

COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT ELEVEN
Dr. Michael J. Thomas, Superintendent
Phoebe Bailey, Assistant Superintendent – Personnel Support Services

**District Accountability Committee
Full DAC Committee Meeting**

September 17, 2020
WebEx
trudy.tool@cssd11.webex.com
6:00 – 8:00pm

1. Welcome/Introductions– Velvet Stepanek, DAC Chair– 5 minutes
2. Equity Road Show – Alexis Knox-Miller, Director-Equity & Inclusion – 45 minutes
3. Return to Learn Questions & Answers – Dave Engstrom, Deputy Superintendent-ALL – 50 Minutes
4. Accreditation Subcommittee Report – Jane Tucker – 5 minutes
5. Budget Subcommittee Report – Michael Reyes – 5 minutes
6. Training & SAC Support Subcommittee Report – Lyman Kaiser – 5 minutes
7. Closing Remarks – Velvet Stepanek, DAC Chair – 5 minutes

T & SS meetings, October 6, November 10, December 1, January 5, February 2, March 2,
April 6, May 4, via WebEx or Volunteer Services Conference Room if in person
SAC Training, September 24, November 5, January 28, April 8, via WebEx or Tesla if in person
DAC meetings, September 17, October 15, November 19, January 21, February 18, March 18, April 15,
May 13, via WebEx or Tesla if in person

Equity Roadshow

Colorado Springs School District 11 is committed to equity and is committed to providing an ecosystem of equitable practices to meet the unique needs of all.

Welcome!!

Thanks for joining me today!

- ✓ Make sure your mic is muted.
- ✓ Introduce yourself in the chat box: Name, what you do, who you serve, etc.
- ✓ Write about your equity journey using a word/phrase/sentence.
- ✓ If you are unsure of your journey think about how your "why" and your purpose align with the work of equity.



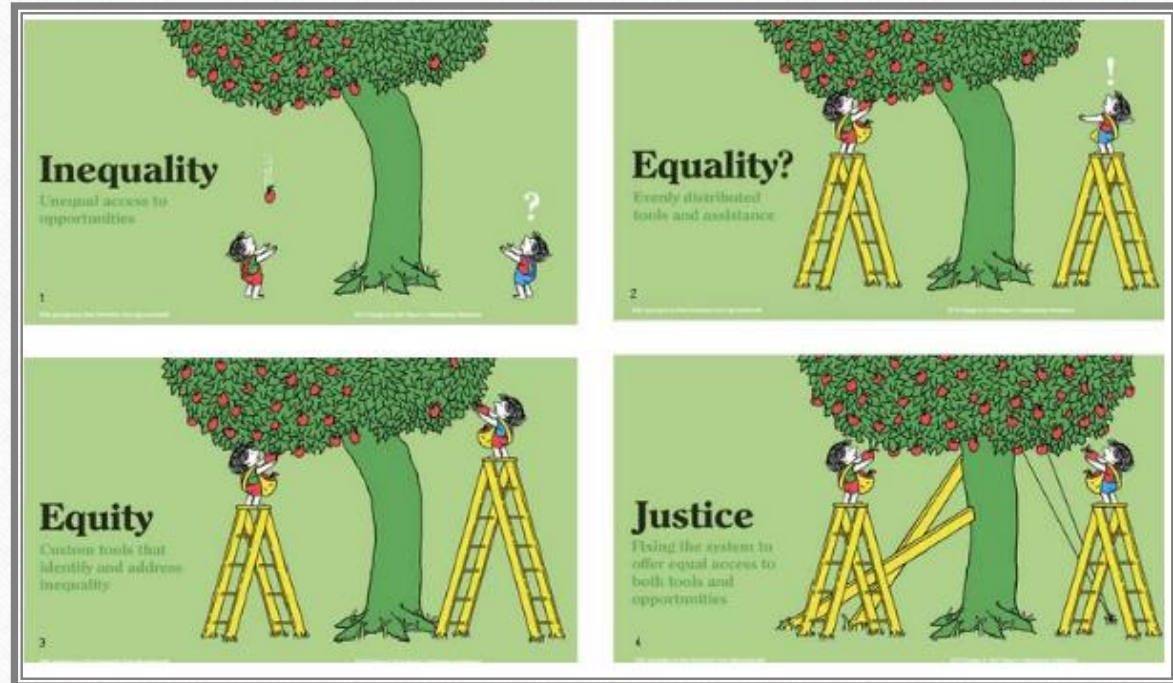
Who Am I?

- Wife
- Mother of 4
- Beginning my 17th year in education & 7th year in D11
- 11 years as an elementary teacher
- 2 years as a TLC
- 1 year as a HS Dean
- 2 years as a MS Assistant Principal

**What is your definition
of equity?**

Equity Defined

- Equity in education is the process of removing barriers, allocating resources, providing training, and doing what is necessary to ensure that all children have access to the same outcomes.





On June 12, 2019 the new D11 Strategic Plan was approved by the Board. This plan mentions or alludes to equity over seven times.



On May 27, 2020 the D11 Board approved the first D11 Equity Policy.



On July 1, 2020 the Director of Equity and Inclusion began their work.



D11 is committed to equity and committed to providing an ecosystem of equitable practices to meet the unique needs of all.

The Equity Journey in D11

Allocate

The District will allocate its financial and human capital equitably.

Promote and facilitate

The District will promote and facilitate opportunities for staff to improve their cultural competency and cultural accountability

Review

The District will review all practices, procedures, and programs that result in the over or under representation of any group through a lens of equity.

Utilize

The District will utilize hiring practices that support and stimulate racial, gender, and language diversity

Collaborate

Teachers, administrators, and District staff will collaborate to establish and implement culturally responsive instructional practices.

