



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION DIAGNOSTIC

Prepared for Addison Central Unified School District

July 2022



INTRODUCTION

Addison Central Unified School District (Addison and ACSD used interchangeably) has prioritized a systemic and strategic approach to addressing core issues of equity districtwide through an Equity Audit to diagnose key issues and begin engaging their community around equity-focused conversations. To support Addison's efforts in engaging district stakeholder voices, Hanover designed, administered, and analyzed the results of an Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Diagnostic Survey. This survey solicited feedback and perceptions from students (Grades 6 and higher), parents/guardians, and staff regarding the district's current efforts to provide an equitable and welcoming learning and work environment. Specifically, the DEI diagnostic addresses constructs related to diversity in terms of ethnicity, race, culture, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic background. The results of this survey are intended to establish baseline perceptions from stakeholders throughout the district and Hanover recommends Addison conduct the DEI Diagnostic annually to gauge changes in the equity environment over time.

Hanover analyzed the results of the DEI Diagnostic and reports these results in full via an interactive Power BI dashboard. The dashboard includes all answers to all questions with supporting visualizations, filters, and the ability to view results by certain segmentations (e.g., by role, by race/ethnicity, by grade-band, by gender identity). Hanover synthesized these results into several Recommendations and Key Findings which we share in this Executive Summary report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the survey, Hanover recommends Addison consider the following actions:



Improve the learning environment in Addison Central Unified School District (ACSD) schools by providing staff with additional resources to identify and mitigate bullying. Most (85%) students, staff, and parents consider it essential or a high priority for the district to provide a welcoming and safe environment for students of all backgrounds, but only 64% of students agree or strongly agree that they feel safe at school. Addressing student perceptions of safety is multi-factorial, but most students believe that one of the issues is bullying. A moderate proportion (60%) of student respondents agree or strongly agree that bullying is a problem at their school. Staff are less aware of this issue (43% agree or strongly agree that bullying is a problem at their school). Improving staff ability to recognize signs of bullying is a first step toward addressing this issue. Empowering them with the skills to mitigate bullying will help students to feel safer at school.



Ensure that high-quality resources are equitably distributed across schools in the district and hold school-level administrators accountable for equitable access to all courses. Just under 80% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the district should prioritize equal distribution of high-quality resources across schools and equal access to courses for all students. At this time, only 24% of staff respondents agree or strongly agree that resources are equally distributed across all district schools, and just 62% of staff respondents agree or strongly agree that students from all backgrounds have access to all classes.



Improve equity in the high school instructional and social environment by carving out time for staff to collaborate on strategies for equitable instruction and by providing additional opportunities for staff training/professional development in equity-related topics. Overall, 74% of respondents recognize the efforts of adults in ACSD schools to treat all students fairly; however, only 64% of high school level respondents indicate that adults in their school/their child's school treat students from all backgrounds fairly. Perceptions of unequal treatment extend to the classroom, as well. Only 57% of respondents at the high school level agree or strongly agree that teachers grade assignments fairly. The district should ensure that teachers are aware of these perceptions and provide additional support. Related, fewer than half of staff respondents agree or strongly agree that their school provides enough high-quality professional development on equity related topics (36%) or time to collaborate on strategies for equitable instruction (44%).

KEY FINDINGS



PRIORITIES AND OVERALL PERCEPTIONS

Ensuring a welcoming and safe school environment for students of diverse backgrounds is respondents' top priority for the Addison Central Unified School District (ACSD). Indeed, 85% of respondents overall consider this to be a high priority or essential.

- There are no significant differences by role, school level, or race-ethnicity in the proportion of respondents who prioritize a welcoming and safe school environment.
- 69% of student respondents agree or strongly agree that they feel welcome at school.
- 64% of student respondents agree or strongly agree that they feel safe at school.

Other priorities include equal access to all courses, to high-quality resources, and to all extracurricular activities. Overall, just under 80% of all respondents indicate that equal access in these areas is a high priority or essential.

- There are no significant differences by role or race-ethnicity in the proportion of respondents who prioritize equal access to courses, resources, and extracurricular activities, but there are differences by school level. A slightly lower proportion of high school parent and staff respondents consider equal access to high-quality resources (80%) to be a high priority or essential than do parent and staff respondents (88%) at elementary schools (88%) or middle schools (87%). Similarly, a lower proportion of high school staff or parent respondents consider equal access to extracurricular activities (67%) to be a high priority or essential than do parent and staff respondents at elementary schools (82%) or middle schools (83%).
- Although 81% of student respondents agree or strongly agree that they have access to all classes, only 62% of staff agree or strongly agree that students from all backgrounds have access to all classes.
- Although 91% of students agree or strongly agree that they have access to extracurricular activities, only 70% of staff agree or strongly agree that students from all backgrounds have access to extracurricular activities.
- Just 24% of staff respondents agree or strongly agree that resources are equally distributed across all district schools.

