Hudson School District
Equity Evaluation
Integrated Comprehensive Systems for Equity

INTEGRATED
COMPREHENSIVE
SYSTEMS FOR EQUITY™

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We want to thank the Hudson District Office administrators for organizing the focus groups and data collection during this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also want to thank the staff, administrators, and community members for being willing to meet with us via video call on Zoom, and for the time and patience to gather, decipher, correct, and clarify the data in this report. A sincere thank you to everyone.

I. Introduction

This evaluation is by request of the Hudson School District and the Hudson School District School Board. Many focus group participants stated that they hoped that the equity audit would be the catalyst for much needed changes in the district. One interviewee stated that "The fact that we are doing the evaluation, is clear that they [the District] are trying hard." Others hoped that there was an "explicit calling and checking in with BIPOC, LGBTQ, and low-income families for this kind of audit. They are the people who are going to have way more insight as to what needs to change." Many stated that the equity audit is a good start to this work and hoped the District did not request it as a response to the public outcry for change and the need to "check a box." Many focus group participants discussed the district's inconsistent policies and inconsistent messaging specific to the work of educational equity. Other participants agreed that the District does not have the vision to increase staff understanding across identities and hoped that this equity evaluation will be the impetus.

Our goal in this report includes an overview of the equity audit data, followed by a summation of the focus group data identifying what is working well and what are the challenges for all learners. We analyzed qualitative (focus group data) and quantitative data (equity audit data) and compared that to best practices and research identifying critical next steps for the future of the Hudson School District.

II. District Equity Data Relative to Wisconsin Pupil Nondiscrimination Law

We provided the District with the ICS Equity Audit form, and the District then collected the data for the form. These equity audit data are integrated throughout the sections. The link for the data is embedded here.

In the district, 48% of the students are labeled and are receiving services outside or in addition to general education (see Figure 1), including nearly 6% students identified as gifted, 20% students identified for Response to Intervention or RtI, 14% of students identified with a disability, nearly 2% identified as English Language Learners (ELL), and 0.06% attend alternative settings.

Figure 1:   Percent of Students Labeled in the District

Percent of Students Identified in the District
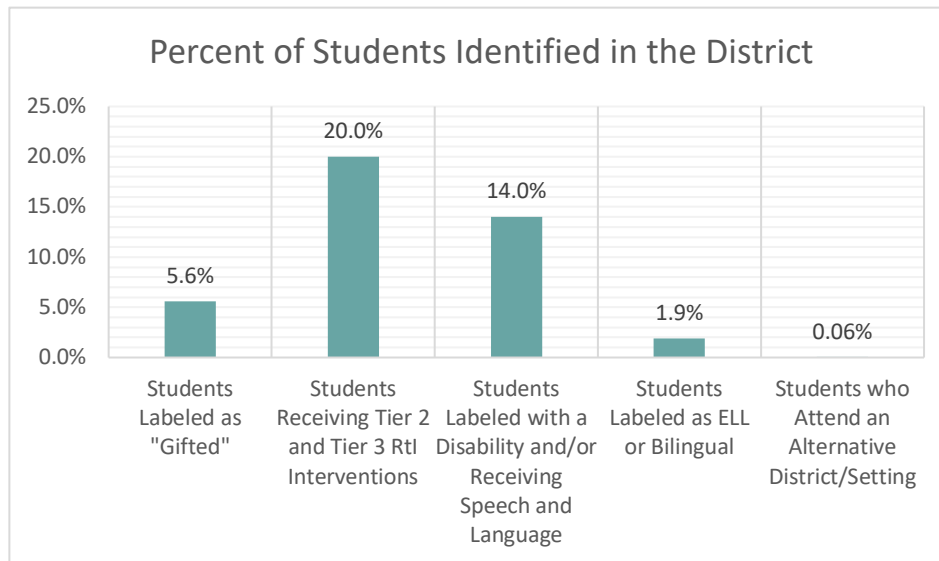
As a Wisconsin public school district, the Hudson School District remains legally bound to be in compliance with Wisconsin Chapter 118:13 Pupil Nondiscrimination Law and PI-9 Wisconsin Administrative Code. Under s. 118.13, no pupil may be excluded from a public school, or from any school activities or programs, or be denied any benefits or treated in a different manner because of: sex, race, religion, national origin (including a student whose primary language is not English), ancestry, creed, pregnancy, parental status, marital status, sexual orientation, physical disability, mental disability, emotional disability, learning disability. The law requires each school district to submit an annual compliance report to the Department of Public Instruction and periodically conduct a self-evaluation of the status of pupil nondiscrimination and equality of educational opportunity. The policy must apply to all areas of school operations, including school sponsored programs and activities. Section PI 9.03, Wis. Admin. Code illustrates the scope and breadth of the required district policies by identifying many of the areas subject to the nondiscrimination policy. They include admission to classes or programs, rules of conduct and discipline, selection of instructional and library media materials, and facilities, among others. However, the pupil nondiscrimination statute applies to all aspects of district operations and programs. What the law requires is that the pupil nondiscrimination policy or policies that the district adopts apply to all areas.

The Hudson School District pupil non-discrimination statement specifically states: *The District is committed and dedicated to the task of providing the best education possible for every student in the District. With this goal in mind and consistent with legal requirements, the District shall not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex (including gender identity, gender expression and nonconformity to gender role stereotypes), sexual orientation, race, color, national origin*

(including English proficiency, surname, or language-minority status), ancestry, religion, creed, age, pregnancy, marital or parental status, homelessness status, any physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other legally-protected status or classification in its curricular, career and technical education, co-curricular, student services, recreational, or other programs or activities, or in admission or access to programs or activities offered by the District.

This includes, but is not limited to: — admission to any school, class, program or activity; — standards and rules of behavior, including student harassment; — disciplinary actions, including suspensions and expulsions; — acceptance and administration of gifts, bequests, scholarships and other aids, benefits and services to students from private agencies, organizations, or persons; — instructional and library media materials selection and reconsideration; — methods, practices, and materials used for testing, evaluating and counseling students; — facilities; — opportunity for participation in athletic programs or activities; and — school-sponsored food service programs.

In this section, we identify the equity strengths and areas for growth for students as described in the district's pupil non-discrimination language including by disability, free-reduced lunch status, race, sexual identity, and gender.

In each section, we provide any additional relevant demographic data followed by key equity audit data. We then describe our understanding of how students with this identity are currently served in the district. We rely on the equity audit data as one way to evaluate the effectiveness of how students with this identity are currently educated in the district. We conclude each section with focus group perspectives of strengths and areas identified for growth.

Students Identified for Special Education

Of the 13.9% of students identified for special education, 21.7% include students labeled with a specific learning disability, 20.3% students labeled other health impaired, 16.9% students identified for speech language, 16.8% students identified with emotional disabilities, 13.8% students identified with autism, 4.2% students with traumatic brain injury, 2.8% students with intellectual disabilities, and students with orthopedic impairment (.44%).

Figure 2:   Percent of Students with Disabilities

Percent by Disability
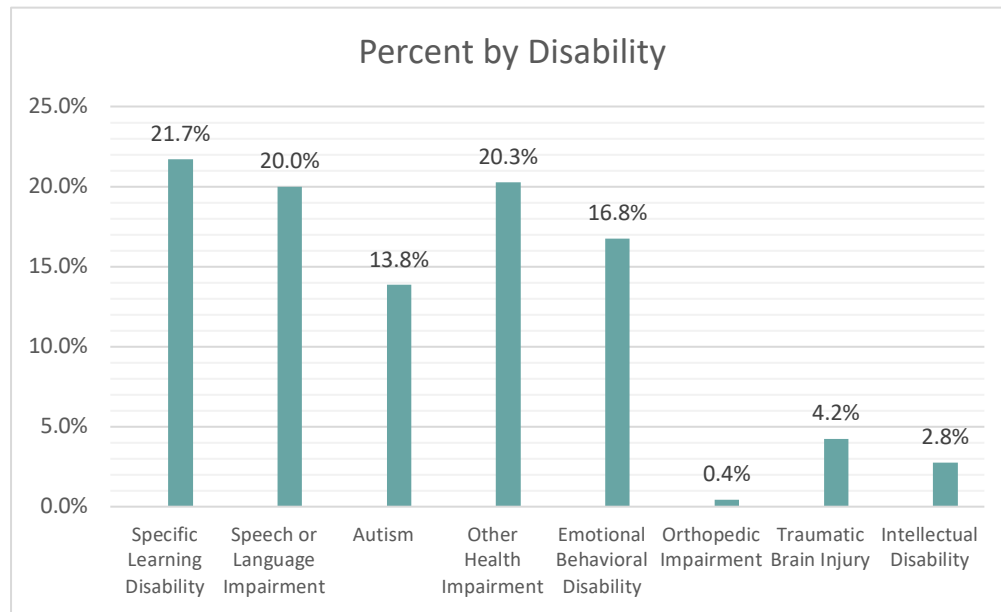
Though students with disabilities comprise 13.9% of the district population, they are over-identified for in-school suspensions given that 100% of the 27 students reported for in-school suspensions were students receiving special education, and 32% of out of school suspensions were students receiving special education. Two of the five students expelled (40%) were students receiving special education. (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3:   Students with Disabilities and Discipline
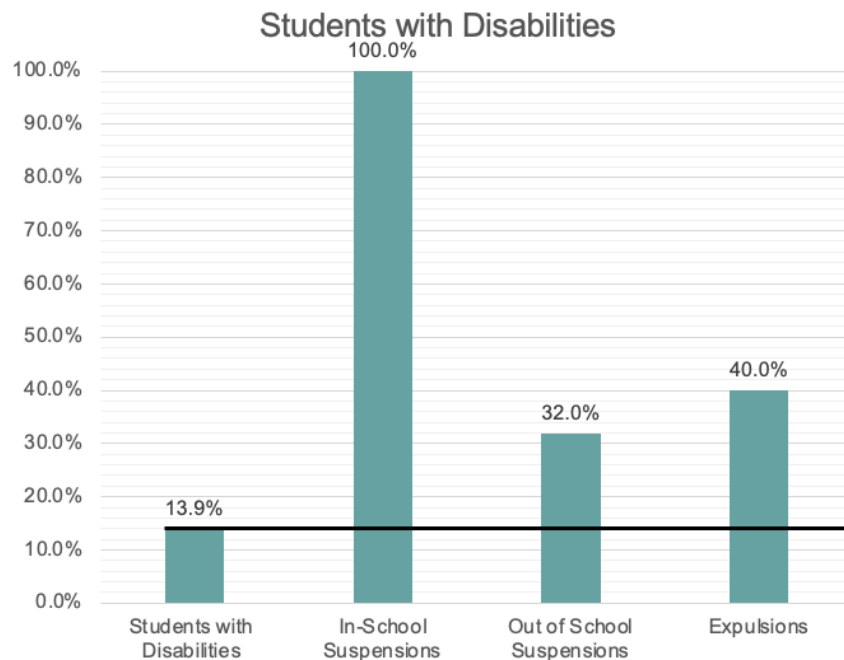
Student attendance rates by students with disabilities (93%) were comparable to students without disabilities (95%).

Keeping in mind that of the 5092 district students, only 19 are identified with an intellectual disability (.004%), then all other district students, including all other students identified for special education are of average to above average intelligence and do not have an intellectual disability and thus can have the expectation of above-to-above average academic performance.

For reading achievement, while 62.7% of students without disabilities scored proficient or advanced, only 18.9% of students with disabilities scored in this range. Likewise, while 36.7% of students without disabilities scored basic or below, 76.4% of students with disabilities scored basic or below. Significantly, nearly 40% (39.2%) of students with disabilities scored below basic. Clearly these data reflect that the current district education for students with disabilities are failing these students (See Figure 4).

Figure 4:   Reading Achievement Data by Disability

Reading Achievement Data in District
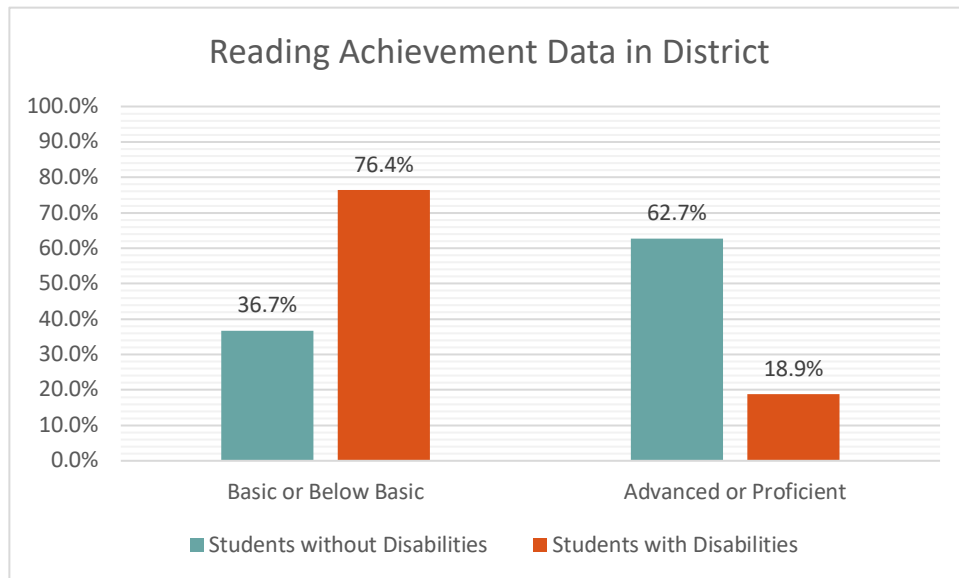
Math achievement between students with and without disabilities are even worse than the reading opportunity gaps. For example, nearly 50% (49.2%) of students with disabilities scored below basic in math compared to 7.1% of students without disabilities. Likewise, 23.9% of students with disabilities score proficient or advanced compared to 65.4% of students without disabilities. (See Figure 5).