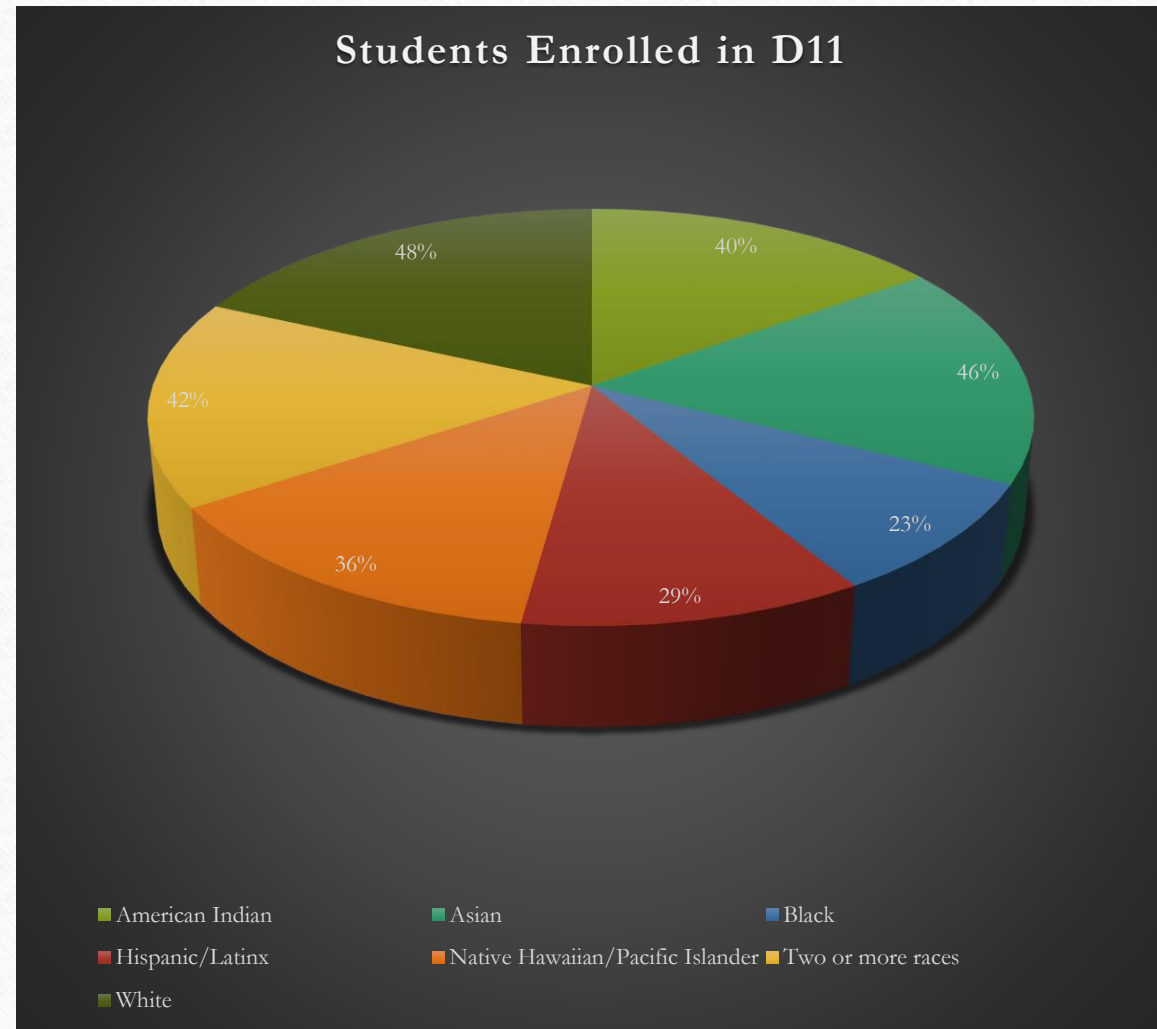
Equity Policy Key Points

You can review the entire D11 Equity Policy
at <https://tinyurl.com/D11Equity4All>.

