

**2023—24**

# **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION STUDY**

**Report of Findings**

**Submitted by**

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**and**

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## INTRODUCTION

At the invitation of the Board of Directors and Dr. Catherine Van Vooren, Superintendent of the Coatesville Area School District, Dr. Robert L. Jarvis and Associates, a diverse and experienced external team of educational leaders was identified to initiate a thorough analysis of the current status of educational diversity, equity and inclusion in the district. This report is the culmination of a comprehensive study of current school and district cultures, conditions, policies, procedures and practices that are impacting the achievement of all learners and diverse groups of K-12 students in the district.

We recognize that the school district is in many ways at the beginning stages of equity-focused planning, and we highly commend the Superintendent's and School Board's expressed commitment to embrace educational equity and inclusion as the foundation for future improvement. We sincerely hope that results of this study and this report will provide valuable insights and direction to the Board and administrative leadership as they move forward to define strategic efforts that will enhance the academic and life outcomes for each and every young person they serve, and that will reduce observed disparities defined by race/ethnicity, gender, ability, economic status, or first language.

We expect that district leadership will use the outcomes of this process to 1) promote a sense of urgency for imagining new and innovative approaches to curriculum, instruction, and student, family and community partnerships in learning, 2) build upon the district's many current assets and promising practices where they exist in the schools, 3) recognize and reflect deeply on their systemic barriers and challenges to equity, and 4) establish priorities for future action that will most effectively address those barriers to rebuilding a highly respected and high achieving school system.

The visiting research team was coordinated by Dr. Jarvis, retired Director of the Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity and Director of the University of Pennsylvania's Coalition for Educational Equity. He was supported by:

Dr. Nancy Hacker, Retired Superintendent of the Springfield Township School District;  
Mr. James Wigo, Retired Superintendent of the Rose Tree Media School District;  
Dr. Monica McHale-Small, Director of Education for the Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Mr. Arthur Mitchell, Executive Director at the STEM Equity Alliance  
Dr. Le Roy Whitehead, School Improvement Specialist, University of Delaware Academy of School Leadership  
Dr. Margaret Thornton, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at Rowan University

Special thanks go out to community leaders Regina Lewis and Rob Marshall for their assistance in holding community focus group meetings with parents and leaders from the city and surrounding communities. Also, special thanks and appreciation goes out to each of the school leaders who graciously welcomed us into their schools, deeply and honestly shared their successes and obstacles to success, and who helped to coordinate day-long focus groups with multiple staff given their busy schedules and daily staffing challenges.

Our team emphasizes that it is the opportune time for all district leaders to work diligently, purposefully and collectively to make the school district the "schools of choice" for all Coatesville Area School District residents, as well as for prospective new teachers, support staff and administrators by successfully implementing multifaceted action plans to fidelity that are

- focusing on sustaining all students' regular attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism,
- accelerating academic achievement and enhancing student engagement in school and learning,

- assuring physically and emotionally safe learning environments, reducing student incidents of misbehavior and reducing the need for exclusionary discipline practices,
- keeping a clear focus on and continuously monitoring progress of different groups of students highlighted in this report which have continuously underachieved in the current system- especially Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students identified as coming from economic challenge, and/or identified for special education services,
- addressing staffing challenges and increasing the racial/ethnic diversity of certificated teaching and support staff, and
- making the district a model for equity, inclusion and belonging, and being the “schools of choice” for parents who are considering or who have opted for charter or private schools.

The appendices of this report offer extensive resources to support implementation of equity policies and practices in the district. Appendices A, B, C and D offer resources to school board and administrative leadership in conceptualizing equity for the district, reflecting on and implementing equity-informed decision-making, identifying strategies for beginning to organize the district for equity and building a core Diversity-Equity-Inclusion-Belonging team. Appendices E and F offer suggestions for equity-focused professional learning including, readings, resource people and organizations. Appendices G and H present expanded trend data on disciplinary incidents and exclusionary sanctions of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. Appendix I offers a checklist to help assess current professional learning needs and interests of administrators, teachers and building staff. Appendix J presents research-informed practices and local/state resources to enhance recruitment, hiring and recruitment of a more diverse teacher and administrator workforce. Appendix K offers key considerations for redeveloping future middle school programs, and Appendix L offers specific reflections and ideas for improvement from focus group participants.

## **STUDY APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

Dr. Jarvis and members of the visiting research team spent multiple days in the district and community May 2023-January 2024:

- reviewing and analyzing current and historical district and school-level disaggregated data, including student enrollment, attendance and retention, graduation rates, racial/ethnic and SES demographics, state and local measures of academic achievement, discipline/behavior, and budget/finance.
- interviewing all central office administrators and building principals and a majority of current school board directors, many on multiple occasions.
- conducting in-depth focus groups and individual interviews in all of the schools with students, a majority of general and special education teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, nurses, secretaries and custodial staff, climate coaches, behavioral and mental health support staff, and special education aides
- conducting multiple community focus groups and individual interviews with parents, business, faith-based, and community leaders, former district administrators, and non-profit youth-family advocacy and support agencies and organizations.
- reviewing key district, state and federal documents/resources including the following:
  - 2023-2026 CASD District Comprehensive Plan
  - 2022-2023 CASD Progressive Discipline Matrix for Elementary and Secondary: District-Wide Multi-Tiered Disciplinary Support Structures
  - 2022-23 CASD Spring Data Update Presentation (Elementary Reading/Math Benchmark Assessments)

- 2021-22 District Communications and Marketing Plan
- 2022 District Marketing Plan
- 2023-24 District Website
- 2018 Performance Audit- PA Department of the Auditor General
- 2021 CCAP Parent Survey
- 2021 and Preliminary 2023 Reports of the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS)
- 2015 Plan of Action/Agreement for Improving School-Community Relations: PHRC-NAACP-Center for Safe Schools
- CASD Reported Safe Schools Discipline Data
- Draft Gifted Education Plan
- Pennsylvania Department of Education Future Ready Index for Academic and Reported Attendance Data
- 2023-24 CASH Course Selection Guide
- 2022 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
- National Center for Educational Statistics
- U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights

## **WHY EDUCATIONAL EQUITY IN POLICY AND PRACTICE IN COATESVILLE?**

By multiple accounts, the Coatesville Area School District has over the past many years been viewed as one of the most challenged districts in the county and in the Commonwealth relative to student achievement and student behavior. For many years, the school district has experienced multiple fiscal and organizational leadership challenges and poor decisions that have created and sustained systemic gaps that have adversely impacted the academic success of a significantly large number of students, especially students of color, students coming from economic disadvantage, non-English speaking immigrant students and students with disabilities.

Only recently in the past two years have significant efforts been made to appropriately begin to align curriculum to state standards, develop multi-tiered academic and behavioral supports systems, and address inequities in student academic outcomes, physical condition of the school buildings, and technology.

The current pressing challenge for the CASD as an educational system will be to create and maintain a strong sense of urgency and accountability that assures that each and every student, regardless of background, is engaged in impactful and relevant learning experiences that are supporting acceleration of their academic progress in concert with their social-emotional and cultural growth and development.

The district has maintained a very traditional structure of schooling that has been reported to have worked well for a number of students over the years, but is clearly not working well at this time for a significant number of students and parents at this time evidenced by:

- extremely high numbers of CASD students enrolled outside the system in charter schools and private education settings,
- three of nine CASD schools currently designated by the state as Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools,
- low levels of academic proficiency across the system, especially for Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students, students with identified disabilities, English Language Learners and students coming from poverty or relative economic disadvantage,
- disproportionately high numbers of students identified for special education services,

- excessive and disproportionately high numbers of student disciplinary suspensions and expulsions,
- excessive attendance challenges and chronic absenteeism, and
- on-going student behavioral challenges and school safety concerns (both real and perceived).

With nearly two thirds of students coming to school from economically challenged families in the city and outlying communities the challenges are significant. Food, housing, employment and health insecurity are a challenge for many children and their families, and local support resources, especially in terms of mental health are reported to be scarce and/or inaccessible.

In all schools we should be able to regularly observe:

- instruction and assessment that challenges, engages, and empowers learners at all levels,
- all students' access to standards-based, content-rich, and culturally affirming curriculum,
- school cultures that communicate to all students high expectations for success, and that foster positive identity, belonging, agency, confidence and purpose for both students and staff, and
- explicit professional learning, discussion, practice, and action for mediating and addressing observed racial and economic inequities.

The future social and economic viability and progress of the City of Coatesville and its surrounding diverse local communities will be highly contingent on improvement of the district's and school's capacities to provide more highly successful and student-centered spaces, and physically and emotionally safe learning environments.

These should be environments where all students, regardless of background, are exposed to high quality standards-based and culturally affirming curriculum, nurturing and supportive student-teacher relationships, restorative and affirming versus punitive behavioral intervention practices, and where each and every child consistently feels valued, loved, cared for and challenged to learn.

The schools cannot do it alone and it will indeed "take a village" in expanded, coordinated and collaborative ways to support and accelerate student success. There is a strong current need to partner with and support many great, but relatively small scale, efforts of local not-for-profit agencies, faith communities, local businesses and regional foundations who are working to support children and families in Coatesville.

## **CURRENT SCHOOL DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS AND CONTEXT**

In the 2023-24 school year, there are nine schools and one cyber academy serving 5,236 students in the Coatesville Area School District. The district is defined as one of the most diverse in the Pennsylvania Commonwealth and is also in the bottom 50% of districts in the state relative to academic performance. On 2022-23 state PSSA academic assessments K-8 schools in CASD evidence math proficiency at 18% (versus the Pennsylvania public school average of 37%), and reading proficiency at 31% (versus the 55% statewide average).

At the high school level, 44% of students scored advanced or proficient on the Keystone English assessment (versus the 65.3% state average), 15.5% were advanced or proficient on the Algebra 1 Mathematics assessment (versus the 34.2% state average), and 25.3% were advanced or proficient on the Keystone Biology assessment (versus the 50.7% state average).

Non-white student enrollment is 59% of the student body, which is more than the Pennsylvania public school average of 38%, with the majority being of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino heritage. Sixty-one

percent of all students are identified as coming from economic disadvantage, and 25% receive special education services. The school district's graduation rate in 2022-23 was 85%.

**Current District Residents’ Demographics**

One of the district’s remarkable aspects is its geographical spread (75.1 square miles), encompassing not only the city of Coatesville, but also surrounding rural/suburban boroughs and townships, making it the sole city-based district in Chester County- which is recognized as the wealthiest county in Pennsylvania.

The district currently serves an economically and racially/ethnically diverse resident population of 67,936 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). As is evident Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino and lower income residents are overrepresented in the city relative to the total population of all residents of the district. The following give a snapshot of current demographics of district residents:

All District Residents	City of Coatesville	Chester County
White 67%	White 32%	White 84%
Black 17%	Black 43%	Black 6%
Hispanic/Latino 11%	Hispanic/Latino 28%	Hispanic/Latino 8%
Two or More 4%	Two or More 11%	Two or More 2%
Asian 1%	Asian 1%	Asian 7%

**Per Capita Income**

All District Residents \$44,506	City of Coatesville \$24,669	Chester County \$59,436
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**Median Household Income**

All District Residents \$87,551	City of Coatesville \$55,589	Chester County \$118,574
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**Owner Occupied Houses**

All District Residents 77%	City of Coatesville 36%	Chester County 75%
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**Median Value Owner Occupied Houses**

All District Residents \$307,200	City of Coatesville \$147,700	Chester County \$435,000
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**High School Graduate or Higher**

All District Residents 91%	City of Coatesville 83%	Chester County 95%
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**Bachelor’s Degree or Higher**

All District Residents 37%	City of Coatesville 15%	Chester County 56%
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**CASD Student Demographics**

The overall number of students being served by the district has been declining in the past decade with increasing numbers of district families opting for charter and private school options for their children. Nearly one third of resident students in the CASD are currently attending charter or private schools.

In September 2018, the PA Department of the Auditor General issued a performance audit of the district focusing primarily on the financial condition of the district. In the 2016-17 fiscal year the district experienced a \$9 million dollar operating deficit with “concerning increase in charter school and special education expenditures. The report noted that “charter school growth in this district has created a negative feedback loop wherein the diversion of limited resources to charter schools threatens the quality of District schools, further driving students to charter schools and thereby exerting more financial pressure on the district.

By 2016-17 charter school enrollment was 2225 students- 26% of the district's enrollment at an expense of \$34 million. Since that time expenditure to charter schools has doubled. In 2022-23 charter school enrollment was 2933 students- 35% of the district's enrollment at an expense of nearly \$67 million, not including transportation costs. Current costs to the district for charter school enrollment are \$12,500 per general education student and \$50,000 per special education student.

The 2021 CCAP Survey offers important insights into key areas that must be addressed to encourage more parents/caregivers to make the CASD schools the schools of choice versus charter or private schools. It offered many specific concerns and ideas for improvement, which were on all accounts ignored by the administration at the time. We heard similar sentiments from many of the parents and community leaders we spoke with. The following are some primary reasons parents shared as to why they were opting their children out of the CASD schools:

- Class disruptions
- Lack of my voice/concerns being addressed or heard
- I did not feel safe/my child did not feel safe
- Discipline issues
- Bullying issues
- My child's needs were not being met due to a lack of services and supports

The following are key reasons parents indicated why they never enrolled their children in CASD schools:

- School rating reports
- Negative reputation from friends, co-workers, neighbors
- Test score reports
- Negative reports in the media
- Negative social media posts
- Building conditions

The following are the survey respondents suggested top priorities for change:

- Change in discipline policies
- Transparency from the school board and superintendent
- Changes in curriculum
- Better communication
- Changes in special education program, ex. more training for teachers, supports and services
- Facilities improvement

**2014-2023 District Student Enrollment And Resident Students in Charter Schools**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Percent Change
<b>CASD</b>	7016	6706	6438	6049	5650	5453	5274	5407	5323	5233	-25%
<b>Attend Charter Schools</b>	1751	1988	2259	2506	2821	3054	3125	3039	2915	2934	+68%

Source: Coatesville Area School District

**2023-24 CASD Residents Charter School Enrollment**

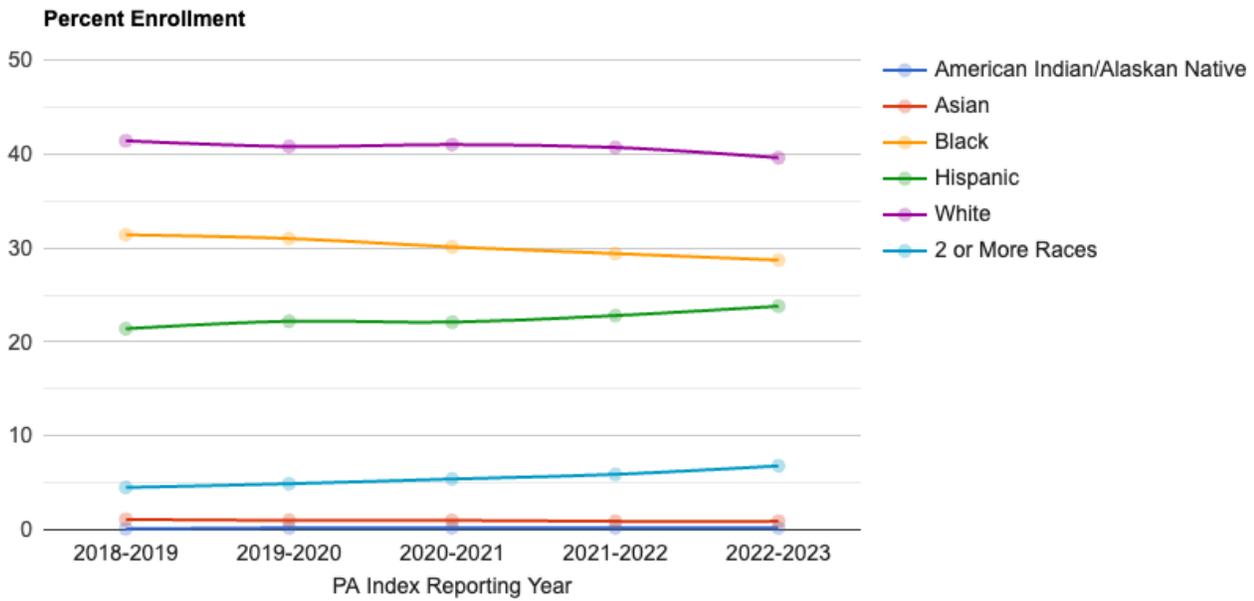
	Regular Education	Special Education	Total
21st Century Cyber Charter School	17	5	12
Achievement House Cyber Cs	6	3	9
Agora Cyber Charter School	10	7	17
Avon Grove Charter School	443	110	553
Chester County Family Academy	28	7	35
Collegium Charter School	1572	509	2081
Commonwealth Charter Academy Cs	23	5	28
Insight Pa Cyber Charter School	21	4	25
Pa Cyber Charter School, The	21	3	24
Pa Distance Learning Charter School	1	2	3
Pa Leadership Cyber Charter School	60	11	71
Pa Virtual Cyber Charter School	9	2	11
Reach Cyber Charter School	21	13	34
Renaissance	6	2	8
	2238	691	2929
	77%	23%	

Source: Coatesville Area School District

Students’ racial/ethnic and other student group demographics in Coatesville have been largely stable since 2018. There has been a slight decrease in numbers of Black/African American and White students with a slight increase in the numbers of Hispanic/Latino and multiracial students. There has also been a slight increase in the proportion of student identified as economically disadvantaged and English Language Learners. The district has been relatively balanced between male and female students.

The most notable increase has been in students being identified and receiving special education services. Students with IEPs went from making up 21.4% of students during the 2018-19 school year to 25.2% of students during the 2022-23 school year.

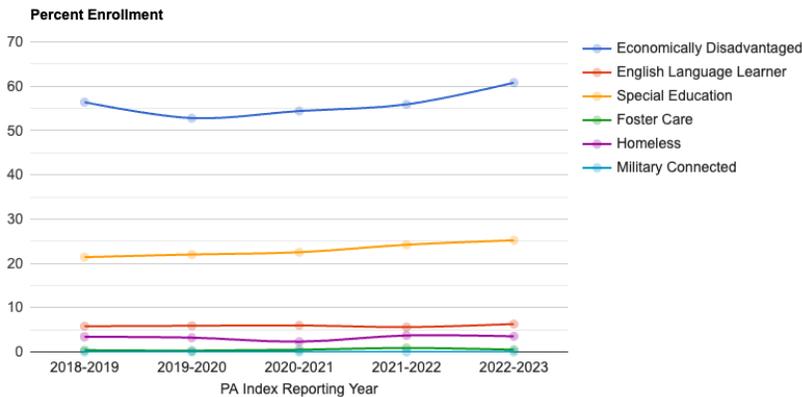
### CASD Racial/Ethnic Demographics: Five Year Trends



	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
<b>American Indian/Alaska Native</b>	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%
<b>Asian</b>	1.1%	1%	1%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%
<b>Black</b>	31.4%	31%	30.1%	29.4%	28.7%	28.5%
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	21.4%	22.2%	22.1%	22.8%	23.8%	24.6%
<b>White</b>	41.4%	40.8%	41%	40.7%	39.6%	38.4%
<b>2 or More Races</b>	4.5%	4.9%	5.4%	5.9%	6.8%	7.4%

Source: PA Future Ready Index

### CASD Districtwide Non-Racial Groups: Five Year Trends



	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
<b>Economic Disadvantage</b>	56.4%	52.8%	54.4%	55.9%	60.8%
<b>English Learner</b>	5.8%	5.9%	6%	5.6%	6.3%
<b>Special Education</b>	21.4%	22%	22.5%	24.2%	25.2%
<b>Foster Care</b>	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.9%	0.5%
<b>Homeless</b>	3.4%	3.2%	2.3%	3.7%	3.5%

Source: PA Future Ready Index

### **CASD Elementary School Demographics**

The elementary schools had several notable differences in demographics in the 2022-23 school year. In terms of enrollment, Rainbow Elementary is the largest with over double the enrollment of the smallest elementary school, East Fallowfield. In terms of racial/ethnic demographics, students were fairly evenly distributed among the schools except at Kings Highway, where there are proportionally fewer Black/African American students and more White students.

Kings Highway also had the smallest proportion of students coming from economic disadvantaged, although still over half of the students there qualify for this designation. Reeceville Elementary School had the largest proportions of students coming from economic disadvantage, students learning English, and homeless students.

At the time of this study, students receiving special education services were distributed fairly evenly among the schools, and East Fallowfield was serving the most students in foster care.

(Note that the district leadership will want to examine racial/ethnic, economic, and special education demographics in the process of redistricting of students between the newly to be constructed elementary school and the other elementary schools, as well as assure equity in allocation of technology and other resources.)