Figure 5: Math Achievement Data by Disability

Math Achievement Data in District

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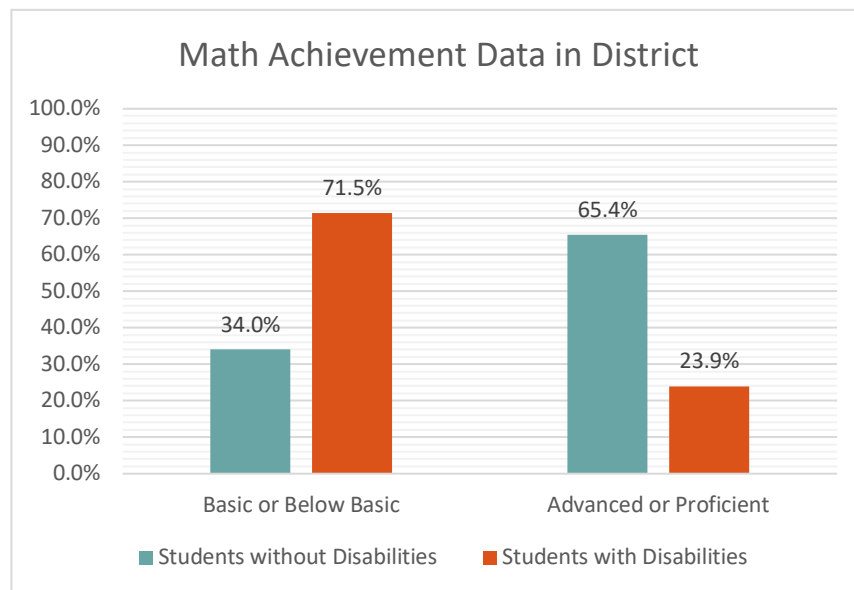
At the high school level, only 3 students of 668 (.47%) enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) courses are students identified for special education. None of these students scored a 3 or higher on the AP exams.

Special Education Services and Focus Group Perspectives

Within the focus groups, little conversation occurred specific to students with significant intellectual disabilities. Staff were proud of their segregated programs and the ability to integrate some kids when they were "ready". As Figure 6 reflects, no students with intellectual disabilities are in a general education classroom 80% or more of the time.

Figure 6:   80% or More of the Time for Students with Disabilities in General Education Curriculum
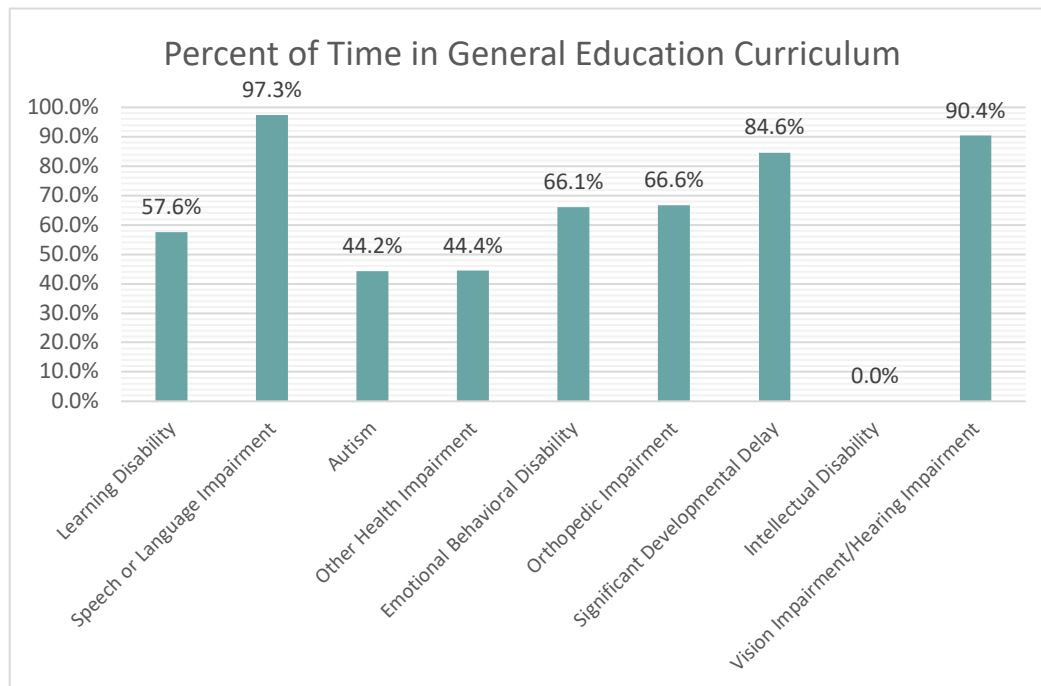
At the elementary level teachers explained that services for students with disabilities were set up under a categorical approach resource room (except one elementary school). In the categorical approach, one special education teacher may serve four or five grade levels for students with only one or two categories of disabilities such as learning disabilities or students with behavioral needs and other health impairments. Special education teachers and paraprofessionals also assist in supporting students both in general education and by removing students and providing

remediation or pullout support in special education resource rooms. Caseloads for special education were described as an average of 15 students to one teacher who supports three to five grade levels.

Others reported that the District tried to implement a cross-categorical approach where special education teachers educate a range of students with differing special education categories on their caseloads, but that many teachers resisted and pushed for a more category-specific approach for special education. Teachers reflected on a cross-categorical approach as too intense to have more complicated students on their caseload while still being expected to remove students from the core of teaching and learning for academics or behavioral needs.

Some educators were concerned about the categorical approach because they believed that students lost instructional time when a special education teacher had to leave their instruction of students to go to attend to a student with challenging behaviors. As one teacher stated, it is essential that we "Ensure appropriate and adequate special education services continue for the child no matter if behaviors are going on in that program – the other children should not lose minutes when outburst or other behaviors occur."

The district supports center-based programs for students with severe emotional disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and autism at all levels of elementary, middle, and high school. This means that rather than students with these labels being able to attend their neighborhood school with their neighborhood peers and with their siblings, they are bussed across the district to a different school to be placed with students most often in a segregated room with students with a similar label. For these students, the practice of mainstreaming students from the self-contained classroom continues to occur "for those students who are able to spend small amounts of time within the general education classroom."

Students eligible for special education who are 3 years old receive services in a self-contained classroom or receive an education in their home from an itinerant teacher. Four-year-old students with disabilities are eligible to attend the 4-year-old kindergartens based on their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

Educators from some schools discussed a practice of "5-minute mini-goals" for students with disabilities to spend five minutes in the core of teaching and learning. As one staff member stated, "So many wonderful things in Hudson, but we could do better using mini-goals to help kids stay in the classroom for 5 minutes."

Middle school and high school teachers reported a similar categorical program model. Each middle school house supports students by special education category. More specifically, students with emotional disabilities are scheduled for one house, center-based students with intellectual disabilities are assigned to another house, while center-based students with emotional disabilities are placed in a different house. As one teacher stated, "We look at the

total number of students in each house, but not about the actual needs of each student and therefore it is even more disproportionate. In addition, the houses rotate every year between students with autism, intellectual disabilities, and emotional and behavioral disabilities at the middle school level. Paraprofessionals modify student assignments in the general education environment. Students receiving speech and language are assigned to a specific house per grade."

Another teacher reported that "Our students are included in classrooms, but we need more education on how to socially engage students in the classrooms – a more well-rounded approach would be helpful." Other educators stated that educational assistants and paraprofessionals are not provided training and need to carry over specific strategies within the classroom setting for specific learners.

Students Receiving Free/Reduced Price Lunch

Students receiving free/reduced price lunch represent 16.5% of the district, but these students are overidentified for special education at 27.2% and are underrepresented in gifted education at 10.2%. Only 7% of the students enrolled in advanced courses at the middle and high school receive free/reduced price lunch (See Figure 7).

Figure 7:   Proportional Representation of Students Receiving Free and Reduced
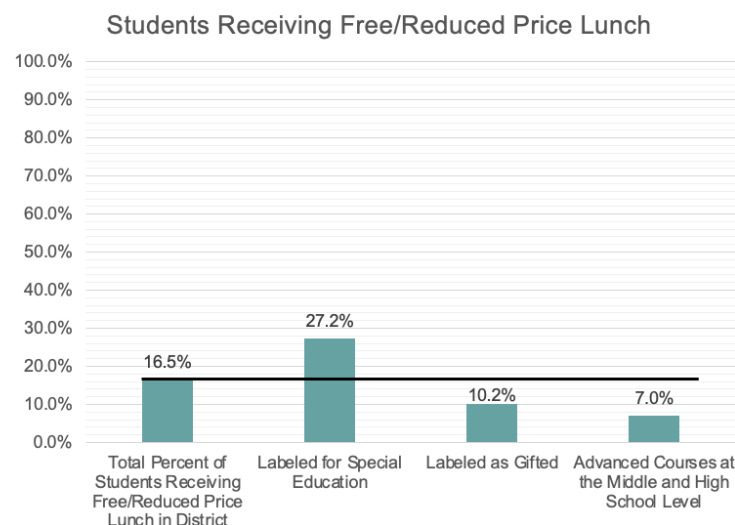
Students receiving free/reduced price lunch are also overidentified by about 34% in both in school and out of school suspensions at a rate of about 40% for each. Of the 8 district students

receiving an alternative education, 4 are students receiving free/reduced price lunch (See Figure 8).

Figure 8:   Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch by Discipline
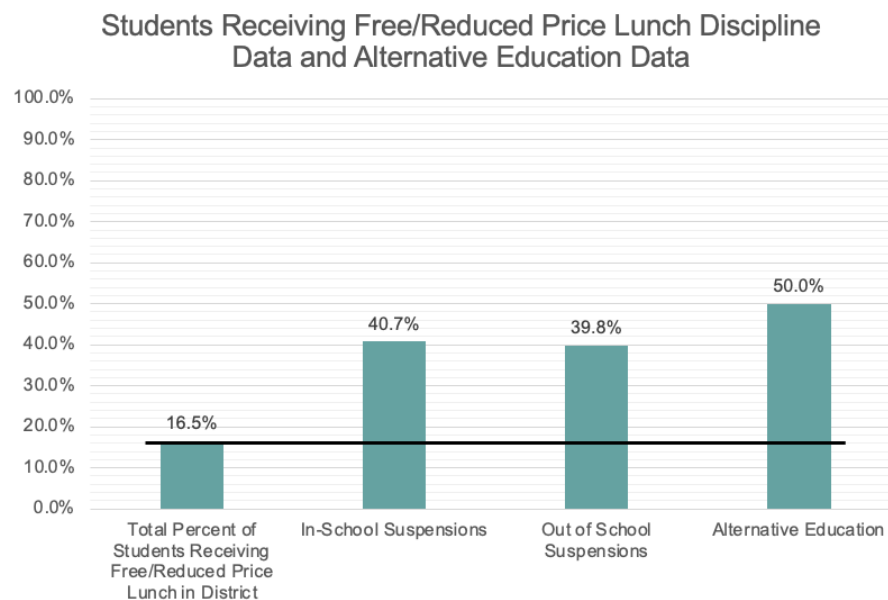
The District reports that students receiving free/reduced price lunch hold a 92.3% attendance rate compared to a 95.1% attendance rate for students not receiving free/reduced price lunch.

In reading, 63.8% of district students receiving free/reduced price lunch are at the basic or below basic level. Likewise, only 36.2% are proficient or advanced. At the same time, 61.8% of students in the district who are middle to upper class scored proficient/advanced in reading. (See Figure 9)

Figure 9:   Reading Achievement by SES

Reading Achievement Data in District

Figure 10:   Math Achievement by SES
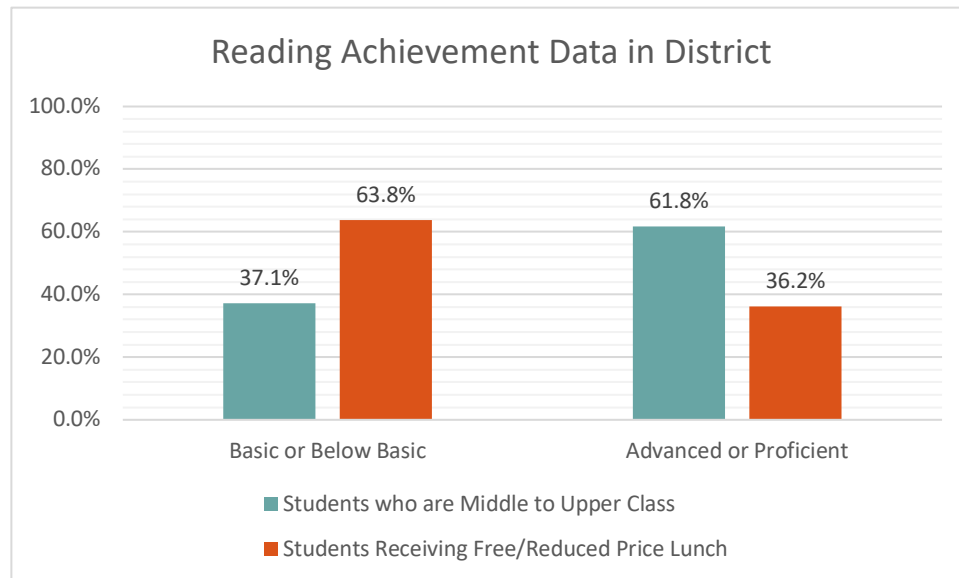
Math achievement data reflect similar trends with 61.6% of students receiving free/reduced price lunch at the basic or below basic level in math with only about 38.5% proficient/advanced in math. Of students not receiving free/reduced price lunch 64.4% are advanced/proficient in math (See Figure 10).