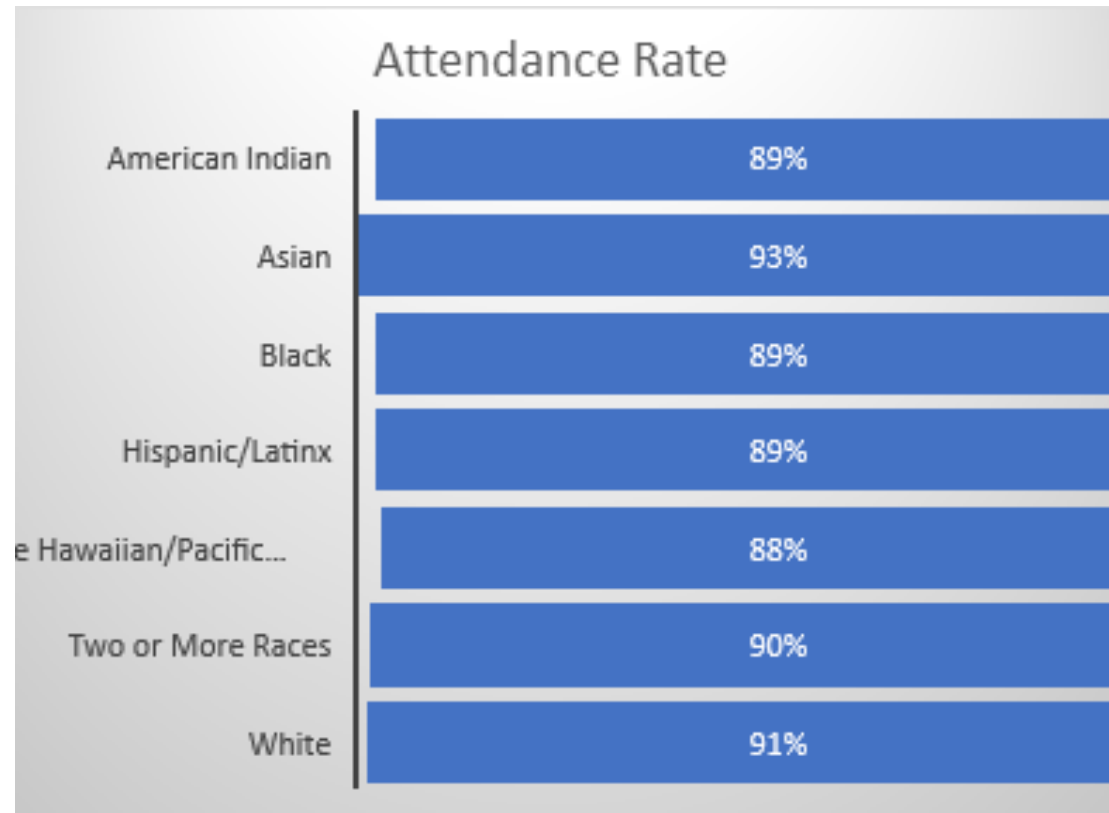
D11 Equity Numbers

During the 2019-20 SY D11 had 26,215 students enrolled.

- American Indian--1%
- Asian—2%
- Black—8%
- Hispanic/Latinx—32%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander--<1%
- Two or More Races—7%
- White—50%