**2022-23 Elementary School Racial/Ethnic Demographics**

School	Overall Enrollment	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/African American	Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White
Caln Elementary School	451	0.20%	0.40%	30.80%	0.40%	24.60%	9.30%	34.20%
East Fallowfield Elementary School	320	0%	0.60%	35.90%	0%	22.50%	7.80%	33.10%
Kings Highway Elementary School	494	0.20%	1.80%	21.10%	0%	18%	8.90%	50.00%
Rainbow Elementary School	683	0.60%	1%	27.40%	0.20%	25.50%	6.20%	39.20%
Reeceville Elementary School	350	0%	0.30%	32.30%	0.30%	32%	5.70%	29.40%

Source: PA Future Ready Index

**2022-23 Elementary School Nonracial Demographics**

	Overall Enrollment	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Foster Care	Gifted Enrollment	Homeless	Special Education
Caln Elementary School	451	70.30%	7.80%	0.20%	0%	5.30%	26.60%
East Fallowfield Elementary School	320	68.10%	6.30%	1.30%	0.30%	5.90%	24.10%
Kings Highway Elementary School	494	59.70%	4.70%	0.20%	0.20%	3.00%	22.90%
Rainbow Elementary School	683	66.80%	5.90%	0.30%	0.40%	3.50%	24.20%
Reeceville Elementary School	350	75.10%	10.60%	0.30%	0%	6.90%	24.30%

Source: PA Future Ready Index

**CASD Secondary Schools Demographics**

As expected, the secondary schools’ demographics are not demonstrably different from the district-wide demographics. Notably, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students does decrease slightly as students increase in age. This decrease could be due to transiency, dropouts, families no longer filling out free and reduced lunch forms, or some other issue. There are also slightly fewer students receiving special education services at the high school than at other schools.

(Note that the district leadership will want to examine racial/ethnic, economic, and special education demographics in the redistricting process of students between Scott and the “new” North Brandywine Middle School beginning next year, as well as assure equity in allocation of technology and other resources.)

**2022-23 Secondary Schools Racial Demographics**

	Overall Enrollment	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black/African American	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic/ Latino	Multiracial	White
Scott 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Center	389	0.0%	1.0%	30.6%	0.0%	20.1%	10.5%	37.8%
North Brandywine Middle School	368	0.30%	0.8%	28.3%	0.0%	26.1%	6.0%	38.6%
Coatesville Area Intermediate High School	891	0.0%	0.9%	28.6%	0.1%	21.8%	7.1%	41.5%
Coatesville Area Senior High School	1414	0.1%	1.1%	27.9%	0.1%	24.9%	4.5%	41.4%

Source: PA Future Ready Index

**2022-23 Secondary Schools Nonracial Demographics**

	Overall Enrollment	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Foster Care	Gifted	Homeless	Special Education
Scott 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Center	389	64.3%	4.6%	0.00%	1.5%	2.6%	26.5%
North Brandywine Middle School	368	60.9%	6.0%	0.00%	1.6%	2.2%	29.4%
Coatesville Area Intermediate High School	891	57.0%	6.6%	0.50%	3.8%	2.7%	26.5%
Coatesville Area Senior High School	1414	51.9%	6.0%	0.40%	4.6%	3.0%	22.6%

Source: PA Future Ready Index

**RACIAL/ETHNIC AND GENDER DIVERSITY OF DISTRICT EDUCATORS AND STAFF**

Large numbers of stakeholders, including board members, community members and parents, and teachers we spoke with, highlighted the pressing need to diversify the faculty and staff of the district racially/ethnically to better represent the diversity of the district’s student population.

Research for Action (2022) has documented extensive evidence of how teachers of color enhance

educational experiences. For *all* students. Teachers representing diverse racial backgrounds are associated with increased learning and positive social and emotional outcomes. For students of color, having a teacher of color is also linked to

- higher expectations for success,
- improved school quality and student experiences, including reduced absenteeism, increased enrollment in Advanced Placement courses, higher rates of representation in gifted and talent programs, and reduction in discriminatory disciplinary practices and disproportionate referrals for special education, and
- improved academic outcomes when taught by a teacher of the same race or ethnicity.

A diverse teaching staff can also reduce feelings of isolation, increase sense of belonging, and improve retention of other teachers of color.

Given all of these advantages CASD, like all districts throughout the Commonwealth, is significantly challenged to attract what are limited numbers of certificated teaching staff, and especially teachers of color. Many stakeholders noted lower pay relative to neighboring districts as one factor, but there are many other variables and strategies that should be considered. At present there is no action plan evident to improve diversity recruitment, hiring and retention, however a number of strategies have been employed by the human resources department to support this effort, including:

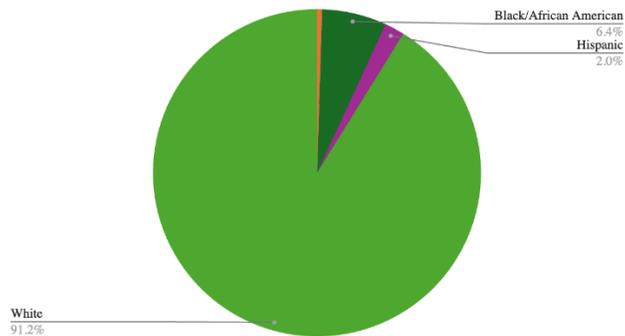
- attending regional diversity job fairs,
- extending recruitment efforts outside the county and at several universities,
- posting job openings on Facebook, Twitter(X) and LinkedIn,
- engaging with the Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity (DVCEE) job fair and regional human resources directors, as well as Wisler Pearlstine law group to identify potential new strategies,
- attending all district-sponsored events and other community events with a table highlighting available positions, and
- providing check-ins with all new staff to assure their needs are being met.

Given the relative racial diversity of teachers' aides as a group compared to teachers, the district might consider the feasibility of offering access and support to current Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino aides and other support staff with completing undergraduate degrees through alternative track teacher preparation programs.

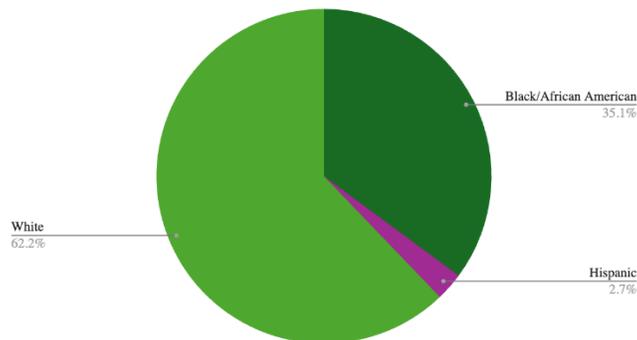
Appendix J offers many research-informed practices that do not appear evident in current district efforts. Also included are many local and state resource people and organizations that are working diligently to enhance educator diversity that the human resources department could connect with to support their efforts.

We would encourage the district to explore the feasibility of seeking resources for developing a "grow your own" program that encourages and supports students of color in the high school to consider teaching as a career, and could build upon the current work of the Teacher Leadership Academy at CCIU and current 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade student participation in the CASH Preschool.

Teacher Race and Ethnicity



Teachers Aides Race and Ethnicity



At present,

- 92% of certificated classroom teachers are White and 8% identify as Black/African American or Asian.
- 92% of certificated school counselors are White and 8% identify as Black/African American.
- 79% of certificated district administrators are White with 21% representing people of color.
- More racial/ethnic diversity is found at the building administration level- 26%.
- The greatest proportion of staff of color are found in the ranks of district-employed teacher aides (38%) and service workers (41%).
- Increased racial/ethnic diversity is augmented by contracted services for special education aides, behavior intervention specialist, climate coaches and mental health specialists many of whom are people of color.
- Teachers' gender mirrors national trends with 74% of teachers identifying as female and 26% as male. Elementary teachers and all school counselors are primarily female, while more gender balance is noted among secondary teachers, and building administrators. Females predominate in both certificated and non-certificated district administrators.

**2023-24 Faculty and Staff Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Diversity**

	Am. Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/ Latino	White	Female	Male
Building Administrators (Principals and Assistant Principals)	0% (0)	0% (0)	21.1% (4)	5.3% (1)	72.7% (14)	47.1% (8)	52.9% (9)
All Teachers	0% (0)	0.5% (2)	6.6% (25)	1.1% (4)	91.8% (348)	73.6% (276)	26.4% (99)
Elementary Teachers	0% (0)	1.1% (2)	4.9% (9)	1.6% (3)	92.3% (169)	89.4% (161)	10.6% (19)
Secondary Teachers	0% (0)	0% (0)	8.2% (16)	0.5% (1)	91.3% (179)	59.3% (115)	40.7% (80)
Teachers' Aides	0% (0)	0% (0)	35.1% (13)	2.7% (1)	62.2% (23)	97.2% (35)	2.8% (1)
School Counselors	0% (0)	0% (0)	7.7% (1)	0% (0)	92.3% (12)	92.3% (12)	7.7% (1)
Service Workers (Tradesman, Custodian, Food Service Cook, Inventory Supply, Labor Pool, Utility Worker, Cafeteria Manager, Police Officer)	1.3% (1)	0% (0)	30.7% (23)	10.7% (8)	57.3% (43)	58.8% (40)	41.2% (28)
Certified District Administrators (Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Department Directors, Program Supervisors, Building Administrators)	0% (0)	0% (0)	16.7% (4)	4.2% (1)	79.2% (19)	60.9% (14)	39.1% (9)
Non-Certified District Administrators (Administrative Assistants, Data Specialist, Family Liaison, Police/Security Officers, Cafeteria Managers, Technology Assistants)	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	2.9% (1)	5.7% (2)	85.7% (30)	75% (24)	25% (8)

Source: Coatesville Area School District

## DISTRICT POINTS OF PRIDE AND HISTORIC CHALLENGES

### Points of Pride

CASD is a district that historically for many years has been a source of high levels of community pride- especially defined by engagement with high school athletic programs, and is a district that has many dedicated and hard-working staff and faculty members, many of whom grew up and attended school in the Coatesville area, and have chosen to stay. School and community members overwhelmingly point to the historical diversity in the student body as one of the district's greatest assets.

In the 2021 CCAP survey parents were asked why they chose to enroll and have their children remain in the district and one of the most frequently mentioned reason was their own and their children's positive feelings about "the amazing and great teachers", with comments like:

- "the teachers truly care for the kids"
- "our children are thriving...teachers seem genuinely interested in them doing well"
- "the teachers strive for excellence, and I hold on to the hope that we can become the district we once were"
- "I know the teachers look out for the children"
- "we love the care we have gotten from teachers and the services my son has gotten for his IEP"
- "especially wonderful, knowledgeable and loving teachers and staff"
- "I know that the dedication of the teachers is second to none"

Parents we spoke with also frequently cited their children's exposure to dedicated and supportive teachers, different cultures and diverse peers, "Coatesville/Red Raider pride and grit", dissatisfaction with their children's charter school experience, extracurricular and athletic opportunities as why CASD offered the schools of choice for them.

On the flip side we also spoke with many parents for whom experiences with the schools have been less positive, and also heard from parent advocates that there are many parents/caregivers, especially representing Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino lower income communities, who have been more challenged in their interactions with the schools, especially as it related to discipline and the identification process for special education and monitoring of identified students' Individual Education Plans.

Current points of pride from recent district communications include:

- 100% of teachers certified and highly qualified
- Offer 24 varsity athletic programs (all of which have junior varsity with many beginning in 7th grade)
- Ranked #3 in Pennsylvania for diversity
- A nationally ranked robotics team that consistently wins state championships
- K-12 STEM program, including science fairs at every school
- Close to 20 school district summer camp opportunities
- Free dual-enrollment program that allows high school students to earn college credits

It was shared with us on many occasions that many CASD alumni have excelled academically, athletically, and professionally, and the suggestion made to move forward with a strong alumni association to support today's CASD students. There could be many opportunities for alumni to reconnect with and provide encouragement to

current students at the middle schools and high schools by sharing their life and career journeys. Further, in recent years there have been significant efforts by key community leaders and organizations to revive the City of Coatesville economically.

### **Historic District Challenges**

Unfortunately, over the last decade the school district has experienced multiple organizational challenges and questionable district leadership decisions and practices that have significantly impacted overall student achievement, as reflected in:

- a longstanding perception in the community and beyond of unsafe schools, poorly functioning school boards and district leadership,
- instability in superintendent, board and school administrator leadership, and turnover of teaching staff,
- a perceived lack of transparency in communications and significant issues of trust both internally and in district-community relations
- a significant exodus of many students to regional brick and mortar and cyber charter schools and private schools,
- a highly publicized district leadership involvement in race-based texting and misappropriation of funds scandals,
- an increasing number of students identified with disabilities,
- financial challenge attributed to reduced income due to loss of students to the charter schools and increased costs in providing special education services,
- professional teaching staff reductions in critical areas that have resulted today in no elementary school librarians, fewer than needed special education teachers, significantly fewer teachers of color and performing and visual arts teachers,
- high and persistent turnover of district employed and contract teacher aides,
- no school social workers to support and communicate with challenged children and their families,
- longstanding delivery of curriculum that was not always aligned to state standards, and misaligned literacy and mathematics curriculum, and
- the dismantling of a traditional middle school model.

### **EQUITY-RELATED DISTRICT AND SCHOOL STUDENT DATA: CHALLENGES AND TRENDS**

Obtaining student placement and performance information was a challenge for the study researchers. In regard to diversity, equity and inclusion related data we found numerous gaps in data collection and reporting (beyond mandatory reporting to the PA Department of Education)

- School and district administrators overwhelmingly reported that the district has rarely talked about or made public disaggregated student data, e.g., race/ethnicity differences in achievement, discipline, special education identification, or course placement to drive change. The district has maintained multiple databases in different offices of the district with no one person or department responsible for consistent collection and shared analysis of student attendance, achievement, discipline, special education, course/program placement information, or charter school enrollment.
- Information about school performance in the CASD Cyber Academy was challenging to obtain as students are counted in the CASD student's home school data and not as Academy students.
- There appears no evidence of administering school climate or culture surveys, beyond the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, to students, staff or families to assess perceptions of their experiences with the schools

that includes a comprehensive assessment of student engagement, sense of belonging, school safety, and the learning environment.

- There is no evidence of any efforts to follow-up with students post-graduation.
- The PA Future Ready Index from the PA Department of Education produced more comprehensive data than the district, and the state numbers did not always match up exactly with the data provided by the district.

Conversations with CASD district and school leaders indicated that in recent years there have been little effort focused on using disaggregated student data to drive or focus improvement efforts. Breaking down student data by different populations can help schools compel change, define/refine district and school policies, plan appropriate programs, decide which interventions to select for different target groups of students, use limited resources where they are needed most, and observe important trends in students' opportunities to learn, student discipline and student achievement.

The majority of information to follow was obtained through the PA Department of Education's Future Ready Index and district reported data. Multiple equity-focused variables are reviewed to identify differences and disparities in learning opportunities and learning and behavioral outcome for different groups of students that include:

- Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism
- Academic Performance on PA State Assessments
- Student Discipline
- Special Education
- Gifted Program
- Honors Level Course Enrollment
- Advanced Placement Course Enrollment and Performance on AP Exams
- SAT and PSAT Participation and Performance
- Graduation and Dropout Rates
- Student Retention

## **ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

*Student attendance, truancy and chronic absenteeism are significant on-going challenges for the district. District and school leaders know from experience and common sense what research confirms: showing up for learning in school matters. Students can't benefit from investments in high quality instruction and more engaging and rigorous curriculum unless they are regularly in their schools and classrooms. We know that students across the country from low-income backgrounds, students of color, students whose families speak languages other than English, and those with disabilities are more likely to be chronically absent from school — and may lack the resources and opportunities to make up for lost time in the classroom.*

*The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania defines chronic absenteeism as missing 10% or more school days (18 days per year), including both excused and unexcused absences. \*Also note that The Pennsylvania Department of Education reports attendance and chronic absenteeism as lagging indicators, meaning that the reporting year (i.e., 2022-23) is one year behind the year measured (i.e., 2021-2022), so the numerical values are calculated using the district's enrollment numbers from 2021-22.)*

We observed as we examined disaggregated chronic absenteeism data for CASD that nearly 70% of Black students missing more than 10% of school days in 2022-23. The numbers of chronically absent students in CASD are better that two times the state average and suggest the need for immediate systemic in-depth study, focused efforts and district level response to both individual and at-risk group attendance challenges.

According to data accessed via PA Future Ready, chronic absenteeism has been an ongoing problem in Coatesville since before the COVID-19 pandemic. The chart below shows that in the 2022-23 school year, only 43.4% of all students attended school for at least 162 days.

Most significant chronic attendance challenges appear to be at Scott and at the Intermediate and Senior High Schools where the percentage of student identified as chronically absent in 2022-23 was 67.7%, 55.8% and 56.6%% respectfully. District administrators recently report that they are currently in process of deeply examining reliability of the attendance data and the inconsistently reporting at the high school, but also indicate inconsistency of reporting of attendance data across all schools in the district- including tardiness and individual class-cutting.

**2022-23 Average Daily Attendance by School**

	<b>Overall Enrollment</b>	<b>Average Daily Attendance</b>	
Caln Elementary School	451	415.85	92.2%
East Fallowfield Elementary School	320	296.93	92.8%
Kings Highway Elementary School	494	443.0	89.8%
Rainbow Elementary School	683	590.0	86.4%
Reeceville Elementary School	350	303.06	86.6%
Scott 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Center School	389	337.62	86.8%
North Brandywine Middle School	368	326.15	94.6%
Coatesville Area Intermediate High School	891	734.34	82.4%
Coatesville Area Senior High School	1414	985.0	69.7%

Source: Coatesville Area School District

**Percentage of District Students Chronically Absent By Group Five Year Trend**

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Statewide Average	14.20%	14.30%	14.20%	17.80%	26.10%
All Students	58.30%	54.30%	37.30%	44.30%	56.60%
Black/African American	73.20%	62.50%	76.70%	64.30%	70.30%
Hispanic/Latino	65.50%	55.10%	67.80%	54.90%	67.30%
White	49.20%	48.10%	51.60%	27.10%	42.50%
Multiracial	N/A	N/A	N/A	57.70%	62.50%
Economic Disadvantage	71.60%	59.00%	72.60%	62.90%	66.10%
English Learners	64.30%	69.70%	75.80%	65.20%	68.60%
Students with Disabilities	64.50%	54.50%	65.90%	67.90%	64.50%

Source: PA Future Ready Index

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ON STATE ASSESSMENTS**

Collectively advanced/proficient pass rates for students in Coatesville on Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Keystone statewide assessments in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science assessments are low relative to state-level averages. An analysis of historic trends suggested that performance levels and numbers of students not meeting proficiency have been evident for some time. Students with disabilities, as might be expected, exhibit particularly low pass rates.

Among racial groups, Black-African American students as a group have consistently exhibited the lowest overall pass rates.

Elementary and middle grades school data for the 2022-23 school year tell a similar story. When broken down by school, only two schools exceeded the districtwide scores in English. The district-wide math pass rate, however, was largely brought down by the two schools serving students in the middle sixth and seventh grades.

*The numbers in parentheses in the table below are the statewide pass rates.* These pass rates were not reported for every group every year, but the comparisons that are available demonstrate a wide gap for many groups in the district. Coatesville outperformed the state among ELL students who took the English Keystone in 2022, but by and large the district significantly underperformed compared to state averages.

