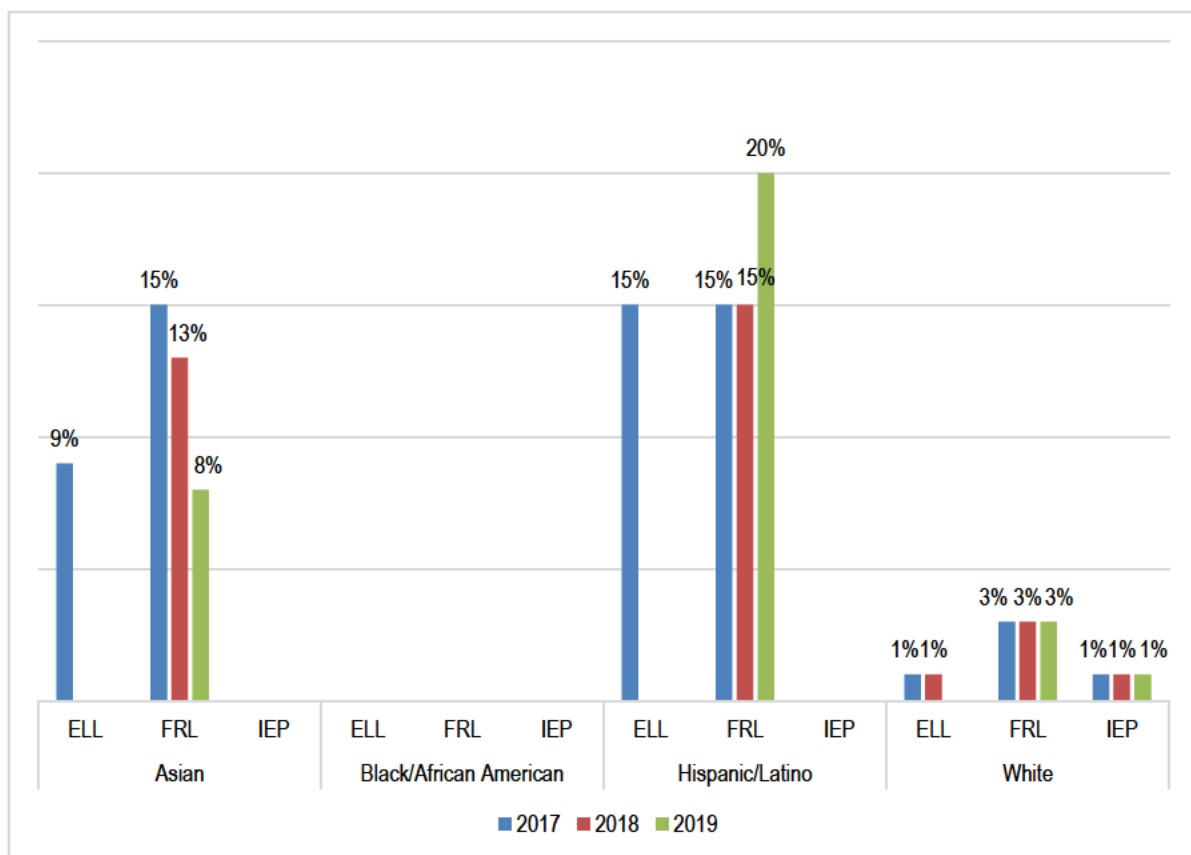
Table 2.13: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and FEMALE

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	1	4	1
2018	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	1	3	2
2019	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	0	4	1

Chart 2.13: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and FEMALE
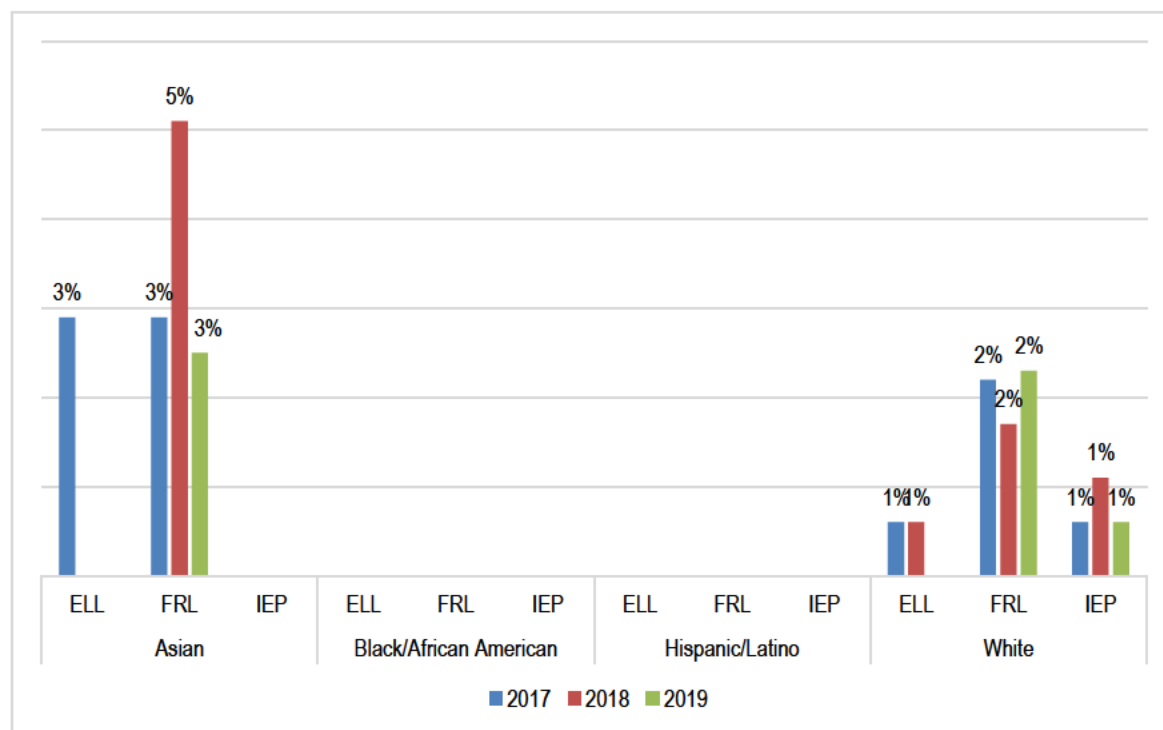
Table 2.14: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and MALE

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	-	-	-	0	2	0
2018	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	-	-	-	0	2	0
2019	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	-	-	-	0	2	0

Chart 2.14: Multi-Year Participation in Gifted Programming by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity, Subgroup and MALE
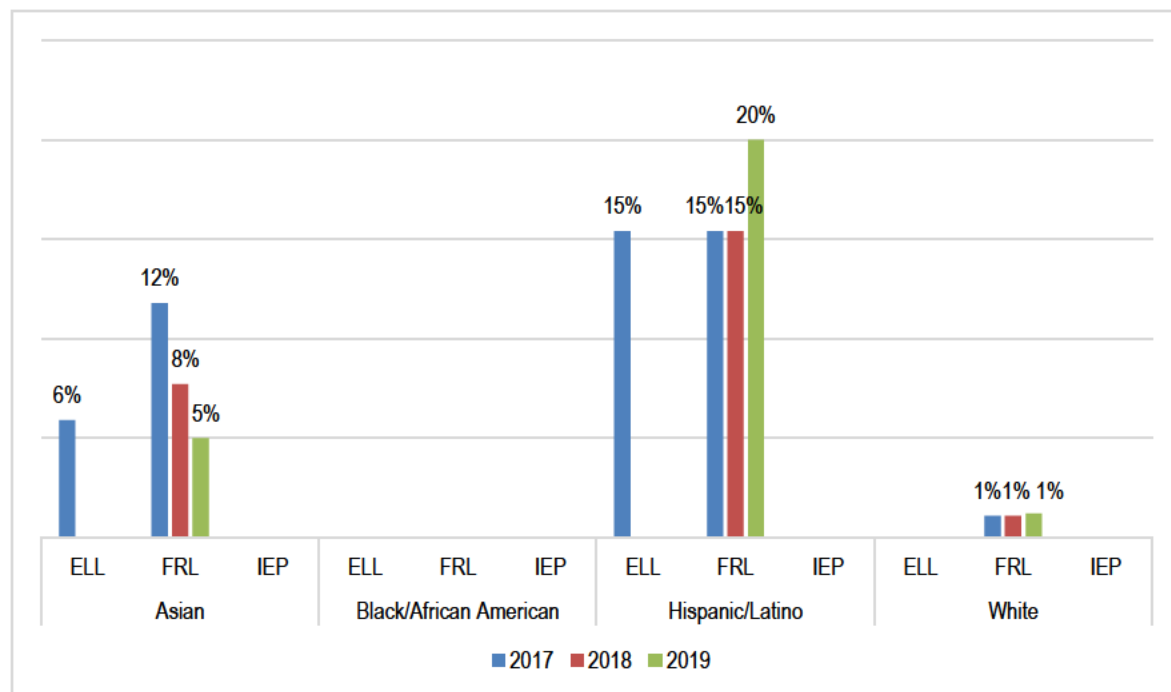
Table 2.15: Multi-Year (Dis)Ability Levels by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Two or More	White
2017	179	226	200	40	1200
2018	203	312	197	45	1253
2019	196	310	190	45	1335

Chart 2.15: Multi-Year (Dis)Ability Levels by Students' Race/Ethnicity
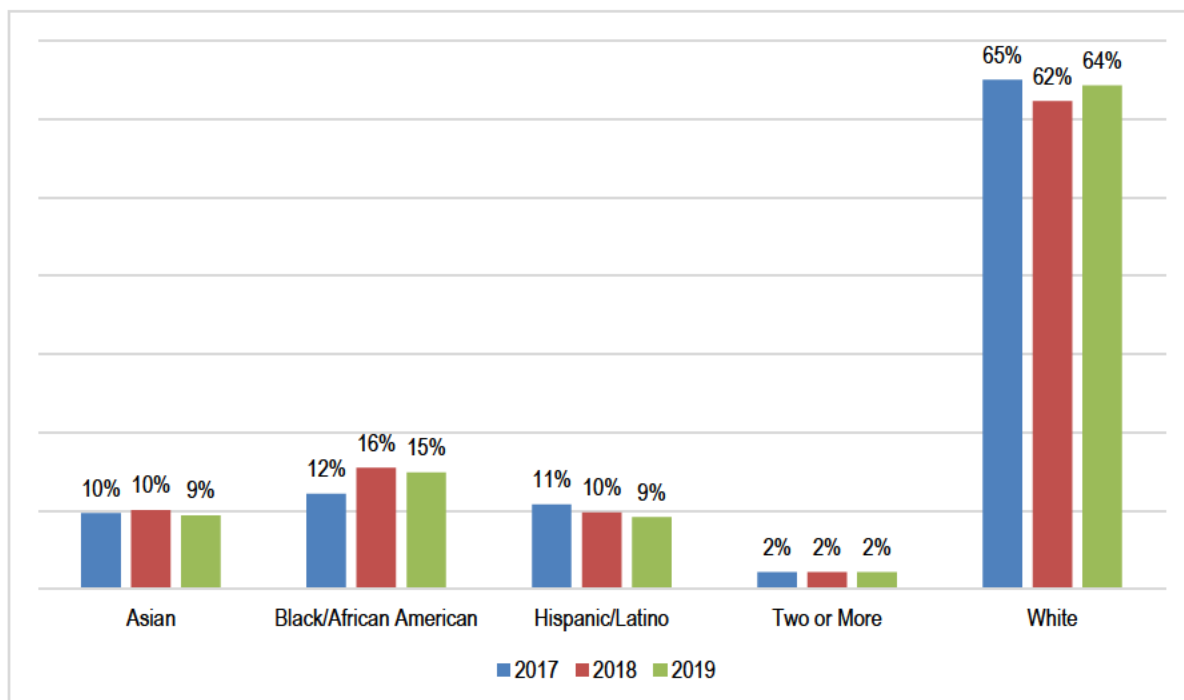
Table 2.16: Multi-Year (Dis)Ability Levels by Students' Subgroup