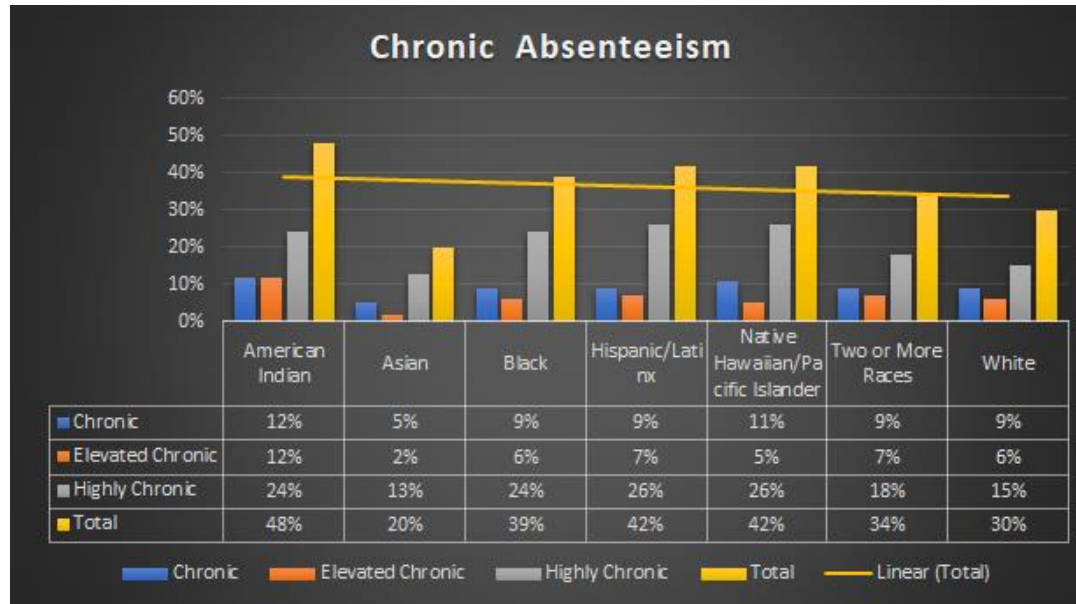
D11 Attendance Data



During the 2019-20 SY
D11 had an attendance
rate of 89.61%

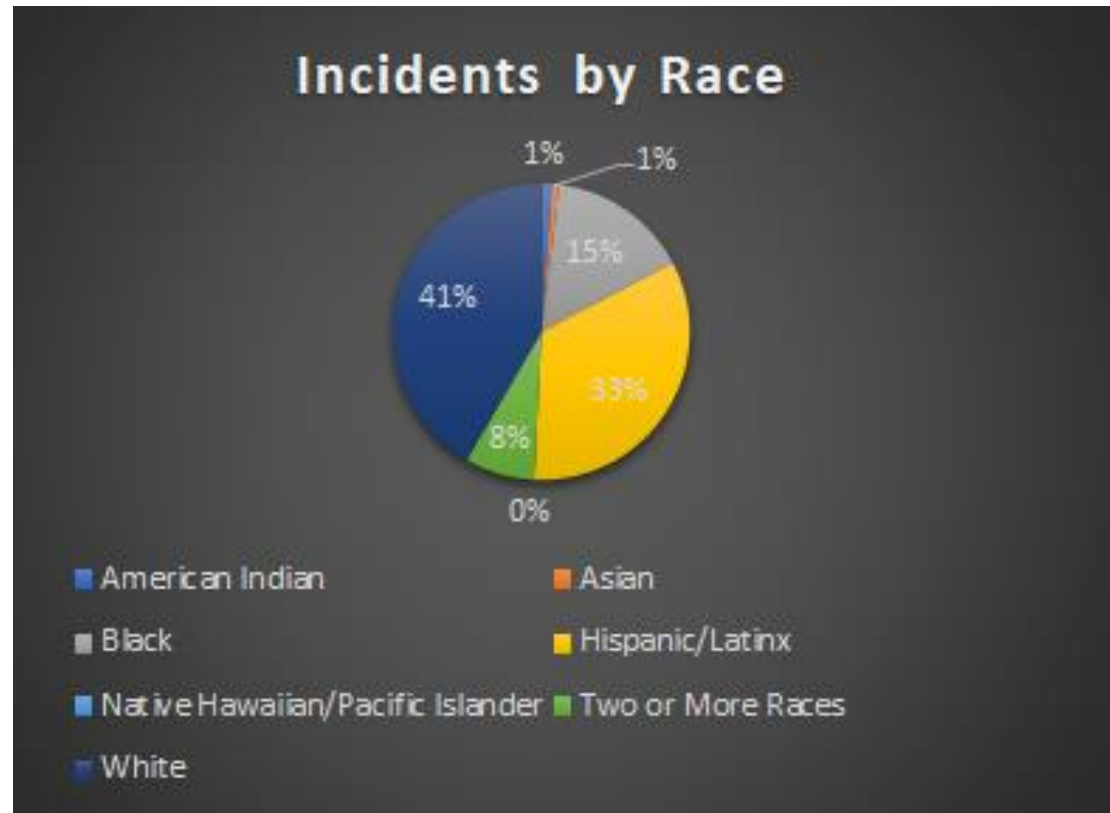
- ELL 91%
- FRL 89%
- GT 94%

Chronic Absenteeism



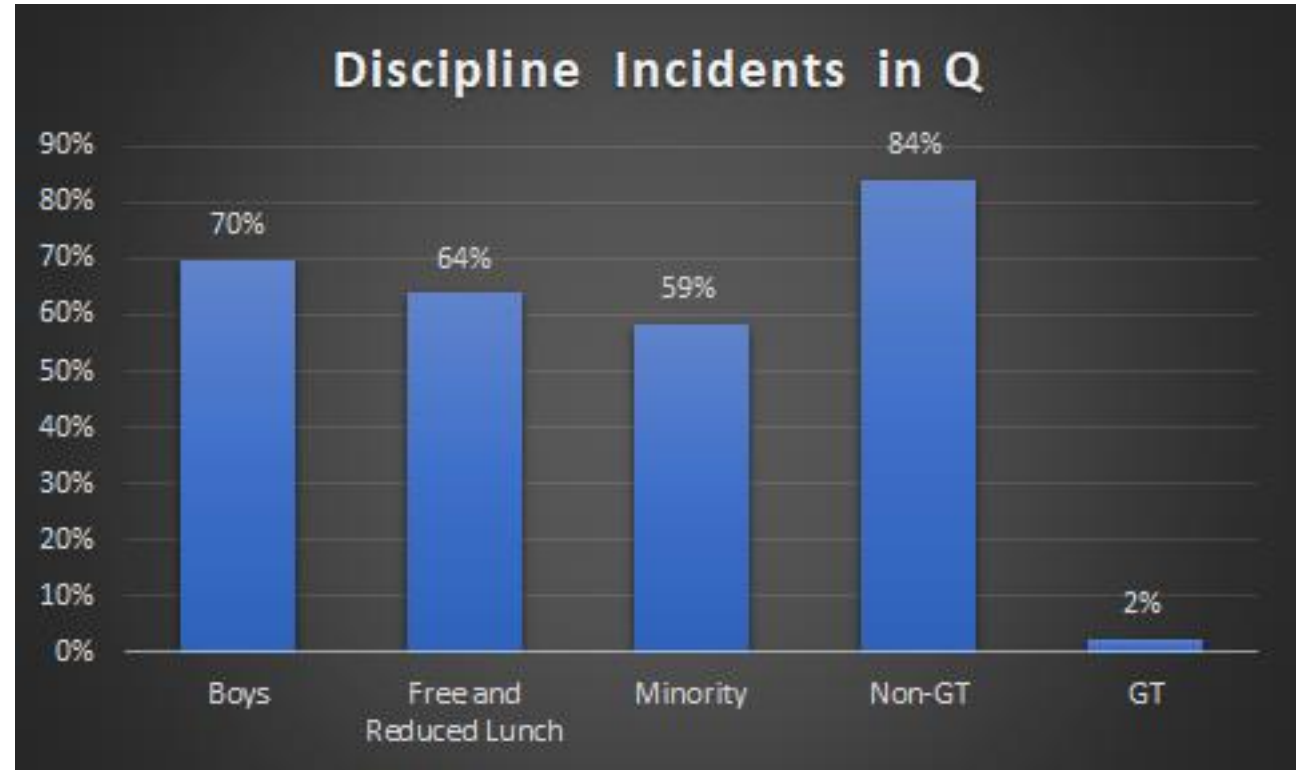
- Chronic Absenteeism is defined as missing more than 10% of the school year for any reason.
- The District chronic rates are:
 - 9% Chronic
 - 6% Elevated Chronic
 - 18% Highly Chronic
 - 33% Total

D11 Discipline Data



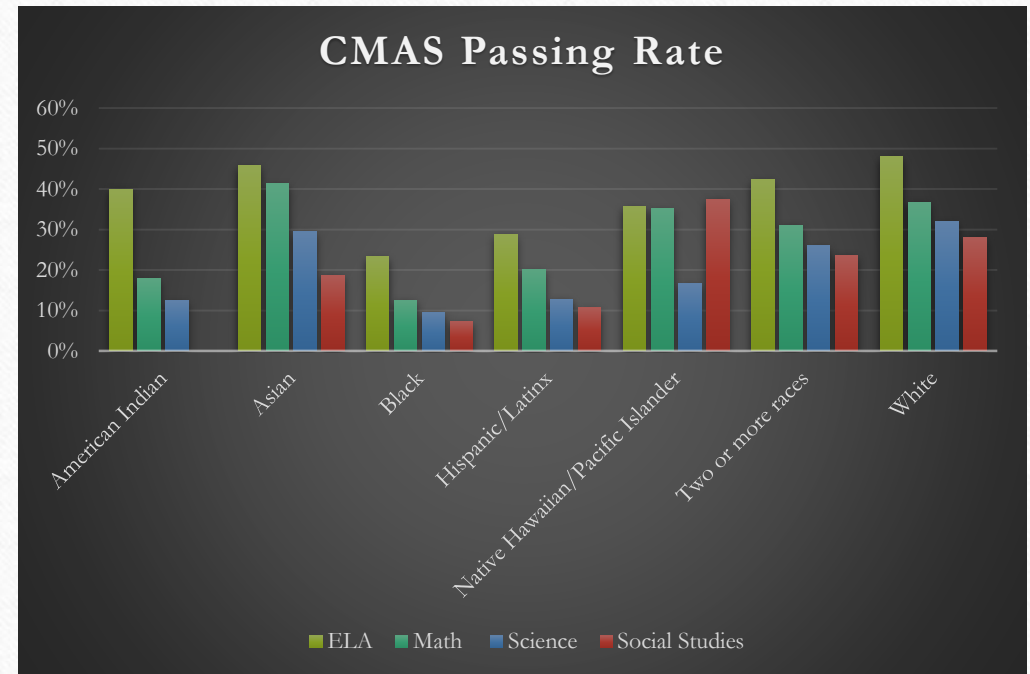
- During the 19-20 SY, there were 12,926 total incidents placed into Q.
- There were 5,591 Repeated Disobedience incidents, 4,960 Detrimental Behavior incidents, and 1,193 Other Violations incidents. These incidents were used most often to code incidents.

