

# North Shore School District 112: Equity and Inclusion Audit Report

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**About Public Consulting Group (PCG)**

Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) is a management consulting firm that offers technical assistance, strategic planning, professional development, financial management, systems development, and other management advisory services to public sector clients. Established in 1986, PCG has consistently delivered on its motto of “*Solutions that Matter.*” Our education practice is committed to helping schools, school districts, and state education agencies strengthen their performance, streamline their operations, and improve their programs and instruction so that all students have what they need to succeed. For more information see <https://www.publicconsultinggroup.com/about-pcg/>

*“When we act equitably, we raise whole, healthy children nested in whole, healthy schools and communities with differentiated support and equal opportunity to learn and succeed, irrespective of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, language, income, or ability. By investing in equity, we maximize all students' educational attainment, opportunities for success in the workforce, and contributions to their communities, and thus strengthen the whole state.”*

– IL State Board of Education.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In January 2021, North Shore School District 112 contracted Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) to conduct an Equity and Inclusion Audit. The audit was commissioned in a time of national (and international) reckoning with the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and institutional racism. The audit in NSSD 112 was designed to examine all areas of the school system’s operations—its policies, practices, and programs—through the lens of equity. We conducted this analysis to identify structural and programmatic barriers that inhibit an inclusive and equitable learning environment.

North Shore School District 112 serves a racially and linguistically diverse student population of nearly 4,000 students in grades Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The student population is drawn from three communities—the City of Highland Park, the City of Highwood, and Fort Sheridan—who attend ten schools across the district. NSSD 112’s largest historically marginalized student group is Latino (27%). Over 53 languages are represented among the district’s families.

The NSSD 112 mission statement appears on the school district’s homepage:

*The mission of North Shore School District 112, a community partnership committed to a world-class education, is to nurture every child to become an inspired learner, a well-rounded individual and contributing member of a global community by striving for excellence within an environment that fosters innovation, respect, engagement and intellectual inquiry.<sup>2</sup>*

To achieve its mission, NSSD 112 sought an audit process that could yield a set of recommendations, grounded in data, to help the school system proactively address implicit and explicit bias and foster a safe, supportive and inclusive education environment where each student feels valued, challenged and prepared for the future.

While NSSD 112 may use the findings and recommendations of the Equity and Inclusion Audit to develop their own definition of educational equity, PCG used the following definition for the purposes of guiding this work:

**Educational Equity** means ensuring all students receive the resources, opportunities, skills, and knowledge they need to succeed in our democratic society.<sup>3</sup>

While this equity and inclusion audit takes a big step toward expanding the conversation within the district, it builds on equity initiatives already begun in NSSD 112 in the past year. The activities include reforming the Inclusivity, Acceptance and Equity Committee, working on strengthening inclusive practice districtwide,

<sup>1</sup> IL State Board of Education, October 2018, Statement on Fair Access and Equitable Support ([ISBE-Values-Beliefs.pdf](#))

<sup>2</sup> North Shore School District 112 Homepage. <https://www.nssd112.org/Page/1>

<sup>3</sup> American Institutes for Research. “Educational Equity: Identifying Barriers and Increasing Access.” <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Equity.pdf>

and community-wide, anti-racism book study groups.<sup>4</sup> As noted above, the equity work underway as well as the audit occur within the context of an increased focus in neighboring school systems as well as at the state level, as reflected in the position statement from the Illinois State Board of Education which opens the report.

## PCG COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Equity demands that we consider the needs of each student with a discerning eye to the students who are historically marginalized or treated with low expectations, often due to cultural and linguistic diversity, identified disability, or gender identity. Our equity audit work is part of PCG's enduring commitment to supporting equitable practices in districts and schools.

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION AUDIT FRAMEWORK

Equity and inclusion audits have gained momentum as a strategy for school systems to systemically examine their policies, programs, and processes to understand the inequities that exist and determine steps they can take to address them. A range of conceptual frameworks have emerged to guide this work.

The framework and guiding questions PCG used for this equity and inclusion audit is built from our synthesis of this work. The overarching question the audit seeks to answer is:

**“How do the policies, practices and processes in North Shore School District 112 promote educational equity, and how can they be improved to do so?”**

The audit framework seeks to answer the broad question by examining NSSD 112 operations and education service delivery in six focus areas highlighted in the table below. Each area has been identified as a core domain in which to identify assets and gaps that inhibit achieving system goals. We also include guiding questions specific to each focus area.

### Exhibit 1. Equity and Inclusion Audit Framework and Guiding Questions

Focus Area	Guiding Question
<b>Leadership, Policies, and Practices</b>	To what extent do <b>policies and processes</b> in NSSD 112 promote a diverse, equitable and inclusive district?
<b>Climate and Culture</b>	To what extent is the <b>culture and climate</b> of NSSD 112 welcoming and supportive of all students and families?
<b>Student Outcomes and Access to Advanced Learning Opportunities</b>	How are <b>student outcomes and access to advanced learning opportunities</b> linked to student characteristics and demographics?
<b>Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning</b>	To what extent do <b>curriculum and instructional</b> practices in the district focus on improving academic and social outcomes for each student. How does the district provide access to culturally responsive curriculum, practices, and programs for diverse learners? How does district professional learning support diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices?
<b>Human Resource Practices</b>	How do <b>human resource policies and practices</b> in NSSD 112 support hiring and retaining a diverse workforce?

<sup>4</sup> NSSD 112 School Board Minutes, June 30, 2020.

<b>Resource Allocation Processes</b>	How are <b>resources distributed</b> across the district? What are the drivers/processes that determine their distribution?
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## REPORT TERMINOLOGY

There are several terms used throughout this report that require definition and clarification within the NSSD 112 context. Some terms that appear throughout the report include:

**Achievement Gap**, or learning gap, refers to “the persistent difference in academic performance between different ethnic and racial groups, income levels, gender, and special student groups.”<sup>5</sup> PCG uses this term when reviewing standardized test data to align with Illinois State Department of Education terminology.

**ALO** Advanced Learning Opportunities provided to students through multiple methods including flexible groupings, push-in support, personalized assignments or projects, co-teaching, and/or differentiated work taught by grade level classroom and ALO teachers.

**BPAC** Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee

**BIPOC** Black, indigenous, and people of color

**EL** is any student in Pre-K to grade 12, whose home language background is a language other than English and whose proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English is not yet sufficient to provide the student with: a) the ability to meet the State’s proficient level of achievement on State assessments; b) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or c) the opportunity to participate fully in the school setting.

**ESL** English Second Language Services – students who qualify for language support can receive a variety of "push-in" or "pull-out" support options depending on their English proficiency.

**FRL** Free and Reduced Lunch

**NSSD 112** North Shore School District 112

**IAR** Illinois Assessment of Readiness, state assessment since 2019

**IEP** Individualized Education Programs (IEPs): are for students who are identified as having a disability through formal evaluations and meet specific criteria as stated under IDEA. They are eligible for special education and related services provided by a team of individuals who develop IEPs for them.

**IMPACT** Increasing Multicultural Parent Access and Culturally Responsive Teaching, community organization in NSSD 112.

**Latinx** a person of Latin American origin or descent (used as a gender-neutral or nonbinary alternative to Latino or Latina).

**Opportunity Gap** is the disparity in access to the inputs, experiences, and resources needed for each student to be academically successful.

**PARCC** Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, the state assessment and accountability measure for Illinois students 2017-2018

**PCG** Public Consulting Group LLC

**PD** Professional Development

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<sup>5</sup> Definition provided on the Illinois Report Card, 2019-2020.

**Note on Gender Data:** Current data collection at NSSD112 and at the state and federal level is binary, with comparative data available for male and female only. As such, these categories are used throughout this report.

## ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

- **Chapter 2** describes the audit methodology including our approach to this work, our data collection and analysis.
- **Chapter 3** contains the top priority recommendations from PCG followed by all recommendations.
- **Chapter 4** describes the current context of NSSD 112 including enrollment and population trends and student achievement.
- **Chapters 5-10** present key findings divided into the focus areas of the framework: leadership, policies, and practices; curriculum, instruction, and professional learning; school and district culture and climate, student outcomes and program participation; human resource practices; and resource allocation and processes. The presentation of the key findings follows a similar format, each chapter opens with a brief description of selected research-based best practices and then presents key findings from the audit.
- **Appendices** provide information about the audit team, the documents collected for the study, and additional school and district data.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

From January through May 2021, PCG conducted an Equity and Inclusion Audit of NSSD 112 using a mixed-methods approach. The findings and recommendations are based on our analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected throughout the course of the audit. These data sources and our approach are described in greater detail below.

### AUDIT APPROACH

PCG's overall approach to the audit is collaborative—we act as an outside agent, with an objective perspective, working alongside NSSD 112 leadership to identify challenges and provide recommendations for improvement including a roadmap for future action.<sup>6</sup> We built frequent touchpoints into the project plan with project leaders from NSSD 112 as well as sessions with NSSD 112's equity and inclusion audit working group to foster communication and collaboration, seek clarifications and additional information, share preliminary findings, and collect feedback.

### DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

To provide a comprehensive understanding of equity in NSSD 112, PCG developed a research design for the audit that collected data from multiple sources. A complete list of data sources reviewed can be found in the Appendix. Data for the study were drawn from the following types of sources:

#### Exhibit 2. Data Sources for Equity and Inclusion Audit

Leadership, Policy, & Practices	Climate & Culture	Student Outcomes & Access to Advanced Leadership Opportunities	Curriculum, Instruction, & Professional Learning	Human Resources Practices	Resource Allocation & Processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies</li> <li>• Manuals</li> <li>• Handbooks</li> <li>• Organizational Charts</li> <li>• Previous Reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous climate and culture surveys or reports</li> <li>• Initiatives designed to create bias-free schools</li> <li>• Family engagement information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic achievement</li> <li>• Rates for enrollment</li> <li>• Representation in advanced classes and programming</li> <li>• English Learner classification</li> <li>• Discipline rates and policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum materials</li> <li>• Intervention information</li> <li>• Pedagogical practices</li> <li>• Support services</li> <li>• Professional development and trainings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data and practices related to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Recruitment</li> <li>– Applications</li> <li>– Interviews</li> <li>– Hiring</li> <li>– Retention</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Job descriptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial distribution</li> <li>• Program budgets</li> <li>• Staff counts and characteristics</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Donis-Keller, C., Meltzer, J., and Chmielewski, E. (2013). "The Power of Collaborative Program Evaluation, A PCG Education White Paper." [http://www.publicconsultinggroup.com/media/1272/pcg\\_collaborative\\_evaluation.pdf](http://www.publicconsultinggroup.com/media/1272/pcg_collaborative_evaluation.pdf)

## *Leadership Readiness Assessment*

As part of the first phase of the project, PCG administered an electronic survey to all district and building leaders, during the first week of February, to gauge participants' perceptions of current district practices and overall readiness to address institutional racism and equity. The Leadership Readiness Assessment was developed to probe the following five topics: Student Achievement; Disciplinary Practices and Procedures; High-Quality Programming and High-Quality Teachers; Distribution of Funding and Resources; School Culture and Climate. The survey completion rate was 84% (27/32). Results were tabulated and shared during a regular meeting of the NSSD 112 Leadership Team in February 2021. The workshop was designed to generate preliminary conversations about equity and inclusion in NSSD 112.

## *Data and Document Analysis*

### **Population Characteristics, Programs, and Achievement and Outcomes Analysis**

PCG collected and analyzed a range of student, school, and district data. NSSD 112 provided student data including characteristics, enrollment, discipline, course taking, achievement outcomes, and socio-economic status. PCG used publicly available data as well as data provided directly by NSSD 112.

Population and program trends are significant equity indicators of the extent to which there is overrepresentation of any group. Student performance data were analyzed to provide a comparative examination of performance by students disaggregated by demographic characteristics.

### **Document Review**

PCG reviewed over 140 documents from NSSD 112 ranging from Board policies, manuals, handbooks, curriculum, intervention information, organizational charts, previous reports, and job descriptions to better understand district operations and organization. PCG also reviewed district and school websites, as well as School Board meeting materials. Finally, PCG reviewed information related to training and professional development offered during the past school year.

An inventory of the documents collected for the study may be found in the Appendix.

### **District Data**

In addition to student level data, PCG collected human resource data such as recruitment activity information and staff hiring and retention data. Data were drawn from district resources to develop a portrait of current district staffing and staffing over time. PCG also collected budget and resource data to better understand the distribution of resources and district priorities.

## *Focus Groups and Interviews*

PCG conducted interviews and focus groups with a range of stakeholders including students, families, teachers, principals, central office staff, and community partners.<sup>7</sup> PCG worked with district leadership to select a sample from each stakeholder group that was representative of the communities served by the district, schools within the district, and school level. NSSD 112 invited staff, parents, and students to general groups by role and to focus groups of color for each group. Interviews and focus groups were conducted virtually and participants were offered the option of participating in English or Spanish. Participation in the focus groups was voluntary.

Focus groups and interviews were conducted during late February and early March 2021. Overall, 167 people participated, with some participants joining more than one group.

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<sup>7</sup> Community partners were included as part of the parent focus groups.

**Exhibit 3. Focus Group and Interview Participants by Role**

	Students	Teachers	School Staff	Principals and APs	Parents	School Board	District Admins	Total
Number of Participants	13	18	26	16	74	7	13	167

A subset of parents and district and school staff attended more than one focus group—they attended a general focus group for their role and then an additional group set up specifically for staff of color or parents of students of color. Not all NSSD 112 schools were represented within each stakeholder group, but overall PCG solicited input from a wide range of participants with representation from all of the district’s schools.

Focus group and interview questions were developed by PCG based on the framework. Each interview and focus group included general questions asked of all participants as well as questions specific to participants’ roles. Interviews and focus groups lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Questions focused on participants’ perceptions of equity and the district educational experience. Interviewers took notes during the encounters and used qualitative analysis software to code the notes documents according to themes aligned with the equity and inclusion audit framework. Individual responses are confidential and will not be attributed to specific participants.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

PCG saw ample evidence that NSSD 112 has strengths on which to build toward providing an inclusive and equitable education to each student that it serves. Its willingness to undertake this audit is a testament to the interest of system leadership to begin this journey in earnest.

Enacting change, the kind of change that will fundamentally improve outcomes of all students, and especially those from historically marginalized groups, requires focus, a strong vision from the superintendent and enacted by senior leadership staff, an appropriate allocation of resources, mandated professional development, and clear, non-negotiable, accountability measures. This type of bold reform requires the involvement and commitment of every staff person, families and community and a willingness to establish high expectations for each student.

#### PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The challenges faced by NSSD 112 related to equity and inclusion are those shared with many school systems across the country. Our recommendations are grounded in district data and are drawn from research-informed strategies and best practices recognized to improve equity and student outcomes. PCG believes that with a commitment to carry forward the recommendations in this report and the active engagement of a wide range of stakeholders with the planning process and implementation will position the school system on a path for success to provide an inclusive and equitable education for every student.

##### *Vision and Leadership*

Vision and Leadership recommendations are the **top priority and should be undertaken first**. It should be noted that while these should be the core initial focus for the 2021-2022 school year, each of these recommendations will span multiple years and are ongoing endeavors.

1. **Develop an up-to-date Strategic Plan that explicitly commits to Equity.** This multi-year plan will provide the District an implementation roadmap for ensuring an equitable education for every student. This Strategic Plan with an equity focus should outline the specific steps the district will undertake to meet this commitment and serves as a signal to the entire community of the prioritization of this critical work. It should prioritize the recommendations found in this report, assigning owners, timelines, and success metrics.
  - a. **Set a clear vision and shared language for equity with NSSD 112.** A vision for districtwide racial equity should encompass all stakeholder groups within the district. The Board and Superintendent have a shared responsibility for setting, communicating, and upholding this vision. This should be the first step towards developing the Strategic Plan.
  - b. **Form an Equity Taskforce** as part of the strategic planning process that includes a diverse stakeholder group who reports directly to the Superintendent and provides quarterly updates on progress being made on the Equity Plan. See the Appendix for proposed membership. A first charge of the Equity Taskforce should be to develop a common vocabulary and clear definitions of equity and equitable practice to be used across the district.
  - c. **Create an Equity Communication Plan** to develop key messages to share the vision for equity both internally and externally. The communication plan should identify ways to include all staff in hearing those key messages. It also must include how messages will be presented to internal stakeholder groups in addition to all families, students, and the larger community. The plan should encourage two-way communication.

- d. **Assign Ownership.** It will take focused effort and tough leadership to make all the changes needed over the next three to five years to become an anti-racist district. Ensure all actions in the Strategic Plan have an assigned District Administrator with the ultimate accountability for item completion. The Superintendent or designee should oversee the overall management of the Strategic Plan.
  - e. **Set Equity Data Targets.** As part of the plan, develop equity data targets and publicly track progress. Consider posting the data targets on the District's website. Equity data targets should address improvement areas found in this report, such as the achievement gap, IEP rates, discipline rates, and access to advanced coursework.
2. **Use an explicit Equity Decision-making lens for all decisions made within NSSD 112.** Adopt an equity decision-making framework through which all decisions are reviewed. To end individual, institutional, and structural racism and bias in the district, all leaders must consistently and intentionally apply an equity-lens to every decision. When making decisions within NSSD112, leaders should ask, "Who is being well served, and who is left out or harmed by the new policy, practice, or program?" It is easy to say that all decisions will be made with equity in mind, but without an explicit Equity Impact Analysis tool, protocol, or framework, it is highly unlikely that the District can stay true to the vision.
  3. **Include equity-focused goals and measures in the evaluations of all staff.** Adhering to the goals and strategic actions of the Strategic Plan should be an expectation set for all staff members holding any position in the District. There should be no belief that it is someone else's job. The only way to make systemic change of long held practices is to hold everyone accountable. This may be accomplished by including goal setting or individual performance plans with a focus on equity as part of the annual evaluation process.
  4. **Build a Culture of Academic Optimism.** Build, promote, and support a districtwide culture that will help instill a value for academic optimism so that all the adults across the district share the responsibility for the achievement of every student. Presume that every student is competent and able and should be exposed to the highest levels of rigor. Focus expectations on an asset-based approach where staff look at students' strengths first rather than what they cannot do. Training identified in the additional recommendations section can help support this goal.

## ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

PCG has identified additional recommendations that emerged around key findings. These recommendations encompass a broad range of operational areas across the district and should guide the development of the Strategic Plan. This multi-year plan, undergirded by the recommendations found here, will create the systems and structures necessary to supporting NSSD112 in the journey to become an anti-racist district.

The first step will be to prioritize each recommendation into Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 or beyond actions, based on overall district goals and capabilities. While some can be considered "low-hanging fruit" and can be accomplished immediately, many of the recommendations are multi-faceted and will require significant planning on the district's part. Implementation of these more complex recommendations may need to occur over multiple school years. Given the broad range of recommendation areas, it will take a collective, districtwide effort to achieve success. PCG recommends frequent monitoring of the Strategic Plan to track progress, refine strategy, and adjust course when needed.

## Data Use

5. **Develop Equity Student Data Reports.** Use data to prioritize closing the achievement gaps and opportunity gaps between student subgroups, ensuring that each student has access to the supports and services they need.
6. **Use data to monitor the identification/classification of students as needing an IEP.** Ensure that no student group is over-represented. Regularly disaggregate student-level data by race/ethnicity, EL, and socio-economic status as feasible and appropriate, to inform decision-making and establish follow-up activities.
  - a. More specifically, analyze the root cause of higher rates of IEP status for ELs. Consider if additional resources, protocols, or training are needed for staff to determine if student need is language acquisition versus a specific learning disability.

## Curriculum

14. **Supplement curriculum content to increase options for materials and resources that are culturally relevant and representative of cultural diversity.** Provide teachers with professional learning and guidance documents to support 1) use of materials that are representative; 2) adaptation of unit lessons to incorporate multicultural perspectives; and 3) culturally responsive teaching. This should be in the form of both written materials and ongoing training, to include teachers across all content areas, programs, and grade levels. More specifically:
  - a. Incorporate culturally responsive practices and strategies into teacher professional development at the beginning of the school year.
  - b. Support teachers' ability to engage students with culturally relevant and culturally representative content, which includes building skills to:
    - i. Identify aligned, grade-level and age appropriate, content (e.g., multiple perspectives, authentic lived experiences from diverse cultures, multiple ways of engaging/demonstrating learning, etc.).
    - ii. Exchange unit texts for other resource materials, specifically those selected and vetted for authenticity by content area teams and district leadership, while ensuring alignment to standards, lesson purpose, and NSSD 112's vision for equity.
    - iii. Provide strategies for planning to embed culturally relevant material across all lessons (e.g., lesson analysis, text analysis, and discussion of approaches to student engagement with instructional coaches).
  - c. Incorporate texts that represent diverse historical, literary, and notable figures in a variety of roles; avoid stereotypical or deficit representation of people of diverse cultural background.
  - d. Continue to provide additional opportunities for students to engage more deeply in events and topics that may be of cultural significance beyond the dominant cultural perspective. Consider books, essays, journals, and other artifacts representing voices from indigenous, underrepresented, and historically marginalized groups.
  - e. Evaluate PD effectiveness with teacher cultural competency self-assessments, at the beginning and end of the school year.

15. For future curriculum review, **amend the existing rubric for culturally relevant content and a culturally responsive pedagogical framework.** Select curriculum that is compatible with including alternate texts that invite greater student engagement and connection – texts that are culturally relevant, authentic, and from diverse authors. Include parent feedback as part of the review.
- Expand review of curriculum to include alternate rubrics.
  - Expand review team to include parent feedback in the process.
  - Solicit input from students through a student survey or adding a small group to the initial curriculum review committee.
  - Curriculum should provide opportunities for age-appropriate conversations around race and diversity. That will be more challenging if the curriculum does not present racially diverse figures or explore the perspectives/contributions of many cultures.

### *Instruction*

16. **Broaden Instructional Coaches' focus and training.** Increase Instructional Coaches' knowledge and skills focused on Culturally Responsive Teaching practices to better support teaching staff.
17. **Design an instructional walkthrough tool focused on equity "look fors" and Culturally Responsive Instructional Practices.** This tool will be a guide for school leaders to identify what they should be seeing when they are in classrooms and will provide anecdotal data to track growth and progress.

### *Professional Learning*

18. **Provide ongoing learning opportunities for all staff to have facilitated discussions and training about anti-bias/anti-racist education** and what it looks like in NSSD 112.
19. **Review all professional development through an anti-racism/anti-bias lens.** If diversity, equity, and inclusion are not represented in the training syllabus or part of the training outcomes, reevaluate if the training aligns to NSSD 112's core values for an equitable education. Ensure trainers coming into the district are diverse.
20. **Provide specific learning opportunities for the leadership team.** There is a lot of need that was shared from school leaders regarding how to facilitate courageous conversations, how to hold a coaching session with a teacher that is not divisive, but constructive and will move the district's vision forward.
21. **Engage families in anti-racism/anti-bias education.** Include parents in professional development around anti-racism/anti-bias education, increasing cultural awareness and cultural competence.

### *Dual Language Program*

22. **Strengthen diversity in DLP teacher recruiting and development.** The majority of DLP teaching staff (57%) at Red Oak and Oak Terrace are white, which necessitates support for increasing the cultural competence and awareness of teachers of culturally diverse students. These cultural connections are as critical for student success as the linguistic bridges that are provided. The efforts around staffing in the DLP should focus on:
- Recruiting and retaining teachers who are people of color and share a cultural connection to students.

- b. Providing professional development to increase the ability of teachers, particularly white, non-Hispanic or Latinx teachers to leverage culturally responsive practices in the classroom.
  - c. Fostering connections between all teachers to build intercultural competence and facilitate greater collaboration and co-teaching.
23. **Provide culturally relevant curriculum for dual language programs.** Increase support for teachers to embed the current curriculum with texts that represent diverse characters and diverse cultural experiences. Culturally responsive pieces also extend beyond race, to ethnicity, nationality, community, gender identity, and identifying as LGBTQIA+.
24. **Prioritize authentic Spanish language materials.** Select texts that have been written and published in Spanish originally. Also provide added layers of cultural and linguistic engagement for Spanish learners, while continuing to support the home-language fluency of students who are bilingual and are learning English.
25. **Conduct an external, third party audit of the Dual Language program** to better understand the learning gaps observed in those programs.

### *Student Discipline*

26. **Revise current approach to the collection of discipline data.**
- a. Use a consistent, coordinated discipline referral and reporting system and practices across both middle school buildings. This includes guidance and training regarding what types of infractions warrant documentation, and when other documentation procedures should be used to track student behaviors.
  - b. Develop a system to collect student discipline data at the elementary level and ensure that is used consistently across schools through training and monitoring.
  - c. Regularly review student discipline referral data to ensure no student subgroup is being disproportionately referred.

### *Access to Advanced Learning*

27. **Analyze impact of tracking on equity goals.** While some may argue that tracking allows for more targeted instruction focused on student ability, research has demonstrated that tracking often results in inequitable teaching and learning for students.<sup>8</sup> Determine if advanced learning programs at the elementary and middle school levels, based on analysis of participation and outcomes data, aligns to the district's equity goals. If it is determined that these programs meet these goals, then:
- a. Collect data at the elementary level to allow for analysis of participation rates by subgroup.
  - b. Analyze current barriers for access and develop a plan to mitigate these challenges. Establish a goal to increase current enrollment of students of color, ELs, and students with IEPs in advanced courses at the middle schools. Monitor enrollment data on a quarterly basis.

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<sup>8</sup> Wells, C. L. (2018). "Understanding issues associated with tracking students in mathematics education." *Journal of Mathematics Education*, 11(2), 68–84.

- c. Create more pathways into advanced learning opportunities that will reach more students and decrease the opportunity gap within each elementary school and at the middle school level.

### *Student Engagement*

- 28. **Increase opportunities for student leadership.** Create accessible channels for students to be able to express concerns and ideas to improve their learning experiences at school. Ensure that every student has the opportunity to make their voice heard by teachers and administrators, especially racially, culturally, and linguistically underrepresented students.
- 29. **Ensure access to social emotional supports.** Conduct additional discovery on student perceptions towards accessing school-based social emotional services. Determine if there are opportunities to encourage students to seek out these services more actively if needed.
- 30. **Develop/expand peer support networks for students.** These may include peer tutoring or peer mentorship programs for students within the same grade, or across grade levels to foster collaborative and supportive relationship-building between students.
- 31. **Provide cultural competency training for students.** To foster cultural competence, provide all students with targeted, frequent, and grade appropriate opportunities to confront stereotypes and bias.

### *Family Engagement*

- 32. **Establish communication guidelines that prioritize reaching all families.** Provide consistent translation services for school communications and at every district and school event, including Board meetings, PTO meetings and parent-teacher conferences. Every building should have support for families that speak a language other than English.
- 33. **Facilitate schoolwide, or districtwide culturally responsive family engagement,** tied to student teaching and learning, to increase sense of community, positive sense of identity, and appreciation for diversity.
  - a. Invite parents of diverse backgrounds to participate in planning family literacy nights or school celebrations.
  - b. Deepen and expand community partnerships with public libraries and other spaces where families access resources, meet for multicultural events, and have access to meeting space.
  - c. Consider holding events outside of the school campus in a setting that is connected to neighborhoods and multicultural communities.
- 34. **Provide consistent trainings or information sessions** (that are linguistically inclusive) for parents and family members to learn about district and school opportunities available to them and their children, and how to access them.
- 35. **Develop a sustained series of parent trainings,** co-created with parents, to address implicit bias and zero-sum thinking about resources.

### *Human Resources Practices*

- 36. **Set explicit, measurable, value-aligned goals around the diversity of the NSSD 112 workforce.** By transparently communicating a district-wide commitment to increasing the diversity of the workforce, the district will set itself up for success by opening the door for departments and schools to embed

similar goals in all aspects of their work as well as allowing for concrete steps like dedicated funding to diversity initiatives across the district.

**37. Develop systems and strategies that use data to guide the work of recruitment, hiring, and retention in the district.** The use of data should include:

- a. Tracking the **demographic information of all applicants** to the district from the point of application through the interview and hiring process. These data can illuminate points in the processes where candidates of color may drop out and can allow the district to examine the factors that affect the progress of candidates of color in the hiring process.
- b. Tracking the **demographic makeup of the staff at each of the schools** in the district in order to prioritize hiring that is reflective of the student body in each school. By transparently tracking and sharing data related to the workforce diversity in comparison to the student diversity at each school, the district can build incentives and structures to support schools with the largest representation gaps in closing those gaps.
- c. Tracking the **retention and advancement of staff members by demographics**. This kind of explicit tracking and communication of trends and findings over time not only shows the district's commitment to retaining a diverse workforce, but also allows the district to pinpoint schools, roles, or departments that may need more support in developing strategies to retain and develop staff of color.

**38. Increase the scope of teacher recruitment.** Prioritize job postings in sites and communities that are targeted at teachers of color such as:

- a. Diversity in Ed
- b. Nemnet Minority Recruitment
- c. Latinos for Education
- d. National Association for Bilingual Education
- e. Handshake<sup>9</sup>

NSSD 112 should also explore developing an internal recruitment program in which current teachers and leaders are given a stipend to serve as a point of contact for educator applicants to the district. These recruitment ambassadors could attend job fairs, be tasked with posting jobs on social media and on job boards, could answer questions via email or live chats, host presentations on applying to and working for NSSD 112, and more.

**39. Develop partnerships with local educator preparation programs with diverse student bodies.** Engage with students early in their careers to build relationships, communicate expectations and benefits to working in NSSD112, and support their eventual applications and hiring. A table that contains information on ten local educator preparation programs with diverse student populations, according to the United States Department of Education Title II State Reports (2020) can be found in the Appendix.

**40. Invest in Grow Your Own (GYO) programs in the district.** GYO teacher programs help address teacher shortages, retention issues, and teacher diversity by engaging in a variety of strategies that aim to recruit teachers from the community in the hopes that the pool of candidates will better reflect that community and will be more likely to stay teaching in the community. For example, while still not

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<sup>9</sup> Handshake is a free job board that many IHEs are using for their career services. While this is not explicitly diversity focused, NSSD 112 has the opportunity to reach a wide range of students and alumni from programs with high rates of diversity.

reflective of the student community, the population of school-based support staff (e.g., paraprofessionals, secretaries, etc.) is significantly more diverse than the teaching staff in the district. Programs that work with paraprofessionals to support their certification and provide training, coursework, and mentorship to develop them as educators are an effective way to increase the pool of educators in the district.