	ELL	FRL
2017	210	492
2018	221	493
2019	221	545

Chart 2.16: Multi-Year (Dis)Ability Levels by Students' Subgroup
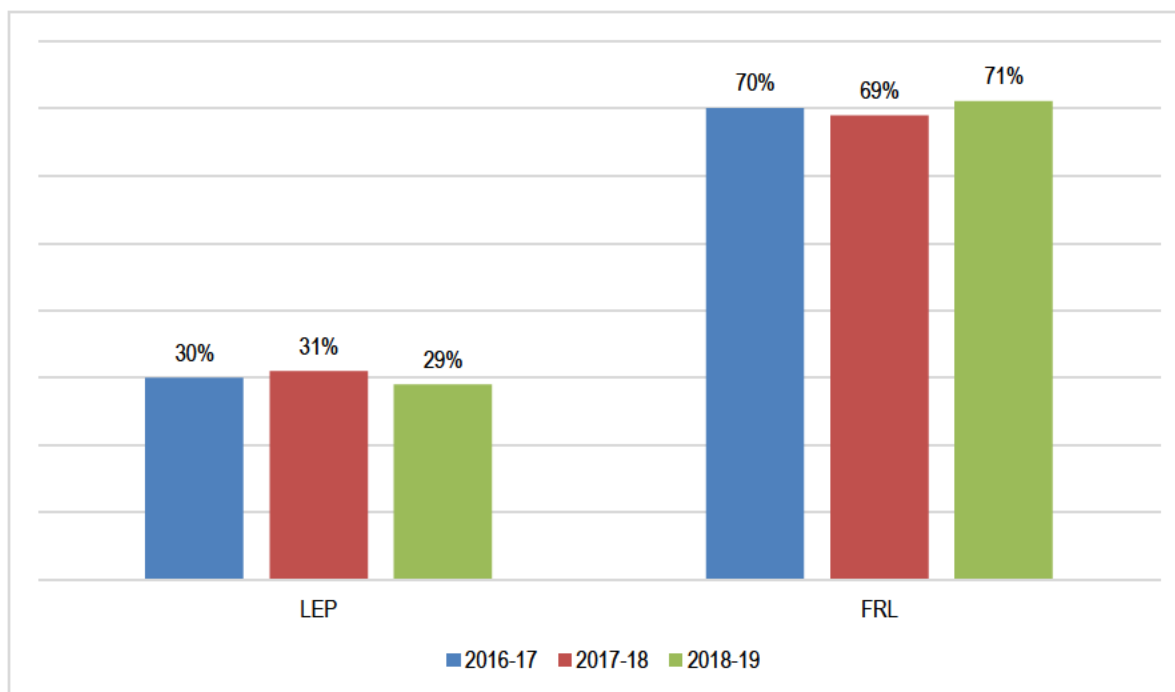
Table 2.17: Multi-Year (Dis)Ability Levels by Students' Gender

	Female	Male
2017	551	1294
2018	530	1480
2019	547	1529

Chart 2.17: Multi-Year (Dis)Ability Levels by Students' Gender
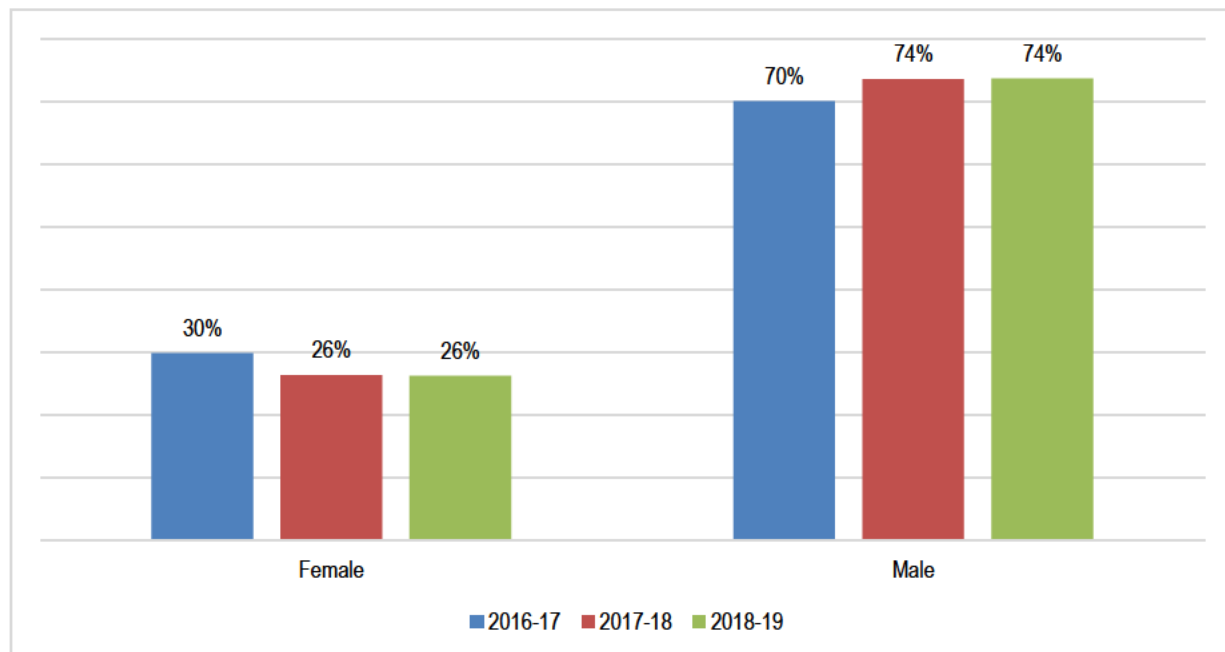
Table 2.18: SY 2018-19[10] Participating in Extracurriculars by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Two or More	White
2019	260	101	171	103	1160

Chart 2.18: SY 2018-19 Participating in Extracurriculars by Students' Race/Ethnicity

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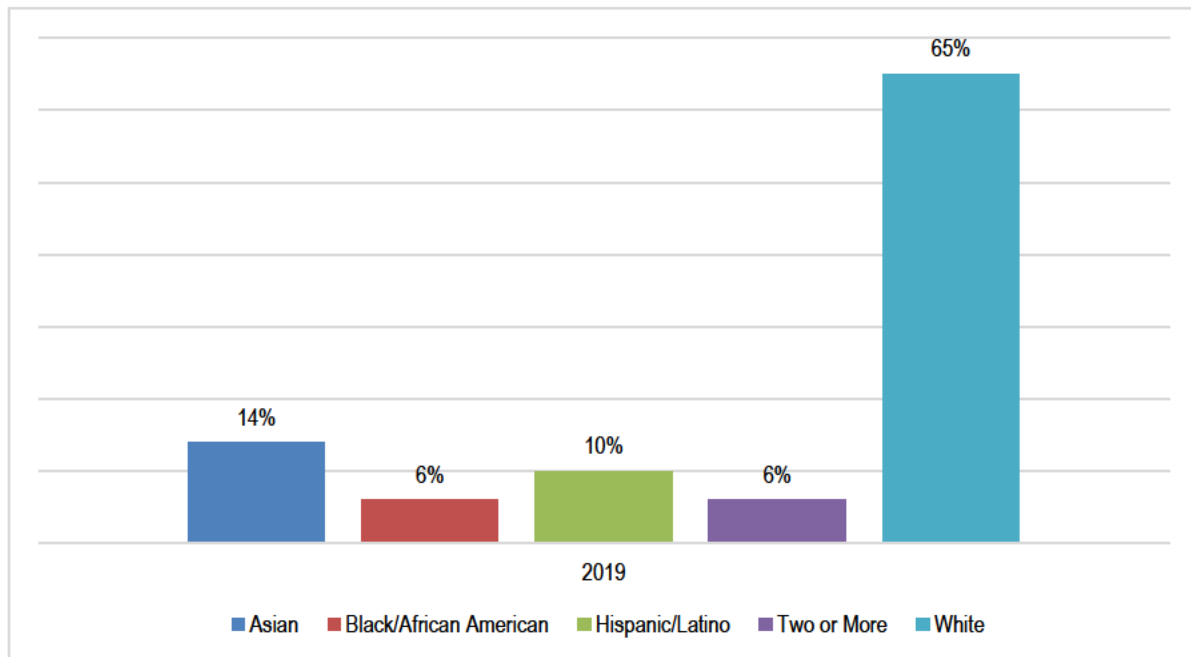
[10] District provided one year of this data

Table 2.19: SY 2018-19[11] Participating in Extracurriculars by Students' Subgroup

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2019	73	281	140

Chart 2.19: SY 2018-19 Participating in Extracurriculars by Students' Subgroup

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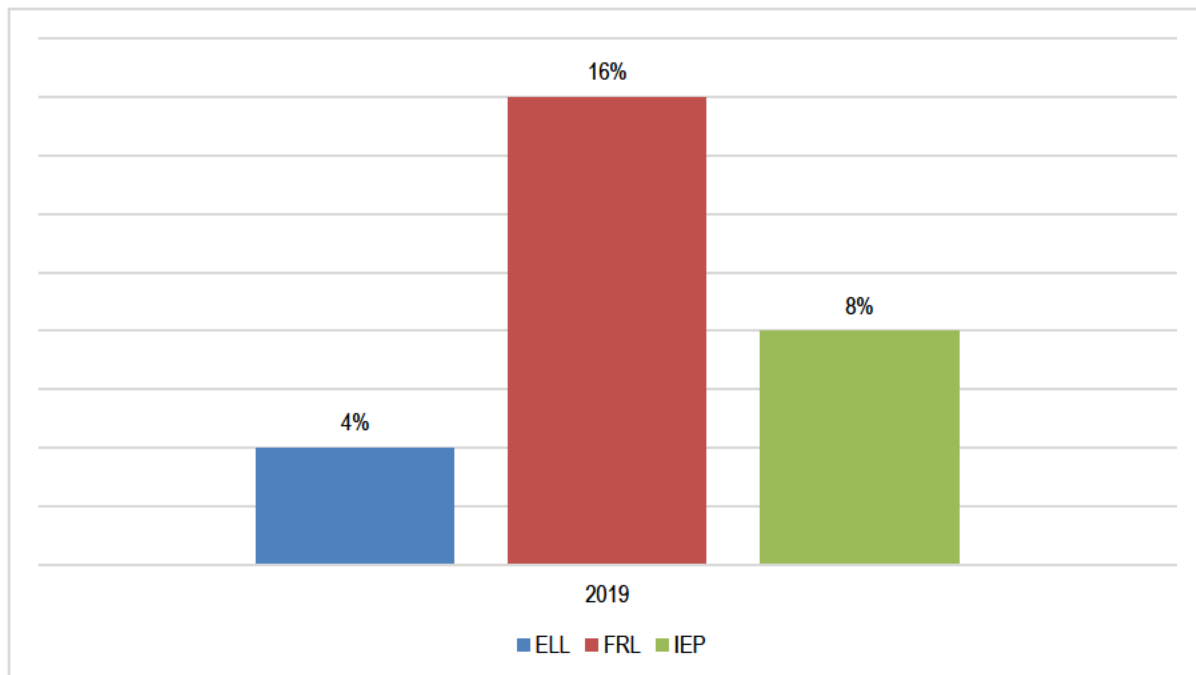
[11] District provided one year of this data

Table 2.20: SY 2018-19[12] Participating in Extracurriculars by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

	Asian			Black			Hispanic			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2019	37	18	9	5	57	25	21	63	20	0	11	3	10	132	83

Chart 2.20: SY 2018-19 Participating in Extracurriculars by the Intersectionality of Students' Race/Ethnicity and Subgroup