Figure 10:   Math Achievement by SES

Math Achievement Data in District
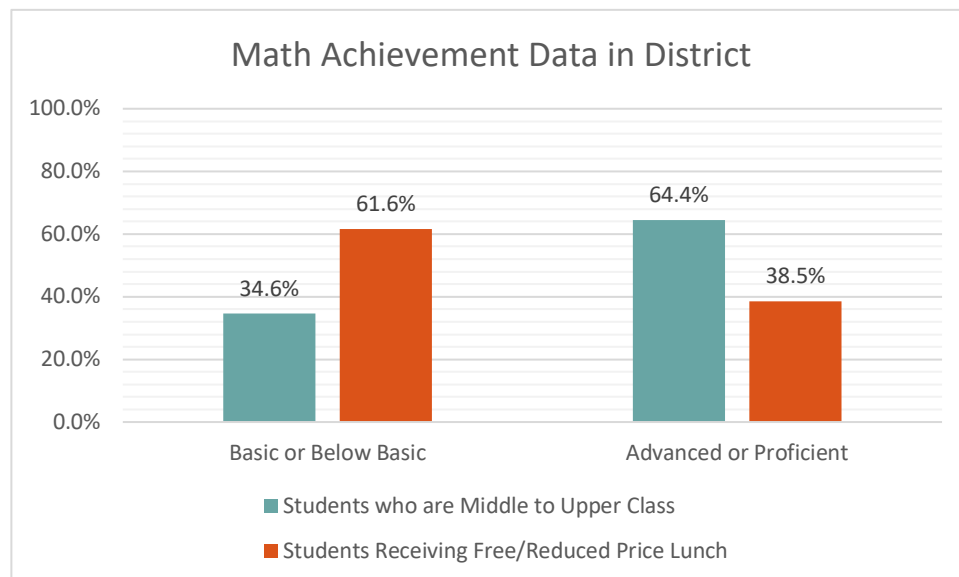
In short, more than two-thirds of students receiving free/reduced price lunch and one-third of students not receiving free/reduced lunch are not prepared for post-secondary options. Three of four students who dropped out of school were students who received free/reduced price lunch.

Students who receive free/reduced price lunches are underrepresented in high school Advanced Placement courses representing 45 (7%) of the 641 high school students enrolled in these courses. (See Figure 11). Of the Advanced Placement exams taken, 31 students receiving free/reduced price lunches scored a 3 or above.

Figure 11:   Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch and Advanced Placement
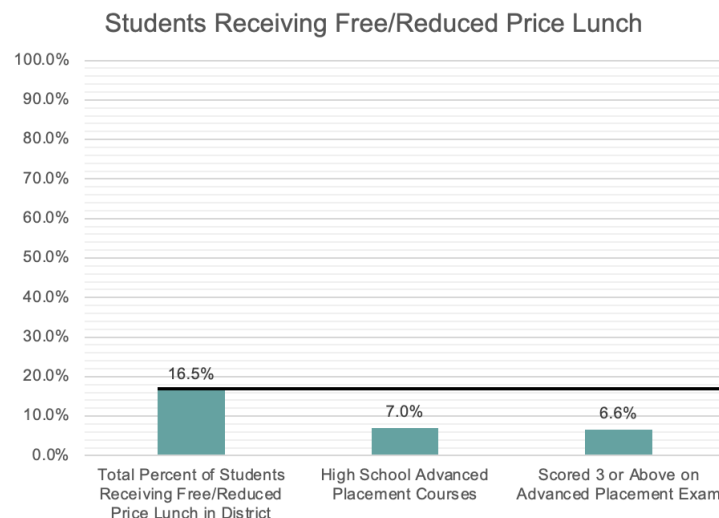
It would be easy and common to assume that these social class differences in education opportunity are a result of in-home opportunities. Yet, the research on education and poverty explains that math and reading achievement differences between students receiving free/reduced price lunch and students who do not represent a combination of "opportunity gaps" in the district and stereotypes and bias about students who receive free/reduced priced lunch which we will address further in our Essential Next Steps section of this report. We did not receive data on students receiving free/reduced price lunch represented in Response to Intervention programs and as a next step, the District should calculate these data.

Students Receiving Free/Reduced Price Lunch – Focus Group Perspectives

Some focus group participants discussed the district historical inequities across socio-economic means and the need for all families and all students to have access to academic rigor and access

to all options (e.g., access to afterschool transportation to be involved in extracurricular activities), traveling sports teams, etc. As a parent summarized, "I feel bad when I go to pick up my kids and there are kids just going home and cannot stay for after-school activities." Staff discussed their feelings of not knowing what to do as the increase of families in the district who are "food and economically insecure."

Other focus group participants identified how some district practices fundamentally exclude families experiencing poverty. For example, one focus group identified a school that held a carnival that required parents to pay $25 per ticket to go and then families were also expected to buy raffle tickets. This practice is one example of a district practice that works against the District's currently stated strategic plan of "creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment." Instead, this focus group suggested a school focused potluck with informal games or activities for families to meet and become acquainted with each other.

Students of Color

Students of color comprise about 11% of the district and include 3.9% multiracial, 3.8% Latinx, 1.9% Asian, 1.3% Black, .2% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and .04% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (See Figure 12.)

Figure 12:   District Racial Demographics
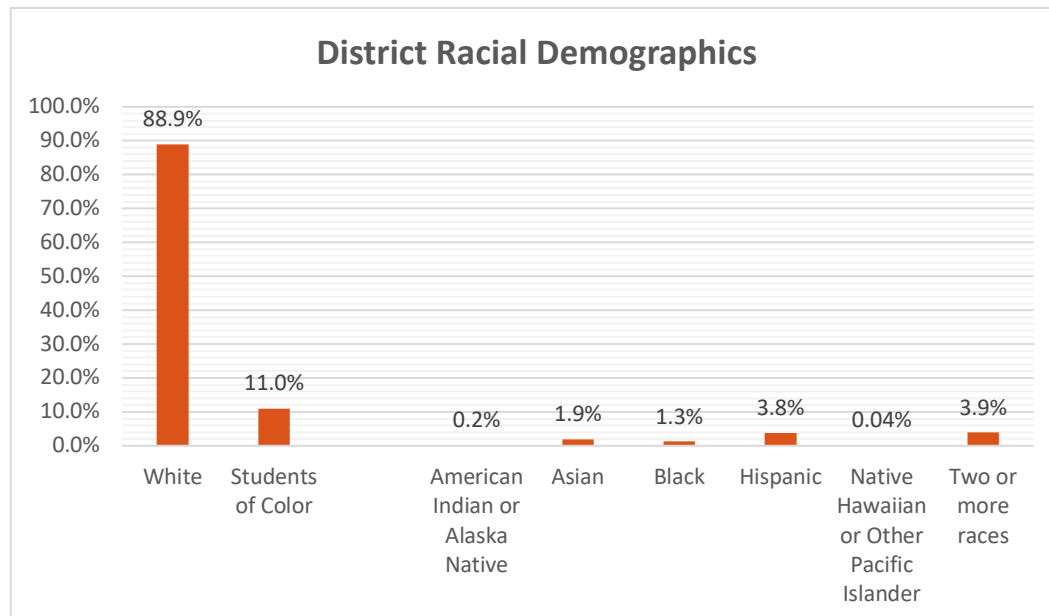
Of the 27 students who received in-school suspensions all but 1 were white. Out of school suspensions totaled 103. Though students of color represent 11% of the district students, they

are overidentified for out of school suspensions (19.4%). Black students are the most overidentified for out of school suspensions at 4.9% (Black students in district 1.3%), followed by multiracial students 9% (multi-racial students in district 3.8%), and Latinx students 4.9% (Latinx students in district 3.8%). (See Figure 13)

Figure 13:   Students by Race and Discipline

Discipline Data for Students of Color
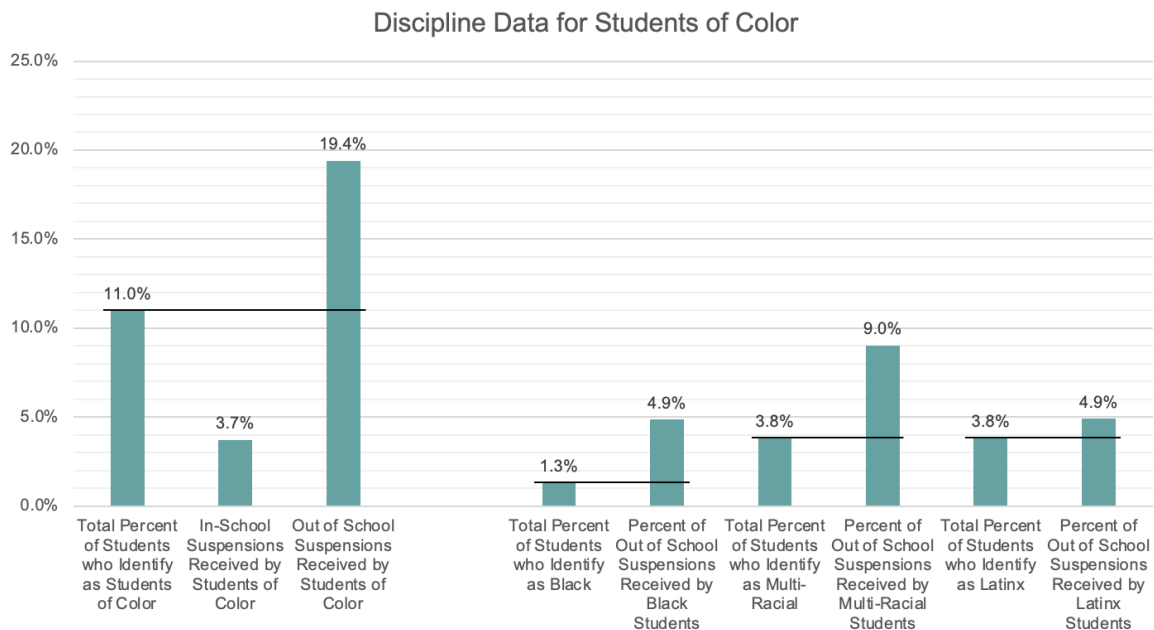
For reading achievement, all students of color scored lower in achievement than White students. Black students had the lowest reading scores across students of color with 76.3% of Black students scoring basic or below basic, 23.7% proficient and 0 scored advanced. Multi-racial students fared better than Black students with 45.6% scoring proficient or advanced and 54.4% scored basic or below basic. Among Hispanic students 51.7% score basic or below and 41.2% scored proficient or advanced. Whereas, of White students 41% scored basic or below basic and 58.2% scored proficient or advanced (See Figure 14).

Figure 14:   Students by Race and Reading Achievement

Reading Achievement Data in District

White Students — Basic or Below Basic: 41.0%, Advanced or Proficient: 58.2%
Black Students — Basic or Below Basic: 76.3%, Advanced or Proficient: 23.7%
Multi-Racial Students — Basic or Below Basic: 54.4%, Advanced or Proficient: 45.6%
Hispanic Students — Basic or Below Basic: 51.7%, Advanced or Proficient: 41.2%

■ Basic or Below Basic   ■ Advanced or Proficient
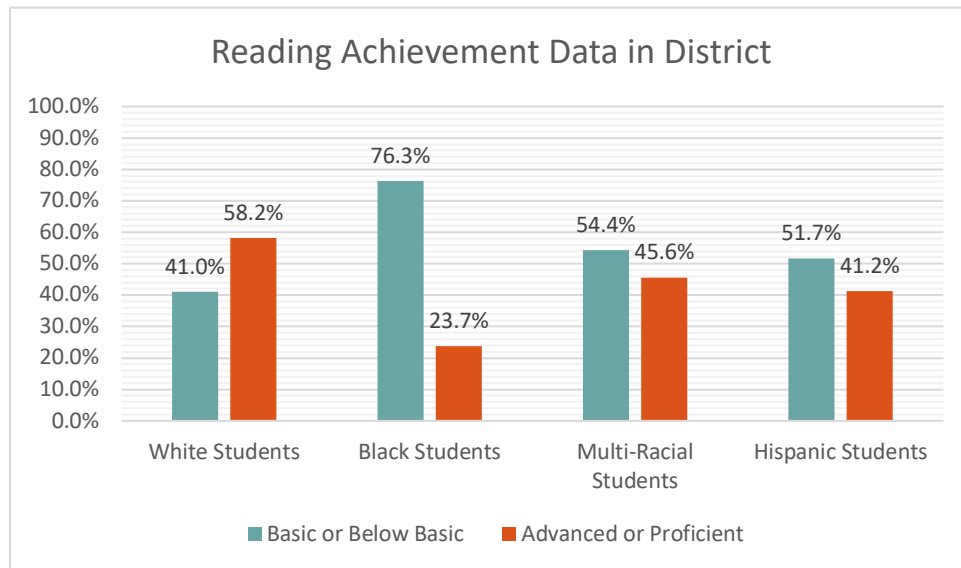
Math achievement for students of color fared worse than reading achievement when compared to White students, with Black students scoring lower than all other students of color. Students of color scoring basic or below basic in math included Black students 84.2%, Hispanic students 56.6%, Asian students 44.3%, Multiracial students 54.4% compared to White students, 40.1% (See Figure 15).

Figure 15:   Students by Race and Math Achievement

Math Achievement Data in District

White Students: 40.1%
Black Students: 84.2%
Multi-Racial Students: 54.4%
Hispanic Students: 56.6%
Asian Students: 44.30%

■ Basic or Below Basic
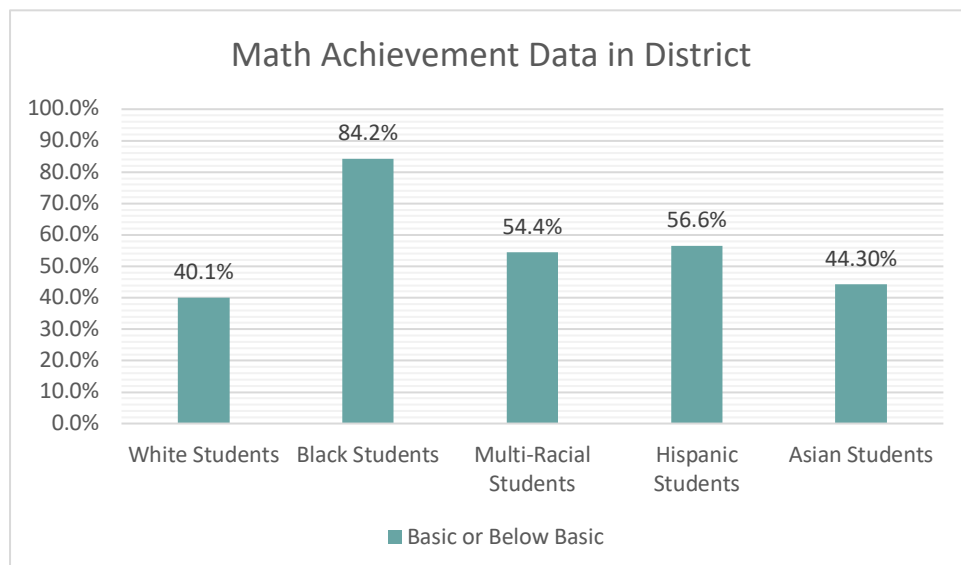
The district did not provide data on the percent of students of color in Response to Intervention and as a next step, the district should calculate these data.