**2022-23 Grades 3-8 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) English-Literature Pass Rates by Groups**

	All Students	Asian	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Students With Disabilities
English	30.5% (53.7%)	77.3% (75.3%)	13.8% (28.8%)	23.9% (33.2%)	31.5% (51.0%)	45.8% (62.1%)	21.2% (37.8%)	6.4% (16.9%)	9.8% (19.5%)
Math	17.3% (39.4%)	63.6% (67.0%)	8.4% (13.0%)	11.5% (14.1%)	15.10% (35.15%)	27.0% (48.4%)	10.7% (23.3%)	5.1% (13.0%)	7.1% (14.1%)

Source: PA Department of Education (State Averages are in Parentheses)

**2022-23 Grades 3-8 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) English Pass Rates by School and Groups**

	All Students	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Students With Disabilities
Caln Elementary School	29.7%	17.9%	21.3%	52.9%	39.4%	22.0%	14.3%	13.8%
East Fallowfield Elementary School	25.8%	11.3%	19.4%	N/A	46.9%	17.5%	N/A	12.0%
Kings Highway Elementary School	46.1%	32.5%	41.4%	39.1%	53.3%	34.1%	N/A	18.2%
North Brandywine Middle School	30.4%	14.4%	25.9%	35.0%	43.8%	19.4%	10.0%	12.8%
Rainbow Elementary School	32.0%	13.6%	26.6%	35.7%	46.0%	25.1%	0.0%	7.2%
Reeceville Elementary School	25.8%	9.5%	26.1%	N/A	52.6%	20.4%	8.3%	4.4%
Scott 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Center	30.0%	17.1%	16.4%	27.0%	47.0%	20.1%	5.6%	9.2%
Coatesville Area Intermediate High School	27.7%	6.2%	22.5%	9.5%	44.7%	16.3%	0.0%	5.4%

Source: PA Department of Education

**2022-23 Grades 3-8 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Math Pass Rates by School and Groups**

	All Students	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Students With Disabilities
Caln Elementary School	26.1%	20.0%	25.0%	26.7%	31.9%	21.4%	20.0%	9.5%
East Fallowfield Elementary School	18.8%	7.8%	6.5%	N/A	40.8%	9.5%	N/A	9.8%
Kings Highway Elementary School	37.6%	23.1%	48.3%	26.1%	40.6%	28.1%	N/A	16.7%
North Brandywine Middle School	13.9%	4.5%	6.0%	10.5%	25.4%	4.7%	0.0%	3.2%
Rainbow Elementary School	24.5%	12.2%	11.0%	21.4%	42.5%	14.9%	0.0%	13.3%
Reeceville Elementary School	19.2%	12.7%	15.2%	N/A	36.8%	12.3%	16.7%	10.9%
Scott 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Center	8.8%	4.7%	2.7%	8.1%	14.9%	4.1%	0.0%	3.1%
Coatesville Area Intermediate High School	5.9%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%	9.3%	2.1%	0.0%	1.1%

Source: PA Department of Education

**2022-23 Grades 4 and 8 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Science Pass Rates by School and Groups**

	All Students	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Students With Disabilities
Caln Elementary School	49.2%	26.3%	57.9%	N/A	57.9%	40.0%	N/A	24.0%
East Fallowfield Elementary School	43.9%	38.7%	N/A	N/A	53.3%	42.5%	N/A	33.3%
Kings Highway Elementary School	74.6%	69.2%	N/A	N/A	78.1%	69.0%	N/A	28.6%
Rainbow Elementary School	60.6%	45.2%	52.0%	N/A	83.3%	51.5%	N/A	32.4%
Reeceville Elementary School	45.2%	25.0%	30.8%	N/A	84.6%	33.3%	N/A	15.4%
Coatesville Area Intermediate High School	32.6%	12.5%	25.0%	14.3%	50.4%	20.9%	4.8	6.5%

Source: PA Department of Education

**Keystone English Assessment Pass Rates by Groups Compared to State Rates: Five Year Trends**

English	All Students	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Students With Disabilities
2018-19	51.20% (71.5%)	33.1% (N/A)	45.7% (N/A)	N/A	63.9% (N/A)	41.4% (N/A)	N/A	18.6% (N/A)
2019-20	51.20% (N/A)	33% (N/A)	45.7% (N/A)	N/A	63.9% (N/A)	41.4% (N/A)	N/A	18.6% (N/A)
2020-21	21.40% (49.6%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021-22	50.00% (60.49%)	33.7% (N/A)	36.7% (N/A)	N/A	64.10% (N/A)	34.7% (48.5%)	N/A	11.7% (22.6%)
2022-23	44.00% (65.3%)	30.1% (42.4%)	38.2% (46.6%)	52.60% (63.0%)	56.20% (72.0%)	30.1% (50.4%)	52.60% (13.8%)	10.3% (23.7%)

Source: PA Future Ready Index and PA Department of Education (State Averages are in Parentheses)

**Keystone Algebra I Assessment Pass Rates by Groups Compared to State Rates: Five Year Trends**

Math	All Students	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	White	Economic Disadvantage	Students with Disabilities
2018-19	41.7% (63.3%)	22.2% (N/A)	37.1% (N/A)	56.2% (N/A)	27.7% (N/A)	9.7% (N/A)
2019-20	41.7% (N/A)	22.2% (N/A)	37.1% (N/A)	56.2% (N/A)	27.7% (N/A)	9.7% (N/A)
2020-21	33.9% (62.4%)	8.9% (N/A)	23.0% (N/A)	52.6% (N/A)	20.8% (N/A)	4.6% (N/A)
2021-22	55.5% (63.9%)	30.4% (N/A)	35.9% (N/A)	72.3% (N/A)	36.4% (38.9%)	14.3% (12.1%)
2022-23	15.5% (34.2%)	5.9% (12.7%)	10.0% (17.5%)	27.3% (41.5%)	5.8% (21.3%)	1.8% (8.1%)

Source: PA Future Ready and PA Department of Education (State Averages are in Parentheses)

**Keystone Biology Assessment Pass Rates by Groups Over Compared to State Rates Five Year Trends**

English	All Students	Black	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White	Economic Disadvantage	English Learners	Students With Disabilities
2018-19	35.1% (63.2%)	16.9% (N/A)	27.1% (N/A)	N/A	48.6% (N/A)	22.1% (N/A)	N/A	10.6% (N/A)
2019-20	35.1% (N/A)	16.9% (N/A)	27.1% (N/A)	N/A	48.6% (N/A)	22.1% (N/A)	N/A	10.6% (N/A)
2020-21	34.9% (67.6%)	13.1% (N/A)	26.4% (N/A)	N/A	50.5% (N/A)	23.9% (N/A)	N/A	4.7% (N/A)
2021-22	8.8% (41.9%)	3.8% (N/A)	4.5% (N/A)	N/A	18.5% (N/A)	5.4% (26.7%)	N/A	5.9% (14.5%)
2022-23	25.3% (50.7%)	12.3% (21.6%)	18.9% (28.1%)	25.0% (44.7%)	37.1% (58.9%)	12.5% (33.6%)	0% (7.2%)	5.4% (16.5%)

Source: PA Future Ready and PA Department of Education (State Averages are in Parentheses)

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

As we examined current and past discipline data from the district’s Safe Schools Reports we observed extremely high numbers of student disciplinary sanctions in the past two years to be *exclusionary*, those that constitute out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. These practices appear to have most adversely impacted Black/African American students. *These exclusionary sanctions are clearly impacting many students’ opportunities to learn, contribute to excessive absences and ultimately to their lower academic performance.*

In 2022-23 961 Coatesville Area School District students were identified as discipline offenders: 17.6% of the total student population. *Disproportionally the largest majority of sanctions/consequences for individual*

*incidents was overwhelmingly out-of-school suspensions.* In this year, Black-African American students were significantly overrepresented in terms of numbers of disciplinary offenders as well as in receiving many more exclusionary sanctions: out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. Black/African American students accounted for 13/21 or 62% of all expulsions and 1041/2102 or 50% of all out-of-school suspensions while constituting 29% of the total student population.

Hispanic/Latino students constituted the next largest group of students whose discipline offenses resulted in exclusionary sanctions. Twenty-four percent of all offenders were identified as Hispanic/Latino and accounted for 3/21 expulsions and 507/2102 out-of-school suspensions. White students were underrepresented as a group in exclusionary discipline sanctions. They represented 40% of the total district student population and 383 or 18% of out-of-school suspensions and 3/21 expulsions. Overall non-White students accounted for 78% of all offenders, 82% of out-of-school suspensions, and 86% of expulsions while representing 60% of the student population.

Student Code of Conduct infractions accounted for 71.5% of all infractions in 2022-23 with significantly high numbers of out-of-school suspensions as the sanction/consequence. As there was no data available to us that specified what behaviors constituted Code of Conduct infractions, it was difficult to assess the degree to which even “minor” infractions resulted in out-of-school suspensions. We note that the district is in the process of assuring more accurate reporting of specific “code of conduct” infractions this year.

As we examined discipline data from the district’s Safe Schools Reports over the past four years (see Appendices G and H) we observed the following:

- In 2021-22, after full-time return from the Covid pandemic, the number of reported incidences returned to pre-COVID levels incidences (2000+), but the number of offenders increased to 1009 that year; 18.9% of the total student population for the district. That number was down in 2022-23 to 961 offenders or 17.8% of the total student population.
- Code of Conduct infractions constituted the majority of infractions: 69% and 72% in each of the past two years. It would help to have a summary breakdown of these offenses, the demographics of the offenders or the subsequent sanctions- information that was not available. It was shared with us that in past years that behavioral data had been incorrectly coded across various buildings and that these issues are being addressed this year.
- In the past four years there was an increase in the relative number of females involved in disciplinary incidents, an increasing proportion of female out-of-school suspensions, and last year females represented 67% of all expulsions.
- Black/African American students have over the past four years represented the largest numbers and relative proportion of students receiving out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.
- Over four years there has also been a consistent increase of numbers and relative proportion of Hispanic/Latino students receiving out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.
- Over four years the numbers of reported incidents in the elementary schools has been consistently declining.



**2022-23 Expulsions by Racial/Ethnicity Group**

	Percentage of Expulsions	Percentage of District Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0%	0.20%
Asian	0%	0.90%
Black	61.9%	28.70%
Hispanic/Latino	14.3%	23.80%
Multiracial	9.5%	6.80%
White	14.3%	39.60%

Source: Coatesville Area School District Safe Schools Report and PA Future Ready Index

**2022-23 Expulsions by Gender**

	Percentage of Incidents	Percentage of District Enrollment
Female	67.7%	48.70%
Male	33.3%	51.30%

Source: Coatesville Area School District Safe Schools Report and PA Future Ready Index

**2022-23 Out-of-School Suspensions by Racial Group**

	Percentage of Suspensions	Percentage of District Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.14%	0.20%
Asian	0.14%	0.90%
Black	49.52%	• 28.70%
Hispanic/Latino	24.12%	23.80%
Multiracial	7.80%	6.80%
White	18.27%	39.60%

Source: Coatesville Area School District Safe Schools Report and PA Future Ready Index

**2022-23 Out-of-School Suspensions by Gender**

	Percentage of Incidents	Percentage of District Enrollment
Female	37.39%	48.70%
Male	62.61%	51.30%

Source: Coatesville Area School District Safe Schools Report and PA Future Ready Index

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

In 2022-23 a total of 1582 students (29% of the total student population) were identified for and receiving special education support services from the district. Five year trends indicate each year steadily increasing numbers of students with disabilities being served by the district from 1457 in 2018-19 to 1582 in 2022-23.

In 2022-23 Black-African American students were most disproportionately overrepresented in special education among racial/ethnic groups, however, four year trends indicate fewer numbers of Black/African American students in special education and decreasing disproportionality evident. The trends also suggest increasing numbers of Hispanic/Latino students being identified and receiving services.

In 2023-24 250 CASD students with disabilities are currently being served in out-of-district placement sites-down from 290 last school year. Males represent 68% of those students in outside placements, and 60% of all students in out-of-school placements were in grades 9-12. Forty-five percent of all current out-of-school placements are disproportionately Black-African American students.

As of December 2023, 683 CASD students with disabilities were being served in charter schools. The Lincoln Center is serving 30 students, and five spaces have been purchased from CCIU for a 45 day alternative program for disruptive youth.

In many spaces we heard of the need to revive alternative education options beyond the CASD Cyber Academy for students at the secondary level, and the need to teach and reinforce resilience mindsets and skills in students experiencing trauma in their daily lives.

Over the past five years the primary identified disabilities of students being served were:

	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
Total Students Served	1582	1515	1492	1453	1457
Specific Learning Disability	38%	36%	37%	41%	42%
Other Health Impairment	21%	21%	20%	18%	18%
Autistic/Autism	12%	12%	11%	10%	10%
Emotional Disturbance	11%	11%	12%	13%	11%
Speech or Language Impairment	11%	12%	11%	11%	12%
Intellectual Disabilities	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%

As we look at a breakdown of identified disabilities by racial/ethnic group in 2022-23 we noted disparate numbers with proportionally more:

- White students more likely to be identified with Autism or Speech/Language Impairment
- Black/African American students more likely to be identified with Emotional Disturbance or Intellectual Disabilities

**2022-23 Special Education Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Group**

	Percentage of Students with Disabilities	Percentage of District Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.13% (2 students)	0.20%
Asian	0.38% (6 students)	0.90%
Black/African American	37.67% (596 students)	28.70%
Hispanic/Latino	19.22% (304 students)	23.80%
Multiracial	7.46% (118 students)	6.80%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.13% (2 students)	0.10%
White	35.02% (554 students)	39.60%

Source: Coatesville Area School District

**Special Education Enrollment by Group: Four Year Trends**

School Year	Overall Special Education Enrollment	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Black	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial	White	Economically Disadvantaged
2019-20	26.42% (1453)	0.21% (3)	0.62% (9)	44.12% (641)	0.07% (1)	15.69% (228)	ND	39.30% (571)	64.28% (934)
2020-21	27.97% (1492)	0.27% (4)	0.60% (9)	44.64% (666)	0.07% (1)	15.75% (235)	ND	38.67% (577)	63.54% (948)
2021-22	27.77% (1515)	0.40% (6)	0.46% (7)	42.77% (648)	0.13% (2)	16.17% (245)	ND	40.07% (607)	62.71% (950)
2022-23	29.28% (1582)	0.13% (2)	0.38% (6)	37.67% (596)	0.13% (2)	19.22% (304)	7.46% (118)	35.02% (554)	68.33% (1081)

Source: Coatesville Area School District

**GIFTED PROGRAM ENROLLMENT**

Current 2023-24 gifted student enrollment in the district is overall low- 148 students or just 2.8% of the total student body. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights estimates that six percent of public school students throughout the country are enrolled in gifted and talented programs. Students of color represents 26% of students identified as gifted. White and Asian students are proportionally highly overrepresented while Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students are especially underrepresented. Male and female students are equally represented: 50% Female and 50% Male.

A universal screener instrument was administered to all second graders for the first time this past December, and as a result, two permissions were sent out for gifted evaluation, and one student qualified for services. Next year there are plans to again administer the gifted screening instrument to all second graders and also to all fifth graders in hopes of identifying additional students who might qualify for a more extensive gifted evaluation and possible identification and services.

The elementary gifted supports include push in and pull-out enrichment support in ELA and math, and opportunities for students to take the next grade level up for ELA and math. The pull-out support consists of project-based learning and enrichment opportunities.

The middle level (grades 6-9) provides the same enrichment options as the elementary and offers an accelerated math class in 6th grade. At the 8-9 building, the gifted support teacher also offers a Gifted Seminar class in addition to enrichment. Students self-select research projects, academic or creative competitions, and independent study.

Tenth grade students participate in pull out enrichment and individualized work geared toward transition planning and individualized goals for AP/honors course planning in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> if not already enrolled. In the 11th and 12th grades the gifted teacher pushes in to AP courses and pulls individual students or groups for enrichment of their individual goals.

**2023-24 Gifted Program Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Group**

	Percentage of Gifted Enrollment	Percentage of District Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.0% (0 students)	0.13%
Asian	4.05% (6 students)	0.85%
Black	4.73% (7 students)	28.53%
Hispanic/Latino	8.78% (13 students)	24.64%
Multiracial	8.11% (12 students)	7.38%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.0% (0 students)	0.07%
White	74.32% (110 students)	38.37%

Source: Coatesville Area School District

**HONORS COURSE ENROLLMENT**

In the current 2023-24 school year 1323 or 49.5% of all secondary students were enrolled in one or more honors-level courses in grades 7-12. Male and female students are proportionally represented and White students are proportionally most highly represented. It is encouraging to note the relatively large numbers of students who are challenging themselves in taking more rigorous courses, and further that nearly 40% of all students taking honors courses this year are students coming from economic disadvantage—a group that has chronically underachieved.

It would be advantageous in future analysis to explore the relationships between successful completion of honors courses, especially in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, in relation to high school grades/GPA and performance on state Keystone assessments and the PSAT/SAT.

**2023-24 Honors Course Enrollment in Grades 7-12 By Groups**

	Enrollment in One or More Honors Courses	Percentage of Secondary School Enrollment
Female	51.55% (682 students)	48.75%
Male	48.45% (641 students)	51.25%
Economic Disadvantage	39.68% (525 students)	47.87%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.02% (1 student)	0.09%
Asian	1.71% (20 students)	0.99%
Black/African American	19.80% (262 students)	28.19%
Hispanic/Latino	14.13% (187 students)	24.03%
Multiracial	8.92% (118 students)	5.57%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00% (0 students)	0.09%
White	55.55% (735 students)	41.05%

Source: Coatesville Area School District

**ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENROLLMENT AND PERFORMANCE ON ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS**

There is significant work to be done in college academic preparation for students from all backgrounds. Advanced Placement course enrollment is defined as taking one or more classes while test taking is defined as taking one or more Advanced Placement tests.

In 2022-23 and in 2023-24 White, and female students were proportionally overrepresented in Advanced Placement classes. Data indicated that of all students taking AP exams last year the predominance of students who passed were White (79%). No Black/African American students passed the tests (score of 3 or above), and White students are more likely to pass their AP exams than students of other racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Given the large numbers of students taking honors level courses it was surprising to see the relatively smaller numbers of students opting for Advanced Placement courses. In 2022-23 only 263 students and in 2023-24 258 students enrolled in one or more AP courses. It was encouraging to note that the numbers of Black/African American students taking AP course increased to 50 from 30 last year. District administrators suggested that

large numbers of students at the high school choose honors versus AP courses primarily to avoid taking the AP exams.

**2022-23 Advanced Placement Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Group**

	Enrollment in One or More AP Courses	Percentage of High School Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.38% (1 student)	0.10%
Asian	2.28% (6 students)	1.10%
Black/African American	11.41% (30 students)	27.90%
Hispanic/Latino	15.21% (40 students)	24.90%
Multiracial	2.28% (6 students)	4.50%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.38% (1 student)	0.10%
White	68.06% (179 students)	41.40%

Source: CASD

**2022-23 Advanced Placement Enrollment by Non-Racial Groups**

	Enrollment in One or More AP Courses	Percentage of High School Enrollment
English Language Learner	0.76% (2 students)	6.0%
Special Education	3.42% (9 students)	22.6%
Female	58.56% (154 students)	49.80%
Male	41.44% (109 students)	50.20%

Source: CASD and PA Future Ready

**2023-24 Advanced Placement Course Enrollment**

	Enrollment in One or More AP Courses	Percentage of Senior High School Enrollment
Female	67.44% (174 students)	49.80%
Male	32.56% (84 students)	50.20%
Economically Disadvantaged	39.81% (71 students)	51.9%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.00% (0 students)	0.10%
Asian	1.71% (3 students)	1.1%
Black/African American	19.43% (50 students)	27.90%
Hispanic/Latino	14.90% (36 students)	24.90%
Multiracial	7.02% (16 students)	4.50%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00% (0 students)	0.10%
White	56.93% (153 students)	41.40%

Source: Coatesville Area School District and PA Future Ready

**2022-23 Advanced Placement Passing Score (3+) by Racial/Ethnic Group**

	Percentage of AP Passing Score Recipients	Percentage of High School Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.00% (0 students)	0.10%
Asian	6.45% (6 students)	1.10%
Black/African American	0.00% (0 students)	27.90%
Hispanic/Latino	5.38% (5 students)	24.90%
Multiracial	5.38% (5 students)	4.50%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N/A	0.10%
White	80.65% (75 students)	41.40%

Source: CASD

**SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT AND PSAT) PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE**

The district provides opportunities for all students, at no cost to families, to take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) in grades 8-11 and the SAT in grade 11. We note that lower than might be hoped for numbers of students actually participate. We wondered why all students in grade 10 were not expected to take the PSAT as a screener for assessing Advanced Placement Potential.

Participation by racial/ethnic groups indicated relatively little to no differences relative to their proportion of the student population at the high school. Lowest average scores for both PSAT and SAT were attained by the Black/African American student group. The Multiracial group attained the highest average PSAT score, and the White student group attained the highest average for the SAT.

According to the 2023-24 CASH Course Selection Guide the district provides students with free, personalized SAT practice and remediation through a partnership between the College Board and the Khan Academy. Official SAT Practice helps students focus on exactly what they need to work on most to improve their scores. It is unclear as to how many and which students are taking advantage of this service.

**2022-23 PSAT/Scholastic Aptitude Test Participation and Mean Scores by Racial/Ethnic Group**

	Percentage of PSAT Takers (648 test takers)	Percentage of SAT Takers (288 test takers)	Percentage of Senior High School Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.77% (5 students)	0.69% (2 students)	0.1%
Asian	0.46% (3 students)	0.35% (1 student)	1.1%
Black/African American	25.15% (163 students)	23.61% (68 students)	27.9%
Hispanic/Latino	21.60% (140 students)	18.75% (54 students)	24.9%
Multiracial	2.77% (18 students)	2.13% (9 students)	4.5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.0% (0 students)	0% (0 students)	0.1%
White	40.9% (265 students)	46.52% (134 students)	41.4%

Source: Coatesville Area School District

**2022-23 PSAT and SAT Mean Scores by Racial Group**

Race	Districtwide Mean PSAT Score	Districtwide Mean SAT Score
American Indian/Alaskan Native	N/A	N/A
Asian	N/A	N/A
Black	792	837
Hispanic/Latino	806	855
Multiracial	934	N/A
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N/A	N/A
White	906	916

Source: CASD

**GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES**

In 2021-22 the district-wide four-year graduation rate of 86.5% is below the statewide graduation rate of 87.03% as is the five-year graduation rate of 88.8% versus the Commonwealth's rate of 89.74%. Four year graduation rates are particularly low for Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, students coming from economic

disadvantage and students with disabilities, although Coatesville did exceed statewide rates for Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students graduating in five years.

Hispanic/Latino students represented the largest proportion, 34/76 or 45%, of all students relative to race/ethnicity who dropped out in 2021-22. Students identified as coming from economic disadvantage constituted 53/76 or 70% of all students who dropped out. Students identified with disabilities constituted 30/76 or 40% of all students who dropped out.

**2021-22\* Graduation Rates by Available Groups**

	CASD Four-Year Graduation Rate	PA Four-Year Graduation Rate	CASD Five-Year Graduation Rate	PA Five-Year Graduation Rate
Black/African American	80.90%	76.99%	86.40%	81.53%
Hispanic/Latino	80.60%	75.97%	85.10%	79.71%
White	92.10%	91.12%	92.30%	93.08%
Economically Disadvantaged	79.00%	80.12%	83.10%	84.67%
Special Education	71.90%	73.59%	78.60%	79.93%
All Students	86.50%	87.03%	88.80%	89.74%

Source: PA Future Ready and PA Department of Education

\* Data provided by the district for 2022-23 could not be used to calculate graduation rates without appropriate subgroup enrollment data of grade level and expected graduation date.