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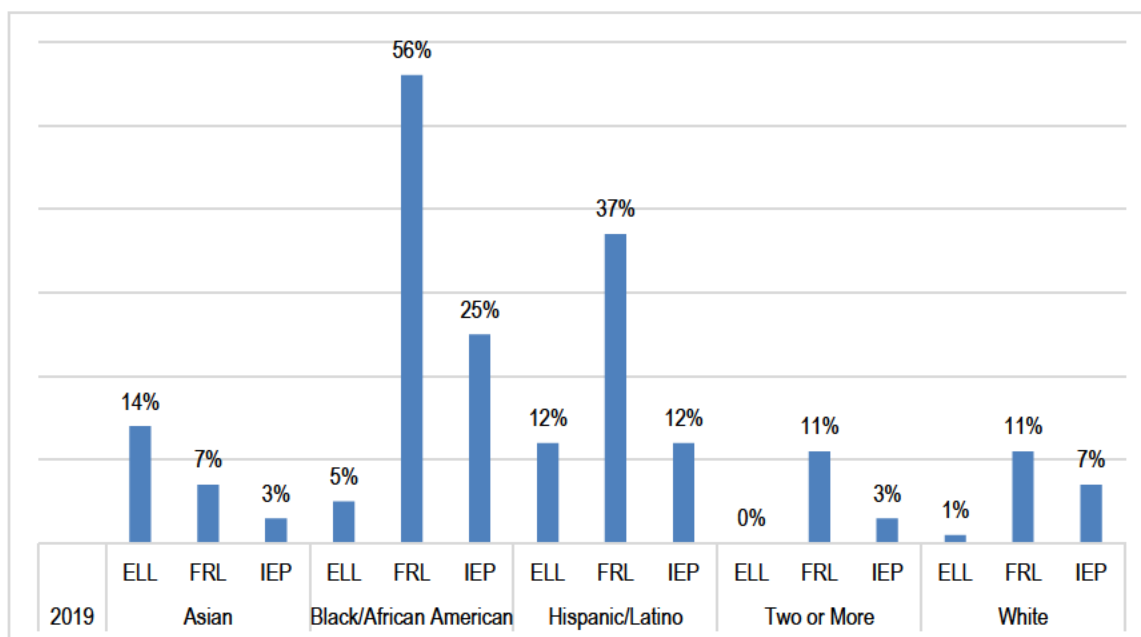
[12] District provided one year of this data

Table/Chart 2.21: Multi-Year NWEA-MAP 40% or Higher in READING by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Two or More	White
2016	88%	63%	69%	89%	91%
2017	87%	61%	71%	85%	89%
2018	89%	58%	78%	87%	89%
2019	88%	52%	73%	88%	88%

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019
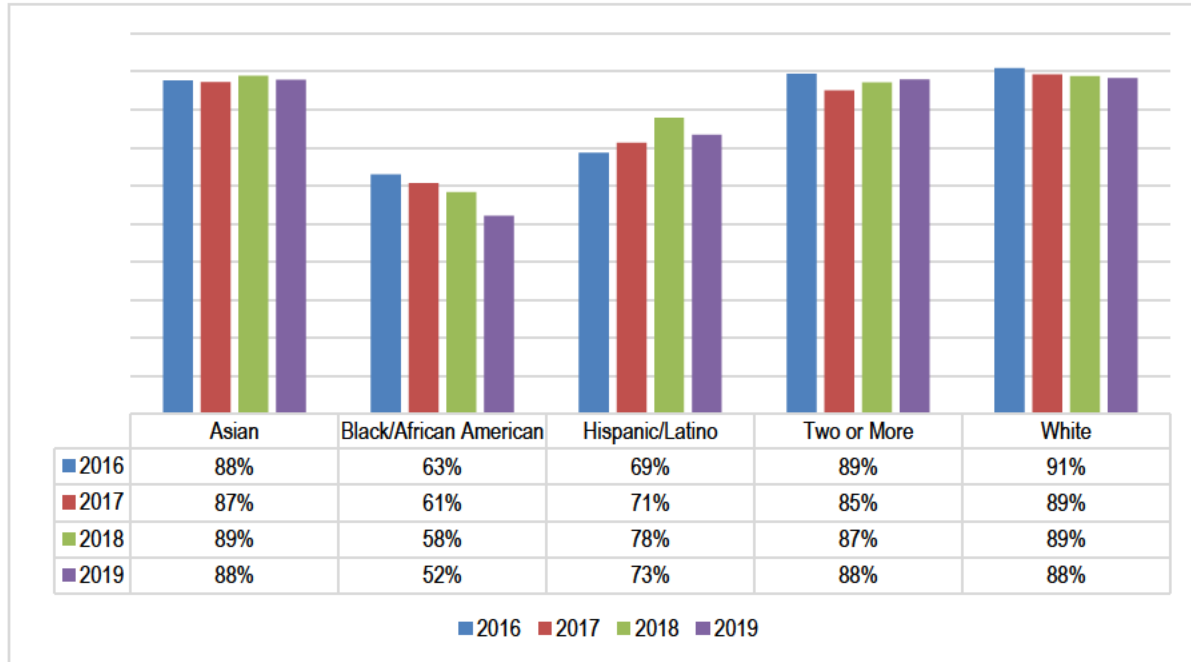
Table/Chart 2.22: Multi-Year NWEA-MAP 40% or Higher in READING by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016	58%	64%	50%
2017	57%	63%	53%
2018	62%	69%	48%
2019	57%	70%	50%

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019

47
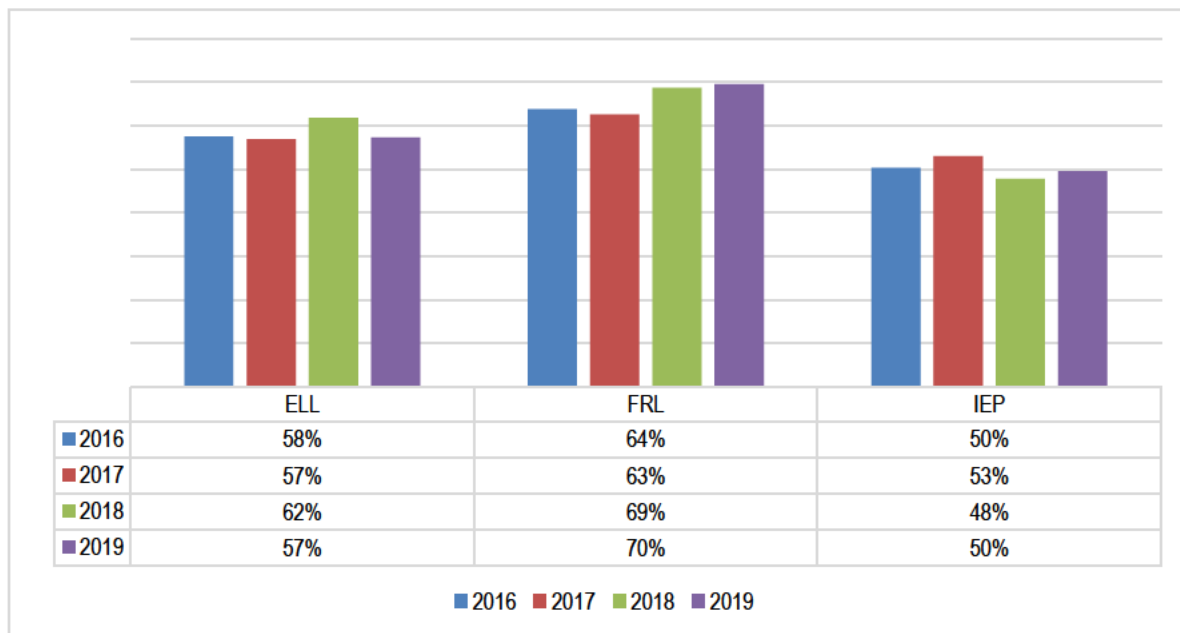
Table/Chart 2.23: Multi-Year NWEA-MAP 40% or Higher in MATH by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Two or More	White
2016	90%	55%	70%	83%	90%
2017	89%	49%	68%	82%	87%
2018	92%	51%	72%	84%	89%
2019	87%	46%	72%	90%	91%

■2016 ■2017 ■2018 ■2019
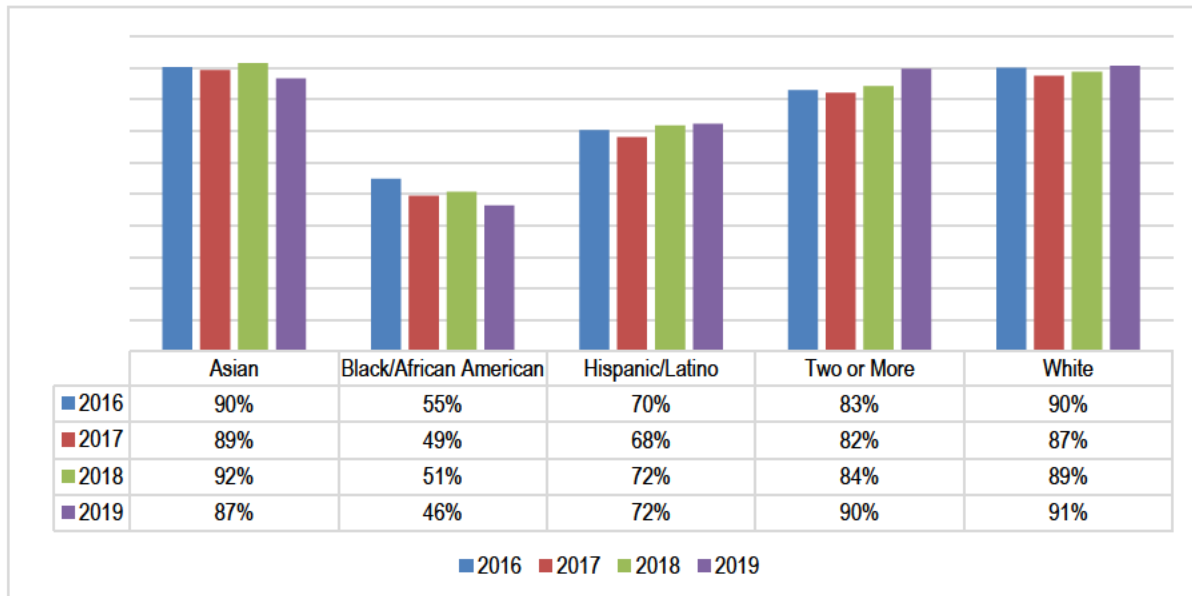
Table/Chart 2.24: Multi-Year NWEA-MAP 40% or Higher in MATH by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016	63%	63%	61%
2017	65%	60%	52%
2018	62%	69%	48%
2019	64%	70%	53%

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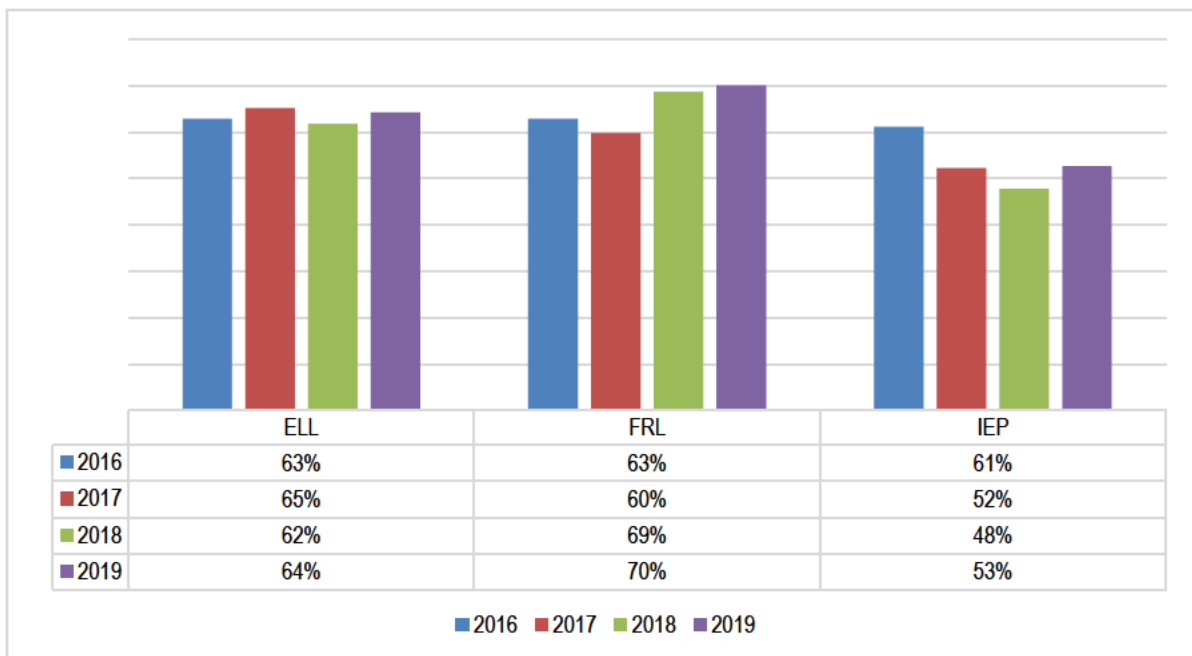
Table/Chart 2.25: Multi-Year Absenteeism[13] by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Two or More	White
2017	18%	9%	15%	4%	54%
2018	22%	9%	14%	4%	52%
2019	24%	9%	13%	4%	50%