Though students of color represent 11% of the district students, only 29 of 794 staff are of color (1.4%) , including zero Black staff members. Though Latinx students represent 3.8% of the district, only 4 district staff are Latinx (.04%). Of the 29 staff members of color, only 2 certified staff (e.g., staff with professional credentials, 1 Asian, 1 Native American) are employed by the district (see Figure 16). These data confirm a focus group participant who noted: "The staff identities, specific to racial identities, does not represent the student population or community of the District."

Figure 16:   Students of Color Relative to Staff of Color

Staff of Color in the District
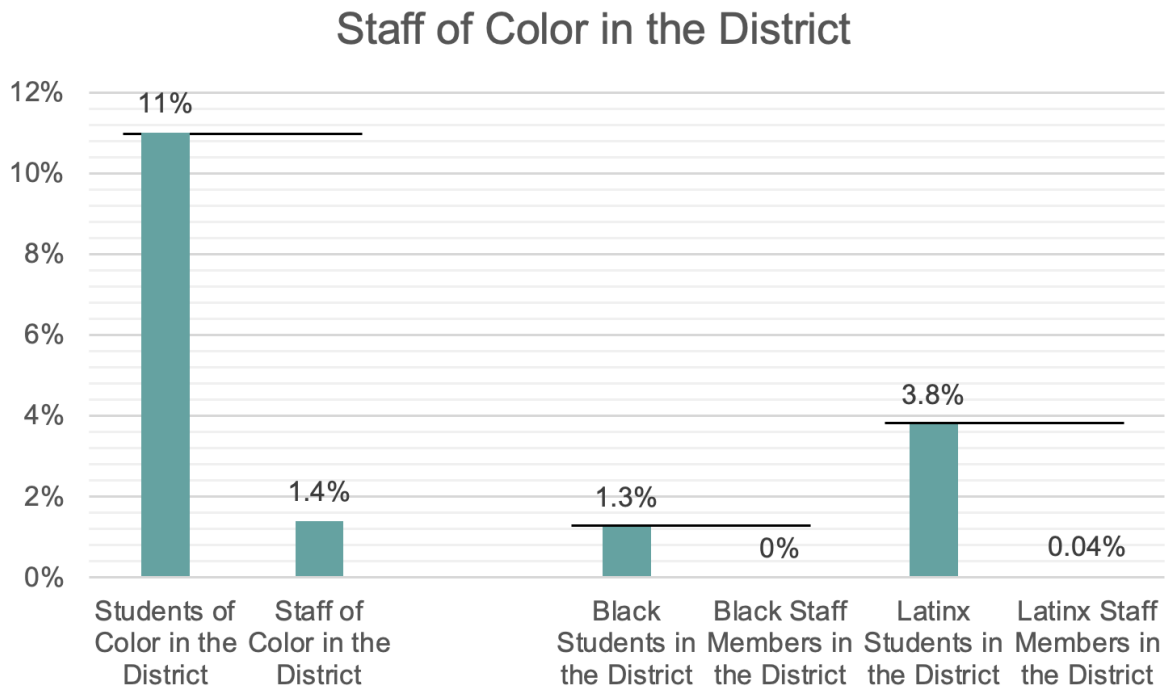
The Education of Students of Color

In this section, we describe how or where students of color are educated in the district which represents access to opportunity for students of color which contributes to the previously identified racial inequities.

Of the 761 students identified for special education, 89 or 11.7% are students of color. Thus, over-all, students of color are not over-identified for special education. When disaggregated by

race, however, students who are Latinx are overidentified for special education in that though they represent 3.8% of the district, Latinx students comprise 6.6% of students identified for special education. Other students of color are over-identified for special education: Black students (1.3% in the district, 2.2% identified for special education). Asian students (1.9% in the district, 2.2% in special education). (See Figure 17.)

Figure 17:   Students Labeled for Special Education and Race
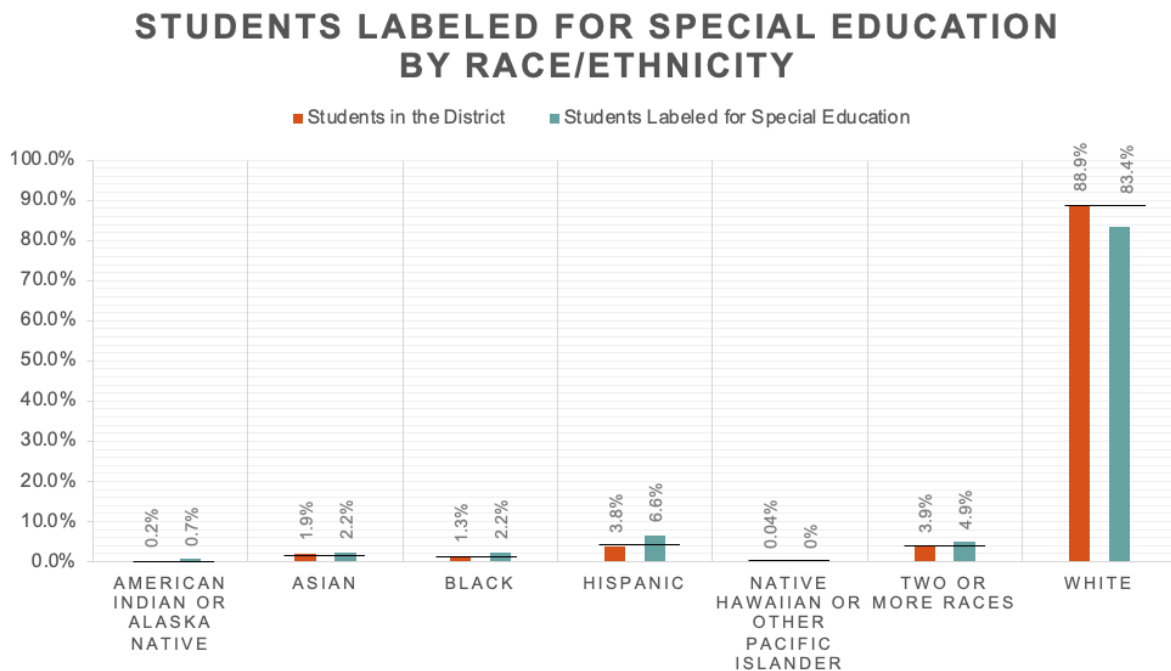
Students of color are also overidentified in the alternative school. Of the 8 students placed in the alternative school 4 (50%) are of color (1 black, 3 multiracial). (See Figure 18).

Figure 18:   Students by Race and Alternative Settings

Students of Color in Alternative Educational Settings
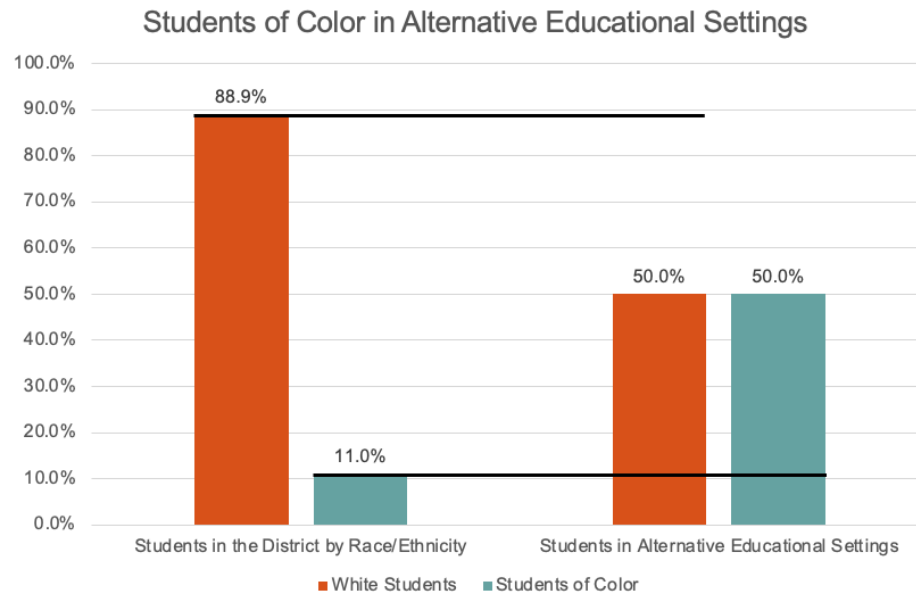
Students of color are under identified for gifted education, in that of the 285 students identified for gifted education, only 12 are students of color (.04%). Of these students, 5 are Asian (1.8%) who are slightly over-represented. Students of all other races are significantly underrepresented in gifted education with 4 who are multiracial (1.4%), 3 are Hispanic (1.05%), while 0 Black students and 0 Native American students are identified as gifted. (see Figure 19).

Figure 19:   Students Labeled as Gifted by Race

Students Labeled as Gifted by Race/Ethnicity
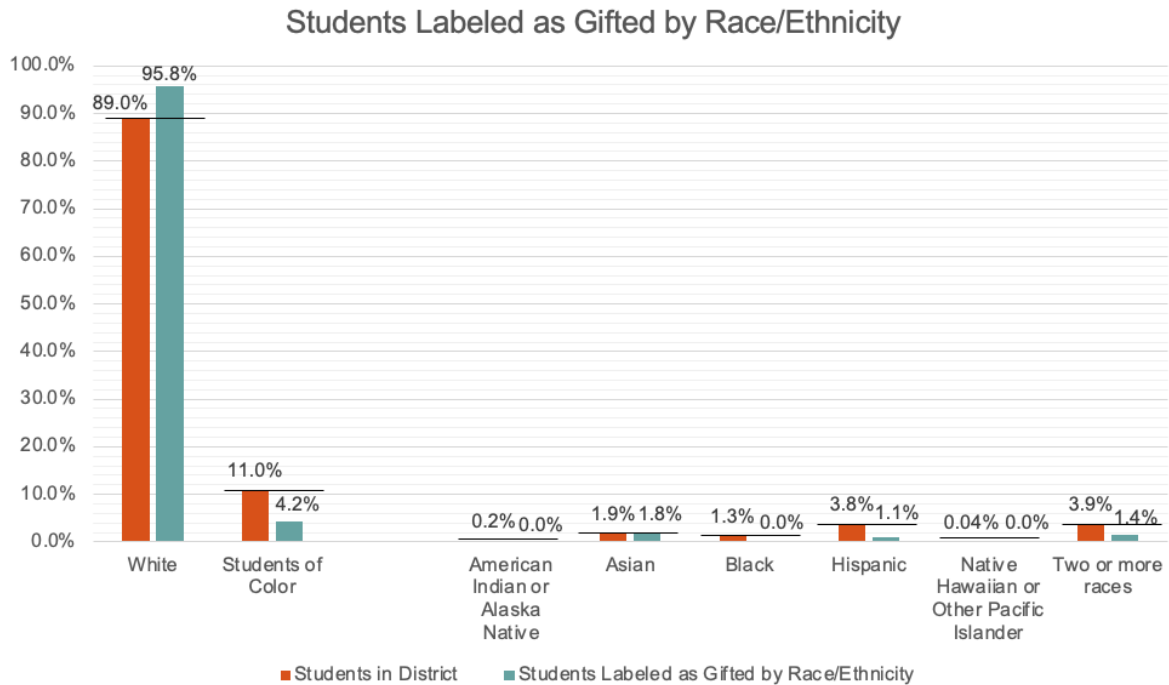
Only 42 students of color of 641 students are enrolled in AP courses (7% when 11% of the district are students of color, with Black students underrepresented the most (1.3% Black students in the district, .47% of AP students), Hispanic (3.8% Hispanic students in the district, 2.2% of AP students), Asian students (1.9% in the district, 1.6% of AP students), multiracial students (3.9% multiracial students in the district, 2.2% of AP students). Scoring a 3 or higher on the AP exam included 25 of the 42 students taking AP exams.

For the average ACT test scores (University of Wisconsin-Madison waived until 2023), no racial category, including White students (23.2) held an average score of 27 or above required for UW-Madison admissions.

Students Labeled English Language Learners

Students who are linguistically diverse and eligible for English Language Services receive either pull-out or sheltered classroom supports. Staff described caseloads of 16 students at the middle school level and 14 at the high school level. Other students are "mainstreamed, and get very little support." Students who are identified for ELS and also identified for special education is slightly disproportionate relative to the District Equity Audit (.31%).

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Students who are eligible for ELL services are 21% advanced or proficient in reading compared to their peers who are not labeled ELL who score 57.1% proficient or advanced in reading (see Figure 20).