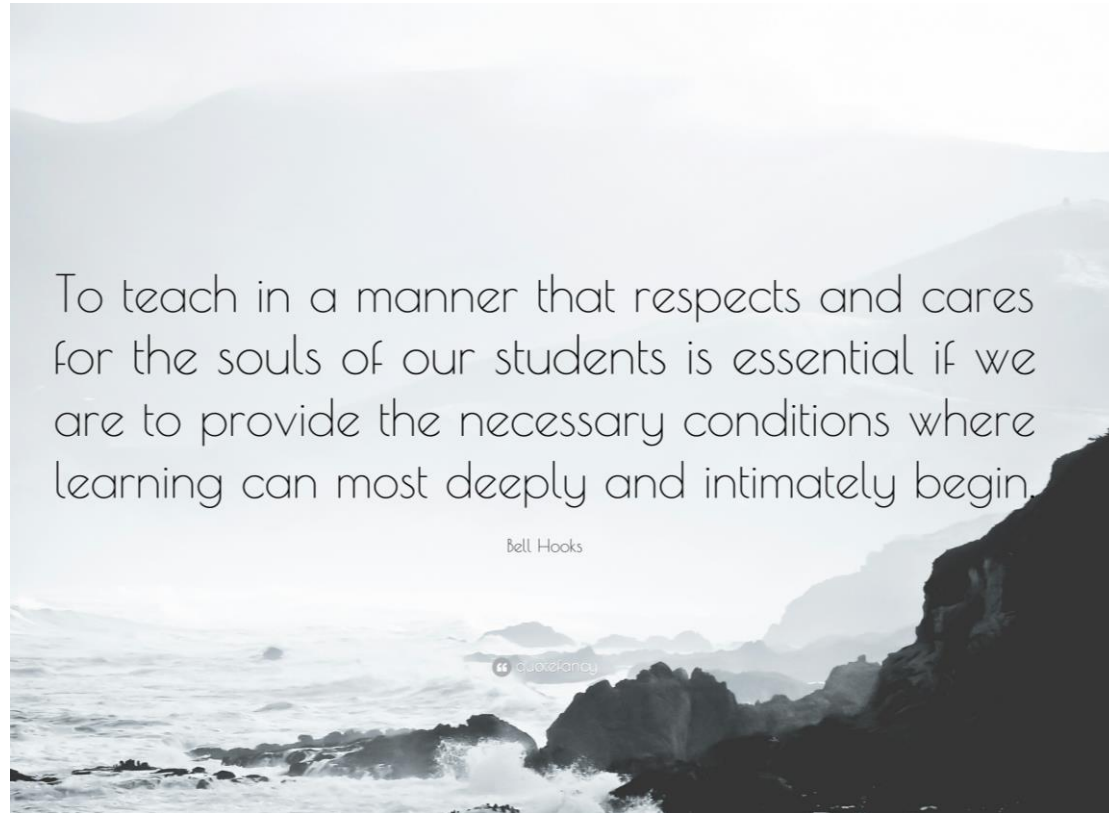
Discipline Data Continued



D11 CMAS Passing Rate

	ELA	Math	Science	Social Studies
American Indian	40%	17.9%	12.5%	0%
Asian	45.7%	41.3%	29.4%	18.8%
Black	23.3%	12.6%	9.5%	7.4%
Hispanic/Latinx	28.8%	20.2%	13.8%	10.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	35.7%	35.1%	16.7%	37.5%
Two or more	42.4%	31.1%	26%	23.7%
White	48.1%	36.8%	32%	28.2%





To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin.

Bell Hooks

“Quartzland”

The Numbers Reveal

- Disproportionality in how we discipline
- Chronic absenteeism is highest among the global majority.
- Disproportionate outcomes in testing/achievement



How are you feeling?

- Questions
 - Comments
 - Concerns
-

What Can We Do About These Numbers?

Data is to be developmental, not judgmental. Our numbers can only change through our actions.

- USIP
 - ✓ Gap-closing strategies within your USIP
 - ✓ Forward-facing—allows the community to know and understand that you take equity seriously.
 - ✓ Intentionality
- Book Studies
- Commitment to Equity



What's Next??



Creation of the District
Equity Leadership Team

9/4 Application Closes

9/10 Panel begins the process of
choosing the DELT



Comprehensive Equity Audit



Creation of the D11 Equity Framework and Theory
of Action



Creation of School Level Equity Teams



Training

Principals

Departments

TLCs and Coaches



Book Studies, Webinars, Etc.

5 Books To Begin The Journey

- We Want to Do More Than Survive by Dr. Bettina Love
- Courageous Conversations About Race by Glenn Singleton
- For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood by Christopher Edmin
- Cultivating Genius by Gholdy Muhammad
- Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain by Zaretta Hammond

You Can Find Me...

Email: Alexis.Knox-Miller@d11.org

Phone: (719) 520-2000 (office)

(719) 297-7248 (cell)

Website: www.d11.org/equity

- Resources
- Blogs
- Data
- FAQs

Don't forget to use our hashtag when you're talking equity on social media

#D11Equity4All

“I entered the classroom with the conviction that it was crucial for me and every other student to be an active participant, not a passive consumer...education as the practice of freedom...education that connects the will to know with the will to become. Learning is a place where paradise can be created.”

