

Equity Audit Report

Prepared for:

**Argo
Community
High School
217**

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Table of Contents

	Page
Executive Summary.....	1
Section 1	
Introduction	4
Research.....	6
Historical Efforts to Address Equity at Argo Community High School 217.....	12
Equity Audit Process	13
Needs Assessment	19
Section 2	
Quantitative Data.....	29
Table Categories	
Demographics	31
Discipline	34
Honors/AP Participation.	40
IEP Services	45
CTE Participation.....	50
Retention	52
Assessments.....	53
Graduation and Final Grades	55
Credit Recovery and Summer School	62
Dropout and Outplacement.....	66
Absenteeism, Tardiness, Truancy, Transfers	69
Staff Demographics, Staff Licensure/Endorsements & BOE Demographics.	75
Languages	78
Section 3	
Qualitative Focus Groups Strands	80
Themes aligned with Strands	
Systems	81
Teaching and Learning	84
Student Voice, Climate/Culture	89
Professional Learning	96
Family and Community as Agency	98
Section 4	
Findings and Recommendations.....	101
List of Frequent Abbreviations.....	118
Glossary.....	119
References	121

List of Tables

	Page
Section 1	
Table 1.1: Historical, current, and projected enrollment in U.S. K-12 public schools by race/ethnicity	10
Table 1.2: Five-year difference of racial/ethnic diversity of students enrolled in Illinois PreK-12 public schools.....	11
Table 1.3: Five-year difference of special population enrolled in Illinois PreK-12 public schools.....	11
Table 1.4: Focus Groups and Participants.....	15
Section 2	
Table 2.1: Student demographic count by race/ethnicity	31
Table 2.2: Student demographic count by special population	32
Table 2.3: Student count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population.....	33
Table 2.4: Student discipline count by race/ethnicity	34
Table 2.5: Student discipline count by special populations	35
Table 2.6: Student discipline count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	36
Table 2.7: Student discipline count by gender	37
Table 2.8: Student discipline count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE	38
Table 2.9: Student discipline count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE.....	39
Table 2.10: Student count in honors/AP by race/ethnicity	40
Table 2.11: Student count in honors/AP by special populations	41
Table 2.12: Student count in honors/AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	42
Table 2.13: Student count in honors/AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations and FEMALE	43
Table 2.14: Student count in honors/AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations and MALE.....	44
Table/Chart 2.15: Student INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	45
Table/Chart 2.16: Student HEARING IMPAIRMENT count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	45

List of Tables (continued)

	Page
Table/Chart 2.17: Student SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	46
Table/Chart 2.18: Student EMOTIONAL DISABILITY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	46
Table/Chart 2.19: Student OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	47
Table/Chart 2.20: Student SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	47
Table/Chart 2.21: Student DEAF BLINDESS count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	48
Table/Chart 2.22: Student MULTIPLE DISABILITIES count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	48
Table/Chart 2.23: Student AUTISM count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	49
Table/Chart 2.24: Student TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	49
Table 2.25: Student CTE participation count by race/ethnicity.....	50
Table 2.26: Student CTE participation count by race/ethnicity and special populations	51
Table 2.27: Student retention count by race/ethnicity and special populations.	52
Table/Chart 2.28: Student assessment count in READING by race/ethnicity	53
Table/Chart 2.29: Student assessment count in READING by special population	53
Table/Chart 2.30: Student assessment count in MATH by race/ethnicity	54
Table/Chart 2.31: Student assessment count in MATH by special population	54
Table/Chart 2.32: Student graduation percent by race/ethnicity.....	55
Table/Chart 2.33: Student graduation percent by special populations	55
Table/Chart 2.34: SY 2016-17, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	56
Table/Chart 2.35: SY 2017-18, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	56
Table/Chart 2.36: SY 2018-19, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	57
Table/Chart 2.37: SY 2019-20, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	57
Table/Chart 2.38: SY 2020-21, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	58
Table/Chart 2.39: SY 2016-17, Student final grade by special populations	59
Table/Chart 2.40: SY 2017-18, Student final grade by special populations	59
Table/Chart 2.41: SY 2018-19, Student final grade by special populations	60
Table/Chart 2.42: SY 2019-20, Student final grade by special populations	60

List of Tables (continued)

	Page
Table/Chart 2.43: SY 2020-21, Student final grade by special populations	61
Table 2.44: Student credit recovery count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE	63
Table 2.45: Student credit recovery count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE	63
Table 2.46: Student summer school count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE	64
Table 2.47: Student summer school count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE	65
Table/Chart 2.48: Student dropout percent by race/ethnicity	66
Table/Chart 2.49: Student dropout percent by special populations.....	66
Table 2.50: Student outplacement count by race/ethnicity	67
Table 2.51: Student outplacement count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	68
Table 2.52: Student absenteeism count by race/ethnicity.....	69
Table 2.53: Student absenteeism count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	70
Table/Chart 2.54: Student tardiness count by race/ethnicity	71
Table/Chart 2.55: Student tardiness by race/ethnicity and special populations .	71
Table 2.56: Student truancy count by race/ethnicity	72
Chart 2.57: Student truancy count by race/ethnicity and special populations....	73
Table/Chart 2.58: Student transfers count by race/ethnicity	74
Table/Chart 2.59: Teacher and administrator demographic percent by race/ethnicity	75
Table/Chart 2.60: Teacher and administrator demographic percent by gender .	75
Table/Chart 2.61: Staff licensure/endorsement count	76
Table/Chart 2.62: BOE demographic count by race/ethnicity	77
Table/Chart 2.63: BOE demographic count by gender.....	77
Table 2.64: ELL Languages Identified (not English).....	78
 Section 3	
Table 3.1: Focus group themes aligned with SYSTEMS	83
Table 3.2: Focus group themes aligned with TEACHING AND LEARNING	87
Table 3.3: Focus group themes aligned with STUDENT VOICE, CLIMATE & CULTURE	94
Table 3.4: Focus group themes aligned with PROFESSIONAL LEARNING.....	97
Table 3.5: Focus group themes aligned with FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AS AGENCY	99

List of Charts

	Page
Section 2	
Chart 2.1: Student demographic percent by race/ethnicity.....	31
Chart 2.2: Student demographic percent by special population.....	32
Chart 2.3: Student demographic percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population.....	33
Chart 2.4: Student discipline percent by race/ethnicity.....	34
Chart 2.5: Student discipline percent by special populations	35
Chart 2.6: Student discipline percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	36
Chart 2.7: Student discipline percent by gender	37
Chart 2.8: Student discipline percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE	38
Chart 2.9: Student discipline percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE	39
Chart 2.10: Student percent in honors/AP by race/ethnicity.....	40
Chart 2.11: Student percent in honors/AP by special populations	41
Chart 2.12: Student percent in honors/AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	42
Chart 2.13: Student percent in honors/AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations and FEMALE	43
Chart 2.14: Student percent in honors/AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations and MALE	44
Table/Chart 2.15: Student INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	45
Table/Chart 2.16: Student HEARING IMPAIRMENT count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	45
Table/Chart 2.17: Student SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	46
Table/Chart 2.18: Student EMOTIONAL DISABILITY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	46
Table/Chart 2.19: Student OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	47
Table/Chart 2.20: Student SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	47
Table/Chart 2.21: Student DEAF BLINDESS count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	48
Table/Chart 2.22: Student MULTIPLE DISABILITIES count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	48

List of Charts (continued)

	Page
Table/Chart 2.23: Student AUTISM count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	49
Table/Chart 2.24: Student TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations	49
Chart 2.25: Student CTE participation percent by race/ethnicity	50
Chart 2.26: Student CTE participation percent by race/ethnicity and special populations	51
Chart 2.27: Student retention percent by race/ethnicity and special populations	52
Table/Chart 2.28: Student assessment count in READING by race/ethnicity	53
Table/Chart 2.29: Student assessment count in READING by special population	53
Table/Chart 2.30: Student assessment count in MATH by race/ethnicity	54
Table/Chart 2.31: Student assessment count in MATH by special population	54
Table/Chart 2.32: Student graduation percent by race/ethnicity.....	55
Table/Chart 2.33: Student graduation percent by special populations	55
Table/Chart 2.34: SY 2016-17, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	56
Table/Chart 2.35: SY 2017-18, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	56
Table/Chart 2.36: SY 2018-19, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	57
Table/Chart 2.37: SY 2019-20, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity.....	57
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Table/Chart 2.40: SY 2017-18, Student final grade by special populations	59
Table/Chart 2.41: SY 2018-19, Student final grade by special populations	60
Table/Chart 2.42: SY 2019-20, Student final grade by special populations	60
Table/Chart 2.43: SY 2020-21, Student final grade by special populations	61
Chart 2.44: Student credit recovery count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE	63
Chart 2.45: Student credit recovery count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE	63
Table 2.46: Student summer school count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE	64
Table 2.47: Student summer school count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE	65
Table/Chart 2.48: Student dropout percent by race/ethnicity	66
Table/Chart 2.49: Student dropout percent by special populations.....	66
Chart 2.50: Student outplacement percent by race/ethnicity	67
Chart 2.51: Student outplacement percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	68
Chart 2.52: Student absenteeism percent by race/ethnicity	69

List of Charts (continued)

	Page
Chart 2.53: Student absenteeism percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations.....	70
Table/Chart 2.54: Student tardiness count by race/ethnicity	71
Table/Chart 2.55: Student tardiness by race/ethnicity and special populations .	72
Chart 2.56: Student truancy percent by race/ethnicity.....	72
Chart 2.57: Student truancy percent by race/ethnicity and special populations	73
Table/Chart 2.58: Student transfers count by race/ethnicity	74
Table/Chart 2.59: Teacher and administrator demographic percent by race/ethnicity	75
Table/Chart 2.60: Teacher and administrator demographic percent by gender .	75
Table/Chart 2.61: Staff licensure/endorsement count	76
Table/Chart 2.62: BOE demographic count by race/ethnicity	77
Table/Chart 2.63: BOE demographic count by gender.....	77
Table 2.64: ELL Languages Identified (not English).....	78

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary is a brief synopsis of the equity audit findings. All findings are categorized using an accountability framework – *Five Strands of Systemic Equity*[®] - which serves as a roadmap to organizational equity. The full equity audit report that follows provides comprehensive information about the purpose, process, quantitative and qualitative analysis¹, findings, and considerations for next steps informed by current research.

SYSTEMS

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

- 1.1 Develop common language around equity, and effectively communicate it with all stakeholders.
- 1.2 Produce a Board policy, a Board statement and/or district statement on equity.
- 1.3 Implement intentional, measurable, accountable and transparent equity goals.
- 1.4 Increase strategic practices to attract and retain highly qualified diverse teachers and administrators.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

- 2.1 Embed culturally responsive curriculum and resources in each content and grade.
- 2.2 Analyze the root causes of academic achievement disparities within the POC population.
- 2.3 Evaluate the equitable access and opportunities to honors and advanced placement courses by Black/African American students.
- 2.4 Assess the integrity of academic supports and rigor offered for English Language Learners.

¹ Analysis and findings are customized to the district data, input and information ascertained.

STUDENT VOICE, CLIMATE AND CULTURE

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

- 3.1 Interrogate the structural root causes of disproportionate racial discipline outcomes.
- 3.2 Develop a student equity advisory committee.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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

- 4.1 Continuously train all staff on educational equity.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AS AGENCY

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

- 5.1 Cultivate and actively collaborate with a community equity advisory committee.
- 5.2 Ensure communication to families, in multiple languages as needed.

Section 1

INTRODUCTION

During school year 2021-22, **Argo Community High School 217** engaged in an equity audit. An equity audit is an initiative-taking opportunity to critically examine areas of strength and needed improvement with particular attention to historically marginalized groups or identities⁶ (Skrla et al, 2009; Smith et al, 2017).

What is equity?

There are numerous definitions of equity, and each district decidedly adopt or create one that adheres to their values. The consistent language in educational equity definitions include fairness in access and opportunity for all students. This becomes especially salient among historically marginalized groups due to historical stratifications. Educational equity embraces a transformative approach to directly address issues of oppression and biases experienced by stated identities in pursuit of a fair and just society (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003; Shields, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gorski, 2018; Blankstein et al, 2016; Aguilar, 2020; Chardin & Novak, 2021). According to the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, educational equity is defined as:

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

The American Institute for Research recognizes a similar definition as it states, “Educational equity is achieved when all students receive the resources, opportunities, skills and knowledge they need to succeed in our democratic society.” Leading organizations in education and equity advocate for the disruption of biases, exclusion and oppression in schools. Professional entities such as the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development

⁶ Identities include but are not limited to, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), gender, gender identity, sexuality, socio-economic level, differently abled individuals, citizenship status, English Language Learners (ELL)/Emergent Bilinguals (EB), and minoritized religions.

(ASCD), Learning for Justice, Learning Forward, Rethinking Schools, Teaching for Change, TeachPlus, The Education Trust and Zinn Project advocate that equity aids to mitigate underpinnings of systemic racism, classism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, and other forms of identity hate. In 2021, the National School Board Association (NSBA) declared the following:

We affirm in our actions that each student can, will, and shall learn. We recognize that based on factors including but not limited to disability, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, students are deprived of equitable educational opportunities. Educational equity is the intentional allocation of resources, instruction, and opportunities according to need, requiring that discriminatory practices, prejudices, and beliefs be identified and eradicated.

The NSBA delved deeper on issues of equity in schools by developing the Dismantling Institutional Racism in Education Initiative (DIRE)⁷ which urges school systems to recognize how systemic racism shows up in educational institutions and structures. The acknowledgment of identity disparities is expressed by many national professional associations as well: National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), National Education Association (NEA) and The School Superintendents Association (AASA).

In Illinois, several professional associations also recognize the importance of equity among students such as: Illinois Arts Education Association (IAEA), Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education (IACTE), Illinois Association for Gifted Children (IAGC), Illinois Association of Multilingual Multicultural Education (IAMME), Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB), Illinois Association of Teachers of English (IATE), Illinois Athletic Directions Association (IADA), Illinois Education Association (IEA), Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA), Illinois High School Association (IHSA), Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA), Illinois Principals Association (IPA), Illinois School Counselor Association (ISCA), Illinois Science Teaching Association (ISTA), as well as the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

⁷ Retrievable at [nsba.org](https://www.nsba.org)

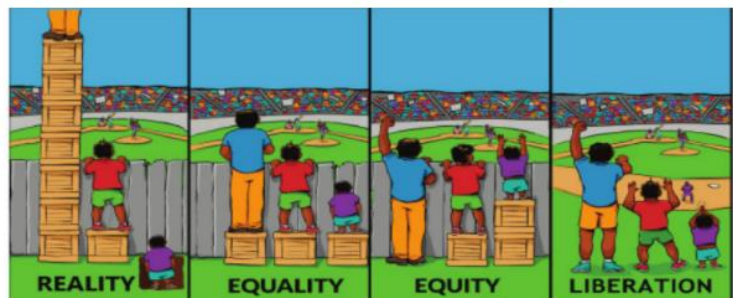
RESEARCH

To understand equity, one must understand inequalities and how public goods and structured sectors – criminal justice, education, employment, finance, health care, housing, security, etc., - have been unfairly designed (Healey et al, 2019; McGhee, 2022). These systems were not created to benefit all members of society. Current efforts to improve the deep and historical inequalities are insufficient. To aim solely for equality functions under the premise of same access and opportunity for all, which would be ideal if all people experienced the same resources and treatment (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Tatum, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999; Lewis & Diamond, 2015). Equality is deficient of facts. It assumes sameness despite differences. It may be ideal, but equality falls short of reality. Equity, on the other hand, accelerates access and opportunity based on positionality or differences. It addresses unique circumstances with innovative solutions (Chardin & Novak, 2021; Gary, 2020; Kim, 2020; Muhammad & Cruz, 2019; Peters, 2019). Educational equity mandates committed, systemic transformations at all levels to mitigate the inequalities while leveraging equitable access and opportunity for each student (Kincheloe, 2008; Gorski, 2018; Aguilar, 2020). For example, consider a new Kindergarten class of students in which one group had access to early childhood education and another did not. The students advantaged by an early childhood education may have mastered multiple sight words, can count to 100 and state their ABC's. The other Kindergarten group of students that did not have exposure to early childhood education may be absent of these skills. A strict equality approach would not allow a Kindergarten teacher to personalize learning for students. Whether it is opportunity to rigorous curriculum or providing supports for academic growth, neither would exist because equality disallows personalization. This outcome would be harmful to all students and demeans the purpose of schooling. Equity in schools, however, protects the integrity of educating the whole child.

For decades, school districts across the country have increased their knowledge, skills, and commitment to educational equity. The growing attention is welcomed, and yet increasingly requires understanding. First, educational equity cannot be perceived as an initiative or trend. It is not new. The pursuit of equity has existed for a long time as evidence through in legal landmark decisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to rulings of inclusion and

support for in special education students and English Language Learners (Kim, 2020). Acknowledging that educational equity does not end with legal rulings is the next consideration to fully comprehend it. Equity in education is a transformative shift that encapsulates the ways schools should operate. It places the humanity aspect to care for the whole child and their learning (Noddings, 2013). It reminds us that the premise of schools is to cultivate future generations as contributing members of a greater society. Principles of human development emerge, and incapsulate such knowledge frameworks as socio-economics and democracy (Freire, 1970; Howard, 2010; Diem & Welton, 2021). Finally, equity demands reckoning with the uncomfortable history of oppression experienced by marginalized groups. Unfortunately, the consequences of history is not exclusive to the past. Biased attitudes, beliefs, behavior and mindsets about people continue to permeate today (Rothstein, 2017; McGhee, 2022; Gorski, 2018; Bocala & Holman, 2017). Although we have made national progress to dismantle systemic oppression, the unequal distribution of access and opportunity remains flanked by the distribution of power (McGhee, 2022; Rothstein, 2017). People in positions of power must be deliberate in their decision-making to seek out knowledge and awareness that is unorthodox to their norm (Roegman, et al, 2020). Since all humans are biases and tend to make decisions based on their narrow views and experiences, it is critically important for those in power to check their biases and how it may impact systems and perpetuate -ism's (Terry, 1996, Desmond & Emirbayer, 2020). As schools are the only formalized institution designated to cultivate core knowledge, skills and critical thinking on new and old content, it is imperative that to be responsive to the country's growing diversity and global connectiveness.

The increasing popularity around equity has led to several visualizations of it. A quick internet search yields many images including this⁸ popular one (Lynch, et al, 2020).The image in the far left column represents the *reality* that not all people are afforded the same advantages,



⁸ Creator, Craig Froehle, Ph.D., University of Cincinnati

and that some individuals may have greater advantages than others thus creating unequal opportunities. While the second image to the left points out that when equal resources are provided, it does not lead to *equality* as some individuals still maintain their advantages and disadvantages. The third column image or the one with the word *equity* underneath indicates that we advance toward fairness and justice when individuals are given what they need to be successful. The fourth and final image in the last column exclaims that *liberation* is when the fence is removed. Metaphorically, the fence represents the systems that perpetuate inequitable outcomes, because it serves as a barrier to equity. (Lynch, et al, 2020).

For districts to determine their positionality in advancing systemic equity, those in power must practice self-reflection, vulnerability and growth mindsets (Dweck, 2007). They must consider the context of how dominant identities have been centered. This is the most important and challenging shift in the educational equity journey because it is personal, and calls into question one's principles (Tatum, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999; Aguilar, 2020; Smith et al, 2017; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Simmons, 2021; España & Herrera, 2020). The self-awareness and collaborative discussions among colleagues should lead to a continual examination and improvement in schools (Freire, 1970; Kincheloe, 2008; Gorski, 2018). Although, equity does focus on historically marginalized identities, it does not leave out dominant groups. Educational equity is beneficial to all students for its humane and just goals (Boykin & Noguera, 2011; Shields, 2019; Smith et al, 2017; Gorski, 2018). This is important to point out as equity can be misconstrued as taking from one to give to another. Authentic equity does not and never has been about removing advantages from one person or group to give to another or disadvantaged group, but to disrupt the notion of automatic or assumed fairness of all.

Although an equity audit is not exhaustive, it is a prime opportunity to examine positionality in systemic equity. By analyzing various forms of disaggregated data such as race/ethnicity, gender and special populations (e.g., EL, IEP and Free/Reduced Lunch [FRL]) as required by each state's education agency, it can identify objective evidence of gaps and trends (Hammond, 2010; Chenoweth & Theokas, 2012; Edley et al, 2019). Qualitative data in the form of focus groups and/or surveys are also critical as they often contribute profound insights, views and experiences. Although an equity audit can provide a comprehensive analysis, it

cannot fully capture an organization's strengths and weaknesses. For example, in one school, there could be educators that cultivate a sense of belonging and ensure each student thrives academically while there are other classrooms that fail in supporting the whole child and are solely interested in subjective demonstration of content learning.

Equity goals are best reached when plans are made, and school districts that develop an equity-driven plan position themselves for long-term success (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003; Skrla et al, 2009). Research has shown that equity goals or action plans must be customized for the organization as it varies widely. Thus, there is no one size fits all or pre-packaged program to guarantee equity for all students in all school districts. Strategies that suggest "best" practices to meet the needs of all students should be approached with caution. Such suggestions perpetuate singular attitudes that all students will be successful by utilizing one or a few approaches. Kim Anderson, Executive Director for the National Education Association (NEA), stated that the most important challenge facing public education today is equity (Peters, 2019).

As the school district considers its next steps, it may be beneficial to point out that whole system transformations include the following:

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

(Fullan, 2015).

All the recommendations in this equity audit report are firmly grounded in scholarship as well as the unique positionality of **Argo Community High School 217**.

National Student Demographics

The increasing demand by federal and local governments call for state boards of education and school districts to address the academic and opportunity gaps among minoritized demographics, which is the fastest-growing population in the United States. These demographic shifts mirror the global, racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Schools must become the epicenter of modeling a deep understanding of the sociopolitical context and affirm the welcoming benefits of racial and ethnic diverse communities (Wells, et al, 2016). According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there are approximately 56.4 million students enrolled in PreK-12 education. With a majority attending public schools – approximately 50.7 million students. NCES reports the following:

Table 1.1: Historical, current, and projected enrollment in U.S. K-12 public schools by race/ethnicity			
Race/Ethnicity	1995	2021	2029
American Indian/Alaska Native	<1%	<1%	<1%
Asian/Pacific Islander ⁹	4%	6%	7%
Black	17%	15%	15%
Hispanic/Latinx ¹⁰	14%	28%	28%
Two or More Races	NA	5%	6%
White	65%	46%	44%

NA = not available

⁹ Pacific Islander was combined with Asian until 2007. Since 2008, Pacific Islander was its own racial/ethnic category, and from that time rounds to zero.

¹⁰ Hispanic is considered an antiqued term as it refers to people whose origin are from Spain. For the purpose of this report, Hispanic/Latinx will be used as an all-encompassing category for Hispanic/Latina/Latino.

Illinois Student Demographics

In Illinois, there is approximately 1.9 million students enrolled in PreK-12 schools. According to the 2020-21 Illinois Report Card, the chart below represents the student demographics between 2016 and 2021.

Table 1.2: Five-year difference of racial/ethnic diversity of students enrolled in Illinois PreK-12 public schools		
Race/Ethnicity	2016	2021
Asian	4.7%	5.4%
Black/African American	17.3%	16.6%
Hispanic/Latinx	25.5%	27%
Two or More Races	3.2%	3.9%
White	48.8%	46.7%

Attention and resources are also necessary for special populations – ELL, FRL and IEP. According to the 2019-20 Illinois Report Card, the following is reported:

Table 1.3: Five-year difference of special populations enrolled in Illinois PreK-12 public schools		
Special populations	2016	2021
English Language Learner (ELL)	11%	13%
Low Income/Free-Reduced Lunch (FRL)	50%	48%
Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	14%	15%

HISTORICAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS EQUITY AT ARGO COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL 217

As part of the Equity Audit, the district is directed to provide a brief synopsis or bullet-point summary of its equity efforts in the last three to five years. The purpose of capturing this information is provide historical context and accolades to districts' work to advance equity.

- Trainings by Director of Union Professional Issues, Dr. Monique Redeaux-Smith
 - Implicit bias trainings
 - Restorative justice trainings
 - Historical perspective trainings
- Union Equity Task Force formed in 2019-20
- Equity Trainings with Dr. Dubiel
- Equity Audit with Dr. Dubiel
- Increased number of bilingual education classes
- Reduced number of outplaced students in Special Education
- Cultural Celebrations held over the past 7-8 years for:
 - Hispanic Heritage Month
 - Latin-American Literature, AP Spanish Language, and Honors Spanish IV art and literature project
 - Performances by various musical groups
 - Day of the Dead altar and celebration by Spanish classes
 - Hispanic Heritage Month Career Panels
 - Black History Month
 - Poetry workshop with African American Lit classes
 - Black History Month Gospel Choir performs in library and all-school assemblies
 - Black History Month Assemblies in 2019-20 and 2021-22
 - Black History Month Career Panels
 - Women's History Month
 - Art installations created by cross-curricular group of students
 - Women's History Month Career Panels
 - Women's History Month t-shirts

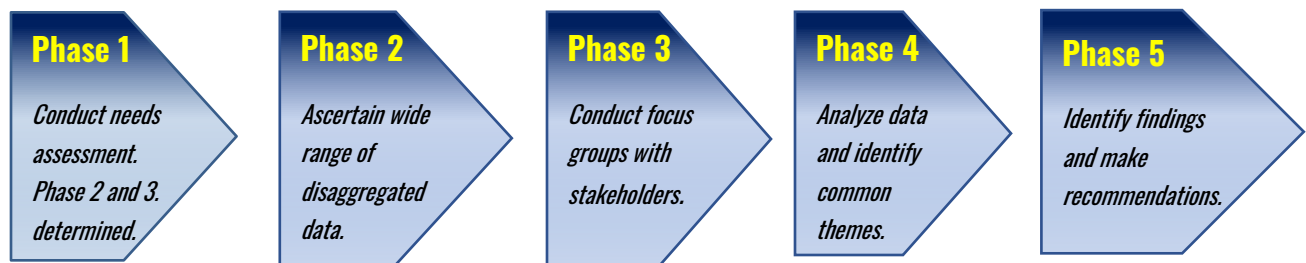
Clubs dedicated to celebrating diversity at Argo Community High School 217

- STRIVE – Club dedicated to creating a safe space for LGBTQ students and allies
- Black Student Union – Club dedicated to promoting Black excellence and culture
- LatinX Concilio – Club dedicated to promoting LatinX excellence and culture

EQUITY AUDIT PROCESS

The *Five Phases of an Equity Audit*® is a fact-finding quantitative and qualitative process that aids in identifying areas of growth, and specifically recommended areas of needed improvement to advance educational equity. This process, often referred to as mixed methods, is an evidence-based approach to collect and analyze data to eliminate biases and weaknesses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The added process of a needs assessment to an equity audit lends towards the triangulation of data aimed to synthesize an understanding of the organization. The Equity Audit timeline is nine months to one year.

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



Pre-Phase 1

District forms a District Equity Leadership Team (DELT). Guidance is provided to district leadership by the auditor into forming a team of 25-30 staff members.

Phase 1

DELT meets with the auditor and conducts a *District/School Assessment on Systemic Equity*® to discuss and rate areas of strengths and needed improvement in its organization. The results of that assessment are a data point in this report (see pages 19-27). During Phase I, DELT is provided with the *Data with an Equity Lens*® document to identify the quantitative data the district will collect and submit to the auditor to analyze. DELT is also provided a bank of sample questions for stakeholder focus groups - staff, students, and parents/guardians/caretakers. For ease of reference, the stakeholder group, parents/guardians/caretakers will be notated as families.

Phase 2

Three to four months are allocated to gather the agreed-upon data.

Phase 3

In alignment with applied social research methods, all focus groups are voluntary and confidential (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). Focus groups occur by stakeholder role, and there is no intermingling of stakeholders in focus groups (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). In other words, students participate with students, staff participate with staff members and so on. Names and identifying information of focus group participants are not used in this report and kept confidential. It should be noted that audits must have finite number of focus groups, and there is no standard number of focus group participants (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). When possible, affinity-specific focus groups have shown to foster culturally responsive approaches to qualitative inquiry (Hall, 2020). A transformative worldview is considered the best for equity audits, as it lends in narrative design, and open-ended inquiries (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Most importantly, the transformative approach in qualitative research is designed to examine issues related to oppression for underrepresented populations in pursuit of better, and just, society (Mertens, 2012; Creswell, & Creswell, 2018). It is important, however, for the district to regularly obtain feedback from its stakeholders and surveys (Johnson & Morgan, 2016).

Quotes from all focus groups were coded and themes identified. Extracted quotes were based on frequency, indicated areas of strength, and needed improvement across the organization while maintaining the authenticity of educational equity through transformative approach (Mertens, 2009; Mertens 2012). The district is responsible for coordinating all focus groups. The number of focus groups is determined within the consultant service package selected by the organization. The structure of dividing the number of focus groups by stakeholders is determined by DELT as they know their community best. Due to time limits, it is critical that all individuals that agree to participate in a focus group show up, as there are no make-ups. This is communicated to potential participants. The table below indicates that actual number of focus groups and participants. All focus groups are confidential and any assertion to identify focus group participants is based on assumption. Any indication of identity during focus groups is withheld in the extracted quotes from Section 3 of this report.

Table 1.4: Focus Groups and Participants		
Focus Groups	Total Number of Focus Groups	Total Number of Participants
Staff	7	49
Students	12	102
Families	2	6
Alumni	1	7
TOTAL	22	166

Students

1. *What do you like most about your school? What do you wish were different about your school?*
2. *Describe any positive or negative connections you have had with adults in the school?*
3. *How have you felt welcomed and included in your school in relation to staff and your peers? How have you not felt welcomed and included in your school in relation to staff and your peers?*
4. *In what ways has your unique identity and experiences been acknowledged, affirmed and valued by your school?*
5. *In what ways, if any, have the adults in the school asked for your input, voice and experience in your educational experience?*
6. *In what ways, do you see yourself in the curriculum? How does representation in the curriculum shape your learning?*
7. *What associations or assumptions, if any, are made about students in the school?*
8. *What association or assumption, if any, are made by peers?*
9. *Is there anything else you'd like to add or share?*

Alumni

1. *What did you like most about your school? What did you wish were different about your school?*
2. *Describe any positive or negative connections you had with adults in the school?*
3. *How have you felt welcomed and included at Argo in relation to staff and your peers? How have you not felt welcomed and included at Argo in relation to staff and your peers?*
4. *In what ways had your unique identity and experiences been acknowledged, affirmed and valued at Argo?*
5. *In what ways, if any, had the adults in the school asked for your input, voice and experience in your educational experience?*

6. *In what ways, did you see yourself in the curriculum? How did representation in the curriculum shape your learning?*
7. *What associations or assumptions, if any, were made about students in the school?*
8. *What association or assumption, if any, were made by peers?*
9. *Is there anything else you'd like to add or share?*

Staff

1. *How do you define equity? What are the greatest challenges your school or district face when it comes to equity?*
2. *In what ways has your school done a good job in meeting the needs of students? In what ways does your school need to improve to meet the needs of students?*
3. *In what ways has your district or the community engage in conversations about identities (e.g., race, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities, language, socio-economic status, etc.)? If your district, has not, what would be some of the challenges in such learning? If your district has, what has been some of the positive and not-so-positive outcomes of it?*
4. *How does your experience (e.g., race, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities, language, socio-economic status, etc.) impact your role? How has equity impacted your instruction and relationship with students?*
5. *Does staff feel treated equitably among peers?* 6. *Is there anything else you'd like to add or share?*

Families

1. *When you hear "equity" what comes to mind?*
2. *What do you like most about your child(ren) school? What do you wish were different about their school?*
3. *Does your child(ren) school feel welcoming to all? Why or why not?*
4. *How is your child and family represented, if any, in the curriculum? If not, why not?*
5. *Besides academics, what else do you believe schools should teach, value, affirm or provide for students?*
6. *Have you experienced and/or do you have concerns that you believe are inequitable or unfair? Please describe.*
7. *What associations or assumptions exist in the community about educational equity at Argo Community High School?*
8. *What do you think the school or district needs to do to advance systemic equity?*
9. *Is there anything else you'd like to add or share?*

Phase 4 & Phase 5

During these phases, an extensive analysis is conducted of all quantitative and qualitative data. A draft report is submitted to the district Superintendent for review. The purpose of the draft is to allow the Superintendent and/or designees to ensure accuracy, while no edits of findings are allowed. After the review, a final report is submitted. This report serves as the definitive equity audit report.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As part of Phase I of the Equity Audit, DELT completed a *District/School Assessment on Systemic Equity*[®] to provide context, deeper discussion and understanding about equity. Prior to completing this assessment, DELT members were grouped to complete the needs assessment. The needs assessment provided an opportunity for self-reflection on ten components of equity against the given rubric. For each component, groups were tasked to provide a rating and rationale as well as suggestions for next steps. An “X” was marked in the needs assessment to designate the group ratings, and the bullet-point list is indicative of group responses. The needs assessment rubric was as followed:

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

Component		Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
1. COMMON UNDERSTANDING, CONSISTENT LANGUAGE - Our district has clearly defined equity, diversity, and inclusion. We have communicated these meanings in a consistent language to our staff and community.		XXX	XX		
Rationale for Rating					
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haven't seen equity defined in any means, nor publicly supported Equity is not defined anywhere on our web page. It has not been communicated to our student, staff, or community. Whatever is communicated is wrong and is not consistent. We do not have common language. There is not a common understanding of what inclusion is in our district. There is some school board policy regarding hiring practices, but this is not communicated with the community, staff, or students. The main issue is that there is no common understanding. Inclusion doesn't mean that you have one gender neutral bathroom located in the corner. We have not had an organized discussion about equity in our district outside of Dr. Dubiel. Some feel like these conversations have not been encouraged inside departments. Not established 				
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No clear message but we're working on it. The actual definitions of equity, diversity, and inclusion have been discussed but we do not believe we have a concrete definition of these words. We are lacking the clear and common language. 				
Suggestions for Next Steps					
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow through with DELT, all administration involved, mission statement for equity work. Develop a simple and understandable common language regarding equity and inclusion. Communicate this language to students, staff, and community. Have it visible and easily accessible to all. Having more PD. Addressing it in our all-staff meeting. 				
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add items to handbook. More written language (website). The next steps are putting together this specific equity committee to have clearer terms. Having more focused professional development on these specific topics will help the community develop vocabulary. 				
Component		Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
2: MISSION, VISION AND/OR STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT - Our district has a clear mission and vision for equity as evidenced in our Board policies, district goals, strategic plan and/or value statements.		XXXX	X		
Rationale for Rating					
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group cannot easily find evidence from the Board that can support the district's mission and/or vision. The district strategic plan and goals are not easily accessible to the community. The district vision for equity, diversity and inclusion appears nowhere in the student handbook and appear three times in school board policy and are poorly defined. The school mission does not mention diversity, equity, or inclusion. There is no strategic 				

	<p>plan for the district. If there is, it has not been communicated or is not easily accessible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board policy is not easily accessible constituents. The school's outreach strategies may not incorporate everyone. • We do not have a clear mission or vision statement. We don't have a clear mission and vision for equity as evidenced in our Board policies, district goals, strategic plan and/or value statements.
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although we started some equity work in the past three years, we have a long way to go before we believe it is strong.

Suggestions for Next Steps

Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District shares goals and policies with staff, Board provides justification for not having evidence clear and publicly stated (as they assume everything is ok). • See above. (Copied and pasted response from this group). The district strategic plan and goals are not easily accessible to the community. The district vision for equity, diversity and inclusion appears nowhere in the student handbook and appear three times in school board policy and are poorly defined. The school mission does not mention diversity, equity, or inclusion. There is no strategic plan for the district. If there is, it has not been communicated or is not easily accessible. • Offer literature (handbook, letters home, etc.) in more languages--primarily the languages represented in our community. Raising awareness, training sessions (implicit bias, cultural sensitivity, etc.) for community members as well as staff and students. • Create a vision statement that is communicated to our community, student, staff. (How is this communicated. Attached to our current statement or a stand alone?). Have a published vision/mission and use of the language.
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our next action steps would need to be to complete the equity audit and have it brought to the board. Once we have a clear needs assessment, we would develop a more clear mission and vision statement to improve equity.