- a. In addition to GYO teacher programs, the district should aim to develop a program that supports the recruitment and hiring of out of state educators. Given the limitations imposed by strict Illinois state teacher licensure requirements, the district should design a program that helps high priority out of state educator recruits in obtaining temporary IL licensure and then supports those educators through the licensure process over the course of their first year teaching in the district in order to secure full IL educator licensure.
41. **Leverage internal referrals.** Utilize the networks of educators and staff of color already in the district to prioritize more personalized recruitment. Explore structures to incentivize participation in recruitment and hiring for BIPOC staff members in the district.
  42. **Let diverse voices drive a review of the hiring process.** Center the experience and voices of diverse staff members in the district when completing a comprehensive review of the application, interview, and hiring process. This review should examine the process, including each step of the application and hiring system, for implicit bias, language bias, and potential barriers to access for applicants of color. The district should engage educators of color in interviews and surveys and ground the analysis in the lived experiences of those educators.
  43. **Engage in implicit bias training for all staff involved in hiring and evaluation.** While current district administrators and hiring managers have undergone this training, every person involved in interviewing or evaluating staff should participate in implicit bias training in order to ensure that everyone has a baseline understanding of what to watch for in conducting processes like these.
  44. **Explore cohort models for staffing educators of color in schools.** One of the reasons why educators of color leave schools is because they are the only or one of the only BIPOC staff members and feel isolated.<sup>10</sup> NSSD 112 can work to combat potential feelings of isolation, especially in schools like Indian Trail where 91% of teachers and 100% of support staff are white, by developing cohort models for hiring and staff placement.
  45. **Develop community building and support opportunities specifically aimed at BIPOC staff members.** While NSSD 112 offers a formal educator mentorship program, setting up structures in which new educators of color can learn from the experiences of veteran educators of color can go a long way towards retaining and developing a more diverse workforce. The district could stipend a teacher leader to coordinate regular, offsite opportunities for educators of color to gather, network, discuss common struggles and organize discussions about topics relevant to the community.

### Resource Allocation

46. **Build a vision for the district's budget that aligns with the vision of equity for the district.** Ensure that the district's explicit vision for and commitment to equity is built into how resource allocation decisions are made. Explicitly connecting funding decisions to the district priorities and communicating about the expected gains to come from the decisions will help to build broad support.

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<sup>10</sup> Bristol, T. (2014). *Black Men of the Classroom: An Exploration of how the Organizational Conditions, Characteristics, and Dynamics in Schools Affect Black Male Teachers' Pathways into the Profession* (Ph.D.). Columbia University. <https://doi.org/10.7916/D85T3HM8>.

47. **Develop district and community wide buy in through joint fact finding.** Stakeholder perceptions about funding and how resource decisions are made vary widely across NSSD 112. Because community members do not have a shared understanding of the facts of how and why financial decisions are made in the district, there will be a large challenge in building widespread support for change. Craft messaging around school spending and budgeting that is clear and compelling and that combats the spread of misinformation or inaccurate perceptions.
48. **Use an equity analysis and equity lens in all decision making.** Facilitate an active shift the district's mindset away from equality and towards equity. Decisions around resource allocation are not easy, but NSSD 112 can mitigate much of this conflict by standardizing the use of explicit equity measures in all decision making and by clearly communicating the connection between resource allocation changes and community and district values.
49. **Address inequitable sources of external school funding.**
  - a. **Reconceptualize the school-based PTOs from individual school fundraising organizations to districtwide support structures.** While school PTOs are important ways to build community within a school, the activities and offerings that raise funds for certain schools and not others should be redesigned in a way that addresses the inequities.
  - b. **Work with the 112 Foundation to bring equity to the number of and total dollar amount of grants awarded each year by school.** While the data shows inequity across schools in the number of grants awarded, it is unclear the reason behind these gaps. The district should dig into these data with the 112 Foundation to determine whether it is due to a lack of applications from certain schools, unintended barriers in the rubric or evaluation process, implicit bias on the part of the selection committee, or other reasons. The 112 Foundation is a strong resource for the district, but it is important to ensure that their funding and processes are also aligned with the district's vision of equity.
    - i. Encourage the 112 Foundation to have greater funding transparency by sharing the total dollar amount awarded by school on their website and in an annual report.
50. **Provide equitable options for student meals.** The school lunch program that is only offered at some schools and not others is a significant source of outside revenue for the district's wealthier schools and perpetuates community misperceptions about school resource levels. Consider going to a single, more inclusive set of options for meals. Work with lunchroom staff to implement practices that will maintain student privacy with regard to participation in free or reduced-price lunch programs. If consistent school lunch practices across elementary schools is deemed not feasible, then the funds raised from the current program, that is not able to be offered in all schools, should be pooled in a district-wide fund whose distribution could be managed by members of PTOs from each school.

## 4. NORTH SHORE SCHOOL DISTRICT 112 COMMUNITY

### BACKGROUND

North Shore School District 112 serves nearly 4,000 students in ten schools: seven elementary schools, two middle schools and one early childhood center. The district employs 500 people and is governed by a seven-member Board of Education who are elected at-large.

NSSD 112 was established in its current configuration nearly 30 years ago (1993), after a contentious merger between District 111 with its neighboring systems of District 107 and District 108.<sup>11</sup> At the time, the district merged administrative functions while maintaining all school buildings. Since that time, the system conducted several community studies<sup>12</sup> of reconfiguration scenarios including one conducted after the politically charged referendum to build a single middle school<sup>13</sup> which failed at the polls in 2016. NSSD 112 stakeholders voted to maintain neighborhood schools which reinforced existing divisions within the district. In 2017, the NSSD 112 Board, citing efficiency concerns, closed two schools and adjusted attendance boundaries to bring students affected by the closures into existing buildings.

In 2018-2019, Dr. Michael Lubelfeld began his tenure as Superintendent of NSSD 112. Dr. Lubelfeld has served in several roles in NSSD 112 starting as a teacher in the district in 1997. In recent years, the school system has also welcomed new district administrators as well as new leadership (Principal and Associate Principals) at several schools. Another area of change in NSSD 112 in recent years is a set of capital projects including the recently completed “reconstruction and modernization” of Northwood Middle School and the current construction underway at Edgewood Middle School.<sup>14</sup>

The district is home to several unique programs including a two-way immersion dual language program that offers instruction in both English and Spanish in grades Pre-K to eighth grade and serves the majority of the districts’ emergent bilingual students. The program started in 1996 and is offered at: Green Bay (PreK); Oak Terrace (K-5); Red Oak (K-5); and Northwood (6-8). The majority of NSSD 112 students attend their zoned elementary or middle school for grades K-8, but a proportion travel to dual language programs.

In addition to the Equity and Inclusion Audit, the district has been examining its operations in other key areas including an audit of special services that was conducted in 2020-2021.

### STUDENT, SCHOOL, AND DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS

A baseline step to understanding educational equity in NSSD 112 is to examine student racial and ethnic demographics and high needs status across the district. Data indicate that school buildings differ along both dimensions, in some cases, substantially.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Hill, J (1993). “School District Feels Strain of Merger, 300 More Students.” *Chicago Tribune*. September 1, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> In Link Strategic Partner’s summary: North Shore School District 112 Focus Group Report: Reconfiguration 2.0 Community Team February 22 and 23, 2017. [https://www.nssd112.org/February\\_2017\\_Focus\\_Group](https://www.nssd112.org/February_2017_Focus_Group)

<sup>13</sup> Moran, T. (2016). “District 112 Voters Reject Referendum.” March 15, 2016. *Patch.com*

<sup>14</sup> Final Long-Range Plan Recommendation- Phase I 2019-2022.

<sup>15</sup> [http://nssd112.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=2&event\\_id=641&meta\\_id=54104](http://nssd112.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&event_id=641&meta_id=54104)

<sup>15</sup> The order of demographic and high need categories in the following data tables follows the order used for ISBE data.

**Exhibit 4. District Demographics (2017-2020)**

Year	N	White	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaska Native	Two or More Races	EL	IEP	FRL
2017	4,076	64%	2%	28%	3%	0%	0%	2%	17%	15%	26%
2018	3,964	63%	2%	28%	3%	---	3%	3%	18%	15%	28%
2019	3,904	64%	2%	27%	3%	2%	2%	3%	18%	17%	25%
2020	3,881	64%	2%	27%	3%	0%	0%	4%	18%	15%	25%

Source: Illinois Report Card

Due to schooling disruptions related to COVID-19, PCG used data from SY2018-2019 to provide a current district snapshot. This data aligns to the latest available state assessment data for the district.

In the 2018-2019 school year:

- Elementary school enrollment ranged from 226 students (Ravinia) to 480 students (Oak Terrace).
- Northwood Middle School served 515 students and Edgewood Middle School served 792 students.
- The district was majority white (64%), 2% Black or African American, 27% Hispanic or Latino, 3% Asian, 2% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 2% Native American, and 3% Two or More Races.
- Approximately 25% of NSSD 112 students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. At the state level, half of all students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.
- 17% of the district's students were on IEPs. This rate is similar to the Illinois state average.
- 18% of the district's students were categorized as English Learners. This number is slightly higher than the state average of 12%.

These student breakdowns remained relatively consistent across school years 2017-2020.

**Exhibit 5. Elementary and Early Childhood Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and High Need Group (2018-2019)**

	N	White	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaska Native	Two or More Races	EL	IEP	FRL
<b>Braeside Elem School</b>	269	86%	2%	4%	4%	---	---	5%	3%	15%	3%
<b>Indian Trail Elem School</b>	426	77%	2%	13%	3%	2%	2%	5%	10%	13%	11%
<b>Ravinia Elem School</b>	226	89%	0%	5%	3%	4%	---	3%	4%	11%	5%
<b>Sherwood Elem School</b>	381	82%	3%	7%	5%	3%	3%	3%	11%	18%	8%
<b>Red Oak Elem School</b>	251	34%	1%	59%	4%	---	---	3%	44%	15%	45%

<b>Oak Terrace Elem School</b>	480	31%	0%	64%	2%	---	---	3%	50%	15%	58%
<b>Wayne Thomas Elem School</b>	324	74%	4%	15%	4%	---	---	4%	8%	18%	19%
<b>Green Bay School</b>	269	43%	1%	48%	2%	---	0%	5%	38%	18%	35%

Source: Illinois State Board of Education Report Card Data Library; Student-level data provided by NSSD 112.

### Exhibit 6. Middle School Data by Race/Ethnicity and High Need Group (2018-2019)

	N	White	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaska Native	Two or More Races	EL	IEP	FRL
<b>Northwood Middle School</b>	515	43%	3%	50%	4%	---	2%	1%	21%	19%	46%
<b>Edgewood Middle School</b>	792	80%	2%	12%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	13%	11%

Source: Illinois State Board of Education Report Card Data Library

At the school level, there was a greater concentration of Hispanic or Latino students at dual language schools: 59% at Red Oak Elementary, 64% at Oak Terrace Elementary, and 50% at Northwood Middle School. These dual language schools also had the lowest percentage of white students: 34%, 31%, and 43% at Red Oak Elementary, Oak Terrace Elementary, and Northwood Middle School, respectively. This concentration is expected as the dual language programs are open to Spanish-speaking families from across the District. It worth noting, however, given the percentage of white students at each of the other schools is greater than 70%. The dual language schools also had the highest percentage of low-income students in the district, with 45%, 58%, and 46% at Red Oak Elementary, Oak Terrace Elementary, and Northwood Middle School, respectively.

Across the district, Hispanic or Latino are more likely to be in a high need category than their white peers.

- Hispanic or Latino students make up 27% of the district student body, but constitute 81% of the district's low-income population, 41% of students with IEPs, and 88% of the English learners.
- Conversely, white students make up 64% of the district student body, but constitute 13% of low-income students, 51% students with IEPs, and 9% of English learners.

When disaggregating district-level data for students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, students with an IEP, and students who are English learners, there are additional findings worth noting.

- There are differences in the percent of students who are low-income across racial/ethnic groups: 3% of white, 24% of Black or African American students, and 48% of Hispanic or Latino students are low-income.
- Nearly half of Hispanic or Latino students are English Learners.
- 34% of English Learners have an IEP, compared the overall district rate of 17%.
- 24% of Hispanic or Latino students have an IEP, compared to overall district rate of 17%.

**Exhibit 7. Student Racial/Ethnic Groups by Percent High Need Categories (2018-2019)**

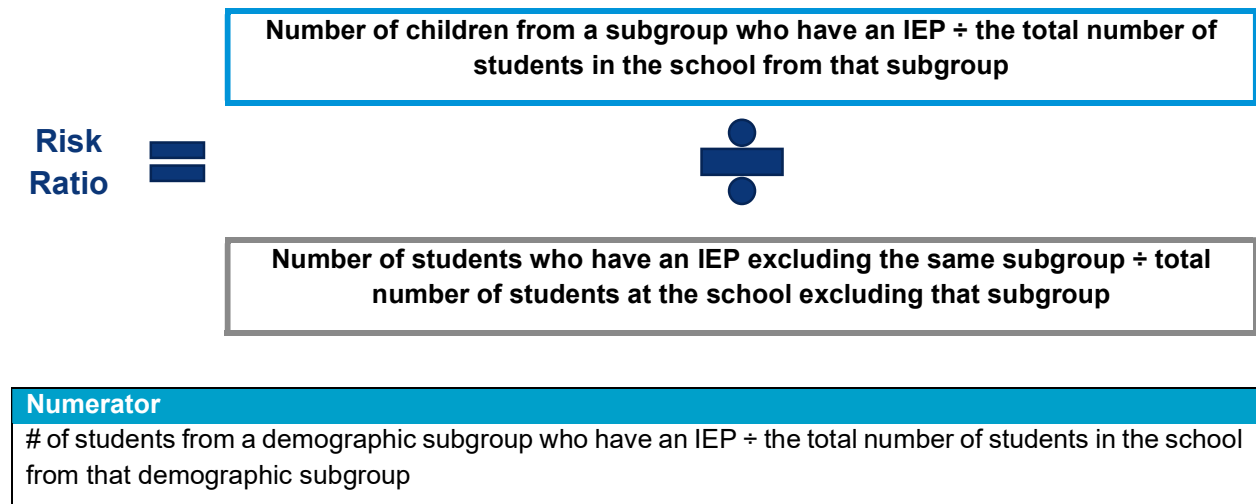
	Total Enrollment	Total % of District Population	EL	IEP	FRL
<b>NSSD 112</b>	4,045	100%	18%	17%	25%
<b>White</b>	2,541	63%	2%	14%	3%
<b>Black or African American</b>	85	2%	4%	19%	24%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	1,142	28%	48%	24%	48%
<b>Asian</b>	132	3%	9%	10%	11%
<b>Two or More Races</b>	135	3%	1%	13%	6%

Source: Student-level data provided by NSSD 112. The total enrollment numbers used for these calculations are based on data provided by NSSD 112, which are slightly different than the enrollment numbers captured by the IL State Report Card from Fall 2018.

Note: We removed Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and Native American students from this table because there were fewer than 10 students in each group.

**Risk Ratios in IEP Rates**

When looking at the rates of students who are assigned IEPs as a measure of educational equity, disproportionality occurs when students from one racial, gender, or other demographic subgroup are assigned IEPs at markedly higher rates than their peers. The following data comes from a risk ratio analysis on students with IEPs in NSSD 112. This risk ratio analysis method compares the likelihood of a student in a certain demographic subgroup to have an IEP to the likelihood that students of all other demographic subgroups will have the same. The formula used to calculate risk in educational settings compared the **percentage of students with IEPs in each demographic subgroup at the school (numerator)** to the **percentage of the student population excluding that demographic subgroup (denominator)**.



Ex: # of Hispanic or Latinx students who have an IEP ÷ # of all Hispanic or Latinx students at the school

**Denominator**

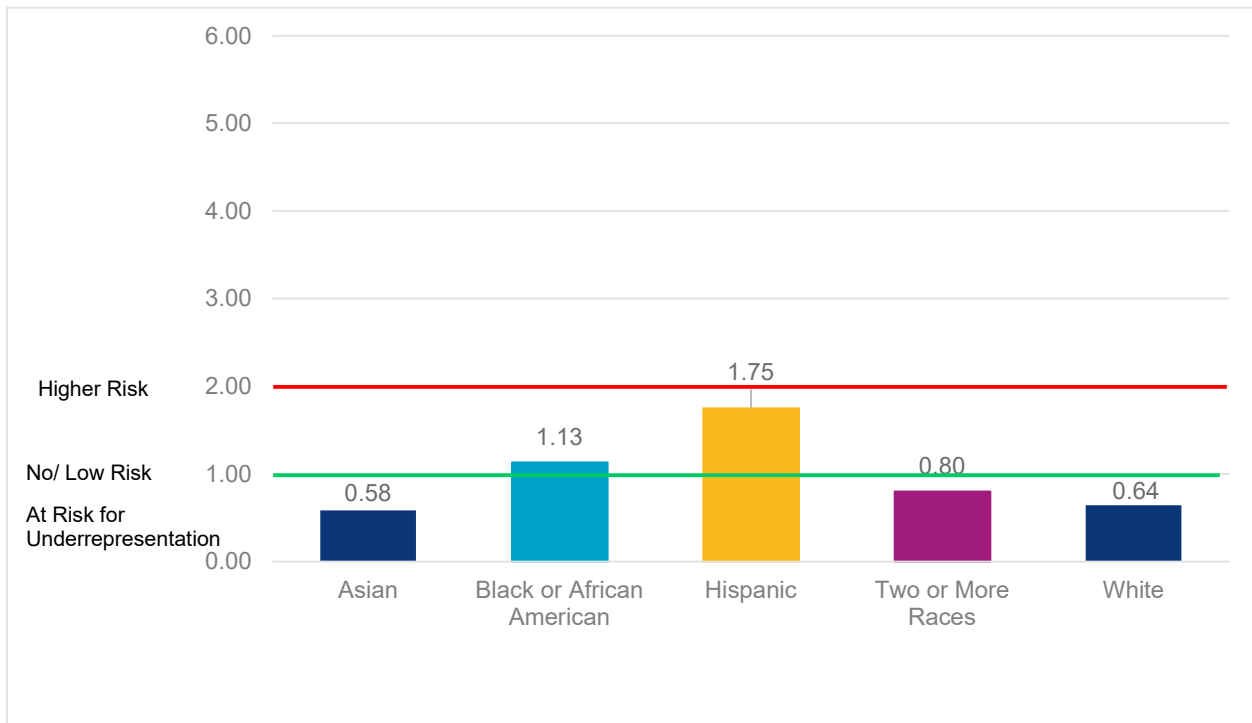
# of students who have an IEP excluding the same demographic subgroup ÷ total number of students at the school excluding that demographic subgroup

Ex: # of students who have an IEP excluding Hispanic or Latinx students ÷ # of total students at the school excluding Hispanic or Latinx students

A risk ratio of 1.0 means there is no association between the student’s demographic group and their likelihood of having an IEP. A risk ratio of 2.0 or greater indicates a risk of overrepresentation in IEP assignments, while a risk ratio of less than 1.0 indicates possible underrepresentation. Student subgroups with fewer than ten (10) students in the school were excluded from this analysis because of the disproportionate impact of a single IEP assignment for those groups.

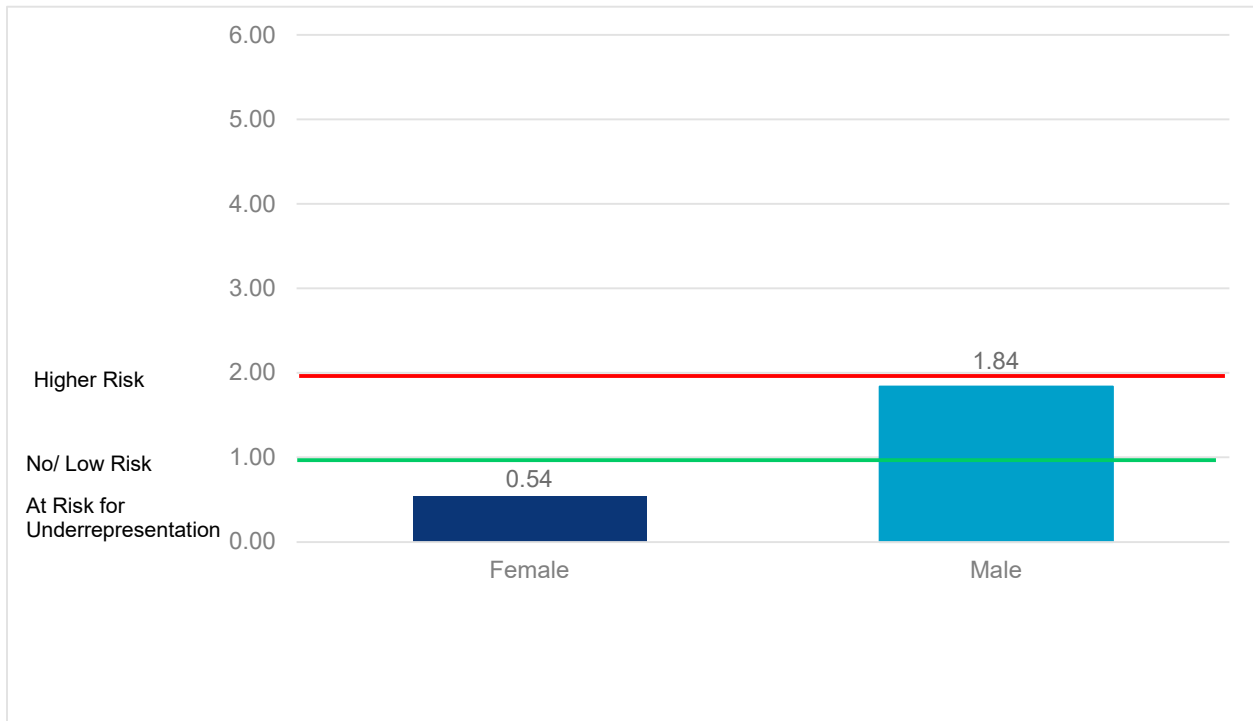
*District Wide IEP Risk Ratios*

**Exhibit 8. IEP Assignment Risk by Race/Ethnicity (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 9. Number of Students with IEPs by Race/Ethnicity (2018-2019)**

Race	All Students	Students with IEPs
Asian	132	13
Black or African American	85	16
Hispanic or Latinx	1142	275
Two or More Races	134	18
White	2541	351
<b>Total</b>	<b>4034</b>	<b>673</b>

**Exhibit 10. IEP Assignment Risk by Gender (2018-2019)****Exhibit 11. Number of Students with IEPs by Gender (2018-2019)**

Gender	All Students	Students with IEPs
Female	2004	235
Male	2041	440
<b>Total</b>	<b>4045</b>	<b>675</b>

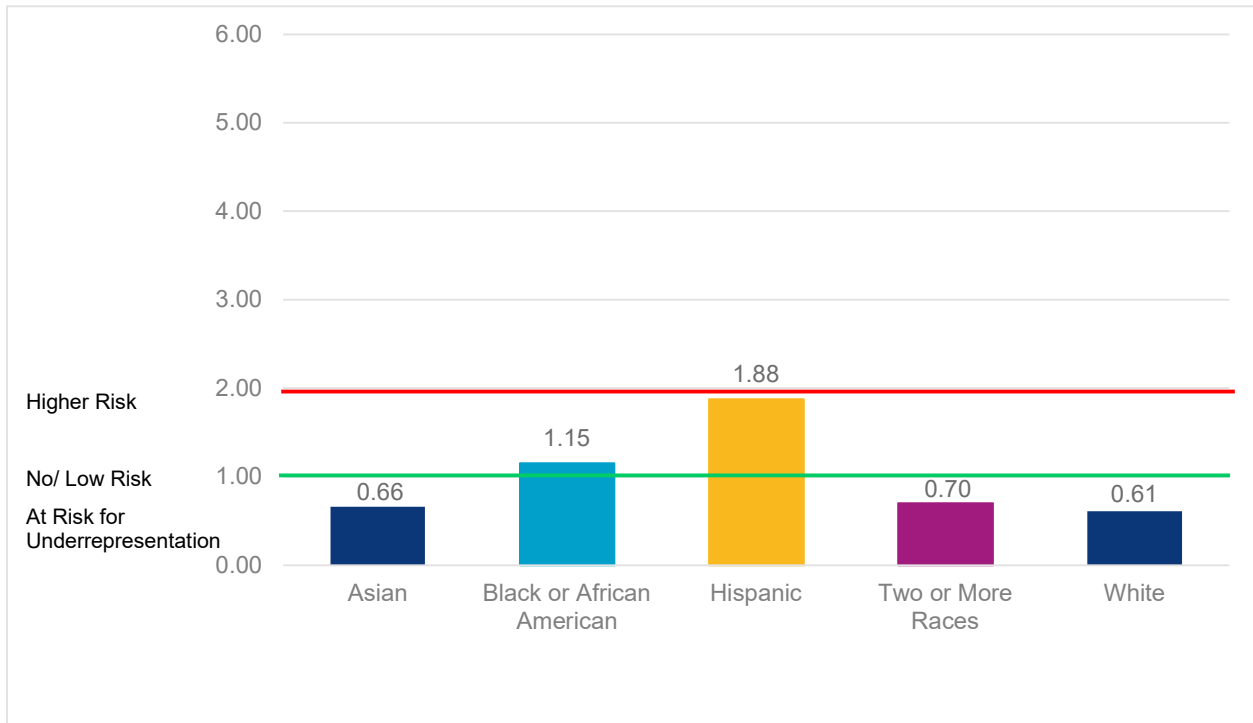
**Analysis: Districtwide IEP Assignment Rates**

In NSSD 112:

- Students identified as Asian are **0.58 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in the district.
- Students identified as Black or African American are **1.13 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in the district.
- Students identified as Hispanic or Latinx are **1.75 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in the district.
- Students identified as two or more races are **0.80 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in the district.
- Students identified as white are **0.62 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in the district.
- Female students are **0.54 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in the district.
- Male students are **1.84 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in the district.

*Elementary School Level IEP Risk Ratios*

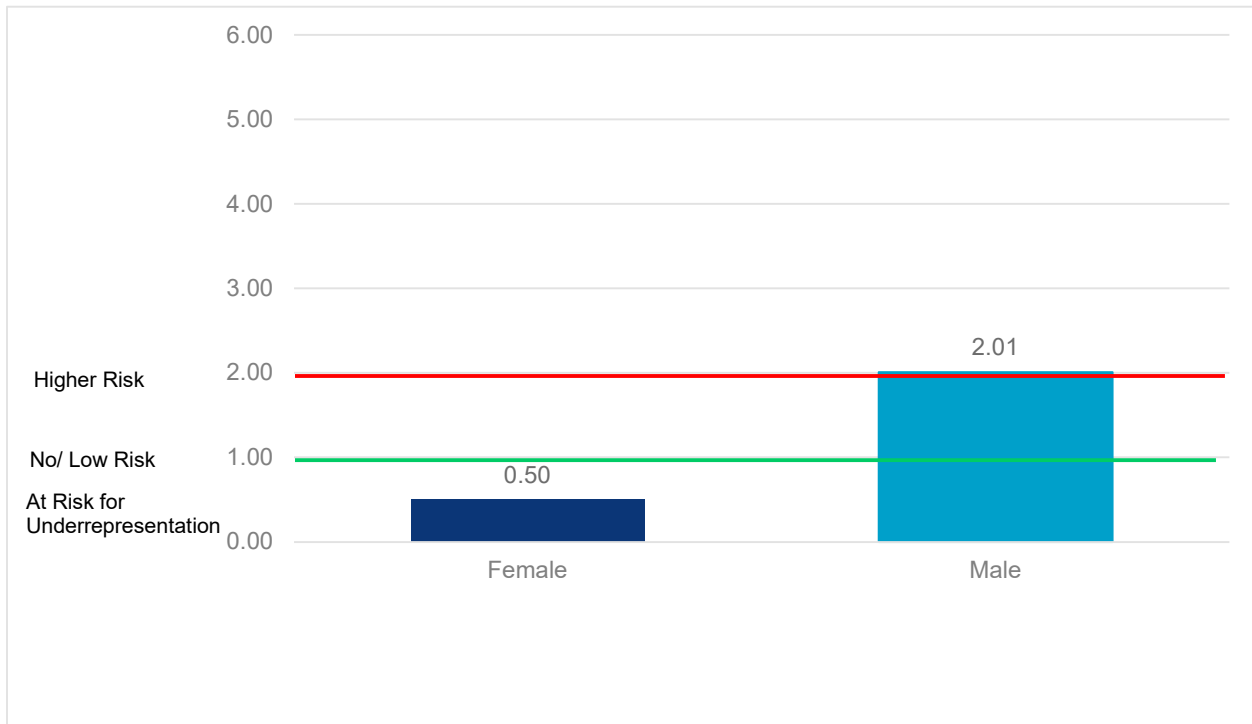
**Exhibit 12. IEP Assignment Risk by Race at the Elementary Level (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 13. Number of Students with IEPs by Race/Ethnicity at the Elementary Level (2018-2019)**

Race	All Students	Students with IEPs
Asian	81	8
Black or African American	47	8
Hispanic or Latinx	642	145
Two or More Races	95	10
White	1565	189
<b>Total</b>	<b>2430</b>	<b>360</b>

**Exhibit 14. IEP Assignment Risk by Gender at the Elementary Level (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 15. Number of Students with IEPs by Gender at the Elementary Level (2018-2019)**

Gender	All Students	Students with IEPs
Female	1217	120
Male	1217	241
<b>Total</b>	<b>2434</b>	<b>361</b>

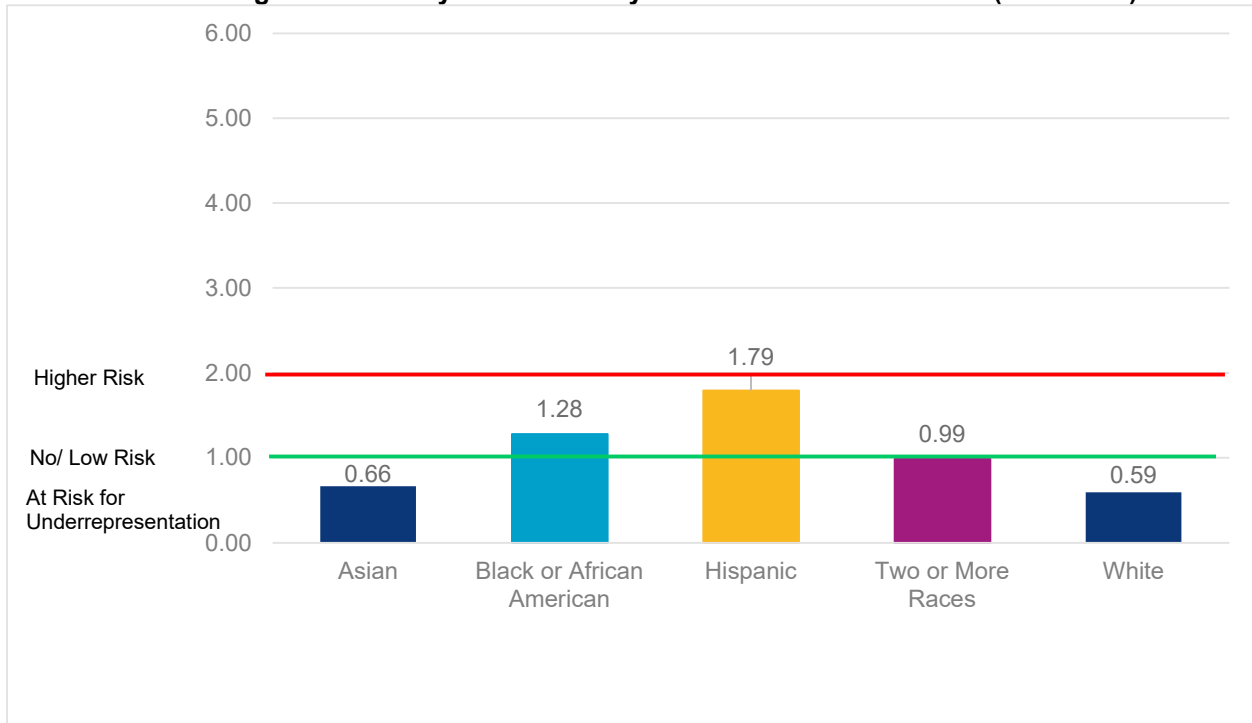
**Analysis: Elementary Level IEP Assignment Rates**

In Elementary Schools in NSSD 112:

- Students identified as Asian are **0.66 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in elementary school.
- Students identified as Black or African American are **1.15 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in elementary school.
- Students identified as Hispanic or Latinx are **1.88 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in elementary school.
- Students identified as two or more races are **0.70 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in elementary school.
- Students identified as white are **0.61 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in elementary school.
- Female students are **0.50 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in elementary school.
- Male students are **2.01 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in elementary school.