Figure 20:   Students Eligible for ELL and Reading Achievement

Reading Achievement Data in District

- Basic or Below Basic: Students who are not Eligible for ELL Services 41.7%, Students who are Eligible for ELL Services 79.0%
- Advanced or Proficient: Students who are not Eligible for ELL Services 57.1%, Students who are Eligible for ELL Services 21.0%
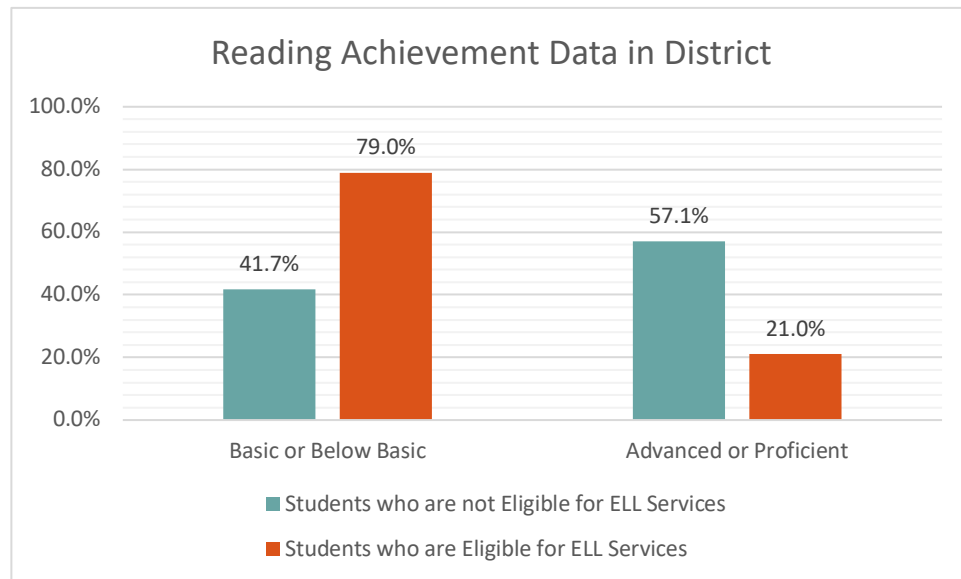
In math, students who are eligible for ELL services scored 39.5% advanced or proficient, while their peers not labeled ELL scored 60.3% (see Figure 21)

Figure 21:   Students Eligible for ELL and Math Achievement

Math Achievement Data in District

- Basic or Below Basic: Students who are not Eligible for ELL Services 38.6%, Students who are Eligible for ELL Services 60.5%
- Advanced or Proficient: Students who are not Eligible for ELL Services 60.3%, Students who are Eligible for ELL Services 39.5%

22
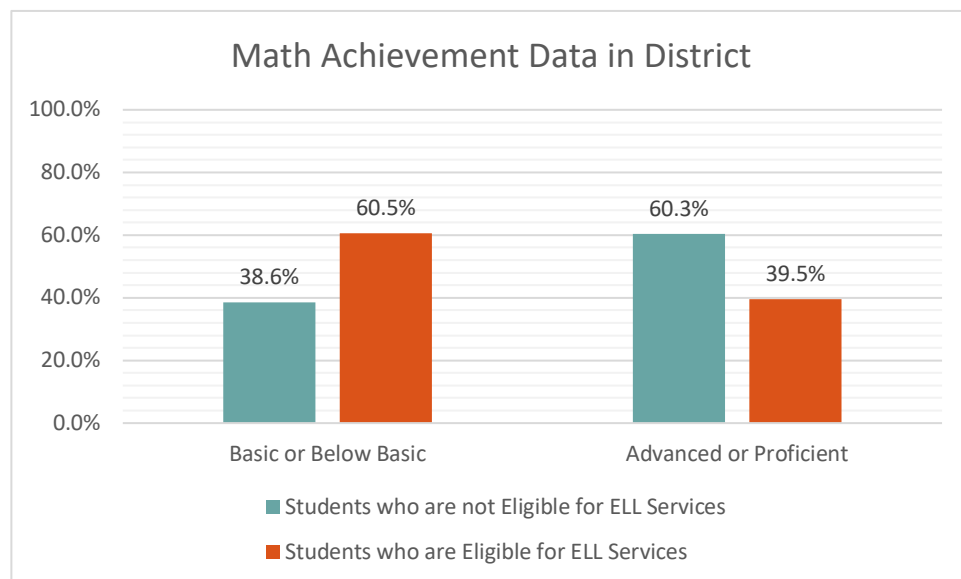
Some focus group participants discussed the assessment process and how it is biased especially for students who are linguistically diverse. As one educator put it, "We are held accountable to a leveling system – including gifted identification and it has been done the same way for a long time."

Students who Identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning

A Gay Straight Alliance group exists at the middle and high schools. Staff receive regular professional training on harassment, teasing, and bullying through the Safe Schools learning modules. The District did not report in the District Equity Audit the status of school enrollment forms for students living in non-traditional households. The middle school has provided professional learning opportunities to provide strategies for staff to support student concerns or questions regarding gender identity. Several teachers have attended workshops and seminars about similar topics. The District has recently developed processes to ensure the curricular resource are inclusive and that students see themselves and their family structures represented in the district's resources.

Despite these efforts, community members, staff, and students shared the prevalence of bullying and teasing in the district of students who are different from the norm, including based on language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, and body size. Focus group students believed that students who identify as LGBTQ or perceived to be are "the most disrespected group in the school. If someone identifies as trans they are made fun of." Other students shared that "some people get really mad if students want to use a different pronoun or name." Research suggests that staff and administrators are among the last to know the extent of bullying and teasing in schools, with students often afraid to come forward as they fear nothing will be done, they will be blamed, or the bullying will increase.

Representation by Program Area

In this section, we summarize the previous sections of student representation by program areas (e.g., Advanced Learners and Response to Intervention) and by behavior.

Advanced Learners

Gifted services at the elementary level are provided by pull-out from the general education classroom. Teachers described a lack of time to better co-plan on behalf of learners within the classrooms. Currently, the District is working hard to support "push-in" supports and again sees time as an issue to overcome as there are so many parameters due to grade-level guarantees. Others stated that gifted services were under-resourced. For example, one teacher stated that

they had 60 students on their caseload and would like to see more high-ability students, but that their caseload was already too high.

As noted previously, students receiving free/reduced lunch and students of color are underrepresented for students labeled gifted. Further, students with disabilities, of color, and receiving free/reduced priced lunch are underrepresented in Advanced Placement courses and no students who are identified as ELL are enrolled in AP courses (See Figure 22).

Figure 22:   Advanced Placement Relative to Students with Disabilities, by Race, Students Receiving Free and Reduced, and Students Eligible for ELL

Advanced Placement Courses Data in the District
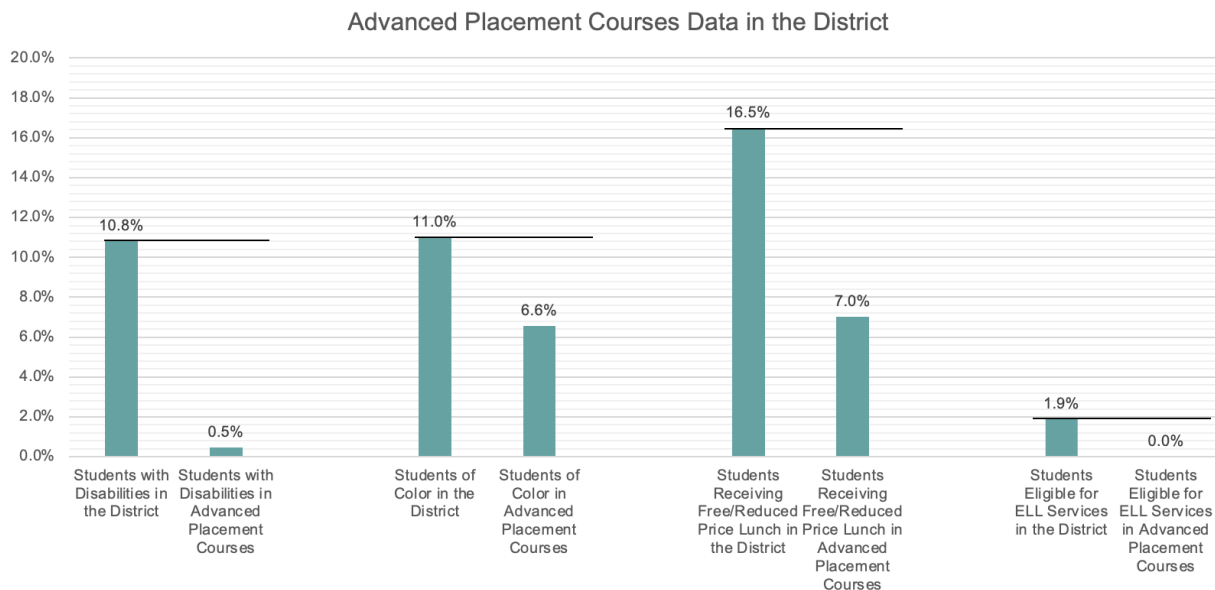
Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention (RtI), is aligned in the District by Tier 2 interventions for students specific to their academic or behavioral progress and Tier 3 for those students who are identified for special education services. Many staff explained that math and reading for Tier 2 are built into the classroom time and they have been asked not to remove students from the core for interventions. Teachers reported that "basically everything is core and when I need to work with a student, I end up pulling students from social studies and science. That is often the content where students excel and then they do not experience those subjects." Yet, other educators and parents reported that students were removed for interventions from core instruction. Students with disabilities receive Tier 3 interventions. The District also incorporated RtI for gifted students, yet others reported that such supports were not equitable across the schools. More specifically, "Some gifted teachers work with 20 RtI students, while others work with much more."

Many staff in the focus groups reported that Response to Intervention (RtI) is going well but could not provide the data to substantiate their claim. Others reported that the disaggregated data by race, socio-economic, disability, and language have yet to be reviewed.

As noted previously, the district did not provide any equity audit data as to the student representation by race, ELL status, or free/reduced lunch status for students receiving response to intervention.

III.   Focus Group Areas of Strength and Growth

We conducted over 70 focus groups comprised of student service providers, general educators, principals, students, district office administrators, and community members. We addressed these questions:

1. What do you think is working well in this school for all students?
2. What are the challenges you see to high quality teaching and learning for all students?
3. Are there district practices or policies that you believe get in the way of educating all students effectively?
4. In what ways could the school improve to better educate all students?

Focus groups are particularly effective in obtaining a breadth of information relative to a specific issue,[1] enabling participants to express themselves in an open and flexible process.[2] Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and state and CDC guidelines, we conducted the focus groups via a video call Zoom meeting. When requested, we also conducted individual interviews. We did not record the focus groups and instead took detailed notes. We followed each focus group session with time to analyze the information collected at that particular session searching for themes "…regularities. … patterns, as well as for topics."[3]

According to Lincoln and Guba, "[S]teps should be taken to validate each [piece of information] against at least one other source."[4] Steps might include a follow-up email from the participant for clarification and/or a second method (i.e., review of policy and procedures, or demographic data)." As such, we compared the focus group data to the equity audit data and to district documents we requested. Participants in the session often discussed their views with one another as they responded to focus group questions. Doing so helped participants recall details or if they disagreed with another participant's perspective, allowed for differing perspectives to surface.

[1] Madriz, E. (2000). Focus groups on feminist research. In N. Y. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 835–850). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. McLeskey J., & Waldron, N. L. (2000). *Inclusive schools in action: Making differences ordinary.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Curriculum Development.
[2] Krueger, R.A., & Casey, M. A. (2000). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
[3] Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (2003). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods* (p. 161). Needam, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
[4] Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (p. 283). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Through the focus groups, some stated that they thought equity is a zero-sum game--that if the District focuses on high quality teaching and learning, students currently successful in the district will lose out. Yet, research and district data suggest that equity efforts advance the learning of all students in districts. Students currently succeeding in the district will exceed their current levels of success and students currently struggling in the district will also experience increased success. Thus, not engaging in equity - -which we define as high quality teacher and learning for all students - - will hinder the progress of all students in the district.

Nearly all participants expressed their positive belief in the capabilities of the district administrative team, praised the district's high expectations and rigor for students, the caring and wonderful educators, as well as the District's communicative responsiveness to COVID-19. Families and community members were grateful for consistency across all buildings and clear district communications. Many stated how competent and exemplary the staff and administrators are in the District. Many other participants reinforced the need for a broader racial representation of educators and administrators in the District.

Nearly all staff and families supported the District's professional learning focused on Trauma-Informed Care. Others thought that this information should be shared more consistently and across all employees of the District.

The gender make-up of district teaching and administrative staff remained fairly unremarkable with a fairly equal representation of male and female teachers at elementary, middle, and high school, within high school AP courses, and within administration.

Teachers believed that they had strong relationships with students and a desire to continue to do whatever they can to help each child succeed. Some of the families reinforced that the teachers care very much. Behaviorally, along with trauma-informed professional development, teachers were most proud of their work specific to the Proactive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS).

We also learned of positive structural changes for high quality teaching and learning at the district level and at the high school. At the district level, special education and curriculum and instruction have been combined into Learning Support Services, moving out of making decisions in silos. This group has reimagined traditional notions of response to intervention to developing more collaborative structures across the district. The high school has already achieved what many high schools are striving for in their leveling up of courses and expansive honors and Advanced Placement offerings.

Preparing Culturally Competent Students for Post High School Success

Across the focus groups, community members, staff, and students recognized the demographic changes in the world and locally. Yet, believed "the district is not preparing students to be successful in college, the world, life with a whole variety of people out there, and in their workspaces." The lack of district opportunities for students to engage with others different from themselves and to engage in productive, civil conversations about different perspectives "limits the cultural competence of all students in Hudson and students will not know how to be successful in the workforce and college."

In alignment with the district's strategic plan, better preparing students for post high school success can include:
1. Opportunities for learning about others different from ourselves via
   a. Direct teaching/learning about others different from ourselves
   b. Heterogenous classrooms
2. Opportunities for civil discussion about current issues

We discuss these throughout this report.

Identity Development Training

Across all focus groups, many participants discussed the need for identity development training across identities and their intersections for staff and students with the desire to understand identities that were different than their own.