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

Rationale for Rating

Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group has not seen any goals or measurable objectives to advance systemic equity. • None exists at this time. • We are unaware of any such plan. • We currently do not have the tools to measure for equity. • We have not acknowledged that there is not equal equity within the building. I feel like that not everyone is aware and that we have room to grow. We need to address implicit bias and historical "always done it this way."
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Suggestions for Next Steps

Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate culturally responsive teaching and leading standards (on ISBE, new standards). • Complete the equity audit. Create a district equity action plan. Follow through on the district equity action plan. Be transparent about all steps in the process and share the data with staff and community members.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, we do not address major issues as a district. For example: BLM, Palestine/Israel, Dreamers, etc. How can we better support our students and make school a more welcoming place? What supports are in place for students who are transferring from other countries and perhaps less than ideal situations? More school-wide activities to acknowledge and celebrate our diverse student population. • We need to complete the equity audit so areas can be addressed in the equity action plan. Once we have the audit complete, we feel there will be goals and objectives we can meet. • Continuing to gather evidence about how equity looks within our building. Create goals of where we need to go AND follow through with it. We need to follow through with the initiative and make sure that it continues to have a conversation. Every year we need to include it. The rotation of administration has been negatively impacting our vision. We need a long-term vision. We should make this the primary goal and vision. Trauma informed was a training that was rolled out, but we haven't discussed it. 			
Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
4: TEACHING AND LEARNING - In each grade and within each content, we have curriculum and resources aligned with equitable pedagogical beliefs and culturally responsive instructional practices that promote elimination of implicit biases and affirmation of student self-identities.	XXXX	X		
Rationale for Rating				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum and resources are not culturally responsive, curriculum is outdated and needs to be adapted for our current students. • There are scattered attempts at providing culturally responsive instruction. It is not a universal goal that we develop culturally responsive instruction. There are no resources available to help teachers develop culturally responsive curriculum. There is no attempt to explain why it is important to include culturally responsive instruction. Little credence is given to the ways in which culture, race, gender and sexuality inform curriculum. • Minimal effort on diversity within the classroom curriculum. • There are some teachers in various departments that work to achieve this. This is not evident consistently throughout all departments. It is not built within the curriculum. It is more of a personality that includes it. Culturally responsive practices have been a focus for us but we need to continue to grow. Technology is good at providing resources that are equitable. For example, when COVID happened we were ready. We had hot spots. We are in "developing" for curriculum but towards "in progress" for technology. We are taking small steps. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each department is structured differently, and some are taking initiatives to implement more culturally responsive curriculum and instructional practices than others. 			
Suggestions for Next Steps				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve curriculum to reflect our students and their identities, self-reflect on our own implicit bias and how we can improve. • Provide resources for staff to explain the importance of number [identities]. Provide resources for staff [on curriculum and culturally responsive teaching]. Create a mandate to ensure that this is put in place. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversify required readings within the curriculum. Outdated practices within departments (PE uniforms). Audit the curriculum. We can audit it to also help for the library's sake. In PLC have conversations and make time for it. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need more professional development on the language of what is equitable pedagogical beliefs and culturally responsive instructional practices. Also, reviewing curriculum in each department to ensure we are being more equitable. Furthermore, having classroom teachers implement culturally responsive classroom management before they send the students to the dean's office. 			
Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
5: ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING - Across the district, we have and continue to take a critical lens to our academic programming (e.g., ESL, SPED, Gifted/Honors/AP, etc.) to analyze student representation by socially constructed identities.	XXX	XX		
Rationale for Rating				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are students who fall through the cracks and aren't provided with any support to recover. Students aren't placed based upon preference. Many aren't given the opportunity to move to more challenging classes if desired/able to academically. In SPED/ELL there are concerns regarding eligibility and how feeder schools qualify students. I'm curious of the demographics on our AP and Honors students. It may be the same kids over and over. I feel that teacher recommends guide AP/Honor recommendations. Kids have limitation in electives because it impacts if they are able to do a specific class. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been more of a push to get students of color into our academically challenging courses. We have sent some teachers to conferences focused on diversity and inclusion, but there has been little follow up. There are no systems in place to support diverse students in AP classes. The numbers of diverse students in AP classes are skewed by an inordinate number of Latinx students taking AP Spanish classes but no other AP courses. Students transitioned from ELL are not given clear support when mainstreamed. Some programs at Argo are stronger than others. We believe some have excellent academic programming and others need improvement. However, some of the students in the middle who pass their classes might get lost and need just as much support. 			
Suggestions for Next Steps				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having meetings regarding Equity for staff, more mentoring for students, include ALL stakeholders for mentoring & other programs. Classes should be taught with universal learning in mind. Collaboration with the feeder districts regarding SPED eligibility and ELL services. Educate parents more about AP, Gifted, and Honors classes. We should have clearly identified tracks and gather data. We need to avoid having our students competing for electives. We should take off lunch as a period because it limits the choices for class options. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training and support for teachers in training for diversity and inclusion. Remove gatekeeping practices in honors and AP courses. Provide ample and robust support for diverse students placed in honors and AP classes. More communication 			

	<p>regarding course selection for students. Create a system of identifying students who should be pushed up into honors and AP classes. Provide ESS support for students who could handle AP classes but are not able to do so due to lack of accommodations. Provide summer institutes (bridge courses) for students taking honors and AP classes for the first time. Make this accessible and not overwhelming for students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at the equity audit for programming should help make curriculum stronger for special learners. 			
Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
6: DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR/STUDENT SUPPORTS - Our district regularly analyzes student discipline data and disaggregates said data by race and special population categories, as well as intersectionality of known social constructs. We have proactive practices in place (e.g., restorative justice, trauma-informed resources, SEL approaches, etc.) to support all students, especially historically marginalized populations.	XXX	XX		
Rationale for Rating				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group isn't aware of any data/evidence in regard to social constructs. We are also not aware of any proactive practices to support students. We do not have restorative justice as a formalized process. While it has been mentioned, there is no specific and clearly defined system in place. Our minority students seem to (anecdotally) face more disciplinary issues, but we are unable to access that data so do not know for sure. We are even unsure if the data is being tracked. We have started some initiatives but there has been no follow through (restorative justice, trauma-informed, etc.). There has been changes in administration and this impacts growth. We need to have options to address behaviors without making it punitive. We also need mentoring. There are some staff members that focus on consequences to some minorities. When we do PowerSchool log entries, we don't have a shared understanding of what to include or how to log into it. Have direct conversations with students. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We can't be sure what the dean's data entails so we do not feel qualified to respond to the restorative justice portion of the question. We do well with trauma-informed resources and SEL approaches are in progress. Our social workers and deans are constantly working together to decrease the disciplinary actions. We are in the beginning phases of restorative justice and trauma-informed practices. 			
Suggestions for Next Steps				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement more restorative justice (e.g., Yoga, Talking Circles), go beyond just the developing stage, long-term commitment. Make disciplinary and referral data accessible to staff and community. Transparency is key. Data must be disaggregated. Change the ways we discipline some infractions. Minor and non-violent infractions should not preclude a student from attending class. Give teachers the ability to reflect on the data, both their own personal referrals and the general referrals and data that is school-wide. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared understanding of behaviors to log--include a drop-down menu. This may be a great way of documenting conversations. Establish having a homeroom class. The homeroom teacher was included in behavior discussions, and this was the same class all 4 years (consider a mixed age homeroom). This also gives parents one primary contact and is helpful for teachers. This also gives students a go-to person for recommendation requests. Students also will be able to build relationships with a staff member. 8 period days would benefit the students. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can end of the year data from the dean's office be shared? More trauma-informed resources/trainings. We need to continue to attend professional development on how to implement appropriate classroom behavioral management strategies that are more proactive than reactive. The dean's office observes a lot of behavioral management that is reactive, especially towards male students of color. 			
Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
7: STUDENT VOICE, CULTURE AND CLIMATE - We consistently seek out ways to solicit students' feedback and experiences. We adjust our organizational culture and climate based on needs (e.g., extracurricular, activities, athletics, clubs, LGBTQ+ accommodations).	XX	X	XX	
Rationale for Rating				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have very few, if any, student surveys soliciting feedback and experiences. There are individual teachers and small groups of teachers who solicit student feedback and experiences, but it is not consistent. There are clubs developed by teachers because they see that students don't have the power or present as apathetic. We have the same kids participating in clubs and activities. They then become stretched and it's hard to have them participate in all things. We offer a diverse selection of clubs. (MSA, BSA, RISE, STRIVE). We cater to two different groups: alumni and current students. Our alumni are more traditional, and our current students are more progressive. For example, we tried to change the school logo and the students voted to changed it, but community/alumni voted no. Our current logo is an image of a ship that was used for transport slaves. This is a concern. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are extracurricular clubs for students that identify with a marginalized community, LGBTQ+ accommodations are limited (no place for new names, pronouns). 			
Strong, but structure needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have groups and clubs, but there is room for improvement. Teachers do not always get to have that one-on-one time with students to solicit feedback and experiences. We feel there are a lot of student groups (extracurricular, athletics, etc.) at Argo to meet the needs but students do not always join. Students may not feel they have the agency in what they want and might feel they do not have a voice. 			
Suggestions for Next Steps				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop student surveys for each year and throughout the year. Prioritize building student agency as a building wide goal. Consistently celebrate all students and communicate this celebration consistently. Expand recruitment--how? Re-establish the principal advisory committee. More platforms for students to express their opinions of what they would like to see for 			

	the school. School can establish mini grants. Students would apply for mini-grants and the school would identify who rec'd it. This built student buy-in
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extracurricular club should be heard more by the community and the stakeholders, demographics page can be more LGBTQ+ friendly, during registration; include an entry for students' preferred pronouns and name
Strong, but structure needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let's hear from them outside of their own groupings. Have students more involved in decision making with parameters.

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

Rationale for Rating

Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the group agrees that there are highly qualified teachers, there are no implemented practices in regard to interviewing or retaining said teachers. Three out of five faculty and staff who left this year were people of color. There is very little reflection on how to retain teachers of color. There is only one administrator of color and nearly all administrators are white men. There may be a desire for diversity and inclusion in hiring, but it is not consistent nor is it communicated clearly. We need a more diverse staff that reflects our student population. There are some pipeline challenges with hiring. I think this is one of the biggest concerns. Our staff doesn't reflect the student body. Some qualified staff were let go and this is a concern. Spanish/Polish/Arabic translators in house are limited. There's a hiring committee in hiring but their input is not included. They go through the motions. We also tend to be harder on our own genders for their personalities, looks and not focus on their character/professionalism. Because we are 1 district/1 high school we tend to operate in our individual silo. We don't have interactions/information about different departments. Is this the culture/structure of the building. Communication from top down about things.
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Suggestions for Next Steps

Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview committees should have a more defined practice in who is included and how their department is represented, figure out how to retain diverse teachers and/or administrators. Develop a plan for hiring teachers and administrators of color. Develop a plan for retaining teachers and administrators of color. Develop an understanding that there is added value to having teachers and administrators of color. Recruiting techniques. Partnering with a historically Black college or other colleges that have diverse student teachers. More awareness of the need for us to have diverse staff. Validating that we all have a powerful voice. Implicit bias training (we need buy in and follow through). Practice more active listening. Educate our stakeholders on the history/current events. Some type of newsletter or communication for staff to be aware of changes, events, etc. More school building events or faculty meetings --More institute days throughout the year. Student teaching days allowed staff to explore and learn about other
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	departments. Don't encourage elective departments to compete for numbers/enrollment. Institute Day: we have staff do community projects/service.			
Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
9. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Our district has demonstrated its commitment to equity by offering a continuum of professional development and growth to all staff.	XX	XX	X	
Rationale for Rating				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group thinks that the current trainings aren't fully applicable to our students and the current social climate. Because we are 1 district/1 high school we tend to operate in our individual silo. We don't have interactions/information about different departments. Is this the culture/structure of the building. Communication from top down about things. We start initiatives but don't follow through. We don't have opportunities to participate in consistent Professional development of our choice. This includes trainings on software that we use. We don't have buy in for equity and change by staff 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have had PD related to diversity and inclusion. There has been little buy-in or accountability for participation in this PD. The same small group of people participate and buy in to this training. There has been little consistency with PD or direction from the administration. There is a lack of visibility of administration in issues of inclusion and diversity. We need more professional development for staff. 			
Strong, but structure needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We feel in the past three years, there has been a commitment to professional development towards equity (trauma informed learning/restorative practices), but it is extremely disorganized and not a lot of follow through. 			
Suggestions for Next Steps				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainings need to be more geared towards our students and their identities. Some type of newsletter or communication for staff to be aware of changes, events, etc. More school building events or faculty meetings. More institute days throughout the year. Student teaching days allowed staff to explore and learn about other departments. Don't encourage elective departments to compete for numbers/enrollment. Institute Day: we have staff do community projects/service. Professional Development: consistent policy in how to utilize/identify who is eligible for it. Coffee Talks --We need to be scheduled for coffee talks/situations in which we will participate in activities. 			
In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created systems for all of the above. We need professional development and committees to be long-standing. 			
Strong, but structure needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to make obtainable action steps and goals towards equity. In the past, there has not been follow through. 			

Component	Developing	In Progress	Strong, but structure needed	Robust
10: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AS AGENCY - We have a structure in place to actively seek out and/or sustain communication and engagement with parents/guardians/caretakers on issues of equity.	XXXXX			
Rationale for Rating				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group feels that there have been many missed opportunities to talk about equity. • Equity hasn't been clearly defined. White parents speak up more often have an outsized voice in our school community. There has not been a consistent effort to reach out to parents of diverse students. • We don't do particularly well communicating with parents. • We have a lot of single parent families or families who work the second shift or two jobs. • We don't have a consistent communication. There are lots of people communicating and parents shut down. We lack Spanish/Arabic/Polish interpreters that are easily accessible for parents to get info. We should have classes with all grades this offers more mentoring and opportunity. Peer mentors are missing. Parents United was a positive step. There is minimal parent engagement, and the parents don't know how to support their students. There is not a partnership with the feeder districts. 			
Suggestions for Next Steps				
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ("N/A" was typed) • Create a clear statement of equity. Create an action plan for dealing with issues of equity in the community. Prepare a district response regarding issues of equity when brought up in complaints by white parents. Support teachers in their quest to provide culturally responsive instruction. • Make sure we are delivering information in their preferred language and more incentives to participate. • Having a zoom option, childcare, or food for the equity audit might increase attendance. Bringing back Parent University or other groups where parents can be involved in decision process. • Establishing homerooms for 4 years and staff will be the go-to contact. Peer mentoring. Providing classes for all grade levels and providing mentoring in a structured manner. It provides role models. We don't engage families in things. Used to have parents united. How to get more parents involved? Some type of parent university to educate the families on how to support students. Educate parents on how to use PowerSchool (grades, schedule, emails). Adult after-school technology classes for families. Provide parent events with babysitting and food. Create a community service requirement/expectation for our students. 			
Other Comments or Suggestions				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board needs to be involved in more equity work. • We need to have 8 period day (lunch should not count as a period) because this will provide students with more opportunities. The students are required to give up their lunch in order to take the classes they want to be in. Homeroom: It would be a great idea to have a homeroom period with the same teacher for 4 years mixed grade level and they could access upper class mentors. Establishing clear expectations for staff (technology usage, when to check email/respond, etc.). Discussion about respect/equity about staff time. 				

Section 2

QUANTITATIVE DATA

All submitted data has been analyzed with an equity approach. A table and/or chart of all data is included in this report. Quantitative data that revealed inequities contributed to the audit findings. It must be noted that data from SY 2019-20, SY 2020-21 and SY 2021-22 may be drastically unique. During this time, there was [is] a global pandemic due to Covid-19. This pandemic impacted school operations throughout the country, affecting curriculum, instruction, resources, and relationship with students.

Index of Quantitative Data	
Table/Chart 2.1-2.3	Student demographic by race/ethnicity ¹¹ , special populations ¹² and intersectionality ¹³
Table/Chart 2.4-2.9	Student discipline by race/ethnicity, special populations and intersectionality
Table/Chart 2.10-2.14	Student participation in honors/AP by race/ethnicity, special populations and intersectionality
Table/Chart 2.15-2.24	Student demographic in special education services
Table/Chart 2.25-2.26	Student participation in CTE by race/ethnicity, special populations and intersectionality
Table/Chart 2.27	Student retention by race/ethnicity and special populations
Table/Chart 2.28-2.31	Student assessment count by race/ethnicity and special populations
Table/Chart 2.32-2.33	Student graduation rate by race/ethnicity and special populations
Table/Chart 2.34-2.43	Final grades by race/ethnicity and special populations
Table/Chart 2.44-2.58	Credit recovery, summer school, dropout, outplacement, absenteeism, tardiness, truancies and transfer by race/ethnicity, special populations and intersectionality
Table/Chart 2.59-2.60	Teacher and administrator demographic by race/ethnicity and gender
Table/Chart 2.61	Staff licensure/endorsement count
Table/Chart 2.62-2.63	BOE demographic count by race/ethnicity and gender
Table/Chart 2.64	ELL languages identified (not including English)

¹¹ Race/ethnicity includes students that identify as Asian, African American, or Black, Hispanic, Latino/a/x, Pacific Islander, Two or More races, White or Caucasian. For the purpose of this report and/or in alignment with Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the following racial categories were used; *Asian* for Asian or Pacific Islander, *Black* for African American or Black, *Hispanic* Hispanic/Latino/a/x and *White* for White/Caucasian.

¹² Special population refers to specialized populations of English Language Learners (ELL), Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL) and Students with Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

¹³ Intersectionality refers to the intersecting identities by social constructs or identities.

Data that did not reveal an immediate inequity is listed below. This does not translate to an absence of inequities according to the data, but that it may be indicative of a deeper investigation beyond the capacity of this audit and/or external factors (e.g., mobility, family structures) impacting the equitable experiences for students. Data that did initiate an inequity finding is referenced in Section 4 of this report.

- Table/Chart 2.1-2.3: Student overall demographics
- Table/Chart 2.15-2.24: Student demographics on abilities
- Table/Chart 2.27: Student retention
- Table/Chart 2.44-2.45: Student credit recovery
- Table/Chart 2.46-2.47: Student summer school
- Table/Chart 2.48: Student dropout rate
- Table/Chart 2.49-2.50: Student outplacement
- Table/Chart 2.51-2.53: Student absenteeism
- Table/Chart 2.54-2.55: Student tardiness
- Table/Chart 2.56-2.57: Student truancy
- Table/Chart 2.58: Student transfers
- Table/Chart 2.61: Student licensure/endorsement

Table 2.1: Student demographic count by race/ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Two or More	White	Total
2016-17	40	249	756	80	712	1849
2017-18	34	229	950	32	646	1895
2018-19	35	222	892	114	652	1922
2019-20	29	224	1009	61	632	1957
2020-21	31	197	986	56	604	1876

Chart 2.1: Student demographic percent by race/ethnicity

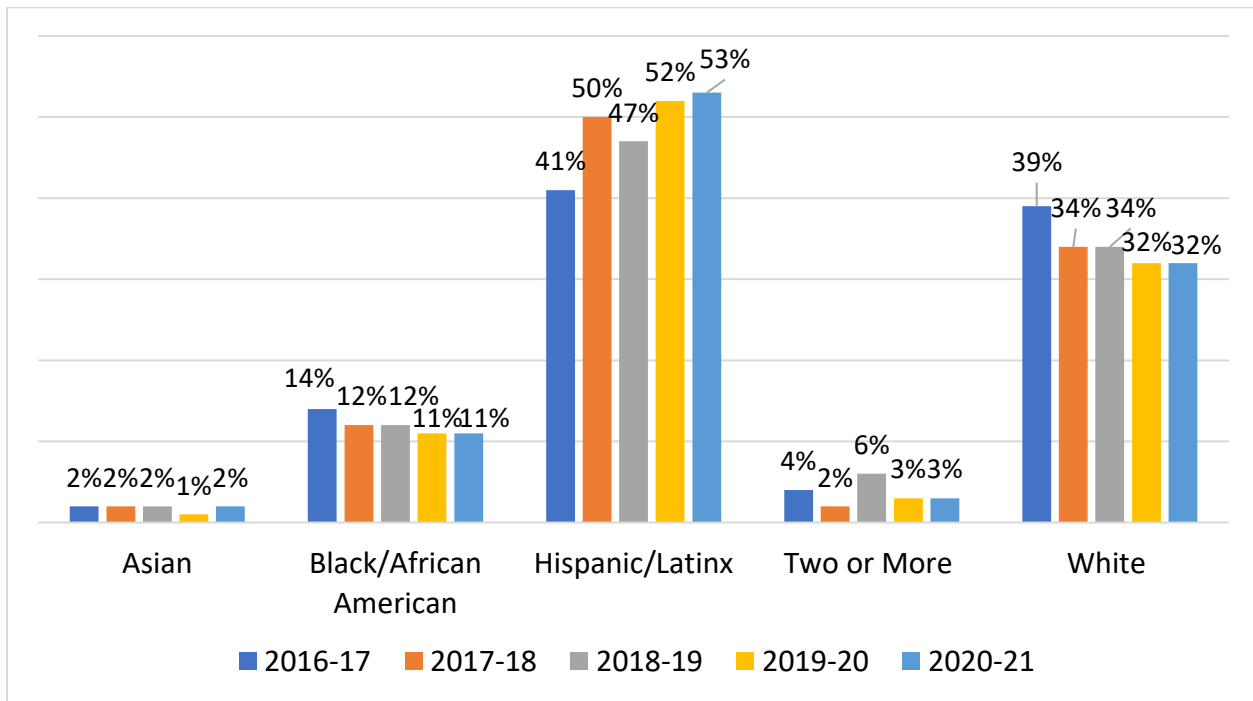


Table 2.2: Student demographic count by special populations

Year	ELL		FRL		IEP	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
2016-17	150	1699	778	1071	230	1619
2017-18	182	1713	1235	660	240	1655
2018-19	206	1716	1268	654	251	1671
2019-20	257	1700	1256	701	269	1688
2020-21	233	1643	1078	798	271	1605

Chart 2.2: Student demographic percent by special populations

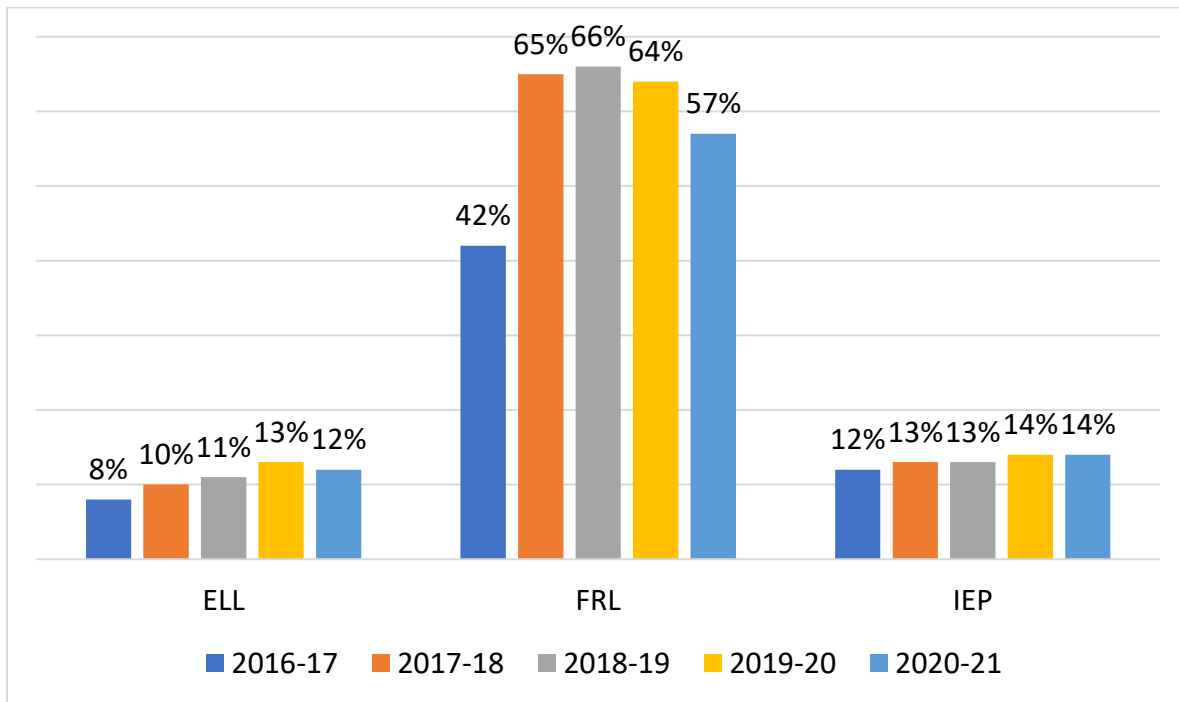


Table 2.3: Student demographic count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	7	16	0	2	128	38	73	348	102	3	49	4	65	234	86
2017-18	8	22	2	2	177	33	102	678	128	3	21	4	67	334	73
2018-19	7	19	3	1	171	41	113	640	121	13	70	13	72	363	72
2019-20	8	20	3	3	163	42	164	701	136	8	40	9	73	330	77
2020-21	8	21	3	2	133	41	155	596	140	5	39	11	63	287	74

Chart 2.3: Student demographic percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population

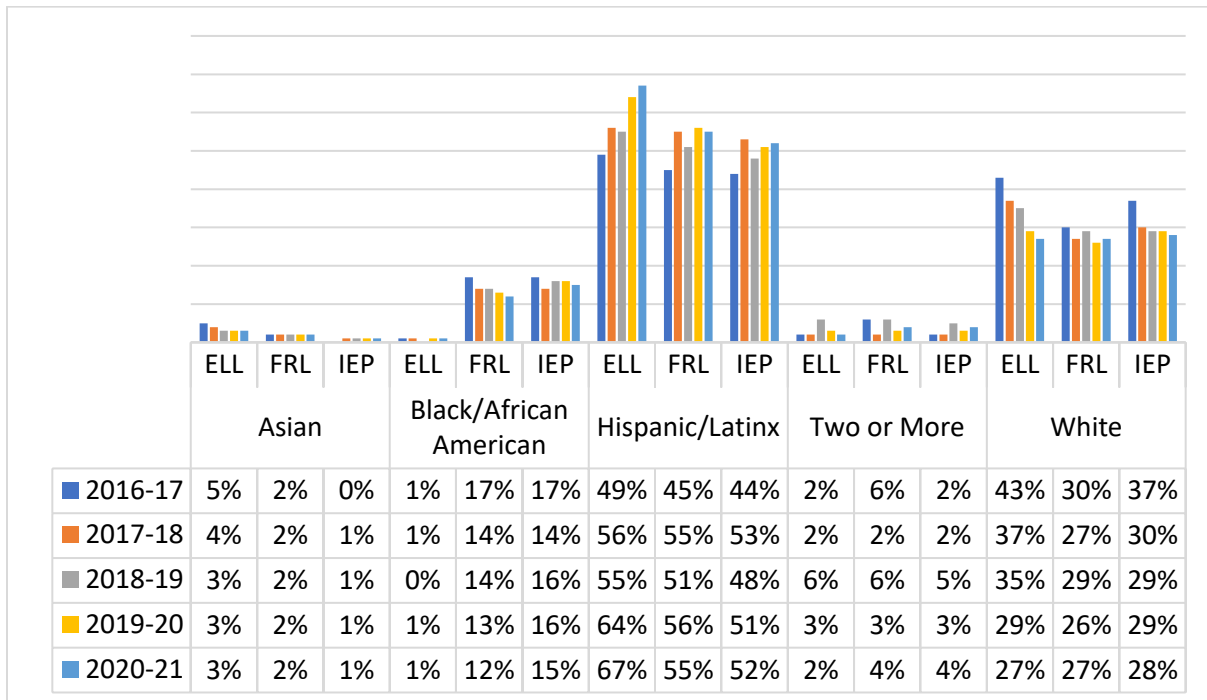


Table 2.4: Student discipline count by race/ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Two or More	White	Total
2016-17	9	172	378	39	241	839
2017-18	9	176	461	54	291	991
2018-19	15	170	544	48	331	1108
2019-20	12	165	519	37	253	986
2020-21	0	4	8	0	6	18

Chart 2.4: Student discipline percent by race/ethnicity

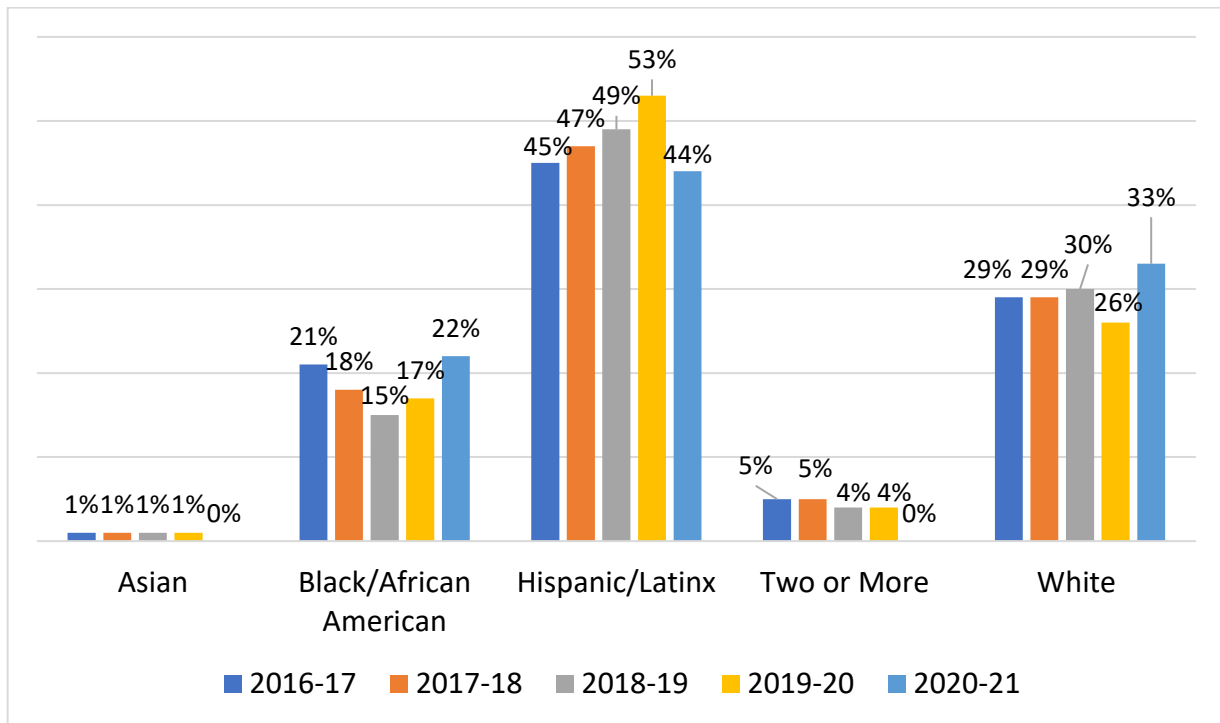


Table 2.5: Student discipline count by special populations

Year	ELL		FRL		IEP	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
2016-17	66	787	552	301	123	730
2017-18	107	906	633	380	134	879
2018-19	126	1000	743	383	145	981
2019-20	151	845	663	333	133	863
2020-21	3	15	11	7	5	13

Chart 2.5: Student discipline percent by special populations

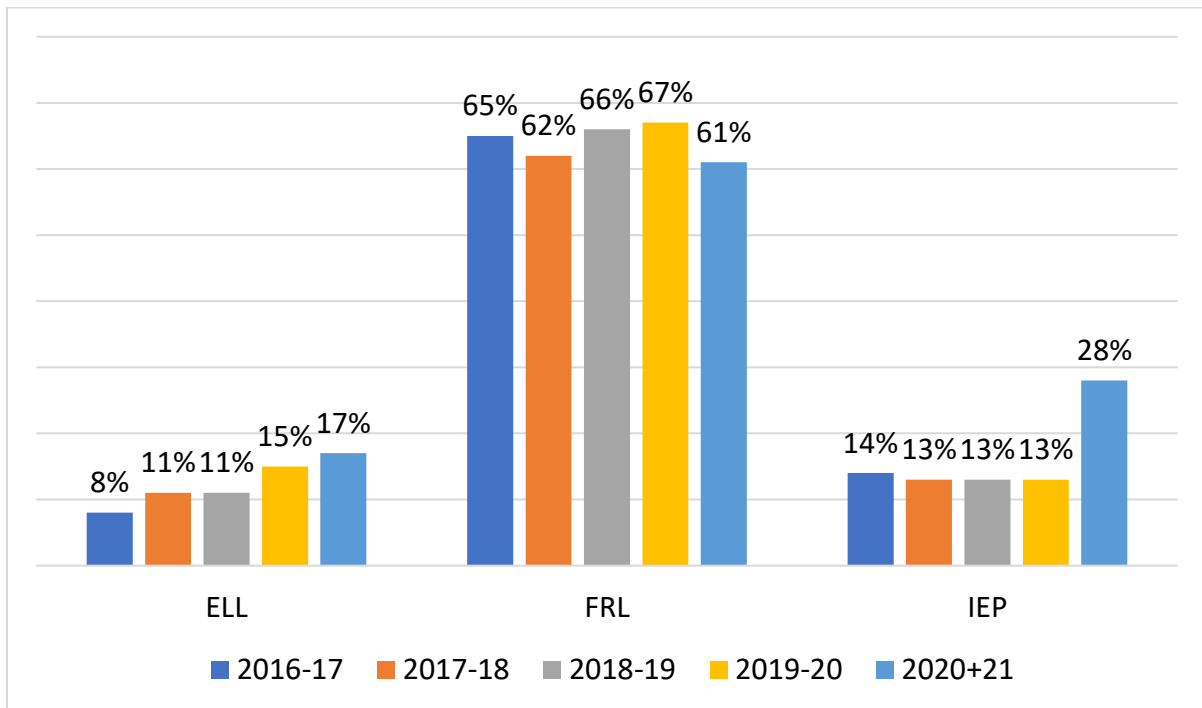


Table 2.6: Student discipline count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	2	6	0	0	126	33	37	238	56	2	24	7	25	147	27
2017-18	4	6	1	0	120	23	57	295	70	3	36	8	42	162	32
2018-19	3	9	1	0	122	26	69	375	71	3	32	9	50	192	36
2019-20	5	9	2	0	120	26	97	352	70	4	24	8	44	151	25
2020-21	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	4	3

Chart 2.6: Student discipline percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population

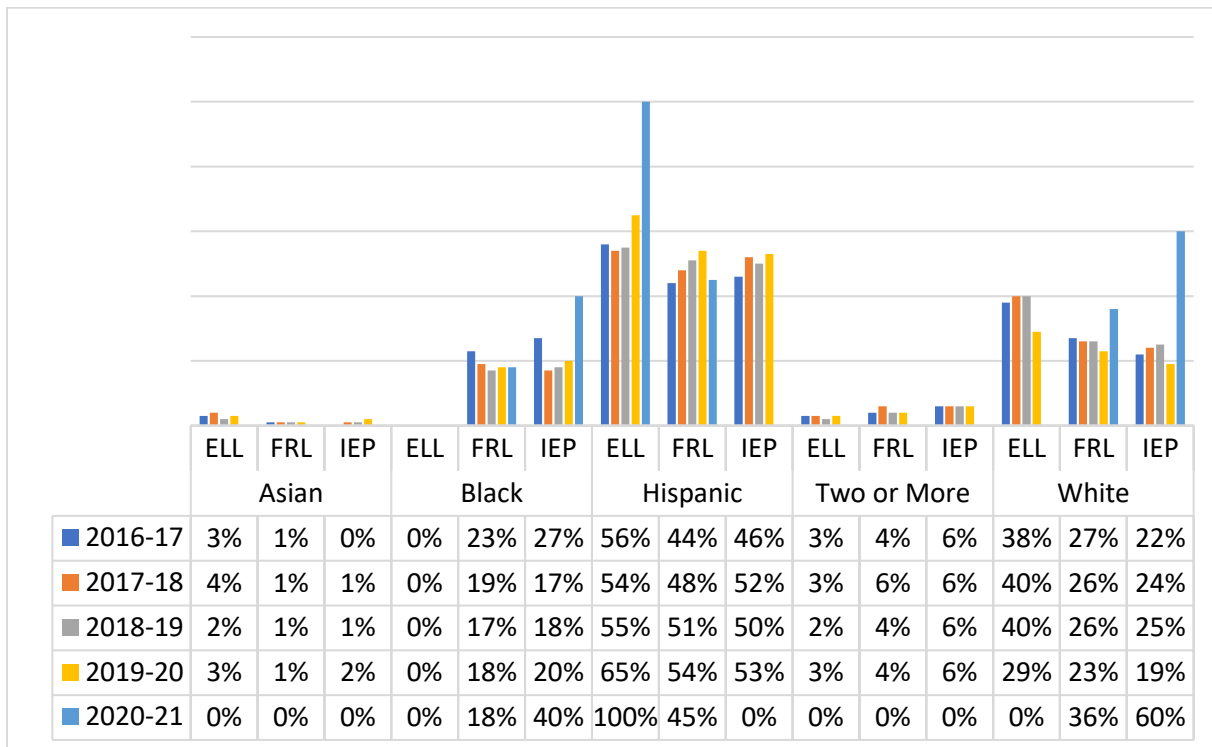


Table 2.7: Student discipline count by gender

Year	Female	Male	Total
2016-17	311	542	853
2017-18	418	595	1013
2018-19	482	644	1126
2019-20	417	579	996
2020-21	6	12	18

Chart 2.7: Student discipline percent by gender

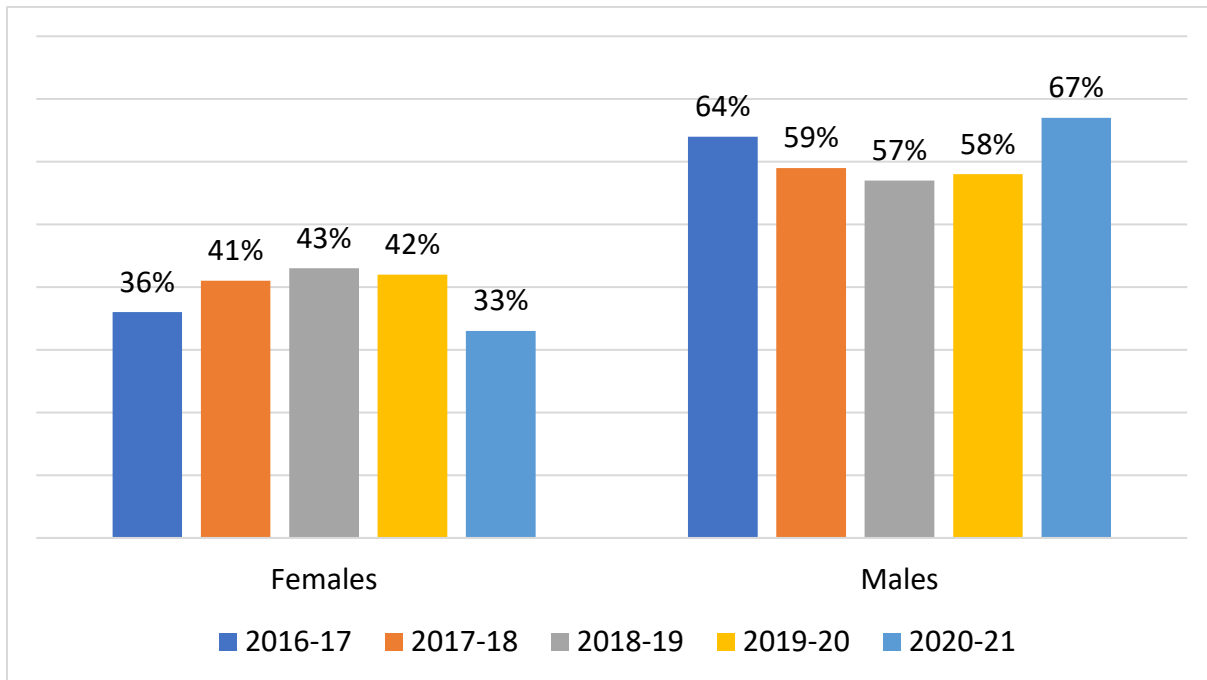


Table 2.8: Student discipline count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	1	0	0	52	8	13	97	23	0	8	3	1	48	9
2017-18	0	0	0	0	60	6	21	129	33	0	16	3	8	60	8
2018-19	1	2	0	0	61	10	19	171	34	0	12	2	14	75	10
2019-20	1	1	0	0	57	12	32	153	27	0	8	2	12	54	9
2020-21	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Chart 2.8: Student discipline percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