**Middle School Level IEP Risk Ratios**

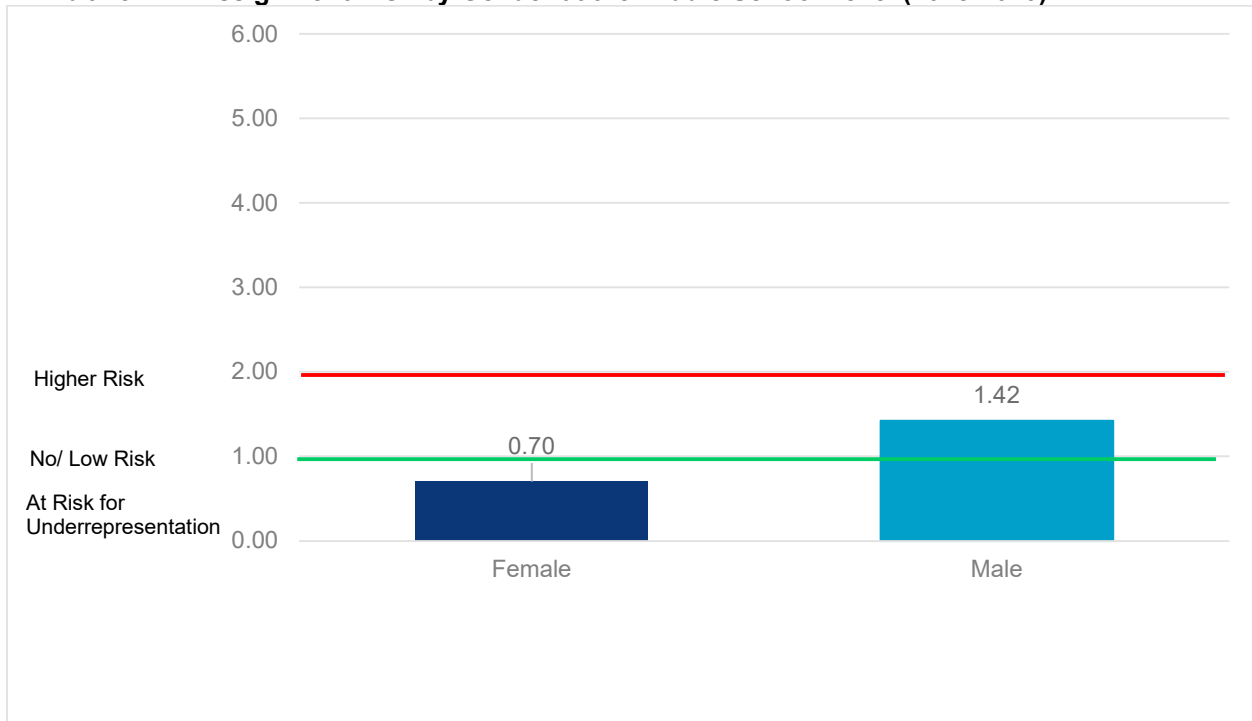
**Exhibit 16. IEP Assignment Risk by Race/Ethnicity at the Middle School Level (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 17. Number of Students with IEPs by Race/Ethnicity at the Middle School Level (2018-2019)**

Race	All Students	Students with IEPs
Asian	46	5
Black or African American	34	7
Hispanic or Latinx	370	88
Two or More Races	25	4
White	861	112
<b>Total</b>	<b>1336</b>	<b>216</b>

**Exhibit 18. IEP Assignment Risk by Gender at the Middle School Level (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 19. Number of Students with IEPs by Gender at the Middle School Level (2018-2019)**

Gender	All Students	Students with IEPs
Female	661	88
Male	681	129
<b>Total</b>	<b>1342</b>	<b>217</b>

**Analysis: Middle School Level IEP Assignment Rates**

In Middle Schools in NSSD 112:

- Students identified as Asian are **0.66 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in middle school.
- Students identified as Black or African American are **1.28 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in middle school.
- Students identified as Hispanic or Latinx are **1.79 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in middle school.
- Students identified as two or more races are **0.99 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in middle school.
- Students identified as white are **0.59 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in middle school.
- Female students are **0.70 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in middle school.
- Male students are **1.42 times** more likely to have an IEP as all other students in middle school.

## 5. LEADERSHIP, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES

**Guiding Question: To what extent do policies and processes in NSSD 112 promote a diverse, equitable and inclusive district?**

### RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

“Until every child has meaningful access to an education system that fully understands and is willing to address his or her cultural, physical, social, and emotional needs, we will continue to have a two-tiered public education system. The students who fit into the prescribed formula will become lifelong learners, while those students whose backgrounds and experiences differ will face greater challenges in becoming their fullest and best selves as learners.”<sup>16</sup>

Highly skilled superintendents can be described as leaders who know where their school district should be heading and why. They create a vision for their district to ensure their students have meaningful access to an equitable education within their district and develop a plan to actualize that vision. Vision guides their work and influences the work of others. They must be willing to take risks to achieve their vision for each student and are able to communicate the vision clearly and explicitly to every stakeholder within the school community.<sup>17</sup>

Creating and implementing a vision for equity does not mean creating equal conditions for all students, but rather targeting resources to schools based on individual students’ needs and circumstances, which includes providing differentiated funding and supports and encouraging both teacher and students’ voice and agency. Targeting supports in this way is intended to remove barriers and create the same opportunities for low-income students, students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities that their more advantaged peers experience.<sup>18</sup>

When equity is part of the district’s vision of a high-quality education, it creates a shared understanding and commitment among staff, students, families, and community partners. It also helps ensure that leadership will continue to prioritize equity and support its focus in all schools. By developing a shared vision focused on equity, the district establishes consistency that enables every student’s success because teachers and leaders are reinforcing the same expectations and effective practices no matter where the schools are located.

Superintendents and their central office leadership team must commit to prioritize a vision for equity within their school district. As part of setting the strategic vision and plan for their school district, in collaboration with their school board, superintendents and their leadership teams must analyze data to determine the greatest gaps and equity challenges facing their districts and determine how they will focus efforts and allocate resources to address those opportunity gaps and their root causes. The superintendent is uniquely positioned to create a sense of urgency by uniting their district and instilling optimism that significant progress can be accomplished through their collective efforts. This requires focus, clear communication, and an expectation that all staff and stakeholders will prioritize this work.

<sup>16</sup> Ingram, A. (2018). “A Vision for Equity in Schools Starts at the Top.” *The Learning Professional*. Oxford, OH. Learning Forward. <https://learningforward.org/2018/11/01/a-vision-for-equity-in-schools-starts-at-the-top/>.

<sup>17</sup> *Issues ...about Change*. (1993). Volume 2, Number 3, Vision, Leadership, and Change SEDL.

<sup>18</sup> The Aspen Education & Society Program and the Council of Chief State School Officers. (2017). *Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs*. Washington, D.C.

When the development of a vision for equity is coupled with the creation of an action plan, not only does the district ultimately adopt a vision, but also has a plan to achieve that vision. The vision becomes the foundation for the district's equity plan including goals, action steps, allocation of resources, and continuous improvement. While the shared vision ensures that everyone involved understands the district's commitment to equity, the plan provides measurable goals and concrete action steps to ensure that the district can follow through on that commitment and ensure all stakeholders know what they need to do to support the vision.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **Equity and Inclusion Audit.** Conducting this equity audit in NSSD 112 is an important first step in identifying equity issues and subsequently creating a multi-year plan to address them. Opening the district up to a variety of voices from school board members, administration, teachers, parents, students, and community members, ensures all stakeholder groups are heard and valued. High community interest as evidenced by participation in the voluntary focus groups demonstrated how desired and potentially impactful this audit can be to the district. This process serves as the foundation towards the creation of a clear vision and pathway focused on equity for each child.
- **Personnel Decisions.** Dr. Lubelfeld, upon being appointed as Superintendent, has spent time assessing personnel and overall district operations. While over the past two years, Dr. Lubelfeld has shifted positions and reconfigured the structure of the NSSD 112 leadership team. The reconfiguration has included changes to reporting structures, realigning duties, and hiring new staff who have similar beliefs and expectations. However, there is not a central office role dedicated to driving consistent and equitable practices and initiatives across the district. Consequently, school administrators report feeling left to their own devices to figure out how to approach equity in their buildings.
- **Board Commitment.** Every School Board member participated in an interview with PCG, and each member verbalized their commitment to developing a vision for equity for NSSD 112. However, many Board members also shared that equity is not currently a lens through which decisions are consistently made nor is data specific to equity reported to them.
- **Equity versus Equality.** Many focus group members shared confusion or differing beliefs with the preferred district approach to the work. Some focused on **equity** within schools and across the district, while others focused on **equality** of services.
- **Lack of Vision for Equity.** There is currently no districtwide vision or definition for equity. When all stakeholder groups were asked about the vision for educational equity, there was a wide range of responses. Multiple members of district administration, including the Superintendent, stated the need for an adopted vision for educational equity, along with common definitions.
- **Equity-driven Decision-making.** Because there is no common language in the district related to equity, core decisions are not consistently made with an equity lens. Decisions are reported to often be made with good intentions, versus a thorough and systematic analysis of the impact on equity, inclusion, and access.
- **Strategic Plan.** There is no active strategic plan for NSSD 112. The last Strategic Plan developed by the district was over a decade ago in 2010. It will be a challenge to implement a vision districtwide focused on an equitable education for all students without a plan to lead the way and ensure accountability. It was stated in the interviews and focus groups that while people are hopeful about engaging in the work of providing an equitable education for each student, they are also concerned that there will be a lot of talk and no action.

- **Policies and Practices:** While school district policies continue to be updated by the NSSD 112 School Board, the latest as of March 9, 2021, there are no stand-alone policies that explicitly address equity within the district.<sup>19</sup>

In 2018, the Illinois Association for School Boards (IASB) published the article, *Ten Ways School Boards Can Champion Racial Equity* which stated that school boards must have a strong commitment to racial equity.<sup>20</sup> The article states that members of the school board must be willing to commit to creating a school culture that embraces and implements racial equity practices, with board members holding themselves accountable to progress towards equity. Equity focused practices should be documented in board policy. NSSD 112 current board policy briefly mentions equity and diversity within a few policies (e.g., Policy 7:10 Equal Education Opportunities and 6:210 Instructional Materials), but if the district strives to achieve an equitable education for each student, it is essential that board policies align to that vision. Sample equity policy language may be found in the Appendix.

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<sup>19</sup> North Shore School District 112. Board Policies Online. [https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=northshore\\_sd\\_112](https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=northshore_sd_112).

<sup>20</sup> Savage-Williams. P. (2018). "Ten ways school boards can champion racial equity." Springfield, Ill. The Illinois School Board Journal. Vol 86. No. 2. <https://www.iasb.com/about-us/publications/journal/2018/march-april/ten-ways-school-boards-can-champion-racial-equity/>

## 6. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### Guiding Questions:

- To what extent do curriculum and instructional practices in the district focus on improving academic and social outcomes for *each* student?
- How does the district provide access to culturally responsive curriculum and practices and programs for diverse learners?
- How does district professional learning support diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices?

Equitable practices have the greatest impact on positive outcomes for students when connections are made between culturally relevant curricular materials and resources, culturally responsive instruction, and professional learning to support teacher competency at embedding opportunities for multicultural and cross-cultural awareness and connection in the classroom environment. To that end, findings related to pacing of unit lessons, core texts and alternate texts, differentiated instruction, and professional learning, should be considered in concert with one another.

### CURRICULUM

#### *Research-based Best Practices*

Student learning is best experienced in an environment where curriculum is representative of, inclusive of, and relevant to the lived cultural and social experiences of students so that stronger connections are being made between what is being taught and what is learned. An equally important factor is that students view civic and historical context and events from multiple perspectives, particularly those of people groups who have been marginalized, oppressed, underrepresented, and silenced.<sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup>

The companion to culturally responsive instruction, as part of the larger context of equitable practices and ensuring equity for all students, is an equitable curriculum. In keeping with the framework outlined by Gloria Ladson-Billings for culturally responsive teaching, best practices match responsive instruction with equitable curriculum,<sup>23</sup> which refers to the extent to which the collection of texts, resources, student and teacher materials reflect the following:

1. Diverse perspectives and materials that represent voices from people with diverse cultural backgrounds.
2. Emphasis on a multicultural view of content, with discussion around power structures, who holds them, and who does not have access.
3. Equitable representation of positive and significant figures in history, science, mathematics, literature, and other content, among people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, highlighting achievements of people who are not part of the dominant culture.

<sup>21</sup> Camcia, Steven P. & Zhu, Juanjuan. (2012). "Synthesizing Multicultural, Global, and Civic Perspectives in the Elementary School Curriculum and Educational Research." *The Qualitative Report*, 17(103), 1-19. <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR17/camcia.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

<sup>23</sup> Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). "But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy." *Theory Into Practice*, 34(3), 159-165. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1476635>

4. Consideration for exploring how the laws and systems pertaining to topics that are being explored may impact different racial/ethnic groups, and other social and cultural groups, in different or disproportionate ways.
5. Units that include lessons that recognize how intersectionality – being identified by oneself or others as belonging to one or more racial/ethnic, gender, socio-economic, religion, or other cultural identity, that is either marginalized or underrepresented in positions of authority – compounds the adverse effects of discrimination and disproportionality.
6. Supports for culturally responsive teaching practices, with specific resources to foster conversations around challenging materials that are respectful of cultural differences and classroom diversity.
7. Activities and resources that promote social justice awareness and responsible action among students.
8. Affirmative development of self-identity and appreciation of diversity in the school climate, with intent to influence societal contexts.

For the purposes of this report, PCG’s Equity Audit team reviewed materials supplied by the district. The team examined revised pacing guides for Math (K-5 and 6-8), ELA (Monolingual, K-5 and 6-8), ELA-SLA (Dual language, K-5), and song lists and a standards crosswalk for Music (K-5).

#### Exhibit 20. NSSD 112 Core Curriculum Reviewed Documents

Grade Level Content Area	Adopted Curriculum	Materials Reviewed
<b>K-5 English language arts and Spanish language arts</b>	Savvas ReadyGEN	Pacing Guides (Rev. Feb. 2021); Program Handbook; Instructional Guide; Leveled Text Level Guide
<b>6-8 English language arts</b>	Savvas myPerspectives	Pacing Guides (Rev. Feb. 2021)
<b>K-5 Math</b>	Math Learning Center Bridges	Pacing Guides (Rev. Feb. 2021)
<b>6-8 Math</b>	Savvas enVision	Pacing Guides (Rev. Feb. 2021)
<b>6-8 Social Studies</b>	TCI History Alive!	Not Reviewed
<b>K-5 Music</b>	Quaver	Contributing Author list; Universal Song List; NCCAS Music Standard Crosswalk

#### Key Findings:

- **Adoption of Curriculum in Core Content Areas.** Since coming to the district four years ago, the Assistant Superintendent has led a process for adoption of a Math curriculum at the Middle School level (Envision 2.0) and in grades K-5 (Bridges); ELA curriculum at the Middle School level (Pearson); and Social Studies at the Middle School level (TCI – History Alive).

The selection committee consisted of at least one teacher from every school and teachers from every grade level in the district. The committee reviewed curriculum options in Mathematics, ELA, and Social Studies. The rubrics provided to the selection team evaluate the consistency of curriculum in terms of the following:

- instructional practices
- alignment to standards

- quality content
- assessment
- technology
- diversity and multicultural perspective
- opportunities for differentiation
- usability

Perception by district staff about the way a curriculum is selected can influence whether it is taught with fidelity. Even among stakeholders who reported that the review committee was representative of teachers and administrators across the district, there were concerns about the lack of representative texts and the lack of flexibility for teachers to trade or add texts to present multiple perspectives and voices. The PCG team received feedback that the selection committee for curricular materials is perceived to be limited to a small number of teachers and leaders instead of being open to volunteers. There were also comments about the rubric as one that favors Savvas (Pearson) over other, potentially more representative curriculum, but that was not consistent with PCG's review of the rubrics provided.

- **Acquisition of Culturally Relevant, Authentic Text Resources.** The district recently purchased considerable texts for teachers to incorporate. Teacher committees will begin reviewing texts during summer 2021 to connect them to units and lessons for the 2021-22 school year. With ongoing professional learning to support teachers as they utilize the new resources, there is an opportunity to strengthen student engagement.
- **ReadyGEN.** Pearson (Savvas) ReadyGEN, for both monolingual and dual language programs is aligned to state standards for ELA. The adoption of a standards-aligned curriculum is a critical component of increasing student academic success and moving toward addressing opportunity gaps among students of color and students who are English learners. According to Ed Reports, ReadyGen “Meets Expectations” in both usability and alignment across all grade levels, K-6.<sup>24</sup>

In a review of the Scope & Sequence, Pacing Guides, and Trade Book List for ReadyGEN, the PCG team found some inclusive texts offered as options for engaging in the unit. However, the included texts and authors were:

- Majority white (European, non-Hispanic or Latinx) authors
- Selected by a team of contributing writers for the curriculum which was also comprised of mostly white teachers.

The following table contains information about texts for grades 3 and 4, which are the two levels at which the scope and sequence indicates there are the most included elements to build cultural awareness. However, among the books' main characters and authors, there is limited cultural representation with authenticity (i.e., even characters representing racial, ethnic, or national diversity and diverse lived experiences have been written and developed by mainly white/non-Hispanic/European authors).

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<sup>24</sup> EdReports.org. (2016). ReadyGEN (2016) - Series Overview. EdReports. <https://www.edreports.org/reports/overview/readygen-2016>.

**Exhibit 21. Texts for Grades 3 and 4**

Grade Level, Unit	Book Title	Main Character Ethnicity/Race	Author – Ethnicity/Race
Grade 3 - Unit 1	The Case of the Gasping Garbage	White	White
Grade 3 - Unit 1	Treasure in the Trees	Asian	Chinese
Grade 3 - Unit 1	About Earth	N/A (Character is a robot)	White
Grade 3 - Unit 2	The Year of Miss Agnes	Alaskan Native and White	White
Grade 3 - Unit 2	The Song of Sky and Sand	Black/African American	White
Grade 3 - Unit 2	Deep Down and Other Extreme Places to Live	N/A (informational text)	Asian
Grade 3 - Unit 3	Storm in the Night	Black/African American	White
Grade 3 - Unit 3	Weather	N/A (informational text)	White
Grade 3 - Unit 3	Living Through a Natural Disaster	N/A (informational text)	Unknown
Grade 3 - Unit 4	Brave Girl	White	White
Grade 3 - Unit 4	Below Deck: A Titanic Story	White	White
Grade 3 - Unit 4	What is Governemnt?	N/A (informational text)	White
Grade 4 - Unit 1	Science Squad: Porpoises in Peril	Multi Racial (Black/African American, Asian)	Black/African American
Grade 4 - Unit 1	Mary Anning: The Girl Who Cracked Open the World	White	White
Grade 4 - Unit 1	Skeletons Inside and Out	N/A (informational science text)	White
Grade 4 - Unit 2	Why the Sea is Salty	Asian	White
Grade 4 - Unit 2	Three Native Nations	Native American	White
Grade 4 - Unit 2	The Longest Night	Native American	White
Grade 4 - Unit 3	Earthquakes	N/A (informational science text)	White
Grade 4 - Unit 3	Anatomy of a Volcanic Eruption	N/A (informational science text)	N/A
Grade 4 - Unit 3	A Tsuanmi Unfolds	N/A (informational text)	White
Grade 4 - Unit 4	Lunch Money	White	White
Grade 4 - Unit 4	Using Money	N/A (informational text)	N/A
Grade 4 - Unit 4	A Tale of Two Poggles	N/A	White
<b>N/A indicates no main character in an informational text or non-human character.</b>			
<b>Unknown denotes that the ethnicity/race of the author could not be determined or was not known.</b>			

- **ELA.** Parents and student focus group participants shared that they do not feel the district's curriculum is inclusive or representative of diverse identities as it could be. The district has voiced a commitment to adopting texts across the ELA curriculum for all grades, particularly in the dual language program, that are authentic and representative, including, characters that represent different cultural views, literary texts that are written by culturally diverse authors, and stories depict diverse characters in a variety of roles that are not exclusively tied to oppression or struggle.
- **Music.** Quaver Music curriculum is aligned to NCCAS Music Standards, with a crosswalk available for grades K-6. The Quaver crosswalk document allows for ease of vertical articulation from Kindergarten through sixth grade to ensure that students are building on emerging music skills and acquiring knowledge that will allow for transition into advancing levels of music performance.

Some of the songs on the Quaver Music list contain language or are tied to historical racial stereotypes (several selections contain archaic terms or slurs referring to people of color), so teacher choice is of particular importance here. NSSD 112 teachers have been given the option of choosing from this list or using other resources, including more contemporary options. Having this option reduces the likelihood that problematic or inauthentic songs are used in lessons. Other findings about the Quaver Music list include:

- limited options relevant to multi-faith, multi-cultural students and families.
- contributing authors and music specialists who led curriculum development were majority white (European, non-Hispanic or Latinx).
- holiday selections represent primarily Christian holidays, with one selection each for “Native American Thanksgiving” and “Kwanzaa.”
- A closer review of the list of selections titled “Native American” is needed to determine historical and cultural appropriateness.

Quaver Music recently updated their website and posted a list of songs that were removed from most resources, at the urging of a newly formed Equity Committee. However, songs containing racially harmful themes and language are still available for certain states.<sup>25</sup>

- **Cultural Inclusivity.** Several stakeholders mentioned the lack of material taught about both Black History and Hispanics Heritage Months. Some perceived that the district prioritizes the teaching of certain cultures and histories over others, neglecting to recognize holidays celebrated by members of the community. Parents and students mentioned an interest in having the curriculum be more inclusive of LGBTQIA+ identities and histories as well.

## INSTRUCTION

### *Research-based Best Practices*

An equitable curriculum is both standards driven and culturally relevant. Standards are designed to provide students with the skills and knowledge they need in order to be successful in college or careers once they leave school. The Illinois Learning Standards and Instruction are now being measured through the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR). For students to succeed on the IAR, the curriculum must be aligned with the standards that are tested. However, for students to connect to these standards, the curriculum needs to be interesting and relevant to the student. Culturally responsive instruction is not about focusing on holidays or special events, such as Martin Luther King Jr. Day or Black History Month, but rather focusing on the current culture lived by students throughout the entire school year, including their family, heritage, and history. Researchers such as Gloria Ladson-Billings, Geneva Gay, and Sonia Nieto have found that when standards are taught in a culturally relevant way, students are more likely to learn the curriculum.<sup>26</sup>

Strategies that develop equitable teaching skills build educators’ ability to support each student’s individualized learning needs. Specifically, teachers acquire skills that improve their instructional delivery such as differentiation, effective strategies for connecting material to student culture, and cooperative learning. Moreover, educators acquire learning strategies that help them engage and support all students, such as presenting content from multiple perspectives/voices, providing opportunities for independent exploration, and incorporating student choice.

<sup>25</sup> QuaverEd. (2020) *Resources Removed from Library*. <https://www.quavered.com/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>

<sup>26</sup> Linton, C.W. (2011). *Equity 101- The Equity Framework*. Thousand Oaks. CA. SAGE Publications.

In Geneva Gay's book, Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice, she defines culturally relevant pedagogy as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant to and effective for them; it teaches to and through strengths of these students."<sup>27</sup> Culturally Responsive Teaching looks at differences as an asset rather than a deficit.

Gay describes culturally responsive teaching as having these characteristics:

- Acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups.
- Builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences.
- Uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.
- Teaches students to know and praise their own and each other's cultural heritages.
- Incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools.<sup>28</sup>

PCG reviewed NSSD 112's approach to pedagogy through the lens of culturally responsive teaching. PCG was unable to view in-person instruction for this audit due to restrictions from COVID-19. As such, most data came from focus groups, interviews, and the document review. PCG included questions regarding pedagogy for the professional staff and requested documents focused on instructional practices.

### *Key Findings*

- **Instructional Coach Program.** NSSD 112 has developed a new Instructional Coaching Program with seven instructional coaches that work with teachers in all schools in the 2020-21 school year.<sup>29</sup> According to the Office of Teaching and Learning, implementing the instructional coaching program is beneficial to supporting teachers' instructional practices. Coaches dispatched from the district can ensure a districtwide approach to communication and consistency across buildings. Administration shared that an additional coach has been hired for 2021-22 school year.
- **Instructional Framework.** The district has developed an Instructional Framework based on Dr. Robert Marzano's research. This framework is grounded in research and is used in states and districts throughout the country. The framework was presented to teachers in February 2020 before the pandemic closed schools. Since teachers have only had an overview of the program, there is a plan in place to provide additional professional development focused on Marzano's Instructional Framework during the 2021-22 school year. It should be noted that while there are elements in Marzano's framework with a vague reference to equity such as Element 39, Understanding Students' Background and Interest,<sup>30</sup> generally the framework does not have a strong equity component.
- **Lack of Culturally Responsive Practices.** There is no written guidance or targeted professional development from the district on what culturally responsive teaching practices should look like. Moreover, the Marzano Framework does not show a strong connection to culturally responsive teaching practices as it is currently being implemented in NSSD 112. All professional staff members who participated in interviews and focus groups shared a belief that culturally responsive practices were not being implemented with consistency, or in some cases at all.

<sup>27</sup> Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. New York, Teachers College Press.

<sup>28</sup> Linton, C.W. (2011). *Equity 101- The Equity Framework*. Thousand Oaks, CA. SAGE Publications.

<sup>29</sup> Instructional Coaches count, by school year: 2018-19 (0); 2019-20 (5); 2020-21 (7); 2021-2022 (8).

<sup>30</sup> Marzano, R. (2017). *The New Art and Science of Teaching*. Bloomington, IN. Solution Tree Press.

- High Expectations.** Throughout the interviews and focus groups, both administrators and teachers discussed the impact of teachers' low expectations for students of color, which was described as a *pobrecito* mindset. Dr. Pedro Noguera describes the term as the 'pobrecito syndrome'. He defines it as, "those who lower expectations as a form of sympathy for disadvantaged students, effectively sending the message that children of color will never measure up to white students and the achievement gap will never be closed."<sup>31</sup> In order to ensure every student meets their learning goals and is prepared to be college and career ready, teachers must have high expectations for all their students, including students of color. If opportunity gaps are to be closed, setting lower expectations will not close the gap.
- Instructional Flexibility.** In focus groups, teachers expressed frustration that due to the curriculum pacing guides, they have limited flexibility to incorporate various instructional strategies or additional resources that reflect the cultural differences of their students. Teachers asserted that some content requires extra time to differentiate instruction to build context and introduce new concepts that students may not have experienced within their own culture. Some teachers shared that when planning for instruction, they may add additional resources to support their students' learning that has not been provided by the district. Moreover, differentiating instruction or including additional materials may impact their ability to stay aligned with the pacing guide.
- Walkthrough Tools.** Currently, there is not a district created walkthrough tool for school leaders to use as a guide when informally visiting classrooms. Walkthrough tools should include specific "look-fors" pertaining to instructional practices with a lens towards culturally responsive practices. Without a walkthrough tool, leaders determine individually where the priorities should be and what instructional focus areas are a priority.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### *Research-based Best Practices*

Effective professional development enables educators to develop the knowledge and skills they need to address students' learning challenges within a school or district. To be effective, professional development requires thoughtful planning followed by careful implementation that includes feedback to ensure it responds to educators' learning needs. Educators who participate in professional development then must be expected to apply their new knowledge and skills to the work of teaching and learning.<sup>32</sup>

Defining and designing effective professional learning opportunities for educators is vital to the effective classroom implementation of new knowledge, skills and strategies that lead to increased learning for students. Professional learning when designed well, is typically interactive, sustained and customized to a teacher's needs. It encourages teachers to take responsibility for their own learning and to practice what they are learning in their own teaching contexts. Conferences, the one- or two-day professional learning planned prior to school, and one-shot workshops are good opportunities for awareness, connecting educators to the latest in research or to introduce new knowledge and strategies, but they cannot change practice in the classroom.<sup>33</sup>

Moreover, professional development opportunities within schools and districts still often ignores discussions about culturally responsive practices. Professional development is more than ensuring that educators

<sup>31</sup> Cepeda, E.J. (August 10, 2013). "In education, a 'pobrecito syndrome'". *The Salt Lake Tribune*. <https://archive.sltrib.com/article.php?id=56717963&itype=CMSID>.

<sup>32</sup> Mayes, H. (2010). *Why Professional Development Matters*. Oxford, Ohio, Learning Forward.