--bell hooks



**Call to Action—What actionable steps
can you take towards equity?**

Welcome!!

Thanks for joining me today!

- ✓ Grab a notecard and a treat!
- ✓ Write about your equity journey using a word/phrase/sentence on the notecard.
- ✓ Keep your masks on and talk about it with someone near you. :)

Executive Summary

1. Name of school, grade levels to be served and growth plan, proposed operating date

Inventa Academy is targeting the fall of 2021 as opening date, serving students from preK through 5th grade, and will organically grow one grade level per year to become a preK-8 school by 2024. Our charter application is for a preK-8 school; however, we hope to expand into preK-12 by requesting authorization to add high school grades at a later time.

2. Vision and mission statements including how they were created

Our vision is *to nurture children as independent learners, curious explorers, self-motivated inventors, creative thinkers, ethical leaders and skilled future workforce capable of contributing to the advancement of the community and the world.*

Our mission is *to provide a learning environment that nurtures happiness, creativity, innovation, character and skills alongside with self-motivated pursuit of knowledge through expeditionary learning and civic engagement.*

These vision and mission statements were created upon our core principle: *education enables personal development, responsible citizenship, and intellectual and emotional growth, not merely academic achievement*; and the belief that great dreams and huge potential reside inside each one of our students. We are focusing our efforts to support the whole child by growing strengths, flourishing talents and developing character within a strong growth mindset and creative thinking.

3. A short explanation of the key programmatic features the school will implement in order to accomplish its vision and mission

To accomplish our vision and mission we plan to implement the Expeditionary Learning Model, with time for self-discovery, exploration of ideas, learning from mistakes, collaboration, service, and appreciation of others' contributions. Our curriculum is framed under the Project-Based Learning approach, where academic subjects, social issues, and student's interests converge in one multidisciplinary project that will ultimately create knowledge and provide solutions to current challenges in our society. In addition, Inventa Academy will offer a Dual Language Immersion Program with Spanish as the target language, to better support the growing Hispanic community in our city. This program will create bilingual and biliterate students, better prepared for the global economy while instilling awareness and respect for other cultures. Equally important will be the attention to social-emotional and physical wellness, the development of life skills through play, and the encouragement of creativity, curiosity, and innovation.

4. How the proposed school will be more effective than the schools currently serving the targeted student population

Inventa Academy will implement recent research on brain development and the relationship between emotion and learning. These principles allow for a different and more effective learning

process based on student agency, choice and overall support, in an environment where teachers are not the source of all knowledge but partners in the learning endeavor. Students will be required to teach others and apply their knowledge by doing projects. These strategies are significantly more effective than direct instruction in terms of student engagement and deep learning. Another important aspect is that both the exploration of self-worth and the dual-language immersion model serve the purpose of closing the achievement gap and uplifting the morale of Hispanic students.

5. Unique features such as non-traditional school year, longer school day, key partner organizations, multiple campuses, school culture, etc.

The Comer Child Development Program will be used to create a school culture where child development is at the center of all educational efforts. This program focuses on building strong relationships to help students thrive socially and developmentally. More than a program, it is a belief system where the school becomes a solid infrastructure of people that care and provide empathy, one where children feel valued and safe. It is a combination of high expectations and good relationships that motivates children to grow and learn in an optimum and healthy way. Regarding partners, we have been building a strong network of nonprofit organizations, businesses, governmental agencies and local leaders interested on providing support either volunteering as guest experts, hosting field trips, or becoming project mentors. All of this will allow students to get to know the community and its assets, propose solutions to challenging situations, and become comfortable on asking for help and receiving external feedback.

6. Student body to be served, such as key demographic data, targeted geographical area, etc.

We expect to serve a student body that is 50% Hispanic. We have identified the census tracts with the highest presence of Hispanic population with children under 5, which are located in the southern end of District 11. That is our targeted geographical area. We also found a good percentage of Hispanic families in the neighboring school districts 2 and 49, very close to D11 boundaries, which offers the opportunity to draw students from these communities as well.

7. Evidence of community need of a school of this nature.

We launched a survey in 2018 asking the community what their ideal school would include. More than two thirds of respondents said that the most important features would be small class sizes, real-life problems and solutions, field trips, STEM, bilingual or multilingual program, outdoor classrooms, clubs and after-school activities, and guest speakers (scientists, industry experts, etc.). Other suggestions included financial literacy, how to actually use knowledge in the real world, caring teachers, and sustainability. The least preferred options were extended at-home reading sessions, extended school day/year, traditional classrooms, classical teacher instruction, and bring-your-own-device policy. From the Intent-to-Enroll forms we have collected, about 90% of families said they are interested on the Dual Language Immersion Program.



Inventa Academy will be a place to nurture the creative and curious mind, a place to dream big, push boundaries beyond what people think possible, and unlock the greatness of human potential.

General Information

Type of School	Public, Tuition-Free Charter School
Model	Expeditionary Learning
Curriculum	Project-Based Learning
Motto	Explore, create, invent!
Languages	English/Spanish Dual Language Immersion Program
Culture	Social-Emotional Wellness and Personal Development
Target District	Colorado Springs School District 11
Target Opening Date	August 2021
Website	www.inventaacademy.org
Grades	PreK-8 by 2024, PreK-12 by 2028

1. Strategic Plan

The educational pathway we propose will revolve around the human potential, helping children to cultivate positive relationships with adults and peers, facilitating exposure to our community and real world situations, nurturing personal growth in all directions, and propelling success by finding purpose and meaning.

Students will become active learners who develop their critical thinking skills through exploration and discovery, while the school provides curriculum that promotes true engagement and involves students in constructing their own learning. The main features of the school are shown in Fig. 1.