**2021-22 Dropout Rates by Group**

	Percentage of Students Dropping Out	Percentage of District Enrollment
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.0%	0.20%
Asian	0.0%	0.90%
Black/African American	26.3% (20 students)	28.70%
Hispanic/Latino	44.7% (34 students)	23.80%
Multiracial	2.6% (2 students)	6.80%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.10%
White	26.3% (20 students)	39.60%
Economically Disadvantaged	69.7% (53 students)	60.76%
ELL	14.5% (11 students)	6.30%
Special Education	39.5% (30 students)	29.28%
All Students*	3.0% (76 students)	100%

Source: CASD

\* This number is calculated by dividing the number of students dropping out by the number of all students in grades 7-12.

**Student Retention: Five Year Trends**

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of Students Retained	52	42	54	146	120

Source: CASD

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AND ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL**

As previously mentioned, there appears to have been minimal formal district wide assessments of students feelings about their experiences in their schools, and one is highly recommended at this time (see appendix F). However, every two years the district has participated in a state-wide assessment, the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12, but there is no evidence that results have been used to focus improvement efforts.

PAYS results provide school and district administrators with critical information concerning the changes in patterns of the use and abuse of these harmful substances and behaviors. Second, the survey assesses risk factors that are related to these behaviors and the protective factors that help guard against them.

One small section of the survey focuses on students' perceptions of School Climate and Safety. District results from 2017, 2019, 2021 and 2023 results strongly suggest the need to delve in deeper to explore issues of student motivation, connection and engagement to learning in the CASD secondary schools, and ultimately the connections of this data to observed lower than expected levels of achievement and attendance, and high levels of discipline infractions. Current and past results suggest large numbers of students who participated in the survey are finding little value in their school experiences as they move through the grades six through twelve.

A few observations of student responses related to student motivation and engagement:

- How often do you feel the schoolwork you are assigned is meaningful and important?

In 2023 there is a significant decrease the percentage of students responding Almost Always or Often from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades

Grade 6	46%
Grade 8	32%
Grade 10	22%
Grade 12	19%

Most troubling is that 34% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 44% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders responded Seldom or Never to this item. Similar trends were noted in 2021 and 2019 results.

- Do you enjoy being in school?

In 2023 there is a significant decrease the percentage of students responding Almost Always or Often from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades

Grade 6	44%
Grade 8	30%
Grade 10	31%
Grade 12	28%

Most troubling is that 30% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 28% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 29% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders responded Seldom or Never to this item. Similar trends were noted in 2021 and 2019 results.

- How important do you think the things you are learning in school are going to be for your later life?

In 2023 there is a significant decrease the percentage of students responding Almost Always or Often from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades

Grade 6	56%
Grade 8	47%
Grade 10	32%
Grade 12	26%

Most troubling is that 37% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 41% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders responded Seldom or Never to this item. Similar trends were noted in 2021 and 2019 results.

## **CURRENT STATUS OF ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS AND SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAMS**

It was reported to our team by curriculum specialists, principals and teachers that there has been relatively long-term neglect on the part of the district in developing an effective, integrated and comprehensive approach to teaching reading and language arts. A new administrator on assignment was retained in 2019 to begin a process for curriculum development and instructional renewal. The goal was development of structured literacy approach that would address gaps in the past practices, create an early warning and tiered interventions of support system, and address remedial reading support structures and approaches at the secondary level. Currently four reading specialists provide support at the high school to struggling readers. There is an expressed need and interest to better align the taught curriculum to state ELA standards.

Last year , the district piloted and adopted a new K-5 English/Language Arts program based on a Science of Reading foundation, that by all accounts has overall been well-received by elementary teachers and students. From teachers' reports the Open Court program in grades K-5 and Wit and Wisdom program in grades 6 and 7 are being found to be offering more engaged learning from their students.

Reading benchmark testing results last year and this past fall strongly suggests positive movement in the numbers of students performing at or above expected standards, especially those at the Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade levels- a most promising sign that the district's new approach to early reading is making a difference for beginning readers. In Fall 2023 59% of all Kindergarten students scored at or above proficient up from 41% at the beginning of the year. Forty-nine percent of 1<sup>st</sup> grade students scored at or proficient this Fall compared to 42% at the beginning of the year.

A significant gap exists in writing instruction K-12. It was reported that structured writing instruction has not been a focus in students' literacy development, and little instruction has existed relative to teaching grammar or the mechanics of language and how these relate to writing competency. Little practice appears to have been provided in developing writing skills, and there has been no emphasis on writing across the curriculum in the secondary schools.

It was reported that there is essentially no social studies curriculum at the elementary level, where teachers are left to their own discretion as to what is taught. We heard that maybe 10-15 minutes at the end of the school day were utilized, focused if at all on Pennsylvania history. Current texts that are available were reported as grossly outdated and few digital resources are provided.

Key concerns and on-going challenges include:

- Elementary principals desire to provide more direct support to classroom teachers instructional development and monitoring implementation of the new curriculum in English/Language Arts, but are challenged timewise with behavioral management challenges and other responsibilities.
- There is a critical need to infuse writing into literacy initiatives.
- There is an immediate need to review all English offerings and review content relevancy and connections to state ELA standards.
- There is a significant gap with no social studies curriculum offered at the elementary level- partly due to the elementary school schedules that offer no dedicated time to the subject. This creates significant background knowledge gaps, and likely interest gaps, as student transition to the secondary schools.

- It was noted that at CASH African American History is only offered as an Honors level course and not accessible to students in the academic track. Black/African American parents also noted this and reflected on possibilities for making it a regular elective option for all students.

## **CURRENT STATUS OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE PROGRAMS**

It was reported that the Everyday Math curriculum was not proving successful in developing number sense and fact fluency in the elementary grades. As a solution, the district adopted the standards-based SpringMath resource, which is now in place as the core Tier 1 intervention in grades K-7. The on-line platform, enVision Mathematics, complements the SpringMath program and is being piloted this year. Responsibility for delivery falls on classroom teachers with the only Math Specialist in the district serving grades 6 and 7. There is a clear need for increasing math specialist support across all grades, especially in grades K-5.

At the secondary level, Algebra 1 is offered in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, but only 17 students are enrolled in the course this academic year. It was reported that only about 20% of students take Algebra 1 in 8<sup>th</sup> grade with the majority taking the course in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. This would mean that only a relatively small number of students who progress through the CASD math program would be on track to possibly take Calculus by their senior year. It was shared that because so many students needed remediation or extended learning support for mastering Algebra 1 a two-year course was developed. Students who take this option will only be able to complete math coursework to the Algebra 2 level before graduation. Sections for remediation were planned at CASH this year, but were unable to be staffed.

Relative to science education in the elementary grades, it was noted that all five elementary schools in the Coatesville Area School District were recognized as a 2022-23 Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Distinguished School for the way they provide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education. The district is currently going through a high quality science materials adoption process and focusing on implementation of new Pennsylvania's Science, Technology & Engineering, Environmental Literacy & Sustainability (STEELS) Standards. Challenges expressed by teachers at the elementary level focused on creating adequate instructional time in the current schedule to deliver science instruction with fidelity.

It was reported that as large numbers of students struggle with math there are direct impacts on their science learning as they move into the secondary schools. As a strategy to increase comprehension, achievement, and align to the STEELS standards, the district is exploring a more integrated approach to STEM learning at the middle school level. It was suggested that one factor that is leading to low Keystone Biology scores at the high school level is that many students are struggling with completing the open-ended questions on the exam. There were no instructional strategies put forward as a solution to this issue.

Remediation in Biology is now offered at the high school in the 10th grade given overall low student performance on the Keystone Biology exams. How the district will address their remediation policies as they fully implement their plan in response to Act 158 Pathways to Graduation was not shared.

Key concerns and on-going challenges include:

- There is a need for additional math specialist coaching support, especially at the elementary schools.
- There is a challenge finding adequate time in the schedule for implementation of new STEELS standards and supporting curriculum.

- There is a need and desire to strengthen college and career pathways and dual enrollment opportunities in math and science.
- There are fewer students of color in upper level math and science courses and there is no current plan to address this disparity.

## **PROMISING FOUNDATIONAL DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS**

### **The 2023-26 District Comprehensive Plan: A Beginning District Vision and Commitment to Excellence Through Equity**

The district's current three year strategic comprehensive plan provides the beginnings of a framework for district improvement relative to principles of equity and inclusion. The plan, which runs from 2023-2026, includes many critical action planning directions and strategies for nurturing the success of all CASD students as well as addressing the unique needs of different groups of students, including commitment of resources to the current study. Many strengths and challenges identified in the comprehensive plan along with recommended action steps in many cases mirror our research team's observations and suggestions for improvement. Effective implementation of the plan should generate increasingly positive and more equitable student outcomes.

### **New Central Office Leadership**

Dr. Van Vooren was hired in January 2023 and has begun refining the organizational structure and assessing effectiveness of central office and overall district operations. Dr. Anthony Rybarczyk just began serving as the new Assistant Superintendent in December 2023 to lead and integrate functions of Education Services and Pupil Services. New Division Directors have been recently hired to develop and lead Pupil Services, Technology, and Operations and Facilities. Both the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent have communicated their strong commitment to school and district improvement grounded in principles of educational equity.

### **Hope for the Future and Current Board Expressed Commitment to Improved Excellence Through Equity**

Despite the multitude of challenges, *all* district and community stakeholders we spoke with maintain an optimistic mindset that student achievement and district organizational functioning can and will improve with sustained and committed new leadership, access to stable fiscal resources, and improved school-family-community trust and communications. The current school board directors we spoke with all indicated a high degree of commitment to addressing long-standing and deeply embedded systemic inequities and challenges.

### **Board Approval of District Master Facilities Plan**

In May 2023, the School Board approved a critical new facilities improvement plan that addresses by design many of the district's multiple equity-related challenges, including significant observed health, safety and technology access disparities among the elementary schools, Scott and North Brandywine. The plan further reconstitutes in two years two grade six through eight middle schools which will ideally address the observed shortcomings and challenges of the current single grade configurations at Scott and North Brandywine and the eighth grade at the Intermediate High School.

## **District History and Tradition**

CASD is steeped in a positive history and traditions. In many cases teachers, administrators and community members with whom we spoke grew up in the Coatesville area and reflect fondly and positively of their growing-up and school experiences. Several current stakeholders described a sense of “Coatesville Pride” and the benefits of the district’s historical racial diversity in their future life success and commitment to the district and the children it serves. Multiple stakeholders shared feelings of pride in the extensive opportunities and values afforded to students in athletics and extracurricular activities.

## **Diversity**

At present diversity in the district has been defined by staff and administrators primarily in terms of race/ethnicity and economics/poverty. District and school staff we spoke with rarely focused on race as a defining variable in students’ success. Little was mentioned about the district’s gender-diverse LGBTQ population or its religious diversity.

In the end and as might be expected, the diversity of CASD students is a direct reflection of the county’s and Coatesville community’s evolving new student populations, especially in terms of increased numbers of non-English speaking Hispanic/Latino students.

## **Teachers and Staff Relationships with Students**

There was evidence from our focus groups and interviews that a significant number of CASD teachers and staff strive to build strong relationships with their students and care deeply about their success, especially in the elementary grades. Many teachers, school administrators and support personnel are actively working to create welcoming, engaging, and safe places for their students.

The students we spoke to stated that when in need of advice or support they tend to gravitate to teachers, coaches, or club advisors whom they know well and want to get to know them as individuals. The athletic coaches appeared to overall be highly regarded by student athletes for building strong personal relationships with them.

## **Array of Curricular and Co-Curricular Offerings**

CASD offers an array of curriculum offerings, including Advanced Placement, Honors, and Academic level courses along with a comprehensive selection of traditional electives. At the high school CASD also offers a wide variety of clubs to meet different student's interests. The district participates athletically in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, and Coatesville teams have historically been well represented in county and state-level competitions.

Delaware County Community College and the Coatesville Area Senior High School Campus afford students the opportunity earn college credit towards a certificate, associate or bachelor’s degree through the dual enrollment program beginning in their sophomore year. These college courses in the Liberal Arts Pathway can be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements. Multiple career and technical education opportunities are provided to CASD students through participation in the Chester County Intermediate Unit Technical College High School programs

The district participates athletically in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, and Coatesville teams have historically been well represented in county and state-level competitions. All five elementary schools in the district were recognized as a 2022-23 Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Distinguished School for the way they provide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education. The grades 7-12 RaiderBots robotics team placed 3rd in the state of Pennsylvania in the 2020-2021 season.

### **The CASD Cyber Academy**

Post-pandemic the development of the CASD Cyber Academy has at all grade levels offered a promising and valuable learning alternative for a wide diversity of students groups from the elementary through high school levels. The school holds great promise for bringing back to the district students and families that are currently choosing cyber charter school options. Some unique options include:

- curriculum is offered through Accelerate Education and taught by Coatesville Area School District regular and special education teachers,
- access to teachers both via Zoom and in-person at the Drop-In Center,.
- the ability to be 100% asynchronous or to participate in live instruction with their teachers via Zoom.
- each family is assigned a teacher who will serve as mentor to their student, who will assist them in achieving academic success and meeting their future goals , and
- opportunities to participate in Coatesville school clubs, sports, performing arts and all available student services.

### **Special Education Support Services**

The district provides an increasingly full array of special education support services. We heard many positive perceptions from students and parents regarding the inclusive and supportive special needs classrooms and the educators teaching in those classrooms. In 2020-21 full-time Emotional and Autistic Support classes were reintroduced into the schools to receive more intensive support in-district.

Based on conversations with parents and parent advocates, areas for improvement appear to be in providing increased transparency, clarity and empathy in communications with parents/caregivers and with community-based parent advocates, and helping support parent/caregiver knowledge and self-advocacy and support for their children in both identification and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) processes.

### **New Elementary Literacy Programs**

In the past two years the district piloted and has adopted new literacy programs, Open Court Reading (K-5) and Wit and Wit and Wisdom (6-7), that align with assessment and instructional practices embedded in the research-supported Science of Reading. Elementary teachers reported, and there is emerging evidence from Spring and Fall 2023 Acadience and MAP benchmark testing, increasing numbers of students engaging positively with instruction and resources with increasing numbers of students demonstrating proficiency.

### **Recent Adoption of a New District-Wide Multi-Tier Disciplinary Support Structure and Progressive Discipline Matrix**

In Fall 2023 the school board approved adoption of a new approach to addressing discipline challenges that establishes a more proactive framework for supporting students' social-emotional and behavioral needs and

reducing exclusionary discipline sanctions through application of School-wide Behavioral Interventions and Supports at the elementary level and Restorative Practices at the secondary level.

It further supports building positive and supportive school climates, commits to application of Seven Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching, and clarifies central office and building administrator, faculty and staff, parent/guardian, and student rights and responsibilities.

The greatest challenge will be in assuring that all staff in the schools are provided in-depth training and on-going support in understanding the new structure, and effectively and proactively addressing the root causes of student misbehavior, and responding from a mindset of care and learning versus what appears to be a long-standing and historical punitive frame.

### **Recent Implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

MTSS uses student performance data to help match academic and social-emotional behavior assessment and instructional resources to each student's needs. In all CASD schools "data teams" are meeting monthly to review students' progress in learning, and individual students who need additional support for enrichment or remediation are identified by data and provided that support with the right focus and intensity. New software, EdInsight, is aiding these teams in providing timely feedback to teaching staff for adjusting instructional focus and support to individuals and groups of struggling students.

Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health. The large majority of teachers and support staff shared their embrace of the framework and there is some tangible evidence of impact in that reported incidents of student misbehavior are on the decline in the elementary schools over the past four years.

### **Additional Behavioral Intervention Specialists, Restorative Practices Coaches, Climate Coaches Mental Health Support Staff and Family Liaison for Non-English Speaking Families**

In the past two years the district has provided additional supports to building administrators, teachers and counselors with contracted behavioral intervention specialists, restorative practice coaches and mental health specialists to provide intervention supports to misbehaving students- many of whom are people of color. Climate coaches provide parallel support to students and staff at the secondary level. Non-English speaking (primarily Hispanic/Latino) families now have access to a full-time Spanish-fluent Family Liaison.

Our observations suggest the need to improve coordination among these contracted providers within and across schools. We further identify the need to increase opportunities for the teaching staff to meet and get to know these support staff, and better understand their roles. It will be important to ensure additional professional training and support that is linked with the implementation of the new Multi-Tiered Disciplinary Support Structure, and that is not being provided by the contracted agencies. At this time, the Mental Health providers contracted through CCIU, are expected to only provide services to students with disabilities, but mental health challenges are reported to also exist with other students as well.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR DISTRICT EXCELLENCE THROUGH EQUITY**

The Coatesville Area School District is in the very early stages of beginning to frame it's work as a system through equity-informed decision-making, policies and practices.

We unfortunately found minimal evidence of a history of district level commitment to and focus on addressing equity, as well as long-standing achievement disparities that are defined by race/ethnicity, special education identification, or poverty/economic disadvantage. The 2023-26 Comprehensive Plan offers a commendable beginning foundation for improvement.

In 2015 as a result of a racialized texting scandal the District entered into an agreement with the PA Human Relations Commission, the NAACP-PA and the Mid Atlantic Equity Center to "improving the relationship between the district and area residents". The agreement called for transparency in communications, maintaining anti-discrimination policies, and providing civil rights/cultural competency training for the board, administrators, teachers, staff and students. Specific recommendations at that time included such activities as:

- hiring an equity professional,
- administering a school climate survey,
- providing tip-line, helpline or box for anonymous submission of student concerns,
- offering extra-curricular activities that appeal to students of diverse backgrounds,
- offering department of justice SPIRIT program or anti-defamation league's No Place For Hate program, and
- holding student driven multicultural celebrations

We could find little actual or anecdotal evidence that these suggestions were implemented, and heard the legitimate frustration of local student and family advocates in the district's lack of response. Relative to staff professional development, we heard of minimal cultural competency training anecdotally through interviews and focus groups for what was only a small number of administrators and teachers eight or nine years ago that was not sustained. Professional development for teachers and administrators focused on educating students in poverty was reportedly provided, but it was unclear as to the depth and sustained support that was provided in that training.

As a resource for professional learning and recruitment of educators of color, the district has renewed its membership this year in the Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity through the University of Pennsylvania. The organization provides engaging and meaningful programming that focuses on inter-district collaboration and shared learning for continuous improvement in eliminating pervasive preparation, opportunity and achievement gaps.

The district is organizationally at a critical tipping point in time where knowledgeable, sustained, dedicated, committed and shared leadership at all levels (from the board room to the classroom) will be imperative for establishing a focus on seeking innovative and creative new solutions (both within and from other local school districts) for accelerating student learning and the social-emotional health and growth of all of their students.

It will be important to bring together stakeholders both within and outside the district to begin to immediately define critical Coatesville Area School District student outcomes-beyond the state standards, and "imagine" new possibilities that redefine what school learning experiences could and should look like, especially for students who have been perpetually struggling to find success in the current system. The concept of "innovation" that is

currently embedded in the district mission and comprehensive plan should be the driving thought for continuous and productive change. The large majority of stakeholders we spoke with want to be a part of these conversations and efforts!

It is the opportune time to begin to work purposefully and collectively to make the school district the “schools of choice” for all school district residents, as well as for prospective new teachers, support staff and administrators by implementing multifaceted action plans to fidelity that:

- focus on attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism,
- accelerate academic achievement and enhancing student motivation and engagement in learning,
- assure physically and emotionally safe learning environments, reduce student misbehavior and reduce the need for exclusionary discipline practices,
- keep a clear focus on and continuously monitor progress of different groups of students highlighted in this report which have continuously underachieved in the current system- especially Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students, students who are identified as coming from economic disadvantage, and/or in need of special education or English as a Second Language support services,
- addressing staffing challenges and increasing the racial/ethnic diversity of certificated teaching and support staff, and
- ultimately making the district a model for equity, inclusion and belonging, and the “schools of choice” for parents who are considering or who have opted for charter or private school alternatives.