<sup>33</sup> Missouri Professional Learning Guidelines for Student Success. (2020). Retrieved from: <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/Professional-Learning-Guidelines-section-4-with-cover.pdf>

receive the technical skills, such as creating lesson plans, developing assessments, implementing instructional strategies, necessary to function in the classroom.<sup>34</sup> Educators must also acquire a foundational understanding of equity-oriented practices by developing and cultivating critical consciousness and critically reflecting on their professional growth and practice in order to create effective learning opportunities for each student. Equity oriented practices are those which critically examine all aspects of the learning environment including educators' beliefs and attitudes about difference as well as instructional practices and materials.<sup>35</sup>

In December 2020, Learning Forward updated their Standards for Professional Learning.<sup>36</sup> The standards have embedded equity throughout their new framework. Specifically, they include as a condition of success and as a transformational process:

- **Equity Foundations:** “Educators establish a vision for equitable access to high-quality professional learning, create structures to ensure such access, and sustain a culture that supports the development of all staff members;” and
- **Equity Drivers:** “Educators reflect individually and collectively to identify and address their own biases, support and collaborate with diverse colleagues, and cultivate beliefs, knowledge, and behaviors that accelerate ambitious outcomes for all educators and students.”

As a national leader in setting standards for professional learning, Learning Forward has created the expectation that equity must be a foundation and driver for all professional learning in schools and districts throughout the country. Moreover, the Illinois State Board of Education adopted new Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards<sup>37</sup> to prepare future educators to teach diverse students. ISBE's Diverse and Learner Ready Teacher (DLRT) Network developed the standards, which educator preparation programs in colleges and universities will integrate into their course content and field experiences by October 2025. Forward looking districts will begin aligning their own professional development to the new standards to support the new teacher workforce entering their district. The new Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Standards include:

- Self-reflect and gain a deeper understanding of how their life experiences affect their perspectives.
- Understand that systems in our society create and reinforce inequities.
- Learn from and about their students' cultures, languages, and learning styles to make instruction more meaningful and relevant to their students' lives.
- Value students' feedback and leadership.
- Support and create opportunities for student advocacy.
- Develop relationships with families and the community.
- Curate the curriculum to include and represent a wide spectrum of identities.
- Ensure the diversity of the student population is represented within the broader learning environment.

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<sup>34</sup> Bay, U., & Macfarlane, S. (2011). “Teaching critical reflection: A tool for transformative learning in social work.” *Social Work Education*, 30(7), 745-748.

<sup>36</sup> Learning Forward. (2020). *Revised Standards for Professional Learning Discussion Draft*. <https://learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/standards-dec5-draft.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Illinois State Board of Education. (2020). *Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards for All Educators*. <https://www.isbe.net/Lists/News/NewsDisplay.aspx?ID=1349>.

Developing a plan for effective professional learning begins with the analysis of student achievement data to define student learning needs and then identifying the teacher knowledge and skills required to address those needs. Teacher professional learning outcomes are defined in terms of improved professional practice, but the long-term goals focus on improved student achievement targets.<sup>38</sup> An effective districtwide professional development plan should identify the data-driven student learning needs, the evidence that supports these identified student needs, and the adult learning needs that will enable educators to support student success in meeting these needs. Long-term professional development plans for district, building and individual plans should be aligned and focused on student learning outcomes supported by improved educator practice.

An effective districtwide professional development plan<sup>39</sup> includes the following:

1. Identifies student and educator learning needs.
2. Specifies who will benefit from the professional learning.
3. Identifies learning outcomes, benchmarks, and observable/measurable evidence of change in teacher practice and student learning.
4. Specifies the learning opportunities and sustained follow-up planned to support implementation (at the district and building level, plans should include the differentiated learning opportunities that will be offered for educators).
5. Identifies resources needed to support the professional learning; and
6. Identifies how professional learning will be evaluated.

### Key Findings

- **Professional Development Calendar Days.** Each year, the NSSD 112 school calendar inserts teacher professional development days (institutes) to support teacher and leader professional growth. In addition, early release days are also built into the calendar. By setting aside uninterrupted time into the calendar, the district assures that professional learning opportunities are available for all professional staff.
- **Instructional Framework Professional Development.** NSSD 112 has entered into an agreement with the Marzano Group to provide professional development during the 2021-22 school year. All school staff received an overview training of the Framework during February 2020, but further trainings were sidelined due to the pandemic and the subsequent school closures. Upcoming trainings for the 2021-22 school year include:
  - **Onsite Professional Learning** (2 days) for building leadership, Teaching and Learning department, and Instructional Coaches.
  - **Site-Based Coaching** (3 days) for Teaching and Learning department, building leadership, and Instructional Coaches.
  - **High Reliability Teacher Certification Course** for 3 teachers per K-8 building (27 total).

<sup>38</sup> Yoon, K. S., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W.-Y., Scarloss, B., & Shapley, K. (2007). *Reviewing the evidence on how teacher professional development affects student achievement (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007–No. 033)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

<sup>39</sup> Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2020). *Missouri Professional Learning Guidelines for Student Success*.

- **Flexible Internal Professional Development to Support Schools.** The staff in the Office of Teaching and Learning provides on-going, flexible professional development supports based on requests by school administrators. When principals reach out to the office with a training need within their school, the office staff are responsive by developing a training to address the area of need. At times, the training is so well received that other schools make a request to receive the training as well.
- **Instructional Coaches' Training.** This year Instructional Coaches began training on Jon Saphier's Research for Better Teaching (RBT) program<sup>40</sup> which provides protocols to help teachers with instructional planning; creating learning targets; and designing common assessments to determine interventions and shifts in instruction. With the need being great to support equity, including culturally responsive teaching practices as part of the coaches' training would add significant value to the teaching staff.
- **Professional Development Opportunities.** Due to COVID-19, professional development opportunities, other than the Orange Frog training, have been limited during the 2020-21 school year. While that is understandable and a trend nationally, professional development opportunities focused on equity were very limited before the school closures began in the spring of 2020. There have been successful book studies, but both teachers and leaders shared that there was a great need for more training focused on equity. In addition, when teachers look for additional training outside the district, focus group participants shared a wide held belief that receiving approval to attend training outside the school district was dependent on school leadership and in many instances, staff felt they were discouraged from pursuing. One staff member shared that "we need a plan of action, training, and support. We know there are many problems, we just don't know how to go about naming them and taking action."
- **Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices Training.** There is not an explicit effort to provide training on culturally responsive practices, equity, implicit bias, and courageous conversations about race. Every focus group involving school and district staff shared the need for training on equity and equitable practices. Leaders added that they needed focused training on how to coach teachers as well as how to hold difficult conversations with their staff both individually and as a group on issues around racial equity and bias.
- **Instructional Framework's Connection to Equity.** Training in support of the new Instructional Framework is planned for the upcoming year. Teachers trained on the framework shared that having a framework is a good start, but there needs to be more support for ensuring that their lesson plans and instructional practices are informed through an equity lens. Without specific training in that area, there is a missed opportunity to ensure the alignment between the Instructional Framework and Culturally Responsive Teaching practices. The Instructional Framework Implementation Plan for the 2021-22 school year provided an overview of the training with the implementation plan focused on training leadership, coaches, and exemplar teachers. The learning goals for the training include the following:
  - **Goals:**
    - Support implementation of the [Instructional Framework](#).
    - Develop teacher leaders.

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<sup>40</sup> Saphier, J. (1997). "Research for Better Teaching." [www.rbteach.com](http://www.rbteach.com).

- Implement an “instructional rounds” process that emphasizes feedback and instructional growth.
- **Professional Learning Standards:**<sup>41</sup>
  - Standard 1: Learning Communities: Committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
  - Standard 5: Learning Designs: Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
  - Standard 6: Implementation: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

As noted, there is no reference to equity or culturally responsive teaching practices in either the goals or the professional learning standards for this upcoming year-long district training.

## DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Access to high-quality, rigorous instruction, aimed at developing English language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, writing), supporting biliteracy, and preserving connection to students’ home language and culture, is essential to the success of those students who receive EL services. For 25 years, the Dual Language Program (DLP) in NSSD 112, has been part of the district’s academic options for diverse learners. The program has grown from its beginnings in a single classroom and is now offered at three district schools: Oak Terrace and Red Oak Elementary Schools, and Northwood Middle School.

1,386 students are enrolled in the program; 580 of whom are classified as English Learners.

DLP serves **emerging bilingual** students, which includes:

- **simultaneous bilinguals**, meaning students who have been exposed to two languages since birth, and
- **sequential bilinguals**, referring to students whose linguistic foundations developed in one language, then another is added.

For the purpose of this audit, the PCG team reviewed the **Dual Language Framework, English Learner Program Guidelines** document, and the revised pacing guides for ELA at all grade levels K-8.

Students and their families may elect to participate in the Dual Language program if, at the time they enter the district:

- The Home Language Survey indicates a language other than English is spoken in the home;
- Results of English Language Proficiency assessment(s) qualify students for EL support;
- Student speaks Spanish and family accepts EL services;
- AND the Dual Language program has space available.

For students who speak a language other than Spanish in the home, ESL supports are provided at all of the attendance area schools for PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade.

DLP teachers are required to be licensed and must have an EL endorsement.

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<sup>41</sup> Learning Forward. (2011). *Standards for Professional Learning*. <https://learningforward.org/standards>.

With multiple models for dual language instruction and support, districts need to identify the best option for providing necessary supports for their students who are ELs, particularly for students in Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. The DLP uses a two-way immersion model, which is a method of instructing classes in which about half of the students are English learners and the remaining students are Spanish learners.<sup>42</sup> <sup>43</sup> As part of the two-way immersion framework, DLP students in grades K-5 receive instruction in equal blocks of Spanish and English. As they transition to Middle School, students receive 30% of their content instruction in Spanish. Four years ago, the DLP made the shift from a 90-10 linguistic block schedule to the current 50-50 model. (Parents and families reported in focus groups that the previous model was 80-20.) The goal was to increase academic outcomes for students of color.

Instruction is designed around three instructional pillars: bilingualism (biliteracy), academic achievement, and intercultural competence. Students in the program increase knowledge across all four domains (reading, writing, speaking, listening) in core content areas, while learning in an environment with peers from diverse backgrounds. There is also an emphasis in the NSSD 112 program on preserving the students' connection to their home language as they are becoming biliterate. Research involving the study of students in two-way dual-immersion programs shows that EL students show faster academic growth than their peers who are enrolled in monolingual programs for learning English.<sup>44</sup>

In the Dual Language Framework, NSSD 112 references a Thomas and Collier article, which found that the dual language model is the most effective way to deliver ESL services to Spanish-speaking English learners.<sup>45</sup>

### Key Findings

The intentional focus of the DLP on those students that are learning English, rather than prioritizing decisions and changes that favor students who are learning Spanish, is reported to have strengthened the program's impact on academic outcomes for ELs. While the DLP provides a unique academic opportunity to support emerging bilingual students in both Spanish and English languages, there are issues that were recurring themes among the stakeholder groups PCG convened. These are of critical significance in making sure that students who are linguistically and culturally diverse have equitable access to high-quality instruction and are treated with dignity and respect:

- **Transition from 90-10 to a 50-50 Model.** Part of the DLP intentional focus is the change in how instructional language blocks are scheduled. With the 50-50 model, it was reported that the DLP has seen an increase in exit rates (the number of students achieving sufficient English language proficiency to no longer qualify for EL support services). It was reported to us that there has also been some growth in NWEA MAP scores, as well.
- **The Bridge.** The dual-immersion framework provides students with instruction in ELA in three spaces: Spanish, English, and the Bridge. This Bridge is the block of instruction between whole-class English instruction and whole-class Spanish instruction. The activities during this period not only build biliteracy and bilingualism, but also target metalanguage and metalinguistic analysis (e.g., cross linguistic transfer), which is a critical skill for students to understand the relationship

<sup>42</sup> Burkhauser, S., Steele, J. L., Li, J., Slater, R. O., Bacon, M., & Miller, T. (2016). "Partner language learning trajectories in dual-language immersion: Evidence from an urban district." *Foreign Language Annals*, 49(3), 415-433.  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/flan.12218/full>

<sup>43</sup> : Espinosa, Linda M. (2015). "Challenges and benefits of early bilingualism in the Unites States' context." *Global Education Review*, 2(1), 14-31.

<sup>44</sup> Burkhauser, S., Steele, J. L., Li, J., Slater, R. O., Bacon, M., & Miller, T. (2016). "Partner language learning trajectories in dual-language immersion: Evidence from an urban district." *Foreign Language Annals*, 49(3), 415-433. Available at  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/flan.12218/full>

<sup>45</sup> Collier, V. P. & Thomas, W. P. (2004) "The Astounding Effectiveness of Dual Language Education for All." *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, 2(1), 1-20.

between English and Spanish. Students become bilingual learners, with elements of both languages involved in linguistic processes.

- **Engagement from families of linguistically diverse students.** The PCG team heard from stakeholders and staff that, in the early days of the Dual Language Program, there was a noticeable lack of representation for families of students of color among parent volunteers and at school events. The overrepresentation of white (non-Hispanic or Latinx) parent volunteers, while at least half of enrolled students are Spanish speakers and students of color, was reducing opportunities for other families to participate. Staff reported that, historically in the DLP, events were planned with little or no input from families of students who are learning English and were not reflective of the cultural diversity of students in the program. As the program has grown, the focus has been on providing opportunities for families of students who are Spanish speakers to lead planning of events and communicating event details in Spanish and English, engaging the community in celebrations reflecting multiple cultures (e.g., holidays, observances), and inviting family members to share their experiences in classrooms.
- **Program demand.** The program is reported to be in high demand from parents of Spanish learners (native English speakers) as an opportunity to engage with diverse students and as a quality program. PCG heard from stakeholders and staff that the DLP is highly sought-after as a program option for students and their families. Because of this, there is typically a waiting list each year for Spanish learners to be enrolled in the program.
- **Maintaining Spanish fluency for English Learners.** DLP goals and framework include an emphasis on the importance of maintaining students' connection to their home language and culture by ensuring Spanish fluency increases alongside the emergence of English fluency and literacy. This also helps to instill in English Learners a sense of pride in their home language, where English is seen as an added and necessary skill, rather than a replacement or superior skill to Spanish language literacy and fluency.
- **Perception of DLP school sites as “less desirable” for some families.** Within the district, some parents – from all schools, not just those with a DLP– reported that Oak Terrace and Red Oak are seen as low performing schools, with poor academic outcomes for students of color as well as white students. Some staff who are not at a DLP school indicated that the DLP schools are perceived as the places where most of the district's discipline problems occur.
- **Perception of DLP as “segregation” by the district.** From the focus group conversations, it is also a widely held perception that the DLP “pulls diversity” away from other buildings in the district. Though the need for dual language instruction is accepted, there were complaints by primarily white (non-Hispanic or Latinx) parents that the other district schools had no diversity. Both Oak Terrace and Red Oak feed into Northwood Middle School, which means that Northwood continues to be more ethnically diverse than other district schools.
- **Cultural competence and culturally responsive practices.** Teacher certification for supporting English learners does not guarantee that students will be treated equitably in the classroom. PCG heard concerns from parents, staff, and students about English learners being disciplined differently and experiencing microaggressions from teachers.
- **Diversity among teaching staff.** This is also discussed elsewhere in this report. With respect to the DLP, the majority of linguistically diverse students of Hispanic or Latinx ethnicity are enrolled at these sites, while the majority of teachers are white (non-Hispanic or Latinx). This raises concerns from parents and other staff that:

- The majority of students do not see people that share similar lived experiences or home-culture experiences in their classrooms.
- Students are being instructed by teachers who are Spanish learners, and the learned Spanish may differ (to varying degrees) from what students have learned at home. This concern was raised by parents in particular.
- **Resources for culturally and linguistically responsive instruction.** Focus group participants raised two concerns related to the curricular materials and resources for the DLP:
  - Texts are not representative of students lived cultural experiences, too frequently depict BIPOC in deficit circumstances, and do not come from a representative list of authors.
  - Texts for English and Spanish language instruction are not inclusive of texts that originate in Spanish. Students in the DLP are instructed from either English texts or texts that have been translated into Spanish.
- **Student academic progress.** Students in the DLP are performing, on average, below their district peers. Focus group participants across stakeholders expressed concern that there are low expectations for students enrolled in DLP. In addition, PCG heard from district staff at multiple levels that the DLP is not providing adequate support for English learners to be successful in middle and high school. On the 2019 IAR 5th Grade ELA test, 14% of ELs scored proficient at Red Oak, 8 % of ELs scored proficient at Oak Terrace.

## 7. CULTURE AND CLIMATE

**Guiding Question: To what extent are the culture and climate of NSSD 112 welcoming and supportive of all students and families?**

### *Research-based Best Practices*

District and school culture and climate play a critical role in setting the tone for how students, families, and staff are included and welcomed in the community. According to the National School Climate Center, “School climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.”<sup>46</sup>

A positive school climate impacts all community members. Numerous research studies have demonstrated the association between a positive learning environment and greater student achievement, social emotional well-being, students' sense of agency, and students' sense of connection to the school community. In positive learning environments, teachers are more empowered and have a greater sense of efficacy in their roles.<sup>47</sup> Creating and sustaining a positive school climate also involves engaging parents and families of all racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, helping them feel connected to the community in culturally and linguistically inclusive ways.<sup>48</sup>

A synthesis of the literature on school climate highlights several practices that are essential to sustaining a positive school climate that promotes equity, including:

- Open and inclusive communication accessible to all community members (students, families, and staff).
- Employing an asset-based view of diversity.<sup>49</sup>
- Proactive culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement practices and partnerships.<sup>50</sup>
- Supportive, reciprocal relationships (between teachers and students, teachers and their peers, and students and their peers).<sup>51</sup>
- Institutional structures, norms, and expectations in place to sustain a positive school climate.<sup>52</sup>
- Use of restorative disciplinary practices.<sup>53</sup>

PCG considered these evidence-based components in our analysis of interview and focus group data and as measured through the Illinois 5Essentials Survey<sup>54</sup> and the district-administered climate survey when reviewing the culture and climate in NSSD 112's schools and in the system overall. Data from the

<sup>46</sup> National School Climate Center. (n.d.) “What is school climate and why is it important?” <https://www.schoolclimate.org/school-climate> “

<sup>47</sup> Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D' Alessandro, A. (2013). “A Review of School Climate Research.” *Review of Educational Research*, 83(3), 357-385.

<sup>48</sup> Mapp, K.L. & Bergman, E. (2019) Dual capacity-building framework for family -school partnerships (Version 2). Retrieved from: [www.dualcapacity.org](http://www.dualcapacity.org)

<sup>49</sup> Hyler, M.E, Carver-Thomas, D, Wechsler, M & Willis, L. (2020). *Districts Advancing Racial Equity (DARE) Tool*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. [https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/RELN\\_DARE\\_TOOL.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/RELN_DARE_TOOL.pdf)

<sup>50</sup> Mapp & Bergman, (2019) and Thapa, A et al. (2013).

<sup>51</sup> Thapa, A et al. (2013)

<sup>52</sup> Darling-Hammond, L., & Cook-Harvey, C. M. (2018). “Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute; Bryk, A.S and Schneider, B. (2003). Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for School Reform.” *Educational Leadership*. 60 (6), p 40-45 Retrieved from: [Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for School Reform - Educational Leadership \(ascd.org\)](https://www.ascd.org/Portals/0/PDF-FILES/Trust_in_Schools_A_Core_Resource_for_School_Reform_-_Educational_Leadership_(ascd.org).pdf)

<sup>53</sup> Hyler, et. al. (2020)

<sup>54</sup> Developed by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research and administered in Illinois school systems and others nationally since 1991.

5Essentials Survey provided by the state can be disaggregated by race/ethnicity. District-administered survey data were not disaggregated by student demographics. Although there was some variation in response by students of different races/ethnicities within and across schools, survey data are only reported in the aggregate to look at overall themes.

## STUDENTS

### *Key Findings*

- **Engaged Students.** Student focus group participants were engaged and highly vocal about their desire to take charge of their own educational path. They expressed a commitment to equity and a strong desire to engage in culturally responsive, relevant, and inclusive learning. Specifically, they noted interest in learning about historical events that are reflective of diverse communities and experiences, and to have opportunities to discuss relevant issues and current events that matter to them.
- **Students of Color Experiences.** Students of color in focus groups shared that they experienced bullying and hurtful comments (microaggressions) from their peers who made assumptions about their race/ethnicity based on how they looked and talked. Students shared that they would feel more comfortable talking to teachers about their problems if they looked more like them and felt they could relate to their experiences.
- **Social Emotional Supports.** Elementary student focus group participants shared that while their school has a social worker, they did not feel comfortable accessing their services. While this data came from a small sample of students, their response warrants further discovery by the district. This reluctance was universal across all participants.
- **Support and Trust.** In focus groups, elementary students shared that they are comfortable asking teachers for help when they have an academic issue, feel supported by their teachers in an academic setting, and that their teachers extend themselves to help students understand. Student input from the 2019 5Essentials supports these findings for the majority, but also indicate room for improvement: while over 60% of students in every NSSD 112 elementary school felt their school was a Supportive Environment and over 65% of students indicated they believe there is trust between students and teachers, less than 50% of students at both middle schools agreed there is trust between students and teachers.
- **Student Safety and Belonging.** According to the October 2019 district-administered survey, over 70% of students in the district reported feeling safe at school. At the middle school level, about 60% of Northwood students and 61% of Edgewood students reported feeling physically safe at school. According to the 2019 5Essentials Survey, over 50% of students at 6 out of 7 elementary schools reported feeling safe at school. At the middle school level, 50% of students at Edgewood agreed they felt safe at school, while 39% of students at Northwood reported feeling safe, according to the survey.
- **Student Voice.** Students expressed an interest in having opportunities to be heard by staff in their schools. They noted that current opportunities, like student council, were more focused on activities like spirit week and did not offer students a chance to be heard. Among measures of the Choice indicator on the district's survey, district-wide, 38.7% of students agreed with the statement, "I get to choose how I do my assignments and projects," and 36.1% agreed that "I get to make decisions about how I learn in the classroom." A similar proportion (38.2%) agreed with the statement, "My teachers ask me to help create classroom rules of expectations."

- **Extracurricular Opportunities and Participation.** Outside of the classroom, there are many extracurricular activities available for students to choose from across the schools. A review of elementary and middle school websites includes: Homework Club, Book Match, Creative Writing Club, Debate Club, Chess Club, and several sports groups. The availability of these activities appears to differ across buildings. While the school websites have a translation functionality, these activity descriptions are posted in English only (except for winter-season soccer at Northwood Middle School, which is described in Spanish). While there are many school-based opportunities for students to participate in at school, focus group participants noted obstacles to participation including activities that had additional costs or teachers that could not accommodate non-English speakers. District-level data on participation is not collected.

## FAMILIES

### *Key Findings*

- **Parent Engagement with Equity Audit.** Parents were the largest stakeholder group that participated in voluntary focus groups to share their perspectives about equity in NSSD 112. Parents from all schools participated and several engaged with the audit team through multiple focus groups. Their passion and willingness to engage in conversation about their experiences and hopes for the district contributed to enrich the findings for this review. Parent focus group members described their commitment to equity and inclusion and to engaging in a process to improve the approach taken in the district to achieve greater equity.
- **Bilingual Parent Action Committee (BPAC).** The Bilingual Parents Action Committee creates a space for bilingual families and other families with students in the dual language program to come together with the goals of improving bilingual education for their students. School systems that offer Dual Language Programs are required to establish a BPAC comprised of parents of children in the program, district staff, and community members but two-thirds of the membership must be parents of children in the bilingual program whose purpose is to advocate for excellence in all district educational programs for English learners. NSSD 112's BPAC has seen a recent revitalization under the direction of the Director of Languages. This group meets four times per year and is attended by the Superintendent's designee, and a school board member, providing access to district leadership and keeping them aware of BPAC concerns. BPAC has planned and organized multicultural events, including a Latino film night, picnics, and literacy activities. These events have seen engagement from a diverse group of parents and families, including from white (non-Hispanic or Latinx) families.
- **Increasing Multicultural Parent Access and Culturally Responsive Teaching (IMPACT).** IMPACT was started in spring 2020 by a small group of parents to promote greater outreach and access for diverse families. The group serves an advocacy role for students of color and their families to address gaps they see in NSSD 112.
- **Designated Supports for Bilingual Families.** Based on focus groups with parents and other stakeholders, the district's Director of Languages and Family Engagement Specialist are helpful resources for bilingual and non-native English-speaking community members (students and families), especially those who speak Spanish. For example, they help with interpretation and translation of district/school materials. Bilingual staff across all district schools similarly provide valuable support for these families. Given the composition of the district population, stakeholders noted that there is a need for additional staff to provide these services.

- **Translation of District and School Communication.** Despite increasing focus on providing access to district and school events and information, stakeholders commented on continued discrepancies in communication with families whose native language is not English. Overall, they observed inconsistent practice across the district and schools with respect to translation, which many felt creates a barrier to full engagement for families. For example, meetings that allow families to engage in their child’s schooling, such as School Board meetings and PTO meetings, are not translated into Spanish. Others noted that while dual language schools have bilingual staff to support non-native English-speaking families, there are few staff or resources at the other schools that can facilitate communication with families who speak a language other than English.
- **Sense of District Community.** While many families are deeply engaged with their schools through volunteering and fundraising, focus group participants noted that their engagement is focused on individual schools and not on the district as a whole. Although district consolidation took place over 30 years ago, stakeholders referenced divisions within the system that have sustained, in part because of an old district (geographic) boundaries and neighborhood demographics. Focus group participants also observed that the lack of diversity in some schools leads to unawareness to the overall diversity in NSSD 112. The lack of community sense of responsibility contributes to the maintenance of ongoing school-to-school inequities and inequities within schools.
- **Zero-sum Scenario.** Focus group and interview participants described a behavior pattern among many NSSD 112 families that researchers have called a “zero sum scenario” – it is when people perceive resources as finite, and so if students with greater need are provided with greater services or support, there will be less resources available for other, advantaged students.<sup>55</sup> While stakeholders provided many examples, one that emerged earlier this year during remote instruction is illustrative. When staff noticed that a number of students were not attending their online classes, the district offered a solution wherein students with attendance issues were offered supervised online learning at school. Parents were concerned that these students were receiving in-person instruction and advocated for their students to also be let into school. A focus group participant explained, “There’s a population that feels they’re being cheated because they’re not getting something that others are getting – even [if it’s a] misperception about what others are getting.” Stakeholders also identified this type of thinking and behavior within NSSD 112 as “opportunity hoarding” where families maximized their own benefits at the presumed expense of others.
- **Negative Perceptions of Schools and Students.** In parent and staff focus groups, stakeholders commented that some community members hold biased views about different student groups rooted in racial and ethnic stereotypes. Parents and staff offered a range of examples of implicit and explicitly biased statements from [white, affluent] families about district schools based on the racial and ethnic make-up of the student body. Stakeholders report that these families have taken both recent and historic steps to prevent their children from sharing classrooms with peers who come from different backgrounds than themselves, including the referendum vote against a single middle school and possible redrawing of attendance zones for district schools.
- **Overlooking Underrepresented Communities.** Stakeholders shared that the district recognizes two predominant demographic groups: white and Hispanic or Latinx. Community members of other racial and ethnic groups feel that their voices and experiences are not heard or valued in the same way.

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<sup>55</sup> Blankstein, A., Noguera, P., Kelly, L. (2016). *Excellence through equity. Five principles of courageous leadership to guide achievement for every student.* Alexandria, VA, ASCD.

- **Discrepancies in Families' Access.** Staff and families perceived important differences in how the district engages families of diverse backgrounds. While some parent focus group participants noted that they feel very comfortable reaching out to district and school administrators and indicated that they receive quick responses, especially from the superintendent, stakeholders also report that access to the administration and board is variable. They observed that certain families have greater access to and demands for district resources and opportunities because of their privileged identities, including their wealth, race, status as a native-English speaker, and their (generational) knowledge of the public school system.
- **Discrepancies in Family Engagement.** NSSD 112 administers an annual parent survey to monitor parents' perceptions of their schools and the district along dimensions of school environment, safety, student learning, accessibility and performance of school and district staff, and mission. PCG also asked about these topics in focus groups. Overall, the majority of parents report that they feel welcome when they come into their child's school (85% agree/strongly agree).<sup>56</sup> However, in focus groups parents whose first language is not English reported that they do not feel welcome to engage with their school communities, whether serving as parent volunteers or room parents, or joining the PTO. They do not feel included in these opportunities, nor do these activities feel accessible to them.

## DISCIPLINE RATES

### *Research-based Best Practices*

Racial disparities in disciplinary action in U.S. schools have long been documented as well as the co-occurrence with other negative outcomes for students of color.<sup>57</sup> Disciplinary practices affect students' sense of safety, support, and trust in schools which affect their opportunities for success.<sup>58</sup> <sup>59</sup> As school systems seek to improve their overall practices to increase educational equity, the assessment of student misbehavior and its relationship to race/ethnicity is a pressing area of inquiry. Recent research demonstrates that there is "no evidence that students of color engage in rates of disruptive behavior sufficiently different from others to justify higher rates of punishment" and that "school perspectives and practices are among the most powerful predictors" of disproportionality in discipline rates.<sup>60</sup>

The U.S. Department of Education (2014) has created guidance for district and school leaders and stakeholders to promote improvements in school discipline grounded in best practices research. The guidance is organized by three guiding principles and subsequent action steps:

#### **Guiding Principal 1: Create positive climates and focus on prevention.**

##### **Action Steps:**

<sup>56</sup> October 2019, district-administered parent survey.

<sup>57</sup> Gordon, N. (2018). *Disproportionality in Student Discipline: Connecting Policy to Research*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/disproportionality-in-student-discipline-connecting-policy-to-research/>

<sup>58</sup> Skiba, R.J., Horner, R.H., Chung, C., Rausch, M., May, S.L. and Tobin, T. (2019). "Race is Not Neutral: A National Investigation of African American and Latino Disproportionality in School Discipline." *School Psychology Review*. P. 85-107 and Darling-Hammond, L., & Cook-Harvey, C. M. (2018). *Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Department of Education (2014). *Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline*. Washington, D.C., USDOE. <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> Skiba, R.J., Arredondo, M.I., Rausch, M.K. (2014). *New and Developing Research on Disparities in Discipline. Discipline Disparities Research Series*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University March 2014, p. 3. [https://indrc.indiana.edu/tools-resources/pdf-disciplineseries/disparity\\_newresearch\\_full\\_040414.pdf](https://indrc.indiana.edu/tools-resources/pdf-disciplineseries/disparity_newresearch_full_040414.pdf)

1. Engage in deliberate efforts to create positive school climates.
2. Prioritize the use of evidence-based prevention strategies, such as tiered supports.
3. Promote social and emotional learning.
4. Provide regular training and supports to all school personnel.
5. Collaborate with local agencies and other stakeholders.
6. Ensure that any school-based law enforcement officers' roles focus on improving school safety and reducing inappropriate referrals to law enforcement.