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019
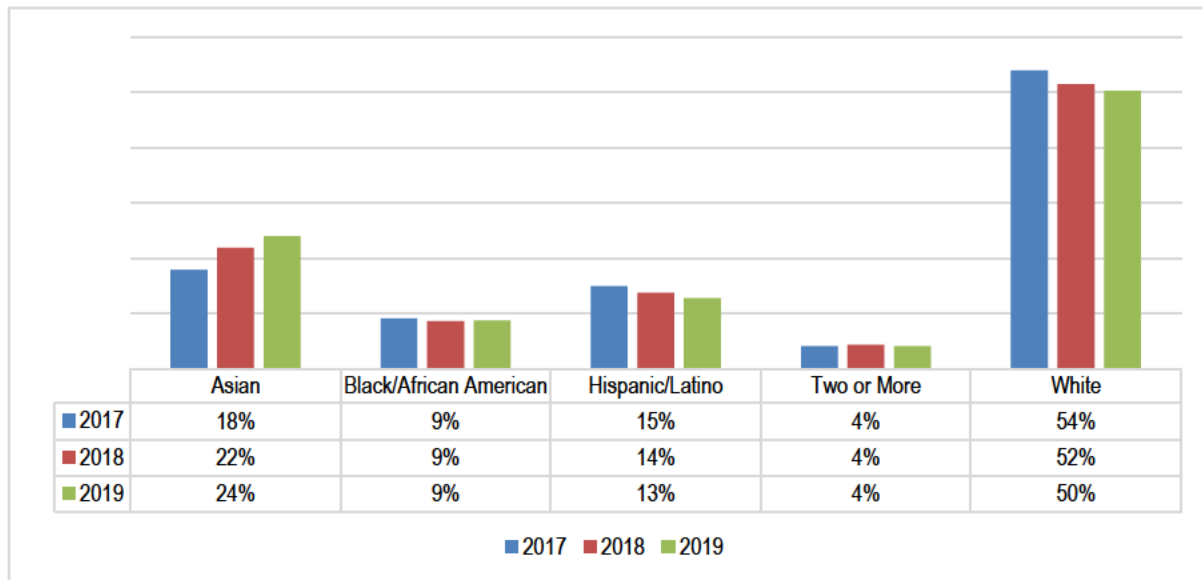
Table/Chart 2.26: Multi-Year Absenteeism by Students' Subgroups

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	14%	29%	18%
2018	16%	26%	18%
2019	13%	27%	15%

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019

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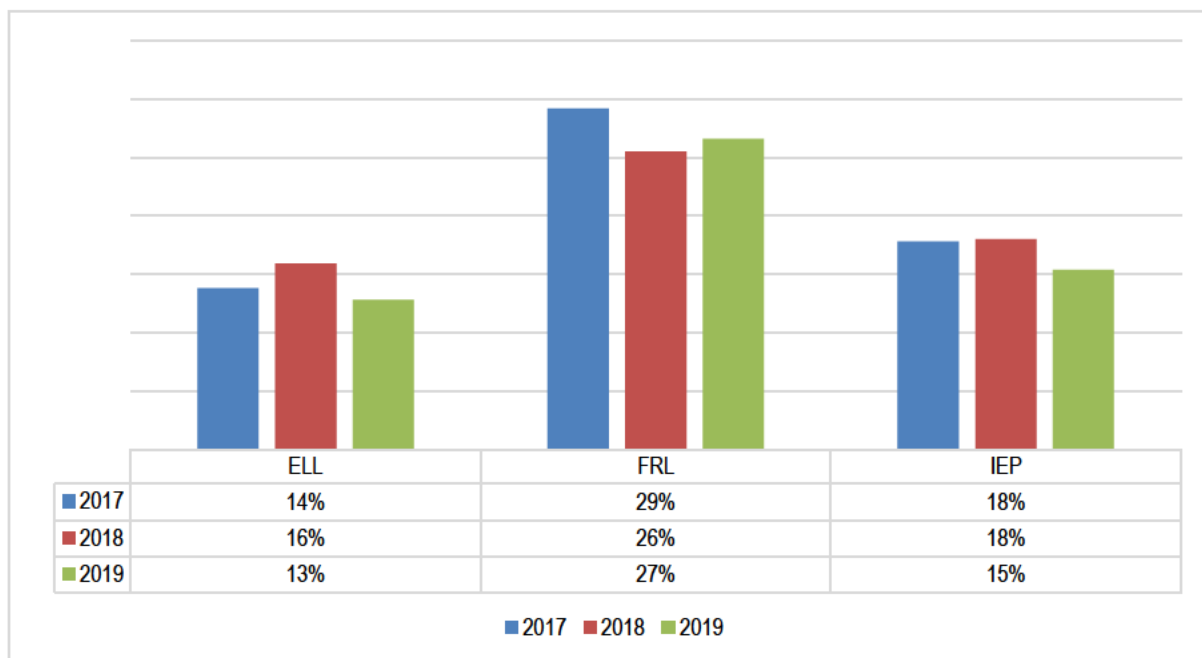
[13] Reported 10 or more absents during one school year

Table/Chart 2.27: Multi-Year Tardiness[14] by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Two or More	White
2017	9%	25%	20%	5%	41%
2018	20%	18%	19%	6%	39%
2019	20%	16%	21%	5%	39%

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019
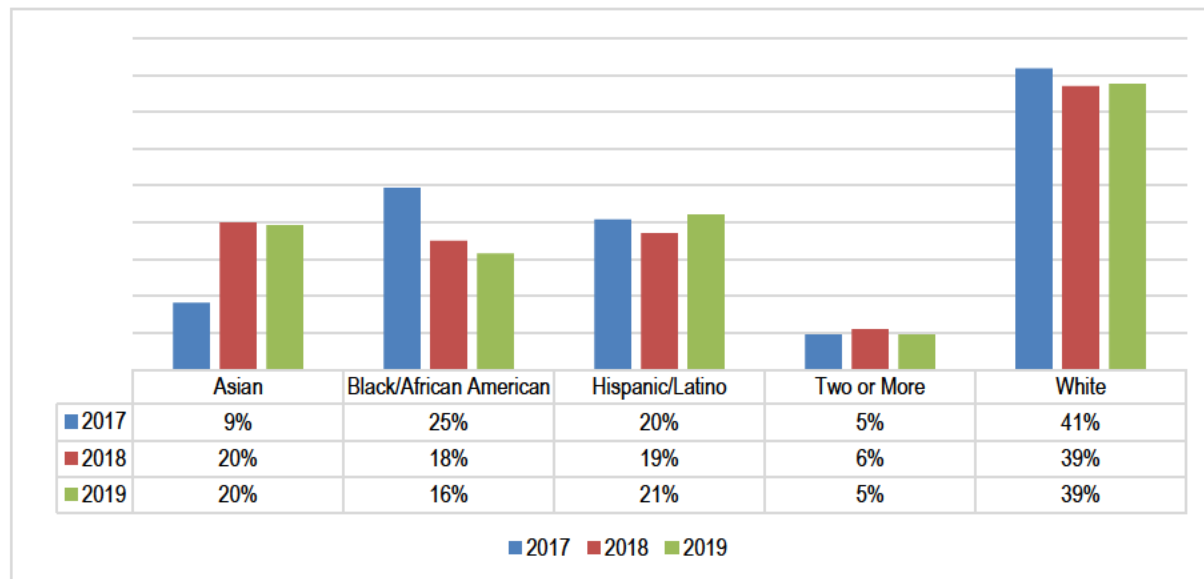
Table/Chart 2.28: Multi-Year Tardiness by Students' Subgroup

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	13%	41%	16%
2018	16%	37%	18%
2019	12%	35%	15%

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019

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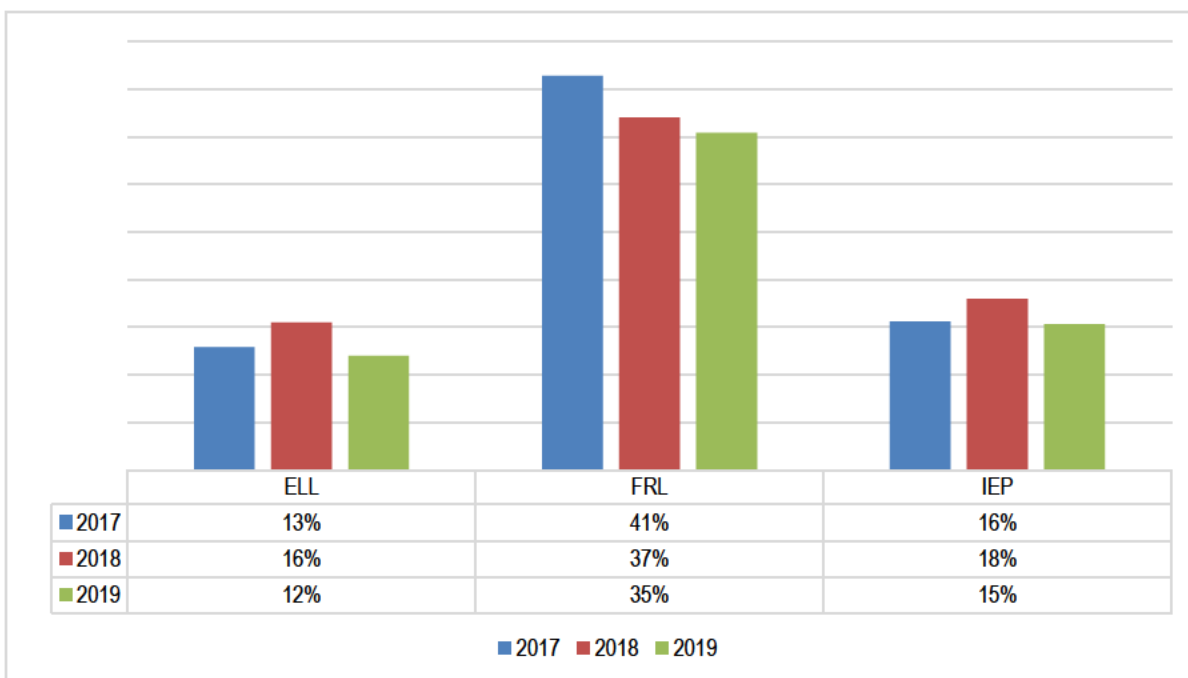
[14] Reported 10 or more tardies during one school year

Table/Chart 2.29: Multi-Year Truancy[15] by Students' Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Two or More	White
2017	24%	14%	17%	10%	34%
2018	42%	14%	17%	7%	20%
2019	41%	14%	13%	3%	29%