Given our observations and time spent with multiple stakeholder groups, the study team recognizes the complexity of system change in the current and historical context of the district and the diverse communities it serves. We encourage district leadership to review the following actions that we view as critically important short and long-term actions for addressing their systemic equity-related challenges:

- developing a board-level district diversity-equity-inclusion-belonging commitment statement, policy, or resolution in concert with district leadership
  - clarifying shared definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging
  - providing a framework for accountability with publicly stated commitments
  - begin using an equity lens in all decision-making
  - developing a compelling and hopeful vision for the district’s future
- clarifying critical expected outcomes for all students (understandings, dispositions, values) that define a Portrait of the Coatesville graduate
- developing a robust and active district-level Diversity-Equity-Inclusion-Belonging Team to
  - build alliances/partnerships across diverse stakeholders
  - provide DEIB-focused school-based and public community forums/ listening sessions, town halls
  - coordinate collection and analysis of disaggregated achievement, discipline and perceptual data for driving change and documenting, measuring, and evaluating progress
  - organize the design, priorities for and implementation of an equity action/work plan integrated within the district’s comprehensive plan- get to root causes of student underachievement
  - cultivate and develop opportunities for student and teacher leadership and active community engagement in addressing equity-inclusion-belonging challenges
  - build and support personal and professional learning for problem-solving and leading change
  - research/share/disseminate learning resources, skills, and tools for operationalizing equity in classrooms and schools
  - champion educational equity and social justice for the district and community

- coordinate opportunities to highlight and celebrate individual and school level success
- prioritizing students' early literacy and language learning in K-3 and continue to build upon the early success of the new curriculum and instructional development initiatives
- increasing time/opportunities for productive play/recess in the elementary schools
- continuing to build upon early reported success of MTSS, PBIS and Restorative Practice programs and processes
- implementing with fidelity the newly board approved District-Wide Multi-Tiered Disciplinary Support Structures: Progressive Discipline Matrix for Elementary and Secondary Schools
- rehiring elementary librarians/media center directors and reopening all elementary school libraries
- building an innovative and highly engaging new model for middle school (6-8) education (see Appendix K)
- At the middle schools and CAIHS and CASH
  - exploring and adopting programming to offer multiple pathways for students' academic skill-building and engagement, teacher instructional development, and nurturing a college-going culture- we strongly suggest *AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)* as a model to consider and embrace
  - formally assessing annually students perceptions of their school experiences, their engagement in learning and feelings of belonging
  - identifying obstacles for students of color and/or low income students participation and enrollment in Dual Enrollment program at Delaware County Community College
  - encourage more parent's understanding of and students' engagement with CCIU Technical College Programs
- investing resources in expanding more diverse students' access to gifted education through refinement of culturally responsive assessment and identification processes
- focusing on strategies for enhancing student motivation and engagement: building and adopting new, innovative and fun "enrichment" activities and programs accessible to all students in the elementary and middle grades, e.g., construction projects, real-world problem-solving, puzzles, virtual field trips, peer mentoring/tutoring, volunteer opportunities
- becoming familiar with and embedding the mandated Pennsylvania Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Competencies in practice in all CASD schools
- providing on-going and school embedded staff and administrator professional learning and coaching support focused on building all staff's confidence and competence relative to:
  - cultural proficiency and culturally affirming/responsive teaching practices
  - understanding impact of implicit/unconscious bias
  - developing empathy and deep relationships with diverse students and families grounded in trust and respect
  - fostering students' growth mindsets
  - fostering students' resilience and self-efficacy
  - sustaining and embedding restorative practices-trauma informed care
  - understanding and supporting students coming from poverty
  - identifying a shared instructional framework- e.g., universal design for learning, expeditionary learning,
  - differentiating and scaffolding instruction
  - providing challenging, fun and intellectually enriching learning activities to all students
- improving district marketing and communications with parents and community
  - implementing recommendations of 2021-22 communications and marketing plan

- as resources come available consider hiring a full-time communications and community relations director
- assessing and assuring consistently physically and emotionally safe school climates and experiences
- increase opportunities for expanding community volunteers in the schools, especially at the elementary level and identify point person to coordinate communications and partnerships with community support people, organizations, and volunteers.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH AND SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS FOR 2024-25**

*All stakeholders we spoke with in both the district and community emphasized the importance of and need for building and establishing interpersonal and organization trust and respect at the foundation for future improvement.* There has been an unfortunate history of poor and inconsistent communications, an organizational culture of “intimidation” and subsequent fear on the part of many staff who have been hesitant to express their thoughts and ideas for fear of “retribution”.

Many stakeholders we spoke with suggested that this was the first time that their perceptions and ideas for improvement have been solicited, and it will be critical that district leaders regularly create opportunities to listen, hear and respect the voices of all district staff, as well as students and families most impacted by decisions- especially those who have been most historically marginalized by the school system.

### **School Board**

- Develop a public statement of district commitment-policy-resolution to Educational Equity-Inclusion-Belonging to frame accountability and drive action planning.
- Consider on-going board professional learning around equity topics and assuring use of an equity lens in all board policy decisions.
- Develop a common language and a common understanding of how the district will define what equity is and is not.

### **Superintendent and Cabinet**

- A critical priority is creating innovative district and school focused plans for increasing student attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism, as current monitoring efforts do not appear to be effectively addressing root causes for improving attendance patterns.
  - Continue efforts to make attendance reporting consistent to assure reliability of data.
  - Convene a cabinet-led team/task force with responsibility for studying and addressing attendance and chronic absenteeism that aligns with existing strategies to improve student engagement and academic outcomes and that represent all key offices/functions.
  - Utilize the *Does Our School District Have A Systemic Approach to Reducing Chronic Absence? A Tool for District Team Self-Assessment* to assess where they are in taking a more systemic approach to enhancing student attendance. (see Appendix D)
- A second critical priority is related to addressing disparate and exclusionary discipline policies and practices, especially in the secondary schools in concert with school administrators, staff and students.
  - Assure all administrators, teachers, support staff, and students have read and understand key provisions of the recently board-approved 2023-24 Progressive Discipline Matrix and have been provided on-going coaching support

- Establish targets/goals for reduction of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions in each school
- Per the recently board-approved 2023-24 Progressive Discipline Matrix:
  - Monitor on a monthly basis incidents and subsequent sanctions and seek evidence of use of prevention/alternative interventions- at CIHA and CASH- assure all school administrators and staff have received adequate professional development relative to implementation of progressive discipline and Restorative Practices
  - Bi-annually monitor and publish suspension, expulsion, and other disciplinary data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, sex, limited English proficiency and disability
  - Create clear guidelines for effective school discipline
  - Prepare recommendations for improving discipline and a positive school climate
- Consider development of a district wide team/task force to monitor, communicate and support efforts to implement to fidelity the regulations in the 2023-24 Progressive Discipline Matrix
- Continue to develop and support a transparent and robust student information management system that is able to integrate currently stand-alone data bases, and identify a single person/department to manage and report all student data. Strongly consider more continuous and in-depth measurement and reporting of disproportionality in achievement, attendance and discipline.
- Create more regular opportunities for all cabinet members to visit all of the schools, visit classrooms, meet with administrators teachers and student support personnel to build trust and credibility, to develop a greater sense of their priorities and needs, and to overcome long-standing feelings of lack of respect and fears of retribution for sharing thoughts and ideas for district improvement.
- More regularly and publicly recognize and celebrate individual and collaborative school-level improvement efforts within the district and to the broader CASD community.
- Develop an equity-focused theory of change and logic model and revisit the 2023-26 CASD Three-Year Comprehensive Plan and identify SMART goals, timelines and responsibilities.
- Formulate a district-level Diversity-Equity-Inclusion-Belonging and Accountability Team with shared responsibility for
  - regularly seeking and analyzing disaggregated data on student achievement, attendance, discipline, and program/course placements
  - annually surveying students, families, community leaders and school/district staff to gather information on their experiences and perceptions of the school system and school culture and climate,
  - organizing student, staff, parent/caregiver and community focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of specific issues affecting different groups of students and gather on-going suggestions for improvement,
  - regularly reviewing policies and practices to identify any that may unintentionally be creating barriers to educational equity, especially policies related to attendance, discipline, grading, tracking, retention and special education services, and
  - supporting development of district-wide Professional Learning Communities, each focused on key equity-related topics for study and professional learning.
- Per recommendations of the 2021 Communications Audit consider hiring, as resources come available, a district Director of Communications and Community Relations and support implementation of the 2021-22 Communications and Marketing Plans that details many critical actions that were suggested by the equity study participants.
- Provide more meaningful outreach, communications and support to diverse parents/caregivers- especially in the district's low-income African American and Hispanic/Latino communities. Consider developing a Community Outreach/ Liaison role/position charged with identifying resources, fostering

enhanced communications and trust-building between the schools and families in the African American communities parallel to the current family liaison role who supports Hispanic/Latino families and students- or as resources come available, consider hiring multiple new social worker/family positions to enhance communications, trust and connections with difficult to connect with families throughout the district.

- Create a systemic practice of regular and focused meetings for improving communications and collaborations among building administrators that focus on equity-related challenges. These meetings should capitalize on the strengths of building leaders, teachers and support staff who should have regular opportunities to offer innovative ideas for improvement, and build upon and share promising practices that do exist in schools and classrooms throughout the district.
- Identify a district point person for regularly engaging with and nurturing support of community leaders and volunteers including parents, community organizations, and local businesses.
- Utilize the newly reconstituted CASD Education Foundation to support innovative equity-focused initiatives, a supportive alumni network and student leadership development.

### **Offices of Educational Services and Pupil Services**

- Develop a portrait of the Coatesville graduate. Beyond state standards, define essential student understandings, dispositions and skills expected of all Coatesville graduates necessary in order to thrive in learning, work and life.
- Explicitly identify and address the systemic issues that are root causes of low numbers of students identified as gifted as well as the underrepresentation of students of color in gifted student programs.
- Create intellectually challenging and “fun” enrichment activities for all students at all levels.
- Examine elementary school schedules to find more time for recess/play and social studies
- Provide more intensive professional development in the areas of differentiated Instruction, student engagement, student belonging and nurturing student and staff resilience for all professional and support staff members at all levels, ensuring that support staff (district and contracted) are included in more equity related professional development opportunities.
- Review all current K-12 curriculum to assure it reflects the cultures/histories relevant to the school district’s diverse populations, and supports all students’ increased understandings of equity and social justice, e.g., explore integrating activities embedded in the K-12 social justice standards from Learning for Justice.
- Identify and annually administer robust school climate/culture and student sense of belonging surveys in all buildings with students and staff.
- Begin support in development of an engaging and innovative middle school model.
- Explore models for career/learning pathways at the high school level, e.g., Bethlehem Area School District
- Explicitly identify and address the systemic issues that are root causes for underrepresentation of students of color in gifted, honors and Advanced Placement level coursework. Review processes for course selection, and monitor and support more proportional representation of all student groups in high-level courses and academic programs.

### **Principals**

- Convene a school leadership team and utilize the Education Northwest Leadership for Equity Assessment & Development (LEAD) Tool™ Rubric and/or the Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium School Equity Audit Tool

(see Appendix D) to identify the school's current assets/strengths, organizational gaps and potential areas of focus for moving the work forward at the school level.

- Review, discuss "Can You Envision" document as a piece of faculty/staff, leadership team meetings. (see Appendix A)
- Create regular opportunities for authentically listening to the voices of underperforming and/or disengaged students and their parents/caregivers/advocates in your school , and nurturing their self-advocacy, leadership and empowerment to improve the quality of their students' school experiences.
- Identify individual staff professional learning needs and interests and collective shared professional learning priorities. (see Appendix I)
- Assure all teachers, support staff and students have a clear understanding of principles and processes embedded in the district's newly adopted Multi-Tiered Disciplinary Support Structure and Progressive Discipline Matrix and are being provided on-going support and coaching in implementation
- At the secondary level begin to explore options for all students to provide leadership in addressing their school's identified equity-inclusion and belonging challenges and to improve their school cultures and climate, and become familiar with and consider AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) as a comprehensive improvement framework for improvement. Explore options for developing alternative and high interest career/learning pathways programs at CASH (see Bethlehem Area School District) and encourage more students to take advantage of programs at CCIU Technical College High School. Further consider possibilities for expanding opportunities for more students' access to the existing Work Experience and Volunteer Internships credit-bearing courses/experiences.

## APPENDIX A

### CAN YOU ENVISION ALL SCHOOLS IN THE COATESVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

(Robert L. Jarvis, Ph.D. 2023)

- Where all students are always feeling that they belong and are physically and emotionally safe?
- Where all students are excited to get to school each day?
- Where all students are intellectually curious and are actively engaged in learning?
- Where all students find their learning to be meaningful, challenging and fun?
- Where failure is not an option, and every adult has every reason to expect every student to succeed?
- Where every student is believing they can succeed?
- Where no students are being reluctant to ask for help and support when they need it?
- Where every adult is wanting to connect with and positively impact the life of every student?
- Where individual differences among students are regularly celebrated and all students are recognized for their unique strengths, assets and contributions?
- Where mutual trust and respect abound between all stakeholders (students, administrators, teachers, staff, families)?
- Where race/ethnicity, economics/class, gender, (dis)ability, or zip code don't define students' destinies?

#### **To Make This Vision A Reality What Might We Collectively Need To**

##### **Do More Of?**

**Expanding on Great Work That is Happening in Individual Schools and Classrooms?**

##### **Start Doing?**

**Identifying and Adopting Innovative New Programs, Strategies, Practices or Policies**

##### **Stop Doing?**

**Eliminate Policies and Practices That Are Not Producing Student Outcomes We Want to See**

## APPENDIX B

### WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL EQUITY?

(Robert L. Jarvis, Ph.D. 2023)

An important first step in the Coatesville Area School District's journey towards improvement will be coming to consensus about what the concept of educational equity means both in terms of student outcomes and educational process. The following offers potential language and perspective to help guide that process.

Educational equity refers to providing every student with fair and equal access to high-quality educational experiences regardless of their race, ethnicity, economic condition, gender, sexual orientation, or other marker of personal and/or group identities. It aims to ensure that all students have the necessary resources, opportunities, and timely support to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally in their school settings and beyond.

- Equity infers that it is in everyone's common shared interest that all children and youth in the system, regardless of racial/ethnic background or economic condition or other dimension of identity or difference thrive and succeed in school and beyond.
- Equity is based on a shared commitment to ensure that every student receives what they need to maximize that success, and that the district is wholeheartedly committed to increasing all students access to intellectually challenging, meaningful and engaging learning experiences.
- Equity means that students' identities will not predict or predetermine their success in the school district, in postsecondary education or in life.
- Equity means that the system is nurturing real possibilities for equality in positive academic and life outcomes for each student and between diverse groups of students.
- At the core diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in schools boil down to creating and nurturing welcoming, respectful, and supportive organizational cultures that affirm the dignity and authentic participation of all individuals or groups, and that create an on-going climate of belonging, engagement and productivity for all stakeholders- children, school staff and families.

Equity and inclusion efforts are not stand-alone or "one shot" programs to remedy student underachievement. Achieving equity in opportunity, access and outcomes will need to be a continual process of organizational and community reflection, recognizing shortcomings, and building on "what's working well" in schools and classrooms across the district, and implementing timely strategic actions that targeting the systemic gaps and their underlying root causes that are impeding student growth and achievement.

The key task of the school board and district and school leaders will be to publicly recognize, seek to understand and actively work to eliminate institutional barriers in current district and school policies and practices that may be limiting any student's access to learning opportunities that cultivate their untapped passions, sense of purpose and potential for higher level learning and ultimately success in school and life.

Equity is observed in practice where collaborative efforts between educators, students and parents/caregivers are continuously focused on:

- challenging the status quo in the system and building the district's and school's capacities for continuous improvement,
- creating inclusive learning communities where the equal worth and inherent dignity of each student is honored and where all students' sense of belonging is promoted and sustained,
- eliminating the predictability of achievement and attainment disparities defined by race/ethnicity, gender, first language, gender identification, (dis)ability or economics,
- challenging assumptions about diverse children and their "potential" or "capacity" for high level learning,
- increasing the focus on highlighting students' strengths and assets versus deficits,
- changing policies, structures and practices that increase access, opportunity, inclusion, sense of belonging and support for our historically underperforming and most challenged learners,
- together building adaptive solutions to the root causes of our observed attainment-achievement-opportunity to learn and expectation disparities,
- committing to shared personal and professional learning around effectively teaching and positively responding to difference,
- focusing on building shared collective efficacy, which is enhancing all educator's and every student's and their families' sense of confidence and competence for success,
- developing coherence, connectedness, meaningfulness and fun in curriculum and instruction in all students' learning experiences,
- seeing your schools and yourselves as passion and dream facilitators for all students and their families,
- making ethical and effective decisions through an equity lens from the boardroom to the classroom, and
- recognizing the value of networks and expanded opportunities for sharing of promising and innovative practices within and between district schools and other districts.

## APPENDIX C

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR MAKING EQUITY INFORMED DECISIONS FROM THE BOARDROOM TO THE CLASSROOM

(Robert Jarvis, Ph.D. 2023)

While there are strong arguments for basing decisions on standards that maintain consistency for all students and staff, educational equity principles suggest a strong need for considering that we base our decisions on serving the best interests of each individual or unique population of students who have historically underachieved in our school systems.

How do district and school leaders and teachers choose from options to make the most fair and ethical decisions that are in the best interests of these students? Every day critical short and long-term decisions are being made at every level of our school system that are impacting individual children and district/school policies and practices that influence these students' outcomes. How might we become more mindful about our decision-making processes and what decisions/actions may be reinforcing our current observed inequities?

In making decisions from the organizational, e.g., resource allocation, curriculum, discipline code/policy, to the individual student level, e.g., program or course placements, behavior management, discipline consequences, academic and personal interventions and supports, it is imperative that before finalizing your decisions that you consciously reflect upon both the intended positive and potentially adverse outcomes of your decisions.

What are the critical decision points in our deliberations about policies, programs or practices that impact your expected organizational or equitable student outcomes?

- Board Policies
- Student Codes of Conduct/Discipline Policies and Practices
- Curriculum Review, Implementation and Offering
- Instructional Design and Delivery
- Standards, Content, Learning Resources and Student Assessments
- Student Program or Course Placements
- Special Education Identification and Placement
- Gifted Education, Honors Level and Advanced Placement Identification
- Support Programs/Services
- Human Resources (Recruitment, Hiring and Retention Processes and Practices)
- Staff Supervision, Performance Evaluation and Professional Development
- Financial and Material Resource Distribution
- Human Capital Distribution (Teacher, Administrator, and Support Staff Assignments)

Some critical overarching and equity-focused reflective questions to consider prior to making any critical decisions should include:

- *In what ways will this decision open or close doors of opportunity, access or inclusion for individual students or groups of students?*
- *Who will most likely benefit from this decision?*
- *Have we considered potential unintended consequences of our decision?*
- *Are there individuals or groups that may be negatively impacted by this decision and how?*
- *Which decisions/actions will best advance more equitable outcomes for all students?*
- *What alternative decision/action options might produce different outcomes?*
- *Have we intentionally engaged the stakeholders, including students, parents/caregivers, educators who are most impacted by the decision? Have all voices been heard and considered before making the decision?*

## APPENDIX D

### ORGANIZING YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR EQUITY

(Robert L. Jarvis, Ph.D. 2022)

#### THE QUEST

***The Ultimate Equity Challenge for All School Systems is to Assure That Each and Every Student, Regardless of Background, is Exposed to High Level and Engaging Learning Experiences and is Provided Access to Supports That They Will Need in Order To Thrive in Today's and Tomorrow's Complex and Diverse Worlds.***

- Creating Inclusive Learning Communities Where the Equal Worth and Inherent Dignity of Each Student is Honored and Where All Students' Sense of Belonging is Promoted and Sustained
- Revisiting and Clarifying Our Shared Visions of Critical Learning and Life Outcomes for ALL Students and the Purposes of Schooling in Our District
- Challenging Our Assumptions About Our Diverse Children's "Potential" or "Capacity" for High Level Learning: Increasing Focus on Our Students' Strengths and Assets Versus Deficits
- Changing Policies, Structures and Practices That Increase Access, Opportunity, Inclusion, Sense of Belonging and Support for Our Historically Underperforming and Most Challenged Learners
- Eliminating the Predictability of Achievement and Attainment Disparities Defined by Race/Ethnicity, Gender, First Language, Gender Identification, (Dis)ability or Economics
- Challenging the Status Quo in Our Systems and Building Our District's and School's Capacities for Continuous Improvement: Provoking and Dealing Effectively with Resistance to Change
- Clarifying and Building Adaptive Solutions to the Root Causes of Our Observed Attainment-Achievement-Opportunity to Learn and Expectation Gaps
- Committing to Shared Personal-Professional Learning Around Effectively Teaching and Responding to Difference
- Building Our Shared Collective Efficacy: Enhancing All Educator's and Every Student's Sense of Confidence and Competence for Achieving Success
- Developing Coherence, Connectedness and Meaningfulness in Curriculum and Instruction in All Students' Learning Experiences
- Assisting All Of Our Students In Discovering Their Passions, Purpose And Untapped Potential
- Seeing Our Schools and Ourselves as Passion and Dream Facilitators for All of Our Students
- Making Ethical and Effective Decisions Through an Equity Lens from the Boardroom to the Classroom: Who Benefits? Will the Decision Open or Close Doors of Opportunity?
- Recognizing the Value of Networks and Expanded Sharing of Promising Practices Within and Between Schools and Districts
- Building Toward Long-Term Sustainability: Imbedding Principles Of Equity Into Policy And Everyday Practice And Monitoring Progress And Accountability

#### SOME ASSUMPTIONS FOR CREATING AN EQUITY DRIVEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

- It's a process, not a program.
- It's about a continuous process of individual, school and district and community self-reflection, improvement and renewal.
- It's about moving from a deficit to a strength-based frame of reference as we view our students.