**Guiding Principle 2. Develop clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors.**

**Action Steps:**

1. Set high expectations for behavior and adopt an instructional approach to discipline.
2. Involve families, students, and school personnel, and communicate regularly and clearly.
3. Ensure that clear, developmentally appropriate, and proportional consequences apply for misbehavior.
4. Create policies that include appropriate procedures for students with disabilities and due process for all students.
5. Remove students from the classroom only as a last resort, ensure that alternative settings provide academic instruction, and return students to class as soon as possible.

**Guiding Principle 3. Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement.**

**Action Steps:**

1. Train all school staff to apply school discipline policies and practices in a fair and equitable manner.
2. Use proactive, data-driven, and continuous efforts, including gathering feedback from families, students, teachers, and school personnel to prevent, identify, reduce, and eliminate discriminatory discipline and unintended consequences.

A recent REL Northwest report (2019) elaborates a similar set of practices, and emphasizes “leading through collaboration and by example”:

“The policies and actions of school leaders influence school climate, how staff members interact with students, and teachers’ classroom management practices. All stakeholders should have the goal of promoting a welcoming and caring school climate for all students – a major component of which is building and sustaining a culture that embraces diversity (something that requires strong leadership and a shared commitment to equity among all staff members) ... [which also] requires the collaboration and engagement ... of parents and students.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Nishioka, V, Williams, J and Jaffery, Z. (2019) Identifying Strategies to Promote Equity in School Discipline. Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest: April 2019. Retrieved from: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/facilitation-instr-strategies.pdf>, p. 8.

## Key Findings

This Equity and Inclusion Audit examined data on student discipline referrals for minor and major offences at both Edgewood Middle School and Northwood Middle School. PCG did not review elementary level discipline data as it is not collected at the district level.

In school year 2018-19, there was a vast difference between discipline referrals at each school. There were 114 recorded discipline referrals at Edgewood, and 1,003 at Northwood. Discipline referrals for minor offences include disrespect, defiance, tardiness, and inappropriate language. Referrals for major offences included property damage, fighting, harassment, being out of bounds, and tobacco.

### Risk Ratios in Disciplinary Referrals

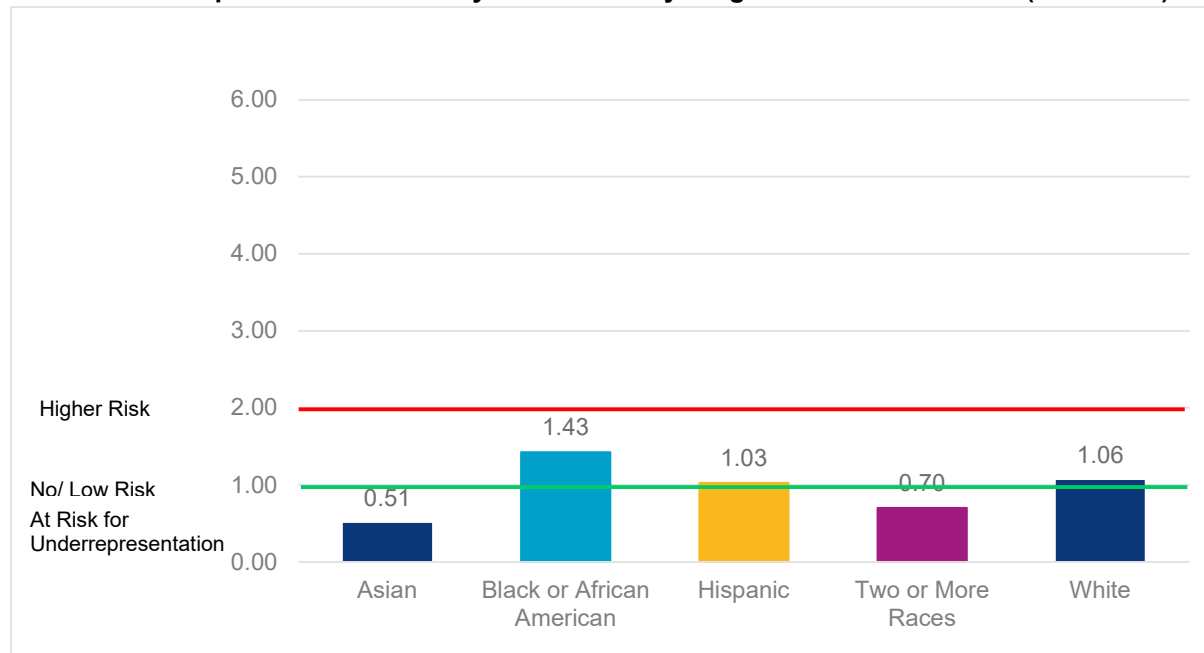
When looking at student discipline as a measure of educational equity, disproportionality occurs when students from one racial, gender, or other demographic subgroup are disciplined at markedly higher rates than their peers. The following data comes from a risk ratio analysis on disciplinary referrals at NSSD 112's two middle schools.

A risk ratio of 1.0 means there is no association between the student's demographic group and their likelihood of receiving a disciplinary referral. A risk ratio of 2.0 or greater indicates a risk of overrepresentation in disciplinary referrals, while a risk ratio of less than 1.0 indicates possible underrepresentation. Student subgroups with fewer than ten (10) students in the school were excluded from this analysis because of the disproportionate impact of a single disciplinary referral for those groups.<sup>62</sup>

### Edgewood Middle School

The following data were retrieved from the file *Edgewood MS SWIS 2016-2020*, provided to PCG by the district, for school year 2018-2019.

#### Exhibit 22. Discipline Referral Risk by Race/Ethnicity: Edgewood Middle School (2018-2019)

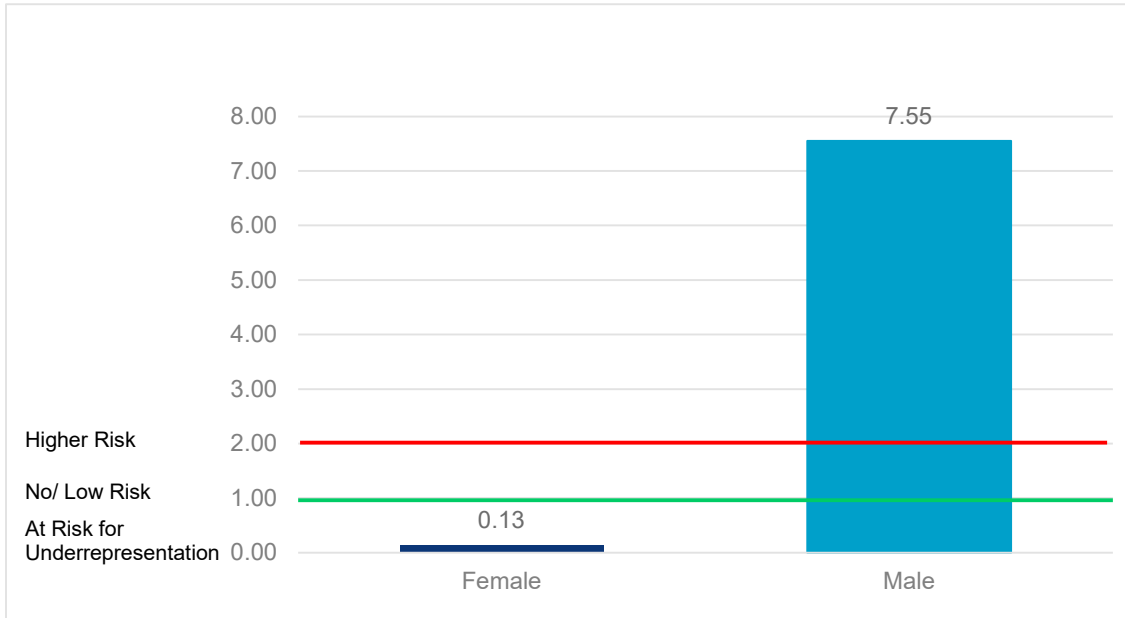


<sup>62</sup> Note: NSSD 112 supplied its own disciplinary risk ratios for Northwood, and due to differences in the treatment of the data there are negligible differences between the two sets of calculations.

**Exhibit 23. Number of Students with Disciplinary Referrals by Race/Ethnicity: Edgewood Middle School (2018-2019)**

Race	All Students	Students with Disciplinary Referrals
Asian	26	1
Black or African American	19	2
Hispanic or Latinx	105	8
Two or More Races	19	1
White	636	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>60</b>

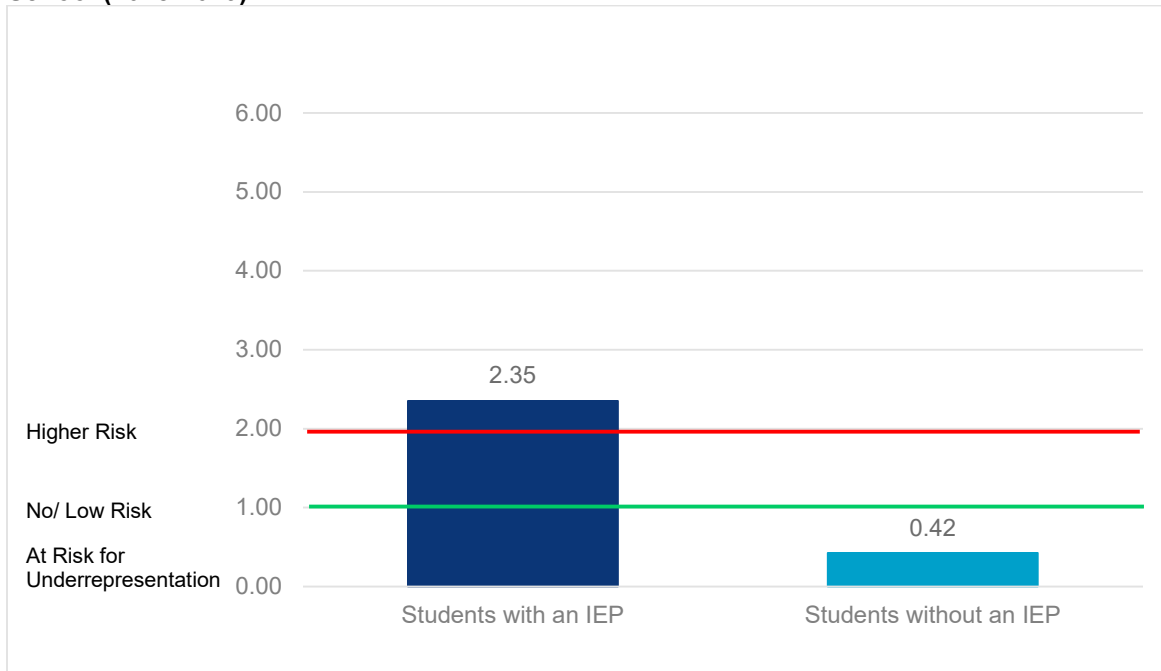
**Exhibit 24. Discipline Referral Risk by Gender: Edgewood Middle School (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 25. Number of Students with Disciplinary Referrals by Gender: Edgewood Middle School (2018-2019)**

Gender	All Students	Students with Disciplinary Referrals
Female	397	7
Male	413	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>62</b>

**Exhibit 26. Number of Students with Disciplinary Referrals by IEP Status: Edgewood Middle School (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 27. Number of Students with Disciplinary Referrals by IEP Status: Edgewood Middle School (2018-2019)**

Gender	All Students	Students with Disciplinary Referrals
Students with an IEP	112	17
Students without an IEP	698	45
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>62</b>

**Analysis: Edgewood Middle School**

At Edgewood Middle School:

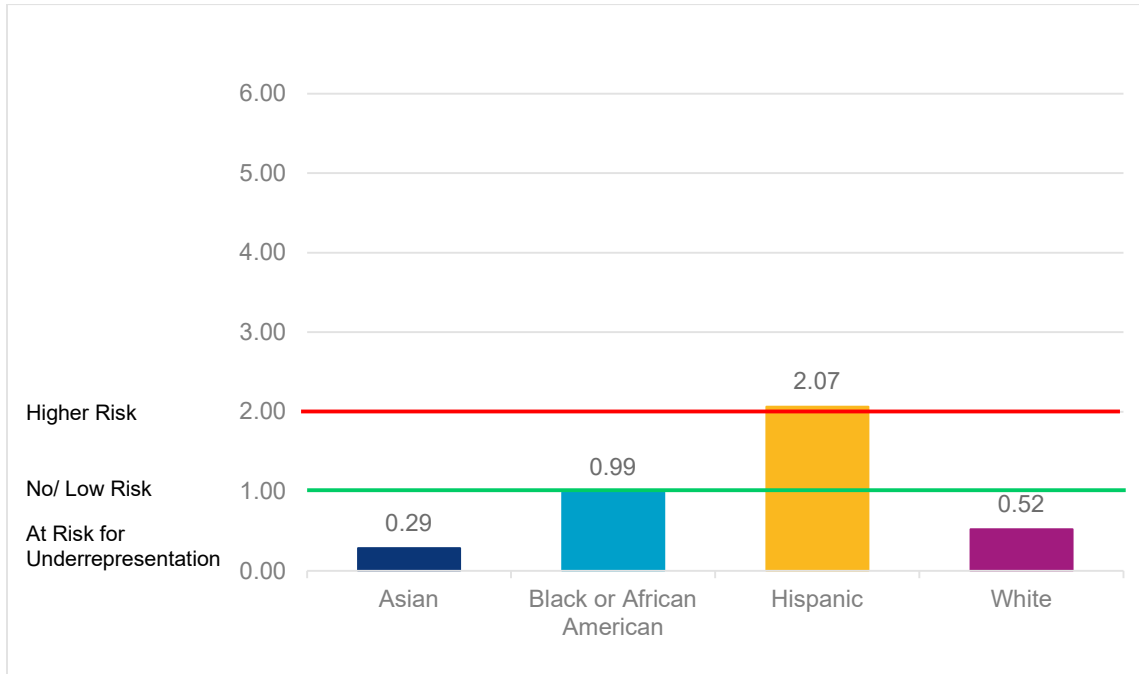
- Students identified as Asian have **0.51 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students identified as Black or African American have **1.43 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students identified as Hispanic or Latinx have **1.03 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students identified as two or more races have **0.70 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students identified as white have **1.06 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Male students have **7.55 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.

- Female students have **0.13 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students who have an IEP have **2.35 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students who do not have an IEP have **0.42 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.

**Northwood Middle School**

The following data was pulled from the file *Discipline Report 2018-2019: SWIS Drill Down Data* provided to PCG by the district.

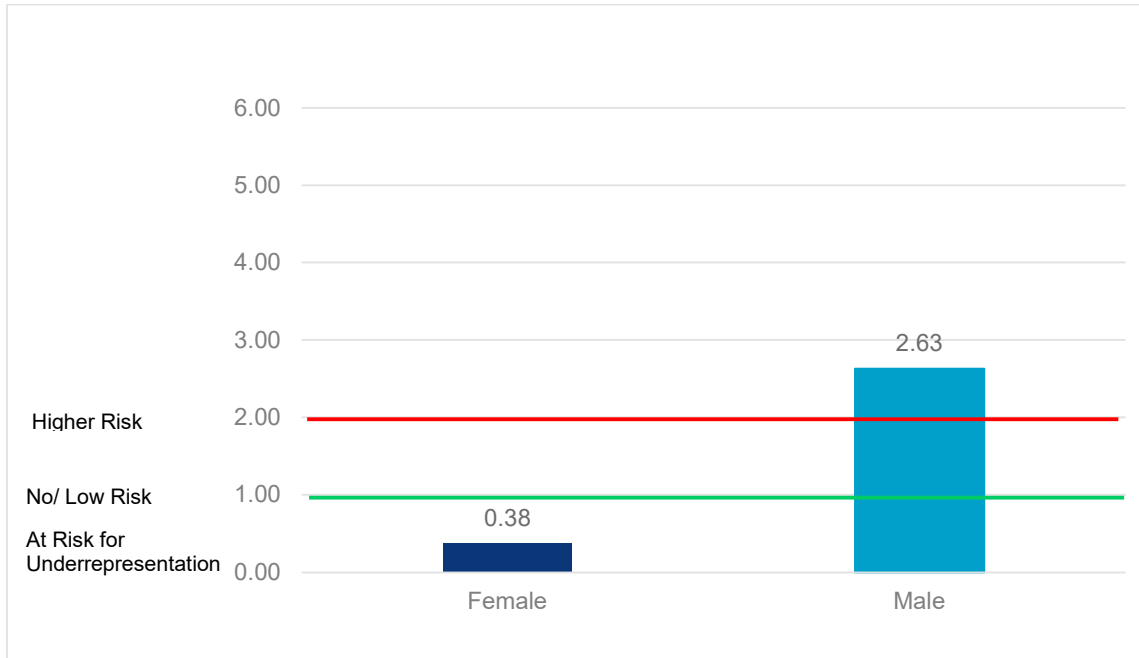
**Exhibit 28. Discipline Referral Risk by Race: Northwood Middle School (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 29. Number of Students with Disciplinary Referrals by Race: Northwood Middle School (2018-2019)**

Race	All Students	Students with Disciplinary Referrals
Asian	20	2
Black or African American	15	5
Hispanic or Latinx	265	120
White	225	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>177</b>

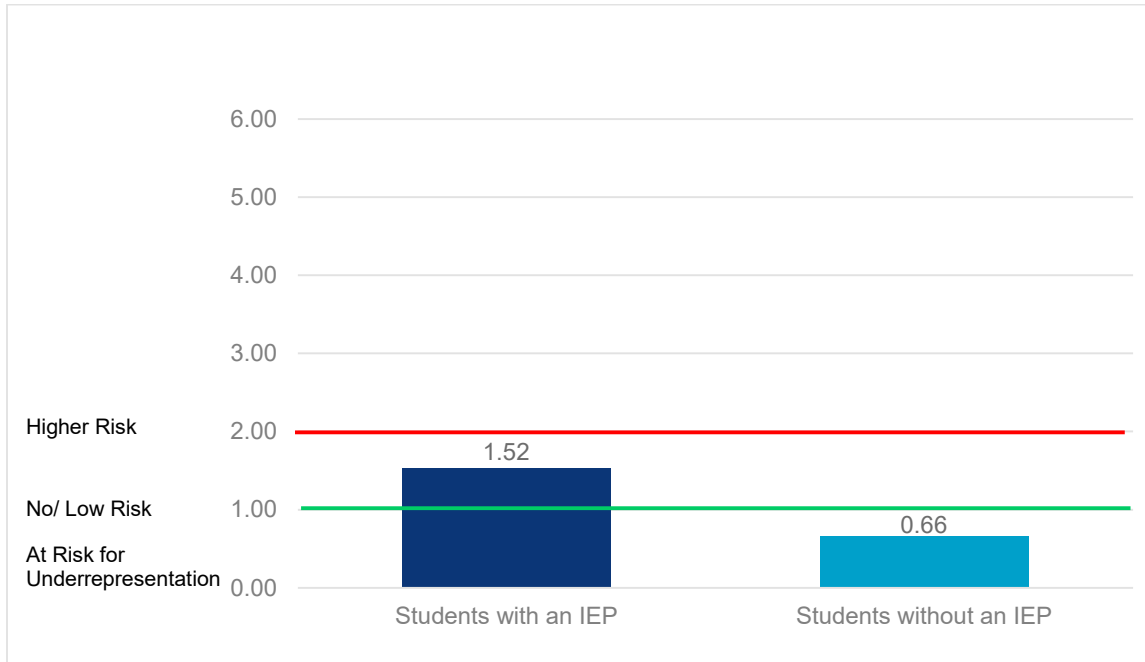
**Exhibit 30. Discipline Risk by Gender: Northwood Middle School (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 31. Number of Students with Disciplinary Referrals by Gender: Northwood Middle School (2018-2019)**

Gender	All Students	Students with Disciplinary Referrals
Female	264	49
Male	268	131
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>180</b>

**Exhibit 32. Discipline Risk by IEP Status: Northwood Middle School (2018-2019)**



**Exhibit 33. Number of Students with Disciplinary Referrals by IEP Status: Northwood Middle School (2018-2019)**

Gender	All Students	Students with Disciplinary Referrals
Students with an IEP	105	49
Students without an IEP	427	131
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>180</b>

**Risk Ratio Analysis: Northwood Middle School**

At Northwood Middle School:

- Students identified as Asian have **0.29 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students identified as Black or African American have **0.99 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students identified as Hispanic or Latinx have **2.07 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students identified as white have **0.52 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Male students have **2.63 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Female students have **0.38 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.

- Students who have an IEP have **1.52 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.
- Students who do not have an IEP have **0.66 times** the risk of receiving at least one disciplinary referral as all other students in the school.

### Disproportionality in Discipline Referral Quantities

The above risk ratios look at the demographics of the individual students who received a discipline referral during SY18-19, regardless of how many referrals each student received over the course of the year. This risk ratio looks to answer the question: “what is the risk of a student of a certain demographic group to receive at least one disciplinary referral over the course of the year as compared to his or her peers?” Another way to look at this disproportionality is to look at the total *number* of discipline referrals given across student demographic groups. It is important to note that Edgewood and Northwood utilize their student discipline referral systems in very different ways. The data included here is reflective of what each school entered into their SWIS system. The risk ratio analysis aims to mitigate the differences in utilization of SWIS between the two schools, and the following analysis aligns with the findings of the risk ratio analysis.

The below tables contain the percentage of discipline referrals given by subgroup as compared to that subgroup’s population in each school. Student demographic groups who represent less than 1% of the student body are not included in the data below.

#### Exhibit 34. Proportion of Total Disciplinary Referrals by Student Demographics: Edgewood Middle School (2018-2019)

Student Demographic Subgroup	Percent of Student Body	Percent of All Disciplinary Referrals
Asian	3%	1%
Black or African American	2%	4%
Hispanic or Latinx	13%	10%
Two or More Races	3%	13%
White	79%	71%
Female	49%	8%
Male	51%	92%
Students with an IEP	14%	24%

#### Exhibit 35. Proportion of Total Disciplinary Referrals by Student Demographics: Northwood Middle School (2018-2019)

Student Demographic Subgroup	Percent of Student Body	Percent of All Disciplinary Referrals
Asian	4%	1%
Black or African American	3%	1%
Hispanic or Latinx	50%	79%

<b>Student Demographic Subgroup</b>	<b>Percent of Student Body</b>	<b>Percent of All Disciplinary Referrals</b>
Two or More Races	1%	2%
White	42%	18%
Female	50%	8%
Male	50%	74%
Students with an IEP	20%	55%

## 8. STUDENT OUTCOMES AND ACCESS TO ADVANCED LEARNING

**Guiding Question: How are student outcomes and access to advanced learning patterns linked to student characteristics and demographics?**

### RESEARCH-BASED BEST PRACTICES

Dr. Wayne Hoy and his colleagues suggest that connecting three important characteristics of schools can produce a potent and positive influence on academic achievement, even in the face of low socioeconomic status, previous performance, and other demographic variables such as school size or minority enrollment.<sup>63</sup> Hoy's definition of "academic optimism" is grounded in social cognitive theory and positive psychology. It embraces the following characteristics:

- **Academic emphasis** – the extent to which a school is driven by a belief system that includes high expectations for students to achieve academically.
- **Collective efficacy of the faculty** – the belief that the faculty can make a positive difference in student learning.
- **Faculty's trust in parents and students** – faculty, administrators, parents, and students cooperate to improve student learning; trust and cooperation among parents, teachers and students influence student attendance, persistent learning, and faculty experimentation with new practices.

The shared belief among faculty that academic achievement is important, that the faculty has the capacity to help students achieve, and that the students and parents can be trusted to cooperate with them in the effort—in brief, a school-wide confidence that students will succeed academically. A school with high "academic optimism" believes that faculty can make a difference, students can learn, and achieve high levels of academic performance. Findings from research showed that there was a significant positive relationship between teachers' academic optimism and students' academic achievement.

### DISTRICT OUTCOMES

Due to the absence of standardized testing in the spring of 2020 because of COVID-19, PCG analyzed achievement data from the PARCC assessments administered in 2017 and 2018 and from the IAR assessment administered in 2019. PCG specifically examined proficiency data for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts and Mathematics tests for the PARCC and IAR assessments.<sup>64</sup> We reviewed proficiency data to identify differences between overall school performance over the 3 years, as well as gaps in student group performance at the school level.

#### MAP Data

Recent Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Data results from the 2020-2021 school year show student growth in both Reading and Math. NSSD 112 reports the following based on their most recent assessments:

<sup>63</sup> Hoy, W. K., Tarter, C. J., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2006). *Academic optimism of schools: A force for student achievement*. Working Paper. The Ohio State University. <http://www.waynehoy.com/school-academic-optimism/>

<sup>64</sup> In alignment with the Illinois State Board of Education, PCG used cut-scores of Levels 4 and 5 to calculate percent of students achieving proficiency.

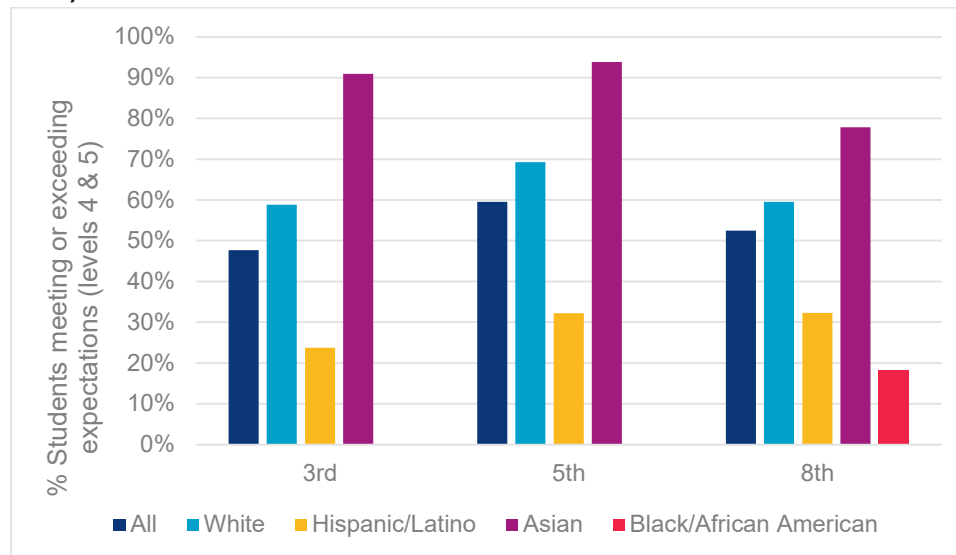
- All grade levels performing above the national percentile on the MAP assessment in Reading and Math.
- Decrease in growth across all grade levels and student groups, more significant in Reading.
- 3rd grade and middle school growth are not statistically different.
- Percent at benchmark for identified student groups is of significant concern.
- Overall, percent of students at grade level remains approximately 50%.
- Significant decrease in growth across all grade levels and student groups.
- Percent at benchmark for identified student groups (e.g., low income, Hispanic or Latino, LEP (Limited English Proficiency), IEP) is of significant concern.
- Overall, percent of students at grade level is approximately 40% in Math and 50% in Reading.

### State Standardized Test Data

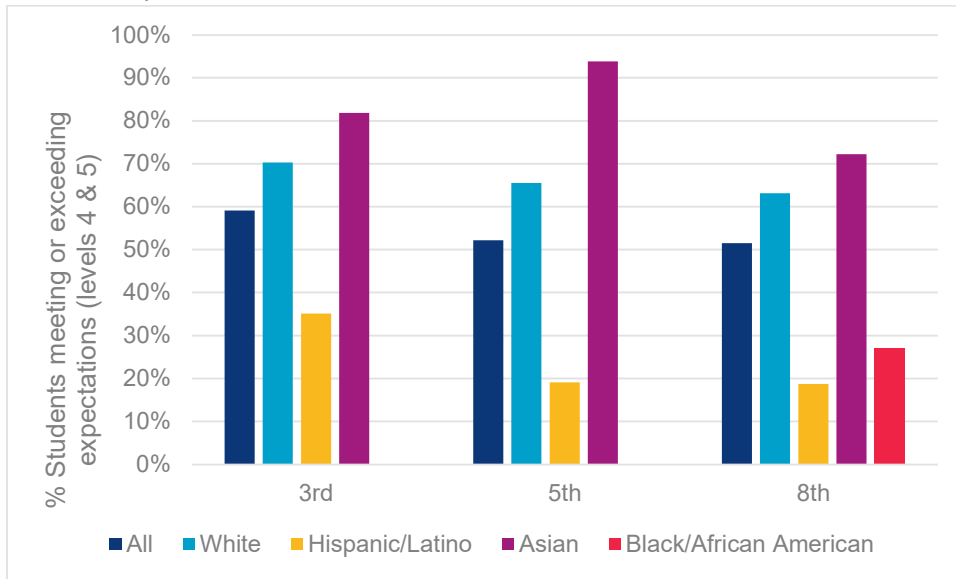
The data revealed that overall, schools with predominantly white students performed better across ELA and Math standardized tests than schools with more diverse student populations.

Asian and white students scored proficient on both ELA and Math tests at higher rates than the district average for all students. The percentage of Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American students scoring proficient on both tests was less than the district average for all students.