Another community member stated that they hoped the District would have the "courage to provide the appropriate [identity development training]" – specifically, "how we talk about language- the intent and the impact… to build a society that we hope for…"

Many educators stated that they were "continuing on the path of educating all staff across all identity areas." In addition, they discussed the need to move forward "to educate everyone collectively." Educators discussed that they need training in anti-bias education as there is a "very different response around kids of color, poverty, ELL, and boys especially those bigger than average." Others stated that the professional development needed to move beyond teachers, "we preach to the choir – how do you get admin school board . . . . on the same page."

A staff member gave the following example of not knowing how to handle a situation in the classroom and hoped to learn more and have better understandings. For example, " teacher mentioned Mexican in the classroom and all students looked at the only student who identified as Mexican. The student felt he had to laugh to go along with it. Staff feels ill-equipped." Others stated that students of color feel as though they are the object of curiosity, while white students do not know how to interact. Specifically, "students across identities do not cross interact."

Educators discussed the need for implicit bias training and that much of what happens pedagogically could be improved through additional support. They believed that for Black history month, little was orchestrated unless completed by teachers individually. A focus group participant shared a common theme: "I really feel it is worth mentioning again that the district seems almost "afraid" of conflict with the community and that is guiding their decisions as far as what is "allowed" to be discussed or taught by teachers, instead of what is in the best interest of students so they can feel seen and heard."

Several focus group parents agreed that, while Hudson School District are kind and caring, many lacked the ability to be culturally responsive to students. One parent explained: "My kids' teachers don't have the skills to teach them in an unbiased way. Teachers want to and they love my kids and recognize them as people. Difference between that and understanding the things that could be doing that are not culturally sensitive."

Other focus group members identified the need for student training on understanding student differences. Several focus group members identified that student microaggressions happen between students but students are not aware they are doing it, for example, inappropriately touching another student's hair, not pronouncing student names correctly, or asking inappropriate questions.

Desire for Opportunities for Civil Discussion

Across all the focus groups, and across a wide range of participant perspectives, participants expressed a strong desire for staff and students to learn how to engage in civil discussion about current and past issues and topics that are presented in a balanced way. We heard often "Don't teach students what to think but how to think." When asked specifically what that would look like, a participant reflected what we often heard, "I think kids need to talk about current events, learn and recognize media bias, coming from a neutral standpoint. Not teach kids what to think but how to think." Participants wanted teachers to learn how to present current issues and topics with both or multiple perspectives and how to facilitate these discussions.

In this context, we heard about some teachers attempting to discuss topics that resulted in community pushback to the extent teachers were afraid to discuss any current or controversial topic at all.

Curriculum and Instruction

One parent believed that kids are still being asked to dress up as pilgrims and Indians during Thanksgiving. Related, several parents and many students described the district's curriculum as only presenting one viewpoint. As one example, "Basically, the curriculum is still colonized and we want the parallel narrative to be taught in a manner that is not about the student who most

of them look like when they talk about immigrants in 1904, while American Indians are being killed." Other parents, community members, and students agreed. For example, at the high school, many participants desired much more expansive history offerings and expanding the content of the current offerings (e.g., American History), beyond a Eurocentric view. One parent shared that his seventh grader, did not know about the civil war or know what biology was. A student provided an additional example, "When you talk about Africa—it was taught as not very strong, as weak when it was developing, when in reality, I have studied African myself, it's a lot different than what the district portrays. . . What was going on in Europe affected trade in many different places in the world. [This needs to be taught] especially in the younger grades so kids growing up, no there is just not one story about how world history came about."

One participant shared an example of a District staff member using the N-word in a classroom as part of required reading, absent any understanding of why such word usage is inappropriate and the harm that it continues to cause. Such usage of the word is always inappropriate for someone who identifies as white, due to the historical use of the term that was oppressive and marginalization for people who identify as African or Black American.

The district has provided guidance and a process for teachers wanting to teach current or controversial topics. Yet, others affirmed that a vocal minority of people have made it difficult when teachers have tried to do the right thing around equity. "The small minority has pushed back and made it impossible to live. I have heard parents state that teachers have a liberal agenda and are trying to turn their kid 'gay'." Staff reported that the history teachers were "scolded for showing CNN TED as it was perceived to be pushing a liberal agenda." They discussed their dismay that they could not show the Tim Scott, holocaust presentation as there were complaints from families, "that it was too much." Other educators stated that "We have been told to stay away from controversial topics". For example, "I showed a video of President Obama about being kind and was asked not to show the video. He was the sitting president." A social studies curriculum analysis is being completed by the District at the time of this writing. Staff stated that Black history month has been difficult as they have been concerned as to what they can and cannot teach.

We also heard probably misunderstandings from the community about teacher classroom actions. For example, one community member stated that "One white teacher said that white students that do not denounce their skin color privilege are white supremacists. I believe that teachers should be removed. Judging people by skin color is racist period."

Related, many participants discussed the limitations of the district K-12 social studies and history curriculum. At the elementary level, teachers and parents believed the emphasis on math and literacy left little time for social studies and science subjects. Students pulled out for special education or interventions were pulled from these subjects. Teachers lack the training of knowing how to teach math and literacy via social studies and science and teachers desired yet were hindered in engaging in interdisciplinary curriculum development.

Student Treatment Related to Wisconsin Pupil Non-Discrimination Law.

Though the district has achieved an impressive amount of consistency across schools related to curriculum and achievement outcome expectations, wide variability exists across schools related to creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment identified within the strategic plan.

Many of the high school students shared positive experiences of students with disabilities in their courses, noting "very supportive. Extremely kind. Friends. Engage in conversations. Appreciating them and enjoying their presence."

At the same time, in addition to the LGBTQ teasing and harassment previously described, staff, community members, parents, and students shared multiple examples of students teased, harassed, and ignorant comments made about students of color and the need for staff and student efforts to learn about student differences. At the high school, staff and students noted that racist remarks, stereotypes, jokes, offensive remarks happened mostly in the unregulated areas of the school during passing time, on the bus, etc. Several students shared that the on-line learning during COVID-19 provided a haven and they experienced less harassment and racism.

Students shared:
"We need to inform kids about different races and ethnicities and understanding that. It's just who they are and accept it and not make crude remarks just because you think it's funny. Not feeling the need to fill up the silence with ignorant remarks."

Another student shared, "A lot of comes with ignorance and misunderstanding, a lot of education needs to happen. Throughout my entire school career starting in kindergarten I have experienced a lot of discrimination and racism all the way through. A lot of exclusion from many different things. A lot of teasing and harassment of different cultures and customs."

Another interviewee stated that "I experienced a lot of microaggressions and it felt wrong but I did not know why it was wrong. I did not know where to go with that. I did not know where to go when a student called me the N-word. I did not feel my identities were acknowledged – it was about the norm – the norm is right – black culture is not important or bad." Others discussed that the Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) was just named last year due to scrutiny.

Focus groups members shared that representation of all is not visible in the schools. As a family member of children of color discussed, "only pictures of white people on the wall. I want to know how are schools representing my child in this space? I want my children seen in the classroom." Another community member expressed concern that "we are still using boys and girls and boys and girl colors."

Many participants shared that if you did not represent the dominant culture in the Hudson School District, little outreach and few opportunities existed for family involvement. As one interviewee put it, "we continue to engage the same families over and over again (Affluent, white, etc.) [which] reinforces stereotypes." Other participants shared the district lacks a uniform system for communicating with families for whom English is not their primary language.

Another focus group member confirmed that there are differences in how the district treats families and students, for example, "if they are bilingual compared to families who know their rights." Yet another stated that "I have a daughter who identifies with the LGBTQ and was concerned about coming out. She has experienced many racial slurs and slurs about sexuality. My daughter has shared things that have been hurtful and I am unwilling to repeat here."

Student Representation in Courses

Students reported a very segregated system where "black kids stick together; the LGBTQ kids stick together." Others stated that "students who identify as BIPOC or LGBTQ are not pushed away, Hudson is just not big enough to be integrated." When asked if all kids can take all classes, students responded that any student who wants to take a challenging class can. Yet, we also heard from others who identified as BIPOC that they were moved out of challenging classes to lower tracked classes before the class even started.

Understanding of Evidenced-Based Practices

Much confusion occurred specific to what was considered best practices for all students to excel. For example, some teachers were concerned about students with disabilities keeping up with their peers. Others believed that students identified for gifted services do not get their learning needs met. More specifically that the curriculum is not differentiated throughout the day. As one educator put it, "the way that school is laid out is not in their best interest to be boxed into a grade level and sitting in a classroom."

Others discussed all the supports in place through the MTSS process within the District for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, such as, but not limited to: Everyday math, CMP, BYOC in the area of Math. Yet concurrently, parents were concerned about how often children were removed from core instruction (in particular social studies and science) as well as other academic areas and that students receiving interventions or additional support at the high school then did not have the opportunity to participate in their areas of interest in band, choir, arts, drama, etc. Teachers were empathic and discussed knowingly and unknowingly perpetuating a deficit based system of reaction.

District Use of Data

Educators discussed how data-rich the District was, but how little the data is analyzed across the District to impact practices and policies. Focus group conversations were specific about both the need and fear of completing a deep analysis of the District data. Some believe that the use of data to decide on interventions is not objective, based on teacher observations and subjective opinions.

Examples of equity data needs participants discussed:

a. "Elephant in the room, we are always talking about the kids and how to get them to proficient. We do not put focus on kids that we do not believe we are going to get to proficient."

b. "There seems to be a fear of having high numbers in special education/intervention services. Students are being "graduated" out of programs who still need help, and when core teachers are seeing they are still struggling and more testing is requested, it is being denied, regardless of data that core teachers have collected."

c. "Identification for student referral – when we work on equity – we get dinged on certain students, so there is a heavy suppression of referring students who are Hispanic. Yet the child has gone through 3 different interventions. Gatekeepers prevent referring students for behavior. We often wait too long [to refer] when students should have been referred 2 weeks earlier."

Planning Time

 We learned that common planning time occurs at the elementary school, 3 days out of 5, with 40 minutes of time dedicated to collaborative planning and 30 minutes dedicated to individual planning, at the middle school individual and team planning time is provided daily, and at the high school, PLC (professional learning community time) is built in, yet there seemed to be wide variability of the effectiveness of this time.

Throughout the focus groups, educators discussed both the importance and the limitations of shared time together to plan or co-create lesson plans across disciplines. Others stated that they were able to co-plan occasionally, but most of the time it was a review of the general education teacher's lesson plan. In this way, special educators could adapt and modify instruction for students with disabilities. Although another stated, "We have reasonably **good** collaboration with teachers across all students even with 'higher' students. Other teams keep 'my program' in

mind." And yet another educator added, "We get meaningful collaboration as some classrooms we have are clustered with students with disabilities, but there is a line… that we cannot cross where we tip the classroom from a general education classroom to special ed classroom." Most staff discussed that they needed to balance the demands of inclusion of students without adding to the demands of an already hectic schedule.

Focus group educators reported that the majority of specialists (special educators, gifted, teachers for students who are linguistically diverse) are often all removing kids for small homogeneously grouped instruction when general education teachers are in Professional Learning Communities (PLC's); therefore, the specialists are unable to attend the PLC meetings. Others discussed that time to meet with the gifted teachers can be completed by requesting specific times. Other elementary teachers were not aware of this practice. Otherwise, as with other disciplines, planning is completed "on the fly".

All educators discussed how valuable they believe team planning time would be and wished that there was a way to be able to schedule it into their days. One educator shared, "A willing staff – wants to work together. If we had the time available, we would be willing to and co-plan very well. Sometimes we are not able to put our plans into action as special ed is so busy putting out fires, they become really hard to count on." Many stated that teachers stay late and come in early and yet they cannot find the time to plan together. As one teacher summed up, "we have no time to check in, every minute is accounted for and such a disconnect with what interventions are used to coincide with what is happening in the classroom."

High Expectations and Rigor and Students Who Struggle

Educators discussed how much they value the District and how well the majority of students do academically and behaviorally. Yet, they also stated that there is "a lot of teaching to the top" and that when students struggled, educators were not sure how to address this, often suggesting options that research suggests are not effective.

For example, at the high school, some students with IEPs repeated courses because there were no other "low level" courses for these students to take. Educators discussed adding more low level courses, or adding to the various, pull out alternative programs at the high school, yet research does not support the efficacy of either of these options.

A few educators discussed the importance of providing more supports in Tier 1, the core of teaching and learning. Others discussed the amount of testing and the rigor expected. Basically, "the testing pulls away from the learning. Evaluating and testing the entire Spring. Takes away from kids who need consistency in a school schedule." There was concern about rigor, including for students identified as gifted and talented. More specifically, one teacher summed it up by stating, "we have become so rigorous- that we are losing connection with kids and

relationships." And finally, others stated that "there is a Hudson way and it is very clear," but staff stated that they were under pressure to maintain such practices.

Others spoke of the need to be able to make adjustments based on their expertise. As one teacher stated, "I don't have the ability to make the adjustments as a classroom teacher." Teachers discussed the need to make necessary adjustments, "and that they felt that they should not need permission to cross out 5 out of 7 math problems and just do two." Staff wanted to have, "the freedom to use our professional knowledge to make decisions that may not align to the pacing guide."

Specific to rigor and the curriculum, many discussed that the training [reading curriculum] does not provide information on how to offer different strategies for different learners, that they believe the training to be very regimented, as one teacher stated, "they are trying to push the circle through the square." Others stated that they need to increase their willingness to adapt for academics and behavior, while others stated that they were unwilling to modify any instruction until the child met eligibility for special education. Many staff believed that the new reading curriculum was more culturally relevant.

Other staff shared, "There are kids that are pulled out so much across the entire day. Their day to day school experience is totally different than other kinds in the school. There has to be a better way." Additional educators noted: "If we differentiate the curriculum, then it is harder for the student to get special education later, so we wonder if we shouldn't differentiate and better to let the student fail so they can get special ed later."

A community member reflected on the impact on staff struggling with meeting student needs on her daughter: "I asked my 2nd grade daughter how many students are in her class for birthday treats and she said 14 and I knew that was not correct, and she said, well the other kids in her class are not really in the classroom. So she knew at 2nd grade that some kids were treated differently than others."