■2017 ■2018 ■2019
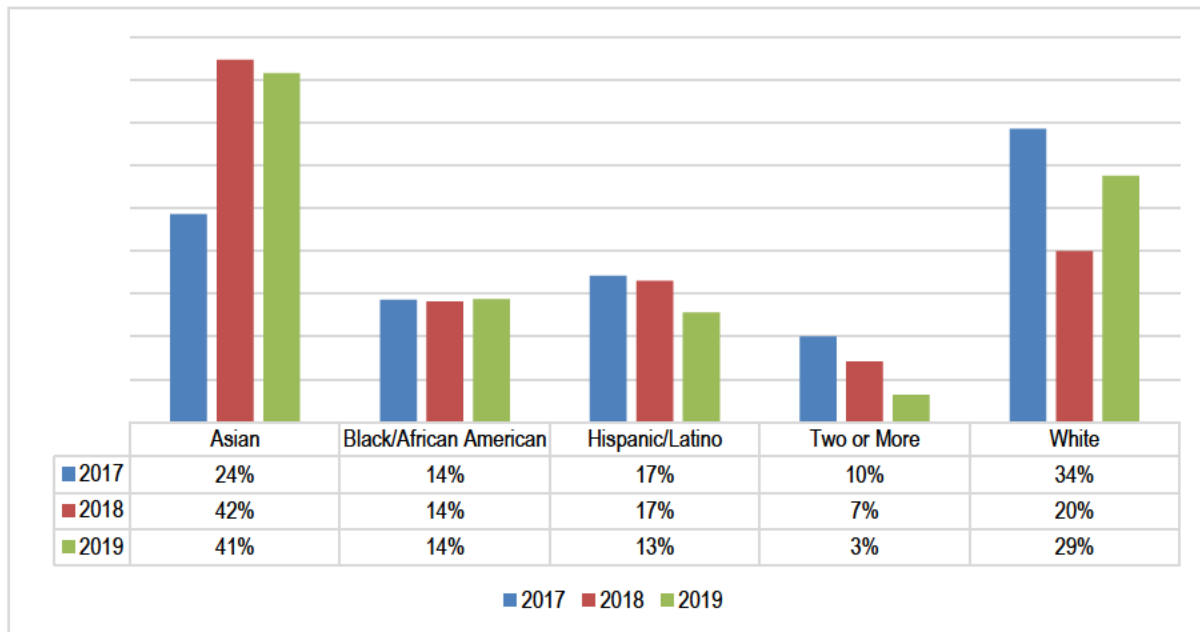
Table/Chart 2.30: Multi-Year Truancy by Students' Subgroup

	ELL	FRL	IEP
2017	14%	50%	20%
2018	25%	31%	20%
2019	24%	38%	21%

■2017 ■2018 ■2019

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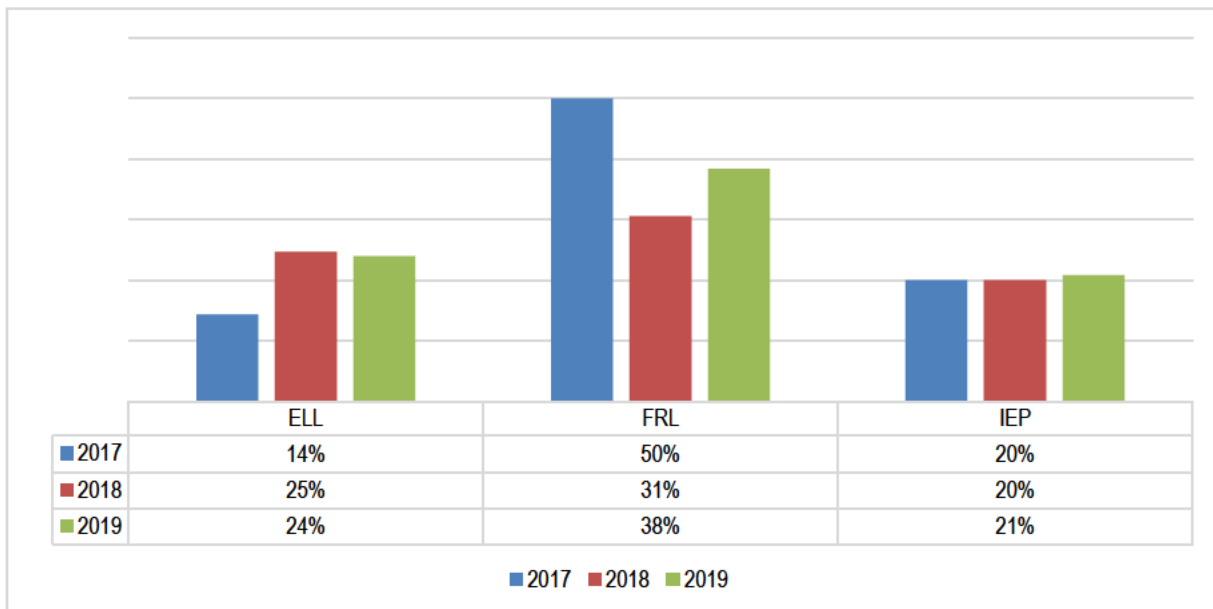
[15] Reported 10 or more truancies during one school year

Table 2.31: Multi-Year Staff Demographic by Race/Ethnicity[16]

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiin or Other Pacific Islander	White
2016	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	95%
2017	1%	4%	1%	0%	0%	95%
2018	1%	4%	1%	0%	0%	94%
2019	1%	4%	1%	0%	0%	94%
2020	0%	4%	2%	0%	0%	94%

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020
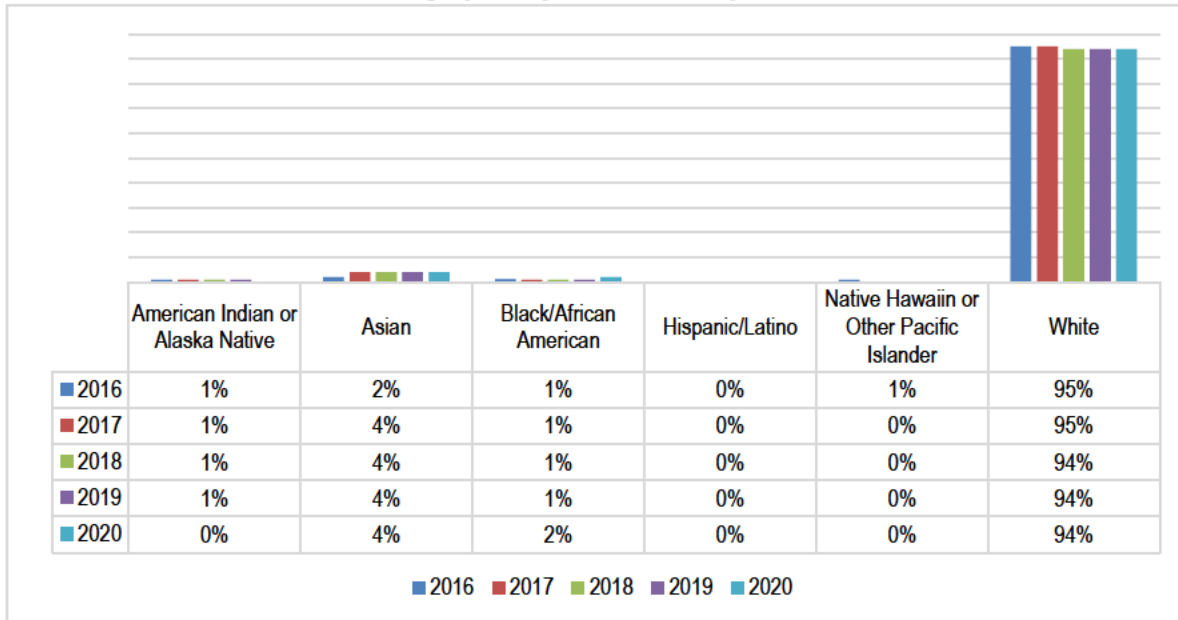
Table 2.32: Multi-Year Staff Demographic by Gender[17]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Female	88%	88%	89%	88%	87%
Male	12%	12%	11%	13%	13%

■ Female ■ Male

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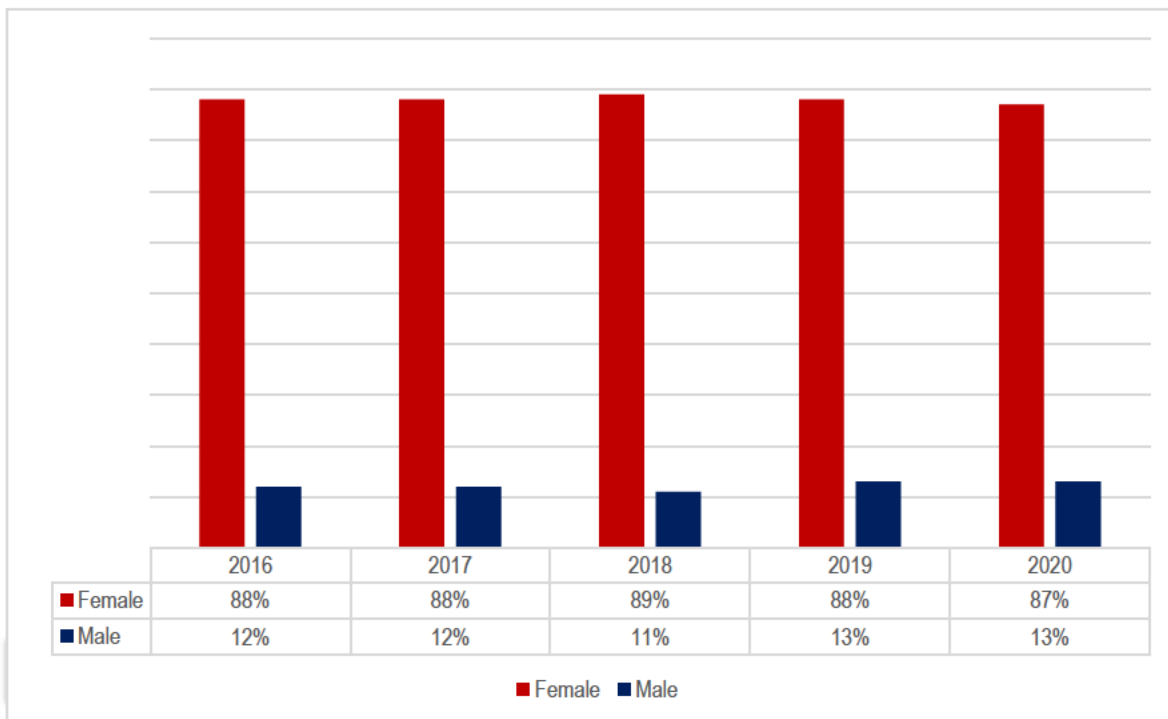
[16] Percentages have been rounded

[17] Percentages have been rounded

Table/Chart 2.33: Multi-Year ELL Languages Identified (not including English)

	All Other Languages	Spanish	Telugu	Urdu
2017	51%	32%	11%	7%
2018	52%	28%	11%	9%
2019	54%	25%	10%	11%