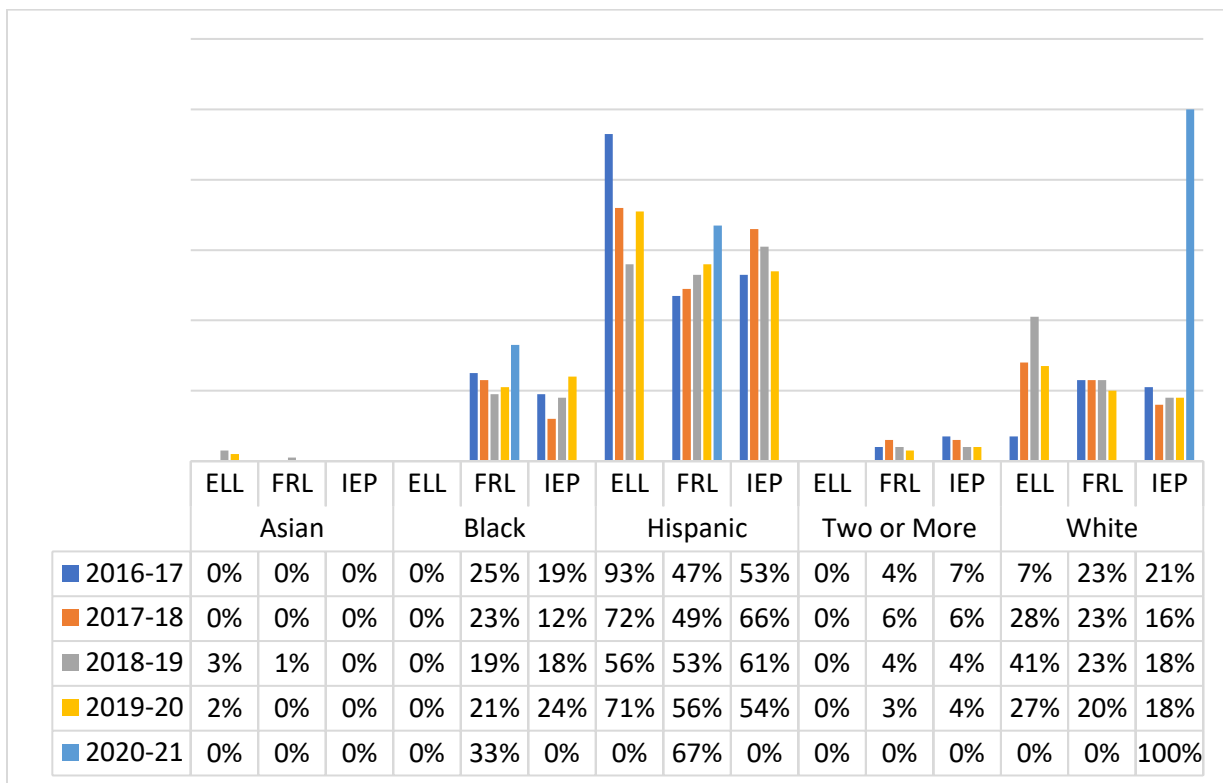


Table 2.9: Student discipline count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	2	5	0	0	74	25	24	141	33	2	16	4	24	99	18
2017-18	4	6	1	0	60	17	36	166	37	3	20	5	34	102	24
2018-19	2	7	1	0	61	16	50	204	37	3	20	7	36	117	26
2019-20	4	8	2	0	63	14	65	199	43	4	16	6	32	97	16
2020-21	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	4	2

Chart 2.9: Student discipline percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE

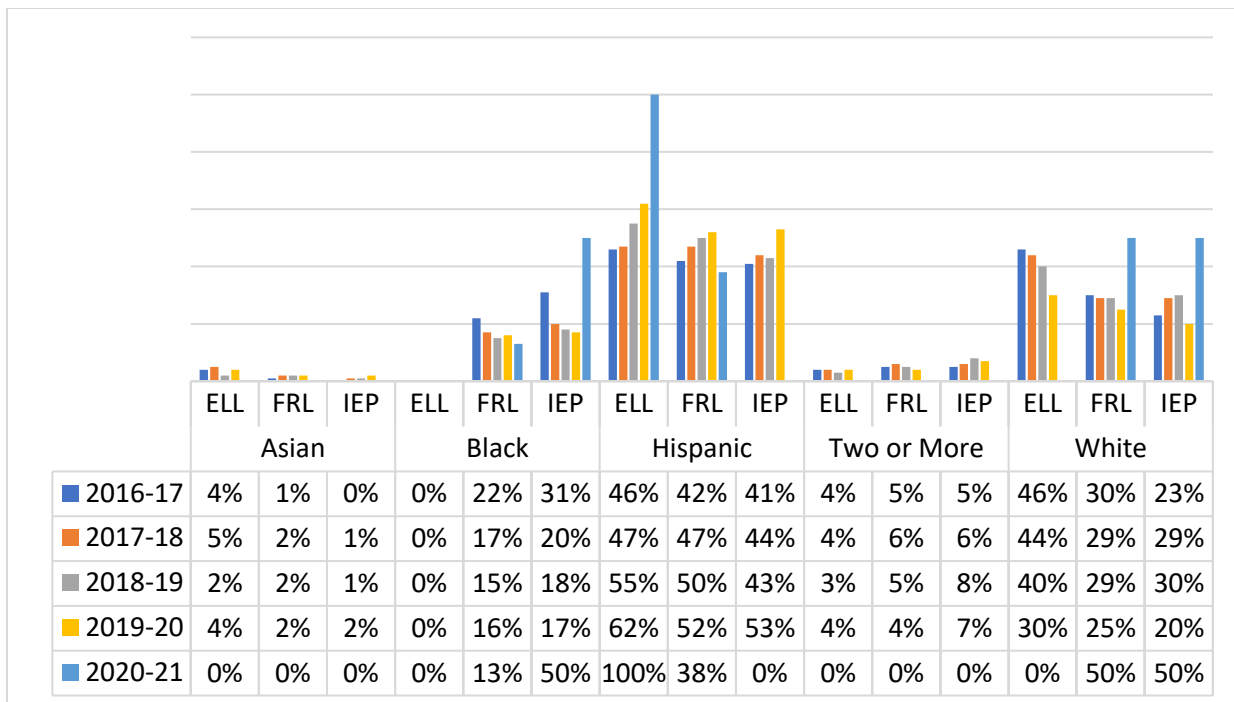


Table 2.10: Student count in honors and AP by race/ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Two or More	White	Total
2016-17	22	41	255	37	247	602
2017-18	16	56	416	10	269	767
2018-19	13	49	414	41	290	807
2019-20	15	54	463	24	304	860
2020-21	15	43	404	20	284	766

Chart 2.10: Student percent in honors and AP by race/ethnicity

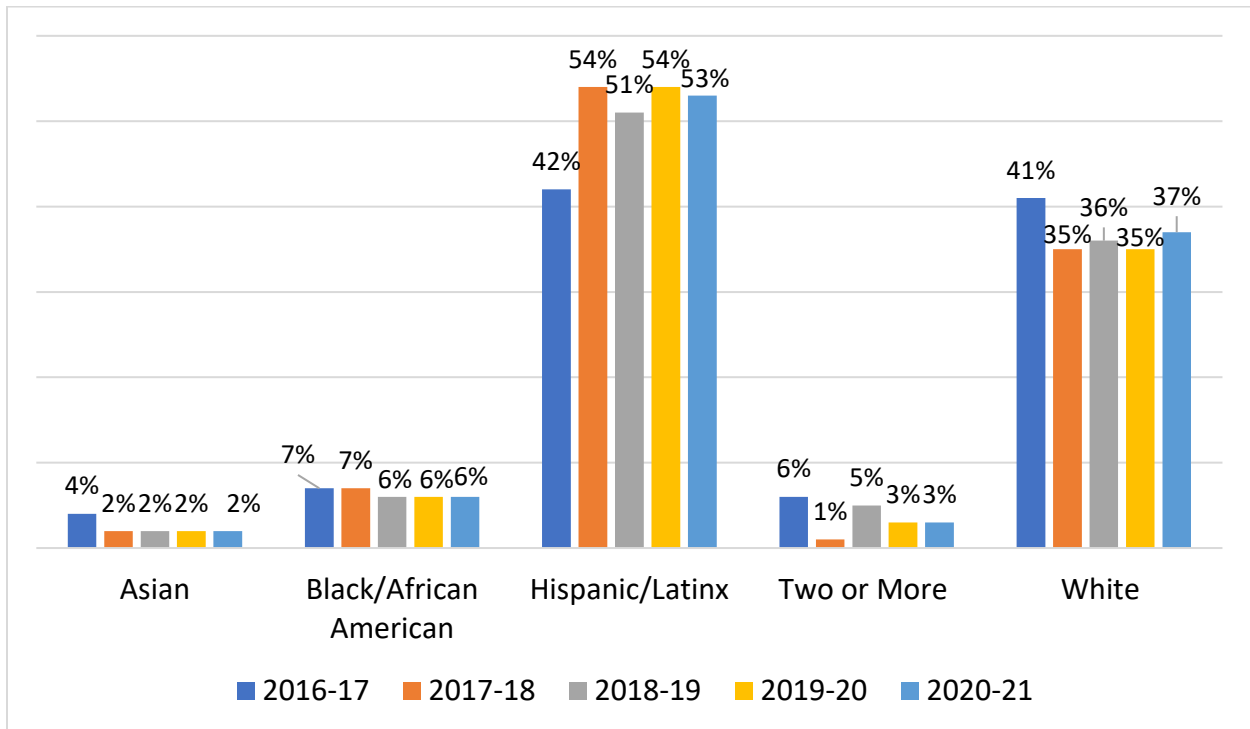


Table 2.11: Student count in honors and AP by special populations

Year	ELL		FRL		IEP	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
2016-17	6	605	222	389	3	608
2017-18	14	754	440	328	6	762
2018-19	24	791	495	320	5	810
2019-20	31	829	487	373	11	849
2020-21	32	734	404	362	11	755

Chart 2.11: Student percent in honors and AP by special populations

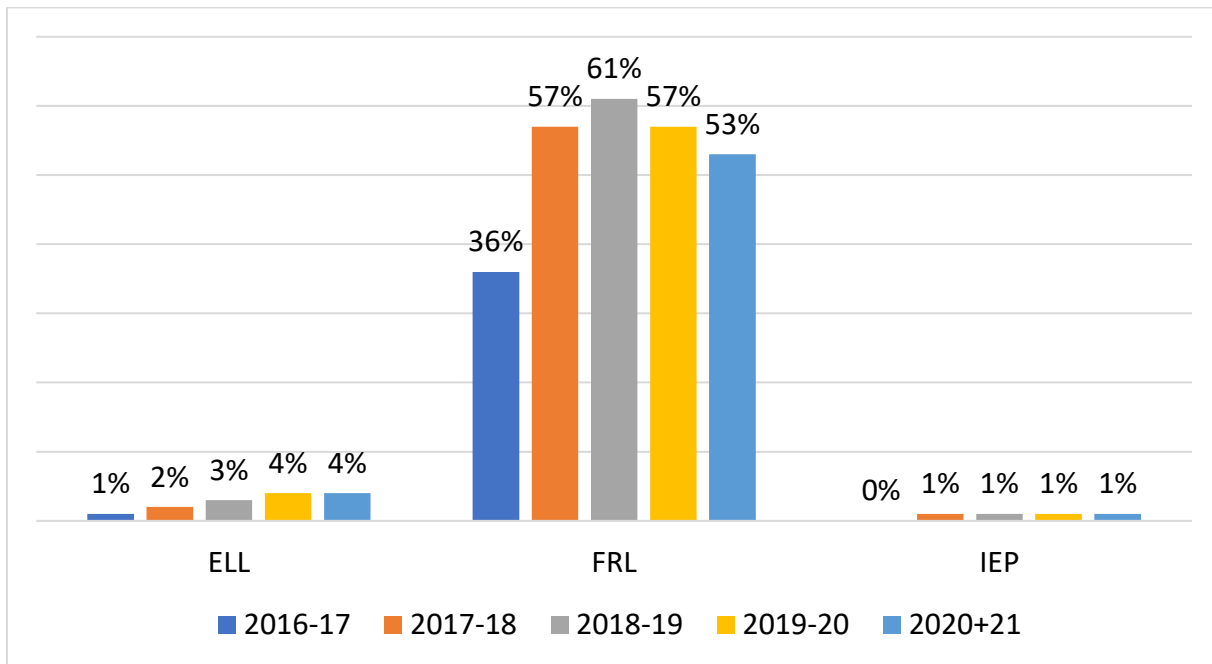


Table 2.12: Student count in honors and AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	10	0	0	23	0	2	110	2	1	21	0	3	55	1
2017-18	0	10	0	0	37	0	11	282	4	0	6	1	3	104	1
2018-19	0	9	0	0	38	2	16	285	1	1	21	2	7	141	0
2019-20	0	8	0	1	32	2	26	307	7	0	14	0	4	126	2
2020-21	1	10	0	0	29	1	29	229	9	1	12	0	1	124	1

Chart 2.12: Student percent in honors and AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations

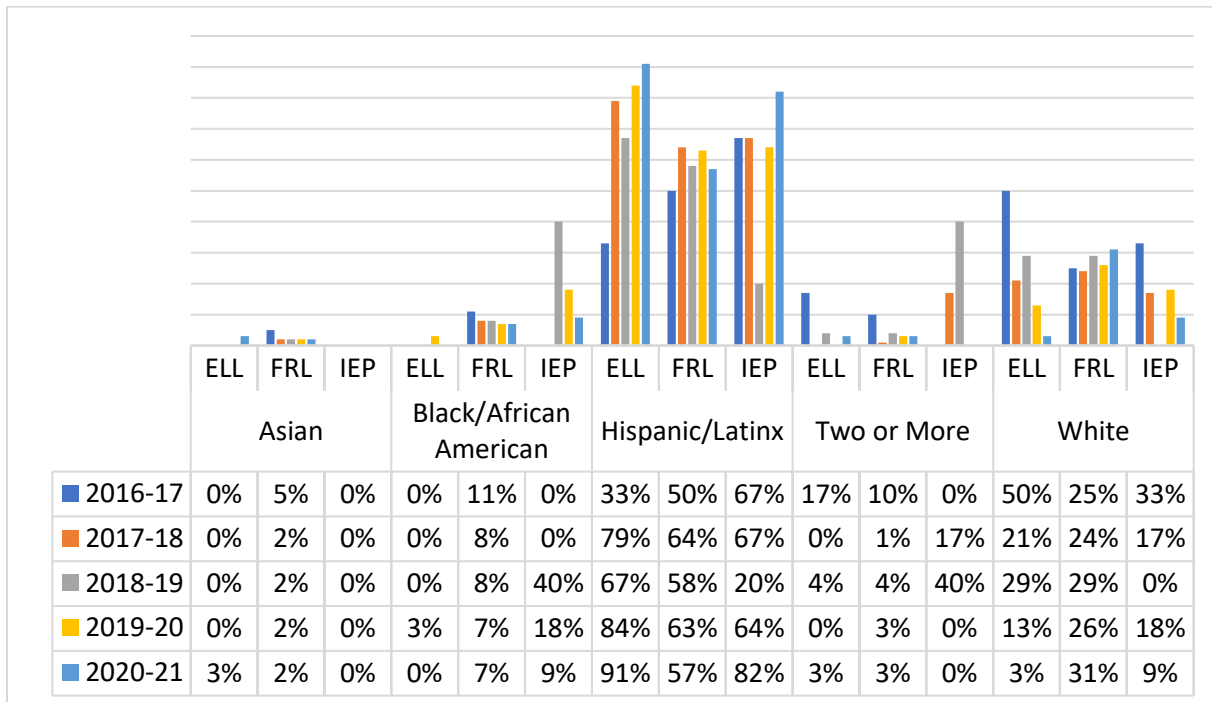


Table 2.13: Student count in honors and AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	7	0	0	17	0	0	63	1	0	12	0	3	32	1
2017-18	0	7	0	0	24	0	4	163	1	0	3	0	2	55	1
2018-19	0	4	0	0	29	1	7	169	0	0	11	1	5	74	0
2019-20	0	1	0	0	21	1	14	174	4	0	13	0	4	71	0
2020-21	1	4	0	0	23	0	20	132	5	1	6	0	0	76	0

Chart 2.13: Student percent in honors and AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

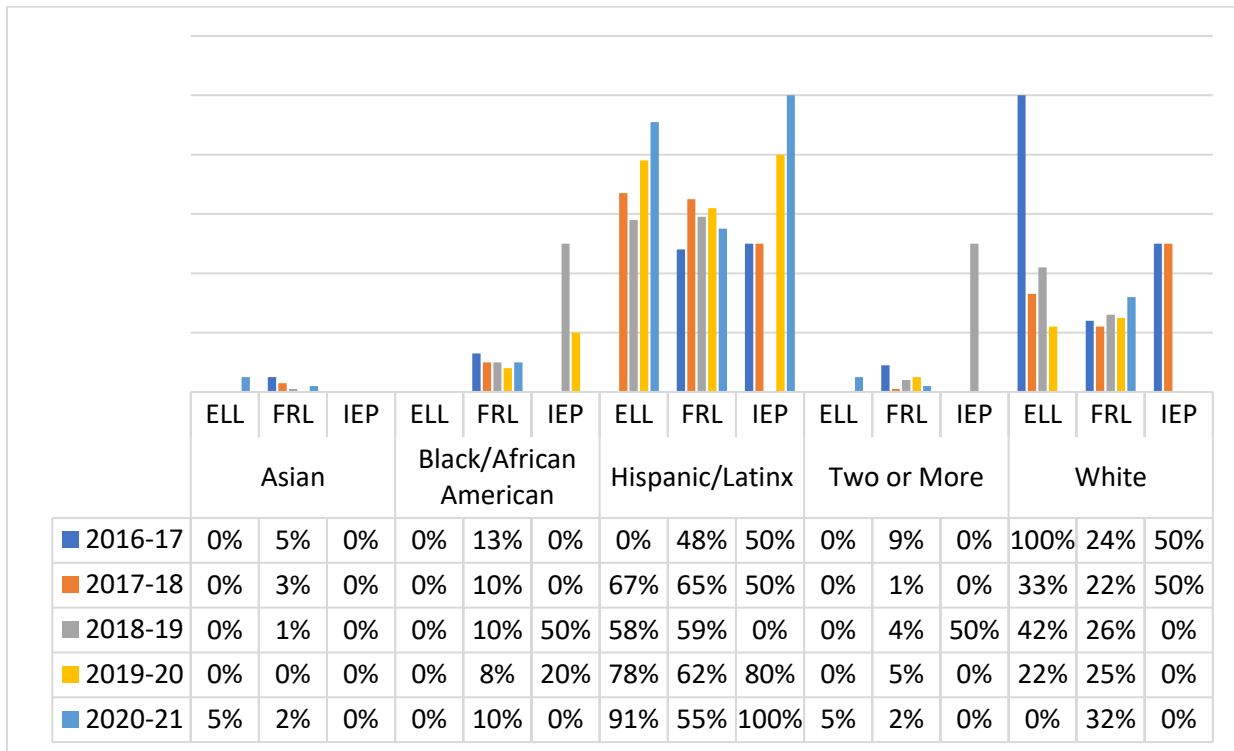
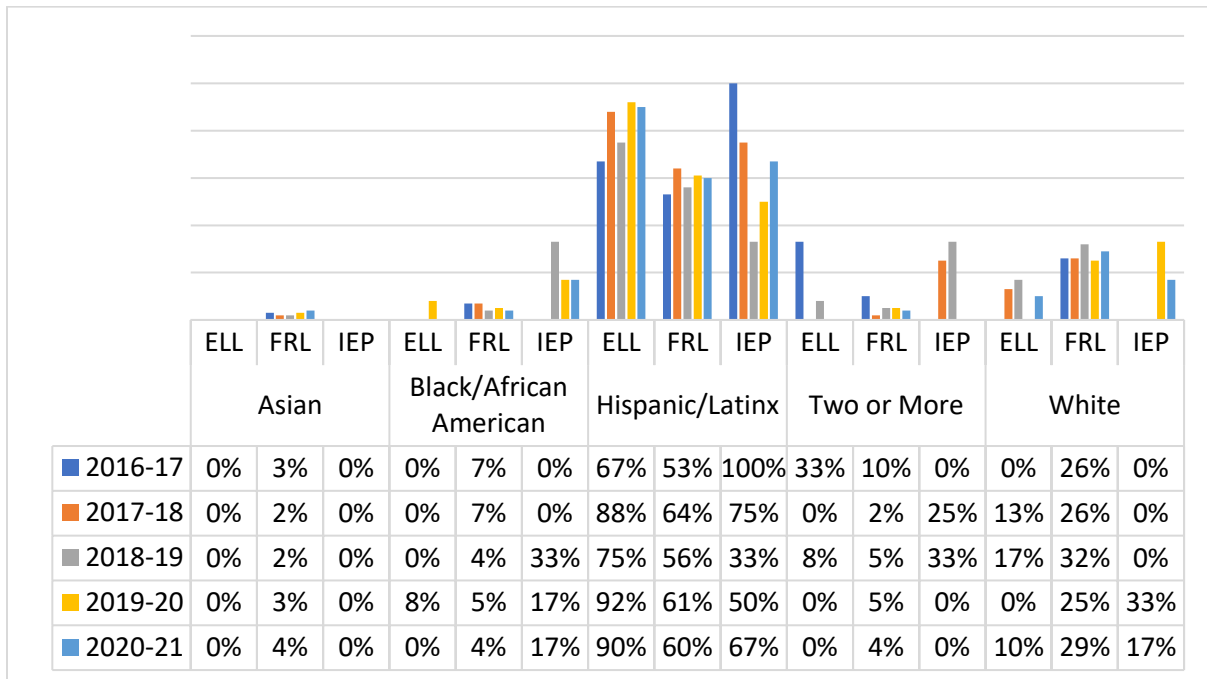


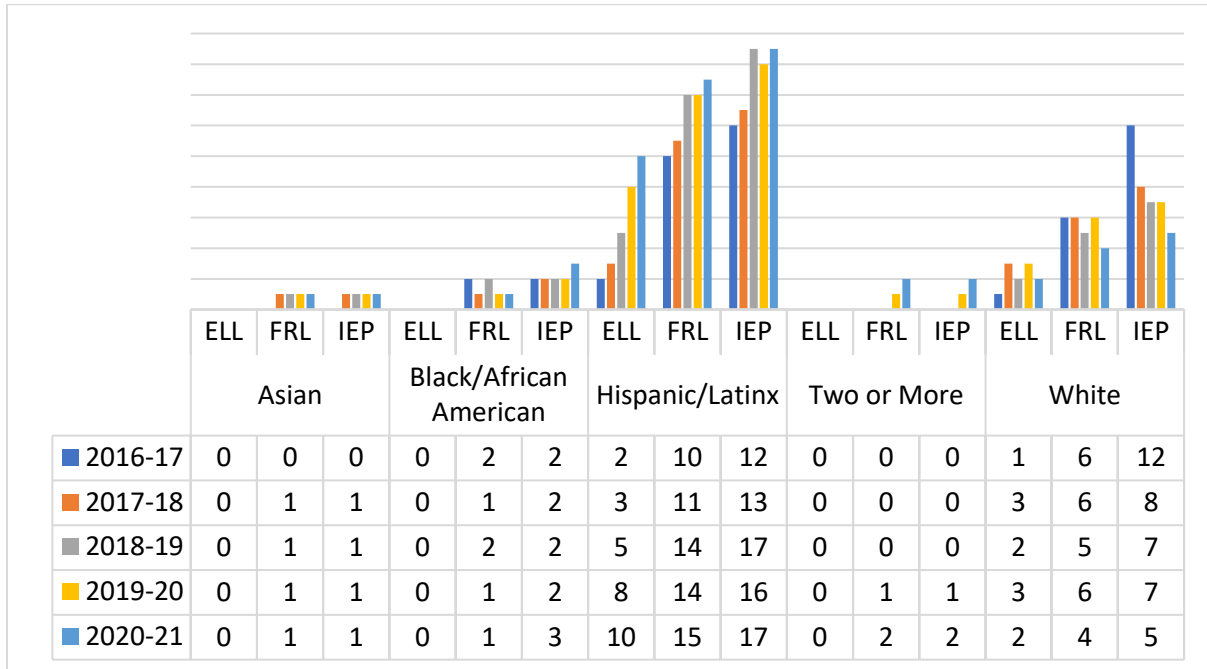
Table 2.14: Student count in honors and AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	3	0	0	6	0	2	47	1	1	9	0	0	23	0
2017-18	0	3	0	0	13	0	7	119	3	0	3	1	1	49	0
2018-19	0	5	0	0	9	1	9	116	1	1	10	1	2	67	0
2019-20	0	7	0	1	11	1	12	133	3	0	11	0	0	55	2
2020-21	0	6	0	0	6	1	9	97	4	0	6	0	1	48	1

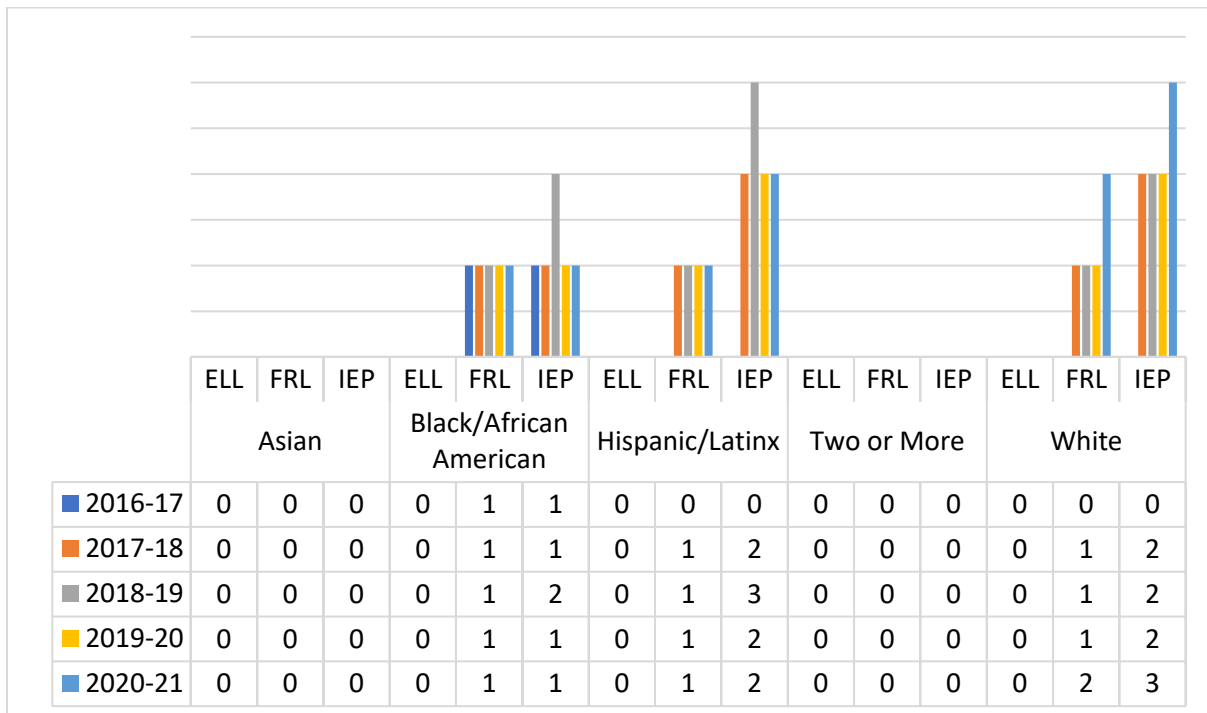
Chart 2.14: Student percent in honors and AP by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE



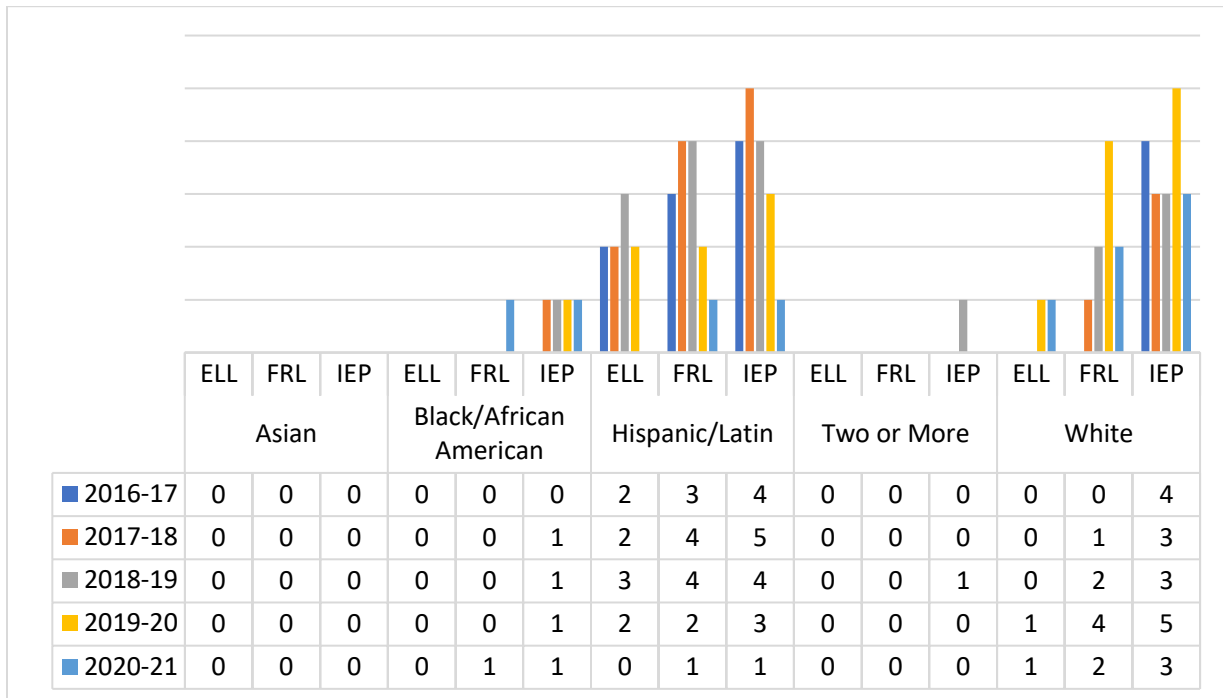
Table/Chart 2.15: Student INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



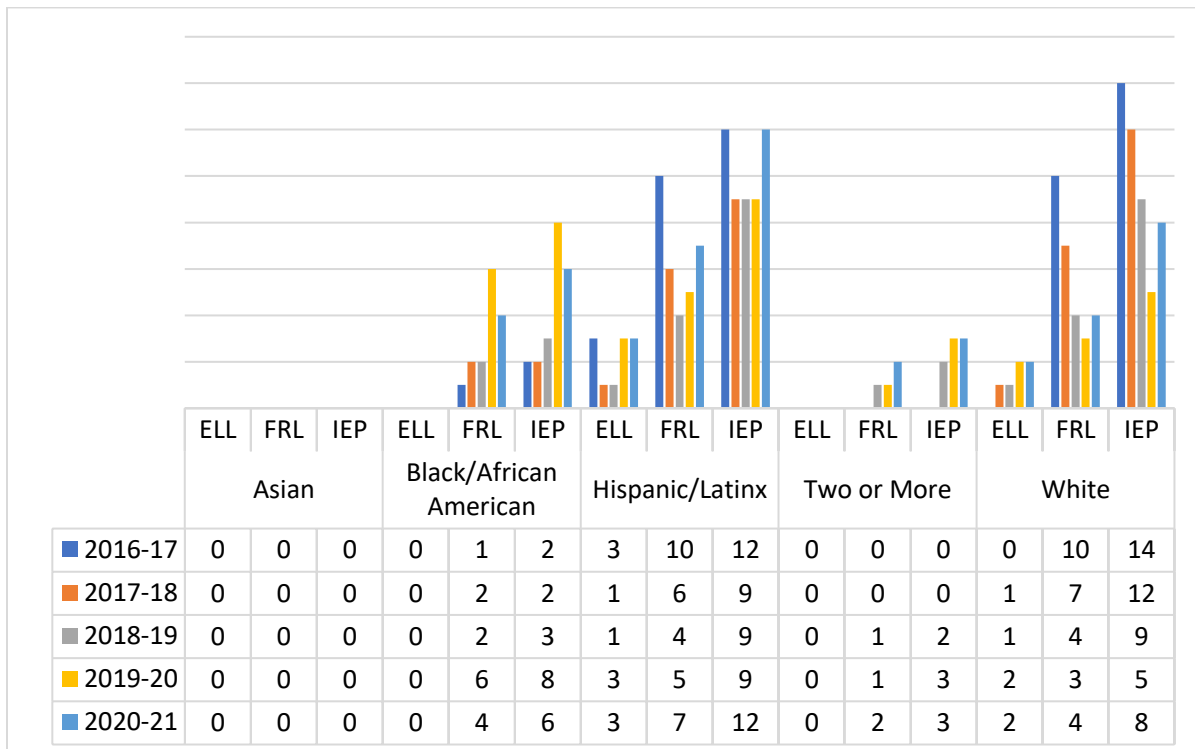
Table/Chart 2.16: Student HEARING IMPAIRMENT count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



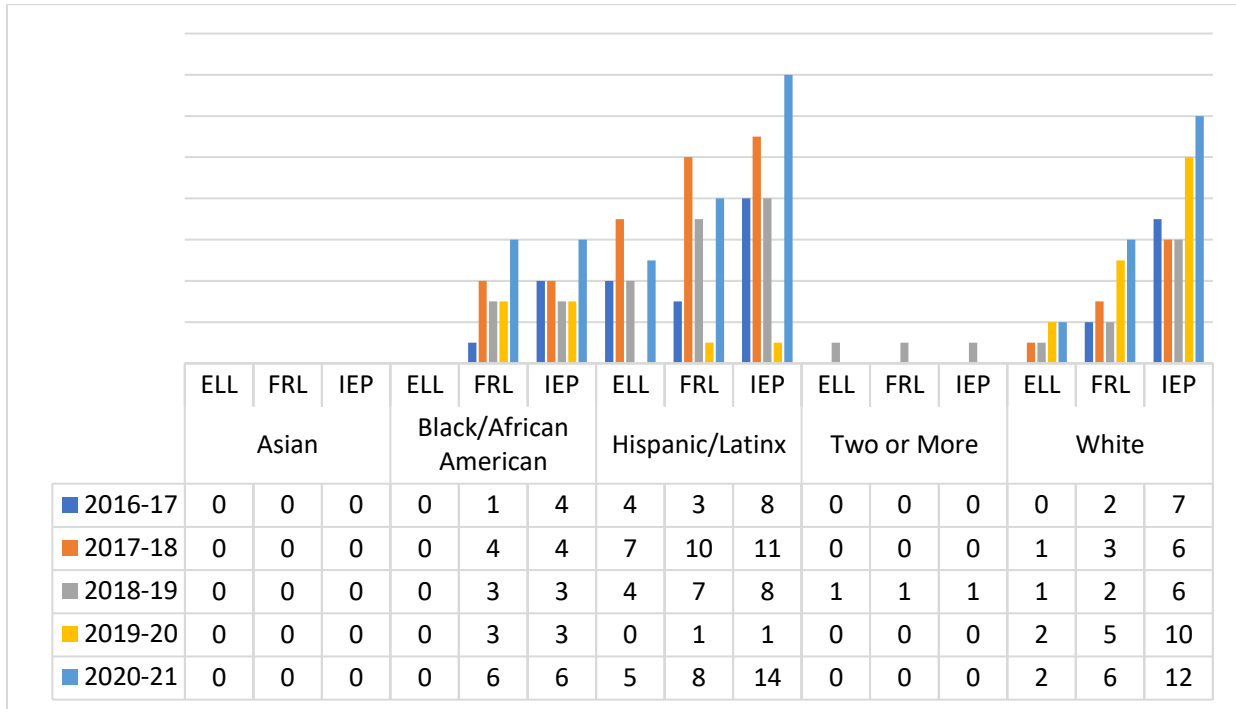
Table/Chart 2.17: Student SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENTS count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



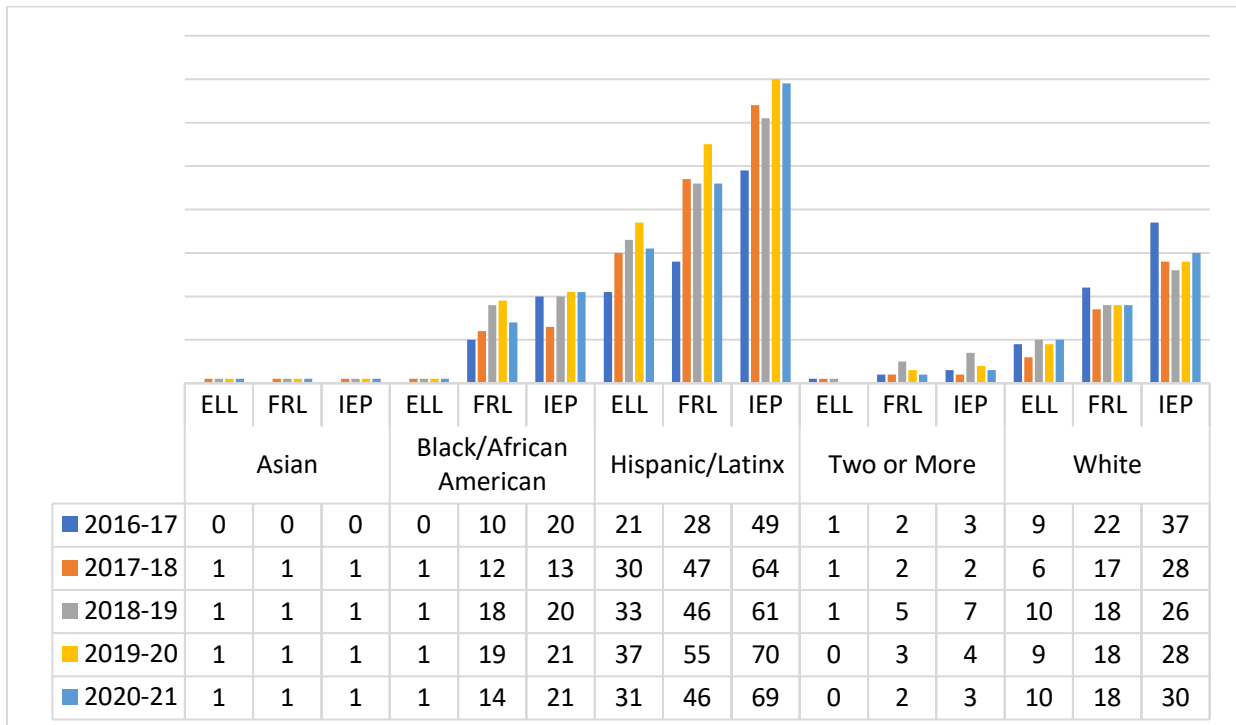
Table/Chart 2.18: Student EMOTIONAL DISABILITY count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