There was a concern that "'trauma-based students', with little breaks, even 'non-trauma-based kids' have much more anxiety due to rigid schedule and not a lot of flexibility to put in a fun activity."

Other Professional Learning

The District has supported professional development for all schools to be "trauma-sensitive schools." The training began with the school counselors three to four years ago and has been rolled out to teachers over a year ago. Yet teachers believed overall that they still required more training and that in some of the schools the training has been inconsistent or less pragmatic.

As the trauma training illustrates, though the district has adopted some effective professional learning (e.g., Universal Design for Learning, UDL), the district also lacks a systematic way of providing professional learning across the district. For example, positively engaging across general education, special education and other staff, the district wide, 60 member RTI (Responsive, Teamwork, Inclusion) team has participated in multiple UDL training, but it is unclear how all staff will benefit from these efforts.

Discipline and Behavior

Teachers and families valued the consistent language relative to PBIS across all schools. Yet, they were also critical of specific areas, such as individual biases that impact how students are treated. An example provided was a girl may skip down the hallway, but when a boy does it they receive a coaching slip, which ultimately feels like a reprimand not coaching. Students must carry clipboards, as part of PBIS positive behavioral strategy, to get their teachers' signatures for each content area. Students who identify as a boy use brown clipboards, while girls use pink clipboards. Others believed that the use of clipboards was positive vs. punitive and the students did not see it as a "got you but a tap in and tap out." However, teachers also discussed that children of color and students with disabilities continue to receive a higher rate of discipline referrals, thus use more clipboards. Educators discussed that often "kids do not start with clean slate and other kids see it and that student becomes the 'bad' kid."

District Policy

Participants discussed policies and procedures that are inconsistent and often not aligned to specific goals of high quality teaching and learning for all students. Participants discussed the need for policies to provide clarity that reinforces and leverages high quality teaching and learning for all students. The following are examples of those concerns shared throughout the focus groups:

> Students' chosen names are not in the system and often teachers do not use the student's chosen name.

> Neutral virtual background to prevent discriminatory objects that represent hate or harm.

> One staff member asked if there was any way to have a policy to support students and families who needed additional support, absent having to ask for the financial support, collectively how to shift the burden off of the students and families.

> Free and reduced lunch does not cover al la carte items – even though there is pressure, from peers to choose the al la carte items.

Others stated that "we don't have policies that hinder, some in name support all students but again those are written by a White majority – so we are missing things."

IV.   Best Practices Analysis and Essential Next Steps

Focus on Equity

1. *Know the History of Educational Marginalization*

Educators and community members both asked that the District provide professional development specific to equity, marginalization and bias trainings. We believe it is essential that all staff and community members understand the "why behind the what." More specifically, what is the history of educational marginalization? In this manner, educators, families, and community members have a better understanding of the institutional history of education that has perpetuated if not created, practices of marginalization.

The Hudson School District staff discussed practices that could be identified as reactive or deficit-based rather than proactive or asset-based. Reactive is defined as any content or skill taught outside of the core of teaching and learning. Proactive is defined as the first time a skill or content is taught in the core of teaching and learning. Reactionary practices discussed in focus groups include, but not limited to; ability grouping, center-based programs, pull-out for special education support, services for English Language Learners or linguistically diverse, interventions for Tier 2, gifted and talented support, and Advanced Placement classes and low level tracked courses at the secondary level.

Often when the educational community learns about the history of educational marginalization, they can better assess those current practices of marginalization within their school and district, thus having a clearer understanding of the "why" behind the "what" in order to set a plan in motion to interrupt practices that hold all students back.

Essential Next Steps:

1.   Complete professional development on the educational history of marginalization for the community and school community to better understand current practices.

2.   Each school staff and district office should draw their current educational structures and determine what is proactive and reactive within their schools and the challenges for students that such practices present.

2.   Shift from Deficit to Assets-Based Thinking, Language

In the focus groups, we heard about lower expectations for students with disabilities, students of color, and students experiencing poverty. The current language in the District for students experiencing poverty (or economically insecure) and students who identify as LGBTQIA+, as well as historical trauma are all proactive and asset-based language. However, other language such as special education students, gender specific, and bias based comments are also being used and require more in-depth discourse and understanding. Specifically, how we talk often defines how we think and what practices we put into place within our educational organizations. The importance of all District personnel moving to consistent use of *person-first, asset-based language* cannot be overstated. That is, personnel in the district will describe children first, and any other descriptor second. It will be essential for educators to shift from deficit based language to asset based language and person first language and practices for all students to experience high quality teaching and learning.

Essential Next Steps:

1.   Shift from deficit-based language and practices to asset-based language and practices.

2.   Participate in activities to reflect and better understand stereotypes, myths and assumptions to interrupt deficit based language, thinking and practices.

3.   Engage in Identity Development

Many focus group participants commented on the benefits of the racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, sexual, and economic diversity in the District and the community. Such conversation ties into the next steps regarding the history of public education, asset vs deficit thinking, language and practices, and especially our own identity development. Staff discussed a range of different issues regarding system needs to better support a diverse normative. The following are a few examples:

- We believe we need to move from tolerance to acceptance – learn to be allies across identities and their intersections.
- Staff were interested in clarity related to policies and procedures to

better support students and their pronouns.
- Staff want to know more about Middle Eastern cultures and being Muslim
- Staff have a strong desire to increase the racial, ethnic, language and religious diversity among staff.
- Staff expressed the wish to do more in integrating diversity into the curriculum and instruction throughout the year, verses just black history month, which is also teacher dependent and limited.
- Some discussed that "we have Informed of best practice – but not applied."

Many schools and districts are engaging in identity development work as part of their equity efforts. This work includes for example, understanding implicit bias, stereotypes and assumptions about race, and cultural competency training. However, these practices do not necessarily lead to changing the systemic and structural inequities in schools.

Thus, identity development work is a critical aspect of the ICS for Equity Framework and Process, but it is also only one important step in this work. The following are ways to advance our own identity development include learning about others' experiences different from ourselves, including:

a) developing authentic relationships/friendships with others;
b) formal courses, learning experiences;
c) reading books, movies, CD, news accounts;
e) Stories/Experience.

Essential Next Steps:

1.   Complete consistent and authentic professional development in the area if identity development to support high quality teaching and learning for all students.
2.   All staff should participate in opportunities of their choice to increase their understanding of identities different from their own.

4. *Apply Equity Research*

Teachers believed that they were doing the best they could educating students based on their presumed need, but also realized that this caused more segregated practices for students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELL) or linguistically diverse, advanced learners, and students receiving Tier 2 interventions. The research is clear that a heterogeneous classroom promotes learning outcomes, better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society and better prepares students as professionals (American Educational Research

Association, 2016, p. 25). In addition, diverse classrooms provide "Improved cognitive skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving, because students' experience with individuals different from themselves, as well as to the novel ideas and situations that such experience brings, challenges their thinking and leads to cognitive growth" (American Educational Research Association, 2016, p. 25).

Students having difficulty at school, especially those experiencing poverty learn more when they are working in heterogeneous rather than in homogenous ability groups (Oakes, 1985,Yonezawa, Wells, & Serna, 2002). Relatively high expectations for learning, a faster pace of instruction, peer models of effective learning and curricula that are more challenging are among the reasons offered for this advantage. (Leithwood, Lois, Anderson, & Wahlston, 2004).

Students labeled with disabilities reach more IEP goals in proportionally represented environments than in segregated settings (Brinker & Thorpe, 1984; Hunt, Goetz, & Anderson, 1986; Westling & Fox, 2009).

The research on the inclusion of students labeled with disabilities originated in the early 1980's, shortly after the passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975 that mandated a free, appropriate, public education for all students regardless of disability. That research unequivocally suggests that when students labeled with disabilities are proportionally assigned to general education environments, they make greater academic and social gains than when segregated. Further, students without disability labels also benefit more academically and socially when they are educated alongside students labeled with disabilities than when not. And, for students with moderate to significant intellectual disabilities- achievement is enhanced or at least equivalent in integrated versus segregated settings (Cole & Meyer, 1991; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman, & Schattman, 1993; National Center for Educational Restructuring and Inclusion, 1995; Ryndak, Downing, Jacqueline, & Morrison, 1995; Saint-Laurent & Lessard, 1991)

The research suggests that students of all abilities learn more in heterogeneous versus homogenous ability groups. The students who are isolated the most in ability groupings often are the furthest behind (Hnushek, Klin, Markman, Rivkin, , 2003). Ability grouping has an effect size of .12 (effect size needs to be .40 or above to impact learning, Hattie, 2013). The two most common forms of ability grouping are

1. Within-class grouping, where students of similar ability are placed into small groups usually for reading or math instruction.
2. Between-class grouping where students are separated into different classes, courses, or course sequences (curricular tracks) based on their academic achievement, otherwise referred to as tracking.

Boaler (2019) also reports that "Tracked groups are often more limiting for students, as they allow teachers to presume they know what students need, and provide narrow questions that do not allow students to achieve highly and do not encourage students to engage in complex,

interesting thinking." Boaler (2019) interviewed ninth graders in two different school districts, one group who had experienced a tracked math middle school and the other group who attended schools without tracking but with highly rigorous math teaching and learning across all students. Compared to the students in tracked math, students with the heterogeneous math experience held more positive expectations of themselves and their math potential.

The National Center for Research on Gifted Education conducted a 2019 study of gifted education across 3 states and 2000 students. They learned that "third-grade students in gifted programs were not making significant learning gains in comparison with their peers in general education. . . . [and that] pull-out programs or self-contained classrooms [for students labeled gifted], were, on average, not helping to boost academic achievement" (cited in Potter & Burris, 2019).

Potter & Burris (2019) summarizes their review of the research:

". . . identification for gifted programs is a problem, but fixing the entrance criteria for a system still based on separating children into differently tracked classrooms is not enough to promote equity. This very practice of separation is not supported by research."

Students labeled gifted who are homogeneously grouped also have limited opportunities to learn across difference. Some studies suggest that such groupings increase student test anxiety, lower self-esteem as students are in an environment that increases comparison among students, and can negatively impact raw course grades and class rankings. (Bui, Craig, & Imberman, 2011; Ireson, Haliam & Plewis, 2010; Preckel, Gotz & Frenzel, 2010; Zeidner & Schleyer,1999).

When students labeled English Language Learners or linguistically diverse are proportionally represented in classrooms/courses versus placed in sheltered English or segregated in particular classrooms or courses, they learn more academic English, make greater achievement gains, have more peer models of English, experience higher teacher expectations, and teachers in the heterogeneous settings model a higher level of English, paired with higher levels of discussion and discourse (Brisk, 2006; Scanlan & Lopez, 2013; Thomas & Collier, 2002; Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011). Further, students labeled ELL in heterogeneous settings become bilingual language role models for students whose English is their home language.

A 2015 a national study funded by the Institute for Education Sciences examined RTI implementation in 13 states, 146 schools, and 20,000 first grade students. Assignment to RTI interventions across Tier 1, 2, and3 not only did not improve reading outcomes but decreased reading achievement. "For those students just below the school-determined eligibility cut point in Grade 1, assignment to receive reading interventions did not improve reading outcomes; it produced negative impacts" (American Educational Research Association, p. 1).

The figure below reflects the RtI model of continuous improvement for instruction in the core of teaching and learning.

Wisconsin's RtI Continuous Improvement Model

Such a model is premised on research based practices of high quality teaching and learning. The model is premised on equity at its core through the following tenants:

- Become self-aware: Staying alert to the ways that **identity** and culture affect who we are and how we interact with learners and families;
- Examine the impact of systems, structures, policies, and practices on learners and families: Analyzing who the system serves and underserves;
- Believe all learners can and will achieve at high levels: Examining and intentionally pushing back on societal **biases** and **stereotypes**;
- Understand all learners have a unique world view: Recognizing each adult and learner represents a complex blend of cultures, identities, and roles, with singular differences;
- Know and respect the communities: Understanding and valuing the behaviors, beliefs, and historical experiences of families and community members served by the school;
- Lead, model, and advocate for equity:
Challenging **prejudice** and **discrimination** as barriers to equity and giving voice to those inequitably impacted by school and district decisions, policies, and practices;
- Accept the responsibility for learner success: Recognizing that equitable outcomes depend on changing the school's and district's beliefs and practices, rather than fixing learners and families; and
- Use practices, curriculum, and policies that respect the identities and cultures of learners and families served by schools.

According the RtI Center of Wisconsin, such a multi-tiered design is not necessary:

41

Schools provide a continuum or multi-level system of proactive and responsive supports built to match the range of learners' developmental, academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs. Supports are equitable and appropriate for the learners being served, validating their knowledge and experiences and acknowledging their diverse identities. Staff, learners, families, and the community are engaged in the selection and implementation of these supports.

Though not required, many schools develop a three-level system of supports to ensure the success of every learner. (emphasis added by report author)

The District's Response to Intervention reflected in Figure 23 represents a flow chart that supports rigor, teamwork and inclusion. These practices also support high quality teaching and learning through, high expectations, collective equity capacity and proportional representation in the core of teaching and learning.

Figure 23:   RtI Reimagined Framework
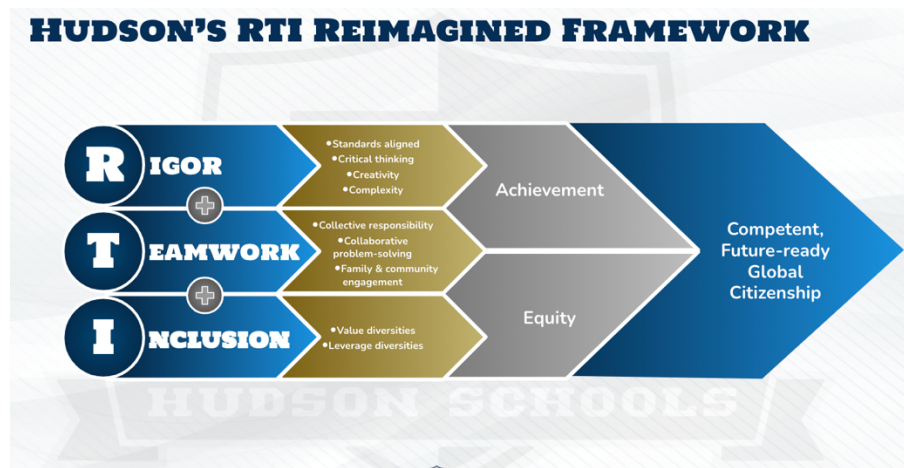
The District has moved forward with their own model that mirrors the RtI Center of Wisconsin's model (see Figure 24).   The District's model for RtI could better represent proactive education by including practices of Co-Plan to Co-Learn to Co-Serve through Proportional Representation in the Core of Teaching and Learning. In this way educators intervene in real time rather than ability grouping for interventions through ability grouping. This then allows for comprehensive, integrated and cohesive instruction for all learners in the core of teaching and learning.