Top spending priorities for the one-time ARP ESSER grant funds include mental health and prevention supports, teacher supports to meet increased educational and social emotional needs of a school, literacy instruction and supports, and targeted behavioral supports. Approximately 95% of respondents identify investments in these areas as somewhat a priority or a high priority. Most (70% or more of respondents) agree or strongly agree that schools support students, families, and staff from different backgrounds. On most dimensions of the schools' diversity, a higher proportion of student respondents agree or agree strongly that the school supports all people than do parent or staff respondents. For example, approximately 80% of student respondents agree or agree strongly that their school supports people from all races/ethnicities/skin colors and people of all cultures compared with approximately 63% of parent and staff respondents. Continued, 76% of students agree or strongly agree that their school supports people of all religions compared with approximately 60% of parent and teacher respondents. Finally, 73% of student respondents agree or strongly agree that their school supports people from different socioeconomic backgrounds compared with 69% of parent respondents and 64% of staff respondents.



ACADEMICS & INSTRUCTION

Student collaboration

Most parents, staff, and student respondents are in favor of student collaboration with other students from different backgrounds and of different ability levels.

- 94% of parents agree or agree strongly that they want their child to collaborate with students from different backgrounds, and 85% of students report that they like working with students from different backgrounds.
 - Student interest in working with students from other backgrounds is higher among respondents in middle school (92%) than among respondents in high school (79%).
- 92% of staff respondents indicate that they want students at different ability levels to collaborate.
 - More parent respondents express interest in having their child collaborate with students who are performing at a higher level (88%) than those who are performing at a lower level (76%), but in both cases the proportion is quite high.
 - The proportion of non-white or multi-racial parent respondents who want their child collaborating with students who are struggling is higher (96%) than the proportion of white parents (77%).
 - The proportion of parents with a child in elementary (92%) or middle school (90%) who want their child collaborating with students who perform better than they do is higher than the proportion of parents with a child in high school (77%).
 - Over 75% of student respondents indicate that they like helping other students learn (77%), and they like learning from other students (76%).
- Collaboration among students of different backgrounds and among students of different ability levels is more common in elementary school than middle or high school.
 - Overall, 32% of respondents report that they/their child/their students worked on projects with students from different backgrounds often or very often in the week prior to the survey. This kind of collaboration is most frequent in elementary school (43%) and least frequent in high school (23%).
 - Overall, 37% of respondents report that they/their child/their students helped or got help from other students often or very often in the week prior to the survey. This type of collaboration is more frequent in elementary school (62%) than in middle (38%) or high school (26%). A higher proportion of teacher and other certified staff respondents (64%) report this type of collaboration among their students than parent respondents (45%) or student respondents (30%).

Diversity in the curriculum

- Most (73% of respondents) agree or strongly agree that teachers are using books, stories, or lesson materials from many different perspectives. Agreement or strong agreement is more common among white respondents (75%) than non-white or multi-racial respondents (64%).
- Approximately one-third of respondents report that they/their child/their students were learning about people from different backgrounds (32%) or talking with students from different backgrounds (38%) often or very often in the week prior to the survey.
- Overall, 54% of respondents agree or strongly agree that teachers are engaging students in meaningful conversations about diversity, but there are substantial differences of experience by role and race/ethnicity. Most staff (64%) and parent (55%) respondents agree or strongly agree that teachers are engaging students in meaningful conversations about diversity compared with 46% of student respondents. On the other hand, 54% of white respondents agree or strongly agree that teachers are engaging students in

meaningful conversations about diversity compared with 38% of non-white or multi-racial respondents.

- Fewer than 30% of respondents indicate that students engaged in classroom conversations about social justice (29%), systemic discrimination/institutional racism (21%), social action (20%) diversity (20%), race-related topics (19%), or implicit biases (18%) often or very often in the week prior to the survey.
- The majority (64% of respondents) agree or strongly agree that teachers encourage students to speak out against discrimination and racism, including most students (65%) and staff (72%).

Diversity among teachers

- Most parent, staff, and high school student respondents do not agree that district schools/their school/their child's school hires or retains teachers from diverse backgrounds. Just 20% of these respondents agree or strongly agree that the schools hire teachers from diverse backgrounds and fewer (17%) agree or strongly agree that schools can retain teachers from diverse backgrounds.
- Grade 6-8 student respondents report a higher level of teacher diversity in their schools. Over half (57%) of middle school students agree or strongly agree that their teachers come from many different backgrounds.
- Most staff respondents do not agree that staff or student diversity is similar across all district schools - 31% of staff respondents agree or strongly agree that student diversity is similar across all schools, and 40% agree or strongly agree that staff diversity is similar across all schools.