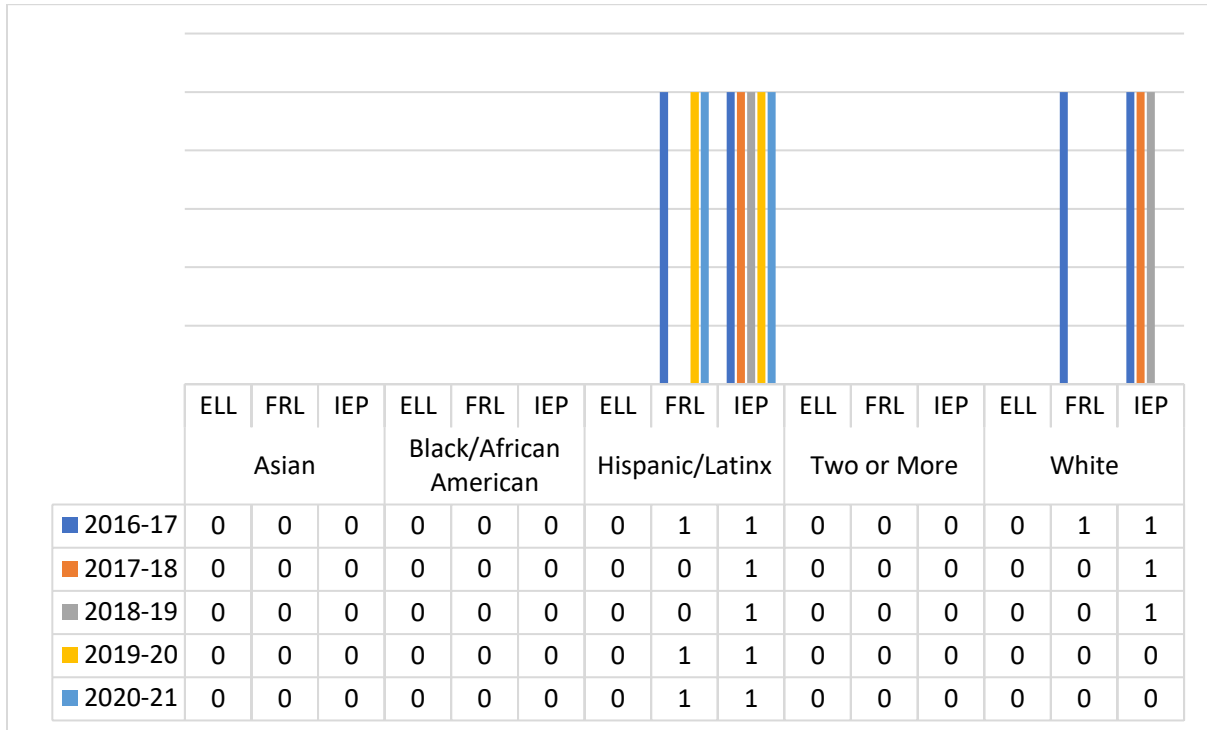
Table/Chart 2.19: Student OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



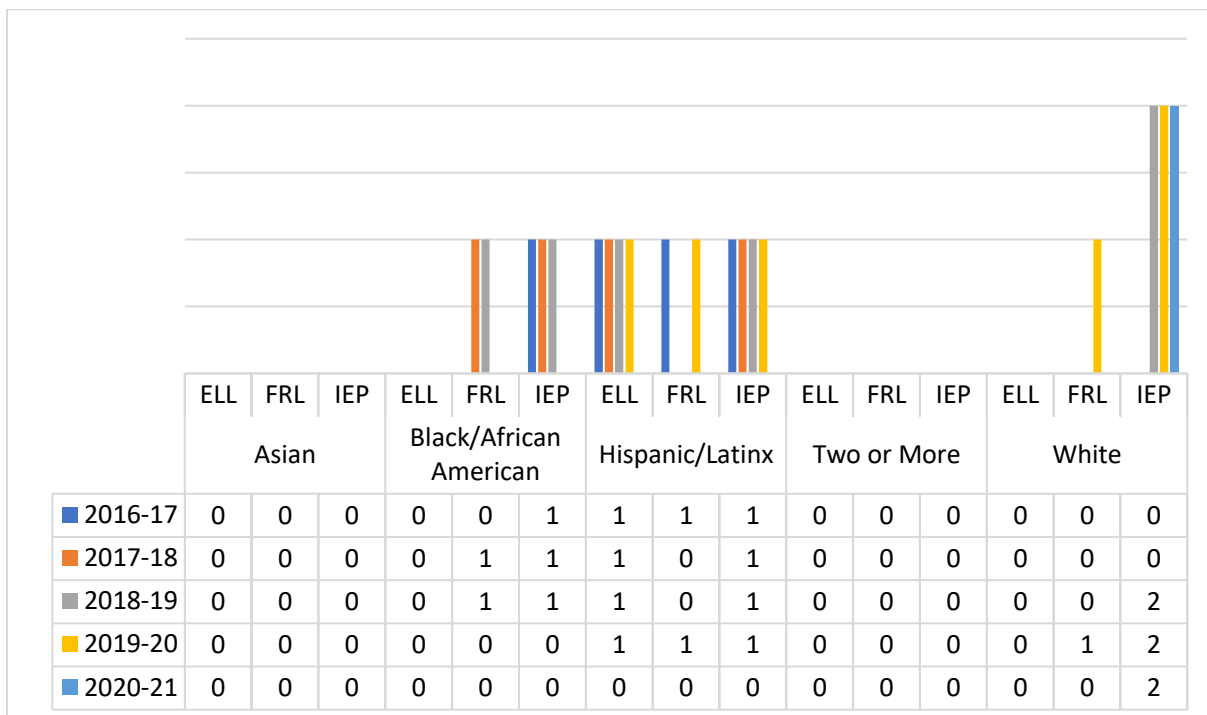
Table/Chart 2.20: Student SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



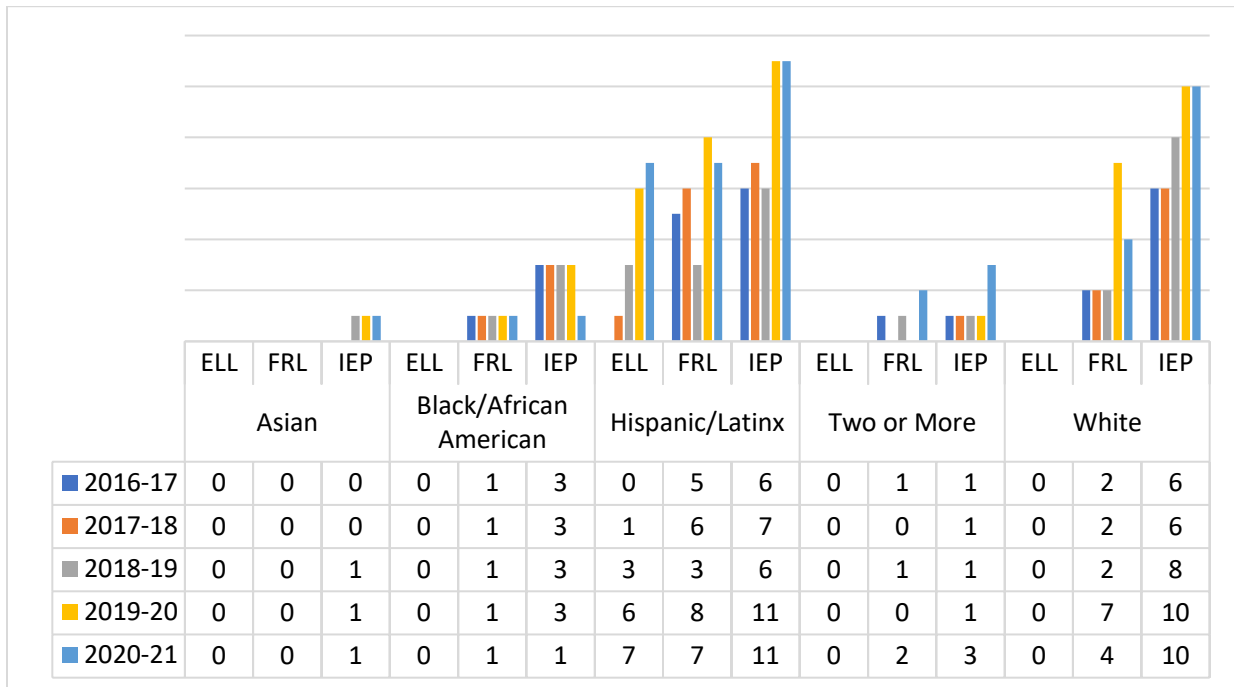
Table/Chart 2.21: Student DEAF BLINDNESS count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



Table/Chart 2.22: Student MULTIPLE DISABILITIES count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



Table/Chart 2.23: Student AUTISM count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



Table/Chart 2.24: Student TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations

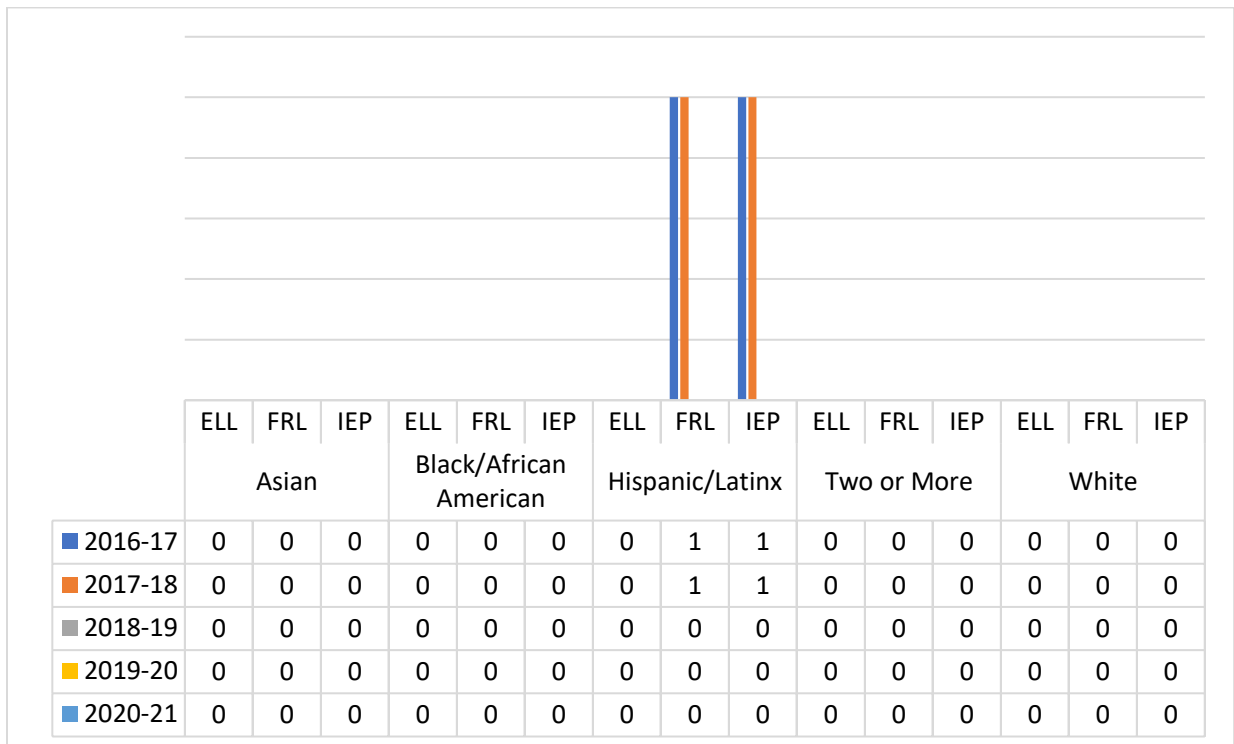


Table 2.25: Student CTE participation count by race/ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Two or More	White	Total
2016-17	14	145	343	45	347	894
2017-18	10	130	355	42	329	866
2018-19	14	121	356	41	345	877
2019-20	13	123	392	37	324	889
2020-21	11	131	454	34	316	946

Chart 2.25: Student CTE participation percent by race/ethnicity

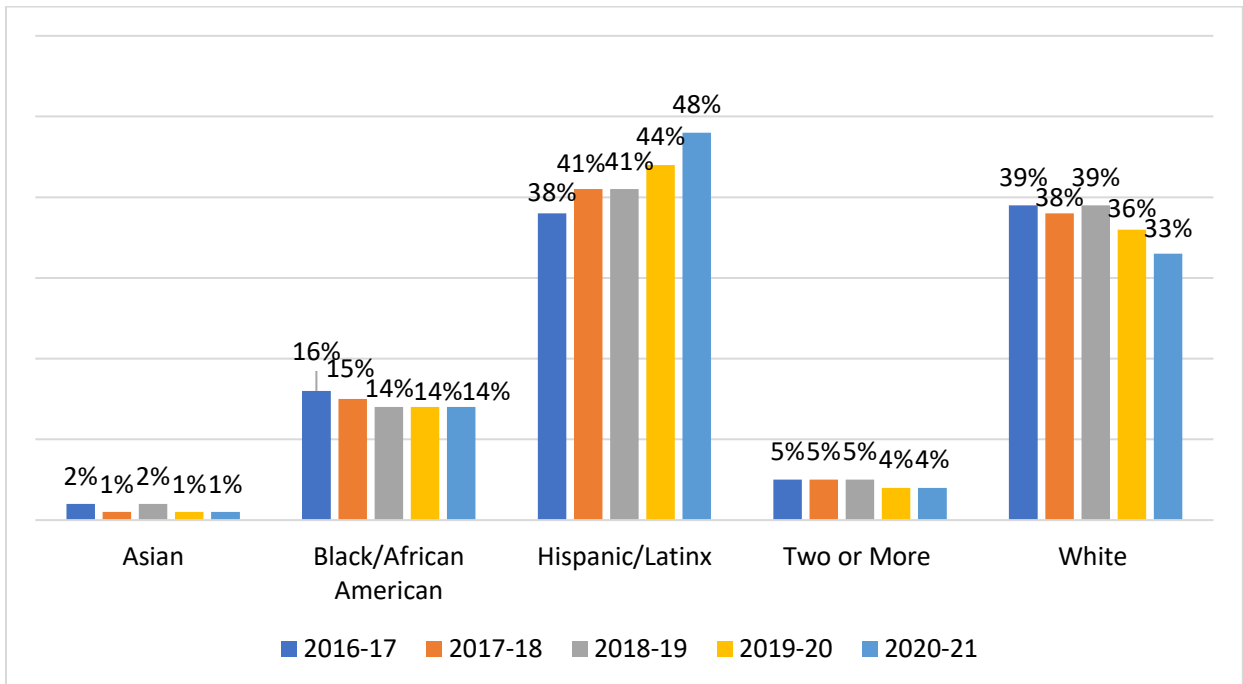


Table 2.26: Student CTE count by race/ethnicity and special populations

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	1	9	0	0	100	24	28	220	44	2	22	3	20	186	38
2017-18	4	8	1	1	87	15	39	209	51	2	26	7	37	159	36
2018-19	3	8	1	1	92	23	51	246	43	3	24	5	44	177	30
2019-20	6	11	1	1	89	19	71	248	53	1	25	3	54	180	27
2020-21	7	9	1	2	94	21	72	294	60	4	22	7	50	169	37

Chart 2.26: Student CTE percent by race/ethnicity and special populations

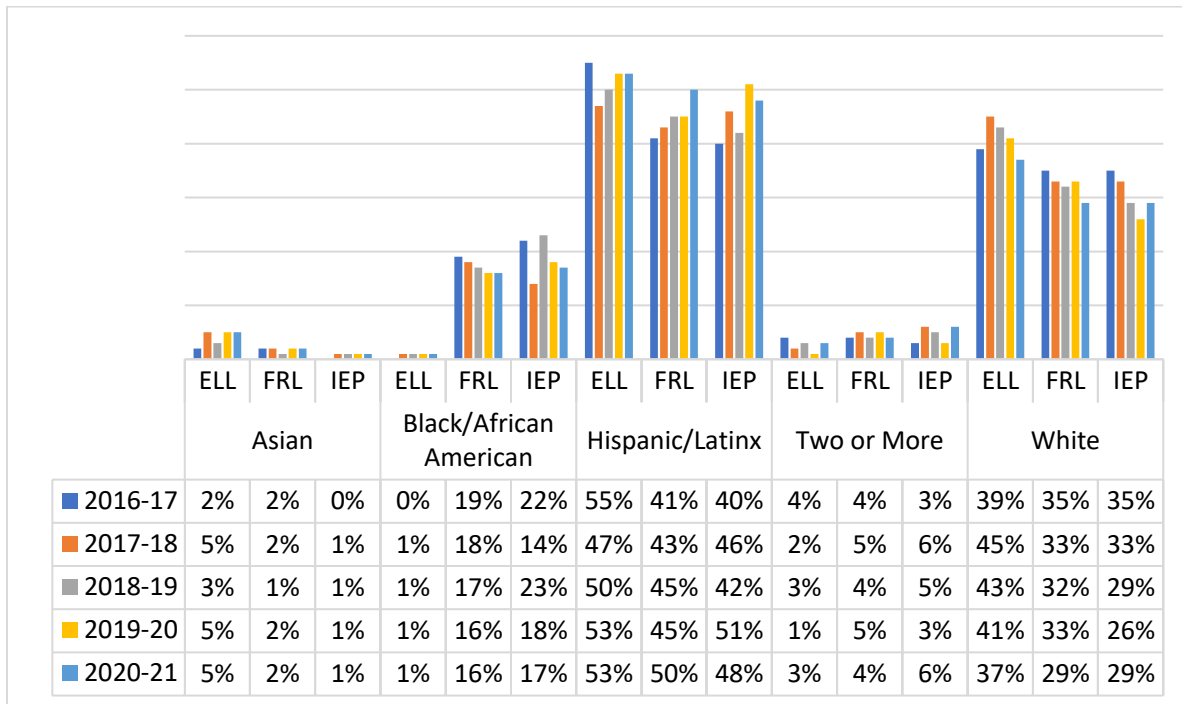
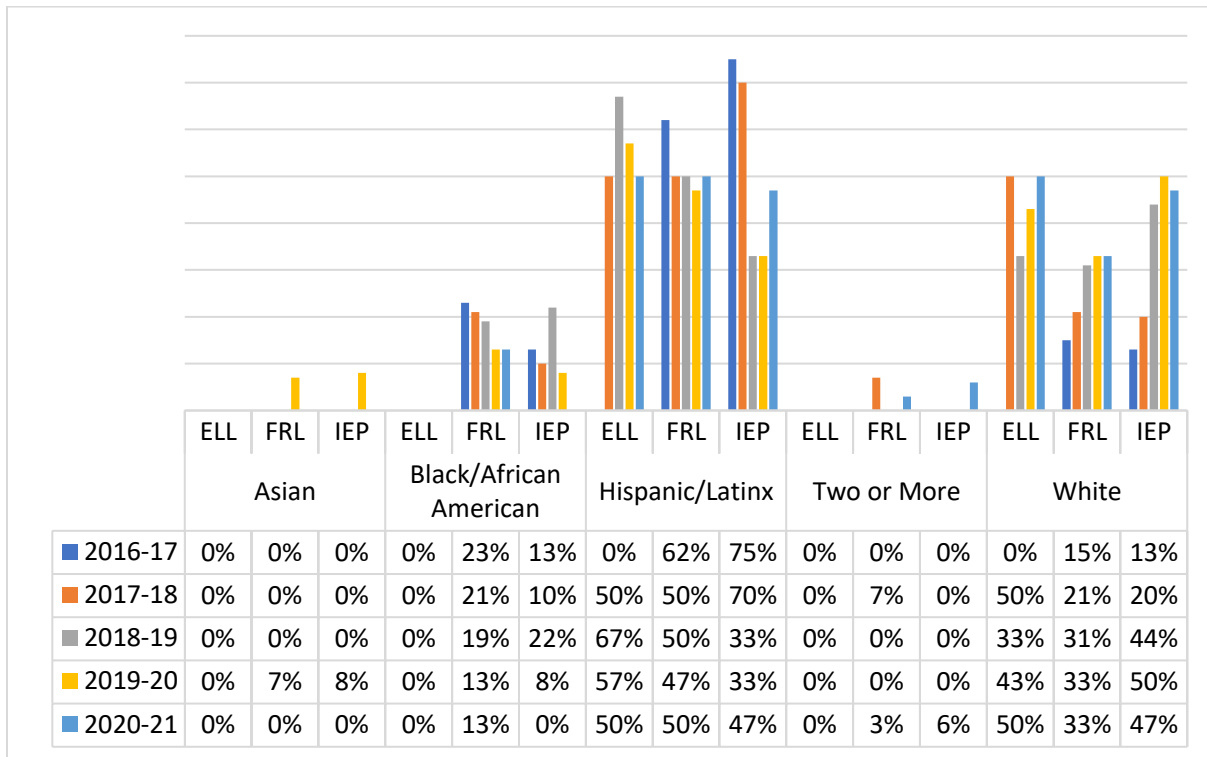


Table 2.27: Student retention¹⁴ count by race/ethnicity and special populations

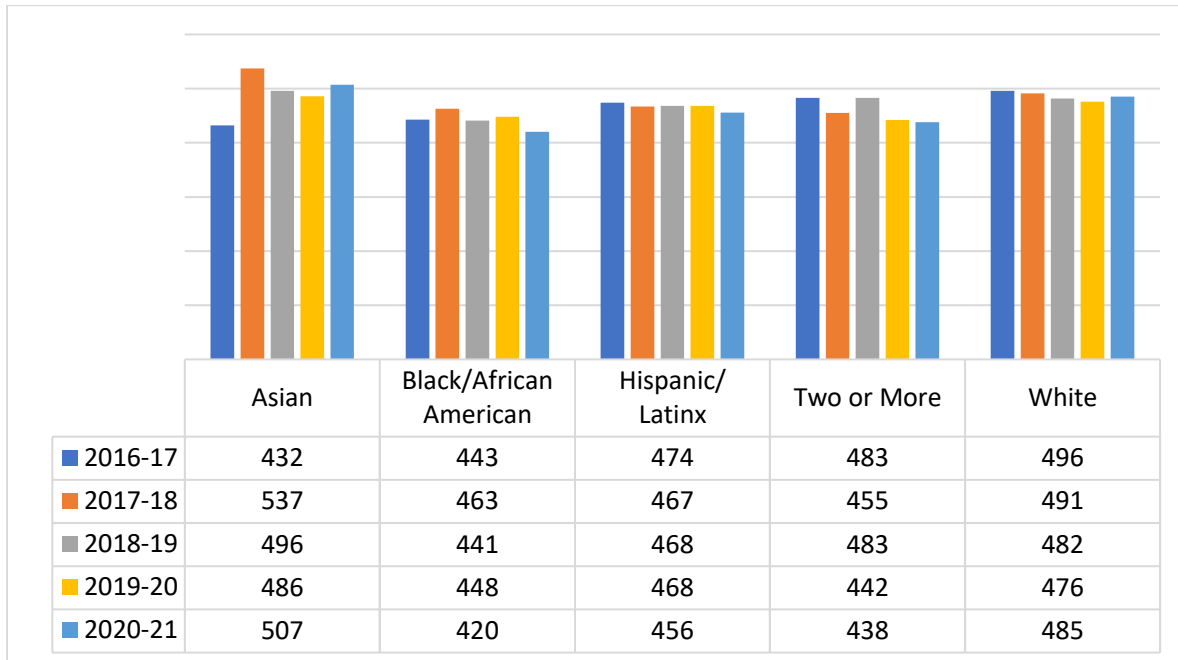
Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	8	6	0	0	0	0	2	1
2017-18	0	0	0	0	3	1	3	7	7	0	1	0	3	3	2
2018-19	0	0	0	0	3	2	2	8	3	0	0	0	1	5	4
2019-20	0	1	1	0	2	1	4	7	4	0	0	0	3	5	6
2020-21	0	0	0	0	4	0	6	15	8	0	1	1	6	10	8

Chart 2.27: Student retention percent by race/ethnicity and special populations

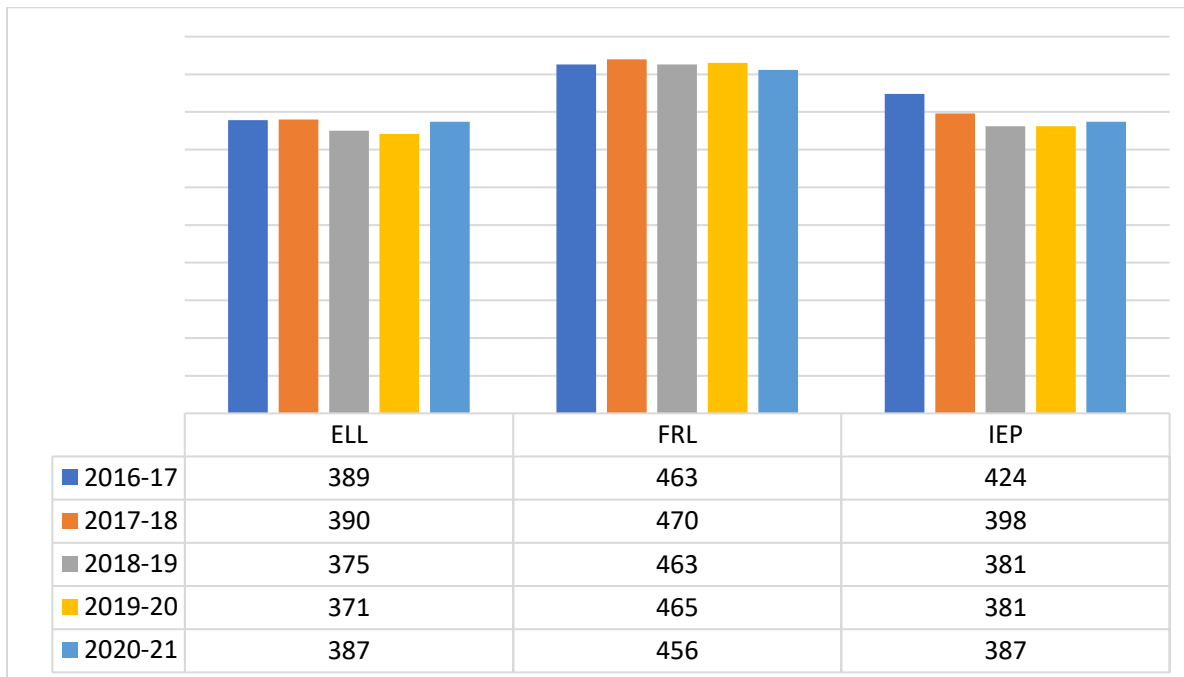


¹⁴ Percent of students who were retained (total students retained by ethnicity and special program divided by total number of students by ethnicity and special program on the cohort). Example: Hispanic FRL students who were retained divided by all Hispanic FRL students on the cohort.

Table/Chart 2.28: Student SAT¹⁵ average scores in READING¹⁶ by race/ethnicity



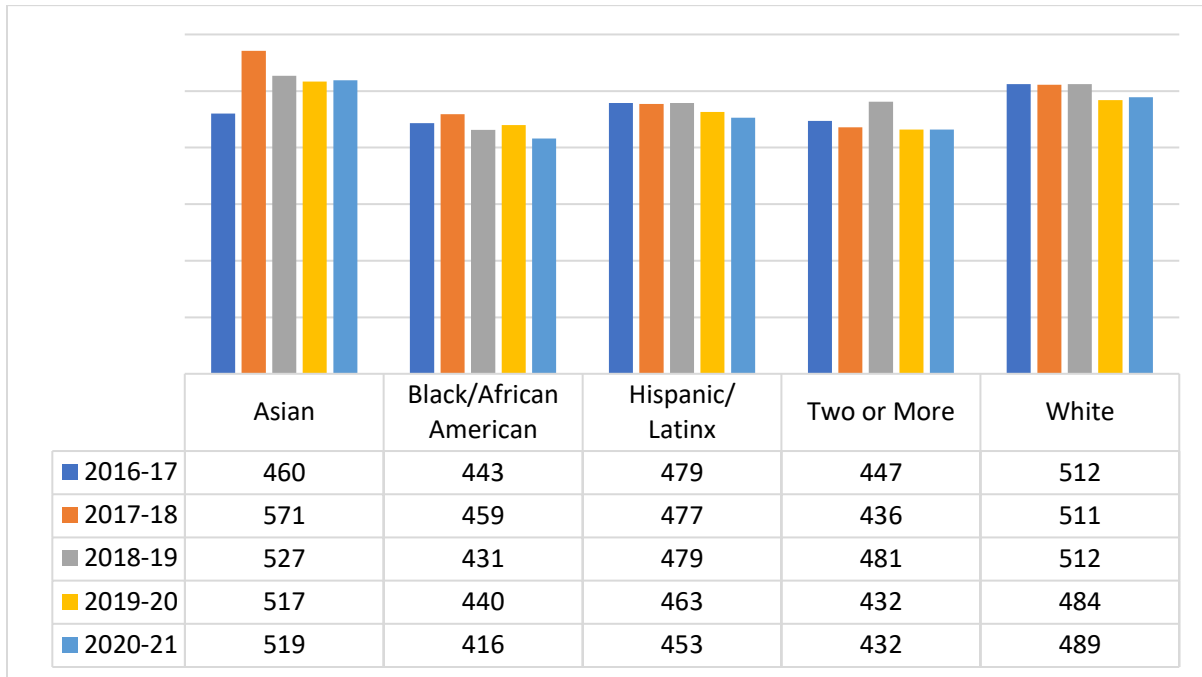
Table/Chart 2.29: Student SAT average scores in READING by special populations



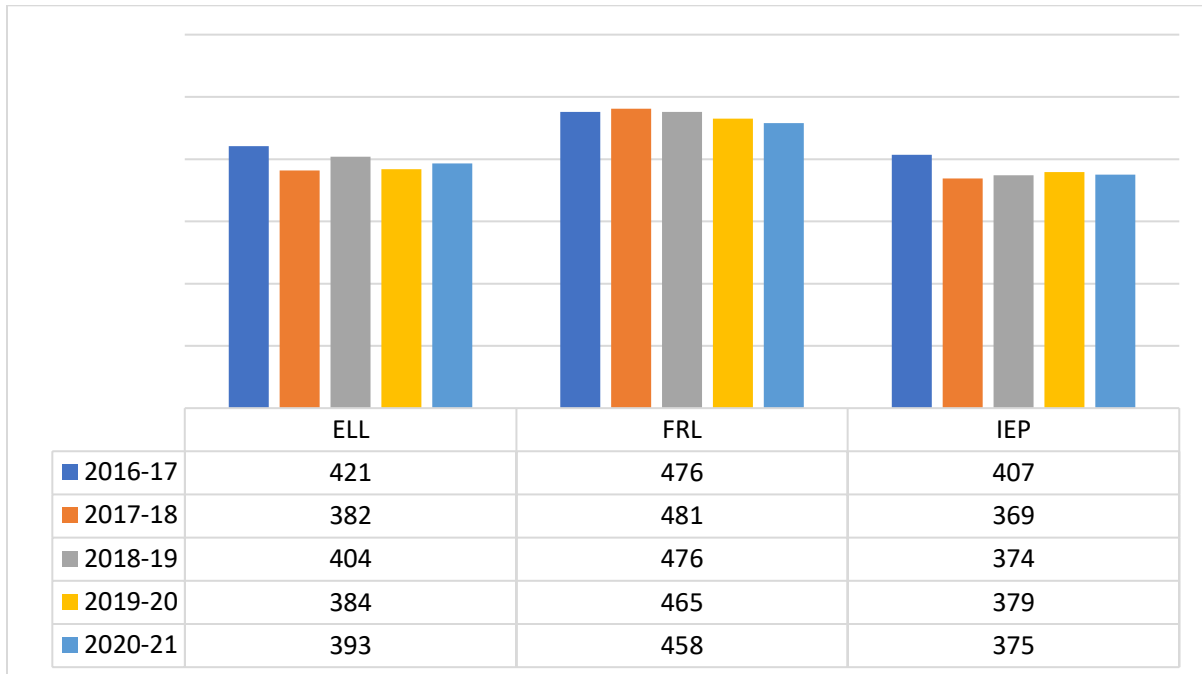
¹⁵ SAT = Scholastic Aptitude Test

¹⁶ Average SAT EBRW (Evidence-Based Reading and Writing) Score by Ethnicity. SAT (1) Test Data from PowerSchool (Scores imported from raw data files from College Board).

Table/Chart 2.30: Student SAT average scores in MATH¹⁷ by race/ethnicity

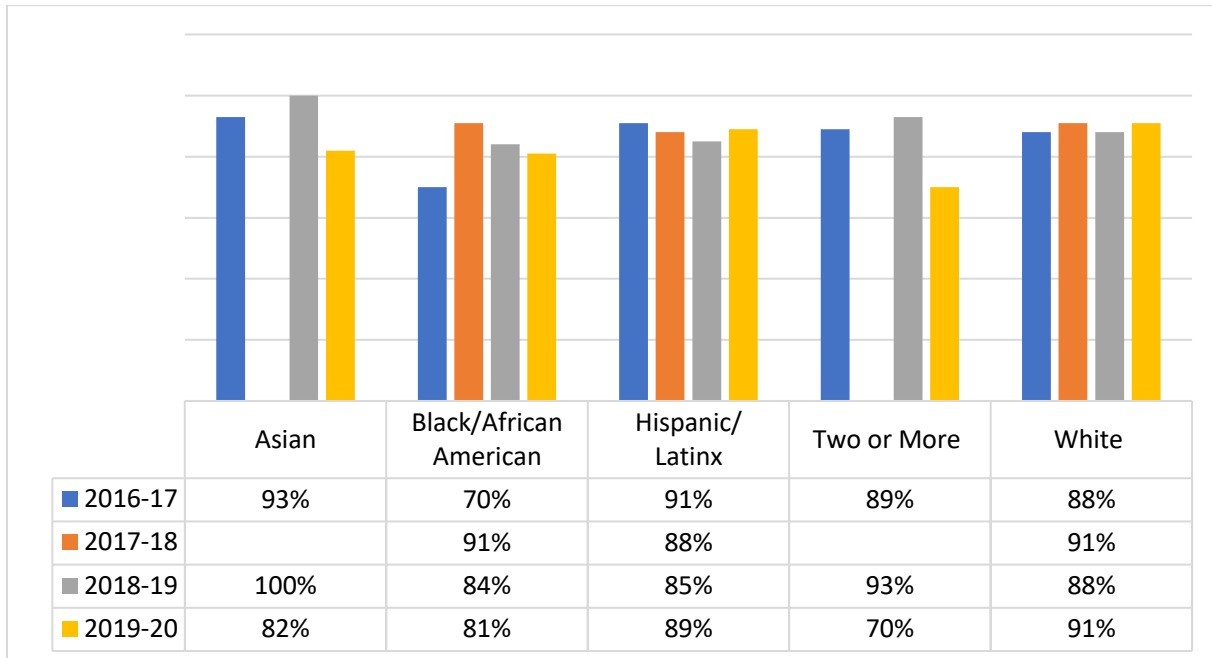


Table/Chart 2.31: Student SAT average scores in MATH by special populations

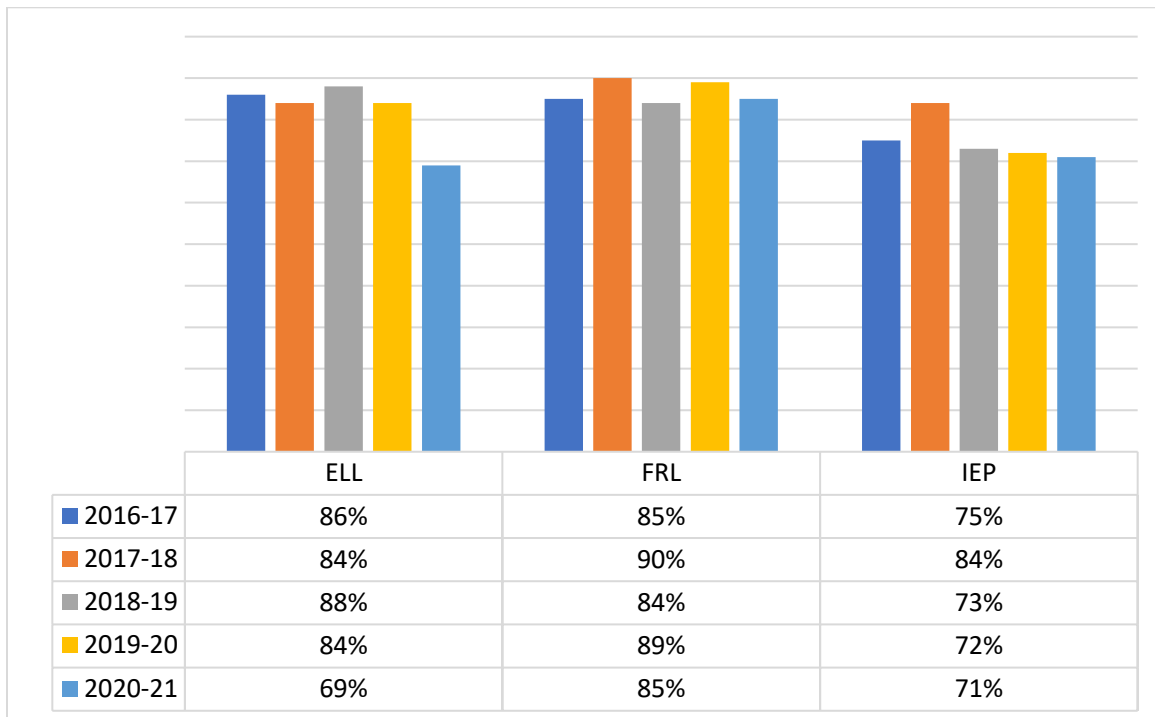


¹⁷ Average SAT Math Score by Ethnicity. SAT (1) Test Data from PowerSchool (Scores imported from raw data files from College Board).