#### Exhibit 36. Districtwide Student Achievement by Race/Ethnicity, Grades 3, 5, and 8 (IAR ELA Tests-2019)

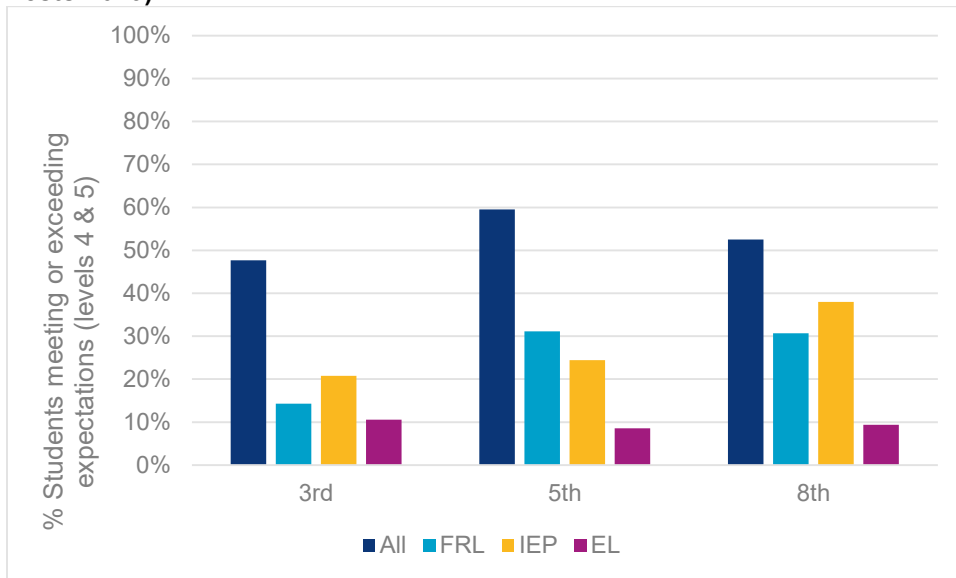


**Exhibit 37. Districtwide Student Achievement by Race/Ethnicity, Grades 3, 5, and 8 (IAR Mathematics Tests-2019)**

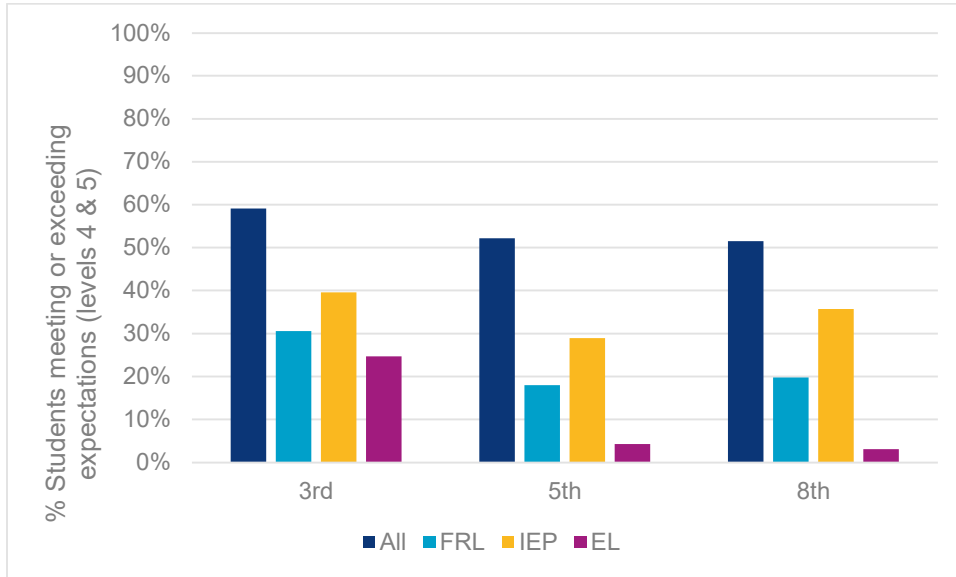


Districtwide, proficiency rates for low-income students, students with IEPs, and students categorized as English Learners also consistently performed below the district average for all students. Below is a snapshot districtwide achievement on the 2019 IAR ELA and Math tests disaggregated by high need group.

**Exhibit 38. Districtwide Student Achievement by High Need Group, Grades 3, 5, and 8 (IAR ELA Tests-2019)**



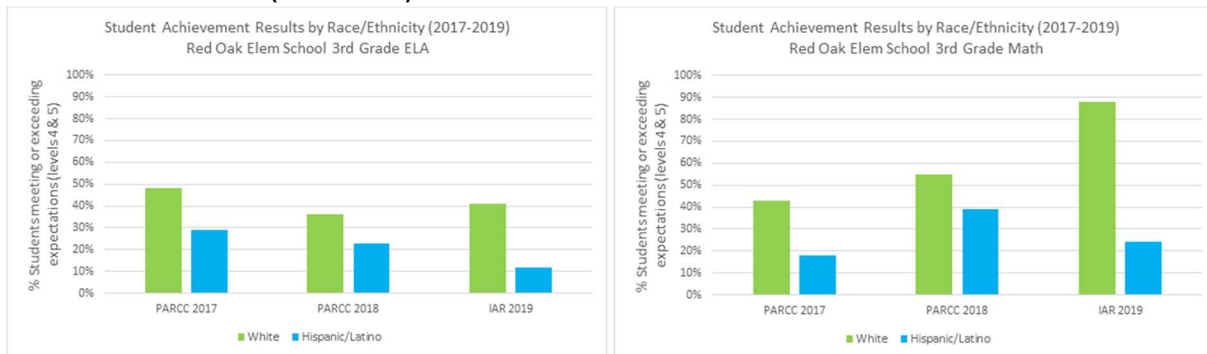
**Exhibit 39. Districtwide Student Achievement by High Need Group, Grades 3, 5, and 8 (IAR Mathematics Tests-2019)**

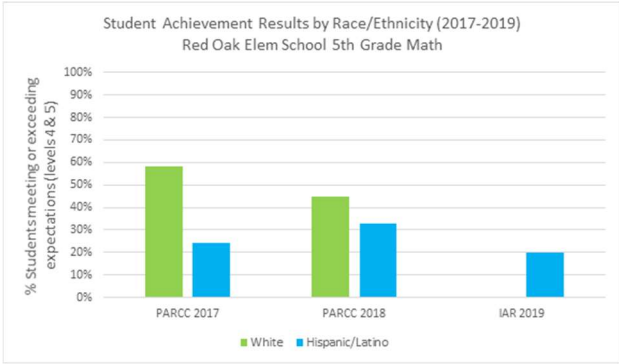
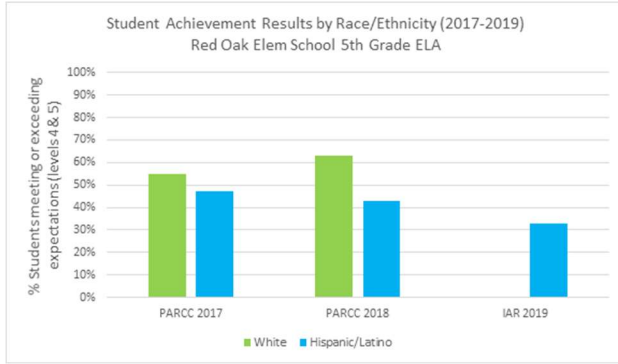


The district achievement gap is greater than the state achievement gap for both ELA and Math for the following comparisons: low income/non-low income, white/Hispanic or Latino, white/Black or African American, and with IEP/non-IEP.

Within schools, there are notable gaps between students of different races/ethnicities. At the dual language elementary schools, Red Oak and Oak Terrace, white students achieved proficiency at higher rates than Hispanic or Latino students on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade PARCC and IAR ELA and Math state assessments. Student counts of non-white students who scored proficient or above at all other elementary schools are too small to perform a similar analysis.

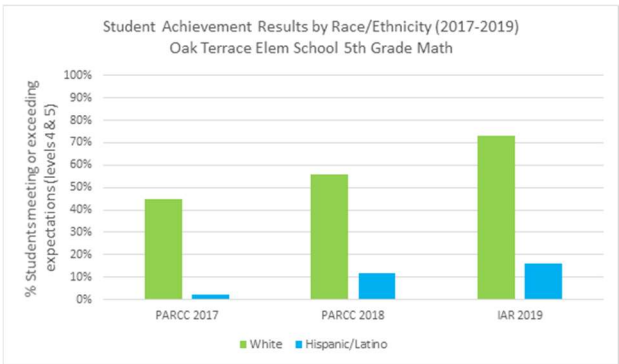
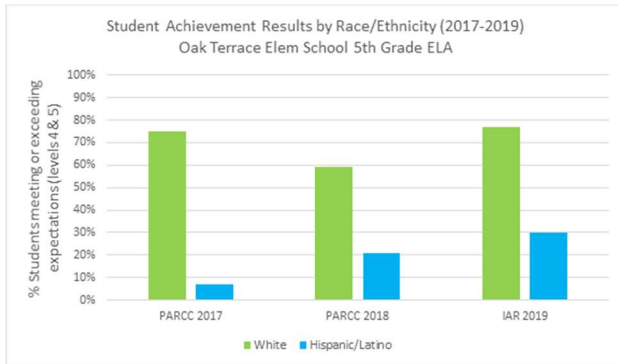
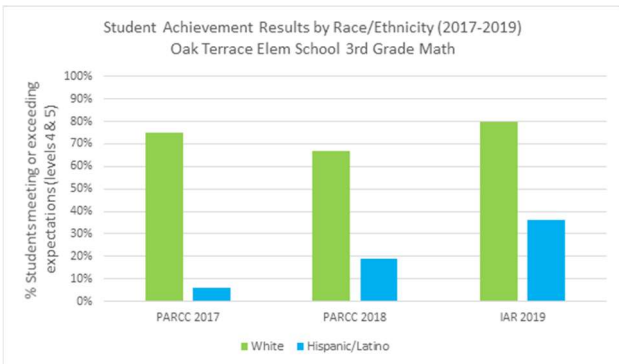
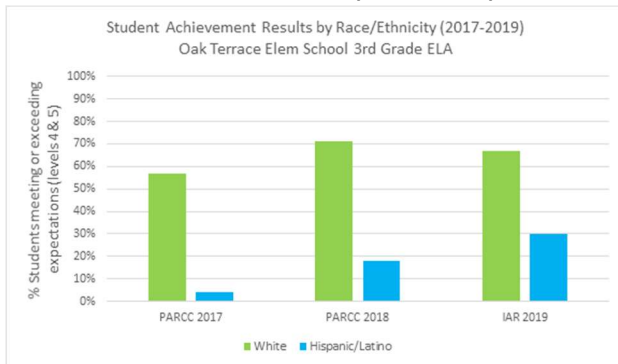
**Exhibit 40. Red Oak Elementary School Student Achievement by Race/Ethnicity on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA and Math Tests (2017-2019)**





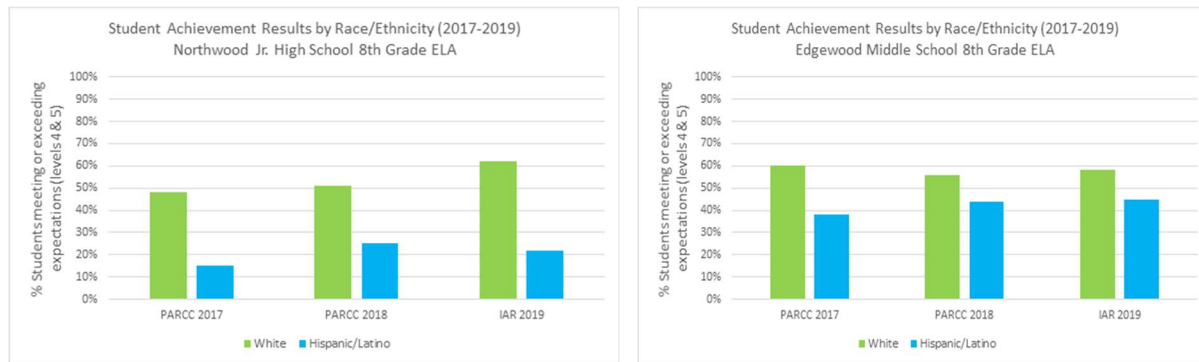
Note: White student proficiency data for Red Oak was not available for the 2019 IAR assessment from the Illinois State Report Card.

**Exhibit 41. Oak Terrace Elementary School Student Achievement by Race/Ethnicity on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA and Math Tests (2017-2019)**



Similarly at the middle school level, white students scored proficient at a higher rate than Hispanic or Latino students on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade PARCC and IAR ELA tests. Student performance on Math tests shows similar trends. In some years, Asian scored proficient at higher rates than white students, but the population size is small.

## Exhibit 42. Oak Terrace Elementary School Student Achievement by Race/Ethnicity on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA and Math Tests (2017-2019)



For all schools, fewer than half of all low-income students scored proficient across all standardized tests.<sup>65</sup> The percentage of students with IEPs who scored proficient varies by school and by grade level.

## ACCESS TO ADVANCED LEARNING

### Research-based Best Practices

The US Department of Education’s Elementary and Secondary Act defines gifted and talented students as those who “give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.”<sup>66</sup> However, research consistently shows that children of color and children in poverty participate in gifted programs at lower rates than white and Asian and wealthy students.<sup>67</sup> A recent study from Vanderbilt University and the University of Florida found that students from high-income families are seven times more likely to land in gifted programs than their other classmates with similar reading and math scores.<sup>68</sup> There has long been concern that high-ability students from underserved populations, those who are limited English proficient, disabled, or from minority or low-income backgrounds, are consistently underrepresented in advanced classes and in programs for students identified as gifted. While many districts have made improvements in identifying and serving a broader range of advanced students, there is still a lot of room for improvement to ensure that all high-ability students receive appropriate gifted or advanced education services to meet their needs.<sup>69</sup>

Students have different needs and abilities that must be addressed in every classroom. However, the practice of tracking students may not be the answer to support stronger academic growth given the inequalities of opportunities resulting from that practice.<sup>70</sup> Most times, tracking leads to an unequal educational experience. Students who experience advanced classes are often taught enriched, challenging

<sup>65</sup> Red Oak Elementary School is an expectation to this statement. On the 2017 PARCC 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA test, on which 60% of low-income students scored proficient. The following year, however, the percent of low-income students scoring proficient on the same test dropped to 38%.

<sup>66</sup> Title IX, Part A, Definition 22 (2002). Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

<sup>67</sup> Siegle, D. (2019) *Inequity Persists in Gifted Programs*. National Institute of Gifted Education. Institute of Education Sciences. <https://ies.ed.gov/blogs/research/post/inequity-persists-in-gifted-programs>

<sup>68</sup> Grissom, J. & Redding, C. (2016). “Discretion and Disproportionality: Explaining the Underrepresentation of High-Achieving Students of Color in Gifted Programs.” *AERA Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858415622175>

<sup>69</sup> National Association for Gifted Children. Identifying Gifted Children from Diverse Populations. <https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/timely-topics/ensuring-diverse-learner-participation-gifted-0>

<sup>70</sup> Wells, C. L. (2018). “Understanding issues associated with tracking students in mathematics education.” *Journal of Mathematics Education*, 11(2), 68–84.

content, focused on creativity and problem solving while students not receiving those opportunities are often given lessons which include a reliance on low level worksheets and memorization.

To achieve the goal of high-quality education for every student within NSSD 112, the district must seriously examine the tracking and ability-grouping policies. Certainly, teachers should address the diverse learning styles, needs, and interests of the students. However, there is a great need to transform the system to guarantee that every student is given equal opportunities to develop to their fullest potential. To have any hope of closing the achievement gap, the opportunity gap must be closed.<sup>71</sup>

### *Key Findings*

- **Success Block.** The Success Block within the district has been reconfigured to ensure there is time to provide interventions as well as advanced learning opportunities for students who have been identified through NSSD 112's process. By building the time into the schedule, students are not being removed from their general education classrooms to receive additional supports, but still receive structured opportunities to meet their learning needs.
- **Advanced Learning Opportunities Pathway.** NSSD 112 provides pathways to advanced learning opportunities that is reflected in the Three Tiers of Acceleration 2020-2021.<sup>72</sup> This process is new for the 2020-2021 school year. While there does appear to be multiple entry points into Advanced Learning Opportunities (ALO) at the elementary level throughout the school year, middle school access appears less flexible. Each fall, middle school students have an opportunity to be screened to move to a higher level math or ELA class, beginning with the initial placement in sixth grade. There is no mention of an option during the school year of changing tracks due to students' successful performance within their classes. This is particularly important for middle school math classes as there are significant differences in math content between the class tracks. Therefore, it makes it very difficult for a student to successfully move into a higher tracked math class after a full year of instruction in a lower class without significant support.
- **Lack of High School and Elementary Data.** Using data to better understand the effectiveness of programs is key for improvement. While students take advanced math and ELA classes at the middle school, data are not collected from the high school to assess how well students in the advanced and accelerated programs are doing in their high school courses. In addition, data are not collected at the elementary level since the programs are more flexible and were revamped during the pandemic. Not having data at the elementary levels inhibits the district's ability to correct for over- or under-representation of subgroups.
- **Lack of Transparency.** During our parent focus groups, some participants noted a lack of understanding about the ALO program at the elementary level and the entry criteria. For example, it was noted that some students of color, who were high performing on traditional measures, were not selected for Advanced Learning Opportunities due to teacher recommendation. It created much confusion for parents who did not have a clear explanation regarding the decision-making process and the weight of academic assessments versus teachers' judgment.

### *8th Grade Algebra Participation*

As a measure of student access to rigorous academic opportunities, PCG examined NSSD 112's school year 2018-2019 8<sup>th</sup> algebra participation data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity and high need group. Algebra is the foundation for higher level math and science courses and early access to Algebra I allows

<sup>71</sup> Futrell, M.H. & Gomez, J. (2008). "How Tracking Creates A Poverty Of Learning." *Educational Leadership*. Vol 65, 74-78.

<sup>72</sup> North Shore School District 112. (2020). Three Tiers of Acceleration 2020-2021. Retrieved from: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mVjFsbsDaQPJFnF0th--4\\_eXz\\_TzgK291YBK6APMYAc/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mVjFsbsDaQPJFnF0th--4_eXz_TzgK291YBK6APMYAc/edit)

students additional time to take advanced STEM courses in high school.<sup>73</sup> Accelerated math is a prerequisite to both Algebra I and Geometry at both middle schools.

- Districtwide, 431 (26%) eighth graders were enrolled in Algebra I.
- At both middle schools, white students enrolled more frequently in Algebra (83%) than their non-white peers.
- At Northwood, students were disproportionately enrolled in Algebra I by race and gender. 58% of students who were enrolled in Algebra were white, 28% were Hispanic or Latinx. Only 5 students of all other races were enrolled. 33% of enrolled students were female.
- At Edgewood, students were disproportionately enrolled by race. 95% of students who were enrolled in Algebra were white. Only 4 students of all other races were enrolled. 47% of the students were female.
- Three 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with IEPs were enrolled in Algebra I across both middle schools.
- No English Learners were enrolled in Algebra I at either school.

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<sup>73</sup> Smith, J.B. (1996). "Does an Extra Year Make Any Difference? The Impact of Early Access to Algebra on Long-Term Gains in Mathematics Attainment." *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 18(2), 141–153; and USDOE (2018). *A Leak in the STEM Pipeline: Taking Algebra Early*. <https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/stem/algebra/index.html>.

## 9. HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

**Guiding Question: How do NSSD 112 policies and human resources practices support hiring and retaining a diverse workforce?**

### *Research-based Best Practices*

All students benefit from having teachers of color. Research shows that when taught by teachers of color, students of color have better academic performance, improved graduation rates, and are more likely to attend college. Students of color also benefit from higher teacher expectations and from seeing members of their own race/ethnicity as role models in positions of authority.<sup>74</sup>

While students of color receive the greatest benefits of having teachers that look like them, diversity benefits everyone. With a more diverse workforce, students are exposed to multiple perspectives. They may have an increased sense of civic engagement and improved problem-solving, critical-thinking skills, and creativity.<sup>75</sup>

Extensive research explores the impact teachers of color have in directly affecting students, but there is additional evidence to suggest that increasing teacher diversity also benefits teachers of color who are already working in the field. In several qualitative studies, teachers of color expressed feelings of isolation, frustration, and fatigue when they were one of few teachers of color in their schools, experiencing pressure to represent their students to colleagues. This suggests that increasing the diversity of the teaching force may also lead to improvements in teacher satisfaction and decreased teacher turnover, a key contributor to teacher shortages and school instability.<sup>76</sup>

### **Recruitment**

Districts that effectively recruit teachers of color often use the following strategies:

- **Data-driven, targeted strategies.**<sup>77</sup> Utilizing data to determine who is underrepresented in their workforce and to forecast their staffing needs allows districts to create marketing campaigns that appeal to candidates of color, are specific to the positions, and highlight the benefits the district has to offer.<sup>78</sup>
- **Strategic institutional relationships.** A large majority of students enrolled in teacher preparation programs are white. To recruit teachers of color, districts must build relationships with faculty members and administrators from local and national institutions that enroll a diverse student body. Districts can also partner with alternative teacher preparation programs, which are more likely to serve people of color, to identify and recruit teachers.<sup>79</sup>
- **Relationship-based recruitment.** To recruit teachers of color, districts should work to build personal relationships with students of color at institutes of higher education and leverage existing

<sup>74</sup> Villegas, A. M., & Irvine, J. J. (2010). "Diversifying the teaching force: An examination of major arguments." *The Urban Review*, 42(3), 175-192.

<sup>75</sup> Wells, A. S., Fox, L., & Cordova-Cobo, D. (2016). "How racially diverse schools and classrooms can benefit all students." *Education Digest*, 82(1), 17-24.

<sup>76</sup> Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher Turnover: Why it Matters and What We Can Do About It*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Learning Policy Institute.

<sup>77</sup> American Institutes for Research, Center on Great Teachers & Leaders, Equitable Access Support Network. (2016). *Talent management strategies: District self-assessment checklist*.

<sup>78</sup> Bireda, S., & Chait, R. (2011). *Increasing teacher diversity: Strategies to improve the teacher workforce*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

<sup>79</sup> Simon, N. S., Johnson, S. M., & Reinhorn, S. K. (2015). *The challenge of recruiting and hiring teachers of color: Lessons from six high-performing, high-poverty, urban schools* [Working paper]. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Project on the Next Generation of Teacher.

relationships in the district to extend outreach beyond individual networks.<sup>80</sup> Building relationships months before a job is posted, forming relationships on campus and through visits to the district, and identifying internal connectors in the district who can use their broader networks can help districts develop and deepen relationships with individuals and communities of color.<sup>81</sup>

## Hiring

Districts that effectively select and hire teachers of color often use the following strategies:

- **Advertise and hire early.** Districts should publish vacancy notices early in the process and hire early in the process. Districts may be able to generate a large applicant pool through early and effective recruitment. Ideally, half of the district's new teachers should be hired at least a month before the end of the prior school year.<sup>82</sup>
- **Engage existing educators of color in the process.** The authentic involvement of teachers of color in the recruitment and selection of new candidates is another way that districts effectively select and hire teachers of color. Providing opportunities for candidates to interact with other teachers of color may help them feel more welcome and connected during the hiring process.<sup>83</sup>
- **Actively counter implicit bias.** Implicit racial, ethnic, and cultural biases shape definitions and measurements of effective teaching.<sup>84</sup> To counter this, districts should train administrators and teachers who are involved in hiring to recognize implicit bias and use behavior-based interviewing techniques to reveal candidates' experience, knowledge, and strengths to increase the hiring of culturally and linguistically diverse teacher candidates.

## Retention

Districts that effectively retain teachers of color often use the following strategies:

- **Strategically and intentionally place teachers of color in schools.** Teachers of color are more likely to be placed in schools with weak organizational conditions, poor leadership, and difficult working conditions, which increases the likelihood of attrition. Before placement, districts should consider the organizational conditions of the school, the strength of the school's leadership team, and overall fit, as well as how assignments are aligned with new hires' content expertise.<sup>85</sup>
- **Design and implement high-quality induction and early support for new teachers of color.** Dealing with low expectations for students, lack of support, inequity in school policies, micro-aggressions, and bias leads to feelings of isolation, dissatisfaction, and burnout, especially among teachers of color. Districts should provide new teachers of color with the opportunity to work collaboratively with other educators, participate in support groups for new teachers, and be mentored by trained, qualified colleagues – particularly other teachers of color.<sup>86</sup>
- **Build the capacity of school leaders to improve working conditions.** Dissatisfaction with school leadership leads to high turnover rates among teachers of color. Districts should offer

<sup>80</sup> Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

<sup>81</sup> Simon et al., 2015

<sup>82</sup> Levin, J., & Quinn, M. (2003). *Missed opportunities: How we keep high-quality teachers out of urban classrooms*. New York, NY: New Teacher Project.

<sup>83</sup> Bireda & Chait, 2011

<sup>84</sup> Chalkboard Project. (2017). *TeachOregon: Lessons learned, promising practices, and recommendations for the future*.

<sup>85</sup> Ingersoll, R., May, H., & Collins, G. (2017). *Minority teacher recruitment, employment, and retention: 1987 to 2013*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

<sup>86</sup> Rogers-Ard, R., Knaus, C. B., Epstein, K. K., & Mayfield, K. (2013). "Racial diversity sounds nice; systems transformation? Not so much: Developing urban teachers of color." *Urban Education*, 48(3), 451–479.

ongoing professional learning opportunities for school leaders to develop the skills to support diverse students and staff members and support teachers of color to become school and district leaders. Districts may also wish to nurture leadership that promotes inclusion, tolerance, and acceptance throughout the school; invests in mentorship and leadership opportunities for educators of color; and ensures autonomy and respect are provided to teachers of color..<sup>87</sup>

## Key Findings

- Competency-Based Screening Process.** In the initial stages of the application process for open positions in the district, NSSD 112 utilizes an online, competency-based screening process. Use of standardized processes and multiple measures of evaluation for applicants are both important ways to ensure equitable hiring practices.

While the use of the screening and phone interview scripts is an important element of an equitable hiring process, because NSSD 112 has not been tracking applicant demographic data we are unable to determine whether the tools are impacting certain groups of applicants in disproportionate ways. This race-blind application and initial screening process may actually be serving as a barrier to hiring candidates of color, but without demographic information about the candidates the district is unable to adjust strategies or practices to increase the diversity of its applicant pool. One board member expressed these exact concerns and a desire for more data-based information on the process and outcomes. In addition, school leaders and other staff members who have participated in the screening processes in the past expressed concern about language bias in the system.

- Proportional Rates of Attrition.** When looking at a snapshot of the rates of resignations among different groups of staff in the district, the attrition rates are relatively proportional to the percent of staff by race in the district. It is important to note that because of the low numbers of staff of color in the district attrition rates for staff of color can be impacted by any single resignation, but the overall proportional resignation rate is a positive signal.

### Exhibit 43. Current Teacher, Administrator, and Other School Staff, and Resignations by Race/Ethnicity (2018-2019)

	Percent of Teachers & Administrators	Percent of Teacher & Administrator Resignations (non-Retirement)	Percent of Other School & District Staff	Percent of Other School & District Staff Resignations (non-Retirement)
<b>Asian</b>	2%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Black or African American</b>	1%	0%	5%	6%
<b>Hispanic or Latinx</b>	11%	10%	27%	19%
<b>White</b>	86%	90%	67%	75%

- Data-driven Decision-making.** A lack of data systems to forecast staffing needs, to track which populations means that the district is limited in how proactive and strategic it can be with recruitment and hiring.
- Workforce that is Reflective of the Student Body.** Both the personnel data from the district and the anecdotal data from stakeholders show that there are wide gaps in representation between the student body and the staff of the district. Students, families, and staff all stressed the importance of the students being able to see themselves in the teachers and leaders in the district and pointed

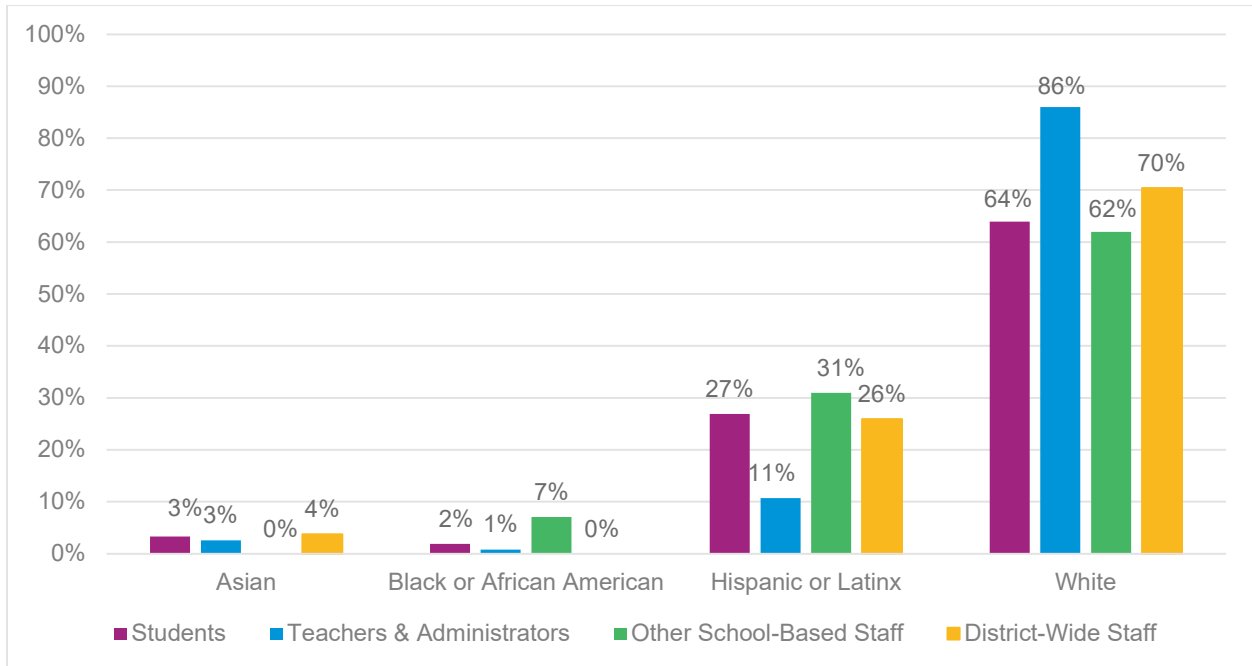
<sup>87</sup> Konoske-Graf, A., Partelow, L., & Benner, M. (2016). *To attract great teachers, school districts must improve their human capital systems*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

out the lack of diversity in both the teacher and leadership staff in the district. These gaps persist across the district but vary by school with the largest gaps in representation between students and teachers and administrators at Red Oak Elementary, Northwood Middle School, and Oak Terrace Elementary. In conversations with parents and teachers, multiple people expressed hesitancy about enrolling students of color in certain schools because of concerns about tokenism and isolation as a BIPOC student in a predominantly white school. Stakeholders across the board discussed the concentration of diverse students and educators in the dual language schools.