Equity in assessments

- The majority of staff agree or strongly agree that assessments are taken in equitable conditions (76%), are equitable (70%), and are not culturally biased (67%).
- Overall, 65% of respondents agree or strongly agree that teachers grade assignments fairly. This perspective is most common among elementary school level respondents (76%) and white respondents (67%), and least common among high school level respondents (57%) and non-white or multi-racial respondents (51%).
- Nevertheless, 76% of respondents believe that it is easier to get good grades with some teachers than with others. A greater proportion of student respondents (89%) agree or strongly agree that this disparity exists than parent (59%) or staff (47%) respondents. Respondent agreement that some teachers give higher grades than others is most common at the high school level (84%) and middle school level (84%) and much less common among respondents at the elementary school level (27%).
- Only 57% of respondents agree or strongly agree that students understand how assignments and tests are graded.

Support for staff

- Fewer than half of staff respondents agree or strongly agree that their school/district schools provide enough quality professional development on equity related topics (36%), support teachers with their struggling students (39%), work to reduce the effect of implicit biases and systematic discrimination on school decisions (40%), provide staff time to collaborate on strategies for equitable instruction (44%), or support for culturally sustaining practices and pedagogies (49%).



SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Student-Adult relationships

- Most respondents agree or strongly agree that adults in Addison schools respect (78%) and care about (81%) students of all backgrounds, treat students from all backgrounds fairly (74%), and care about and support students beyond their schoolwork (69%).

- These perspectives are most common among respondents at the elementary school level and least common among respondents at the high school level.
 - Approximately 80% of elementary school level (81%) and middle school level (79%) respondents agree or strongly agree that adults treat students from all backgrounds fairly compared with 64% of respondents at the high school level.
 - The gap is similar with regard to adult respect for students of all backgrounds; 86% of respondents at the elementary school level agree or agree strongly that adults respect students from all backgrounds compared with 69% at the high school level.
- Agreement or strong agreement that adults in the Addison schools understand students' backgrounds and experiences is less common. Just over half of parents (51%) and staff (57%) agree or strongly agree that adults in schools understand students' experiences and backgrounds. A comparable proportion (50%) of student respondents agree or strongly agree that adults in their school understand them and their experiences; 58% of student respondents agree or strongly agree that adults in their school understand their culture and background.
 - These perspectives are more common among white respondents than non-white or multi-racial respondents. 62% of white student respondents agree or strongly agree that adults in their school understand their culture and background compared with 45% of non-white or multi-racial student respondents. 54% of white staff and parent respondents agree or strongly agree that adults understand students' experiences and backgrounds compared with 26% of non-white or multi-racial staff or parent respondents.

Student-Student Relationships

- Fewer than half of all respondents agree or strongly agree that students care about (48%), respect (47%), or treat other students fairly (44%) regardless of their background. There are no statistically significant differences in these views by role.
- Substantial differences exist regarding the perspectives on all of these student-student relationship issues by school level. More than 60% of respondents at the elementary school level agree or strongly agree that students care about (76%), respect (66%), or treat other students fairly (64%) regardless of their background. At the high school level, 40% or fewer than agree or strongly agree that students care about (40%), respect (40%), or treat other students fairly (37%) regardless of their background.



DISCIPLINE & SAFETY

Overall, 67% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they/their child feel(s) safe at school. Feeling safe at school is most common among staff (76%) and respondents at the elementary school level (83%), and least common among students (64%) and respondents at the middle school level (57%).

A greater proportion of student respondents and middle school respondents perceive bullying as a problem at school compared to respondents overall. Accordingly, 60% of student respondents and 76% of middle school level respondents agree or strongly agree that bullying is a problem at their school compared with 43% of parent and staff respondents, 39% of high school level respondents, and 27% of elementary school level respondents.

Most (63% of respondents) agree or strongly agree that adults at schools clearly communicate the rules, and 56% agree or strongly agree that the consequences for breaking the rules are clearly communicated, but only 53% of respondents agree or strongly agree that adults make sure that students have the same consequences no matter what the student's background.

- A higher proportion of student respondents agree or strongly agree that adults clearly communicate the rules (63%) and the consequences for breaking them (59%) than staff respondents. There is no difference by role in the proportion of respondents who agree or strongly agree that all students face the same consequences.
- There are no differences by race/ethnicity in agreement or strong agreement that rules and their consequences are clearly communicated, but there are differences in perceptions of fair enforcement. Over half (56%) of white respondents agree or strongly agree that all students face the same consequences regardless of their background compared with 48% of non-white or multi-racial respondents.

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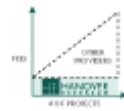
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