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019
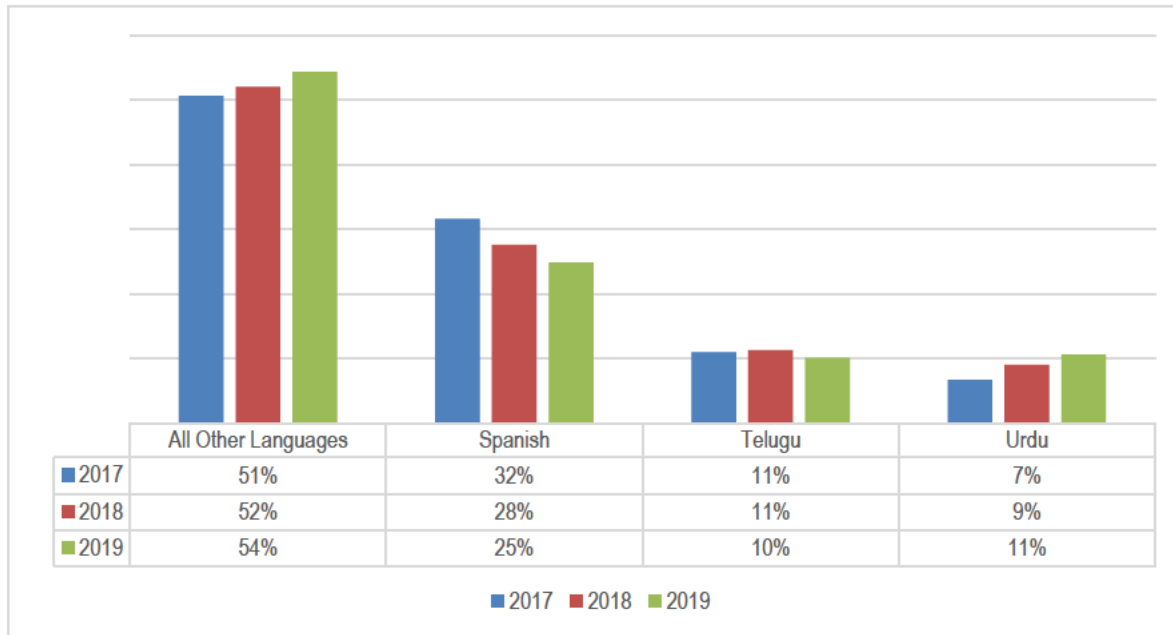
Section 3

As mentioned previously, Phase III of the Equity Audit are the focus groups. Focus groups take place by stakeholder role – students, staff and parents/guardians/caretakers - and there is no intermingling of stakeholders in one focus group. In other words, students participated with students, staff participated with staff members and so on. For the ease of reference, we will refer to the stakeholder group, Parents/Guardians/Caretakers as Families. It should also be noted that there were several one-on-one interviews with the auditor. This occurred based on scheduling preferences and/or one person showed up for the focus group. No names or identifying information was gathered or used in this report to protect confidentiality. Any attempts to identify an individual included in this report are mere coincidence. About one hour is allocated per focus group. Based on cost and time, the focus groups were limited to six days and the following rules set by the auditor.

- Staff: Any staff member as long as adhere to the 5-8 Rule. This rule indicates that if DELT would like 8 staff members per focus groups, then they are limited to approximately 5 questions. If they would prefer 5 staff members per focus group, then they may have 8 questions.
- Students: Up to 10 students may participate in student focus groups and grade level mixing is allowed. Up to 8 questions may be asked of students.
- Families: Up to 10 individuals may participate in this focus group. Up to 8 questions may be asked.

Table 1.4: Focus Groups and Participants		
Focus Group	Total Number of Focus Groups	Total Number of Participants
Staff	22	106
Students	17	136
Families	13	54
TOTAL	52	296

The questions for each of the focus groups were identical based on role and were as follows:

Staff
1. When you hear equity, how do you define it?
2. What are some examples of how your school has closed or narrowed the opportunity gap for students? What are areas to consider to close or narrow the opportunity gaps?
3. What are the greatest challenges your school or district face when it comes to equity?

4. How have you felt welcomed and included as an employee? How have you not felt welcomed and included as an employee?
5. How does your background (e.g. race, gender, gender identity, socio-economic status, abilities, etc) differ from students and families? How does this impact your role in the district?
6. How have students in your school been affirmed in their identities?
7. In what ways, have positive, meaningful relationships been built with students? With families?
8. Does staff feel treated equitably among peers?
9. Is there anything else you'd like to add or share?

Students
1. What do you like most about your school? What do you wish were different about your school?
2. What are ways you and a teacher have connected?
3. In what ways, have you connected positively with other adults in the school?
4. How have you felt welcomed and included in your school? How have you not felt welcomed and included in your school?
5. How have your peers been welcoming and inclusive or not welcoming and inclusive?
6. In what ways have you advocated for yourself? Has it been easy or challenging?
7. In what ways has your unique identity and experiences been celebrated or valued by your school? By your teachers(s)?
8. Is there anything else you'd like to add or share?

Families
1. When you hear "equity" what comes to mind?
2. Besides academics, what else do you believe school should teach, value, affirm or provide for students?
3. In what ways, do you believe your school is doing a good job in meeting the needs of all students?
4. What are the areas of needed improvement in order to meet the needs of all students?
5. How has the school/teachers supported your child(ren) academic success?
6. How has the school/teachers supported your child(ren) success outside of academics?
7. Have you experienced and/or do you have concerns that you believe are inequitable or unfair? Please describe.
8. Is there anything else you'd like to add or share?

Focus group responses were analyzed and categorized into the *Five Strands of Systemic Equity*©:

Systems: To ensure a systemic and continuous development toward advancing equity within all policies, processes, procedures, initiatives, decision-making and fiscal responsibility.

Teaching and Learning: To intentionally embed equity-driven pedagogy in the curriculum, resources, instructional approaches, use and consideration of assessments and academic programming for the purpose of advancing equity for each student.

Student Voice, Climate and Culture: To consistently seek students' feedback and experiences and nurture a positive, authentic and meaningful organizational culture and climate.

Professional Learning: To provide a continuum of professional learning and growth opportunities for all staff in pursuit of fully understanding and embracing educational equity.

Family and Community as Agency: To partner with families and the community for authentic opportunities to serve the students, the school and district.

For example, responses that best aligned with districtwide or building-wide decision-making such as policies, programs, procedures, processes, personnel and Board of Education were categorized under **Systems**. Responses that correlated with instruction, curriculum, assessments, daily classroom occurrences, culturally responsive practices and academic programming and professional educator autonomy were categorized under **Teaching and Learning**. Responses that indicated student behavior, discipline, adult-student relationships, SEL, trauma, restorative practices, climate and culture among student and staff groups were categorized under **Student Voice, Climate and Culture**. Responses about professional development and growth were categorized under **Professional Learning**. Finally, responses that discussed family and community communication and engagement, parent groups, academic and other wholistic resources that involve families were classified into **Family and Community as Agency**. Areas of strength and needed improvement were identified to determine emphasis. Several quotes from the focus groups have been included in this report. Below is a visual representation of the qualitative analysis.

Illustration 3.1: Visual Representation of Qualitative Response Analysis

The following were emerging identifiable themes based on focus group responses. The themes placed into this strand closely aligned with systems. **Systems**, as defined by the Five Strands to Systemic Equity©, is to ***ensure a systemic and continuous development toward advancing equity within all policies, processes, procedures, initiatives, decision-making and fiscal responsibility.*** There is no one question asked that could inquire so broadly about systems, but numerous responses demonstrated areas of strength and needed improvement within the **systems** strand.

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Themes aligned with Systems

Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of Strength	Areas of Needed Improvement
Decision-Making, Policies, Processes, Procedures, Resources, and Fiscal Responsibilities	Staff	-full-time nurses -full-time social workers -full day kindergarten -ADA-complaint website with translation -utilizing data to make informed decisions	-paraprofessionals utilized as substitutes hindering student services -paraprofessionals not compensated as substitutes when temporarily reassigned for that role and sense of unfair compensation - lunch menu options not equitable to students' cultural needs -space utilization in some buildings need to be considered for maximum collaboration between staff members and flow for students -lack of diversity among staff impacting adult-student relationships -major religions holidays/events should be considered when assembling district or school calendar of event -transportation for extra curricular participation -be mindful of filling critical personnel - class sizes too large
	Families	-improved leadership -early and late transportation offerings -specialized staff valued (e.g. social workers, psychologists) full-time nurses -majority of staff high-quality	-inconsistent leadership strength -lack of trust between some families with some administration and teachers -need for diverse staff -need for male teachers -class size -drop-off/pick-up concerns -need for supervision during indoor recess -inconsistent volume and homework expectations
	Students	-enjoy PE every day, Music and Art specials weekly -transportation services	-expanded lunch and/or recess time -longer passing periods -sexist dress code

The following were emerging identifiable themes based on focus group responses. The themes placed into this strand closely aligned with systems. **Teaching and Learning**, as defined by the Five Strands to Systemic Equity©, is to ***intentionally embed equity-driven pedagogy in the curriculum, resources, instructional approaches, use and consideration of assessments and academic programming for the purpose of advancing equity for each student.*** There is no one question asked that could inquire so broadly about teaching and learning, but numerous responses demonstrated areas of strength and needed improvement within the **teaching and learning** strand.

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Themes aligned with Teaching and Learning

| Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of Strength	Areas of Needed Improvement
Academics, Academic Programming, Instructional Supports and Resources, Assessments	Staff	-library open in the summer for student access -library supports -academic programs such as STEM, Orchestra and MakerSpace -MAP testing as one measure of academic achievement opposed to exclusively standardized assessment measure -volume of supplemental learning materials for student	-more time for data-informed decision-making and identifying root of problems -misunderstanding with differentiation as some teachers lower expectations or 'water down' the content -lack of knowledge or equitable services for students that qualify for ELL and SPED programs -over testing of students -systemic need for different types of assessments (e.g. problem-based learning, hands-on activities)
	Families	-instructional approaches and curriculum differentiation for students -technology usage, resources and supports -support and reteaching provided	-transparency with gifted and STEM programming/opportunities -GenEd students needs to be addressed -being mindful with external content entities (e.g. sex/health education for students)
	Students	-a lot of positive input on classroom learning -awareness of the teacher that want to make the learning engaging	-inconsistent information about homework completion (e.g. no follow-through after stating time will be offered) -academic freedom to demonstrate learning (e.g. projects) and/or pursue interests (e.g. space science)
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	Staff	-diverse books -increase in diverse consciousness -cultural fair -growing attempts for culturally responsive pedagogy and practices	-lack of knowledge and/or consistency in understanding culturally responsive practices -failure to address systemic issue of inequities
	Students	-teachers make effort to learn about students beyond academics -relationships with teachers and social workers	-consider culturally responsive and social justice projects

The following were emerging identifiable themes based on focus group responses. The themes placed into this strand closely aligned with systems. **Student Voice, Climate and Culture**, as defined by the Five Strands to Systemic Equity©, is *to consistently seek students' feedback and experiences and nurture a positive, authentic and meaningful organizational culture and climate.* There is no one question asked that could inquire so broadly about student voice, climate and culture, but numerous responses demonstrated areas of strength and needed improvement within the **student voice, climate and culture** strand.

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Themes aligned with Student Voice, Climate/Culture

Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of Strength	Areas of Needed Improvement
Staff Climate/ Culture	Staff	-positive peer-to-peer professional relationships -positive teacher to paraprofessional relationship	-staff cultural responsiveness to changing student demographic -feeling of being devalued and lack of support from administrators to teachers - lack of support and recognition for paraprofessionals -cultural taxation expectations on staff of color
Student Climate/ Culture, Feedback, Experience, Student Voice	Staff	-relationship-building efforts between most teachers and students -growing number of classrooms meetings with students -trauma awareness and training -SEL awareness and practices - extra curricular opportunities -growing number of clubs offered during lunch to maximize student participation -PRISM club	- training on cultural competence and culturally responsive practices -systemic relationship-focus -blame-mindset against students - create opportunities to listen to students and solicit their input - consistent understanding and application of restorative practices -narrow view of diversity as celebrating differences
	Families	-most teachers are accessible and responsive to family inquiries and concerns -SEL -strong relationships among many teachers and students -increased inclusion -extra curriculars offered for students -staff attending student extra curriculars as supportive	-inconsistent reaction to student needs, including culturally responsiveness
	Students	-beginning of the year surveys -variety and quality of extra curricular offerings -welcoming and inclusive environments	-more opportunities for students to give feedback beyond beginning of the year -inconsistent responses to anti-bullying from adults upon student complaint -peer-to-peer gossip and mean behavior -recess supports

The following were emerging identifiable themes based on focus group responses. The themes placed into this strand closely aligned with systems. **Professional Learning**, as defined by the Five Strands to Systemic Equity©, is *to provide a continuum of professional learning and growth opportunities for all staff in pursuit of fully understanding and embracing educational equity.* There is no one question asked that could inquire so broadly about professional learning, but numerous responses demonstrated areas of strength and needed improvement within the **professional learning** strand.