**Exhibit 44. BIPOC Student Enrollment and BIPOC Teachers and Administrators (2019-2020)**

School	BIPOC Student Enrollment	BIPOC Teachers & Administrators	Percentage Point Difference
District-Wide	36%	14%	-22
Braeside Elementary	14%	7%	-7
Edgewood Middle	22%	6%	-16
Green Bay EEC	54%	40%	-14
Indian Trail Elementary	22%	8%	-14
Northwood Middle	57%	17%	-40
Oak Terrace Elementary	70%	34%	-36
Ravinia Elementary	12%	4%	-8
Red Oak Elementary	64%	23%	-41
Sherwood Elementary	19%	0%	-19
Wayne Thomas Elementary	25%	10%	-15

**Exhibit 45. Districtwide Student Enrollment and Teachers and Administrators by Race/Ethnicity (2019-2020)**



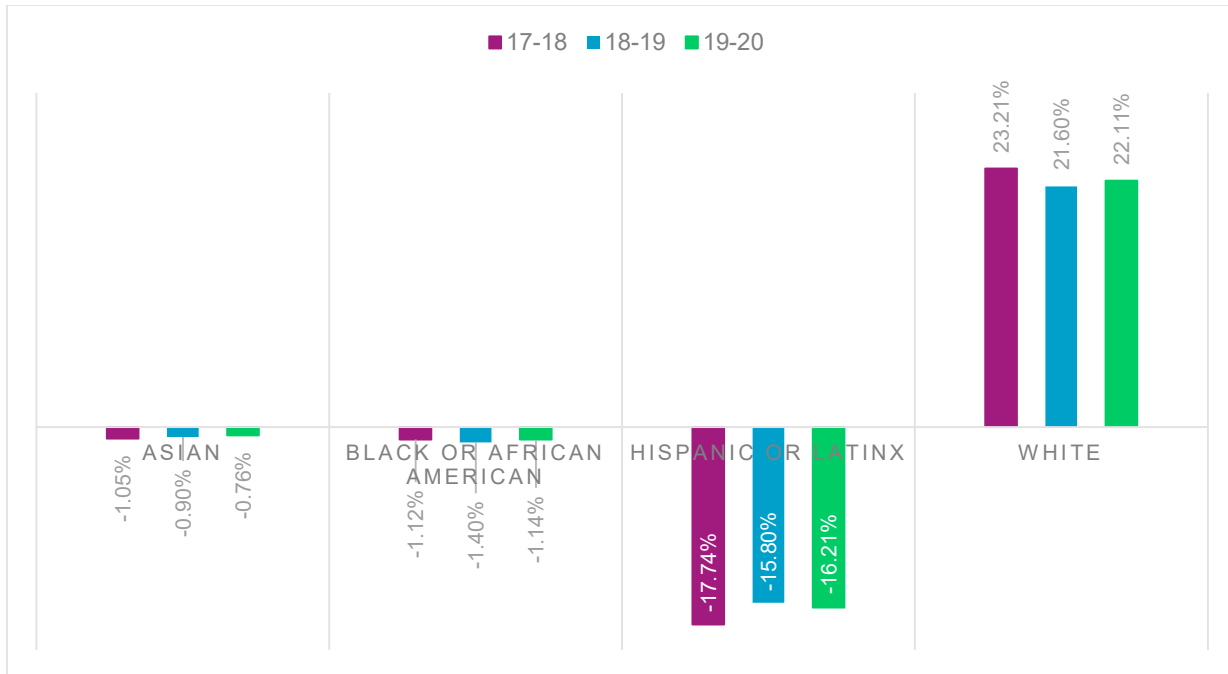
Note: An additional 4% of NSSD 112 students identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races. Those students are not included in this chart because the data provided indicated that no staff identify in those three demographic categories.

The biggest gaps in representation are between Hispanic or Latinx students and the teachers and leaders in the district. Students, staff, and families also expressed a large need for more Spanish-speaking educators, leaders, and staff, but because that data is not tracked in a systematic way, we were unable to clearly analyze those gaps.

**Exhibit 46. Percentage Point Gap Between Enrollment of Hispanic or Latinx Students and Staffing of Teachers and Administrators (2019-2020)**

School	Hispanic or Latinx Student Enrollment	Hispanic or Latinx Teachers & Administrators	Percentage Point Difference
District-Wide	27%	11%	-16
Braeside Elementary	3%	3%	--
Edgewood Middle	12%	5%	-7
Green Bay EEC	43%	33%	-10
Indian Trail Elementary	11%	3%	-8
Northwood Middle	51%	17%	-34
Oak Terrace Elementary	65%	30%	-35
Ravinia Elementary	5%	4%	-1
Red Oak Elementary	55%	16%	-39
Sherwood Elementary	7%	0%	-7
Wayne Thomas Elementary	13%	0%	-10

**Exhibit 47. Percentage Point Gap Between Student Enrollment and Teachers and Administrators Over Three Years (2017-2018 through 2019-2020)**



In addition to the gaps in representation at the school level, the diversity of the workforce at the district’s central office is also lacking in reflective demographics.

**Exhibit 48. District Central Office Staff Demographics (2019-2020)**

	Number of District Office Staff	Percent of District Office Staff
<b>Asian</b>	1	3%
<b>Black or African American</b>	1	3%
<b>Hispanic or Latinx</b>	6	21%
<b>White</b>	21	72%
<b>Total</b>	29	--

- Equity Focus in Recruitment and Hiring Materials, Processes, and Policies.** An important factor in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce is making sure the district’s commitment to equity is explicit and transparent. While the importance of equity and wanting to be equitable were themes throughout the conversations with stakeholders, the district lacks a shared definition of what that means and an explicit commitment to equity and building a diverse workforce appears nowhere in the hiring process, job descriptions, recruitment materials, or related documents. In addition, while it is important to note that the district offers a mentoring and induction program for new teachers and leaders, the lack of intentionality around the induction and mentorship needs of staff of color is a missed opportunity.

The Board of Education policy states: “The District will attempt to recruit and hire minority employees. The implementation of this policy may include advertising openings in minority publications, participating in minority job fairs, and recruiting at colleges and universities with significant minority enrollments. This policy, however, does not require or permit the District to give preferential treatment or special rights based on a protected status without evidence of past discrimination.” This language limits the district’s ability to set goals and prioritize the recruitment and hiring of diverse educators and staff, despite the known benefits and need expressed by all stakeholders interviewed.

- **Recruitment Reach.** The current recruitment reach is incredibly limited and does not reach the diverse educator candidates the district wants. External recruitment for open positions in NSSD 112 is limited to postings on social media, general/broad job boards (Indeed, IASA Job bank and K12 JobSpot), the district website, and two annual job fairs (pre-COVID). While the job fair sponsored by the Illinois Resource Center is targeted at Bilingual and ESL educators, the event has not produced the number of eventual hires that the district had expected. The other fair, sponsored by the University of Illinois Chicago, is a large event open to the public but is not targeted at the diverse educator pool that the district is seeking. Members of the board, families, and members of district leadership all expressed a concern with the pool of candidates that the district draws from for filling vacancies and described a recruitment process that highly relies on the networks of existing district staff. Because the district staff is predominantly white, these networks similarly lack in diversity. Members of the Board and district leadership said that equity has not been involved in discussions about recruitment practices.

## 10. RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND PROCESSES

**Guiding Question: How are resources distributed across the district? What are the drivers/processes that determine their distribution?**

### *Research-based Best Practices*

A growing body of evidence shows that increased spending on education leads to better student outcomes.<sup>88</sup> When districts develop more equitable school finance systems, student achievement levels rise, and the positive effects are even greater among low-income students. In order to overcome issues of poverty, low-income students need additional funds. Some research shows that students in poverty require twice the funding as students from affluent backgrounds. These dollars should attract effective teachers, improve curriculum, and fund quality programming.<sup>89</sup> States and districts with successful, equity-driven efforts have provided more total funds to their low-income students, and in some areas, low-income students receive more than 20 percent more in total funding than their affluent peers.<sup>90</sup>

Equitable school budgeting is rooted in the belief that schools should be resourced commensurate to their need. Funding levels within the district should reflect the costs of the different educational needs of the students in each school. A review of relevant research found several best practices in setting and implementing equitable school budget policies and practices:

- **Pay for priorities.** School budgets can have the most impact on student learning when they are rooted in the priorities of the district. Intentionally created, equity-focused priorities provide a strong basis for making budget decisions across the district.<sup>91</sup>
- **Prioritize equity-focused investments.** Districts should use funds to build the capacity of schools with the most concentrated student need. Investments should be designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable students in the district by prioritizing funding for high-impact strategies including hiring, instructional and curriculum supports, and strategies to allow for more personalized learning.<sup>92</sup>
- **Center marginalized voices.** All decisions on distribution and redistribution of school and district resources should be directly informed by the communities most impacted by inequities in the district. This, in combination with a clear alignment between the district's stated values and the decisions being made, will build trust and buy-in from stakeholders across the community.<sup>93</sup>

A key element in implementing an equity-driven school budgeting system is the investment in managing the culture shift required to make the new processes successful. At the center of an effective, equity-based

<sup>88</sup> C. Kirabo Jackson, Rucker C. Johnson, and Claudia Persico, "The Effects of School Spending on Educational and Economic Outcomes: Evidence from School Finance Reforms," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 131 (1) (2016): 157–218, available at <https://www.nber.org/papers/w20847>.

<sup>89</sup> Jackson, Johnson & Persica. 2016.

<sup>90</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, "Table A-6: Current expenditures per pupil in membership, by poverty quartile and state, FY 2011–2012," [https://nces.ed.gov/edfin/Fy11\\_12\\_tables.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/edfin/Fy11_12_tables.asp).

<sup>91</sup> Smarterschoolspending.org. 2017. *Best Practices in School Budgeting: Set Instructional Priorities*.

[https://smarterschoolspending.org/sites/default/files/resource/file/GFOASchoolBudgetBP-2A-DevelopGoals\\_2017FINAL.pdf](https://smarterschoolspending.org/sites/default/files/resource/file/GFOASchoolBudgetBP-2A-DevelopGoals_2017FINAL.pdf).

<sup>92</sup> Cardichon, Jessica. "Using Federal Stimulus Funds to Advance Equity and Opportunity." *Learning Policy Institute*, 7 Apr. 2020, [learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/using-federal-stimulus-funds-advance-equity-opportunity](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/using-federal-stimulus-funds-advance-equity-opportunity).

<sup>93</sup> Kavanagh, S. and Kowalski, J., 2021. "The Basics of Equity in Budgeting." *Government Finance Review*, Available at: [https://gfoaorg.cdn.prismic.io/gfoaorg/80d22a0b-d880-4387-96a1-a1872d226aab\\_GFRFeb2021-Equity-Budgeting.pdf](https://gfoaorg.cdn.prismic.io/gfoaorg/80d22a0b-d880-4387-96a1-a1872d226aab_GFRFeb2021-Equity-Budgeting.pdf).

budgeting system is a fundamental shift in the vision for what the district believes will give students the best opportunities to succeed and a realignment of decision-making to fund that vision.<sup>94</sup>

### Key Findings

- Well-resourced District.** NSSD 112 consistently ends each fiscal year with its revenues exceeding its expenditures and is able to maintain a General Education Fund Balance of at least 25% of the district's operating costs. In interviews with district leadership, it was clear that the district values being able to fund programs and opportunities for all students and that requests for funding or resources are accommodated, whenever possible. In addition, the NSSD 112 community of families and other stakeholders is generous and eager to contribute financial and other resources to support their schools and specific programs within the district.
- Desire to Address Inequities.** When needs arise, such as the need for internet hotspots for families without internet access at the time of the initial shutdowns in March 2020, the district works hard to meet the needs that exist. Across stakeholder interviews there was also a clear desire to do more to differentiate funding and other resources based on student and community need.
- Equality-focused Resource Distribution.** Throughout interviews, focus groups, and a review of budget documents, emphasis was placed on the equality of funding in the district and the per-pupil amount spent by NSSD 112. However, by emphasizing equality the district is not focusing on equity. Several members of district leadership mentioned that equity was not a part of the conversation around budget and resource allocation decisions. Many stakeholders mentioned the importance of making sure the district did not spend money at one school without spending the same at others – reiterating the emphasis on equality over equity. School leaders expressed concerns with staffing allocations based on enrollment numbers and not including an equity analysis in determining the actual needs at their schools.
- Community Perceptions.** Many stakeholders mentioned the wide variety of community perceptions of resource allocation in the district. Families from the district's Title I schools expressed frustration at the inequitable funding and programmatic offerings at the district's wealthier schools, and families from the wealthier schools focused on fundraising because they perceived that the Title I schools were receiving more resources from the district because of the government funding. Because of a lack of shared language around equity and how to embed equity in discussions around allocation decisions, conflicting understandings of how funding in the district works based on an individual experience.
- Inequitable External Fundraising.** A common thread among interviews and focus groups was frustration with the perceived inequities perpetuated by PTO fundraising at each of the different schools. Several school communities have the ability to raise significant funds to supplement whatever budget the district sets for the school year. This is especially evident in the food services program where schools that do not receive the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program meals sell lunches to students to raise money for the schools. In 2018-2019 those funds totaled over \$34,000 – fundraised money that is spent only on the schools with the highest resourced communities. The district ensures the schools that do not have the same level of external fundraising receive equitable funding for programs from district resources, ensuring all students have access to the same level of opportunities.

<sup>94</sup> Levenson, N. (2015). "A Better Way to Budget: Building Support for Bold, Student-Centered Change in Public Schools." *District Management Journal*, 18. Available at: <<https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/3412255/Strategic%20Budgeting/DMJ18-Fall2015-A-Better-Way-To-Budget-An-Excerpt.pdf>>

Another source of inequitable funding in the district appears to be the annual grants funded by the 112 Foundation. Based on the publicly available data on 112 Foundation grant awards between 2015 and 2018, Indian Trail Elementary School received 33% of all elementary level grants awarded, despite having only 11% of enrolled students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch. In contrast, despite having significantly higher populations of students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch (35%, 58%, and 45% respectively) Green Bay, Oak Terrace, and Red Oak received 9%, 13%, and 14% of the elementary level grants, respectively. It is important to note that this distribution shows the number of grants awarded and not the total dollar amounts awarded by school. The amounts of each grant were not publicly available at the time of writing.

**Exhibit 49. 112 Foundation Grant Distribution By School and Grade Level**

School	Number of 112 Foundation Grants	Percent of 112 Foundation Grants by School Level	FRL Enrollment
<i>Elementary Schools</i>			
<b>Braeside Elementary</b>	5	6%	3%
<b>Green Bay EEC</b>	8	9%	35%
<b>Indian Trail Elementary</b>	29	33%	11%
<b>Oak Terrace Elementary</b>	11	13%	58%
<b>Ravinia Elementary</b>	6	7%	5%
<b>Red Oak Elementary</b>	12	14%	45%
<b>Sherwood Elementary</b>	9	10%	8%
<b>Wayne Thomas Elementary</b>	7	8%	19%
<i>Middle Schools</i>			
<b>Edgewood Middle</b>	12	43%	11%
<b>Northwood Middle</b>	16	57%	46%

Student enrollment data: School Year 2018-2019

112 Foundation grant data: 2015 – 2018. Note: 2016 grantee information was not publicly available.

- Lack of Systematic, Equity-focused Strategies.** As mentioned above, NSSD 112 is eager to meet needs as they arise – as evidenced by the response to the COVID-19 crisis and the need for some families to receive internet hotspots. However, both school and district leaders talked about the rushed, haphazard, and incomplete execution of these efforts. While it is commendable that the district rises to these occasions, one district leader mentioned that without a look at the data to figure out what needs exist or to forecast upcoming needs, the district's solutions often feel rushed and not like they are addressing the root causes of the issues themselves.

# APPENDICES

## 1. PROJECT TEAM

Our project team brings years of experience working in public education to this engagement—as former classroom teachers of diverse students in rural and urban communities; as former school administrators, district leaders, and university professors; as researchers, coaches, and consultants.

**Anna d’Entremont** is an Associate Manager at PCG and served as the Project Director for the audit to provide support and oversight to the entire project to completion. Anna brings two decades of education and management experience to this project. She has a strong background in understanding the organizational policies and practices essential to support program and process improvement. She has worked with education agencies across the country delivering consulting services, including audits, strategic planning, and guiding educational leaders through change management. State-level clients include the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, Delaware Department of Education, Rhode Island Department of Education, Alabama State Department of Education, and the Massachusetts Department of Education, among others. Prior to joining PCG in 2008, Anna was the Director of Operations of the Edward W. Brooke Charter School in Boston, MA. In this role, she served as Co-Director and the Operational Leader of a high-performing K-8 urban charter school. Anna also worked as a Program Officer at New Visions for Public Schools, where she managed a diverse portfolio of initiatives designed to support and develop innovation in 85 new small high schools across New York City. Anna began her career as a bilingual kindergarten teacher for the Houston Independent School District and as an elementary ESL teacher in DC Public Schools. She is also a Teach for America alumna and received her Ed.M. in Education Policy from Teachers College, Columbia University. Anna is fluent in both English and Spanish. In many of Anna’s projects, she has conducted focus groups in both languages.

**Mary Baker-Boudissa** served as Subject Matter Expert for the districtwide Equity and Inclusion Audit. Mary is a Project Specialist with Public Consulting Group and has 12 years of service in the education field, including higher education and education research. She also has six years of experience in Human Services. Since joining PCG, she has served as project manager for Project SUCCESS (Indiana), which provides professional development for teachers of students with significant intellectual disabilities. She also managed the CPS Arts Scope and Sequence development, which produced a full scope and sequence as a foundation for equitable curriculum and culturally relevant instruction in Chicago Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theatre. She has developed online course content around culturally responsive teaching and led conference sessions to assist teachers and paraprofessionals in supporting diverse learners. As Assistant Director of Charter School Research at Ball State University, she coordinated academic growth assessments for charter schools throughout the state of Indiana and published reports on achievement among charter school students. Prior to coming to PCG, Mary led international communications for the Church of God, Anderson, Indiana, served as interim pastor at her local church, and continues to speak at and consult with churches in Midwest around issues of social justice. Mary is a graduate of Harvard University and holds a Master of Arts in Educational Psychology. Additional areas of expertise include workforce development, anti-trafficking awareness, co-active coaching, and trauma-informed care and services.

**Chy Davidson** served as Project Advisor for this Equity and Inclusion Audit. Chy is a Manager for Public Consulting Group leading the Principal’s Playbook Business Line, where his passion for supporting leadership development can be realized. Chy began his unique career path as an NFL player for the New England Patriots, the Washington Redskins, and the New York Jets before returning to New York to serve as a physical education teacher, coach, and administrator. During his tenure with the Hempstead School District, he served in a variety of roles, including Principal of the Senior Academy at Hempstead High

School, where he was instrumental in securing numerous federal and private grants, including a 1.2-million-dollar Small Learning Community grant. He also served as Adjunct Professor for Adelphi University, teaching courses in ethics, law, educational leadership, and policy. Chy's love of sports and learning is clear through his involvement as a principal partner in the Somewhere to Go Someplace to Play Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization designed to enhance recreational value through development of sports facilities in urban communities. Prior to his current role, Chy served as Regional Director for Zaner-Bloser, a Highlights Education Company where his team lead the company in sales each year during his tenure. Chy's faith and trust in God has guided his life's path and he is proud to continue assisting educators with effective educational programs that focus on building culture & trust that impact student learning. Though his career path has had multiple twists and turns, his theme has remained consistent throughout: "You don't have to be a star to shine."

**Dr. Christine Donis-Keller**, Subject Matter Expert for the audit, has worked on problems related to educational equity in urban and rural education systems of all sizes, nationwide, for more than 25 years. Hired by PCG in 2011 as a research and evaluation specialist, Christine has led or supported evaluations, reviews and audits of programs and policies designed to increase student opportunity and eliminate achievement gaps. These have included initiatives designed to increase access for low-income students, students of color, and students with disabilities to high quality, rigorous and standards-aligned curriculum; opportunities for after school enrichment; access and engagement with the arts; system and school organization to maximize student success; and community and family engagement with schools. Using a collaborative evaluation model, these projects are set up to work shoulder to shoulder with clients to use findings and data to structure solutions and action plans that can support better outcomes for all students. Christine's project work at PCG includes the evaluation of implementation and impact of: a districtwide arts initiative in Hartford Public Schools; a 21st Century Community Learning Center for middle school students in Jersey City, NJ; a Family and Community Engagement grant project in Bridgeton, NJ; special education reviews in Alexandria, VA, Arlington, VA and West-Windsor Plainsboro, NJ; and literacy curriculum reviews in Pinellas County, FL and Hillsborough County, FL. In all of these engagements she has guided the development of research instruments and protocols as well as primary data collection through interviews, focus groups, surveys, and case studies and analysis to understand program effectiveness. Christine's research has focused on school district consolidation, the four-day school week, theme schools as school restructuring and reform strategy, and community organizing for school reform. Christine received her doctorate in the sociology of education from New York University.

**Mary Ellen Hannon**, Subject Matter Expert for the audit, is a Senior Associate and has over 30 years of successful educational systems experience, including extensive understanding in school leadership, data analysis, curriculum development, and policy design and implementation. Mary Ellen has served as the Project Director for the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary School's project Monitoring Teaching and Learning in Level 4 and 5 Schools. Her responsibilities included leading client meetings, overseeing the development of a classroom monitoring tool, conducting audits of struggling schools, and analyzing and reporting school data. Recently, Mary Ellen served on the Alabama State Department of Education Operational Study. Mary Ellen's other project experiences include collaborating with clients to improve low performing schools with a focus on leadership coaching, providing professional development on the science of reading, and curriculum reviews. Before joining PCG, Mary Ellen served as an elementary teacher, school and district leader including serving as a curriculum director and as Superintendent of Schools. Mary Ellen was also an Adjunct Professor at Rivier University working with Educational Administrator candidates.

**Sydney Menzin**, Data Analyst for this project, supported the data collection, organization, and analysis to inform recommendations. As a Consultant at PCG, Sydney provides project management and data analysis support to state and school district clients. Her recent projects include a Special Education Review, District Strategic Planning, a State Department of Education Operational Study, District Internship Program

Design, and a Strategic Communications Campaign. Prior to joining PCG, Sydney completed her MA in Urban Education Policy at Brown University. During this time, she served as a Research Consultant for the Massachusetts-based Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy and as a Research Assistant for Providence Public Schools. In these roles, Sydney was charged with responsibilities of project management, data collection/analysis, and policy research related to student leadership, social emotional learning, opportunity youth, and community partnerships. Sydney has experience with college and career readiness programming at the national and state levels. She previously served as Director of Digital Strategy and Outreach Coordinator for former First Lady Michelle Obama's social media campaign, Better Make Room, which puts students at the forefront of promoting postsecondary attainment. Following this work, she supported Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo's Education team with efforts to improve postsecondary access and affordability and to build a college-going movement across the state. Sydney has worked with students in classroom settings as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Madrid, Spain, and as a volunteer with the organization Generation Citizen, facilitating an action-civics curriculum in schools throughout Rhode Island. Sydney is fluent in both English and Spanish. In many of her projects, Sydney has conducted focus groups in both languages.

**Amanda Preston-Sicari** serves as Project Manager for this project, tasked with overseeing all project management processes and quality assurance systems to ensure a high degree of collaboration and the delivery of high-quality services. As a Senior Consultant, Amanda provides strategic leadership and project management, bringing a deep attention to detail and deliverables required to support measurable change. Amanda's current clients include Alabama, Richmond (VA), and a school district in Western MA. Prior to joining PCG, Amanda served as the Strategic Director for the Office of the Superintendent in the Boston Public Schools. In this role, Amanda worked with the team of School Superintendents to deliver project management, strategic planning, and implementation support for key districtwide initiatives that focused on ensuring cross-departmental organizational effectiveness. She led the design and implementation of strategic project plans that aligned with the Boston Public Schools' overall vision and strategy that ensured movement towards the district's goals and objectives. In addition, Amanda served as the Director of Recruitment for the Boston Public Schools for five years and during that time created and refined effective systems, strategies, and processes to innovate the work of teacher and school leader recruitment across the district. Amanda received her MA in Urban Education Policy from Brown University.

## 2. DOCUMENT INVENTORY

Below is a comprehensive list of the documents and data PCG reviewed for this audit.

### Curriculum

- 6-8 ELA Pacing Revisions 2.25.21
  - 6ELA Pacing Calendar 2020-2021
  - 7ELA\_6ACC Pacing Calendar 2020-2021
  - 8ACC Pacing Calendar 2020-2021
  - 8ELA\_7ACC Pacing Calendar 2020-2021
- 6-8 Math Pacing Revisions
  - 6 Math Pacing Calendar 2.22
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Acc\_7<sup>th</sup> Adv Pacing Guide 2.22
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Advanced Math Pacing Guide 2.22
  - 7 Math Pacing Guide 2.22
  - 8 Math Pacing Guide 20-21
  - Algebra 1 Pacing Guide 20-21
  - Honors Geometry Pacing Guide 20-21
- K-5 Dual ELA-SLA Pacing Revisions 2.25.2021

- 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Dual ELA\_SLA At-a-Glance 2020-2021
- 1<sup>st</sup> Grade ELA\_SLA Pacing Guide [20-21]
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Dual ELA\_SLA At-a-Glance 2020-2021
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade ELA\_SLA Pacing Guide [20-21]
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Dual ELA\_SLA At-a-Glance 2020-2021
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA\_SLA Pacing Guide [20-21]
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Dual ELA\_SLA At-a-Glance 2020-2021
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA\_SLA Pacing Guide [20-21]
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Dual ELA\_SLA At-a-Glance 2020-2021
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA\_SLA Pacing Guide [20-21]
- Kindergarten Dual ELA\_SLA At-a-Glance 2020-2021
- Kindergarten ELA\_SLA Pacing Guide [20-21]
- K-5 Math Pacing Revisions
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Math At-a-Glance [20-21]
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Math Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Math At-a-Glance [20-21]
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Math Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Math At-a-Glance [20-21]
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Math Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math At-a-Glance [20-21]
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Math At-a-Glance [20-21]
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - Kindergarten Math At-a-Glance [20-21]
  - Kindergarten Math Pacing Guide [20-21]
- K-5 Mono ELA Revisions 2.25.2021
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual At-A-Glance [20-21]
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual At-A-Glance [20-21]
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual At-A-Glance [20-21]
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual At-A-Glance [20-21]
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual At-A-Glance [20-21]
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Monolingual Pacing Guide [20-21]
  - Kindergarten ELA Monolingual At-A-Glance [20-21]
  - Kindergarten ELA Monolingual Pacing Guide [20-21]
- ReadyGen BiLiteracy Preview
- ReadyGen Scope and Sequence
- ReadyGen Trade Book List K-5
- QuaverSongList\_V18\_Universal
- Equity Curriculum Review – Sample Tools
  - Assessing Bias in Curricular Materials
  - Seed the Way equity tool

### **Dual Language**

- District 112 EL Program Guidelines
- Dual Language Framework

**Instruction**

- Implementation Plan for Marzano Resources
- Instruction Aligned with Standards and Core Curriculum
- Instructional Framework
- Instructional Framework Roll Out

**Improvement Planning**

- Final Long-Range Plan Recommendation- Phase I 2019-2022
- NSSD 112 Strategic Plan, 2013 & 2016  
(<https://www.nssd112.org/cms/lib/IL02217852/Centricity/Domain/713/StrategicPlan2013UpdatedVersion.pdf>)
- North Shore School District 112 Focus Group Report: Reconfiguration 2.0 Community Team February 22 and 23, 2017. Prepared by Link Strategic Partners ([https://www.nssd112.org/February\\_2017\\_Focus\\_Group](https://www.nssd112.org/February_2017_Focus_Group))

**Human Resource Materials**

- Exit Survey
- Job Descriptions
  - 2018 Payroll Manager job description
  - 2018 Teaching & Learning Coordinator – Job Description
  - 2018 Teaching & Learning Coordinator – Job Description
  - 2019 New Chief Financial Officer Job Description
  - 2020 Teaching & Learning Coordinator Job Description
  - Accounting Manager Job Description
  - Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services
  - Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
  - Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
  - Chief Financial Officer Job Description
  - Chief Financial Officer Job Description
  - Chief Technology Officer (CTO)
  - Director of Communications New NSSD 112 job description
  - Director of Curriculum and Instruction Job Description
  - Director of Fiscal Service new
  - Director of Languages Job Description
  - Director of Languages Job Posting 2017
  - Director of Operations Job Description 2021
  - Director of Operations, Facilities, and Transportation Job Description New
  - Hoover-Teaching & Learning Coordinator – Job Description
  - New Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning 2017
- Job Fair
  - Job Fair Confirmation, Resume Access
  - Staffing, recruitment, selection PPT 2019
- Mentoring Program
  - D112 Mentor Program to Develop Educators
- Selection Process
  - 2019 Sherwood Principal Detailed Selection Process
  - 2020 Edgewood Principal Detailed Selection Process
  - 2021 Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations Detailed Selection Process
  - Fit Interview Question Bank
  - FIT Interviews Via Zoom

- Guidance for Reviewing Applications
- Guidance for Reviewing Applications
- Hiring Parameter Experience Credit List
- Interview Participant Agreement
- Oasis Step by Step NSSD112
- Personnel Selection Form NSSD 112 Template
- Profile of a NSSD112 Teacher
- Reference Call Template
- Reference Checks – When Solicited by Outside Potential Employers
- Rejection Email after screener
- Staff Selection Checklist
- Star Behavior Interview and Follow up Guide
- When Collaborating for Selection Process To Do List
- 16-17 HR Audit Results Lake County ROE (pdf)
- Orange Frog Data February 15, 2021 Professional Development Evaluation (Orange Frog) (Responses)

### **Professional Development**

- Professional Development
- Marzano's Resources Professional Development Plan

### **Reports, Policies, and Practices**

- NSSD 112 RtI Manual Elementary 09-24-14
- Parent Student Handbook 08-25-2020
- Policy 1:30 School District Philosophy
- Policy 2:20 Powers and Duties of the Board of Education; Indemnification
- Policy 4:120 Food Services
- Policy 5:10 Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment
- Policy 6:10 Educational Philosophy and Objectives
- Policy 6:135 Accelerated Placement Program
- Policy 6:160 English Learners
- Policy 6:210 Instructional Materials
- Policy 6:40 Curriculum Development
- Policy 6:60 Curriculum Content
- Policy 7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities
- Policy 8:90 Parent Organizations and Booster Clubs

### **State Performance Plan Indicators**

- 2017 PAARC
- 2017 State Report Card
- 2018 PAARC
- 2018 State Report Card
- 2019 IAR
- 2019 State Report Card

### **Data Reports**

- Discipline Data Reports
  - Edgewood MS SWIS 2016-2020
  - Northwood Discipline Data 2017-2018
  - Northwood Discipline Data 2020-2021
  - Northwood Discipline Reports 2018-2019