Table/Chart 2.32: Student graduation percent¹⁸ by race/ethnicity

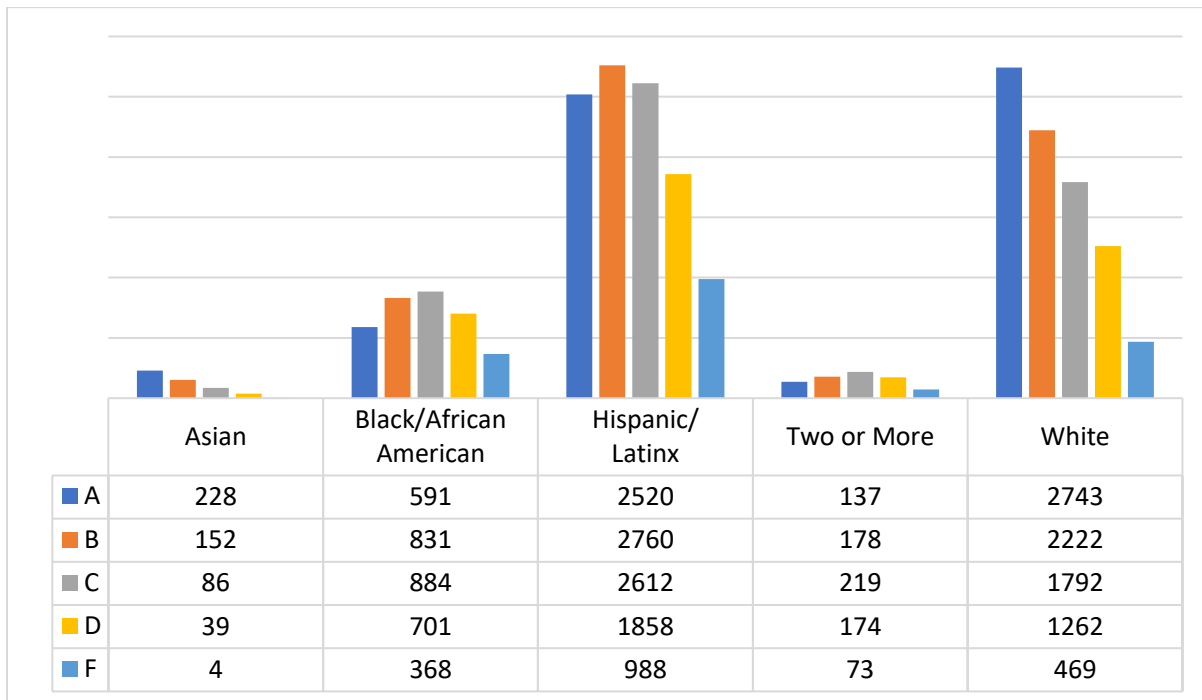


Table/Chart 2.33: Student graduation percent by special populations

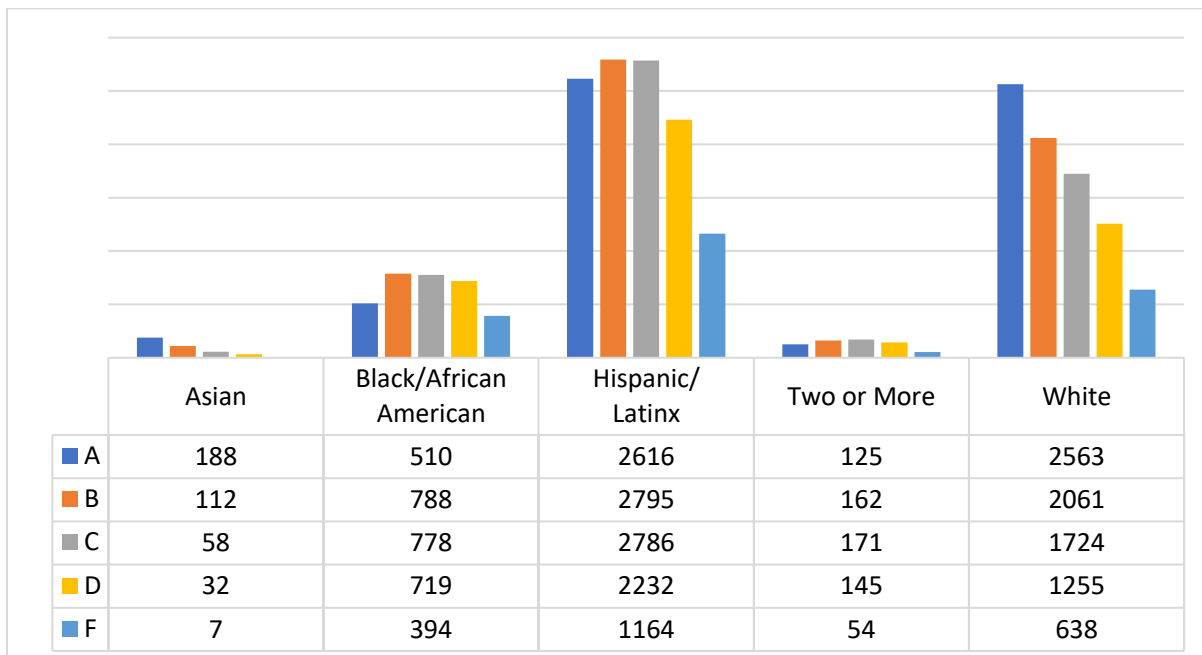


¹⁸ Blank cells intentionally left blank due to unknown data.

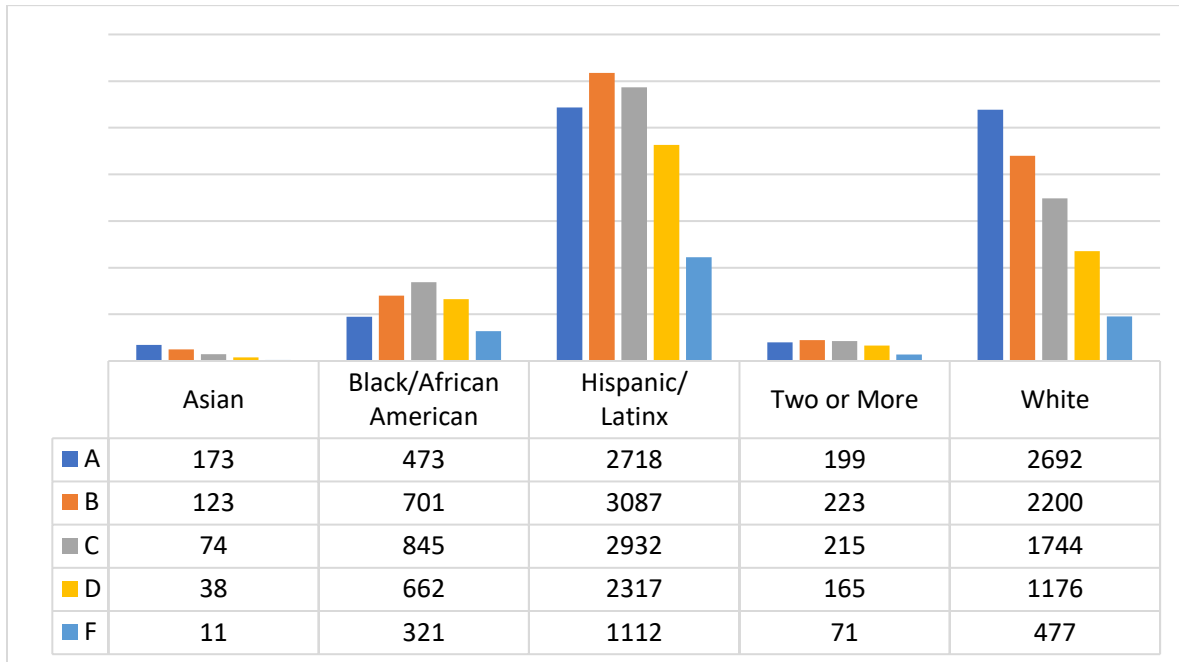
Table/Chart 2.34: SY 2016-17, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity



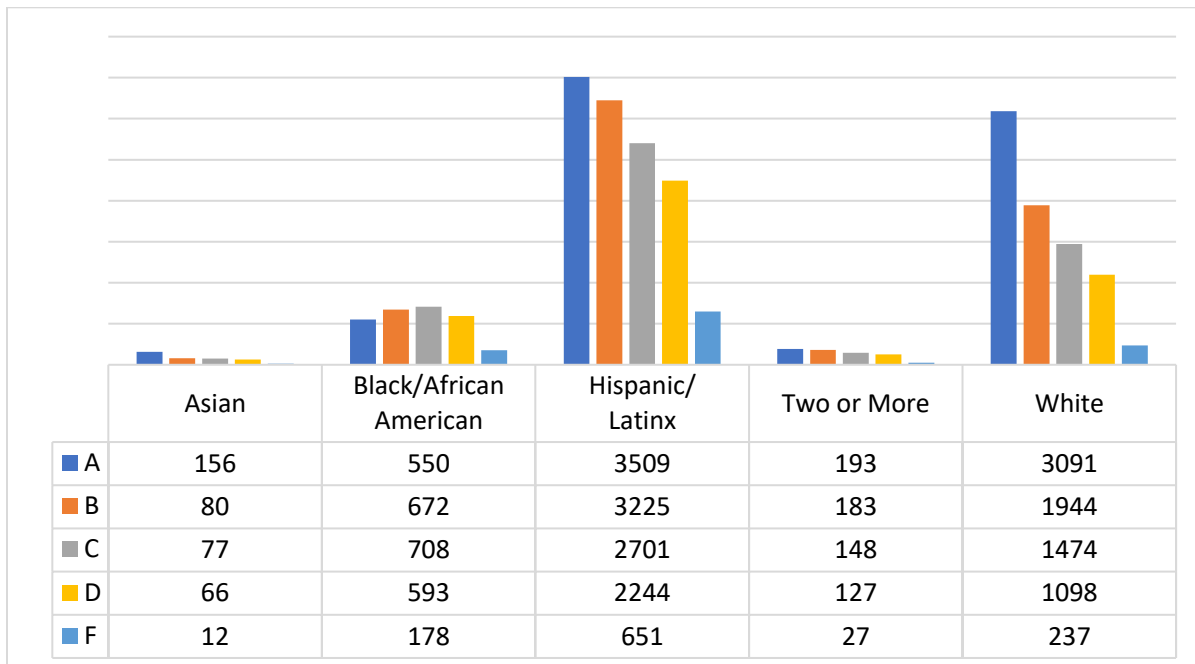
Table/Chart 2.35: SY 2017-18, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity



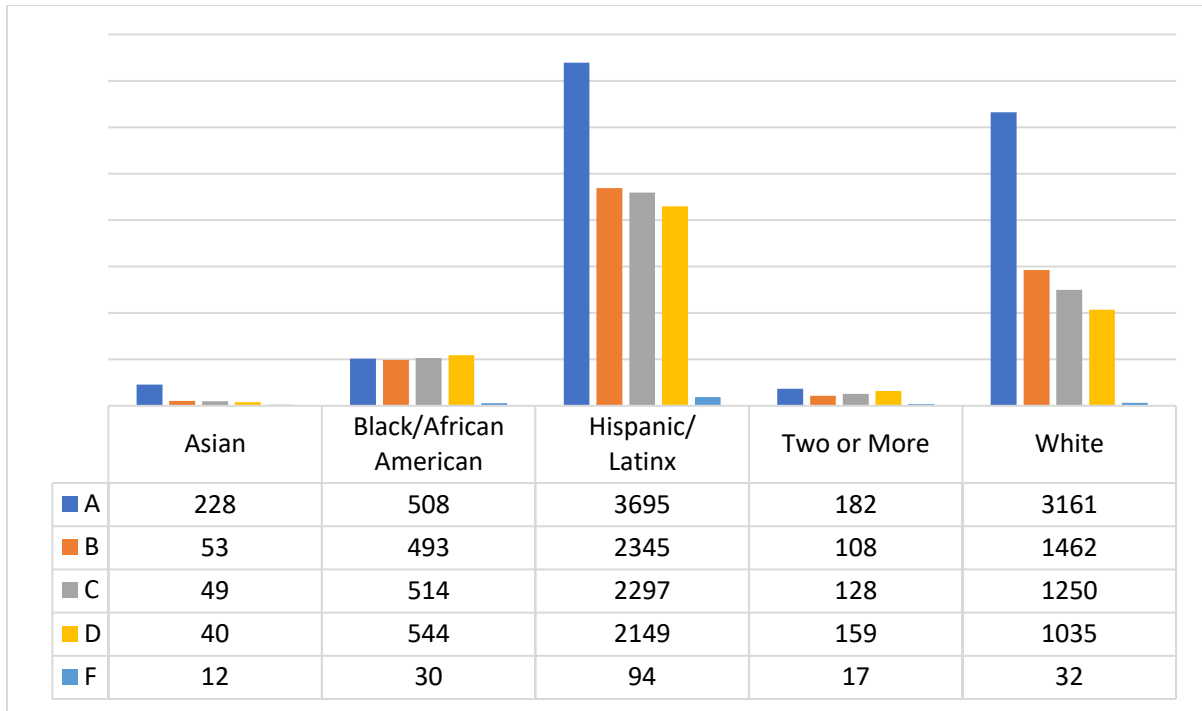
Table/Chart 2.36: SY 2018-19, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity



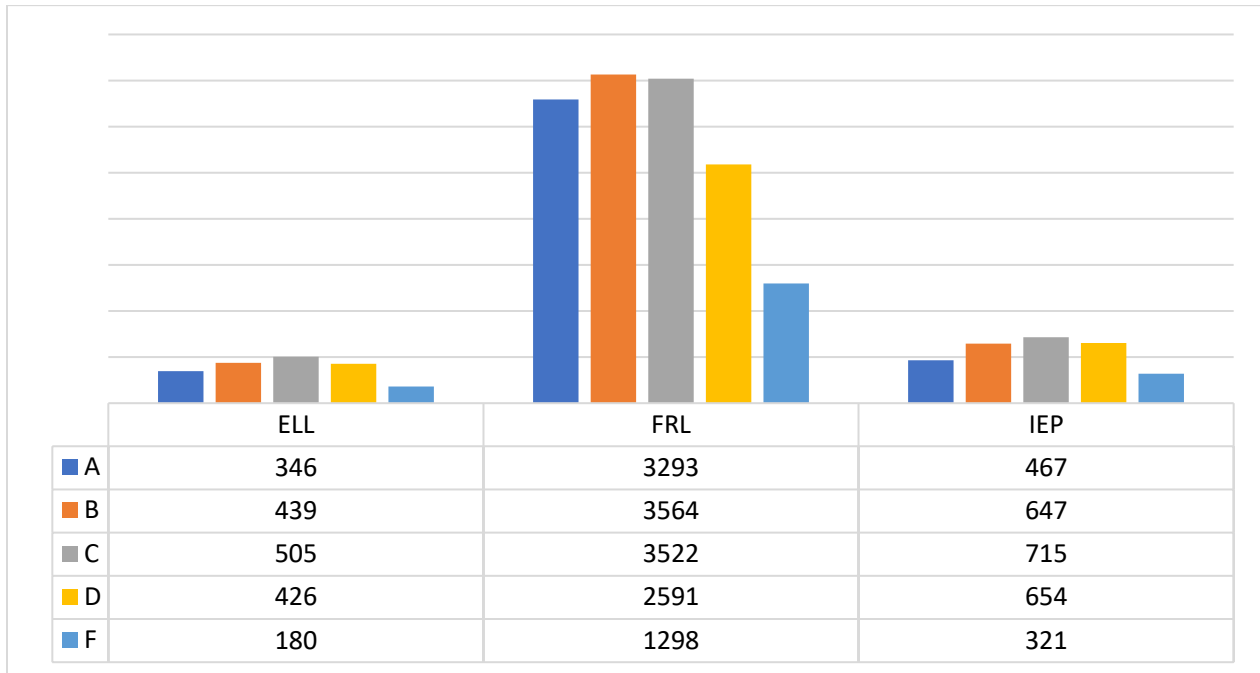
Table/Chart 2.37: SY 2019-20, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity



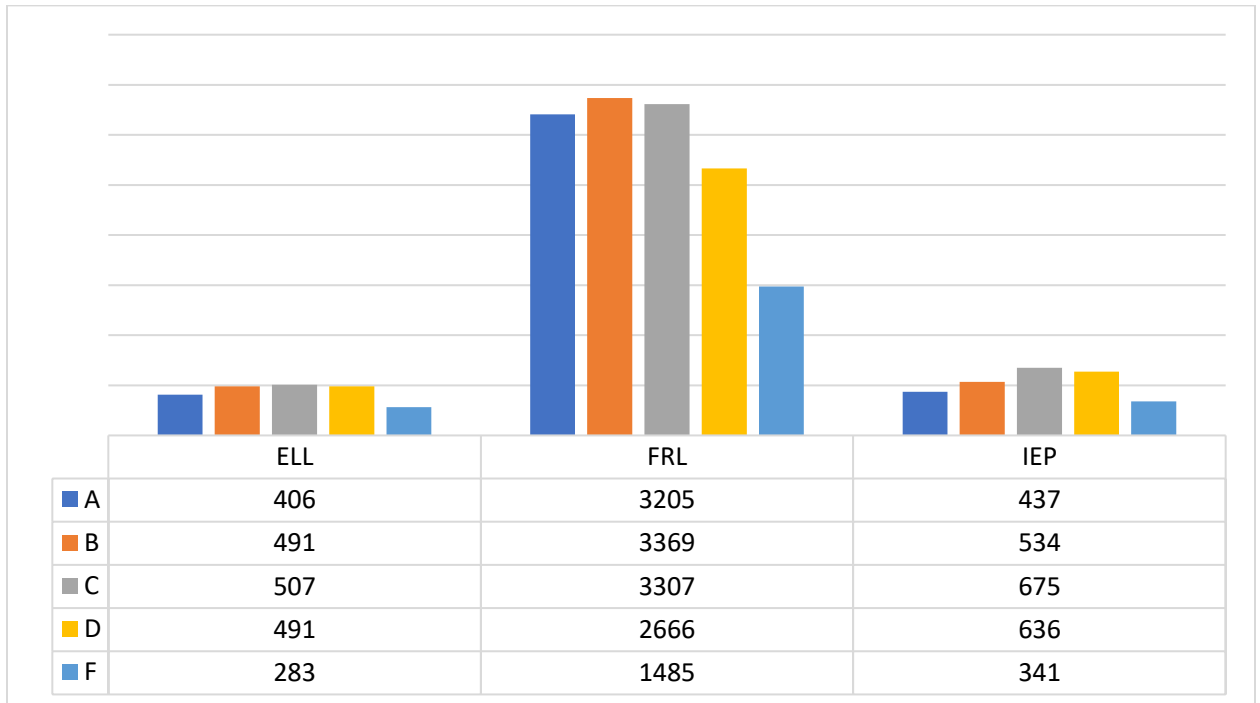
Table/Chart 2.38: SY 2020-21, Student final grade count by race/ethnicity



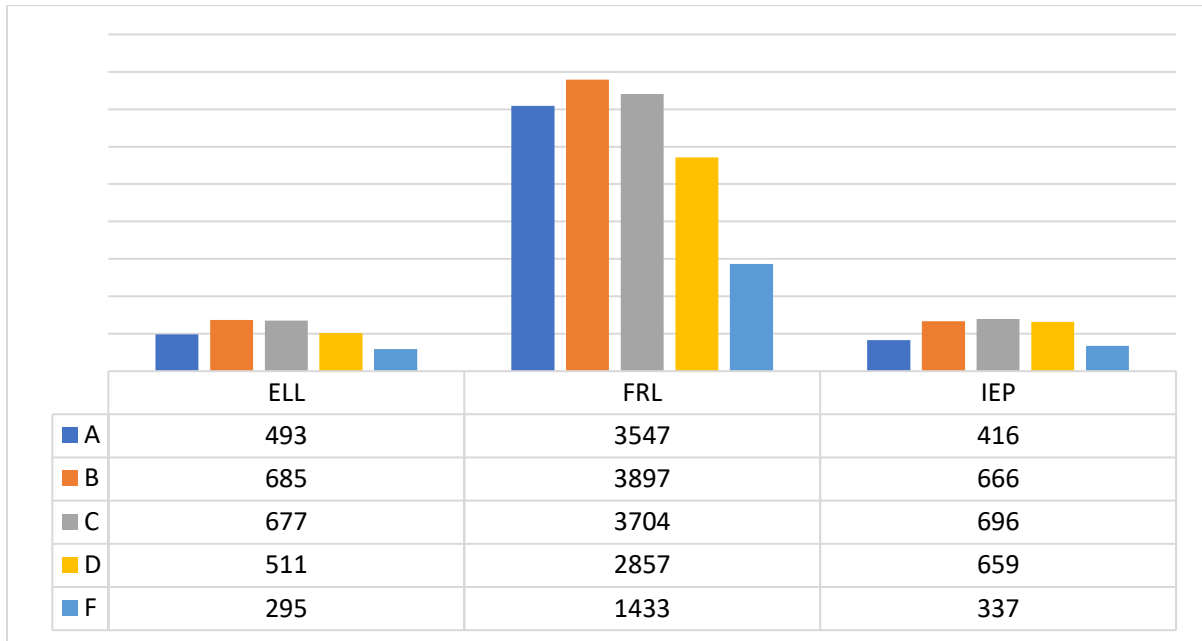
Table/Chart 2.39: SY 2016-17, Student final grade count by special populations



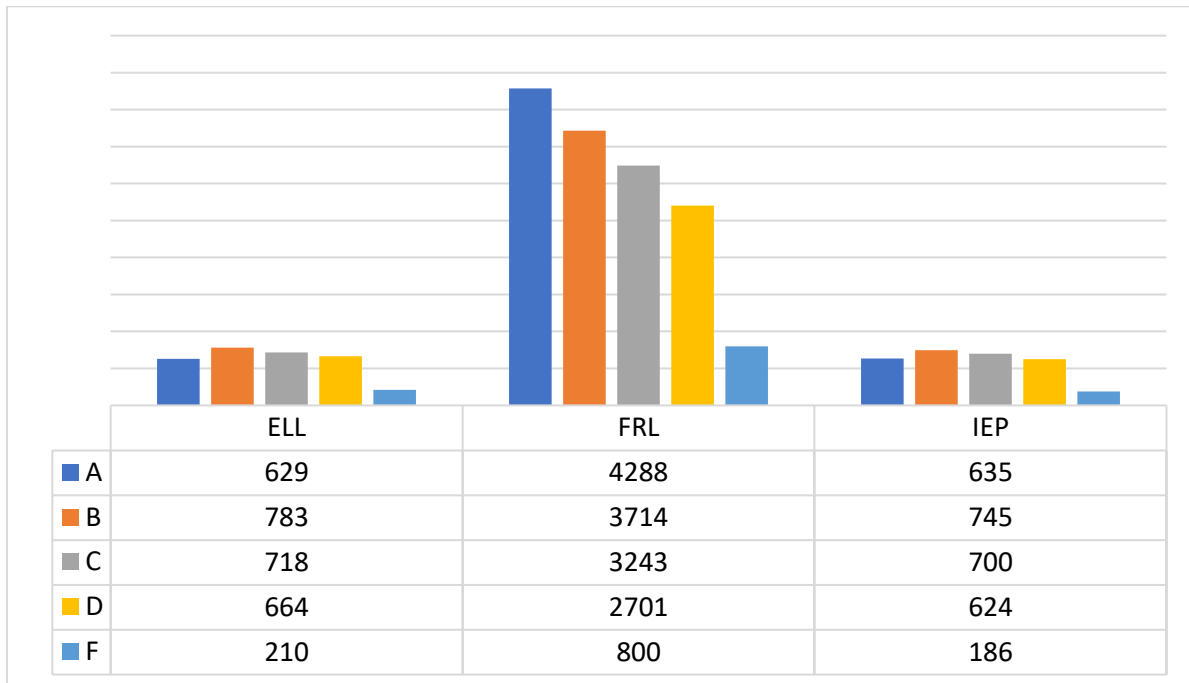
Table/Chart 2.40: SY 2017-18, Student final grade count by special populations



Table/Chart 2.41: SY 2018-19, Student final grade count by special populations



Table/Chart 2.42: SY 2019-20, Student final grade count by special populations



Table/Chart 2.43: SY 2020-21, Student final grade count by special populations

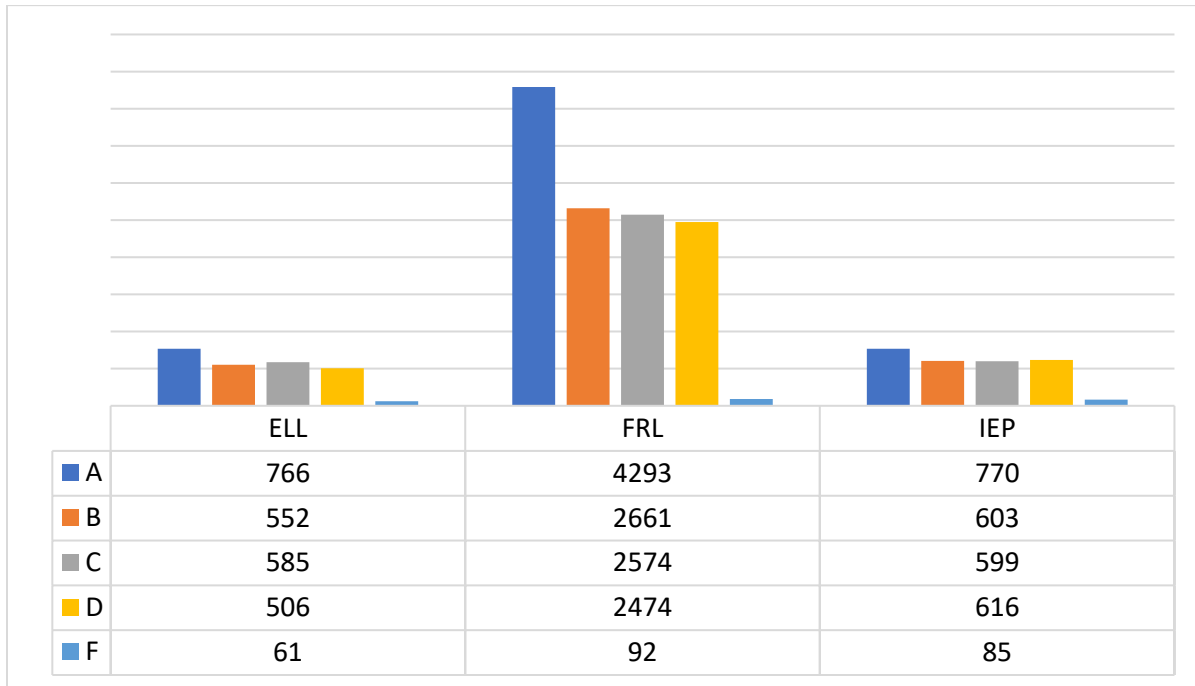


Table 2.44: Student credit recovery count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	1	1	0	0	5	2	0	8	1	0	0	0	1	8	3
2017-18	0	0	0	0	11	0	5	15	6	0	0	0	1	9	6
2018-19	0	0	0	0	10	2	4	19	8	1	3	2	3	14	5
2019-20	1	1	0	0	9	6	5	13	7	0	1	2	1	6	4
2020-21	0	0	0	0	9	4	2	13	6	0	1	0	1	3	3

Chart 2.44: Student credit recovery percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

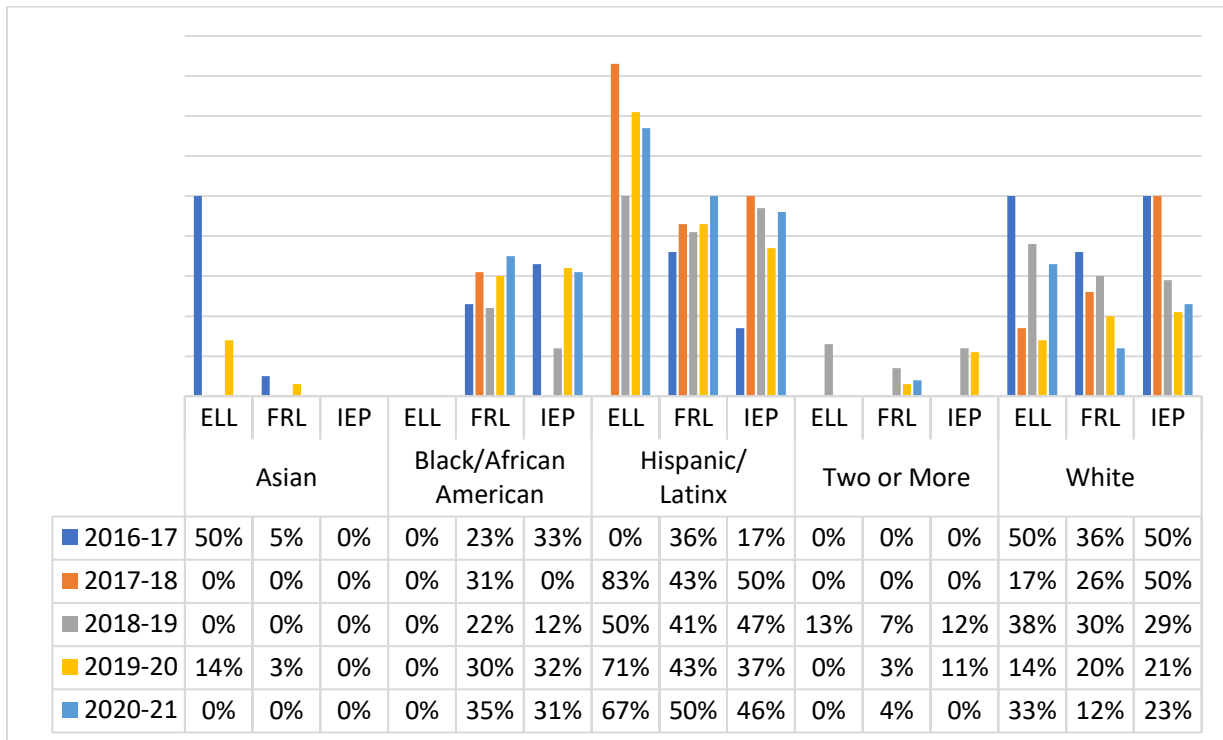


Table 2.45: Student credit recovery count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	1	0	0	0	4	1	2	16	6	0	2	0	0	5	3
2017-18	0	0	0	0	5	4	3	14	8	1	1	1	1	10	9
2018-19	0	0	0	0	6	4	7	34	11	0	1	0	5	20	5
2019-20	1	1	0	0	10	5	15	34	10	0	0	0	9	23	6
2020-21	0	0	0	0	8	2	6	20	10	0	1	1	2	12	5

Chart 2.45: Student credit recovery percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE

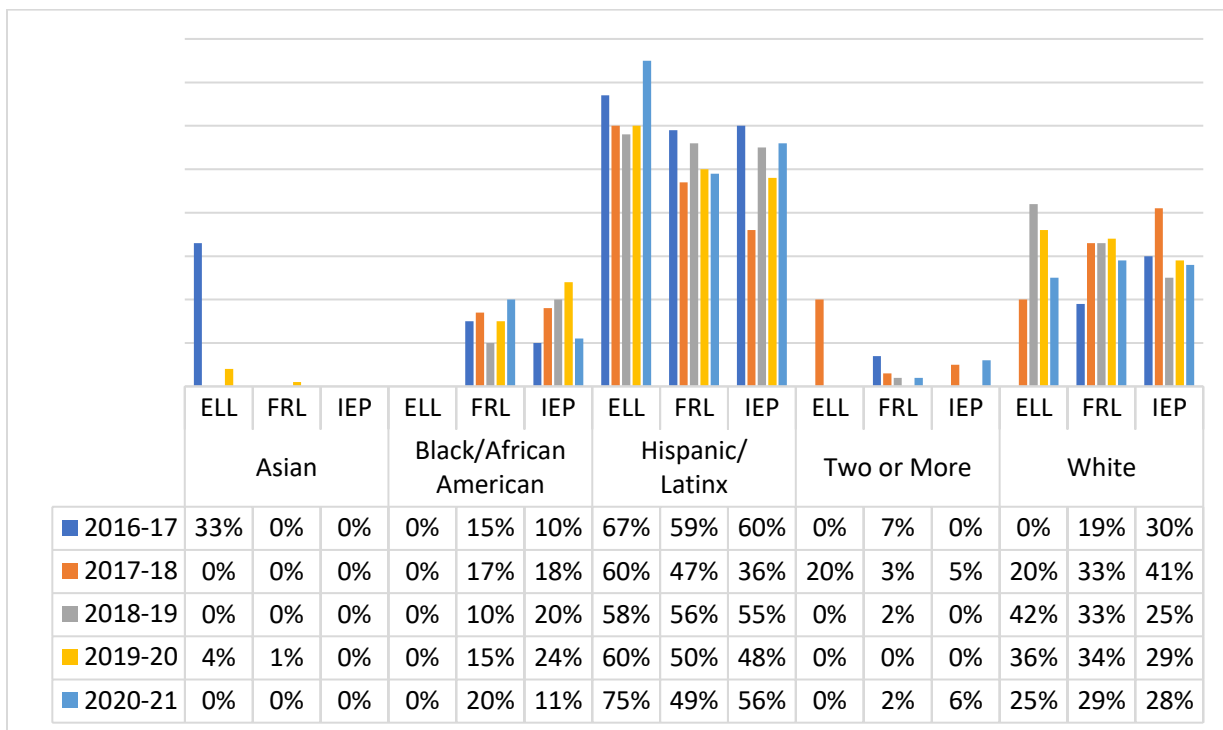


Table 2.46: Student summer school count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	0	0	0	7	2	7	34	5	0	1	0	3	18	3
2017-18	0	1	0	0	6	2	5	14	9	1	1	1	2	5	1
2018-19	0	0	0	0	6	3	9	41	13	0	2	3	1	12	3
2019-20	1	0	0	0	9	3	8	28	9	0	1	0	2	9	2
2020-21	0	0	0	0	7	2	10	22	5	0	3	0	2	12	4

Chart 2.46: Student summer school percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and FEMALE

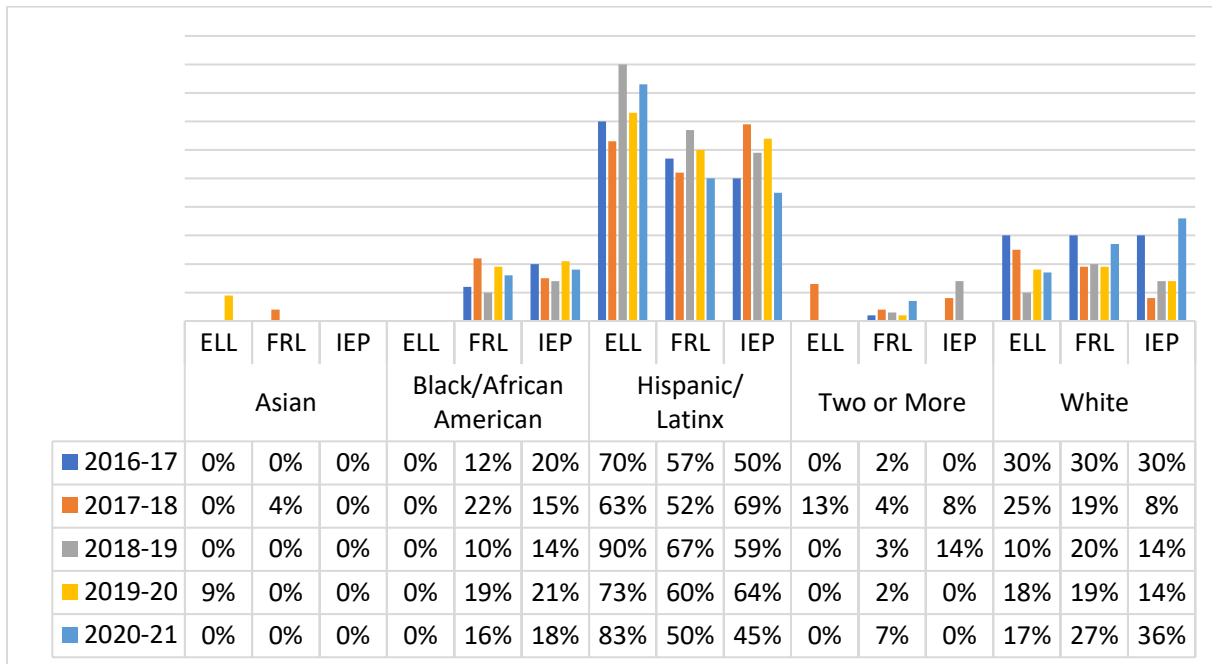
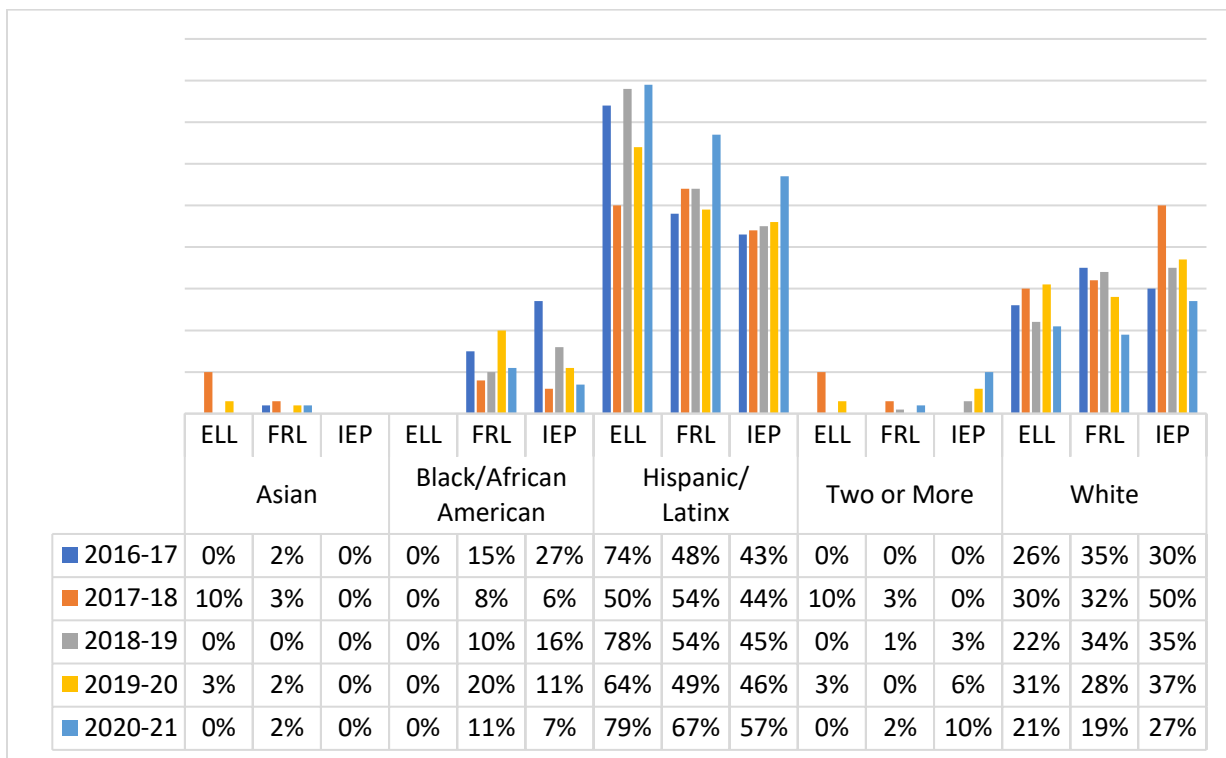