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Themes aligned with Professional Learning			
Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of Strength	Areas of Needed Improvement
Professional development continuum	Staff	-desire for continued professional development -mentor program	-lack of understanding about the achievement gap -deficit mindset about changing demographic -training on relationships with students who have ADD and ADHD
	Families	-opportunities for parent engagement (e.g. WatchDog group) -parent series offered in the community -communication is convenient and frequent	-parent education classes (e.g. IEP parent training)

The following were emerging identifiable themes based on focus group responses. The themes placed into this strand closely aligned with systems. **Family and Community as Agency,** as defined by the Five Strands to Systemic Equity©, is ***to partner with families and the community for authentic opportunities to serve the students, the school and district.*** There is no one question asked that could inquire so broadly about family and community as agency, but numerous responses demonstrated areas of strength and needed improvement within the **family and community as agency** strand.

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From Students

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Individual quoted survey comments have been redacted, as survey participants were not told that their responses would be shared with the general public.

Themes aligned with Family and Community as Agency			
Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of Strength	Areas of Needed Improvement
Partner with families and community	Staff	-supports for families (e.g. winter wear, McKinney-Vento rules, meeting unique transportations needs based on variety of dire circumstances, food for students and their families, supplies, gift card donation to families) if request or need -waving fees to increase student participation in special events -relationship-building efforts with families (e.g. positive phone calls home) -opportunities for family engagement -communication efforts with families (e.g. newsletters, phone calls, interpretation, Language Line) -partnerships with families (e.g. WatchDog, Girls on the Run, Kiwanis, Parent University – but inconsistent, SCARCE, other wrap-around services)	-lack of families' cultural knowledge or needs -lack of family schedules when planning events -create opportunities for home visits -deficit mindset upon "unengaged" families -fear of dissent hindering equitable relationships with families
	Families	-volunteering opportunities for families -opportunities the district offers for parent voice (e.g. boundaries, equity audit)	-inequitable access to PTC-sponsored events (e.g. financial, limiting to some families) -form parent groups (e.g. SPED)

Section 4

To maintain the integrity and purpose of DELT and the *Five Systemic Strands to Equity©*, the following is suggested. District leadership share and distribute this full report to each member of DELT. Allow DELT members to independently read and review it over a couple of weeks. DELT members should then reconvene and discuss the findings and recommendations. DELT should develop a template or Equity Implementation Plan (EIP) to progress monitor agreed-upon objectives in alignment with this report's recommendations. It is suggested that the EIP include the district role, school role, measurable metrics, accountability, evidence, status and alignment to district/BOE goals (see Illustration 4.1).

Illustration 4.1: Example Template of EIP

Goal	Strand							
Objectives	Objectives	District Role	School Role	Measure/ Metrics	Timeline	Accountability	Evidence	Status	Alignment
	1.								
	2.								

The strand serves as a comprehensive goal while the recommendations offered is a specific objective or "how to" pursue each goal. DELT should then be divided into five smaller groups in alignment with the five strands. The five subgroups of DELT will oversee objective progress in each strand. DELT should meet regularly to progress monitor equity movement. BOE presentations and community transparency is highly recommended in regards to this report and the next steps pursued by the district. Although, this Equity Audit is comprehensive and offers many recommendations, it is **NOT** recommended for a district to implement all of them, at least, not in the short-term. Most of these recommendations may be long-term objectives. The district must use their best judgment and allocate energies and resources to rollout each objective thoughtfully and with integrity. The Equity Audit research-based recommendations are grounded in finding. Several considerations are offered for actionable and measurable ways to advance equity. Each recommendation adheres to the five strands.

1.1. District develop common language around equity, diversity and inclusion.

<u>Findings:</u> Based on the needs assessment and focus group responses, the district can benefit by identifying a clear definition and common language about equity, diversity and inclusion. Choosing a definition should include critical points of considering all policies, procedures, processes, interactions and resources with an equity lens.

<u>Considerations:</u> This should be the first objective for the district. Understanding community needs and expectations, DELT is in the best position to create or adopt a definition. The definition should unequivocally include language on racial equity, equitable needs for marginalized populations and the acknowledgement that the systems and structures are continually examined for anti-bias. In creating or adopting its equity definition, the district should also ensure alignment to existing mission, vision and/or strategic plans. The district may also benefit in providing a definition to culture. Metric considerations can be a survey to staff, families and students on what they believe these definitions should include and after crafting such language, work tirelessly that a consistent message is delivered. In a few years, a future survey could help identify if there is community understanding. Explicit guidance on homework expectation was requested. BOE policies adopt strong language about its commitment to equity and anti-oppressive mindsets and pedagogy to benefit all students.

<u>Research:</u> There are various interpretations of equity that should be explored. Any of the references cited in this Equity Audit offer plenty of considerations. Particular attention should be paid to research and practitioner organizations like the Great Lakes Equity Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights.

1.2 District develop a long-term plan to increase diversity among teachers and administrators with a focus on people of color.

<u>Findings:</u> Like most of the school districts across the country, CCSD 89 staff is predominantly White. Although, this statistic is common, it does not alleviate any district from formulating short and long-term goals to diversify its staff. The majority of staff and community participants in the focus groups were White, and the needs assessment completed by DELT also indicated an urgency for the district to increase its staff diversity. Gathering and reviewing this data on a regular basis would serve the district well as it could be utilized to catapult discussions on multiple, intentional efforts to recruit and maintain high-quality, diverse staff. As the district creates deliberate plans in doing so, they must also be mindful and challenge beliefs that diversifying staff suggests unqualified personnel.

<u>Considerations:</u> Create a campaign focused on the strengths and benefits of working in the district. Partner with community members and local affinity groups to work on the campaign. Maintain consistent marketing on district's website and communication about the district's commitment to diversify. Build relationships with local colleges and universities in their teacher prep courses. Reach out to college affinity groups for undecided majors to share benefits of a career in education. Consider a 'Grow Your Own' program. Ensure candidate interviewing pools include diverse candidates ('Rooney Rule'). While the diversifying of staff may take time as the shortage of teachers of color is dire throughout the country, the district would benefit from developing protocols in hiring staff that embraces diversity, culture and inclusion. DELT could create a bank of interviewing questions focused on the importance of diversity, inclusion and culturally responsive practices. Such questions can include scenario-type inquiries from candidates. This can help shape the district's desire to hire individuals that understand, value, affirm and validate equity paradigms. Since this will need to be a long-term plan, the district should work currently and diligently to establish action for the projected desire of staff diversity. Also, the district must work to develop its understanding on retaining people of color and the cultural taxation often placed on marginalized staff.

<u>Research:</u> Overwhelming research points to the benefits of a racially and ethnically diverse staff that parallels the continued diversity among students. This does not suggest that predominantly White schools not commit to racial and ethnic diversity among staff. Teachers and administrators responsible for the education and well-being of

students should comprise a great number of people of color as it has demonstrated increased positive adult-student relationships, higher student engagement, connection and expectations, as well improved intergroup relations, role-modeling and combating stereotypes and biases (Ladson & Lewis, Eds, 2016; Wells, et al, 2016; TeachPlus, 2019).

| 1.3 | District develop a long-term and measurable plan to demonstrate its commitment and growth to educational equity. |

Findings: The district should be praised in its vulnerability to identify the areas of needed growth in equity, such as this audit. CCSD 89 could illustrate its long-term commitment to educational equity, particularly experienced by its growing marginalized population, by instituting a clear and measurable plan toward equity. This was prevalent concern indicated by the DELT members in the needs assessment.

Considerations: An Equity Implementation Plan (EIP) is strongly recommended to devote deliberate discussions on equity. The district could include its current initiatives and projects in an EIP to continue its improvement path while ensuring that said work is considered with an equity lens. An EIP will remind the district to review its anti-oppressive, unintentional work through quantitative and/or qualitative metrics to do better.

Research: Throughout the country, access to equitable educational opportunities continue to plague children; yet, we have school districts that either unknowingly, unintentionally or a combination of both fail to incorporate clear indicators of equity to show areas of strength and needed improvement (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Edley, et al, 2019).

Teaching and Learning
To intentionally embed equity-driven pedagogy in the curriculum, resources, instructional approaches, use and consideration of assessments and academic programming for the purpose of advancing equity for each student.

| 2.1 | District critically examine their programming with an equity lens. |

Findings: Over the last five years, 6-7% of the student population has been Black/African American; yet, there are no Black/African American students in its gifted programming. Similar data trends are exemplified among the Hispanic/Latino demographic. A steady 12% of students identify as Hispanic/Latino in the last five years, but only represent about 6% of the population in giftedness. Although, it may seem that 6% is significant when compared to the total percentage of the Hispanic/Latino student population, attention must be given to the raw numbers. The 6% represents those in the gifted program which translates to 15 Hispanic/Latino students in 2019; while there were a total of 269 Hispanic/Latino students, for example. The disparity of diverse representation in gifted programming is not exclusive to race. The lack of diversity among student subgroups identified as gifted was apparent. During school years, 2018 and 2019, a total of 892 and 952 students, respectively, were from one or more subgroups (ELL, FRL and IEP), while in the same years, the subgroup demographic of those in the gifted programming was a total of 14 students in 2018 and 15 students in 2019. This is less than 1% in comparison to the entire district population. In short, this translates that most students in the gifted program are White or Asian, English-speaking, middle-class and above, and non-differently-abled.

Consideration: A critical analysis of how students are identified as gifted should be thoroughly conducted. By reviewing the indicators of entry to gifted programming, the district may be able to improve and/or incorporate holistic measures that illustrate academic achievement. Enrichment programs at primary grades, if do not exist, may contribute to increased equitable gifted placement in later years. Extensive professional development to how some of the (dis)ability labels could be misinterpreted as cultural aspects and/or continued critical conversation and evaluation of how race and subgroup may impact identification could lead to over and under representation in these academic programs. Research into twice exceptional and bilingual gifted programs could aid the districts' approach to meeting the rigor and high expectations of all its students.

Research: Plenty of research exists in regards to the racial disparities between Black and Brown students to White and Asian in just about every academic program. For example, the fact that some students in racially minoritized groups are likelier to exhibit problematic behavior in the classroom (Howard, 2010). Transparency to student

placement and opportunities for each student to have challenging learning environments aids in equitable practices (Smith, et al, 2017).

2.2 District develop systemic expectations of culturally responsive practices.

Findings: Throughout the focus groups, it became apparent that many staff members were unaware of institutional inequities which is indicative of systemic absences to culturally responsive teaching and practices. This is evidenced in what staff and students said when discussing pedagogy and inclusion. Although staff, in general, recognized the importance of representation through textbooks and increased diversity in literature, it does not automatically translate to inclusion and student voice in daily instruction and assessments. Both students and staff shared that there was an absence of consistent understanding and practices when it comes to culturally responsive practices as well as lack of social justice projects for students. This was categorically rated as lowest or "developing" among all DELT groups too. The need for professional development, understanding, growth measures and connection to student voice emerged as necessary work and suggestions for next steps.

Considerations: It may benefit members of DELT to conduct an implicit bias walk-through and/or student surveys on how they learn best. Historically marginalized populations experience lower expectations and poor instructional practices may be a symptom of decreased academic standards. Consider multiple opportunities for students to experience learning via hands-on, cooperative groups, problem-based, music, art and other forms of often engaging practices. Attention might be given to the best use of technology in the classroom. Perhaps, measuring the amount of technology utilized in the classroom to monitor that leveraged as a tool and not in substitution for instruction. A vulnerable and brave unpacking into the Whiteness of instructional mindsets would benefit all staff and students.