- It's about suspending our judgements about our children's "capacities or potential" until we provide multiple and continual opportunities for growth and development.
- It's about a deep belief in the capacity of each and every one of our students to be able to engage at higher levels of intellectual engagement.
- It's about raising the bar for the adults in the system, and refusing to accept mediocrity in teaching, learning and care for all students.
- It's about doing "whatever it takes" to assure students' opportunities to learn at high levels in engaging and meaningful work.
- It's about clarity of shared vision and purpose transformed to sustained shared action.
- It's about shared, courageous and transformational leadership at all levels.

### **BEGINNING STEPS**

- Starting and continuing with on-going deep individual and organizational self-reflection and learning.
- Moving beyond "diversity": developing shared definitions, language and understandings of equity among all stakeholders. What does equity look like in action?
- Reflecting on foundational equity pillars of fairness, justice, access, opportunity, inclusion, belonging
- Building relationships grounded in fundamental values of dignity, trust, respect, and empathy.
- Viewing equity as both process and outcome.
- Integrating equity in all academic and non-academic program and policy decision-making.
- Connecting the equity-focused work to and reframing as necessary the current district vision/mission.

### **DEVELOPING A COMPELLING RATIONALE FOR WHY EQUITY AND WHY NOW**

- Understanding the current and historical context of the district: racial/ethnic, economics, social-political-religious values
- Defining the moral, social, economic purposes/imperatives...opportunity to access the "American Dream"
- Addressing the challenges of balancing tensions between individual self-interest and the collective good
- Addressing what's in it for me/us collectively?
- Recognizing long histories of systemic or institutional bias/discrimination/racism/classism/sexism/ableism...
- Identifying potential/expected sources of resistance to change grounded in knowledge, power and privilege

### **DEVELOPING A COMPELLING AND HOPEFUL VISION FOR LEARNING IN THE DISTRICT TO ELEVATE THE CURRENT AND FUTURE SUCCESS ALL STUDENTS**

- Recognizing who benefits by current structures, program and policies and who doesn't
- Reimagining schools of excellence through equity- "the ideal school"
- Reimagining innovative, engaging and meaningful curriculum and learning experiences
- Rethinking, expanding and affirming our notions of students' "success"- in school and in life
- Asking: Beyond standards, what do we really want all of our system's graduates to know, understand, value and be able to do? Exploring and highlighting critical learning outcomes that foster **all** students' readiness for future life success navigating challenge, uncertainty and a more diverse world
- Engaging all stakeholder's (especially students') voices and their diversity of experiences and perspectives

- Identifying our students who are “wounded” by their school experiences and how/why

### **NURTURING SHARED/DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP FOR BUILDING DISTRICT, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY CAPACITIES**

- Building individual and collective efficacy- confidence and competence
  - background knowledge and experiences in living with and navigating diversity
  - values and beliefs
  - skills
  - practice
  - risk-taking
  - fears
- Modeling equity in action and walking the talk
- Integrating equity work into current district comprehensive plans
- School Board leadership
  - vision-mission
  - public/community commitment and communications
  - accountability
  - resources
  - goal setting
- Superintendent/Central Office leadership
  - serving as “lead learners” for organizing for reflection, learning and change
  - advocating for historically marginalized students and families: those “out of the mainstream”
  - sustaining a sense of urgency for improvement and dealing effectively with resistance to change
  - nurturing processes for developing culturally responsive and equity-informed policies and practices
  - effectively allocating resources to where the needs are
- Consistently supporting the people who support the children
  - strategic planning and direction
  - professional learning
  - resource allocation
  - building district and school DEI team/task force/coalition/committee
  - identifying barriers and dealing with resistance to change internally and in the diverse communities/neighborhoods the district serves.
- Elevating student, teacher and family/community voices and leadership

### **BUILDING A CORE DISTRICT DIVERSITY/EQUITY/INCLUSION/BELONGING (DEIB) TEAM**

Equity needs to be thought of as both an aspirational and operational framework—a process and a destination. Creating a Core DEIB Team/Council/Coalition will help anchor, drive, and center the work. A Core District Team needs to be recognized as the primary leadership team, including both formal and informal leaders, responsible for designing, coordinating, and organizing district and school level equity learning, action plans and activities. It should be focused on systems change that leads to more equitable outcomes for all students.

The Core Team serves as the engine for change, leading the way, highlighting system gaps and challenges, building alliances of diverse stakeholders and moving in a common direction, and building the movement and momentum to make necessary change happen.

## **Define Key Functions**

- Building alliances/partnerships across diverse stakeholders
- Providing DEIB-focused school-based and public community forums/ listening sessions, town halls
- Catalyzing equitable systems change in the schools and in the community
- Coordinating collection and analysis of disaggregated achievement, discipline and perceptual data for driving change and documenting, measuring, and evaluating progress
- Organizing the design, priorities for and implementation of an equity action/work plan integrated within the district's comprehensive plan
- Cultivating and developing new leadership for equity and active community engagement
- Building system capacity for personal and professional learning and leading change
- Sharing/disseminating learning resources, skills, and tools for operationalizing equity in classrooms and schools
- Communicating about educational equity across schools, departments and management levels
- Championing educational equity and social justice in the district and communities
- Coordinating opportunities to highlight and celebrate individual and school level success

## **Desired Characteristics of Individual Core Team Members and Team Composition**

- Commitment to racial and social justice, with passion and energy to motivate others;
- Emerging knowledge of equity and race issues, with analytical skills for systems thinking;
- Collaborative in working across differences and organizing for collective results;
- Leadership experiences and emerging ability to be a visible and vocal champion for equity;
- Communication skills to be a liaison and ambassador to a variety of audiences;
- Creativity to think outside the box to craft forward-thinking and innovative strategies;
- Facilitation and training skills to engage in challenging conversations about race, discrimination, bias;
- Flexibility to work across departmental barriers and roles;
- Humility and curiosity to continually learn and engage in self-reflection;
- Ability to nurture trusting relationships, internally and externally, that can be leveraged to expand engagement;
- Resilience in overcoming resistance to engage in deep, challenging, and long-term work.

The Core Equity Team needs to be representative of many different facets of the districts and communities it serves, and at the same time needs to be manageable in size to work productively and efficiently. Some considerations for achieving a representative Core Team:

- Diversity across race/ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual orientation and other important markers of identity
- Diversity across schools, departments, community organizations, agencies or other key units of local businesses government.
- Diversity in leadership, both emerging and experienced, including those who display non-traditional leadership qualities and those who don't usually get the opportunity to share their voice in this way.
- Diversity across work levels, functions and authority, including administrative staff, classroom teachers, support staff, students and parents/community representatives

## **Duties And Expectations Of Core Team Members**

It is good to delineate and clarify at the outset of a new member's tenure on the Core Team so that all members, and their supervisors, are aware of the commitment involved.

Potential expectations might include:

- Champion and advocate for fairness, equity, racial and social justice and model the organizational values
- Represent their schools and departments at leadership meetings and communicate messages from the Core Team to their own schools/departments/communities.
- Participate in all Core Team meetings and activities, as well as sub-committees or work teams
- Provide leadership, facilitation, coaching, and technical assistance to school leaders and school-based equity teams
- Coordinate, track, and publicly report district/school equity action plans, successes and improvements
- Continually learn and support system-wide professional learning.
- Meet with students, parents/caregivers, especially those whose voices may not be considered, and encourage their thoughts, perceptions and solutions.
- Take advantage of opportunities to build personal and professional knowledge and skills, including leadership, strategic planning, effective communications, complex problem solving, application of equity assessment tools for planning and decision-making, and in-depth analysis of racism and racial justice.

## **Options for Creating a Core DEIB Team**

- The district leader can designate an appointed team of leaders to coordinate the initiative, which might likely include members of the district management team. While this approach is more top-down than other approaches, it can also help ensure that the management has deep investment, direct access, and high confidence in, those they've chosen to lead.
- Another approach is to have each department or unit director and school principal initially identify one or two representatives to be on the Core Team. This will ensure broad and equal representation across the system. But a drawback can be that the full Core Team may not end up with an ideal mix of diversity by race, gender, experience level, and other important characteristics. In this case, it is important for the district leader to analyze overall demographics and skills of potential members to make any adjustments needed.
- A third approach is to put out an invitation to all employees, students and parents/community members to nominate themselves or others to serve on the Core Team. Once you receive the nominations, you can screen and interview candidates to arrive at a desired diverse balance of participants for the full Core Team. With this approach, you may get some unlikely or surprising candidates, which can be an asset. They may be colleagues who have a real passion for equity and are ready to step up. This more bottom-up approach may yield a very dedicated, diverse, and perhaps even younger, group of new equity leaders, even though they may not have as much positional power and influence as those who would typically be selected from the top.

There are different trade-offs with each approach, but all of them can work. You'll need to select the approach you think will work best since each district has its own unique history, structure, and power dynamics that need

to be considered and navigated. Once the Core Equity Team is established, initial activities often include some community building, visioning, and team development training.

### First Steps

- Explicitly defining the Core Team’s purpose: a shared commitment and spirit of collaboration in creating more high quality and equitable outcomes for all of the students
- Defining the team’s leadership roles/scope of responsibilities and decision-making in support of movement toward excellence and equity in district policy and practice
- Defining a shared leadership structure and process
- Creating safe spaces for honest personal and organizational reflection: trust, respect, dignity and authentic conversations
- Clarifying understandings of the language of equity and recognizing it in practice
- Defining guiding conceptual frameworks from the literature
- Assessing current reality relative to the vision and planning for change
  - information and data gathering and synthesizing
    - examining board and school policies (written and unwritten) through an equity lens
    - reviewing curriculum offerings through an equity/cultural/diversity lens
    - generate and review disaggregated district and school level data by race/ethnicity, gender, SES or other markers of students’ identities
      - Outcomes
        - student state and local academic assessments-
        - PSAT/SAT performance
        - student grades/GPA
        - attendance rates and patterns
        - high school graduation rates
        - college-going rates/attending first college of choice
        - college persistence and success
      - Process
        - enrollment patterns in advanced placement, international baccalaureate, honors, gifted, math and science courses
        - PSAT/SAT participation
        - enrollment patterns in “lower ability” groups, remedial programs, special education
        - discipline referral rates and consequences
        - extracurricular involvement
        - first generation college-going
        - access to out of school supports- mentoring, tutoring
        - technology access
      - Student and parent/caregiver perceptions of their experience with our schools
        - surveys/questionnaires
        - interviews/focus groups
      - Shadowing students
    - Examining/challenging our assumptions about what we see/hear in the data
    - Getting more information if necessary and getting to root cause(s) of discrepancies between our vision and reality defined by the data

- Avoiding jumping to solutions/interventions before the problem and its root cause(s) are defined
- Establishing our theories of action/change
- Recommending/establishing short and long-term SMART goals/targets, strategies, impact evaluation process and timelines with responsibilities

### **Team Building and Learning**

Before you delve into the work of advancing equity, it's important to take some time for members to get to know each other and build relationships within your Core Team. When people know and understand each other, it can help get you through some of the difficult conversations and challenges that are an inevitable part of doing racial equity work.

Sharing stories, sharing a meal, and building some social and festive time together can go a long way towards humanizing each other, breaking down stereotypes, and building cohesion.

Building in ongoing training and learning together is also key. Don't assume people are on the same page when it comes to understanding equity and social justice. Everyone has a unique identity, history and perspective. Some foundational training together—where team members learn basic concepts, definitions, tools, and strategies for addressing equity—will help you have more constructive and productive conversations.

### **Maximizing Impact**

Core Equity Teams can help move things from talk to action, from problems to solutions and from episodic reactive responses to well-coordinated systemic strategies. By developing concrete goals and priorities, along with doable plans, with delineated and delegated tasks and timetables, aspirations can become realities.

By modeling the design and implementation of effective and accountable work, the Core Team can help other Equity Change Teams at the building level and leaders to do the same. A Core Team that authentically represents the diversity of the district is well positioned to develop an Equity Action Plan that includes measurable benchmarks and meaningful results.

By tracking your progress, you can hold yourselves accountable and keep yourselves focused on meeting your goals. Periodically share with your colleagues and community what you are achieving and learning. In the process, you can create a community and culture of learning and action, with your eyes on the prize of educational and social equity and justice.

## APPENDIX E

### RECOMMENDED EQUITY-FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING RESOURCE PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS

**John Krownapple and Floyd Cobb**

**Dignity Consulting**

“We Partner With Organizations To Build Cultures Of Dignity And Belonging.”

<https://www.dignityconsulting.com/>

**Matt Brandt**

**Innocent Classroom Technologies**

**Change the Relationship Change the Outcomes Change the Future**

**Dismantling Racial Bias So Every Child Can Succeed**

“We Help Educators Connect Every Child And Family To The Curiosity, Vibrancy, And Possibility Within Their School Experience.”

**Frank J. Kros**

**Kros Learning Group-The Resilience Builders**

Professional Development – Consulting – Coaching

“Powerful, Practical Skills for Shaping Resilient Minds”

<https://kroslearninggroup.com/>

**Shauna F. King**

**King Professional Development**

“Empowering Educators To Empower Students”

<https://shaunafking.com/>

**Peter Grande**

**Teaching Learning Succeeding; A Professional Learning Company**

“Your Pathway to Assessment Driven, Responsive, Engaging<sup>SM</sup> Instruction, Because Differentiated Instruction is Equity in Action Every Day.

<https://teachlearnsucceedpa.com/>

**A.J. Juliani**

**The Adaptable Learning Group**

“High-Quality Professional Learning (That Saves You Thousands)”

“Meaningful and Relevant: Helping Educators Engage Their Learners with Project-Based Learning, AI, and Design Thinking.

<https://www.ajjuliani.com/>

**Carlos Ojeda**

**Coolspeak**

“The Nation’s #1 Youth Engagement Company for Students, Parents, and Teachers... We provide speakers, programs, online learning, corporate-sponsored events, books, and resources to support and engage the youth-driven community.”

<https://coolspeak.com/>

**Katie Novak**

**Novak Education**

“The premier organization for designing and delivering high-quality, evidence-based professional development on multi-tiered systems of support, evidence-based tiered interventions, evidence-based literacy models, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and effective leadership practices.”

<https://www.novakeducation.com/>

**Pam Moran Ira Socol**

**SocolMoran Partners, LLC**

“Are you creating schools for kids who will live and work into the 22nd Century- schools driven by curiosity and learner choice? We begin with the premise that every student comes to us not knowing less but knowing different. Our model is straightforward in teaching why, when, and how to say yes to bold and strategic innovation, create a culture supporting team agency, leverage resources, observe and analyze results to inform decisions, and move from small steps to big change across a school or school district.

<https://www.socolmoran.com/>

**AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)**

National research driven organization- strong student and teacher resources. “There are many ways to develop a thriving learning culture based on the needs of your specific district, school, or classroom. With over 40 years of experience, AVID is excited to share proven educational practices with educators. We’ve also compiled resources around what it takes for students to become ‘future-ready,’ as well as the importance of building relational capacity. These resources have been designed with you, the educator, in mind to help you, your teams, and your students thrive.

<https://www.avid.org/>

Contact: Albert “Beto” Howell, Regional Partner Engagement Manager

[ahowell@avid.org](mailto:ahowell@avid.org) Phone: (617) 955-6892

**Communities in Schools Eastern Pennsylvania**

“ALL IN FOR KIDS. ALWAYS. The mission of Communities In Schools is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.”

<https://www.ciseasternpa.org/>

(484) 834-8830

**Coalition of Community Schools**

Institute for Educational Leadership

<https://www.communityschools.org/>

## APPENDIX F

### SUGGESTED DIVERSITY-EQUITY-INCLUSION-BELONGING RESOURCES AND READINGS

(Most highly recommended resources and readings are highlighted in bold)

Included in this appendix are readings and resources clustered in topical areas for study and use by district or school-level equity teams, teacher/support staff professional learning communities, and district and school leaders.

- SCHOOL EQUITY PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS
- OTHER KEY DISTRICT PLANNING RESOURCES
- ADDRESSING ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM
- ADDRESSING EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE DISPROPORTIONALITY
- RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF DIVERSE EDUCATORS
- FOSTERING DISTRICT AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY, INCLUSION AND CULTURAL PROFICIENCY
- PROMOTING CULTURAL PROFICIENCY AND ADDRESSING BIAS
- EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION WITH CULTURALLY DIVERSE LEARNERS
- SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN POVERTY, BUILDING STUDENTS RESILIENCE AND DEVELOPING TRAUMA SENSITIVE SCHOOLS
- USING DATA TO ASSESS DISPARITIES AND ADDRESS DISPROPORTIONALITY
- ENHANCING DIVERSE PARENT/FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT
- EQUITY/DIVERSITY CURRICULUM RESOURCES
- FACILITATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS IN SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS

#### SCHOOL EQUITY PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Education Northwest, The Leadership for Equity Assessment & Development (LEAD) Tool™ Rubric, Education Northwest <http://leadtool.educationnorthwest.org/>

Education Northwest, Ten High Leverage Equitable Practices  
<http://leadtool.educationnorthwest.org/ten-equitable-practices/>

Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium School Equity Audit Tool  
<https://maec.org/equity-audit/>

Great Lakes Equity Center Equitable Classroom Practices Observation Checklist  
[https://greatlakesequity.org/sites/default/files/201001011005\\_equity\\_tool.pdf](https://greatlakesequity.org/sites/default/files/201001011005_equity_tool.pdf)

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Pennsylvania Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Competencies  
[https://s3.amazonaws.com/newamericadotorg/documents/The\\_Pennsylvania\\_Culturally\\_Relevant\\_and\\_Sustaining\\_Education\\_Competencies.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/newamericadotorg/documents/The_Pennsylvania_Culturally_Relevant_and_Sustaining_Education_Competencies.pdf)

**Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education (CR-SE) Program Framework Guidelines**

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Teachers-Administrators/Certification%20Preparation%20Programs/Framework%20Guidelines%20and%20Rubrics/Culturally-Relevant%20and%20Sustaining%20Education%20Program%20Framework%20Guidelines.pdf>

**Equitable Practices Hub**

<https://www.education.pa.gov/EIB/Pages/default.aspx>

## **OTHER KEY DISTRICT PLANNING RESOURCES**

**Learning for Justice Curriculum Resources, Frameworks, and Social Justice Standards**

<https://www.tolerance.org/frameworks>

**National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments**

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/>

**Quick Guide on Making School Climate Improvements**

**Safe Supportive Learning**

[https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/NCSSLE\\_SCIRP\\_QuickGuide508.pdf](https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/NCSSLE_SCIRP_QuickGuide508.pdf)

**ED School Climate Surveys (Free and Downloadable)**

**National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments**

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls>

**Panorama Student, Parent and Staff Surveys**

<https://www.panoramaed.com/products/surveys>

**Bethlehem Area School District**

**2023-24 Vision and Strategy** <https://www.basdschools.org/future>

**Excellence Through Equity Plan** <https://www.basdschools.org/domain/75>

**Phoenixville Area School District**

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives, Professional Development and Community Partnerships**

<https://www.pasd.com/our-district/diversity-equity-inclusion>

**Reading School District**

**Reading Thriving, Together: A New Agenda for Education and the Community**

<https://theharwoodinstitute.org/report-catalog/reading-thriving-together-a-new-agenda-for-education-and-the-community>

## **ADDRESSING ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

**Attendance Works** <https://www.attendanceworks.org> has developed extensive resources and toolkits tailored for educators working with students in preschool through secondary school, as well as principals and school

districts. The toolkits are filled with strategies and resources for monitoring, understanding and addressing attendance and chronic absence challenges.

Attendance Works, Using Chronic Absence Data to Improve Conditions for Learning, September 2019.

[https://www.attendanceworks.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/06/Attendance\\_Works\\_Using\\_Chronic\\_Absence\\_091619.pdf](https://www.attendanceworks.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/06/Attendance_Works_Using_Chronic_Absence_091619.pdf)

Attendance Works, Does Our School District Have A Systemic Approach to Reducing Chronic Absence? A Tool for District Team Self-Assessment and Planning, 2022.

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/District-SELF-ASSESSMENT-Tool-rev-4-18-22.pdf> and <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/District-PLANNING-Tool-rev-4-18-22.pdf>

The Education Trust and Attendance Works, Five Things Advocates Know About Chronic Absenteeism, 2023.

[https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/5Things\\_ChronicAbsenteeism\\_V3.pdf](https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/5Things_ChronicAbsenteeism_V3.pdf)

California School Boards Association Policy Brief, Improving Student Achievement by Addressing Chronic Absence, December 2010.