1.1 Our Core Principle

Education enables personal development, responsible citizenship, and intellectual and emotional growth, not merely academic achievement.

1.2 Vision

To nurture children as independent learners, curious explorers, self-motivated inventors, creative thinkers, ethical leaders and skilled future workforce capable of contributing to the advancement of the community and the world.

1.3 Mission

To provide a learning environment that nurtures happiness, creativity, innovation, character and skills alongside with self-motivated pursuit of knowledge through expeditionary learning and civic engagement.



Figure 1. Main Features of Inventa Academy

2. Academic Plan

Inventa Academy will strive to support the whole child by growing strengths, flourishing talents, and developing character within a strong growth mindset and creative thinking.

2.1 Expeditionary Learning

Expeditionary Learning is based on self-discovery, contribution of ideas, responsibility for learning, developing empathy, caring for others, learning from failure, collaboration, appreciation of diversity, commitment to inclusion, appreciation of the natural world, time devoted to solitude and reflection, the value of service and compassion. By being exposed to Expeditionary Learning, students will not only gain important academic skills, but also the capacity and passion to be leaders, creators, and innovators. According to EL Education, learning is [1]:

- Challenging. Students are supported to do far more than what they think they can.
- Active. Students are scientists, urban planners, historians, artists, engineers, activists, etc.
- Meaningful. Students are learning with a purpose and see that their education is in service of building a better world.
- Collaborative. School leaders, teachers, students, and families work together to create a culture of respect, responsibility, and joy in learning.
- Public. Students produce high-quality work for presentation to audiences within and beyond the school.

2.2 Project-Based Learning

The project approach offers children a learning environment that can develop their sense of competence and worth. It creates a classroom culture in which children's points of view are taken seriously and their feelings and opinions treated respectfully. It offers the opportunity for children to try out their developing powers of judgment and to learn with confidence from their mistakes [2]. Projects will tackle a specific issue or will study a relevant theme from different perspectives, will be multidisciplinary in nature and will be aligned to academic standards. Students will have support from teachers, mentors, parents, industry experts, community leaders, government representatives, and organizations that care about the topic under study. The school will become a hub for knowledge creation and innovation, a vibrant community where we all dream big, find our voice and pursue our passions.

2.3 Dual Language Immersion Program

Immersion education is an educational model designed to provide students with fluency and literacy in two languages. It offers a unique and two-fold educational opportunity. On one hand, it offers a great environment for English-speaking students who wish to become fluent in Spanish. On the other hand, it supports Spanish language proficiency to Heritage learners. One classroom at each grade level will provide the Spanish language immersion environment, with approximately 50% of daily instruction provided in Spanish. During this time, Spanish is not taught as a subject, but rather it is the language in which instruction is delivered and communication is held.

Students who attend the Dual Language Immersion Program will:

- Become bilingual and biliterate
- Be better prepared to interact in the global society
- Increase awareness of and respect for other cultures
- Achieve academic proficiency in both English and Spanish
- Improve general cognitive ability and build self-confidence
- Acquire an additional skill and career advantage for life

2.4 Social-Emotional Wellness

We are committed to embrace, protect and propel a fulfilled childhood as the roots of present and future success. The Comer Child Development Program will be used to create a school culture where child development is at the center of all educational efforts. This program focuses on building strong human relationships to help students thrive socially and developmentally. To educate children holistically, the Comer Program identifies a whole spectrum of needs and demands for children to be able to function in society, associated with the following developmental areas [3]:

- Social-interactive: children become responsible for managing themselves in a constructive and respectful way.
- Psycho-emotional: children learn to handle impulses and to control their behavior, that is, to handle themselves, their emotions, and their feelings.
- Moral-ethical learning: understanding what is right, what is wrong, and live by that.
- Linguistic expression and reception: children are able to express themselves in a whole variety of settings, to know what is appropriate and to be able to listen to others.
- Intellectual cognitive: academic content.

The Comer program provides children with the social competence they need to be able to function well in school and later in life. More than a program, it is a belief system where the school becomes a solid infrastructure of people that care and provide empathy, one where children feel valued and safe. It is a combination of high expectations and good relationships that motivates children to grow and learn in an optimum and healthy way [4].

2.5 The Importance of Play

Play is fun, is social interaction, is problem-solving, is self-expression, but overall, is learning. Given the importance of play to the well-being of children, the United Nations has recognized play as a fundamental human right, just as important as shelter and education. Research shows that over the same years that recess and playtime in schools have declined, there have been rises in depression, anxiety and suicide rates. Experts have expressed their concerns as: “If we love our children and want them to thrive, we must allow them more time and opportunity to play, not less” [5]. Play teaches children how to work together and how to be comfortably alone. It is a natural and unconscious training to become creative, flexible, adaptable, collaborative, resilient, and able to take on challenges. These are the skills we want our graduates to master. Children are capable of developing those skills very early in their lives, if we only give them time to play.

3. Description of the Need for an Innovative School Like Inventa Academy

Learning by doing and peer tutoring are the most effective strategies for deep learning, as shown in the so-called Learning Pyramid (Fig. 2). The Learning Pyramid was proposed about 6 decades ago but unfortunately most of the current teaching methodologies are still based on lecturing [6].