Research: Low expectations for students of color is considered one of the most egregious forms of school structural racism (Diamond, 2008). This is a national epidemic. The Office of Civil Rights has consistently reported disproportionate representation of Black and Hispanic students in gifted programming, even when socioeconomic status and classroom environments are similar (Grissom & Redding, 2016).This is indicative of systemic structures and individual biases that may be unintentionally selective of White and Asian students for gifted identification. There must be critical understanding to the distinction of non-bias versus anti-bias in tracking and its impact on equity (Mickelson, 2020).

2.3 District internally evaluates and regularly reviews their curriculum and resources for appropriate inclusion and diverse representation in its efforts to embed culturally responsive pedagogy and practices.

Findings: As mentioned previously, focus group respondents commented on the growing diversity of its resources, which is to be celebrated and acknowledged. However, critical equity demands that we consistently challenge organizations to do better, acknowledging that increased, diverse representation does not necessarily translate to inclusion. We can certainly find ways to do better, such as integrating culturally responsive practices in staff evaluations. Other considerations are listed below.

Considerations: Besides extensive, long-term professional development to support educators on culturally responsive practice, the district could identify those teachers that are strong practitioners in this area to model instruction, to allow for peer observation and to create a system of common language and expectations. District could work with their curriculum teams to be explicit in example ways each lesson could be culturally responsive and offer related resources. District might benefit in considering a value scale for various external assessment and growth benchmarks to include greater weight placed on in-district formative and summative assessments. Evaluations that include culturally responsive practices should be expected.

Research: Culturally responsive pedagogy must be intentional and explicit in its practices (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Hammond, 2018). This is not only obvious in daily practices like cultural games, poetry, song, art and adult self-examination, but in output as well demonstrated by social justice and community-based projects (Bartolome, 1994; Johnson, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2007; Blankstein et al, 2016; Hammond, 2018)

Student Voice, Climate and Culture
To consistently seek students' feedback and experiences and nurture a positive, authentic and meaningful organizational culture and climate.

3.1	District develop process to regularly survey staff on their employer satisfaction and areas of needed attention.

<u>Findings</u>: There was a sense of collaboration and harmony among many staff members within the buildings, but disconnect between staff members and district administrators. The district would benefit in continuously nurturing and monitoring the climate and culture among its adult staff members.

<u>Considerations</u>: Annual employee surveys that collect perspectives and experiences on employer satisfaction can serve as a catalyst for improved climate and culture. Utilizing DELT members to evaluate survey responses and offer suggestions in the district's efforts to organizational commitment, work productivity and overall positive climate and culture among staff can serve as an equity model in valuing the voices of its personnel.

<u>Research</u>: Biases, such as a group think, is a powerful phenomenon that transpires in many social and professional environments (Ross, 2014). Focus groups reveal wide ranges of perspectives and experiences. Very rarely is one-hundred percent consensus or beliefs reached by participants. Nonetheless, what should be clear is an organization's mission, vision and values. Employees should know it, even if they do not adhere to it. There is a need to first support all employees to be familiar with equity and expectations of employee fairness. With that, equity and employee fairness should be communicated often and embedded in all areas. Soon thereafter, accountability measures could evolve to determine growth and sustainability.

3.2	District develop long-term, proactive solutions to student behaviors and adult mindsets surrounding school expectations.

<u>Findings</u>: The racial and subgroup disparities among student discipline is apparent. Although the district provided only one year, 2019, of discipline data making it impossible to identity trends, there was enough data to identify disproportionality. In 2019, the total student racial demographic was as follows: 142 Black students or 6%, 269 Hispanic students or 12% and 1,352 White students or 60%. The racial make-up of discipline received among students was as follows: 110 Black students or 27%, 71 Hispanic students or 18% and 205 White students or 51%. Among subgroups in 2019, ELL represented 212 students or 9% of the total student population, 442 students or 19% students made of the FRL subgroup and 298 students or 13% of students were identified as IEP. In discipline among subgroups, the numbers contrasted: 35 students or 8% of ELLs, 192 students or 46% of FRLs, and 117 students or 28% of IEPs. Although, some of the students receiving discipline may be repeated pupils, it still illustrates recipient of punishment. A review based on the intersectionality of race and subgroups into discipline revealed that 66% of all discipline is received my Hispanic, FRL students and 49% by Black, FRL students. Overall, the discipline data showed that students of color who are from the free/reduced lunch population receive the majority of discipline.

<u>Considerations</u>: A concentrated commitment to approach these data realities with an anti-bias, equity commitment could lead the district to consider proactive and systemic restorative practices in its schools. Through consistent check-ins, dialogue circles and/or mentor partnerships, historically marginalized students could ascertain agency of inclusion. Regular reviews of student behavior and discipline, school data team discussion and regular, structured and long-term time and commitment devoted for staff to examine personal biases, student expectations and relationship-building. A clear training plan on restorative practices, SEL and trauma-informed situations is recommended. Evaluating staff against measures to sustain positive, meaningful relationship with all students with a focus on restorative practices could be considered.

<u>Research</u>: Overwhelming amounts of research point to the racial discipline disparities in schools across the country and the dangerous school-to-prison pipeline it cultivates. The urgency to address discipline issue is paramount to academic success, student engagement, student view of self, affirmation of self-identities, individual prejudices and biases, institutional racism, power, privilege and other forms of realities that impact oppression (Tatum, 1997; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Kincheloe, 2008; Howard, 2010; DiAngelo, 2018; Gorski, 2018).

3.3	District advise schools to develop a student leadership committee and/or include students in the district-level equity advisory committee.

Findings: In speaking to the students and based on the DELT responses, an intentional plan to have thoughtful deliberations on equity could aid all stakeholders. It would also allow for actionable measurement to advance equity.
Considerations: The district could benefit on proactive measures of equity by systemically ensuring equitable practices such as gender-neutral restrooms in each school. It should be noted and rightfully celebrated that the district has implemented ways to include and highlight student voice such as representation in BOE meetings.
Research: Overwhelming amounts of research point to the racial discipline disparities in schools across the country and the dangerous school-to-prison pipeline it cultivates. The urgency to address discipline issue is paramount to academic success, student engagement, student view of self, affirmation of self-identities, individual prejudices and biases, institutional racism, power, privilege and other forms of realities that impact oppression (Tatum, 1997; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Kincheloe, 2008; Howard, 2010; DiAngelo, 2018; Gorski, 2018).

Professional Learning
To provide a continuum of professional learning and growth opportunities for all staff in pursuit of fully understanding and embracing educational equity.

4.1	District develop mandatory professional development continuum for all staff on issues of equity.

Findings: A long-term plan that honors the complex equity paradigms impacting every facet of education would contribute to greater understanding, increased empathy and transformative equitable practices. It was clear in the focus groups that numerous staff members were unfamiliar with equity and do not fully comprehend how, when and where institutional inequities are perpetuated daily. We cannot expect to move the equity needle forward if we do not know how it currently operates in the organization. The implications of not transforming equity into practice results in limited understanding of the "achievement gap", which places blame or onus onto students rather than considering that the "achievement debt" is really societal doing (Ladson-Billings, 2007).
Considerations: Consider expanding professional learning to non-certified staff. Expand the learning to support staff too. Tying examples of culturally responsive practices or an equity mindset to evaluations may aid in leveraging the systemic understanding that equity is the responsibility of all stakeholders.
Research: As mentioned previously, equity and social justice are complex topics that are not exclusive to education. Inequities in school is not just occurring in education systems. Health care, housing, employment, policing, criminal justice systems, military, politics and other institutions have demonstrated long histories of oppression against minoritized groups (Ferguson, Eds, 2020). Education is another entity entailed in the larger society. With that, comes limited understanding and experiences to depth of equity and inequities (Tatum, 1997; Dweck, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Gorski, 2018). Hesitations, uncertainties and outright rejection and anger to discussions of equity often curtail broaching the topic. Courageous entities willing to pursue must prepare and expect the pushback associated with such conversations and transformative movement towards social justice (Williams, 2003; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Sleeter, 2012; Shield, 2013; Minor, 2019). It is personal work that requires all parties to be vulnerable, it challenges deeply ingrained beliefs and is suggestive a privilege stance – an emphasis that people often reject about owning. Any entity, including school districts, that engage in humanizing conversations about societal -ism's must stay on a long-term, predictable path of resistance. Equity shifts take considerable time and never-ending commitment (Dewey, 1938; Kozol, 1991; Fullan, 2003; Chenoweth & Theokas, 2012; Howard, 2015; Peters, 2019; Muhammad, 2020

Family and Community as Agency

To partner with families and the community for authentic opportunities to serve the students, the school and district.

5.1	District assembles an equity advisory committee to effectively collaborate and communicate its commitment and work to advance equity.

Findings: To continue the critical growth about equity, the district could benefit from formulating a robust committee of diverse stakeholders to build upon its understanding.

Considerations: Consider a collaborative with leaders from all existing parent groups, plus BOE members, personal invitation underrepresented affinity groups, staff and students. Thoughtful involvement of community members, staff and students to inform the district on positive scenarios and areas of needed improvement such as personally identifying underrepresented groups to lead, not just attend, community discussions related to their needs (e.g. navigating the American education system, understanding district's curriculum, latest instructional approaches and assessments). Consider rotating administrators and staff members to host engagement talks in local neighborhoods, libraries, firehouses and/or establishments to nurture relationships with community. Conduct in-home visits as needed, as appropriate and as feasible. This larger advisory committee could also advise the district improved ways to communicate to families beyond digital dependence. It the creation of such a committee, the district may learn of futher needs and ideas to engage families.

Research: Studies have improved transparency and overall well-being when districts collaborate with local community members (Smith et al, 2017).

In conclusion, since the district chose this preemptive and proactive measure to conduct an equity audit, it is assumed the district will engage in next steps to continue to move the equity needle forward. There is plenty of work to do in ALL districts in their equity journey. These recommendations are very likely in many school districts. This works takes time. This works requires intentionality. This work is relentless and brave. This work is necessary. The district should be thoughtful as to which recommendations it will consider in the short and long-term. Careful examination about the metrics and accountability should be thoroughly vetted against the reasonable resources it holds while challenging itself to do better. District should also identify current initiative and include them in the equity implementation plan as this the EIP offer measurable and accountable components. Additionally, including current initiative in the EIP will allow for intentional conversation and planning to examine with an equity lens. These recommendations in this plan is not exhaustive and the district has the autonomy to include other objectives or indicators to toward equity, such as considerations to its dress code policies and practices, competitive employment salary and incentives to increase interest for high-demand roles, and equity literacy opportunities among families and community members.

Next steps for the district following this equity audit is entirely independent of this auditor. It is strongly suggested that DELT members reconvene and read this report in its entirety. DELT should be at liberty of creating of designing reasonable objectives to create actionable plans toward equity. DELT should also be transparent and share findings with their BOE members. Transparency can be a strong accountability tool and could aid the district in identifying and learning new ways to advance equity for its students. A Board presentation indicating the details and nuances of this equity audit would catapult communication with its community. An equity webpage on the district site could emphasize the district's commitment to equity. There are plentiful ways the district could highlight its equity work and in doing so, should be clear on its current efforts. The district has an option of continuing its partnership with this auditor and/or the auditor's office if so desired to support its next, actionable planning towards equity. Options have been presented to district for the continued support, but it is not exhaustive. The findings proved that are many considerations to demonstrate actionable opportunities to move toward equity and disrupt institutional forms of -ism's and biases. In other words, seeking out various experts to any of these listed recommendations, such as culturally responsive pedagogy and SEL are at the discretion of the district. Finally, the district should be applauded and rightfully acknowledged for its proactive exploration of equity via an audit.

List of Abbreviations

ADA = American with Disabilities Act

BOE = Board of Education

ELL = English Language Learners, maybe used interchangeably with EL or LEP

ES = Elementary School

ESL = English as a Second Language

GenEd = General Education

FRL = Free/Reduced Lunch

IEP = Individualized Education Program, may be used interchangeably with SPED

LEP = Limited English Proficient, may be used interchangeably with ELL

MTSS = Multi-tiered System of Support

PTC = Parent Teacher Council

PD = Professional Development

SPED = Special Education, may be used interchangeably with IEP

SY = School Year

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