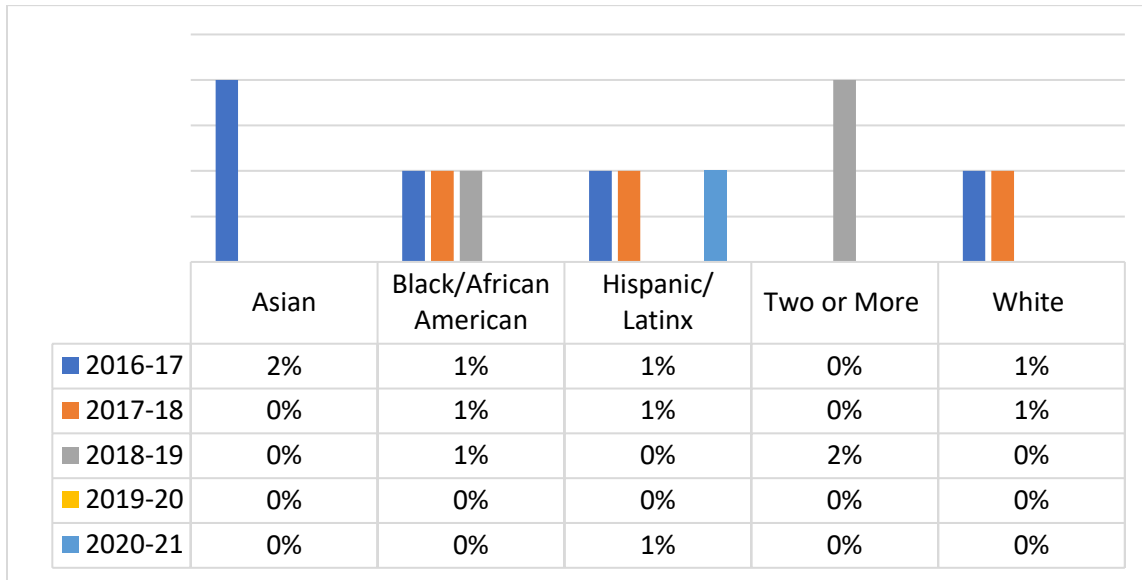
Table 2.47: Student summer school count by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	2	0	0	16	8	14	50	13	0	0	0	5	36	9
2017-18	1	1	0	0	3	1	5	20	7	1	1	0	3	12	8
2018-19	0	0	0	0	9	5	21	47	14	0	1	1	6	30	11
2019-20	1	2	0	0	17	4	23	41	16	1	0	2	11	23	13
2020-21	0	1	0	0	7	2	22	43	17	0	1	3	6	12	8

Chart 2.47: Student summer school percent by the intersectionality of race/ethnicity, special populations and MALE



Table/Chart 2.48: Student dropout percent by race/ethnicity



Table/Chart 2.49: Student dropout percent by special populations

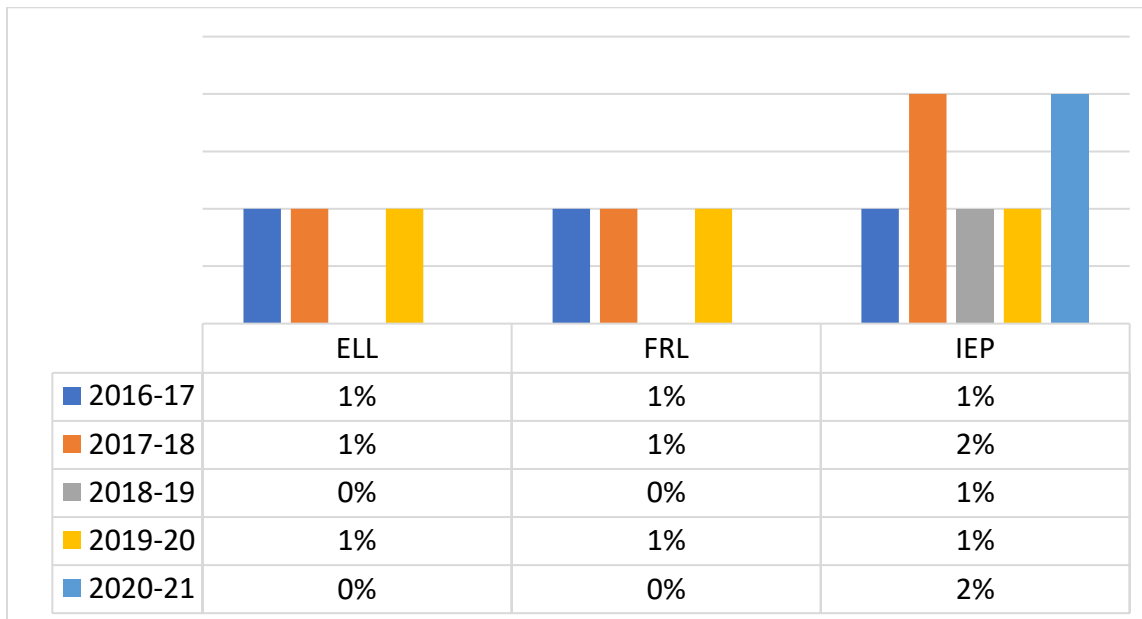


Table 2.50: Student outplacement count by race/ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Two or More	White	Total
2016-17	0	15	21	0	25	61
2017-18	0	10	35	1	23	69
2018-19	0	8	24	1	20	53
2019-20	0	13	26	3	23	65
2020-21	1	9	26	3	16	55

Chart 2.50: Student outplacement percent by race/ethnicity

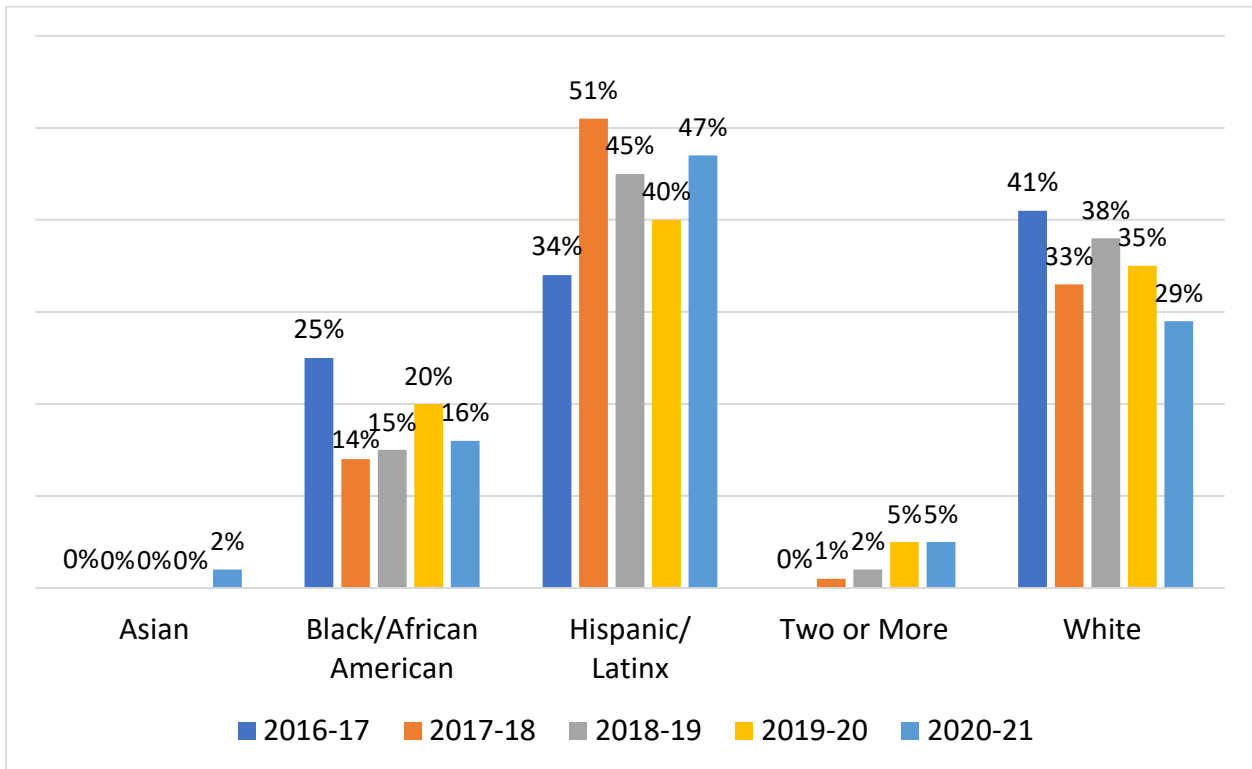


Table 2.51: Student outplacement count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2016-17	0	0	0	0	10	7	3	17	16	0	0	0	0	18	23
2017-18	0	0	0	0	8	4	6	23	20	0	0	0	0	13	17
2018-19	0	0	0	0	5	6	3	14	17	0	1	0	1	7	17
2019-20	0	0	0	0	9	11	12	15	19	0	3	1	4	18	19
2020-21	0	1	0	0	5	8	13	18	23	0	3	3	1	8	12

Chart 2.51: Student outplacement percent by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special population

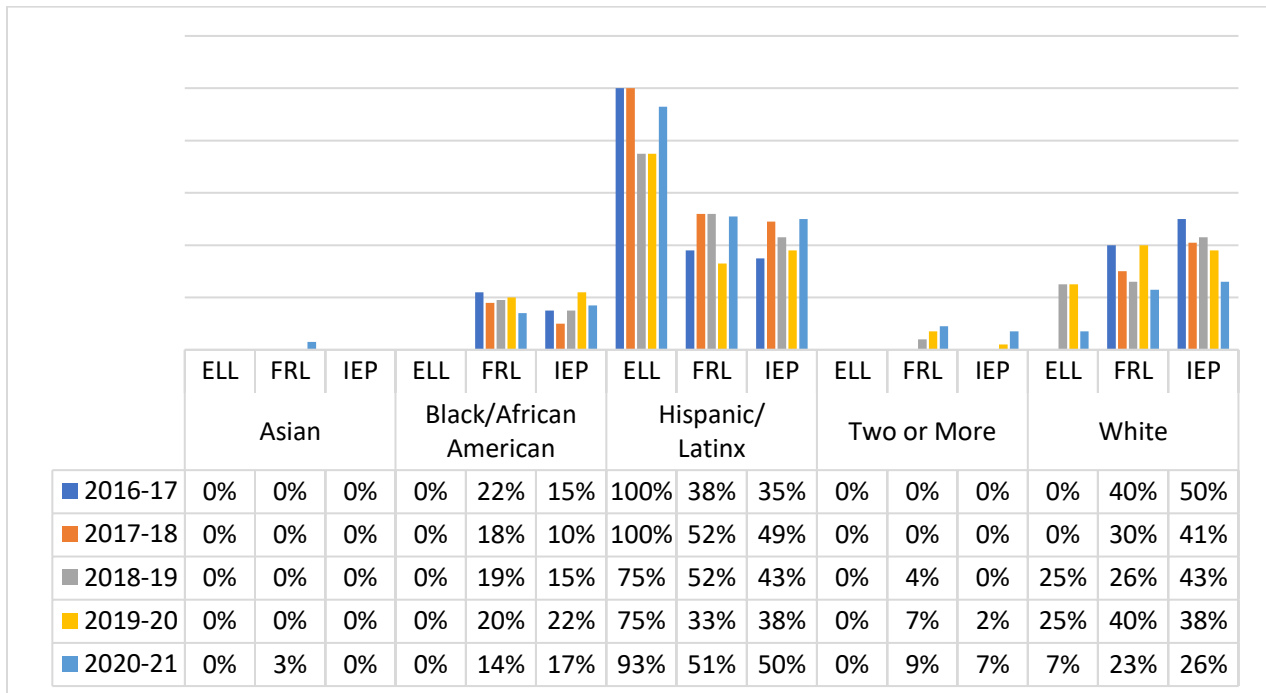


Table 2.52: Student absenteeism count by race/ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Two or More	White	Total
2018-19	4	61	204	11	130	410
2019-20	4	42	192	13	110	361
2020-21	8	64	224	16	96	408

Chart 2.52: Student absenteeism percent by race/ethnicity

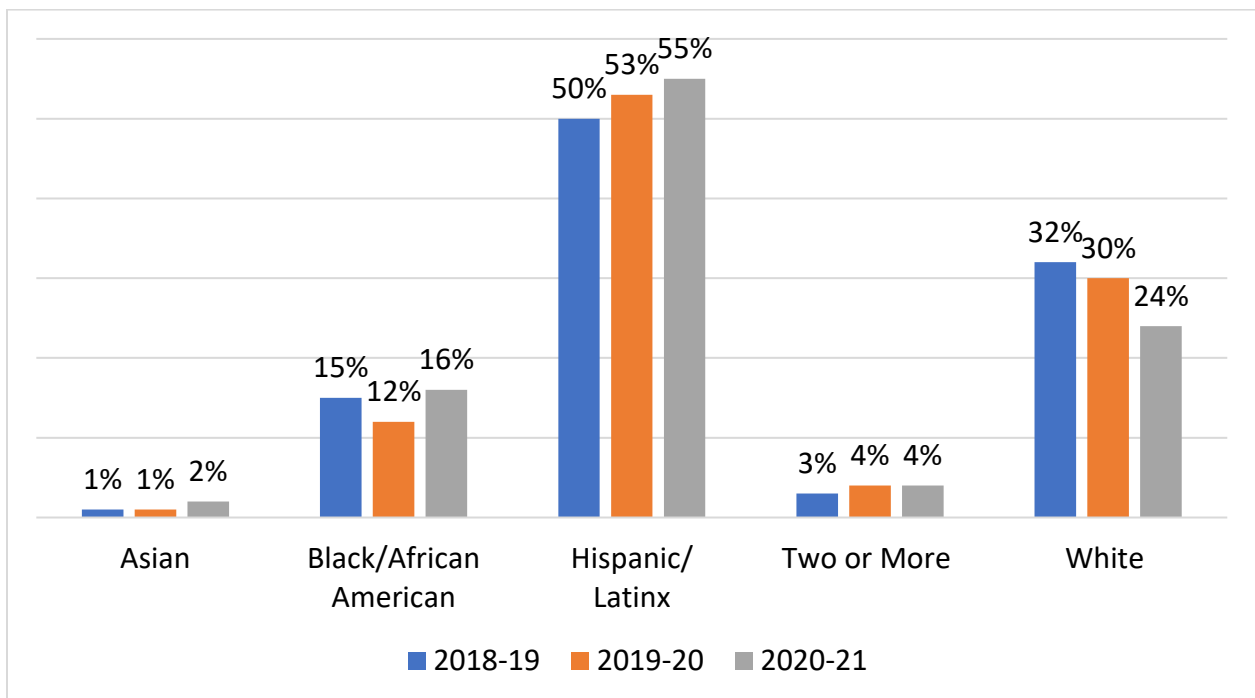
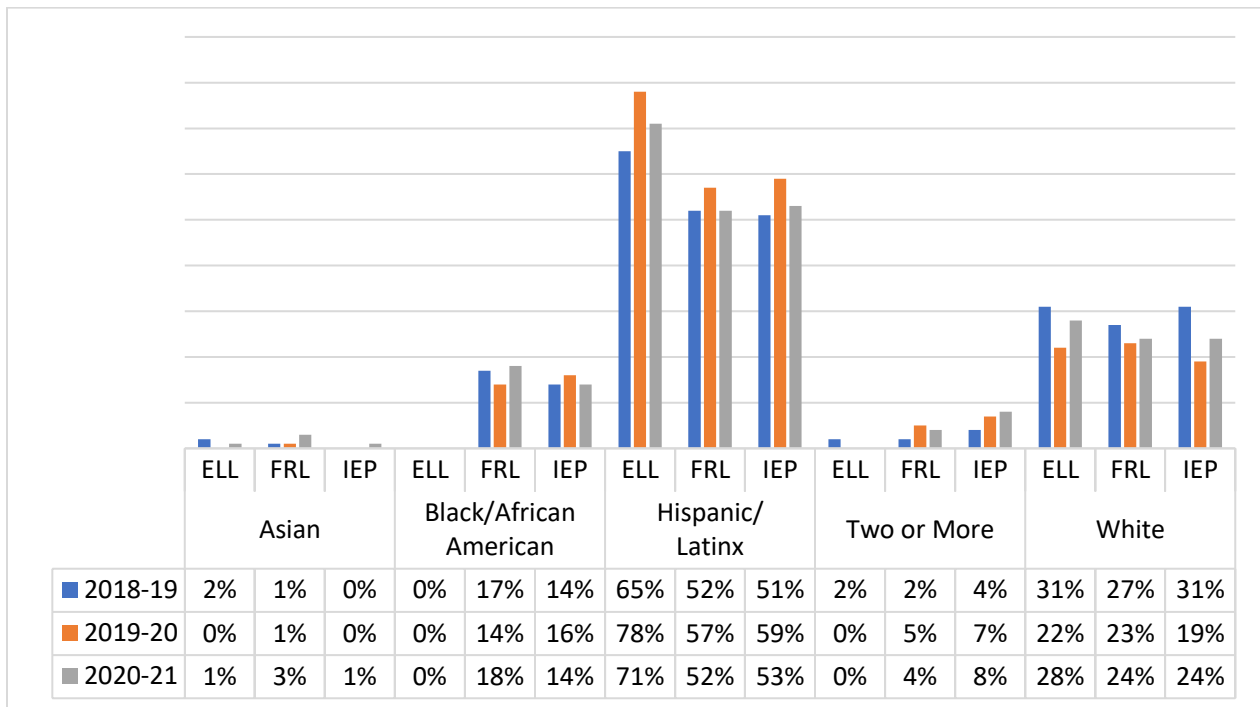


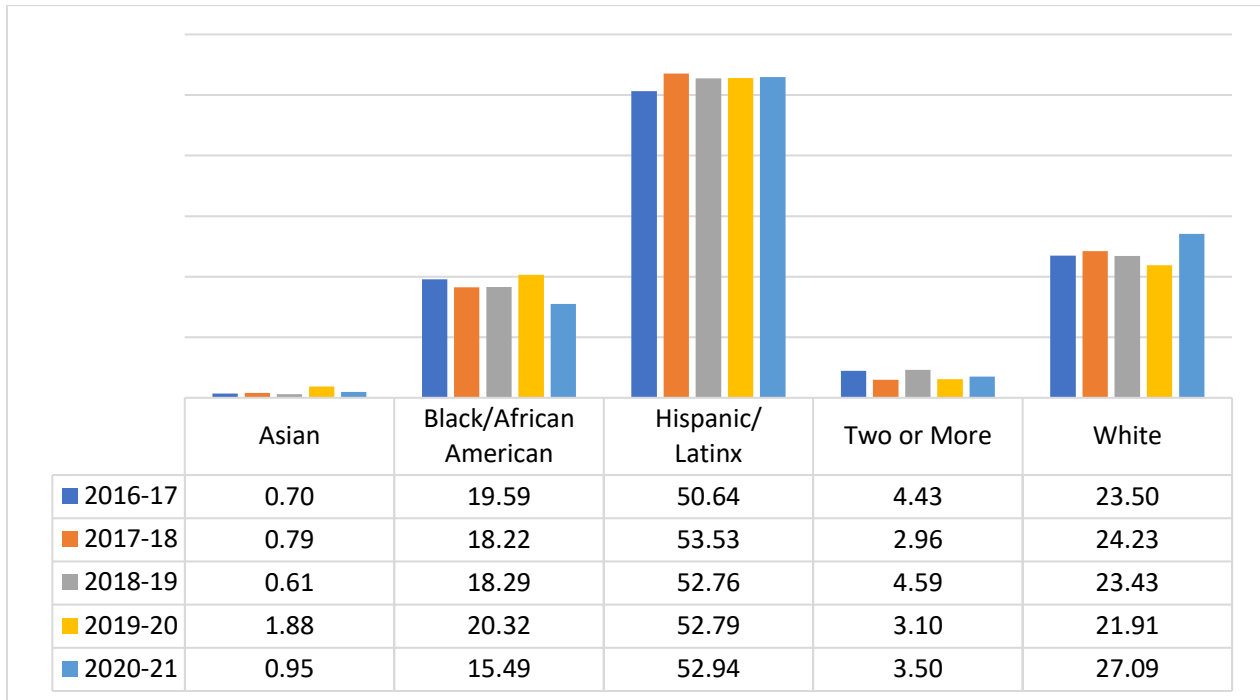
Table 2.53: Student absenteeism count by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2018-19	1	3	0	0	45	10	31	138	37	1	5	3	15	72	22
2019-20	0	2	0	0	30	9	36	125	34	0	10	4	10	51	11
2020-21	1	7	1	0	42	13	49	120	51	0	9	8	19	55	23

Table 2.53: Student absenteeism percent by intersectionality of race/ethnicity and special populations



Table/Chart 2.54: Student tardiness count by race/ethnicity



Table/Chart 2.55: Student tardiness percent by race/ethnicity and special populations

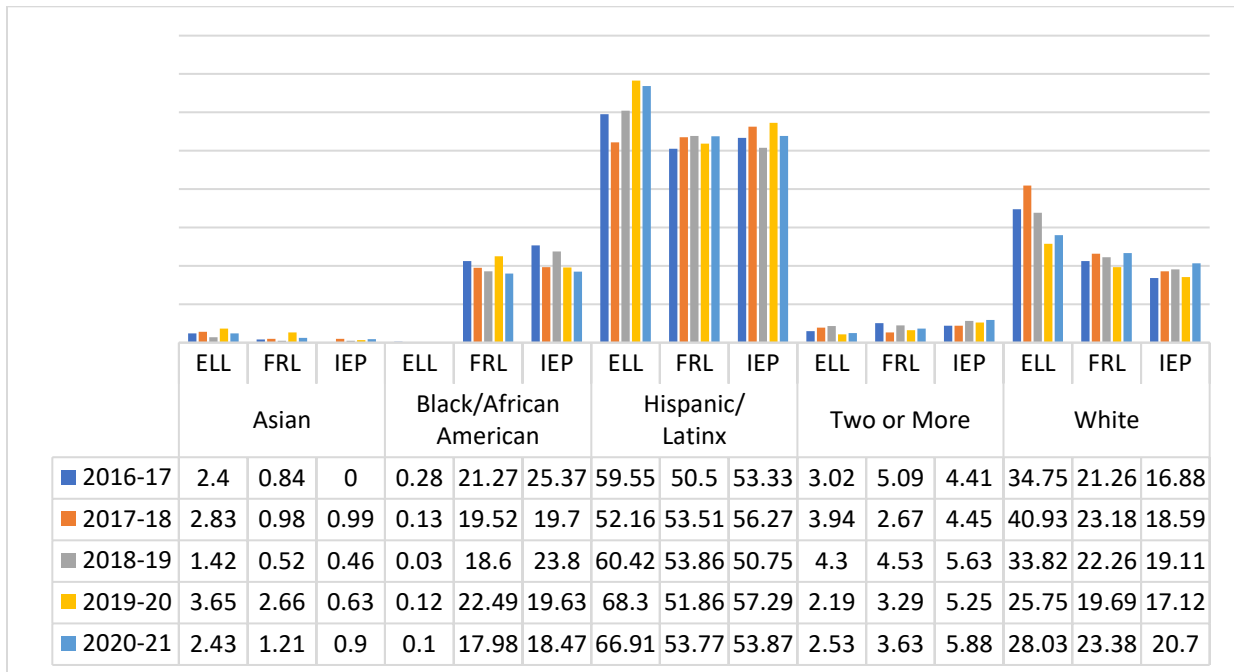


Table 2.56: Student truancy count by race/ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Two or More	White	Total
2018-19	2	29	70	6	35	142
2019-20	1	22	84	3	29	139
2020-21	7	76	268	14	108	473

Chart 2.56: Student truancy percent by race/ethnicity

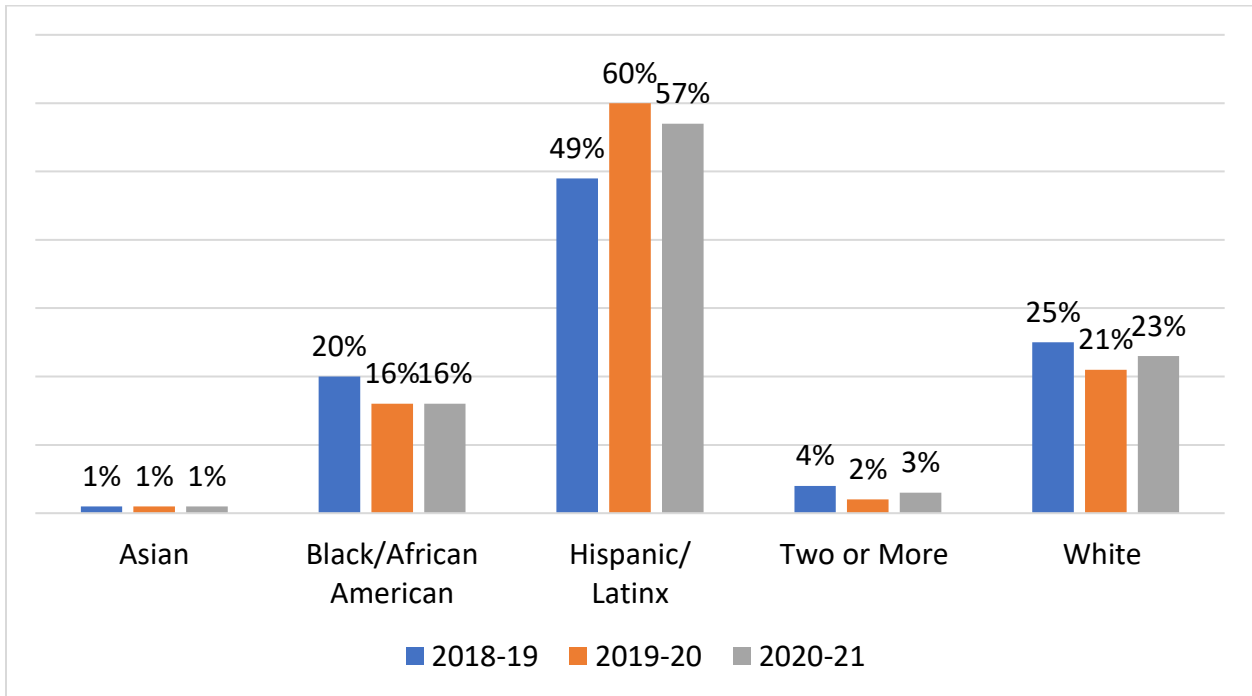
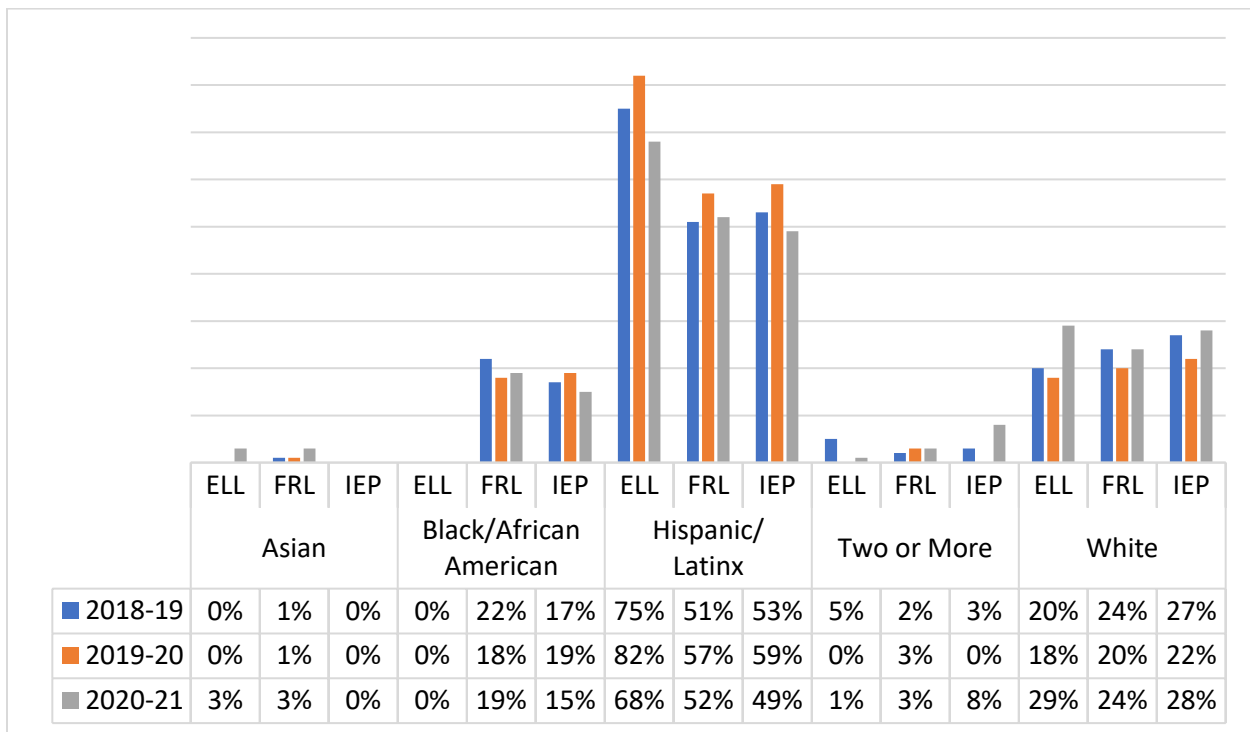


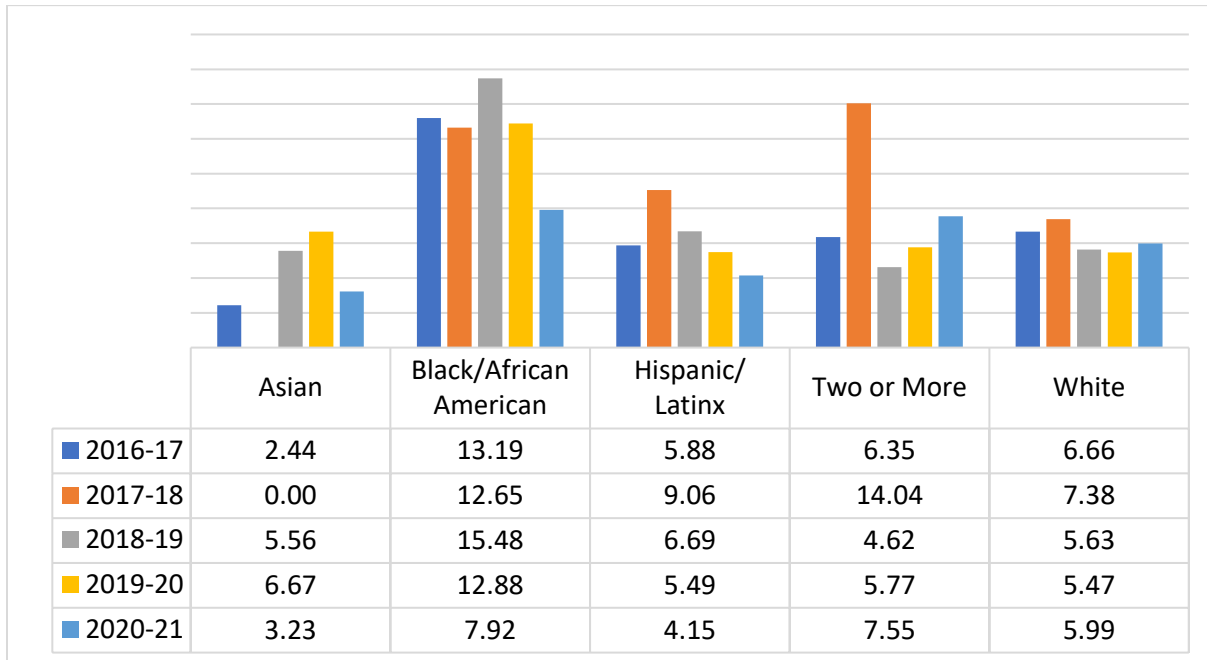
Table 2.57: Student truancy count by race/ethnicity and special populations

Year	Asian			Black/African American			Hispanic/Latinx			Two or More			White		
	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP	ELL	FRL	IEP
2018-19	0	1	0	0	24	5	15	55	16	1	2	1	4	26	8
2019-20	0	1	0	0	18	5	18	56	16	0	3	0	4	20	6
2020-21	2	7	0	0	51	16	54	136	51	1	7	8	23	62	29

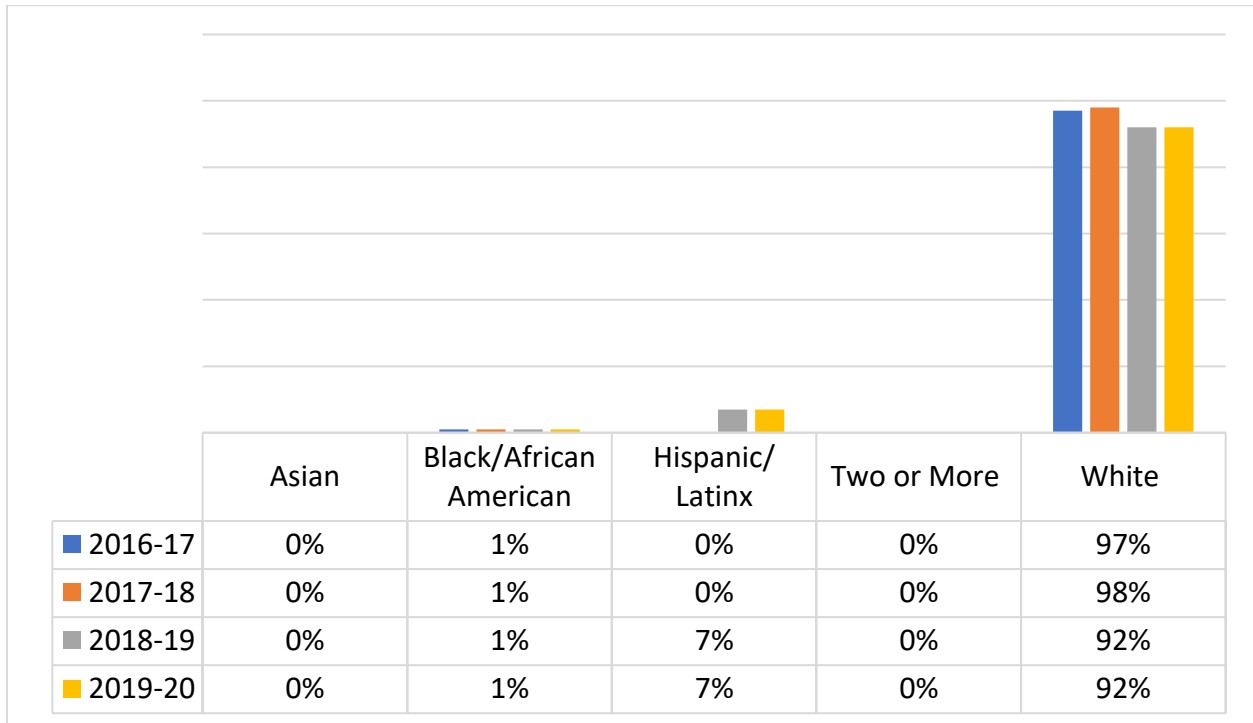
Chart 2.57: Student truancy percent by race/ethnicity and special populations



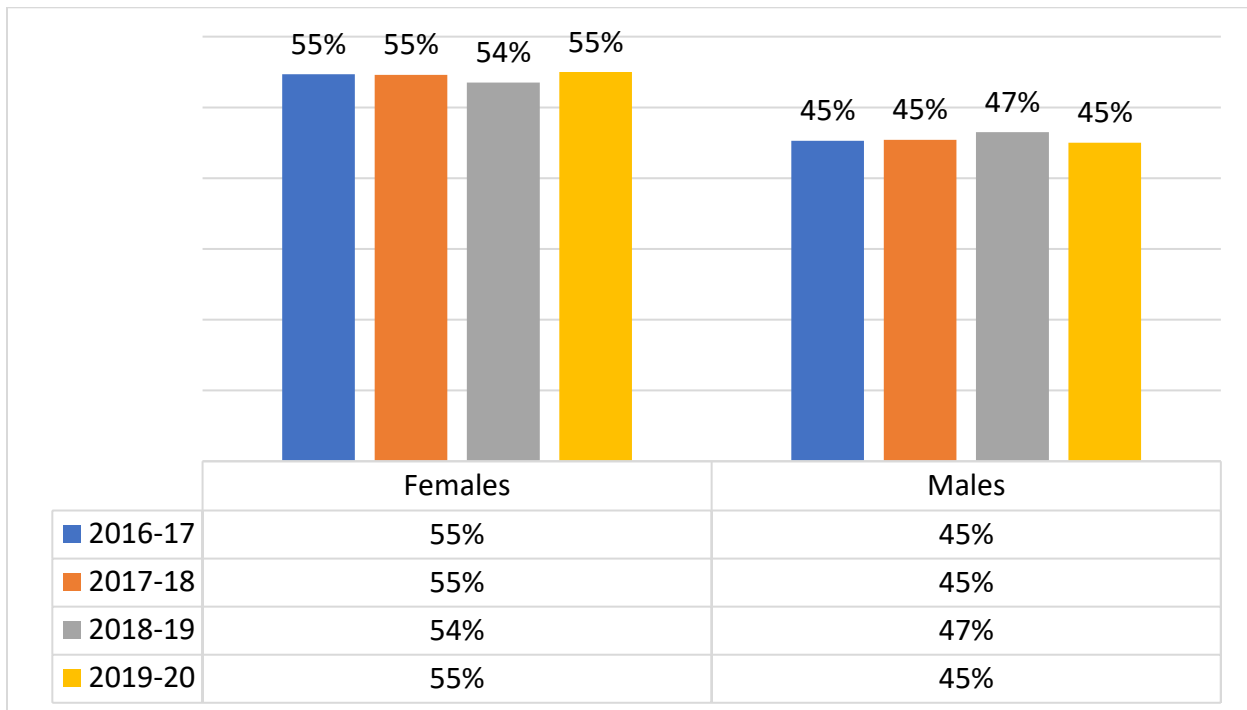
Table/Chart 2.58: Student transfers count by race/ethnicity