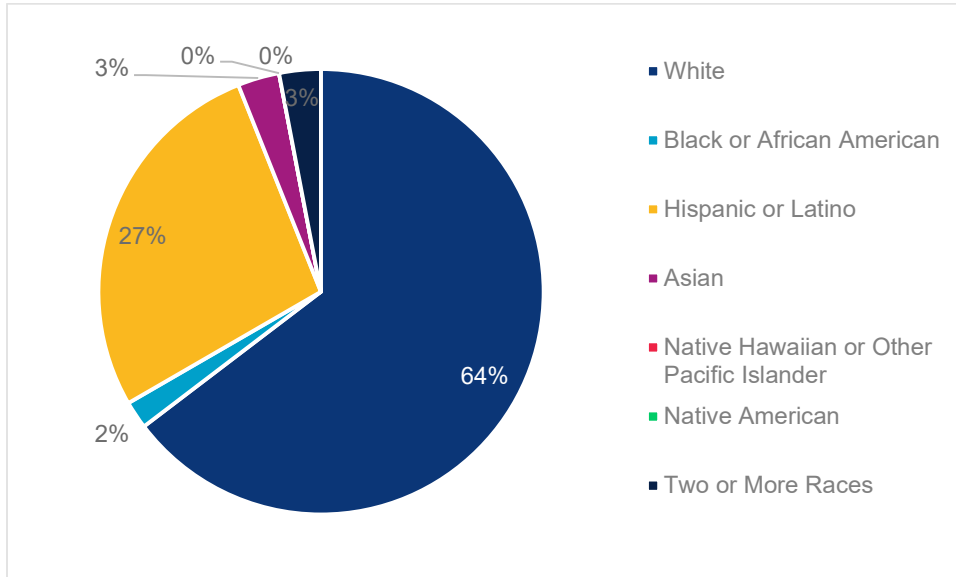
- Northwood Discipline Reports 2019-2020
- Northwood SWIS – Discipline Equity Reports 2018-19
- Northwood SWIS – Discipline Equity reports 2019-2020
- Northwood SWIS – Discipline Equity Reports 2017-18
- Braeside – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Edgewood – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Indian Trail – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Northwood – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Oak Terrance – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Ravinia – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Red Oak – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Sherwood – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- Wayne Thomas – Overall Growth Summaries, 2017-2019
- 2018-19 District-administered Climate Surveys
  - Staff Survey August 2019
    - Full District
  - Student Survey October 2019
    - Edgewood
    - Northwood
    - Full District
- NSSD 112 Student and Personnel Data

**Business Office Data**

- Equity Audit – Business Office
- SEFA
- 2019 Annual Financial Report: July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019
- 2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report: July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

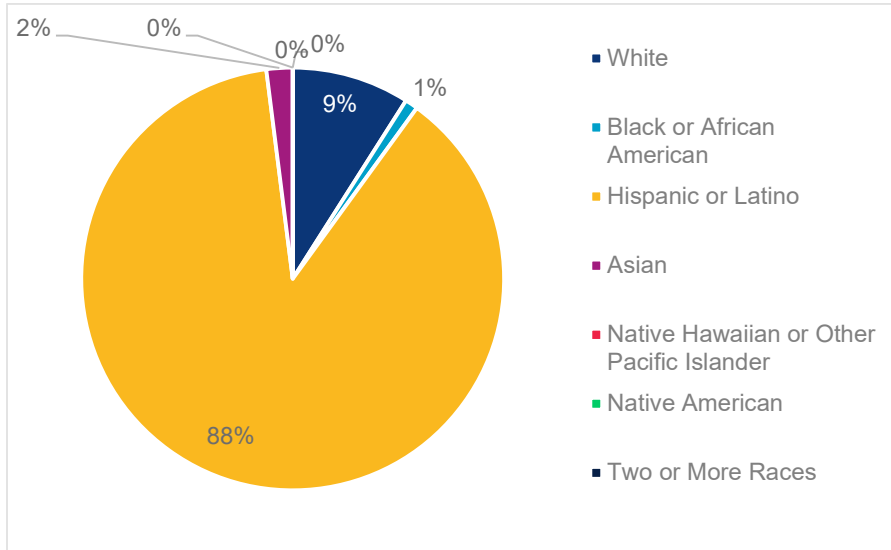
### 3. ADDITIONAL DATA DISPLAYS: NSSD 112 CONTEXT

**Exhibit 50. NSSD 112 Student Demographics by Race/Ethnicity, n=3,904 (2018-2019)**



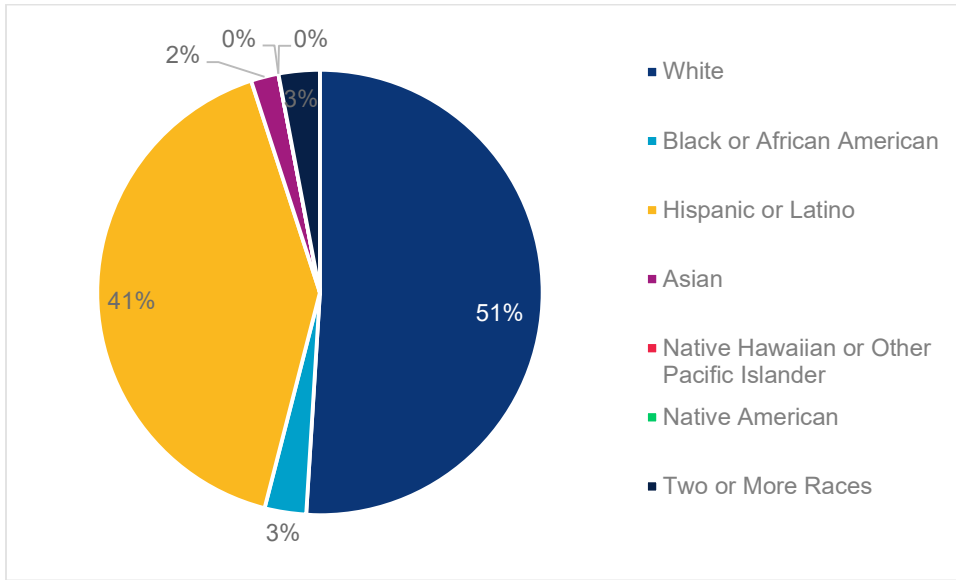
Source: Student-level data provided by NSSD 112

**Exhibit 51. District Enrollment of English Learners by Race/Ethnicity, n=703 (2018-2019)**



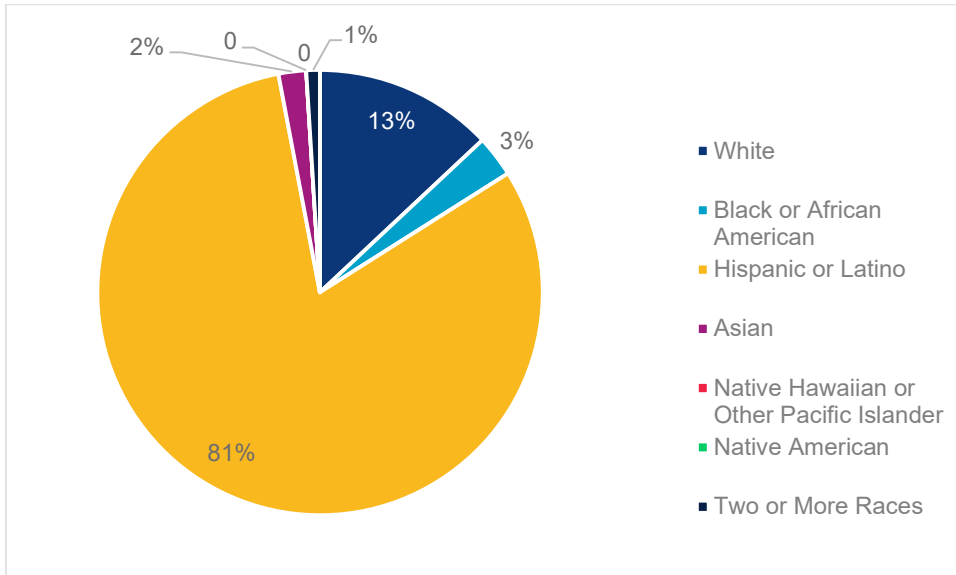
Source: Student-level data provided by NSSD 112

**Exhibit 52. District Enrollment of Students with an IEP by Race/Ethnicity, n=664 (2018-2019)**



Source: Student-level data provided by NSSD 112

**Exhibit 53. District Enrollment of Low-Income Students by Race/Ethnicity, n=974 (2018-2019)**



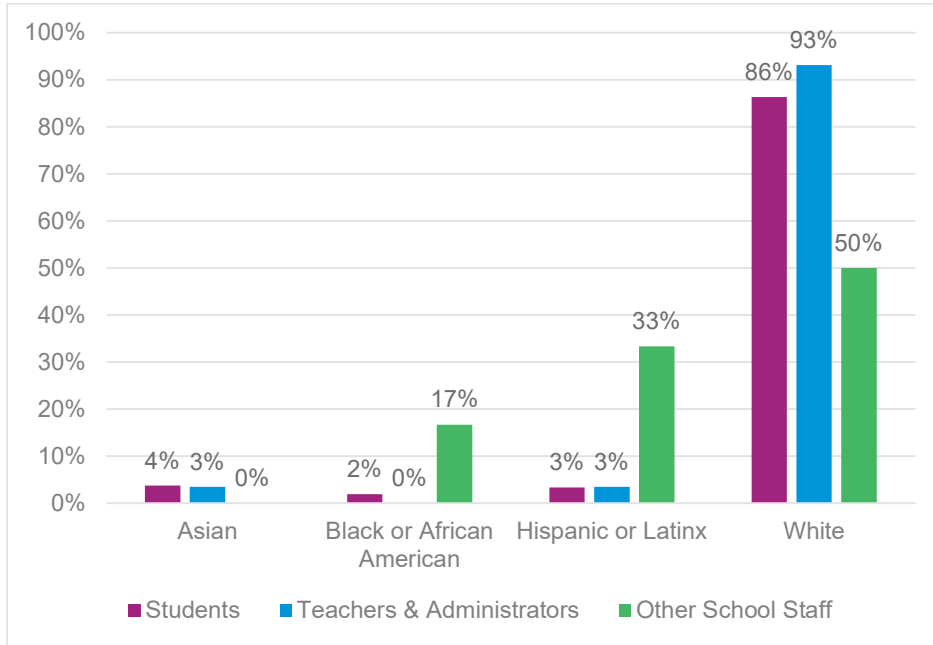
Source: Student-level data provided by NSSD 112

#### 4. ADDITIONAL DATA DISPLAYS: WORKFORCE DIVERSITY BY SCHOOL

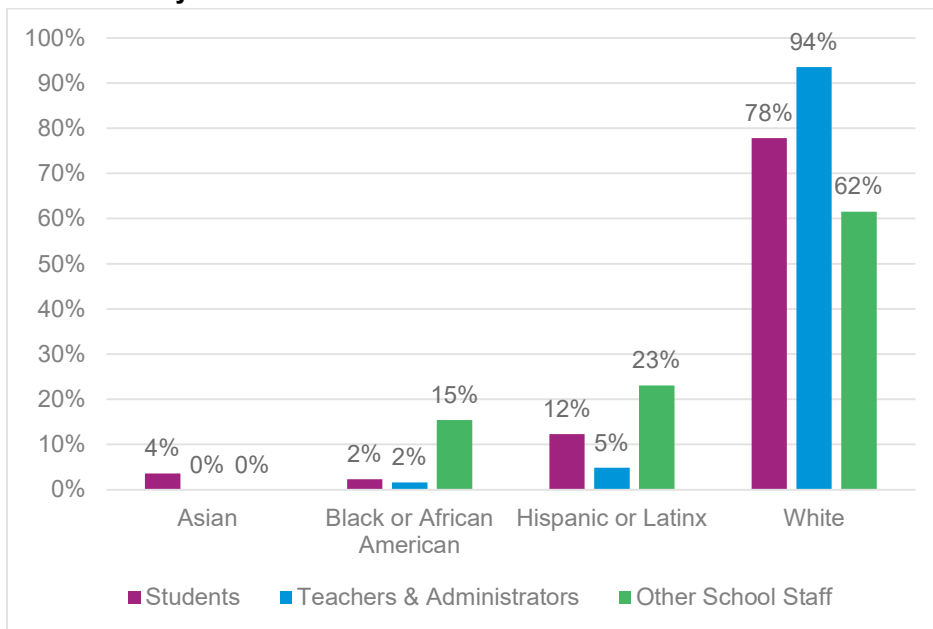
Note: An additional 4% of NSSD 112 students identify as Native American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Two or More Races. Those students are not included in the following charts because the data provided indicated that no staff identify in those three demographic categories.

The following charts contain data from the 2019-2020 school year.

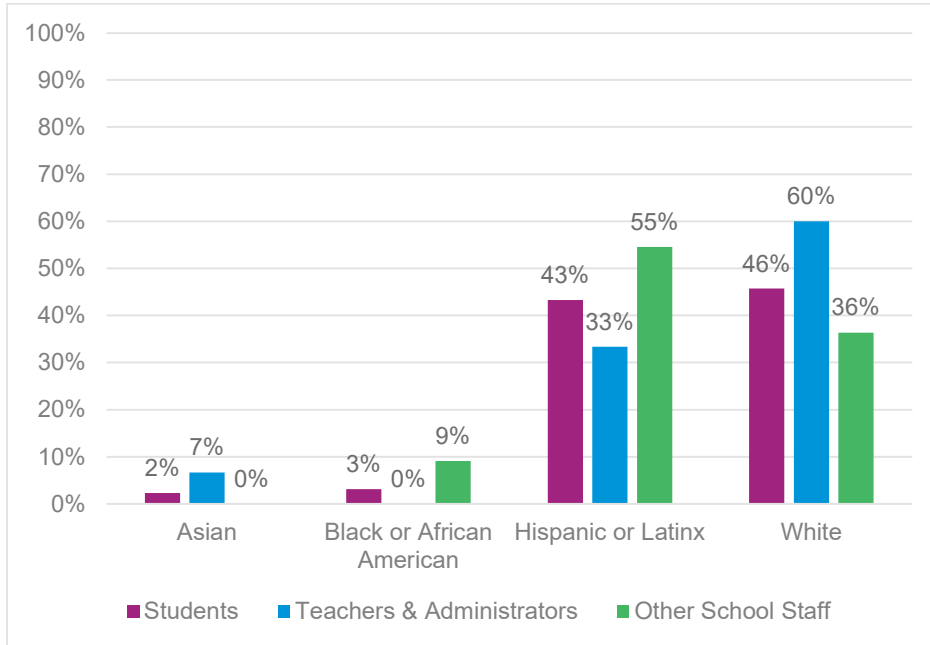
**Exhibit 54. Braeside Elementary School Student Enrollment, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



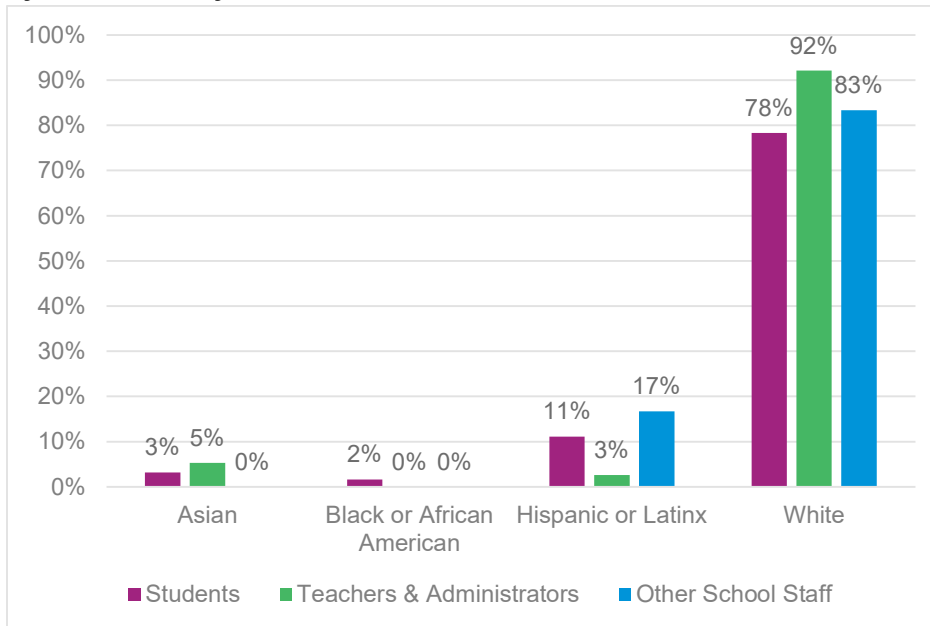
**Exhibit 55. Edgewood Middle School Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



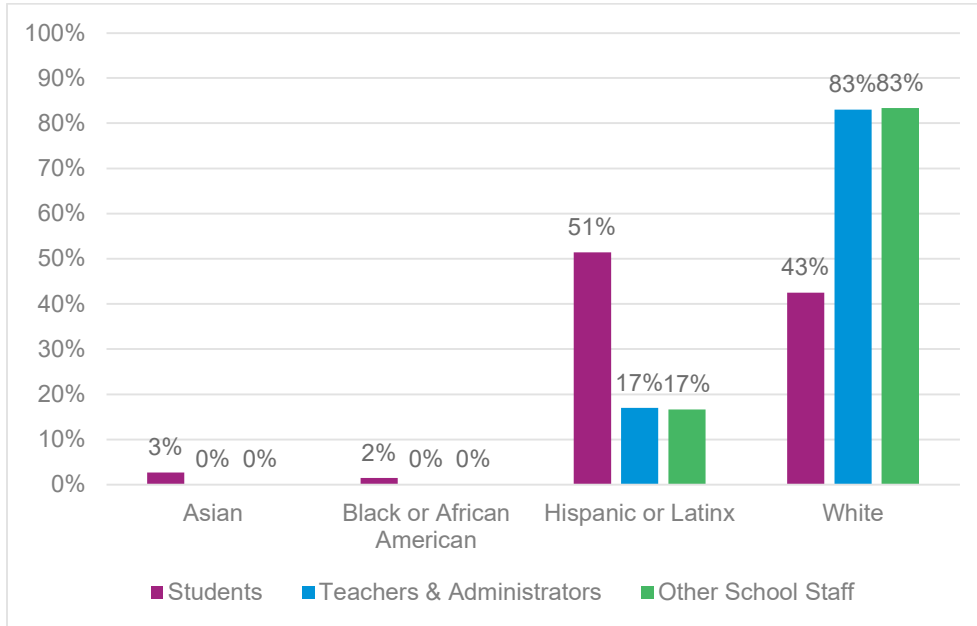
**Exhibit 56. Green Bay Early Education Center Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



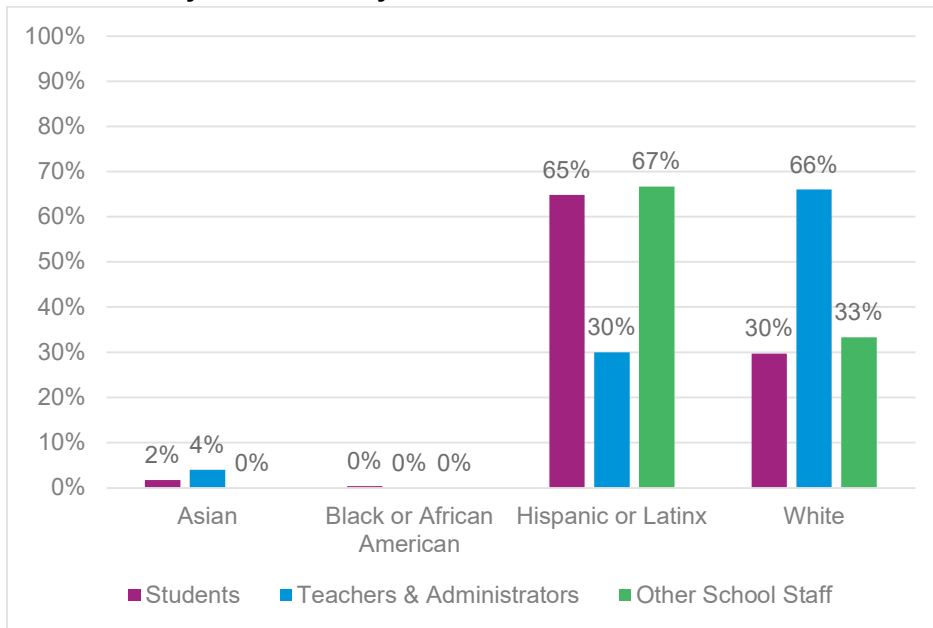
**Exhibit 57. Indian Trail Elementary Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



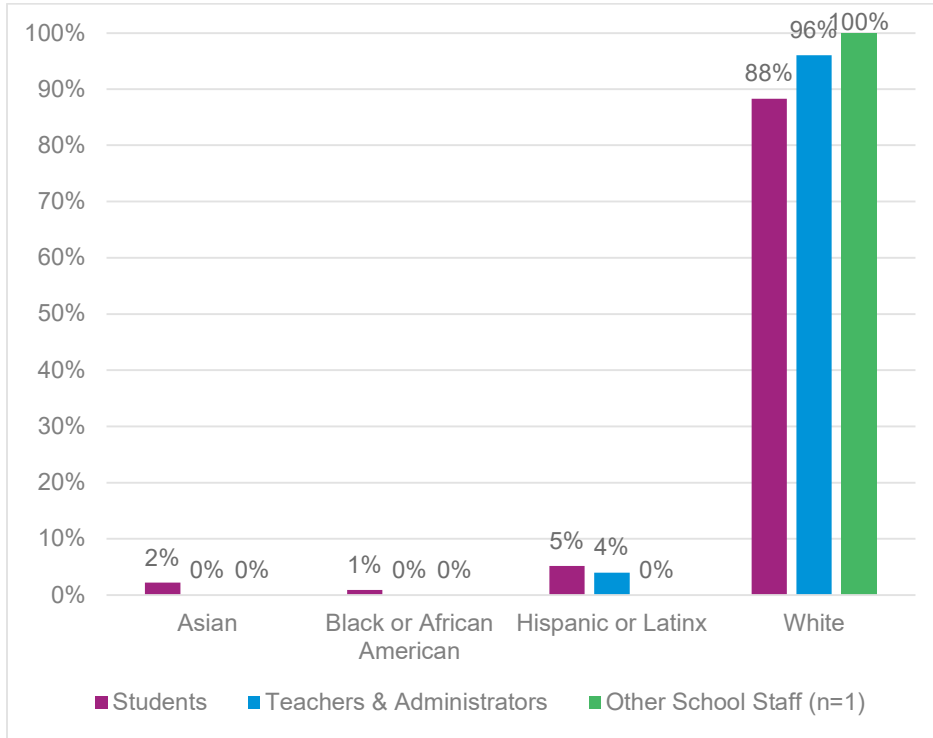
**Exhibit 58. Northwood Middle School Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



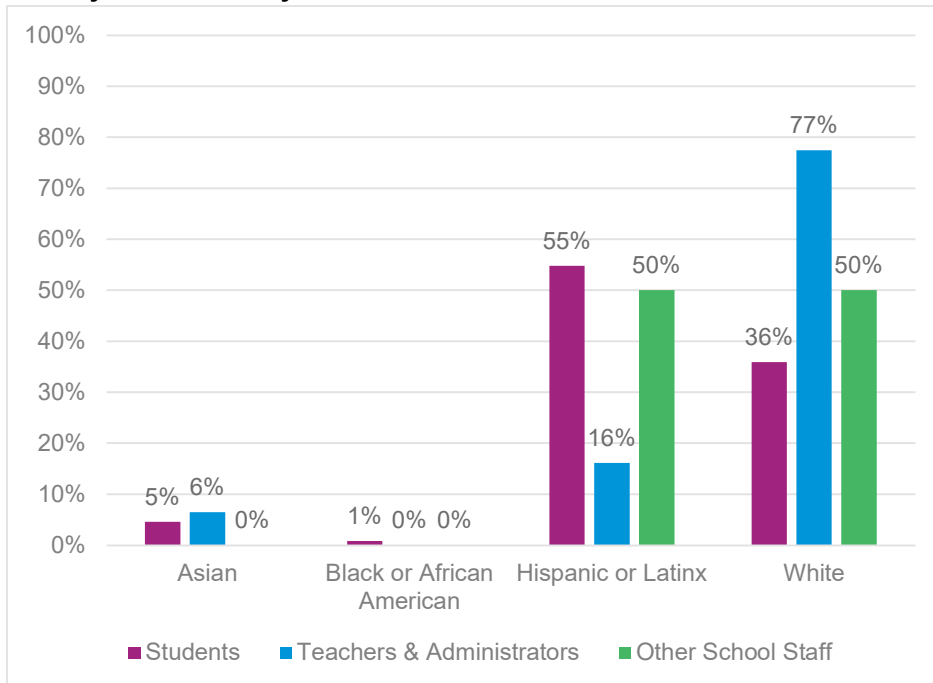
**Exhibit 59. Oak Terrace Elementary School Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



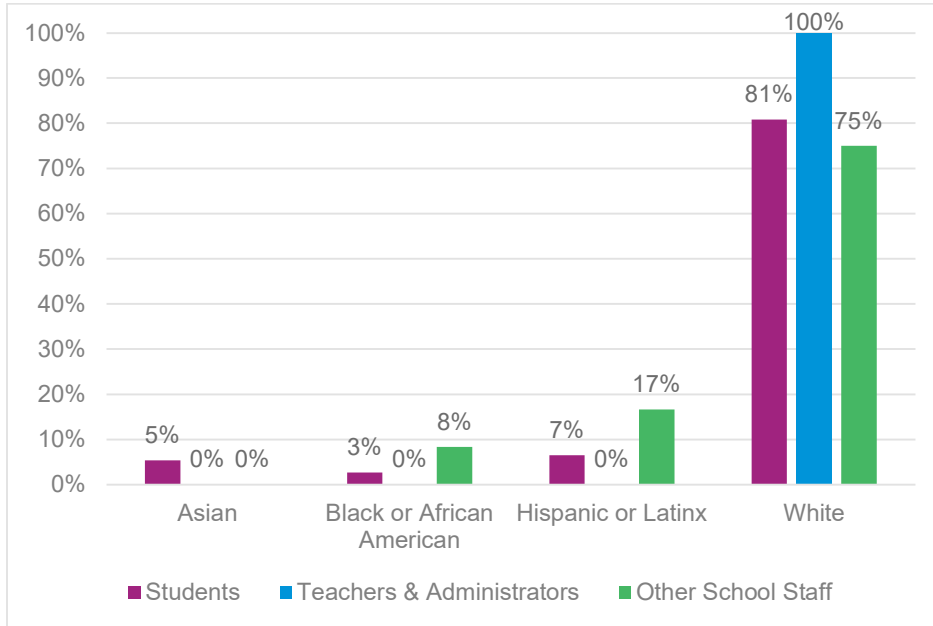
**Exhibit 60. Ravinia Elementary School Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



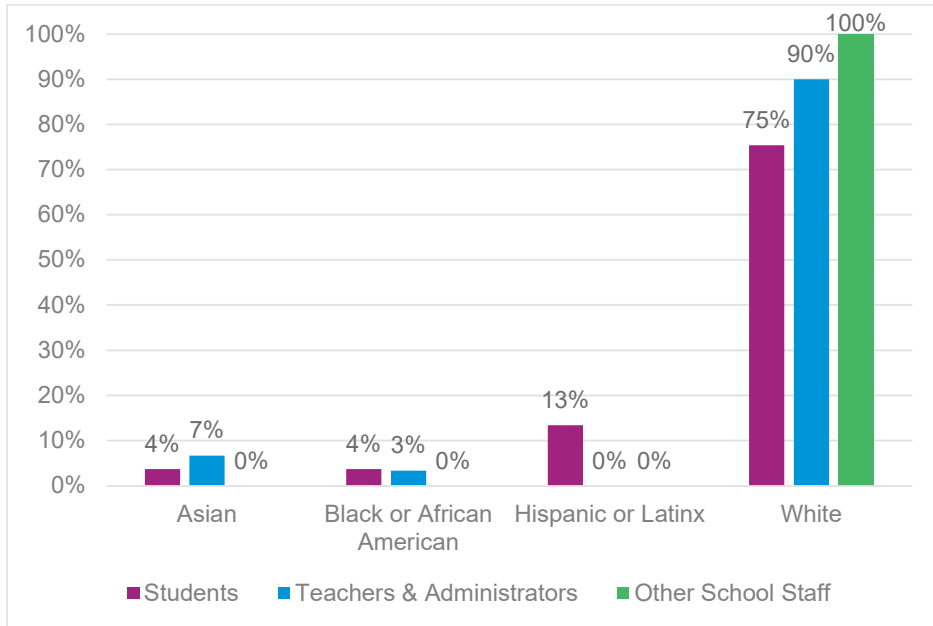
**Exhibit 61. Red Oak Elementary School Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



**Exhibit 62. Sherwood Elementary School Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



**Exhibit 63. Wayne Thomas Elementary School Students, Teachers and Administrators and other School Staff by Race/Ethnicity**



## 5. EQUITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXAMPLE

The Superintendent or designee will appoint a Committee that includes people from varied backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences who:

- Bring knowledge, experience, and relationships that reflect the diversity of the North Shore School District 112.
- Have a strong interest in issues of educational equity.
- Can engage in the process of institutional change related to equity and inclusion.
- Have experiences across multiple dimensions of diversity.
- Are willing to serve and be fully committed to attend committee and workgroup meetings.

<b>Composition of Committee Members</b>
Committee Chair – Superintendent (or designee)
One (1) Assistant Superintendent
Two (2) School Board Members
Six (6) Parents/Guardians (representative sample)
Two (2) Community Members
Two (2) Administrators (School Leadership)
Six (6) Teachers (representative sample)
Two (2) Students (one (1) from each middle school)

The Committee may seem large, but it is representative of the stakeholders in the community. It also ensures there are enough members to break out into work groups.

## 6. LOCAL EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS WITH DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS

The following table contains information on ten local educator preparation programs with diverse student populations, according to the United States Department of Education Title II State Reports (2020).

Program	Total Enrollment	BIPOC (n)	BIPOC (%)	African American (n)	African American (%)	Hispanic (n)	Hispanic (%)
<b>Chicago State University</b>	281	260	92.5%	216	76.9%	42	14.9%
<b>University of Illinois at Chicago</b>	673	450	66.9%	76	11.3%	119	17.7%
<b>Governors State University</b>	264	127	48.1%	67	25.4%	51	19.3%
<b>Relay Graduate School of Education</b>	319	145	45.5%	43	13.5%	54	16.9%
<b>Northeastern Illinois University</b>	650	281	43.2%	28	4.3%	197	30.3%
<b>Concordia University</b>	331	134	40.5%	26	7.9%	87	26.3%
<b>DePaul University</b>	839	329	39.2%	101	12.0%	110	13.1%
<b>National-Louis University</b>	2533	939	37.1%	302	11.9%	474	18.7%
<b>Loyola University of Chicago</b>	542	190	35.1%	46	8.5%	83	15.3%
<b>Aurora University</b>	392	135	34.4%	14	3.6%	112	28.6%