[https://www.csba.org/GovernanceAndPolicyResources/ConditionsOfChildren/SafeSupportiveSchlEnvironment/~media/CSBA/Files/GovernanceResources/PolicyNews\\_Briefs/ChronicAbsence\\_Truancy/2010\\_12\\_PolicyBrief\\_ChronicAbsence.ashx](https://www.csba.org/GovernanceAndPolicyResources/ConditionsOfChildren/SafeSupportiveSchlEnvironment/~media/CSBA/Files/GovernanceResources/PolicyNews_Briefs/ChronicAbsence_Truancy/2010_12_PolicyBrief_ChronicAbsence.ashx)

## **ADDRESSING EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE AND DISPROPORTIONALITY**

Safe Schools, Thriving Students: What We Know About Creating Safe and Supportive Schools

[https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/4102/download?inline&file=Safe\\_Schools\\_Thriving\\_Students\\_REPO\\_RT.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/4102/download?inline&file=Safe_Schools_Thriving_Students_REPO_RT.pdf)

National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments

Addressing the Root Causes of Disparities in School Discipline: An Educator's Action Planning Guide

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/ActionPlanningGuide508.pdf>

Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Discipline Disproportionality Problem Solving: A Data Guide For School Teams

<https://www.pbis.org/resource/using-discipline-data-within-swpbis-to-identify-and-address-disproportionality-a-guide-for-school-teams>

Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Supporting and Responding to Students' Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Needs: Evidence-Based Practices for Educators

<https://www.pbis.org/resource/supporting-and-responding-to-behavior-evidence-based-classroom-strategies-for-teachers>

Anyon, Y. et.al. The Persistent Effect of Race and the Promise of Alternatives to Suspension in School Discipline Outcomes, Children and Youth Services Review, Vol 44, September 2014.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0190740914002485>

Barton, R. and Nishioka Discipline Disparities: Implications for School Practice and Policy, NAASP, Vol 9(4), July 2014.

[https://www.academia.edu/64550672/Discipline\\_Disparities\\_Implications\\_for\\_School\\_Practice\\_and\\_Policy?email\\_work\\_card=view-paper](https://www.academia.edu/64550672/Discipline_Disparities_Implications_for_School_Practice_and_Policy?email_work_card=view-paper)

Fenning, P. and Jenkins, K. Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Exclusionary School Discipline: Implications for Administrators Leading Discipline Reform Efforts, NAASP Bulletin, Vol 102(4), 2018.

[https://www.academia.edu/95119921/Racial\\_and\\_Ethnic\\_Disparities\\_in\\_Exclusionary\\_School\\_Discipline\\_Implications\\_for\\_Administrators\\_Leading\\_Discipline\\_Reform\\_Efforts?email\\_work\\_card=thumbnail](https://www.academia.edu/95119921/Racial_and_Ethnic_Disparities_in_Exclusionary_School_Discipline_Implications_for_Administrators_Leading_Discipline_Reform_Efforts?email_work_card=thumbnail)

Gregory, A., Bell, J. and Pollock, M. How Educators Can Eradicate Disparities in School Discipline: A Briefing Paper on School-Based Interventions, The Equity Project at Indiana University, March 2014.

[https://www.academia.edu/99528914/How\\_Educators\\_Can\\_Eradicate\\_Disparities\\_in\\_School\\_Discipline?email\\_work\\_card=thumbnail](https://www.academia.edu/99528914/How_Educators_Can_Eradicate_Disparities_in_School_Discipline?email_work_card=thumbnail)

LaForett, D and De Marco, A. A Logic Model for Educator-Level Intervention Research to Reduce Disparities in Student Suspension and Expulsion, Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 26(3), 295–305.

[https://www.academia.edu/96352960/A\\_logic\\_model\\_for\\_educator\\_level\\_intervention\\_research\\_to\\_reduce\\_racial\\_disparities\\_in\\_student\\_suspension\\_and\\_expulsion?uc-sb-sw=48833514https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000303](https://www.academia.edu/96352960/A_logic_model_for_educator_level_intervention_research_to_reduce_racial_disparities_in_student_suspension_and_expulsion?uc-sb-sw=48833514https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000303)

McIntosh, K. et.al. Education Not Incarceration: A Conceptual Model for Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality in School Discipline, Journal of Applied Research on Children: Informing Policy for Children At-Risk, Vol.5 Issue 2, 2014.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1188503.pdf>

NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Locked Out of the Classroom; How Implicit Bias Contributes to Disparities in School Discipline, 2017.

[https://www.academia.edu/38727133/Locked\\_Out\\_of\\_the\\_Classroom\\_How\\_Implicit\\_Bias\\_Contributes\\_to\\_Disparities\\_in\\_School\\_Discipline?email\\_work\\_card=title](https://www.academia.edu/38727133/Locked_Out_of_the_Classroom_How_Implicit_Bias_Contributes_to_Disparities_in_School_Discipline?email_work_card=title)

Walker, B. The Disproportionate Discipline of African American Learners: Reducing School Suspensions and Expulsions, Exceptional Children, Vol 66(3), 2000.

[https://www.academia.edu/76468925/The\\_Disproportionate\\_Discipline\\_of\\_African\\_American\\_Learners\\_Reducing\\_School\\_Suspensions\\_and\\_Expulsions?email\\_work\\_card=thumbnail](https://www.academia.edu/76468925/The_Disproportionate_Discipline_of_African_American_Learners_Reducing_School_Suspensions_and_Expulsions?email_work_card=thumbnail)

## RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP)

Restorative Practices in K-12 Schools

<https://www.iirp.edu/resources/restorative-practices-in-schools-k-12-education>

National Education Association (NEA)

Restorative Practice, 2022.

<https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/tools-tips/restorative-practices>

## **Schott Foundation**

**Restorative Practices: Fostering Healthy Relationships & Promoting Positive Discipline in Schools  
A Guide for Educators, 2014.**

<https://schottfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/restorative-practices-guide.pdf>

**Gardner, T. Establishing a Restorative Ecosystem in High School, Edutopia, June 2023.**

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/using-restorative-practices-high-school/>

## **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF DIVERSE EDUCATORS**

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), *A Vision and Guidance for a Diverse and Learner-Ready Teacher Workforce*, 2018.

Carver-Thomas, D. *Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color*, Learning Policy Institute, April 2018.

**Greenberg Motamedi, J. and Stevens, D. Human Resources Practices for Recruiting, Selecting, and Retaining Teachers of Color, RELNW, Washington State Vibrant Teaching Force Alliance, November 6, 2018.** <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/human-resources-practices.pdf>

**Greenberg M., 9 Strategies for Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Diverse Teachers, Regional Education Lab Northwest, 2019.** <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/teacher-attribution.pdf>

**Parks, S. et. Al. Small but Mighty: Lessons from Black Teachers' Experiences in Allegheny County, Research for Action, November 2023.** <https://www.researchforaction.org/research-resources/k-12/small-but-mighty-lessons-from-black-teachers-experiences-in-allegheny-county/>

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## APPENDIX G

### 2019-20 THROUGH 2022-23 CASD DISCIPLINE TRENDS (District Safe Schools ACS and LEA Profile Data)

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>INCIDENTS</b>	2147	239	2099	2099
<b>OFFENDERS</b>	900	184	1009	961
<b>OFFENDER % OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT</b>	16.4%	3.5%	18.7%	17.8%
<b>INCIDENTS INVOLVING LOCAL LAW</b>	39	45	109	85
<b>CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS AND % OF TOTAL INFRACTIONS</b>	1696 (79%)	146 (61%)	1443 (69%)	1501 (72%)
<b>MOST FREQUENT NON-CODE OF CONDUCT INFRACTIONS</b>	-Minor Altercation -Threat to School Official/Student -Disorderly Conduct	-Minor Altercation -Harassment/Intimidation -Threat to School Official/Student	-Fighting -Vaping -Threat to School Official/Student	-Fighting -Vaping -Disorderly Conduct

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>INCIDENTS</b>				
<b>INCIDENTS BY GRADE LEVEL</b>				
K-5	31.6%	33.6%	20.4%	17.6%
6	7.4%	8.1%	13.6%	14.4%
7	12.8%	13.0%	12.7%	16.1%
8	11.9%	9.2%	10.4%	11.3%
9	10.4%	20.7%	13.9%	11.7%
10	9.6%	6.5%	12.4%	14.3%
11	9.7%	5.4%	11.2%	10.1%
12	6.7%	3.3%	4.5%	4.5%

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>INCIDENTS BY GENDER</b>				
Male	67.7%	75.0%	61%	61%
Female	32.3%	25.0%	39%	39%

**INCIDENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

American Indian/ Alaska Native	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%
Asian	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Black/African American	55.4%	51.1%	49.2%	47.9%
Hispanic/Latino	18.7%	19.6%	22.3%	23.9%
Multi-Racial	5.6%	4.9%	6.4%	6.2%
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
White	20.1%	23.9%	21.6%	21.5%
Unknown	0.0%	0.5%	0.1%	0.0%

% of Incidences By Students with IEP	39.3%	47.8%	37.5%	38.4%
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**SANCTIONS**

Detention	80	9	21	18
Suspension In-School	658	14	466	26
Suspension Out of School	1432 (1465?)	201 (221?)	1519 (1562?)	2053 (2101?)
Expulsion Total	8	0	13	20
Expulsion <Year	8	0	13	11
Expulsion >Year	0	0	0	2
Expulsion 1 Year	0	0	0	7
Other	215	33	419	100
None	1	21	70	41
Interim Alternative Setting for SpEd	0	0	2	0

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<b>OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY</b>				
American Indian/ Alaska Native	1	0	1	3
Asian	1	0	2	3
Black/African American	863 (59%)	128 (58%)	843 (54%)	1041 (49%)
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	245 (17%)	40 (18%)	352 (24%)	507 (24%)
Multi-Racial	61 (4%)	10 (5%)	92 (6%)	164 (8%)
White	294 (20%)	43 (19%)	261 (17%)	383 (19%)

**EXPULSIONS OR  
ADJUDICATIONS  
BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

American Indian/ Alaska Native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0
Black/African American	5	0	6	13
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	1	0	5	3
Multi-Racial	0	0	4	2
White	3	0	2	3

**OUT OF SCHOOL  
SUSPENSIONS BY  
GENDER**

Male	1064 (73%)	164 (74%)	1002 (64%)	1316 (63%)
Female	402 (27%)	57 (26%)	560 (36%)	786 (37%)

**EXPULSIONS BY  
GENDER**

Male	7 (78%)	0	16 (94%)	7 (33%)
Female	2 (22%)	0	1 (6%)	14 (67%)

## APPENDIX H

### 2022-23 CASD OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

Out-of-School Suspensions	ACADEMIC	CONDUCT	DRUG-ALCOHOL	TOBACCO & VAPING	VIOLENCE	WEAPON
GRADE LEVEL CODE AT TIME OF INCIDENT						
001	0	13	0	0	4	0
002	0	22	0	0	8	1
003	1	17	0	0	13	0
004	0	23	0	2	9	2
005	0	16	0	9	7	0
006	0	262	1	6	152	0
007	0	216	0	0	142	0
008	0	161	12	9	46	1
009	0	150	12	20	41	5
010	0	291	7	31	63	4
011	0	169	7	28	40	1
012	0	45	6	6	3	3
Kindergarten	0	10	0	0	5	0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1395</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>17</b>

RACE / ETHNICITY DESCRIPTION	ACADEMIC	CONDUCT	DRUG-ALCOHOL	TOBACCO & VAPING	VIOLENCE	WEAPON
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0	3	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	2	0	0	1	0
Black or African American	1	690	15	46	282	7
Hispanic/Latino	0	351	14	24	109	9
Multi-Racial	0	121	3	6	34	0
White	0	228	13	35	107	1
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1395</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>17</b>

GENDER	ACADEMIC	CONDUCT	DRUG-ALCOHOL	TOBACCO & VAPING	VIOLENCE	WEAPON
Female	1	529	15	32	201	8
Male	0	866	30	79	332	9
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1395</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>17</b>

### Expulsions

GRADE LEVEL CODE AT TIME OF INCIDENT	ACADEMIC	CONDUCT	DRUG- ALCOHOL	TOBACCO & VAPING	VIOLENCE	WEAPON
001	0	0	0	0	0	0
002	0	0	0	0	0	0
003	0	0	0	0	0	0
004	0	0	0	0	0	0
005	0	0	0	0	0	0
006	0	0	0	0	0	0
007	0	0	0	0	1	1
008	0	0	0	1	0	1
009	0	1	0	0	1	0
010	0	0	0	0	4	1
011	0	0	0	0	6	0
012	0	0	0	0	4	0
KSF	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>

RACE / ETHNICITY DESCRIPTION	ACADEMIC	CONDUCT	DRUG-ALCOHOL	TOBACCO & VAPING	VIOLENCE	WEAPON
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	0	1	0	0	10	2
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	3	0
Multi-Racial	0	0	0	0	1	1
White	0	0	0	1	2	0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>

GENDER	ACADEMIC	CONDUCT	DRUG-ALCOHOL	TOBACCO & VAPING	VIOLENCE	WEAPON
Female	0	1	0	1	11	1
Male	0	0	0	0	5	2
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>

## APPENDIX I

### EMBRACING SUCCESS OF DIVERSE STUDENTS : ASSESSING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INTERESTS (Robert Jarvis, Ph.D. 2018)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Role/Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
School/District: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your degree of interest in participating in professional learning opportunities based on the following scale:

Extremely High Interest	Moderate Interest	Low Interest
5	4                      3	2                      1

#### ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY-EQUITY-INCLUSION AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

- \_\_\_\_\_ *Developing Living and Shared District or School Visions/Missions/Goals/Commitments That Focus on Innovation, Equity and Meeting the Learning Needs of All Children*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Social Justice/Equity/Detracking: Creating Opportunity to Learn Policies and Practices*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Assessing District Special Education Policies and Practices*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Internal Accountability: Using Student Information and Data Analysis for Continuous Improvement*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Leadership Rethinking Expectations: Leading School Culture and Change*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Building a District Equity Team and Equity-Focused Professional Learning Communities*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Enhancing Cultural Proficiency, Sensitivity and Anti-Bias Competence At All Levels*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Rethinking and Reforming Student Discipline Policies and Practices*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Refining Roles of Teachers, School Administrators, Counselors, School Nurses, Social Workers, School Psychologists, Support Staff, Volunteers and Parents in Addressing the Needs of All Students*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Assessing and Developing Culturally Relevant and Responsive Curriculum*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Innovative and Research-Informed Programs and Curriculum for Language, Literacy and Learning*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Fostering Diverse Families, Schools and Communities Teaming for Children's Success*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Developing an Action Research Initiatives and Program Evaluation Frameworks for Assessing Progress*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Accessing Student and Parent Voices*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Nurturing Family and Community Partnerships*

## ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY AT SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM LEVELS

- \_\_\_\_\_ *Building School/Classroom Communities of Care, Belonging and Inclusion*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Building a Culture of High Expectations for Student Success*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Fostering Students' Sense of Belonging and Inclusion*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Effective Classroom and Student Behavior Management*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Embedding Restorative Practices And Trauma Informed Care In Classrooms And Schools*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Personalization of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment- Differentiation/Scaffolding*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Innovative Strategies for Engaging and Motivating Students: Breaking Cycles of Failure*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Fostering Students' Growth Mindsets*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Beyond Basic Literacy: Teaching Executive Functioning and Advanced Analytic, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making and Thinking Skills*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Researching and Implementing Impactful Effective In and Out of Class Support Programs*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Attending to Children's Social and Emotional Development and Mental Health Needs*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Nurturing Student Self-Efficacy, Wellness and Resiliency*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Cultural Proficiency And Culturally Affirming/Responsive Teaching Practices*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Understanding Impacts of Implicit/Unconscious Bias*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Developing Deep Relationships With Diverse Students And Families Grounded In Trust And Respect*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Engaging and Attending to the Needs of Diverse Parents and Caregivers*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Closing the Gaps: Attending to the Unique Learning and Developmental Needs of:*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Students with Varying Physical, Emotional and Cognitive Disabilities*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Gifted Students*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *English Language Learners*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *African American, Latino and Other Racially and Ethnically Different Students*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Behaviorally Challenged Students*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Students of Poverty*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Boys Versus Girls*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ *Gender Diverse LGBTQ+ Students*

## APPENDIX J

### PROMISING PRACTICES AND LOCAL RESOURCES FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

(Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest, 2018)

One of the most comprehensive research-informed papers relative to Human Resources practices for recruiting, selecting and retaining teachers of color (Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest, 2018) identified 12 key practices that are prevalent in school districts that have had success with diversifying their workforce. They note that the impact or effectiveness of these strategies are challenging to evaluate and as such can only be inferred as promising practices. All appear to be highly context dependent and are offered as supplemental strategies to current efforts.

#### RECRUITING

Identify data-driven and targeted outreach strategies to inform outreach efforts.

- Use data to forecast staffing needs and determine who is underrepresented in their workforce.
- Create marketing campaigns that appeal to candidates of color, are specific to the position and highlight the benefits the district has to offer, the system-wide commitment to meeting the needs of students of color.
- Ensure recruitment materials, websites, and job postings contain clear and consistent messaging.
- Share information of job openings locally and across the country through
  - Town and district websites
  - Social media
  - Local news sources
  - Career fairs
  - Community events

Develop strategic institutional partnerships/relationships.

- Build relationships with faculty members and administrators from local and national institutions that enroll a diverse student body, e.g., HBCU's and Hispanic-Serving Institutions.
- Partner with alternative teacher preparation programs.
- Reach out to and partner with organizations in which prospective candidates might participate, i.e., academic, service, military and veterans organizations, Black and Latino sororities and fraternities.
- Build personal relationships with students of color at higher education institutions that are in teacher, counselor or administrator preparation programs and invite candidates to school or district events to meet educators with similar backgrounds.
- Extend outreach beyond traditional networks.
  - Identify informal connectors- teachers of color, paraeducators or other community members, who can use their broader networks to help the district develop relationships with communities of color- invite them for school tours.
  - Utilize recruiters who are part of the communities from which they are attempting to recruit.

- Authentically involve your educators of color in the recruitment and selection of new candidates- collaboratively develop and enact new or innovative outreach strategies and leveraging personal networks and experiences.

## **SELECTION AND HIRING**

Publish vacancy notices early in the process

- Ideally, half of the new teachers should be hired at least a month before the end of the prior school year.
- If collective bargaining units permit, offer incentives for veteran teachers to announce their resignation, retirement and transfer intentions in early spring.

Go blind for the application or resume review.

Standardize interviews-focus on factors that have a direct impact on performance.

Actively work to identify sources of bias in hiring decision-making to counter bias in the selection and hiring process.

- Understand what hiring prejudices are and how they operate. Engage all involved in the screening, hiring, interviewing process in implicit/unconscious bias professional development.
- Use behavior-based interviewing strategies to elicit candidates, experience, knowledge and strengths- focusing on a candidates practical skills and performance rather than formal qualifications.
- Use multiple measures to evaluate the qualifications of applicants- including performance-based tasks.

Offer competitive compensation and benefits- if higher pay is not an option, consider other supports for special programs, professional development, and leadership opportunities or supporting tuition and student loan forgiveness.

High quality induction and early support- provide new teachers of color with opportunity to participate in support networks with other new teachers, and be mentored by experienced colleagues- particularly other teachers of color.

Nurture leadership throughout the system that actively promotes equity, inclusion and belonging and offers ongoing professional learning opportunities for school leaders to develop skills to support diverse students and staff, and support teachers of color to become school and system leaders.