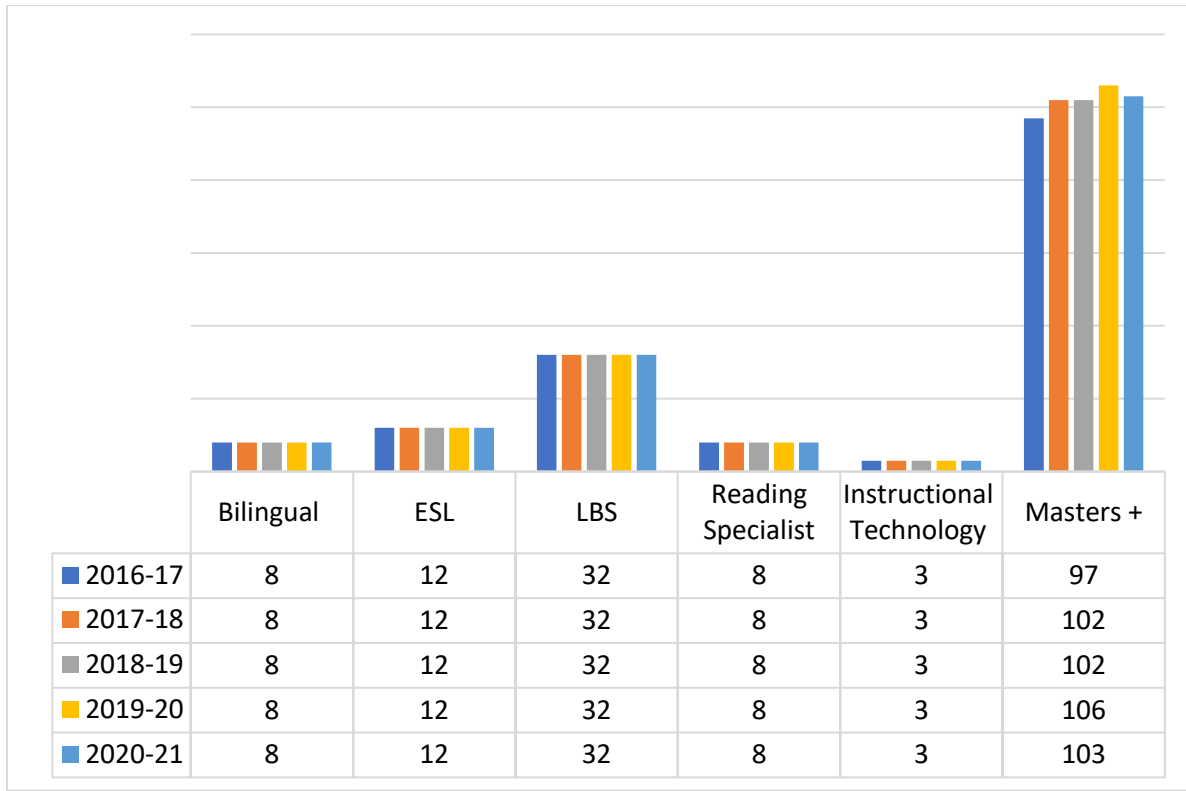
Table/Chart 2.59: Teacher and administrator demographic percent by race/ethnicity



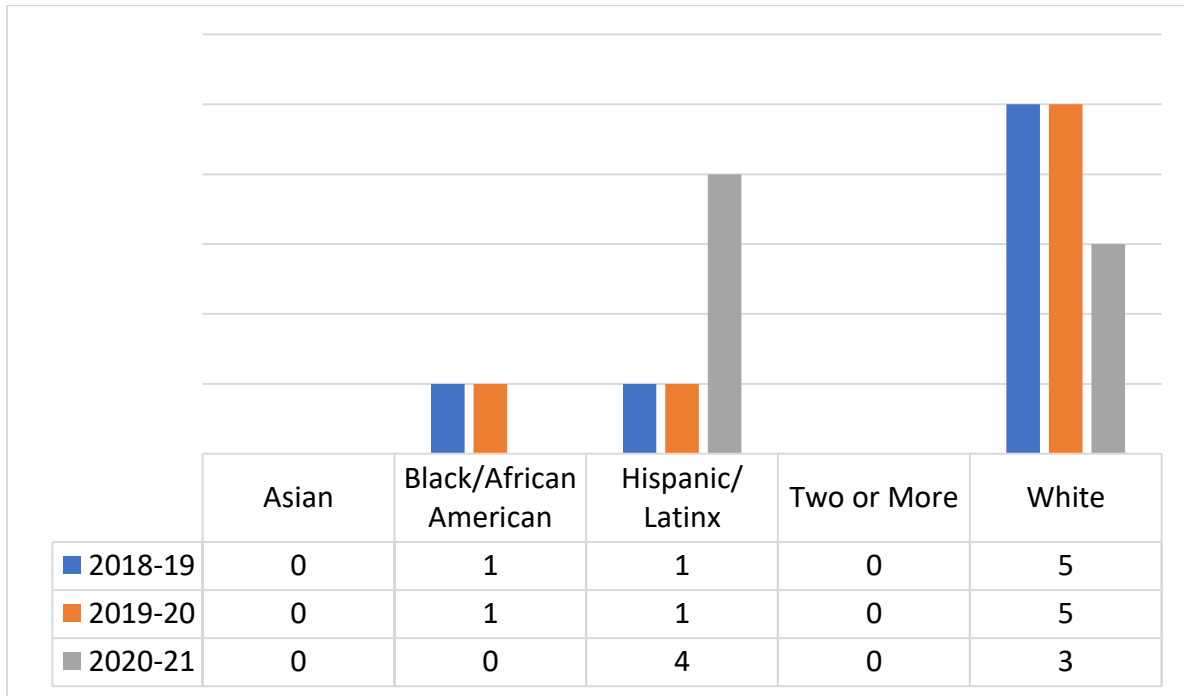
Table/Chart 2.60: Teacher and administrator demographic percent by gender



Table/Chart 2.61: Staff Licensure/Endorsement count



Table/Chart 2.62: BOE demographic count by race/ethnicity



Table/Chart 2.63: BOE demographic count by gender

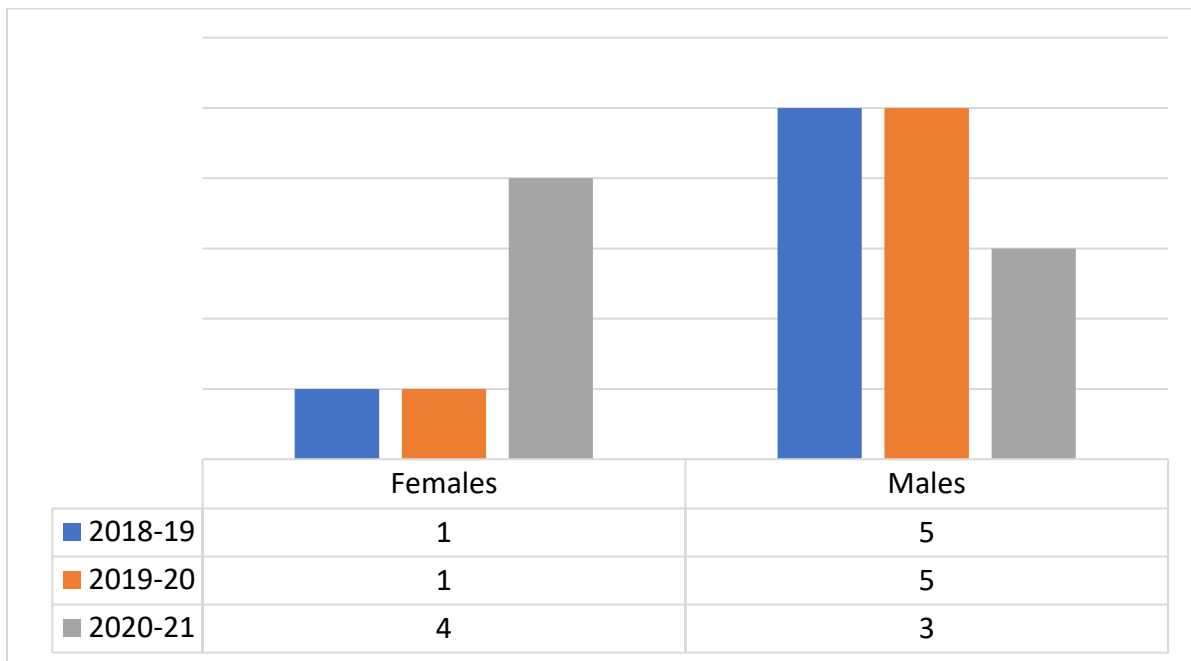


Table 2.64: ELL Languages Identified (not including English)

Year	0-20% Home Languages	21-49% Home Languages	50-75% Home Languages	75+% Home Languages
2016-17	Albanian/Tosk, Bosnian, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Lithuanian, Panjabi, Pilipino, Polish, Romanian, Slovak, Urdu		Spanish	
2017-18	Albanian/Tosk, Arabic, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Lithuanian, Panjabi, Pilipino, Polish, Romanian, Slovak, Urdu		Spanish	
2018-19	Albanian/Tosk, Arabic, Greek, Hindi, Lithuanian, Panjabi, Pilipino, Polish, Romanian, Slovak, Urdu		Spanish	
2019-20	Albanian/Tosk, Arabic, Hindi, Pilipino, Polish, Urdu		Spanish	
2020-21	Albanian/Gheg, Albanian/Tosk, Arabic, Czech, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Ibo/Igbo, Krio, Lithuanian, Pilipino, Polish, Sindhi, Slovak, Urdu, Vietnamese		Spanish	

Section 3

Focus group responses were analyzed and categorized into the accountability framework - *Five Strands of Systemic Equity*®:

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

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

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

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

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

Responses that aligned with districtwide or building-wide decision-making such as policies, programs, procedures, processes, and personnel were categorized under **Systems**. Responses that correlated with instruction, curriculum, assessments, culturally responsive practices, and academic programs were categorized under **Teaching and Learning**. Responses that aligned with student behavior, discipline, adult-student relationships, SEL, trauma, restorative practices, climate and culture among student and staff were categorized under **Student Voice, Climate and Culture**. Responses about professional development and growth were categorized under **Professional Learning**. Finally, responses that aligned with family and community communication, engagement and empowerment were categorized into **Family and Community as Agency**.

Areas of strength and needed improvement were identified to determine emphasis. Below is a visual representation of the qualitative thematic coding and analysis.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Quotes from the stakeholders related to **Systems** was extracted. Themes under each strand are listed in a following table.

From students

- “Wish there was more diversity in teachers. We have some non-White teachers that work in the language department, but they are not in the core departments like math and history staff.”
- “Wish we had more gender diversity, more women, with the coaching staff.”

From staff

- “Most of our activities are free such as SAT¹⁹ prep, tutoring and activity busses.”
- “One thing that has been a concerted effort is that we're trying to recruit diverse candidate. We know it's important and want to do it. When comes to posting jobs and getting applicants, not many apply. For every 50 White candidates, we get one Black candidate.”
- “School district has done a good job of hiring alumni, bringing people that grew up in the area, and have experience with Argo to provide outlets for student. Hiring staff to be more aligned with students doesn't mean meeting the needs but are we willing to also be open-minded about those cultures.”
- “One challenge is that the BOE needs to understand what equity is and distribute that knowledge to the community.”
- “BOE have their own idea or definition of equity is and they represent a small population. I don't know if truly represent the school. They may have an antiquated definition of what they think equity is and it not what it is now in 2021.”
- “One of the challenges the school district faces is the image that everything is fine, great and there no underlying issues. Administration fails to realize poverty and cultural differences of our students versus in the U.S. Before students drop out, I don't know if there is an intervention. If students absent 20 days, it is assumed dropped out. Students disappear and they are gone.”
- “If look at dropout, it's always Black students and we do not address this issue. Other school districts address the issue, but Argo ignores it and are afraid of people voicing their opinions. It's not about voicing an opinion but address it.”
- “The problem is we have BOE that see identity as politics, so they don't want to talk about it. We need buy-in from top-down. A lot of push back from administration about how important equity is to us as school district.”
- “We need representation from higher levels. From BOE and down. Need representation that is directly engaged with students. The lack of representation from the higher ups and lack of communication, even space, so we can actually communicate with students to BOE. If all staff meetings or through an anonymous opportunity to not feel pressured

¹⁹ SAT = Scholastic Aptitude Test

or judged so politics don't play a role what we do. We don't want repercussions for speaking up.”

- “It would help if we had the BOE support us to engage in the dialogue with students. To fall back on, if we had discussion in my class, for example. But there would be repercussions and I would not have a leg to stand on.”
- “Every time something scary comes up, they bring it up to their legal responsibility rather than what is good for the students. For example, the idea that we shouldn't talk about vaccines, or BLM in our classrooms, because we do not feel comfortable teaching real curriculum. The past administration was much more progressive and saw those issues as important elements of students’ education. Everyone hated them as a result, so this new administration takes 180 degrees in not talking about it.”
- “Greatest challenge is figuring out what it looks like at school district, and how to implement measures to bring equity to the table.”
- “We don't have systems in place to provide for our students of color or students who may have deficits for whatever reasons, like lower socio-economic supports. There is a lack of structure for those students so we put arbitrary Black students in there and they may not do well so it reinforces the system to believe the deficits, and that certain students are remedial.”
- “I wonder what systems can be placed at the elementary and middle school levels to really close the gap.”
- “They [administration and BOE] are afraid of making waves and just don't know how to approach equity.”
- “Responsibility is often placed on small group of people, and we can't place the responsibility on just POC staff. It needs to be consistent with system and expectations.”
- “Greatest challenges for school district is everyone having a common definition of what equity is and how it hinders our understanding of it and trying to see if it is something we need to work on or improve.”
- “Senior outings had been scheduled during Ramadan. School district can be mindful when holy month happens so students are not missing out. They are not excluding groups.”
- “We need to double the amount to of counselors.”

From families

- “We don't have a diverse representation of staff and not sure how far administration is venturing out to recruit at colleges. We should have someone in our school district recruit high-quality diverse staff like Black males, Black female, Muslim, Asian teachers and etc. Make sure students see themselves within the hiring process. It goes a long way that someone represents you. Also, it would be helpful to have faculty represent students’ body as students would feel more comfortable seeking people.”
- “I would like to hear the principal have more of a say in decision-making at the school. I would appreciate in situations where we have educators, substitutes or paraprofessionals give out misinformation or making comments in class that are hurtful, address it. Sometimes administration says they take care of it, but then don't correct the

misinformation given by teachers to students. For example, in one class, incorrect information was given to students and students repeat it. Feel like if they do know giving out misinformation, it's ok to say made an error and make a correction. It would go a long way for students and helpful for the students to see it.”

- “I wish the exterior building was different. We need more parking. Some of our students, who are disabled, have a different area [to access building], but it can be better. We need to extend it.”
- “I hear from a lot of people especially who have multiple students that they struggle to pay for fees. If families have multiple students in athletes, it’s expensive. The fees have exponentially grown and have to make hard decision if their students can participate.”
- “I know accommodations have been made for LGBTQ+ students. There are protocols with bullying and responding appropriately, but with mental health rising, we lack personnel.”

Table 3.1: Focus group themes aligned with SYSTEMS

Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of strength	Areas of needed attention/improvement
Districtwide policies, processes, procedures, resources, and equity-focused decision-making	students		-attention to racial and gender diversity among teachers in core instruction
	staff	-free access to resources -hiring of alumni	-BOE supports for equity -clear interpretation of equity -empathy to POC and low SES students’ school engagement -diverse leadership representation -need for a systemic plan -calendar of historically marginalized religions and their major dates for inclusive planning -need for additional counselors and social workers
	families	-growing attention to LGBTQ+ students and anti-bullying efforts	-lack of diverse staff -transparency in decision-making -attention to building accessibility -extracurricular fees

Quotes from the stakeholders related to **Teaching and Learning** was extracted. Themes under each strand are listed in a following table.

From students

- “Some teachers try to include activities for all different types of backgrounds.”
- “The teachers ask us how the stories relate to our backgrounds and families so maybe the story is not about different nationalities, but we’re asked to make the connection or how it relates to us.”
- “There are a lot of resources that can help us if we need help. Teachers put effort to give every student an opportunity to succeed in class. They put out resources for math and have before and after school for English resources. Then, they try to help during in-school and if there is time to help during resource time or a specific like science, they do.”
- “We see more POC authors in ELA. It’s important.”
- “Some teachers ask about my identities, and it makes me want to learn because they care.”
- “I like the resources we have for people that need extra help.”
- “I like they give students a bunch of options. More than once. Over time, give two or three retakes for a test sometimes to do better.”
- “Students who are non-honors and or not in AP classes are treated childish in general education courses.”
- “Wish they would inform us more about college. They don’t talk much about college with general education students only directly to honors and AP classes.”
- “AP classes work on college writing and general education classes don’t work on writing at all.”
- “Teachers have low expectations and assume if we have a bad grade in their class, they assume you have a bad grade in all of your other classes.”
- “Teachers give you a test all at once. Today, for example, I have three tests.”
- “It’s a lot of homework and tests all at once.”
- “There is no diversity in the AP classes. Not many students of color and sometimes there is discomfort in those classes especially when talking about history.”
- “Teachers talk about the same historical figures every time during Black History Month.”
- “I think it’s important to learn about my background. Like when I see the curriculum, I see myself in it. I like learning about my culture.”
- “Have homework during the weekend on top of the five days per week to do homework. It’s excessive and especially during this past three-day weekend. It’s too much. We have work, have activities, homework and mental health.”
- “Homework is not always associated with points, and they tell us to not worry about the points, but then tell us to complete the homework and better prioritize.”
- “The curriculum is irrelevant. They don’t let students choose what we want to learn.”
- “Teachers are very quick to put in a zero for students but take months to grade an assignment.”

- “Teachers will assign you books that appeal to your feelings, but not usually your ethnicity.”
- “More Black people represented in the curriculum than Latinos.”
- “I see myself in the Spanish language curriculum.”
- “There is very few representations of women in the curriculum, especially women of color.”

From alumni

- “When I was at Argo, I could tell the difference between regular and honor students. It was so unfair and so obvious. I had scored one point below Argo to get into honors. Most of the time, I was fighting with counselors about taking harder classes. One of my teachers assumed that I had been taking honors most of the time. But I was told no, because honors was too difficult even though I wanted to challenge myself in that regard. But this one person acted as a huge barrier, so I advocated to take AP classes and later learned I didn't need this one person, so I ended up taking the AP class.”
- “I was in a lot of extracurricular and activities, and senior year, I didn't have lunch hour because taking extra classes and AP classes. Teachers would let me eat lunch in class and were very accommodating, but I do feel that since I was in AP and honors, I got a lot more help than my peers who were not in honors or AP classes, like in applying for colleges and applying for FASFA²⁰. I would tell my friends who were not in honors and AP where I was applying to college and doing certain things, and they would just look at me oddly, because they hadn't gotten the same information. I wish I had spoken up more.”
- “I was in honors and AP classes as well, and the school took the smartest students and put them into ACT²¹ prep classes. We received a lot of help and I know a lot of my peers did not have that help, or those that were in AP with me, didn't see many males, Black students in AP classes.”
- “Only saw self in curriculum when it was based on something historical like To Kill a Mockingbird which is not a positive representation of a Black person. Certain teachers felt stuck on what they could work with in terms of history. It was fast tracked, and I remember learning about Black Panthers that we spent very little time on it. I also and remember they referenced Black Panthers as a version of the Klan, so it was not in a positive light.”

From staff

- “We are given permission to support and accommodate students. To get to know students, implement RtI, offer resource opportunities, before and after school supports.”
- “I know that African American numbers don't match our population, so we put extra eyes on African American students on AP track. Getting them extra support. We go above and beyond in retaining them.”

²⁰ FASFA = Free Application for Federal Student Aid

²¹ ACT + American College Test

- “We don’t handpick our students to take courses. We have open doors. The AP classes are open and have a lot of students that may not have access to AP classes elsewhere.”
- “We don’t provide electives for all students. It’s limited to certain populations on what classes can be taken. For example, EL students don’t have as many options as mainstream students. We need to provide more course options for all demographics.”
- “The same three options are provided for ELs whereas mainstream students get so many opportunities.”
- “I don’t know if we do the best job in retaining honors/AP students. I don’t know if we have enough graduating students participating in AP/honors courses.”
- “I have few African American students in my honors classes.”
- “The benchmark of our celebration, it’s even on the school lanyards, is based on how many students take AP but only at 28% are reading at grade level, and that does not seem to me like something to celebrate. If they can’t read, they can’t be well in other content either.”
- “There is no well-rounded experience for the students just more content. It’s never about arts.”
- “We never ask the students what changes they want to learn. Where is their voice?”
- “We have a mandate in U.S. history to include topics like race, LGBTQIA+ and we have to figure out how to incorporate in curriculum.”
- “We need students to show their mastery of topics in different ways. For example, rather than everyone read the same thing and do the same report, divide it into sections. One will different activity and outcome to demonstrate their learning, and to differentiate instruction.”
- “Some administration frown down upon leaving class for a field trip, but some students may never have the opportunity otherwise.”
“We need a paradigm shift from a hard pass way of grading, when there are no retakes. We need more fairness and a lot more awareness and teach accountability but also balance that there is a lot that we don’t know. Interest comes first, interaction comes second. It doesn’t take that long to check-in on students and some people believe that their job is strictly on academics.” -

From families

- “My child has a 504 plan, and we’ve had a wonderful time with time with the team. They are very hands-on with my child and help me as well. They provide additional help in the library, before/after school help, reaching out to my child her and making sure my child has what is needed, even when they were homebound. The additional help provided was remarkable. What they’ve done so my student can get what is needed needs out of school and learning for multiple years, is something that I cannot speak highly enough of. They made a difference for my child.”
- “We have a nice vocational department for students that do not excel in traditional academics, they really enjoy that path forward into an internship whether it’s welding or such especially where other school districts have shrunk their vocational department.”

- “In the summer readings of the honors/AP classes, when looked at my daughter's reading list, only saw two African Americans listed and two Latino authors. I didn’t see any LGBTQ+ or Asian authors. It would be nice if we can get more diverse in authors and exposure to someone that doesn't look like them to connect through a book.”

Table 3.2: Focus group themes aligned with TEACHING AND LEARNING

Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of strength	Areas of needed attention/improvement
Academics, academic programming, instructional supports, resources, assessments	students	-resources and extra help provided for students -test retake opportunities	-low expectations of students who are not in honors/AP courses -assumptions about student academics -unfair access to college pathways -lack of empathy due to homework weight and expectations -lack of student voice in curriculum -lack of student diversity in honors/AP classes
	alumni	-accommodating and supportive teachers	-low expectations for student interest in honors/AP courses -unfair access to college pathways
	staff	-support and accommodations for students with an IEP and/or Rtl opportunities -intentional efforts to leverage Black students -open access to honors/AP classes -academic access to AP	-unfair barriers to electives by EL students -retention of honors/AP students to graduation -low enrollment of Black students in honors/AP -absence of exposure to fine arts -lack of student voice in their learning -ensure differentiation for student learning -grading with empathy and fairness

			-opportunities for real-life experiences (e.g., field trips)
	families	-supports and accommodations provided to students -career pathways beyond college	
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	students	-responsive learning activities for students -culturally responsive practices -positive relationships with teachers -increase of diverse authors -increase of diverse curriculum representation	-lack of diverse representation in the curriculum -few women and particularly women of color in the curriculum
	alumni		-lack of meaningful learning on Black history
	staff		-need to work on LGBTQ+ curriculum considerations
	families		-lack of diverse authors in summer reading list

Quotes from the stakeholders related to **Student Voice, Climate and Culture** was extracted. Themes under each strand are listed in a following table.

From students

- "I think Argo makes students feel welcomed."
- "I like the different clubs and activities. Something for each student."
- "I like the diversity of the school and they are respectful to pronouns and ask students at the beginning of the year, their pronoun."
- "A lot of classrooms show support LGBTQ+ community and we have STRIVE club."
- "A lot of teachers are understanding and open to different opinions. Really open to everyone even if opinion most people don't agree with, they are still open about it."
- "School does a great job of giving students the opportunity to succeed but up to student to succeed."
- "I like that we have opportunities to join clubs where everyone feels welcome, safe and has a safe space at the school."
- "More welcoming atmosphere when teachers have the rainbow flag in their classroom."
- "Teachers are super easy to talk to, can talk about personal live, what you enjoy, and they do the same with us. Makes me feel welcome. But some bad teachers make it harder for the good teachers. The bad teachers make all the good teachers look bad."
- "One of my favorite teachers that I have a strong relationship with knows how it is for high school students. She says, I know I'm not your top priority and OK with it especially since students are taking multiple AP classes. She's very understanding."
- "Students who have high grades can order food from outside to get delivered. If failing, can't participate in sports."
- "Some sports get more attention and funding than others compared to sports like football."
- "A lot of code switching by Black students. We have to portray this character because if we go off when the teacher says the n-word [from literature] then we are looked at as ghetto. They have no right to say that word and the BOE tells us, it is not ok to say that word especially if not a Black person."
- "The non-students of color say racist thing. They use the n-word and teachers hear it and they don't say anything about it."
- "The subs are not saying preferred name or pronouns of students."
- "Sometimes when in the hallways, classmates say racial slurs and sometimes I ignore it and the staff doesn't do anything about it."
- "A lot of microaggression. Student's cat-call female students all this time."
- "School don't ask for our opinion. No survey. No opportunity to give them feedback."
- "The school perpetuates a culture of sexism. Staff should do something about it. They hear and do nothing They place pressure on the girls to prove wrongdoing."
- "Argo talks a big game about their diversity, but it's not accurate."
- "Not all White students when sometimes in honor class when Black student gets the answer right, they are surprised."
- "I've been told by White students that I am whitewashed because I use big words."

- “Feel like students that have the same race stick together. They don’t really mix.”
- “Lots of students say racist, sexist and homophobic slurs.”
- “Wish the school would do more to check on how teachers are through students.”
- [Intentionally removed] do not have a good relationship with us. Feel they assume the worst, and there is no trust, and they see us suspicious.”
- “Dress code feels more against Black females. Black women are curvier and Black girls are super targeted, because of dress code.”
- “When Black boys wear hoods or durags, they get in trouble, but White students walk around with their hoods on, and nobody says anything.”
- “We shouldn’t be teaching girls that a guys’ education is more important than a girls comfort. That’s what we’re doing when we police girls’ body. Dress code is sexist.”
- “School prioritizes athletes over non-athlete students.”
- “[Intentionally removed] do not have good relationship with the female athletes, and students don’t want to join sport as a result.”
- “They claim to care about our mental health, but it’s all talk. Their actions don’t mean anything.”
- “Even the adults have problems with the [intentionally blank] and comment power trip and school feels like a prison.”
- “There are assumptions about students because of their middle school.”
- “There are a lot of non-teachers that are awesome. Some are sponsor and some really care about us.”
- “Some really bad teachers too. There are aggressive teachers that get mad at students all the time. There are teachers that are sarcastic, and I don’t like that.”

From alumni

- “I had a positive experience at Argo. Loved my high school career. No issues. A lot of friends of all races. Loved the diversity of the school.”
- “I felt welcomed and included. I was an athlete and in other activities. All the teachers knew who I was. I didn't feel unwelcome. There were certain incidents that may have happened, but overall felt fine. Maybe because I was an athlete and involved in things, people got to know me, and maybe my experience was not hard because people knew me.”
- “When I was at Argo, they didn't have as many clubs and activities as now. I can't say students of color were valued when I was there. Though there was Black History Month, there was no real celebration or activities. We did have a guest speaker who spoke poems. Students wrote poetry and that was good for me. I can't recall anything that made me feel that my identity really mattered.”
- “I had strong relationships with certain teachers. One teacher wrote a recommendation for college, and I was appreciative of that. Some folks not able to trust or have good relationship with teachers. I had teachers that were open and very encouraging.”
- “There are some staff members who are completely amazing. They do what can to uplift you and encourage you and that has to be one of my favorite things, but in the same breath, there were many teachers that did not care. Argo isn't a school where most

students are from generational college graduates and college doesn't get pushed as much as it should."

- "I was involved in a lot of stuff that helped put a lot of ideas around inclusivity to make an impact for Black students specifically, because there was not a big push to have them involved in athletics and spirit week. The school wanted more students to be involved, and hearing that they wanted more African American and minority students was really nice. The effort was there and asked to help work on it and be an advocate for it."
- "There were certain efforts made by certain teachers to bring more attention to Black identity as students were there. We used to boldly celebrate Black History Month, but at Argo it was difficult because it had to be initiated by certain teachers. One year Argo invited someone to perform poems and other Black students were encouraged to be themselves and celebrate the Black identity and what it meant to them. There are teachers that still try to bring Black identity into the classroom. I recall students asked about the book, *New Jim Crow*, by M. Alexander and then library picked it up. There were small efforts done by certain teachers that helped with that."
- "I remember I had peers that wished they had a choice or autonomy to explore extracurricular options, but not because Argo was pay to play."
- "I liked the diversity of Argo, even though I experienced racism. I learned to interact with students different from you. I learned about different cultures and that helped me with college. I learned to relate to other races. Looking back, I did experience imposter syndrome because I questioned whether I deserved something or not."
- "I noticed how students of color were treated differently in terms of behavior especially Black students, who were sent to alternative schools without hesitation, even if students were not problematic. They got the most severe punishment but friends that were White students didn't get nearly as much punishment. Girls that were physically developed were policed more based on their clothes. The curvier girls were told to change or be reprimanded this happened especially during 'Twin Day' for clothes."
- "I wish Black students were treated differently as far as discipline. The only thing that didn't make me feel welcome or uncomfortable were the deans, because how they treated me and my Black peers. If students did something outside of the school environment, deans would try to find out and use it at school. If deans had reached out to students differently, in a healthy, happy manner, it would make a difference."
- "Feel like [extracted] did not care. They didn't reach out to me, and I didn't reach out to them."

From staff

- "At every level of administration, counselors, deans, and social workers, students are the center, and they are the forefront of our mind."
- "Students are encouraged to not take a lunch break to take AP or another course. They are in school all day without a break or food."
- "A challenge is fear of offending people or causing more conflict when intention is to have conversations. I am personally comfortable having conversations with students about diversity. From student point of view, there are some teachers who are not

comfortable or think it will turn into a fight between Black students and White students.”

- “Why not ask teachers directly what is needed? Technology-purchasing decisions seemed to be made without teacher input.”
- “Students say homophobic slurs. No one bats an eye if two females holding hands, not the same if two males.”
- “Feel like African American girls and boys are sent down to dean's office a lot, and I cringe when I view the suspension list. We need more conversation with students, not everything leads to suspension. It’s more about having these conversations that are needed.”
- “Started doing restorative justice, which is good, but we’re not quite there.”
- “We have African American positions in place with resources but can do a better job on reaching out to students that can use it more, especially students of color and not just when there are disciplinary issues.”
- “We’re not equipped with SEL content at least more so in some departments than others.”
- “Students are misplaced. These are smart students, and they don’t have role models.”
- “Not saying right or wrong, because there are minorities in the school. The school is open to minorities but that's not how life works. Not sure there shouldn't be but that is and not our number one goal, education is. Education will improve minority relation issues. Whatever is needed, people will want to make it all about minorities – Hispanic, African Americans, gay/lesbian – wanting to make everything inclusive and not everything is inclusive or needs to be. Everything needs to be respected, but that's where we fall short, the respect within any language or culture.”
- “As school staff, we need to go deep and learn about student likes, struggles, cultures, and needs.”
- “It’s a boys club here, male/White club.”
- “POC staff ignored by some. Even when say ‘Hi’ in the building. Feel you have to give 100% as opposed to White counterparts and it feels like a double-edged sword. It’s overwhelming and it can impact your role in different ways.”
- “Everyone jokes about boys club but really not funny, because it’s true.”
- “Seems female administrators do not last long here. Feel back for female leaders and how they were bullied.”
- “Male teachers don’t get yelled at. They get away with so much.”
- “Something needs to be done with us versus them – main office administration against staff. Clearly, you can see divide.”
- “Biggest challenge here is we don't know how to successfully address needs of lowest achieving Black male students, which is incredibly difficult and daunting challenge. Many people have tried. Seems like mountain to climb. Many of our Black female students are doing well and easier to work with. Not just us, it's a national crisis.”
- “Have heard teachers saying these kids are monsters, and adults need to understand that not similar background as their own, and we can't talk to students that way.”

- “Students likelier to express their feeling when they have an adult they can connect to and share that culture.”
- “We don’t have time. We don’t have homeroom. No time set aside for students, provide resources for students.”

From families

- “There is a lot of opportunity for extracurricular, groups, different associations, and I’m impressed with how many options there are for students to participate in. Made steady stream of improvement in activities. School increased their arts programs too with different types of athletics that students can participate in. Students encouraged to participate and encouraged in the clubs as well. A lot of clubs surrounding those groups very beneficial to students and feel represented at Argo.”
- “My students have had positive experiences at Argo, but they are White females, but they tell me what their friends of color experience at the school.”
- “I would want to know how the LGBTQ+ students feel about the school.”
- “Some of our students are raising themselves. Need empathy from teachers.”
- “Not all races are treated equally. I've seen it.”

Table 3.3: Focus group themes aligned with STUDENT VOICE, CLIMATE AND CULTURE

Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of strength	Areas of needed attention/improvement
Student climate/culture, student voice, student experience, student input	students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -welcoming school -variety of extracurriculars -diversity of school -LGBTQ+ supports -open-mindedness and meaningful connections between teachers and students - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -unequal attention and funding to sports -social hierarchy about students allowed by school -peer-to-peer hate speech and microaggressions -culture of -ism's experienced by some students -disregard of student identities by some educators and substitutes -social segregation among students -inequitable dress code -some male students perpetuating sexism -attention needed to mental health services and supports -lack of positive relationships with some school adults
	alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -positive experiences and relationships -student diversity -welcoming and inclusive school -the growing number of extracurriculars over time -encouraging educators -intentional supports for POC students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -fees for extracurricular participation -racial discipline disparities
	staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -caring adults throughout the district -start of restorative practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -pressure for students to not take academic breaks -the need for increased communication and transparency in decision-making

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -racial discipline disproportionality -more attention to SEL -build on positive role models for students -lack of mutual respect among various groups -preferential treatment toward male, white staff -need to cultivate belonging atmosphere between adults -negative perceptions about students -lack of structure to meet student needs
	families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -variety of extracurricular options for students -positive experience as dominant identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -negative experiences based on marginalized identity -heighten empathy for students from adults at school

Quotes from the stakeholders related to **Professional Learning** was extracted. Themes under each strand are listed in a following table.

From staff

- “Thinking about school district or how administration has educated staff members about undocumented populations. There was some negative responses from some staff, but it was such a good thing they did. Having staff members teach other staff members about what students are going through that many staff members were unaware of. It was a good thing that happened years ago. We’ve since had new staff that have not been not exposed to that information.”
- “When we go through conversations on topics of equity, implicit bias comes up. I feel like people who are not part of a protected class are reluctant to give opinions because maybe they are White males. They may think they are not part of having a tough having conversation about them. Some may not think it impacts them or feel may overstep their bounds when discussing it, because they don't have the credibility to talk about it which stops people from engaging in the conversation about this. There are certain circumstances, extreme examples that cause people to become offensive, cornered or told something they are doing wrong. Both of those are potential barriers for groups to engage in this conversation.”
- “I can't remember the last time, we had convo about transgender students or people with different sexual orientations. School district doesn't it address as often as they should.”
- “LGBTQ+ getting to be prevalent and more students identifying as transgender. We need to be more informed. They don't address it as often as they should.”
- “I would rather not have conversations about gender and gender identity. Rather see the students get the support from an expert that can have the conversations.”
- “A lot of resistance to talk about anti-racism.”
- “Feel like some people don't want to know what equity is.”

From families

- “Additional training on SEL is needed for staff.”
- “More relationship training to front staff. More education about trans visibility can be beneficial. Educations and parents can learn more about new ways of teaching with technology.”

Table 3.4: Focus group themes aligned with PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of strength	Areas of needed attention/improvement
Professional development continuum	staff	-learning opportunities about marginalized communities (e.g., undocumented)	-need for more DEI training -lack of learning opportunities about marginalized experiences -resistance to equity, ABAR
	families		-need for SEL training -need for positive interaction training -need for more DEI training -need for technology use and awareness

Quotes from the stakeholders related to **Family and Community as Agency** was extracted. Themes under each strand are listed in a following table.

From staff

- “The website is translated. I always tell them to check the site. It can be translated.”
- “We don’t have or do parent outreach.”
- “No one goes to student homes to find out how we can help them be successful and for parents too. So many parents have lived in the U.S. They are barely surviving.”
- “We used to have leaders from different backgrounds come and speak to students.”
- “Need parent liaisons to help parents.”

From alumni

- “When we went to other schools for games, people would say that Argo students were violent, poor, and a lot of negative things said about it. When go to competitions at different school, they made negative connotations of school and students, and would say I was in the ghetto.”