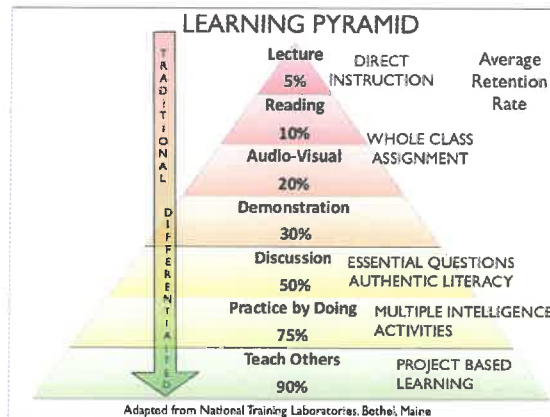


Figure 2. The Learning Pyramid

For the United States of America to be competitive in the 21st Century, and for our children to be successful, we must act now. The future of work is here. Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence, whether we understand them or not, are already around us. Companies are constantly training and re-training employees to keep up with the demands of our ever-changing markets, technologies and needs. But how can employers successfully re-train people with fixed mindsets? Now more than ever, recruiters are looking for individuals with high adaptability, creativity, resilience and growth mindset, a skill set that our old, industrial revolution-serving education cannot create. We need to equip students with the tools to innovate, to adapt, to solve problems under high ethical professionalism, to work synergistically in this global society, to challenge the status quo with profound integrity, and to be ready to shape their own lives and pave the path for those generations that will come after them.

Inventa Academy will exist to support the rapidly evolving marketplace, the 21st Century technological industry, emerging eco-friendly occupations and all the jobs yet to be created. We are here to make sure that all these industries find the talent they need right here in our community. Talent is here, our children have untapped, unimagined, and unbelievable potential, ready to explode and show the world that they can drive this economy, they can change the unchangeable, they can create a better present and future.

Our children's talent is enormous. We are here to let their voice speak loud, let their strengths flourish, let them own their education, let their dreams come true. We are here to protect their ingenuity, to grow their creativity, to guide their development, to support their multiple intelligences, to strengthen their self-confidence, and of course to celebrate their successes along this magnificent journey. The time is now, our children are waiting for an opportunity to shine, to find meaning and purpose in their lives and their education. We are ready to witness their extraordinary accomplishments in making this world a better place.

4. Team

4.1 Planning Team

We are a team of professionals coming from academia, military, business, education and mental health background, with working experience in several countries such as Mexico, Japan, Austria, and Germany, besides the US. We all share a strong passion for serving children and for providing unique opportunities for them to grow in a nurturing environment that sparks their inner curiosity and boosts their self-confidence. The main planning team members are:

Name	Expertise
Veronica Corral, PhD	Scientist, Assistant Professor Adjoint Dept. of Physics UCCS. Active volunteer in STEM education. Bilingual.
Sam Palamara	Retired Principal at Bradford School (4-8), Jefferson County (Expeditionary Learning school).
David Koster	Retired US Air Force Officer. Active volunteer in STEM education.
Myna Carter	Former teacher, homeschool parent. Bilingual.
Julie Hudak	Independent Clinical Social Worker and Therapist.
Rosa Machado	Graduate student of Electrical Engineering at UCCS. Bilingual.
Adam Combs	US Air Force Veteran. Undergraduate student of the Bachelor of Innovation at UCCS.
Marco Martinez	Math High School teacher and Principal at Albuquerque Public Schools. Bilingual.
Laura Corral	Math and Career and Technical Education High School teacher at Albuquerque Public Schools. Bilingual.

4.2 Partnerships

We also have a diverse team of advisors and partners that are either providing their expertise now during the planning period or have committed to support the school once we open. Our partners will support us mainly by providing volunteers that will share their expertise with students to inform and enrich their projects. Other forms of support are: offering a discount on their services, establishing an after school program at the school, bringing their services to the school to benefit families, receiving groups at their facilities during field trips, etc. The following list has both advisors and partners:

Name	Organization
Dimitri Klebe	Mobile Earth & Space Observatory
Brad Miller	Miller Farm Law Firm
Eileen Johnston	James Irwin Charter Schools
Jennifer Savino	Colorado League of Charter Schools
Trish Beyer	Legacy Insurance
Sterling Chase	DuMyon Martial Arts
Nathan Fisher	Animation Production Group
Erin Laney	Omtastic Kids Yoga
Marion Blank	Reading Kingdom
Regina Walter	Educating Children of Color
Sean Svette	Department of Health Sciences, UCCS
Kathy Turzi	One Nation Walking Together
Julissa Soto	Servicios de la Raza (Services for the People)
Robert Sallee	National Space Science & Technology Institute
Heather Pelser	Regional Youth Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Health Solutions
Joy Fleishhacker	Pikes Peak Library District, East Library
SarahEllen Hickie	Pikes Peak Library District, Library 21c
Linda Stahnke	Founder of Rocky Mountain Classical Academy
Lynnane George	Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, UCCS
Paula K. Hergert	Community Health Educator, El Paso County Public Health
Willie Breazell	Former D11 Board Member
Bob Null	Former D11 Board Member
Joe Barrera	Professor of History, retired
Ted Mische	Board Member of New Summit Charter School
Steve Oliveri	Tap Root Cooperative, Farm to School Initiative
Kathleen Fitzpatrick	National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity
Marc Straub	Cool Science
Paul Valdez	GlobalED Solutions, Inc.

KiMar Gartman	Catalyst Accelerator
Andrew Coors	Steelhead Composites
Kandy Ruiz	TRIO Site Coordinator, Colorado State University Pueblo
David Flanagan	Palmer High School
William Vogl	Vogl Homestead, regenerative farming
Linda Meredith	CPCD Head Start
Chelsea Gaylord	Economic Development Project Manager, City of Colorado Springs

References

- [1] Core Practices - A Vision for Improving Schools, EL Education, 2018.
- [2] L. Katz and S.C. Chard, Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach, 3rd ed., Praeger, California, USA, 2014.
- [3] About the Comer School Development Program; Web. 03/07/2019;
<https://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/communitypartnerships/comer/>
- [4] Hedrick Smith, Comer School Development Program. Web. 03/07/2019; available at:
<http://www.pbs.org/makingschoolswork/sbs/csp/jamescomer.html>
- [5] Siobhan O'Connor, The Science of Play in The Science of Childhood, TIME, 2017
- [6] Expanding the Repertoire to Support Student, Teaching and Learning Activities: Emerging Issues in the Practice of University Learning and Teaching 2005; 1. Available at
<http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/1933/>.