## **LOCAL RESOURCES**

There are a number of key people, networks and organizations in Pennsylvania and Greater Philadelphia that the district should consider affiliating and engaging with to support young people of color in investigating and engaging in teaching as a career, as well as to promote its own diversity recruitment priorities and efforts and those for the county, state and region:

Laura Boyce, Pennsylvania Executive Director of Teach Plus

[lboyce@teachplus.org](mailto:lboyce@teachplus.org)

Diversifying the Teacher Pipeline: A Toolkit for Recruiting More High School Students of Color Into Pennsylvania Teacher Prep Programs and Schools <https://teachplus.org/resource/diversifying-the-teacher-pipeline-a-toolkit-for-recruiting-more-high-school-students-of-color-into-pennsylvania-teacher-prep-programs-and-schools/>

Dr. Juliet Curci, Co-Director of the Pennsylvania Educator Diversity Consortium

[juliet.curci@temple.edu](mailto:juliet.curci@temple.edu)

<https://www.paeddiversity.org/about>

[https://www.paeddiversity.org/files/ugd/492f24\\_a9e35ae74ab84244be53e0b8e1182b91.pdf](https://www.paeddiversity.org/files/ugd/492f24_a9e35ae74ab84244be53e0b8e1182b91.pdf)

Dr. Anthony Stevenson, Director of Personnel for the Tredyffrin-Easttown School District

[stevenson@tesd.net](mailto:stevenson@tesd.net)

Southeastern Pennsylvania Educators of Color Network at Villanova University

<https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/artsci/graduate/newsevents/RecentNews/041119.html>

Tomea Sippio Smith, Director

[tsipp@upenn.edu](mailto:tsipp@upenn.edu)

Dayna Muniz, Associate Director

[dbmuniz@upenn.edu](mailto:dbmuniz@upenn.edu)

UPenn Coalition for Educational Equity and Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity Educators of Color Job Fair and Candidate Listserv

<https://www.gse.upenn.edu/about-penn-gse/catalyst/coalition-for-educational-equity>

Sharif El-Mekki, Founder/Chief Executive Officer

Center for Black Educator Development

[Sharif.El-Mekki@thecenterblacked.org](mailto:Sharif.El-Mekki@thecenterblacked.org)

<https://www.thecenterblacked.org/>

Lauren Patterson

Bloomboard Teacher Apprenticeship Program

[lauren.patterson@bloomboard.com](mailto:lauren.patterson@bloomboard.com)

<https://bloomboard.com/resource/teacher-apprenticeship-a-new-model-for-innovative-districts-to-fill-classroom-vacancies/>

Dr. Margarita Bianco

Educator Diversity And Grow Your Own Programs

Pathways2Teaching

[DrBianco@Pathways2Teaching.com](mailto:DrBianco@Pathways2Teaching.com)

Mobile: 303-907-9767

<http://www.margaritabianco.com/>

## APPENDIX K

### MODEL MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/school-success/school-involvement/model-middle-schools.html>

While there is no one foolproof plan to guarantee middle school success, educators now recognize the type of learning environment that best serves tweens' particular needs. Here are some of the newer developments you can find at the best schools:

- **Teachers with vision, passion, and compassion, who coach and guide rather than lecture.** An increasing number of teachers are getting trained and certified by colleges and universities that have inaugurated programs geared to teaching this age group.
- **Creation of schools-within-schools.** A body of research has shown that the most effective middle schools divide students into small groups under the guidance of a core group of teachers, across disciplines, who act as advisors and mentors. Some schools assign an advisor to each pupil who serves as a mentor, checks in with him daily, and meets regularly to assess performance, weaknesses, and strengths.
- **An exciting, meaningful learning experience that challenges all students to use their minds well, regardless of ability.** Concerned less with getting the right answer, good middle schools care more about how a student got to that answer in the first place. Children are taught to think critically, research, and analyze, so they can problem-solve and interpret rather than memorize facts and tables and regurgitate them back on a test. Classes in art, music, technology, drama, foreign languages, and careers offer students opportunities to explore new areas, pursue interests, and identify aptitudes.
- **Thematic curriculums that link several subjects.** In one Texas middle school, students read *The Scarlet Letter* while studying Colonial history. In New York City, a unit on the monarch butterfly becomes a template not just for science class, but for math and English as students compute how long it takes for a caterpillar to shed its chrysalis, experiment with what to feed it, and record what they learned in a journal they share with parents.
- **Use of different teaching styles to reach and challenge all types of learners.** That's why you might see the science teacher asking students to drop water balloons from the second-story window to calculate rate of fall and measure acceleration, or bring in cake mixes to simulate a volcano erupting in chemistry class, rather than simply lecturing on scientific principles.
- **Innovative scheduling that allows more time for in-depth study and fits the pattern of middle school minds.** It's not easy for a preteen to concentrate for 45 minutes, break for five, and then buckle down for another 45-minute period. Block scheduling allows for fewer, but longer, classes. A lecture, a project, and time for discussion makes learning more meaningful.
- **An understanding of what it's like to be an adolescent and the ability to respond well to students' needs and concerns.** Classes in ethics, conflict resolution and bully-proofing behavior, media literacy, substance abuse, eating disorders — the full panoply of issues confronting kids today — are woven into the curriculum. The best schools include a staff of nurses, counselors, social workers, or child psychologists who can recognize when a child needs help.
- **A thriving after-school curriculum** of athletics and clubs, intramurals, student government, community service projects and peer tutoring that keep kids engaged and supervised after the final bell rings.

## APPENDIX L

### SELECTED SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

#### STUDENTS

The one thing I really love about my school this year is...

##### Elementary

- Teachers being nice or caring was the most frequent response
- Many reported that clubs and extracurricular offerings made their school experience better
- Classes/activities that had social components- gym, lunch, recess, music were reported often
- The different ways that my teachers teach
- Pizza on Fridays
- My friends
- SOAR
- Learning new things
- How my teacher is making learning fun
- My teacher is guiding us to make us smarter

##### Secondary

- School spirit is higher- proud to be here
- My involvement with sports shared by many of the students
- Teachers are trying to better understand where students are coming from
- I'm having more choice in assignments

Share with us who you think are the students in this school who are the most successful and those that tend to Struggle. Why?

##### Successful

- Students who listen to teachers and follow the rules- raise their hand
- Students who are seen as being smart
- Students who come from supportive homes and have active parents
- Students who work hard and pay attention and turn in homework
- Those that ask for help with teachers that are open to your questions
- Those who have parents who help them at home
- Those who help one another and their friends with schoolwork
- Those who get good grades: "Good grades open more opportunities"
- Their goal is to go to college

##### Struggle

- Students who need help but don't get it, so they act out and are disruptive
- Students who want attention and fool around

- Those who don't practice or try their best
- Those who come from a different place like Mexico and don't know our language
- Those who are unsure about themselves
- When people judge them- "people should accept people for who they are"
- Those who have a I don't care mentality
- Those who feel it's not cool to ask for help
- Students who get lost when the teachers are explaining and teaching- when teachers go too fast
- Students who don't like to wake up
- Those who are having trouble at home or outside of school
- The students are under a lot of stress and adults don't know
- There is little time or focus on student working together and some students need that
- When teachers only teach one way
- Boys mostly- "males with fragile egos"
- Students who are depressed-seem sad- the school can be unsafe mentally and emotionally for some students
- There are a lot of kids who don't engage in their schoolwork and its seen as OK
- The staff talks negatively to honors students about non-honors students
- Those with mental health challenges- anxiety, worry about grades
- Those that are too shy or scared to ask for help

**Who are the students in this school who feel like they belong that they fit in that they are accepted and supported for who they are?**

- There are a lot of ways to fit in at the schools
- Those who have a nice teacher
- When people are allowed to be themselves
- There is some bullying, but not a lot
- Students who have a close friend group
- Kids who are involved in sports
- Those who get along with everyone
- Those who find friends with similar values

**Are there students that don't feel like they belong?**

- There are some outsiders and students who go unnoticed
- There are programs and teachers who help new students get adjusted to the school
- ROCKS program helps
- Those who act different and stay to themselves- withdrawn, social anxiety
- Students who just have different interests
- Kids who don't know what they want and are drifting
- Those that get bullied- more in person than cyber
- Those that think they have mean teachers

**If I was the principal in my school, the first thing I would do to make sure that all students are more successful would be to**

**Elementary**

- Make learning more fun- a very common theme
- More ways to help students learn (technology, books, support activities)
- Check into classrooms to see the kids- go into classes and help kids
- Small group learning and cooperative learning
- Brain breaks- longer recess
- Affirmations and check-ins with students
- Take time to help students find out what they are good at
- Make the environment more safe and easier to move around
- Less homework and more different kinds of work and projects during the day
- Make work more meaningful and relevant
- Bigger breakfasts and healthier food
- Always hire good teachers
- Decorate the school
- Make sure all kids get exercise every day
- Talk to kids when they need help
- Hire good counselors- help kids know how to control their feelings
- Make sure all students have the supplies they need
- Try to prevent bullying and fighting
- Students have the best learning opportunities- have kids teach each other
- Help 5<sup>th</sup> graders feel more comfortable, not afraid, worried about going to middle school

**Secondary**

- Hire teachers that make learning fun
- Make more classes that are job-related, career-focused, more meaningful
- Have more breaks/brain-breaks
- Understand how different kids learn differently
- Math should teach like science teachers- groups, hands-on
- Get rid of slow, outdated technology- Chromebooks are often broken
- Let students fail- more student accountability-we sometimes work on something for two weeks because people don't do it- teachers should not be afraid to hold students accountable
- Make it easier to ask for help-sometimes we are scared to ask for help
- Improve the lunches
- We need to be learning more about race- understand history and different points of view
- Teachers need to be more open in class talking about real issues
- Need more access to mental health resources and support
- We need to get more kids involved with sports and activities

**I learn best when my teachers**

**Elementary**

- Make learning fun
- Encourage me instead of badgering me

- Use technology
- Use different teaching strategies- teach us in different ways
- Put us in groups
- Break things down and make them more simple- explain it to me- go over and give examples
- Give us harder problems
- Go slower when we are learning new things
- Help me when I need it- if you're stuck they help you
- Go over the homework with us
- When teacher is not yelling at kids and the class is quiet

### **Secondary**

- Provide group activities
- Explain with details
- Give examples
- Have energy and are not uptight
- Communicate- listen
- Consistent in discipline
- Let me work with my friends
- Allow me to fix my mistakes
- Don't just give me the answer-explain it to me step by step

### **TEACHERS, COUNSELORS AND SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF**

**In order to enhance the quality of all students education experiences and elevate student achievement in your school what do you collectively need to:**

#### **Do More Of**

#### **Elementary**

- Fully understand and implement the restorative practices program
- Spend time learning the new curriculum
- Data driven discussions/decisions about student performance are helping lead to change
- More incentive driven programs for students
- More natural consequences for inappropriate behaviors
- Continue PBIS- many comments on success in all of the buildings
- MTSS a success and needs on-going refinement- building on MTSS plans that are working was mentioned frequently with need for additional Tier 2 and 3 resources- groups need more time
- Better public relations- reversing the "Coatesville stigma"
- Consistency in teaching and reinforcing students' self-management skills- Zones of Regulation is helping
- More consistency in approaches to discipline between teaching staff and agency support people
- More mental health supports- self-regulation and coping skills- need more time for social emotional learning activities
- Additional training in Open Court reading instruction- adapting to meet all kids needs
- Continue with consistent implementation of new math curriculum
- User friendly iPads for younger students
- Working together as a team, be willing to jump in and help

- Hiring a classroom aide for every classroom
- Have central office administrators in our building more often
- Building family relationships
- Hiring more behavioral support staff
- More training for working with students with disabilities
- Spirit week and classroom celebrations/parties
- Hold parents to account- for attendance, dress, destroyed computers-we pacify too much- too afraid to confront- “it can’t all fall on the school”
- Assure more equitable class sizes given the needs of the students, e.g., special education
- Support a kind and loving environment for all of our students

### **Secondary**

- Get kids meeting grade level benchmarks in the elementary schools
- Better early identification of students with learning and behavioral challenges
- Bring back range of special ed programs- full inclusion to modified
- Improve safety and discipline practices-suspensions and extrinsic motivators are not working
- Don’t isolate special ed programs in the back of the building-“a form of segregation”
- Restorative practices and PBIS- all of us being on the same page with discipline
- Address realities of struggling readers in high school
- Raise our expectations for students achievement
- Level more classes- assure they have the skills for honors level work- reassess leveling that melded Merit and Academic
- More student initiated and led organizations for building community
- Reinforce students acceptance of diversity of their peers- LGBTQ and special education students
- More teacher input- “trust and respect us”

### **Start Doing**

#### **Elementary**

- Real outreach to families
- Go back to using a kindergarten readiness screener again
- Lower class sizes in kindergarten- more appropriate curriculum to deal with large numbers of children coming with minimum readiness skills
- Students need more fun activities
- Transition planning and meetings
- Making school more fun for our students- making learning exciting
- Allow kids to play- more recess time was mentioned frequently
- Build in time for staff collaboration and planning- time to work with each other on PD days
- Use an assets-based approach with staff; staff talents are underutilized
- Celebrate and don’t minimize diversity
- Increasing our staff racial diversity
- Look for ways to include student voice
- Reopen the libraries- need librarian-media specialist support
- Getting solid social studies and science curriculums
- Increasing district enrollment by bringing back students in charters

- Get additional instructional support for math- mentioned multiple times
- Recognize more students and more diverse students as student of the month
- Help students' transition to middle school- especially students with special needs
- Providing/assuring access to afterschool clubs/activities
- Instructional assistants in all kindergarten classrooms- never have had them
- More volunteers, e.g., retired teachers or grandparents to read to and with our children
- Adaptive PE and increased music supports
- Pull out lowest performing groups of students with reading specialist

### **Secondary**

- Improving administrators reaction time and holding kids accountable- kids say "just write me up"
- More consistency in rules- holding students accountable- some of us not aware of new code of conduct
- Social skill classes
- More out of the community field trips
- Better outreach to and collaboration with families
- More student input-tap into those students beyond student government
- Better address the good kids in the middle who are bored- better support the average students caught in the middle
- Hire more special ed teachers
- Earlier diagnosis of special ed needs
- Assess/assure parents ability to access on-line resources
- Collaborating as more of a team in our building
- Putting together policy for monitoring Chromebook use at home
- Create maker-spaces in the building
- More time for fun/free time for students
- More homogeneous groupings for differentiation
- Bring back alternative school options- more vocational training in-house
- Having hard conversations about just passing students on
- Identifying unrecognized gifted African American students- parents need to understand the process
- Mentoring support to Black girls

### **Stop Doing**

#### **Elementary**

- Being so punitive; looking for ways to remove students (look at disproportional discipline data)
- Labeling students and treating them like their labels
- Overidentifying students for special education was mentioned more than once
- Develop emotional support classrooms
- Pulling our counselor in so many directions- she need more time to pull groups and go into classrooms
- Passing on students who are clearly not ready for the next grade level
- Expecting teachers to do it all

#### **Secondary**

- Stop rewarding kids extrinsically for what they are supposed to be doing
- Going for evaluation for special ed before giving supports
- Graded homework

- Allowing parent override of class selections
- Bathroom duty
- Switching students schedules
- Lumping ELL students in low level courses
- Over-testing

**What supports do you personally and professionally need to enhance your success in your work with the diverse learners in your classroom or school?**

**Elementary**

- The number one thing that was often repeated was that staffing shortages make it more difficult for everyone to do their jobs; especially not having classroom aides and substitutes
- Time to plan with peers and do their jobs was an often cited need- “we all have kids best interest in mind”- opportunities to meet grade level and job alike peers across the district- to get paperwork done- time to teach and do more fun activities
- Having adequate technology, materials, and equipment- “I don’t have a smart board like other classrooms”
- Understanding how to better educate students with IEPs
- More flexibility in the daily schedule
- Co-teaching with large numbers of special ed students in my classroom
- Feeling supported- “I appreciate you”- central office administrators spend more time in schools and listen to us
- A recognition that teachers are struggling and stressed- feeling supported and knowing building administration is over-stretched
- Smaller classes because of large numbers of children with special needs
- Social skill development groups
- Get us the resources, give us some autonomy and means to execute the curriculum
- More trauma informed training- consistent behavioral support
- Reasonable timelines for learning and implementing curriculum
- Focusing on what we need in terms of professional development- PD that is relevant like visiting other classrooms in our school or meeting with teachers in other schools
- More volunteers in our classrooms and schools
- Having classroom teachers better understand what we do and be willing to modify/differentiate- IEP writer training- ask us what we need in terms of professional learning (from special ed teacher)
- Support with work-life balance- “we are tired...we go the extra mile for our students”- dealing with post impact of “COVID trauma”
- Timely handling of severe behavior
- Less micromanagement of instruction- we are scheduled to the minute- more autonomy
- Consistent district leadership for ELL and support to us and better professional development for strategies- need additional family liaison support
- More support in dealing effectively with disruptive and aggressive behavior
- It would be ideal to have expanded district preschool program

**Secondary**

- Need to get recognized and rewarded some way- get back positive recognition of my efforts
- Someone to talk to

- Get updated resources and/textbooks- update library and resources
- Address staffing shortages
- From central office: consistency, professional development, visibility in the school, more ELL support
- More reading specialists and ELL support
- Resources and support for handling emotionally challenging situations
- Reassess leveling system and grading policies
- Address large class sizes in academic sections- up to 36 too much
- More mental health resources for students and mental/physical/health support for staff
- Technology that works
- A functional apartment for life skills
- Reduce special education teacher's caseloads
- Trust us to explore/identify professional development/training for ourselves
- Need time to learn and play with computer software programs before implementation

**What is the one thing you would like us to communicate back to your principal or the district, one key recommendation for improvement?**

#### **Elementary**

- More support people and resources in the classroom was mentioned frequently- additional counselor or social worker, classroom aides, volunteers
- Additional support for our principal
- More professional time together-time to socialize
- Celebrate students' growth that is happening and "celebrate the teachers that got them there"
- Target WIN groups to address specific needs
- Communication between special area teachers and core staff
- Treat and trust teachers as professionals was mentioned often
- Listen to staff ideas; everything isn't a complaint, and many complaints are legitimate
- Need more adequate and up to date technology that works and tech support
- Ensure that contracted agency staff are in the communication loop
- More family engagement and family support groups
- We need a district equity team
- Need more remediation and math specialists and special education teachers
- There is an imbalance between elementary and secondary workloads
- There is an overemphasis on 'grows' and not 'glows'
- Provide all students access to musical instruments- especially those who can't afford them
- Get more subs so that teachers/administrators aren't covering classes
- Get PD support from the outside and stop doing turn-key PD
- Insuring ELL students have access to "translated materials"
- We care deeply about our students- need to see that we are trying, and efforts are in the right place
- Get upper administration in the building and talking with staff and kids- let teachers know they are appreciated- better understand our daily challenges
- Look at the schedule- zero transition times, breaks (especially in the afternoon), time for relationship building, science and social studies- "need more quality time with my good students"- there were multiple calls for more flexibility in the schedule for the benefit of both teachers and students- to make school more engaging for students

## **Secondary**

- Improve consistency in academic and behavior expectations, consistency in discipline, restorative practices and supports to students
- Staff need to get to know their students so they will be more able to deal with their behavior/challenges
- Class sizes are too large
- More team time
- Get equity teams in every building
- Let teachers stay with students over time-looping at middle level
- Bring back the alternative education program
- Athletics and extra-curriculars are a plus for many students, but need activity buses for student without transportation
- More visibility of central and building administration
- Stop pushing kids through
- WIN should be at the end of the day
- Listening to us-follow-up communications-respond to our emails-no last minute communications
- We need a better tracking system- proper leveling given kids' knowledge and skills
- Put together a plan for social-emotional-behavioral services- now seems disjointed
- Make professional development more meaningful and consistent-allow us and support us to go out of district
- Increase support to LGBTQ students
- Need to decide on who is going where as 6<sup>th</sup> and 7th grades are coming together- need planning and team-building time
- Every teacher puts in extra time
- Get kids out of the hallways- not in class and no consequences- tends to be worse at end of day
- Reassess and address cell phone policies
- Need more afterschool options for food, extra help, mentoring, clubs that target students interests/needs
- More counselors, school psychologists/mental health staff, special education support in regular classrooms, social work support in homes/community
- Need strong district level expertise in working with and supporting ELL students
- Need to have resource directory of community supports and services

## **BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS**

**In order to enhance the quality of all students education experiences and elevate student achievement in your school what do you collectively need to:**

### **Do More Of**

- Planning and learning time with colleagues in other buildings and with own teams
- More staff training on restorative practices- facilitating a difficult mindset change

### **Start Doing**

- Better address needs of students in the middle
- Addressing our own fears and personal prejudices and improve our multicultural understandings

- Staff training on culturally responsive teaching
- Have uncomfortable conversations
- Rebuilding our SAP program
- Improve WIN
- Streamlining operations/processes- working smarter not harder

### **Stop Doing**

- Stop grade inflation; current grades don't reflect achievement
- Hour and a half lunch duty

### **What supports do you personally and professionally need to enhance your success in your work with the diverse learners in your school?**

- Central office needs to communicate with and be present in buildings; demonstrate real care and concern
- Time to reflect and see projects through- more time for non-instructional PD like DEI and class management- to spend time with my staff to listen and coach them up
- Understand the culture and provide PD that helps staff to navigate in the culture
- Supervision- more frequent communications with and support from supervisors
- Need more opportunities to meet with administrator colleagues in other buildings
- Need social worker support with families

### **What is the one thing you would like us to communicate back to the district, one key recommendation for improvement?**

- We need a community engagement officer
- Connect with families and the community
- Give teachers a reason to commit to their jobs; they arrive and leave with students
- Don't poo poo that racism exists in our system
- Teachers and administrators need to be respected and valued- free to openly express concerns and ideas for improvement
- We need additional staff at all levels
- Improve new teacher on-boarding and induction process

### **PARENTS**

#### **What are your hopes and dreams for your children?**

- Success, satisfaction, self-sufficiency
- A good life
- District does not know or sometimes share parents hopes and dreams

#### **Share the good things that are happening or have happened for your children in their school experience in the CASD**

- An attendance exception allowed enrollment in a better ES where they there is more

structure, nicer teachers, and they follow the IEP

- Several parents commented on the special education staff being a great support but could not always say the same for general education staff

### **Share your thoughts about how well the schools/teachers have communicated with you about your children's progress**

- Special education staff does a great job in communicating
- District communication is a problem; you have to call central office in order to get a reaction from the principal
- Teachers promote using the home access system, but it is very inconsistent
- Secondary teachers feel that it is not their job to communicate
- Key information gets buried in communications
- Parents may be afraid to share concerns
- Website is bad; can't find anything

### **Share challenges you have encountered**

- Parent was not being engaged properly so a family member who was a district employee had to intervene
- Talking at versus talking to us
- Too much education jargon and inaccessible language
- Having to fight for things that should be offered
- Work is not meaningful; busy work, not enough homework
- Feeling that life starts after graduation and not while they are still in the district

### **Supports that are needed to enhance success**

- More diverse staff
- Social workers
- Mental health staff
- Trust
- More reasonable counselor caseloads
- Hear more from my child's teacher, like weekly updates on my child's progress

### **Suggestions for improvement**

- Hire people who reflect and represent the community
- Stabilize leadership
- Relevant and rigorous work for our children
- Expect parents to support their kids
- Listen to a lot of different perspectives
- Address access to bathrooms (dignity)
- Always investigating; never implementing- do something
- Bring back 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday half day of fun activities for kids
- Recognize through special awards students that don't get recognized for their effort and growth