From families

- “Argo tries to reach out and have different events for different members of the community. They’ve done a wonderful job with Black History Month, and for Latinx. Wonderful holiday recognition for Eid and other Islamic holidays, We should partner with community and other programs so students can get free associate degree. I know there are certain unions that offer free degrees and why not working with that for students and their families.”
- “We don't have any outreach person, equity person or other school district representative. Other districts have an equity person on site, and we've never had one.”
- “I have heard stories from parents that they don't feel welcomed. Have also heard community rumors that Argo is horrible, and others say it's wonderful.”
- “There is an assumption is that parents do not care and therefore they are overlooked with certain minorities. If they can take platform that they are building representation with Latino, African American, and Muslim students, they can incorporate and expand relationships with LGBTQ+ students too. School could raise awareness even if more information about cultural events and holidays. We used to do a great event that was an ethnic fest and students had parents from other countries and give out information about different cultures they come from. It fostered understanding between students a bit better.”
- “People are getting pulled me out of activities to translate for families.”
- “Parents are intimidated. They don’t know who to go to at the school if have concern.”
- “Support staff pulled to translate in an IEP meeting or 504 Plan when they may not be able to say certain academic language in those meetings. We need trained interpreters.”
- “Noticed that many things are translated for families, but I’ve been told they do communicate in different languages.”

Table 3.5: Focus group themes aligned with FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AS AGENCY

Theme	Stakeholder	Areas of strength	Areas of needed attention/improvement
Family inclusion, community care and empowerment	staff	-translated website option	-lack of parent outreach
	alumni		-community perceptions of district
	families	-outreach events -diverse cultural acknowledgements -translated communication	-unwelcoming perception and experiences -negative assumptions about families based on identities -lack of structured for translation services and needs

Section 4

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the district implements any of the equity audit findings, the following is suggested for implementation:

1. District leadership distribute full report to BOE members
2. District leadership distribute the Executive Summary (or full report) to DELT members
3. District leadership adopt all equity audit findings utilizing an accountability framework
4. District leadership create, implement, and progress monitor equity goal each year with accountable, measurable, and transparent features.
5. District leadership maintain the existence of DELT to collaboratively develop and progress monitor equity goals.

The findings and recommendations in this Equity Audit report are not exhaustive. It is the district's responsibility to determine next steps, and continuously progress monitor and improve toward systemic equity. The district must invest time and resources to consistently advance systemic equity. To aid in the implementation practice of an accountability framework, each finding is arranged by the *Five Strands of Systemic Equity*®. Each of these strands are equally critical and should be pursued simultaneously. They are numbered for reference, not by importance.

- 1. Systems:** To ensure a systemic and continuous development toward advancing equity within all policies, processes, procedures, initiatives, decision-making, and fiscal responsibility.
- 2. Teaching and Learning:** To intentionally embed equity-driven pedagogy and practices in the curriculum, resources, instructional approaches, use and consideration of assessments and academic programming for the purpose of advancing equity for and among each student.
- 3. Student Voice, Climate and Culture:** To consistently seek students' feedback and experiences, and nurture a positive, authentic, and meaningful organizational culture and climate.
- 4. Professional Learning:** To provide a continuum of professional learning and growth opportunities for all staff in pursuit of fully understanding and infusing educational equity in all aspects of schooling.
- 5. Family and Community as Agency:** To partner with families and the community for authentic opportunities to serve the students, the school(s), and the district.

SYSTEMS

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

1.1 DEVELOP COMMON LANGUAGE AROUND EQUITY, AND EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE IT WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

EVIDENCE

Findings

According to the need’s assessment completed by DELT, and the equity history provided by the district, there have been conversations about equity, but no clear or universal interpretation of it. By clearly defining equity, the district would be setting the foundational basis toward a common understanding on equity. Additionally, staff focus group respondents commented on the need for stakeholder knowledge and clarity. Such statements made were: “One challenge is that the BOE needs to understand what equity is and distributed that knowledge to the community.” “BOE have their own idea or definition of equity is and they represent a small population.” The consistent ratings from DELT about common understanding, consistent language as well as mission, vision and/or strategic plan is indicative of acknowledgement, which may aid the district to accelerate its equity commitment.

Recommendations

The first systemic goal for the district is to determine what equity means in their institution. DELT may be in the best position to research, develop or adopt an equity definition aligned with their mission to support all students. The district should be mindful as they consider educational equity interpretations that remain authentic to the meaning of equity. Ensure to include language that places the responsibility on the district to actively identify barriers that may perpetuate disenfranchisement among students; thus, not placing the onus solely on students. Although equity intentions organically mitigate access, opportunity and expectations gaps, it merely views equity as providing students the differentiation and resources they need to thrive. This suggests that a focus on students is all that is necessary to advance equity. Student inclusion and belonging is the goal, however, equity from a lens of personalization is insufficient. Consider, for example, policies, processes, procedures, and resource allocations that unintentionally conserve access and opportunity to some students, but limits others, which are often those of historically marginalized identities. For instance, research has shown that when students are engaged in extracurricular opportunities, it leads to learning engagement. Extracurriculars are often coupled with fees, occur before/after school, and require independent transportation beyond school hours. Families that are from lower SES or financially struggling, single-family homes, families with limited time due to multiple jobs, lack of vehicle access etc., do not have the same access to extracurriculars. A clear definition of equity that expounds looking inward at the institution can lead to navigating organizational approaches. In the above example of extracurriculars, the district will be empowered to consider fee waivers, providing activity busses, and offering unique schedules for in-school extracurriculars. Finally, as the district works to share its equity definition, they may contemplate communicating it to all stakeholders, posting it on the

district website, including it in handbook, integrating it in each job posting, facilitating professional development and onboarding trainings, visual posters in facilities, and so on.

Findings

Being clear on the definition and interpretation of educational equity is crucial) and a framework should be employed to purposely disrupt inequities (Stembridge, 2020). It is critical that equity is not loosely defined or unknown, and that the district positions itself to develop reflection and actions to combat systemic biases, whether intentional or unintentional (Aguilar, 2020). An equity lens to decision-making will serve all students in meeting their whole needs (Roegman, et al, 2020; Bocala & Holman, 2021). School leaders have the capacity and responsibility to lead their staff in developing a vision and common language aimed to achieve equity (Diem & Welton, 2021).

1.2	PRODUCE A BOARD POLICY, A BOARD STATEMENT AND/OR DISTRICT STATEMENT ON EQUITY.
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EVIDENCE

Findings

Following the established definition on equity, it would behoove the district to cement their commitment with a Board policy/statement or district statement. Focus group comments repeatedly identified an absence of duty and responsibility on behalf of the BOE, which has been demonstrated by silence or lack of active support. Ideally, BOE policies can be meaningful for organizational expectations. When a BOE policy is not possible, legal experts have indicated that either BOE statement or district statement on equity is welcomed. Based on the perception of multiple stakeholders, it is strongly recommended the district pursue a BOE policy on equity.

Recommendations

The purpose of an equity policy and/or statement is to leverage opportunities to advance systemic equity. This is a common, legal strategy to support equity work, especially in times of gross misinformation about diversity, inclusion and belonging. Districts empowered with such policies or statements plainly communicate to their stakeholders that all students are valid and affirmed, and intentional efforts to remove biased barriers will be pursued. The BOE and leadership will join districts across the country with such efforts and may seek out their legal team to employ sample language. More importantly, equity reminds us of the racially changing demographics that mirror the globe. What is often referred to as *People of the Global Majority* (PGM), the human population is comprised mostly of POC individuals and that will soon be reflected in the population in the U.S. An equity BOE policy, district policy and/or statement will finally and rightfully lend itself for POC, and other marginalized identities, to see themselves in the curriculum and fully participate in the school experience. When, not if, there is pushback, fear propaganda and intimidation attempts to negate any and all equity efforts, the BOE and district can rely on their commitment to all students in their stated policies or such. Stakeholders often appreciate knowing the diversity, equity and inclusion stance of their BOE and district values through these unambiguous and transparent means.

Research

Through the implementation of a Board policy and/or statements, the district can position itself to acknowledge the systemic way its practices may implicitly obstruct action (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003; Anderson, 2009; Smith et al, 2017). Board of education members can rally behind equity through these powerful statements and critically examine the structural changes needed (Savage-Williams, 2018). The need for explicit policies on anti-racism are necessary to uphold the district’s stance and long-term commitment of equity (Diem & Welton, 2021).

1.3	IMPLEMENT INTENTIONAL, MEASURABLE, ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT EQUITY GOALS.
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EVIDENCE

Findings

DELT members unanimously determined that equity goals should be sought. A recurring theme from focus group participants was the need for various actions to address equity needs. A number of quantitative data sets – staff demographic, assessment results, discipline – provide objective substantiation to address the trends of racial disproportionalities and special population disparities.

Recommendations

The work to advance districtwide, or systemic, equity goals must be a constant and relentless pursuit. It will be necessary to not only demonstrate to stakeholders the commitment to equity, but more significantly, acknowledge that barriers exist, and then work to eliminate them. Coherent and explicit goals that include accountable and measurable ways to mitigate inequities while advancing equity are ideal. An accountability framework that lends itself to systemic, research-based equity action would benefit the district. Such a framework serves as a plan of action in achieving the stated goals that have been formed by the carefully selected members of the district's equity leadership team. Whether these equity goals are referenced as a separate action plan or embedded in a district's strategic plan, the district should be mindful of organizational-wide responsibilities. In other words, a plan that allows for identification of districtwide shortcomings in multiple areas such as grading expectations, discipline approaches, talent development, programmatic structures, and communication efforts, and not merely one equity-driven goal. This will be daunting as the opportunities of improvement are massive, but they cannot be reasonably deconstructed and reconstructed at once. Prioritizing five areas, for instance, as opposed to a dozen will rightfully keep equity at the forefront of progress. As the district journeys through this process of developing equity-focus goals or plans using an accountability framework or a similar framework, it can expect, assuming the work is done with authenticity and fidelity, that a transformative shift will occur. An important consideration for the district is that effective Fall 2022, ISBE will utilize an Equity Impact Analysis Tool wherein districts will be guided to answer these six questions, which this district has addressed through this Equity Audit: *What is the policy, program, practice or budget decision under consideration, and what are the desired results and outcomes?; What data is obtainable, and what does it tell us?; How have stakeholders*

been engaged? How can we expand engagement opportunities?; Who will benefit from or be burdened by your proposal? What are your strategies for advancing equity or mitigating unintended consequences?; What is your plan for implementation?; How will you ensure accountability, then communicate and evaluate results? Through the implementation of equity-driven goals and plans, the district would be in alignment with ISBE's expectations.

Research

Consistent, reliable collection of quantitative and qualitative data allows critical analysis that can enlighten the district toward transformative shifts (Edley, et al, 2019). Through the implementation of a specific equity plan, the district may readily identify indicators to progress-monitor its culture and climate shift. A design process is feasible through an equity plan, and not a typical districtwide strategic plan. Equity must be systemic to ensure collective responsibility in disrupting inequities especially inequities encountered by historically marginalized groups (Singleton & Linton, 2006; Shields, 2019). Scholarship informs how these foundational frameworks to interrogate educational equity in hopes to disrupt injustices particularly those experienced by historically excluded groups can aid in mitigating inequities (Aguilar 2020). Through transparency efforts and systemic plans, the district positions itself to develop collaborative, authentic actions to advance equity and intentionally disrupt explicit and implicit forms of -isms (Bocala & Holman, 2021; Diem & Welton, 2021). Consistent, reliable collection of quantitative and qualitative data allows critical analysis that can enlighten the district toward transformative shifts (Edley, et al, 2019; Shields, 2019).

1.4	INCREASE STRATEGIC PRACTICES TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN HIGHLY QUALIFIED DIVERSE TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS.
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EVIDENCE

Findings

DELT members consistently rated and recognized their need to diversify their staff. Attention for more diversity among staff was also shared by students, staff and families that participated in the focus groups. Over the last four years, the combined teacher and administrator racial demographic has ranged from 92%-98% White. A maximum of 8% of all teachers and administrators identified as POC in the last four years.

Recommendations

Across the country, school districts struggle to recruit racially diverse candidates as less people of color seek a career in education. Although there are infinite ways to attract and recruit high-quality teacher candidates, the district may find it needs to consistently be innovative in its recruitment process. For instance, innovative approaches include outreach to affinity groups at local colleges and universities or *Grow Your Own* programs targeted toward diverse identities. Unfortunately, there is no immediate turnaround to increase racial/ethnic diversity if there are few positions to fill. In the meantime, there are several opportunities to examine. For one, the district could review its current recruitment efforts at HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and other higher education institutions that have a diverse teacher preparation program. The district may also employ marketing techniques to undecided college majors. The district may also offer guaranteed teacher

interviews to district alumni. The district will not immediately diversify its staff as most schools are aggressively competing for diverse teachers and administrators; therefore, the district could also review its candidate interview questions (of candidates). Asking inquiries related to diversity, equity and inclusion will provide interviewing teams information about candidate pedagogy and practices. Finally, the district, with complete vulnerability, can interrogate its retention efforts through the exit surveys it has offered previous employees, seek out feedback from minoritized identities, and consider its reputation as having (concerning) DEI climate and culture. It is well-known that people will inform one another of a positive, belonging space in their place of employment. This is especially investigated by POC who often know they will be in the minority in the education field, as White teachers comprise 87% of all educators across the country. There is no magical formula or one way the district will diversify its teaching or leadership staff. A call to action on multiple recruitment efforts, retention efforts, and its overall commitment to equity, will likely position the district as a sought-after place of employment.

Research

The benefits of a historically marginalized diverse staff include increased positive adult-student relationships, higher student engagement, meaningful connections to the school, mitigating access and expectation gaps, as well as improved intergroup relations, role-modeling and combating of stereotypes and biases. (Wells, et al, 2016; TeachPlus, 2019). When cultural mismatch occurs, cultural misunderstandings may also contribute to unfavorable assumptions that impact student learning and efficacy (Taylor, 2021).

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

2.1 EMBED CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES IN EACH CONTENT AND GRADE.

EVIDENCE

Findings

There are many teachers that have embedded culturally responsive pedagogy in their practices. This was repeatedly echoed by students in how educators have connected the learning to their background, made it relevant to their lived experiences and cultivated a community of learners. However, it is not a universal perspective or practice. Although, it may be impossible for all students to feel connected to their learning, there appear to be everyday opportunities to strive for a positive, meaningful relationship-building with students, and that does not seem like a commitment from all educators at Argo Community High School. A consensus among each department chair clearly articulating their equity goals within the curriculum could make a meaningful impact for all students. Whether it's differentiated trainings on culturally responsive practices based on content for each department, providing specific examples of culturally relevant teaching embedded within the scope and sequence of learning units as it should not be a separate 'to do', identifying antiquated instructional tools and assessments that fail in student engagement and empowerment, unlearn everyday language and sarcasm that underpins biases and condescending behaviors, and of course, asking students and co-creating curriculum. The best culturally responsive classrooms do not view such pedagogy and practices as an add-on, but infused in the language, the thoughtful modalities of teaching and the employment of critical thinking

Recommendations

There is an overwhelming amount of research that show students are engaged in their learning when they feel connected to the content, and when it is designed to be meaningful and relevant to their lives. It is impossible at this juncture to identify all the reasons of academic gaps between racial student groups, but a constructive consideration that can be employed with fidelity is culturally responsive pedagogy and practices. When educators strive for culturally responsive learning spaces, it organically encompasses relationships as teachers would need to know the students they are teaching, and vice versa. Cultural responsiveness is the responsibility of all workers that occupy the public sector. It aids in developing empathy and understanding for another whose background and lived experiences may be different from one's own positionality. Transforming the district culture to recognize and engage in conversation about cultural responsiveness as embracing diverse identities will be needed to accelerate care and humanity. Extensive, long-term professional development to support educators on culturally responsive practices will aid in centering the voices and experiences of POC, Bilingual, and other marginalized students. All certified staff may benefit from professional development around the recently approved Illinois Culturally Responsive

Teaching and Leading Standards, which provide performance indicators. Administrator and teacher evaluations that include the expectation of culturally responsive pedagogy and practices catapult its urgency. An equity lens of all curricula, resources and assessments will be necessary to identify the numerous ways dominant culture is centered. The Understanding by Design (UDL) framework (Chardin & Novak, 2021) is a powerful opportunity for educators to collaborate, personalize learning, tap into students' funds of knowledge, and sustain culturally responsive pedagogy.

Research

Culturally responsive pedagogy must be intentional, affirming, and explicit in its practices (Hammond, 2015; España & Herrera, 2020; Muhammad, 2020). This is not only obvious in daily practices like cultural games, poetry, song, art, and adult self-examination, but in output as well demonstrated by social justice and community-based projects (Johnson, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2007; Blankstein et al, 2016; Hammond, 2015). UDL lends itself to social justice by calling for transformative calibration and evidence-based intentional learning (Chardin & Novak, 2021).

2.2	ANALYZE THE ROOT CAUSES OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT DISPARITIES WITHIN THE POC POPULATION.
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EVIDENCE

Findings

According to the READING assessment scores from SAT, White and Asian students have consistently (exception was SY 2016-17 for Asian students) earned higher scores than other racial counterparts in five consecutive years. The same holds true in MATH. There are many unknowns, undoubtedly some beyond the school control, which impact these outcomes. Unless there is a deep analysis to the root causes of these racial disparities, this trend will continue. The quality of life does vary based on a number of indicators including race. Consider that the U.S. has a long history of systemic racism in access and opportunities as evidenced in employment discrimination, housing policies, geographical locations (e.g., dwellings in polluted and dense areas tend to be more affordable), segregated schools and income and wealth, to name a few. This reality may impact a student's ability to thrive. For instance, additional responsibilities may be placed on the student that can negatively affect their school engagement. Student can be relied upon for caring for younger children to employment earning expectations placed on them. As a result, less time can be devoted to studying and homework completion. Sleep deprivation, exhaustion, proper nutrition and hygiene are known factors to impact student learning. If students are poverty-stricken, have enormous responsibilities or activities beyond the school day and/or suffer from poor health, their learning will be negatively affected. The statistics of this happening to students is greater among racially minoritized individuals and lower socio-economic groups. Most of the student population at Argo Community High School are POC and qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch; thus, strongly pointing out that the urgent need to analyze the racial discrepancy in these assessment outcomes. But the academic achievement variance is not limited to this assessment. According to the data sets provided, there are unknown inconsistencies with graduation rate over the last four years. There is no one racial category that has had a

consistent trend, either decrease or increase, in graduation. It has fluctuated each year and within every racial group. The fluctuation in graduation is true among special populations, with varying rises and dips. Grading philosophies is another avenue to explore for these academic disparities. Although, the Hispanic/Latinx student population makeup the majority racial group at the district, accounting for the many “A” in grades, but also “F”, attention must be given to the high counts of “D” and “F” in every student group. Further evidence that suggests a racial dynamic to academic achievement growth is absenteeism data. Clearly, when students are not in school, they are not learning. The absences among each student racial group are proportional to overall demographics, except Black/African American pupils, who have higher percent of absences. As mentioned earlier about outside responsibilities, learning the why behind some of these poor grades can be beneficial to disrupt unintentional biases in the structures of a school system.

Recommendations

Examining the root causes may provide a feasible explanation for academic achievement disparities, which can aid the district in their equity journey. Placing too much emphasis on any one measure of performance is not implied, but what is encouraged, is understanding why this incongruity exists. Participate in ISBE’s Illinois Partnership to Disciplinary Equity to provide training for teachers and administrators in Empathetic Instruction.

Research

Any hierarchical suggestion or predictability of academic performance based on race is problematic. A call for a standard of excellence from all students is foundational to any academic setting. At the same time, attention must be paid to knowledge, skills, and cultural codes that students are expected to manifest that could impact their navigation of school expectations and assessment performances (Howard, 2010).

2.3	EVALUATE THE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO HONORS AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES BY BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS.
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EVIDENCE

Findings

From SY 2016-17 to SY 2020-21, the overall Black/African American student population ranged from 14% to 11%, respectively; however, within the same five-year span, Black/African American students made up only 6%-7% of in honors/AP courses. It also seems that there are unofficial gatekeepers from sharing college pathways to all students. Whether this is driven by low expectations or traditionally available to honors/AP track students, it is a gross miseducation to not provide this valuable information (e.g., applying for FASFA, ACT or SAT prep, college writing practices) to all. A reminder that to the quantitative teaching and learning differences identified: a proportionality exists in the demographics and students in honors/AP by race/ethnicity in all categories except Black/African American. At times, there are reasonable questions like: (1) *Is equity about exact proportionality by racial groups in certain programs and opportunities?*, or (2) *How do we increase interest and participation (in this case) among a minoritized racial group in honors/AP?* For the first question, the answer is no. To suggest an automatic number or

percentile perpetuates the misinformation of a non-existent quota. However, there should, and probably there is, constant dialogue about identifying the barriers that exist for Black/African American students to participate in honors/AP. For instance, often, honors/AP classes are rigorous, and often coupled with increase homework expectations. If the course is rigorous, as it should be, and there is an assumption that the honors/AP course is open enrollment for all students, then there must also be an assumption that the preparation for such classes is the same in all middle schools that feed into Argo Community High School. This way, as incoming 9th graders, all Black/African American students interested in honors/AP classes may pursue at their desire. We know identical preparation of course rigor is not the same at each middle school for a host of reasons. Thus, what could be the realm of Argo Community High School to prepare all students for honors/AP if they so desire? This is a non-exhaustive list of considerations: summer, virtual or in-school learning opportunity for students to prepare them for the rigor, a comprehensive review of homework expectation compared to realistic responsibilities outside of school for students, a collaboration of teaching scaffolding techniques to engage learners, the practice of culturally responsive pedagogy, and waiving associated fees. A positive racial group parallel is the percent of students participating in CTE programs. In every racial category between overall population and CTE enrollment, there is no more than a 9% differential in five consecutive years among any racial groups.

Recommendations

Though often unintentional, academic programs based on increased rigor in ELA and math create an inequitable structure. Ways to mitigate such inequities may include regular, universal screening for all students to ensure equitable access to enrichment in ELA and math. Utilizing building-level criteria as opposed to national norms may provide greater opportunities as well. As many districts include a wide array of multiple measures for entry into gifted programs, staff stakeholders should employ a robust evaluation to ensure its diligence and avoid the potential of biased gatekeeping. To further support students, the district may consider enrichment opportunities that nurture critical thinking skills and talent development in non-core content. This may be supported by innovative considerations like the employment of gifted specialists, blocked talent development in school schedules, and student-choice projects.

Research

Societal biases deeply rooted in the status quo of systems and structures are often the culprits to the stubborn, inequitable access to gifted and talented programs (Peters, 2021). Widening inclusion and fostering a sense of belonging in perceived elite programs requires intentionality (Wells, 2020).

<p>2.4</p>	<p>ASSESS THE INTEGRITY OF ACADEMIC SUPPORTS AND RIGOR OFFERED FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS.</p>
<p>EVIDENCE</p>	
<p><u>Findings</u> Multilanguage proficiency takes years to develop, but it does not diminish one’s capacity to critically think or problem-solve. Yet, it appears there are barriers preventing EL students from fully participating in their schooling. Per staff focus group responses, there is unfair barriers to electives for EL students. One staff member stated, “We don’t provide electives for all students. It's limited to certain populations on what classes can be taken. For example, EL students don't have as many options as mainstream students. We need to provide more course options for all demographics.” Another staff member commented, “The same three options are provided for ELs whereas mainstream students get so many opportunities.”</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u> The fact that staff members believe they must be fluent in another language to support English language learners is a fallacy. Sharing the same language may certainly aid in understanding; however, all educators should be aware of instructional approaches designed to leverage academic growth for ELs such as SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol). Basic understanding of (comprehension to) language acquisition and programmatic terminology may heighten intentionality and reflection in pedagogical practice by all teachers and administrators. Research into bilingual gifted programming or ways to develop academic talent among ELs would behoove the district in their equity journey.</p> <p><u>Research</u> Numerous studies have revealed that the EL population is often neglected. The language barrier between EL students and teachers is deemed too overwhelming by some educators. Yet, when teachers know their EL students language, literacy, backgrounds, cultural strengths and individual needs, and transform their pedagogical beliefs and practices, EL students thrive (Wright, 2019). By centering the richness of bilingualism, linguistic, and cultural traits, teachers can evolve from deficit into asset mindsets (Echevarría et al, 2017). Identifying notions of English linguistic supremacy can aid to unlearn language hierarchies (Garcia, et al, 2021).</p>	

STUDENT VOICE, CLIMATE AND CULTURE

To consistently seek students’ feedback and experiences, and nurture a positive, authentic, and meaningful organizational culture and climate.

3.1 INTERROGATE THE STRUCTURAL ROOT CAUSES OF DISPROPORTIONATE RACIAL DISCIPLINE OUTCOMES.

EVIDENCE

Findings

Members of DELT acknowledged either unknowns or lack of consistent analysis to discipline data disaggregated by social constructs of race/ethnicity, special populations or intersectionality. They remarked the need for restorative practices, understanding trauma, and empathizing with behavioral variabilities. They noted that the district is currently working to identify and address disciplinary issues. In the last five years, there is evidence of racial proportionality in overall demographics to discipline percentile with the exception of Black/African American students. The percent of discipline among Black/African American student discipline has been higher than the demographic percentile. Interrogating the structural root causes to the racial discipline outcome may also offer insight to concerns mentioned during the focus groups such as racially biased dress codes, hate speech, racist epithets, innuendos and microaggressions.

Recommendations

The district may benefit from the application of restorative practices or similar models that offer deliberate relationship-building, healing, and unpacking of root causes to behavior. It would benefit the district to investigate the discipline count by school, classroom, content, time of day and infraction. Beneficial trainings for all staff include implicit biases associated with student behavior, adolescent psychology, and social work methodology and approaches may be beneficial trainings for all staff. Developing a system for school teams to regularly analyze discipline data and disaggregate by identities allows for continual monitoring. A continuum of teaching considerations or trainings should also be offered to all students on problem-solving, conflict resolution, and emotional well-being and mental health. Developing a system for school teams to regularly analyze discipline data and disaggregate by identities allows for continual monitoring.

Research

Restorative practices aim to identify the root causes of behavior, misunderstandings, and fosters meaningful relationship building that has been damaged or lacks care (Smith, et al, 2017). Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of restorative practices as a pathway to educational equity (Gomez, et al, 2020). Racial discipline disparities perpetuate a dangerous school-to-prison pipeline. The urgency to address this discipline issue is paramount to academic success, student engagement, student view of self, affirmation of self-identities, individual prejudices and biases, institutional racism, power, privilege, and other forms of realities that impact oppression (Tatum, 1997; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Kincheloe, 2008; Howard, 2010; DiAngelo, 2018; Gorski, 2018).

3.2	ESTABLISH A STUDENT EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.
EVIDENCE	
<p><u>Findings</u></p> <p>There was a wide range of topics brought forth during the focus groups, and knowing that not all people were, or desired, to contribute, it is suspected there are additional issues that require attention. The district should be proactive in its commitment and action toward a more equitable school through the development of an equity advisory committee. Such a committee can meet on a regular basis to offer the district and school leadership constant feedback. Alarming matters mentioned related to racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, misogyny, classism, lack of empathy, lack of trust, lack of respect and overall mental health issues. The quotes extracted for this report do not include all the statements made, but the common theme under this strand and that is one of proactive urgency to mitigate the historical and hurtful perceptions while working to cultivate collective harmony and authentic supports.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u></p> <p>The development and sustenance of a student equity advisory committee could allow for continued centering of student-driven equity commitments. Whether there is a student equity focus committee at schools, a districtwide equity council, and/or opportunities for students to report incidents of biases, the district could proactively position themselves to be actively responsive to students.</p> <p><u>Research</u></p> <p>Fostering student voice is at the heart of equity. Intentional nurturing, input and co-creation from historically marginalized students that have been harmed by educational institutions, is critical. By centering the often-negated experiences of marginalized populations, it emphasizes overdue attention and action (Aguilar, 2020; Gorski, 2018).</p>	

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

To provide a continuum of professional learning and growth opportunities for all staff in pursuit of fully understanding and infusing educational equity in all aspects of schooling.

4.1 | CONTINUOUSLY TRAIN ALL STAFF ON EDUCATIONAL EQUITY.

EVIDENCE

Findings

Staff, families and DELT commented on the need to continue learning about the complex paradigms related to DEI. Once the district has established common language and understanding about it, they could offer scaffolded opportunities of learning as participants will vary in their capacity, practice and role. In other words, there is no end to the professional development of DEI. It is a constant process of unlearning and learning in regard to societal stratification and its projection in the school setting. As the district plans on stakeholder capacity, they could position themselves to educate stakeholders beyond staff such as BOE members and community members, as this was a common theme of wanting to learn expressed by focus group respondents.

Recommendations

Following mandated deep learning of equity and social justice for staff, the district should consider an onboarding process to ensure all new hires participate in foundational professional learning in equity. To further support equity knowledge and development, the district may develop a differentiated approach. Finally, differentiated learning approach focused on transformative movements for participants that are advocating for community-based or large-scale shifts may be useful. Strong onboarding for new staff to share in the district’s equity work and consistency in the training will be beneficial in demonstrating commitment. Affinity groups serve as an opportunity for employees to interact based on shared experiences, and the district can be supportive of its forming knowing that racially, ethnically, and linguistically minoritized groups are underrepresented in education and educational leadership.

Research

Equity work and development is never-ending. There is no final destination (to it). It requires understanding inequity and how it manifests in schools. Organizational change management to advance equity includes culture, identity, and healing as part of professional learning (Dugan, 2021). Equity and social justice are complex topics that are not exclusive to education. Many other institutions have demonstrated long histories of oppression against minoritized groups (Shields, 2019). Education is a microcosm of larger society. With that, comes limited understanding and experiences to the depth of equity and inequities (Tatum, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Gorski, 2018). Hesitations, uncertainties and outright rejection and anger can be expected in broaching such topics. Leadership must understand that transformative movement is often contentious (Williams, 2003; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Sleeter, 2012; Shields, 2019; Minor, 2019). Equity shifts often take time, but it a never-ending journey (Chenoweth & Theokas, 2012; Howard, 2010; Peters, 2019; Muhammad, 2020).

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AS AGENCY

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

5.1 CULTIVATE AND ACTIVELY COLLABORATE WITH A COMMUNITY EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

EVIDENCE

Findings

DELT unanimously agreed that their family and community efforts were developing. They have developed some encouraging relationships and made meaningful contributions in their connections with families and the community, but they also recognized the need to educate community member on equity, enhance communication efforts and improve parent outreach. Focus group participants commented on topics that align with DELT. From lack of parent outreach to unwelcoming perception and experiences by student families, the district needs to prioritize its families and communities. Finally, the lack of racial diversity in the last three years among BOE members in a school district that is predominately comprised of POC students is an opportunity to engage community member. It may also motivate interest toward local pursuits for BOE opportunities or increase awareness of school happenings. DELT members provided a list of considerations to remedy the absence of family and community as agency, and there are additional recommendations listed below, whichever is pursued, the district should recognize, like students, a differentiated approach must be considered.

Recommendations

Establish a committee of community members of historically marginalized identities to serve as advisory to the Superintendent and/or DELT. Such a committee can provide critical guidance to cultivate just and liberating structures in the school. Personal invitations from district leadership to minoritized community members may contribute to positive, meaningful relationships. Host neighborhood meetings, and conduct home visits as appropriate. Offer education on policy-development and school structures to encourage active involvement and BOE possibilities.

Research

A community-development model serves as agency for continual intellectual and human growth (Stefanski et al, 2016; Ishimaru, 2020). Families can be levers in the education of their child(ren). School-community collaboration has proven to empower active participation and investment in the education of children. Meaningful partnerships between schools and the community it serves are necessary for justice and liberation among minoritized people (Costanza-Chock, 2020).

5.2	ENSURE COMMUNICATION TO FAMILIES IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES AS NEEDED.
EVIDENCE	
<p><u>Findings</u> Extracting bilingual staff members to translate for families is primarily pursued due to the need to communicate. Most staff members are expected to carry out tasks not necessarily explicitly outlined in their job duties, nonetheless, as the district has a growing population of EL students, presumably EL families as well, they may consider an onsite the hire, additional pay to current or another way to dedicate personnel to the growing translation needs to communicate to families and possibly oversee the equity dialogue and efforts that emerge from creating a community equity advisory committee.</p> <p><u>Recommendations</u> Develop a structure for systemic translation after families have self-identified and requested translated communication. If applicable, avoid the practice of pulling individuals out of their daily responsibilities to translate. All critical documents should be translated, and proactive steps taken for clear and concise communication.</p> <p><u>Research</u> The identity-affirmation of students naturally encompasses their families (Muhammad, 2020; Ishimaru, 2020). Deliberate acts that value a student’s home and family cultivate trust, and influence relationships. All members of the school community should aim to diligently connect with students and their families (Ishimaru, 2020; España & Herrera, 2020).</p>	

As the district chose this preemptive and proactive measure to conduct an equity audit, it is assumed the district will engage in next steps to continue to move the equity needle forward. Research explains the criticality of equity audits as a tool to strategically identify inequities in systems and structures (Skrla et al, 2009; Smith et al, 2017). Equity cannot be achieved if the organization does not deliberately identify the barriers that perpetuate biases. Intentional deconstruction of inequities and such biases require schools and all impacted stakeholders to relentlessly reflect and transform their beliefs. Developing equity literacy is a constant journey and requires critical and considerable reflection to our personal, interpersonal, and structural unpacking (Gorski, 2018).

These recommendations are not exhaustive, and the district must be cognizant that equity work never ends. Although each finding is important, the district should be thoughtful as to which recommendations will be short-term and others that require consistent oversight. It is recommended that district implement an equity plan that includes metrics and accountability. In developing an equity action plan, the district should identify current initiatives, to also include in the equity plan. This demonstrates a systemic commitment to consider all initiatives with an equity lens. As the district explores their next steps, they can expect resistance from a variety of stakeholders. The findings and recommendations can be difficult realities to accept. Despite the district's proactive undertaking to pursue an equity audit, the magnitude of improvements needed may be a challenge. Systemic transformation is a process, and implementation on any of the recommendations will take finite time. To execute, it is recommended the district reconvene DELT and share the audit report. From there, DELT should work closely to prioritize and identify each finding. Determine the measure for each finding, if applicable, and progress monitor the equity achievement. With each transformative shift, the district may adopt the implementation of additional findings and/or recognize other inequities that need to be addressed. It is critical for the district and its stakeholders to fully understand there is no final destination to reach equity. There is no stopping point. It is a constant, prevalent, and complex paradigm in efforts to maximize humanity and social justice for historically marginalized identities.

List of Frequent Acronyms

ABAR = anti-bias/anti-racist

AP = Advanced Placement

BOE = Board of Education

CEU – Continued Education Unit

CTE = Career Technical Education

DEI = Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

ELA = English Language Arts

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

ES = Elementary School

ESL = English as a Second Language

GenEd = General Education

FRL = Free/Reduced Lunch

IEP = Individualized Education Program

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

LGBTQ+ = Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and other identities within
the LGBTQ community

PLC = Professional Learning Communities

PD = Professional Development

POC = People of Color

SES = Socio-Economic Status

SPED = Special Education

SY = School Year

Glossary

Agency: The efficacy to navigate systems and institutions.

Anti-bias/Anti-racist (ABAR): To be anti-bias and/or anti-racist is to actively identify and disrupt explicit and implicit forms of biases and racism in and among individuals, cultures, and institutions.

Bias: An organic information process of the human brain to identify preferences, inclination, disposition, or preferences.

Belonging: The impact of wholistic acceptance of a person in all their forms.

Cisgender: A person that identifies their gender to their biological sex.

Classism: The oppressive state of discrimination, exclusion and prejudice based on socio-economic status.

Diversity: The mix of unique backgrounds, identities, and experiences, not limited to culture, language, or race/ethnicity, but as often misused to describe minoritized racial and ethnic groups.

Dominant (dominant culture): All non-dominant or historically marginalized identities such as White, male, heterosexual, cisgender, upper class, abled-bodied, U.S. born, native English-speaker, college-educated, Christian, young, desirable in stature, size, and appearance.

Ethnicity: Groups of people that share common ancestry, heritage, history, geography, and language influenced by background and culture.

Historically marginalized identity (group or population): Any socially constructed identity based on race/ethnicity, gender/gender identity, sexuality, ability, socio-economic status, language, age, national origin, religion/non-religious affiliation, physical attributes, education attainment and family status that has experienced institutional oppression. May be used interchangeably with minoritized identities, groups, or populations.

Inclusion: The act of being involved or active participation.

Isms: The act that systemically eliminate fair distribution of access and opportunity impacting power dynamics and group privileges based on identity attribute.

Equity: In terms of educational equity, equity is intentional identification of barriers to ensure every student has access and opportunity to academic and whole child needs in the school setting as measures by quantitative and qualitative outcomes, while examining the policies, procedures, processes, resources, and practices of the institutional structures that explicitly or implicitly, knowingly, or not, perpetuate inequities.

Institutions: The wide range of public goods and private entities developed to serve society such as criminal justice, education, employment, health care, housing, and policing.

Intersectionality: The intersecting of marginalized identities. Such identities include one or more intersections of race/ethnicity, gender/gender identity, sexuality, ability, socio-economic status, language, age, national origin, religion/non-religious affiliation, physical attributes, education attainment and family status.

Minoritized (also known as minority): The non-dominant social constructs of race/ethnicity, gender/gender identity, sexuality, ability, socio-economic status, language, age, national origin, religion/non-religious affiliation, physical attributes, education attainment and family status. May be used interchangeably with historically marginalized identities, groups, or populations.

Oppression: The exercise of power to unjustly manipulate resources and treatment against others, often experienced by minoritized identities.

Power: The capacity and ability to exercise influence among individuals, or at a structural or systemic level.

Racism: The individual, cultural, and institutional beliefs, and actions of oppression that manifest privileges to White people, or those that identify or are perceived White, based on devaluing the experience and humanity of Black, Indigenous and/or People of Color (BIPOC), or those that identify as BIPOC. Racism is fueled by White supremacy ideology.

Sexism: The individual, cultural, and institutional beliefs, and acts of oppression that manifest privileges to men, or those that identify as males, based on devaluing women, or those that identify as female. Sexism is fueled by male supremacy, also known as the patriarchy.

Social Constructs: All dominant and non-dominant identities that exist in visible and invisible social stratification systems of one's value, positionality, and full humanity.

Social Justice: The relationship of historically marginalized identities measured by full and equal participation in distribution, resources, and opportunities to leverage human privileges.

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