Figure 24:   Hudson School District RtI Continuous Improvement Cycle
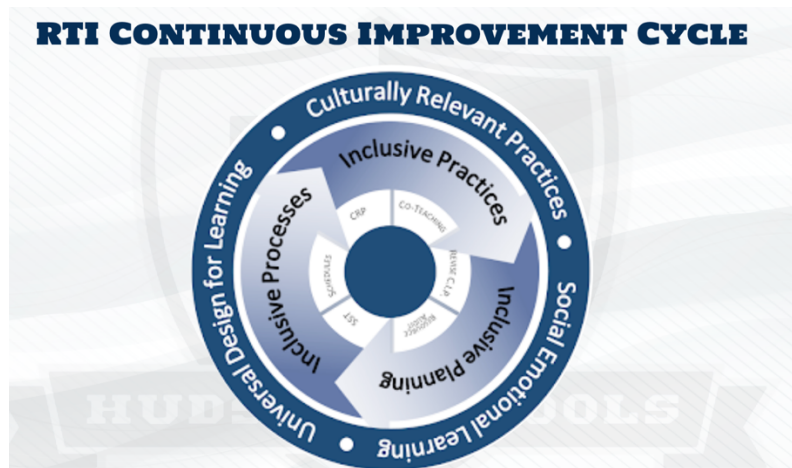
Essential Next Steps:

1. Understand the research on equity and best practices across all student identifiers (special education, ELL, advanced Learners, RtI, relative to current practices.

5. *Develop Principles of Excellence*

Hudson School District sets the stage to leverage high quality teaching and learning through equitable and identity relevant structures and pedagogical practices. The vision is aspirational but requires a plan of action to deliver on its intent.

"When students, families, staff and the community interact with Hudson Schools, we want their experience to be:

Welcoming

No matter a person's first point of contact within the school district, the experience should be friendly and service minded. We ask everyone to be respectful and provide a safe, supportive learning environment.

Student-Centered

The Hudson School District is in the business of serving the educational needs of students. Students are our work and focus is on developing each child to his or

her full potential. Each student should be engaged and invested in his or her own learning.

Transforming

Students need differentiated learning support to be successful. The learning needs of our students are best met by maximizing the talents and contributions of all staff. Providing students and staff with consistent and expected opportunities for collaboration enriches curriculum, maximizes learning, and enhances solutions. In order to meet these expectations and transform learning, continuous improvement is expected, measured and evaluated.

Grounded in a Culture of Excellence

Decisions are made with our students' best interests in mind. We ensure that high quality, collaborative, and sustained professional staff development is maintained for quality learning and the implementation of best practices. We are committed to developing leaders throughout the organization and increasing the capacity of the School District to improve. We value business and community partnerships that are known to enhance learning and school operations. We know that investing in excellence requires adequate resources, both human and capital, that are necessary to support Hudson's system of learning."

In addition, the District's strategic plan for 2020-2025 addresses areas of equity:

Figure 25:   Hudson School District Strategic Plan

Hudson School District Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Foundational Pillars

I. Our Students	II. Our Team	III. Our Community
Creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that provides equitable access, so all students fully participate in their academic and personal success.	Recruiting, retaining, and supporting quality employees.	Ensuring that parents and community members are engaged and well informed.
A. Foster excellence and experiential learning opportunities through academics, arts, athletics, and activities.	A. Recruit, develop, and retain high quality staff focused on District initiatives that reflects the diversity of our students.	A. Engage in meaningful partnerships between families and District.
B. Support the social-emotional learning, character development, and mental health of all students.	B. Establish professional development for all employees that improves their knowledge, collaboration, and effectiveness; rooted in the core values of excellence, equity, and engagement.	B. Cultivate two-way communication between District, families and community.
C. Develop a District-wide system in which all students graduate with a post-secondary plan.	C. Promote a culture of well-being and safety for all employees.	C. Nourish existing community partnerships with our team and our students.
D. Provide safe and flexible learning environments to encourage collaboration, innovation, critical thinking, and appropriate risk-taking in which students can fail forward among students and staff.	D. Reward and recognize the contributions and performance of staff.	D. Create new community partnerships that provide experiential and career-related opportunities for students.
E. Ensure the curriculum is developmentally responsive, rigorous, and relevant to our students' experiences, including the assessment of District curricular priorities.	E. Implement strategies for communicating District vision, focused goals, pathways to excellence, and organizational culture.	E. Provide maximum value to our community through efficient and effective operations and resource management.
F. Strengthen the positive relationships among staff, students, and families/caregivers.		

To deliver on the intent of the District's strategic plan, the District will need to delineate a set of common core principles or Principles of Excellence that can define how they will meet those aspirations, essentially how to operationalize equity and the 2020-2025 vision for success. The notion that each student is entitled to a high quality integrated and comprehensive education with their peers is not negotiable. Leaders for all students hold a strong vision that each student belongs. Simply claiming goals of "rooted in the core values of excellence, equity and engagement", or "ensure that the curriculum is developmentally responsive, rigorous, and relevant to our students," is not enough. High achieving school districts for literally all students in the district evaluate their perceptions, structures, instruction, curriculum, as well as funding, policy and procedures to make it clear that all students are a part of this vision, through evaluating their practices including removing students from Tier 1, center-based programs, clustered services for special education, English Language Learners or Linguistically diverse, and gifted.

Holding both goals —achievement and belonging for all learners—in high priority, is essential for the achievement of all students in the district. However, without a delineation of Principles of

Excellence that can provide a road map to assist in making such goals and aspirations operational, school leaders continue to perpetuate a program model and achievement/opportunity/access gaps for students with disabilities, linguistically diverse, students of color, and students experiencing poverty. Therefore, the following Equity Non-Negotiables are offered as exemplary:[5]

   1. Eliminating inequities begins with ourselves

   2. The system is responsible for student failure

   3. All staff are aligned to Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn Teams (C3) to support cohesive instruction

   4. Students are proportionally represented in the core of teaching and learning

   5. Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) Teams intentionally develop each other's capacity

   6. Instruction is based on Identity Relevant Teaching and Learning (IRTL) and created for each learner the first time the concept/skill is taught

   7. Policies and funding are aligned to these Equity Non-Negotiables

Once created and vetted out through all aspects of the educational community, the Equity Non-Negotiables become Board policy of how to meet the visions and strategic plan for the District. In this way, all decisions are then made toward and in alignment of the District equity non-negotiables.

Essential Next Steps:

1. Create District Principles of Excellence to operationalize equity and leverage the District vision and strategic plan.

   6. *Conduct Equity Audit*

The District completed a district level equity audit for this evaluation. An equity audit should be completed annually at the school and district level. The data is not intended to blame and label more students but to truly assess the effectiveness of current practices and set clear benchmarks and goals for success of all students.

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[5] ICSEquity.org

Essential Next Steps:

1.   Complete a District and per school equity audit annually to measure the District's progress toward equity relative to the data represented in this report.

Align Staff and Students

1. Re-align Staff and Students

High achieving school districts align staff expertise with student need. As mentioned earlier in the report, equity is not a zero-sum game. Therefore, where students are physically placed to learn impacts the learning of all students. Student location for learning distinguishes between reactive or deficit-based practices resulting in segregated (including pull-out) programs and that of integrated, comprehensive – proactive practices resulting in all students learning more in the core of instruction. In deficit based practices all students learn less. Such practices hold back the system, especially if over 40% of the Hudson School District student population is involved in such practices. Under a segregated program model, educators believe that the primary reason for student failure is the student. There are five primary Hudson School District practices that support this assumption that works in opposition of equitable structural practices:

1. District placement of a child in a **specialized school** other than the one they would typically attend as their home school, or school of choice.

2. **Clustering** students in specific schools (within or outside of the district) by an identifier, such as, but not limited to, Special Education or At-risk, discussed as center-based programs.

3. Removal of a child to **segregated rooms for pull-out instruction**, often defined as a Resource or Self-Contained classroom, for 10 minutes (for Special Education, RtI interventions, at- Risk, ELL, Gifted and Talented, etc.) a day to all day within the schools they would typically attend as their home school, or school of choice.

4. Providing **lower class tracks** for students, especially students with disabilities or those perceived as not prepared for a more accelerated course – predominately at the middle and high school level (such placements are referred to by the National Education Association as *Between-class grouping – a school's practice of separating students into different classes, courses, or course sequences (curricular tracks) based on their academic achievement*)

5. **Ability grouping** within the core of teaching and learning (such placements are referred

to by the National Education Association as *Within-class grouping – a teacher's practice of putting students of similar ability into small groups usually for reading or math instruction*)

Concomitantly, a proactive or asset based approach requires the formation of Co-Plan to Co-Learn to Co-Serve Teams (C3 Teams) at each grade-level and content specific at the secondary level and the proportional representation of all students in the core of teaching and learning, or Tier 1.

Proportional representation of students within the core of teaching and learning is essential. In this manner, there is a true representation of all learners within each classroom that is natural to the student demographics of the school. Specifically, proportional representation means that the demographic of the school is reflected in every classroom, course, activity, setting, and experience within the school. For example, if 13.6% of students are labeled with a disability, then no more than 13.6% of students in any classroom, course, activity, setting, or experience are students labeled with a disability. Proportional representation applies to grade levels when assigning students labeled with disabilities, students who are linguistically diverse, and students labeled as gifted. That is, if 13.6% of the students in the school are labeled with a disability and 20% of the students in the school are linguistically diverse, and there are six third grade classrooms, then no more than 13.6% of students in each third-grade classroom have a disability and no more than 20% of students in each classroom are linguistically diverse. Students who are linguistically diverse and students who have disabilities are equally assigned across these six classrooms.

According to Figure 25, the District spends just over $800,000.00 in out of District placements. Often, once placed out of District, a child would remain out of District, resulting in over $1,000,000 in expenditures per student over 12 to 13 years.

The Code of Federal Regulations and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction make clear the importance of students attending the schools they would attend if not eligible for special education. Therefore, the district should determine if any child can be returned to the school and classroom they would attend if not disabled. This aligns with the District's social and emotional learning goals and strategic plan of supporting positive student relationships between all students and students being able to attend schools with their neighborhood peers and siblings.

Such expenditures could then be reallocated to better support students in the schools and classrooms they would attend if not disabled and to advance the district's strategic plan.

Figure 26:   Out of District Placements

Non Hudson School	Grade	Race	2019-20 SES	Disability	Gender	2018-19 Cost for Tuition and Transportation	2019-20 Cost for Tuition and Transportation
Northeast Metro 916	6	B	N	OHI	M	135,249	111,443
Northeast Metro 916	6	W	N	EBD	M	109,070	100,762
Northeast Metro 916	5	2+	Y	EBD/OHI	M	136,764	111,251
Northeast Metro 916	3	W	Y	A	M	111,593	41,346
Northeast Metro 916	6	W	Y	ID/SL	F	111,593	106,087
Northeast Metro 916	9	2+	Y	EBD	M	112,338	12,649
						716,607	483,538
Metro School	4	W	N	HI	M	121,747	94,117
						121,747	94,117
				Total		838,354	577,655

As previously described, most staff across elementary, middle and high schools reported practices that did not support proportional representation or Co-plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3). Much of the practices reported, reflected more of a center-based or clustering, segregated rooms for pull-out instruction, co-teaching, tracking, and ability grouping. For example, as mentioned earlier in this report, at the middle school level, different houses at each grade level supported students with behavioral, learning , or more significant disabilities in separate houses and rotated groups of students through the houses every year. Teachers were concerned about disproportional placement as well as feeling conflicted with believing that they did not have the ability to meet IEP minutes in any other model – such as cross-categorical.

In Figure 26 below, each school is represented by grade and the number of students within in grade, followed by the number of students with disabilities, eligible for Speech and Language, linguistically diverse, students receiving Tier 2 intervention and the number of students who are advanced learners. The number of students who are identified as eligible for speech and language are specific to a primary disability. Caseloads are higher when including students who receive speech and language as a secondary disability. The percent of students identified with disabilities within each school are identified in the 2nd row of each school table, followed by the ratio of staff to students.

Both Willow River and North Hudson host an Autism and Intellectual Disabilities center-based program, respectively. Subsequentially, each school reflects a much higher percentage of students with disabilities. Hudson Prairie also host a center-based program for students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities, yet does not reflect a higher increase in overall percent of students with disabilities at Hudson Prairie.

The percent of students identified is significant as it provides and understanding of the overall percent of students identified in each school and an overall average of 36% at the elementary level. In addition, those elementary schools with clustered programs also reflect a higher percentage of labeled students often about 50% of the student population (River Crest [54%], EP Rock [46.5%], North Hudson [52%], and Houlton [41%].

The ratio of staff to students provides a better understanding of equity across district. Special education at the elementary level averages less than one special education teacher for 9.5 students--all within acceptable ranges and could support a C3 Team structure. Speech and language is difficult to address as the number of students eligible for a secondary disability are not listed in the current data. Suffice it to say that caseloads for Speech and Language tend to fall under one clinician to 35 students across the District, which is also well within a proactive range.

Support for ELL is a bit less consistent with EP Rock at 27 students for a .5 ELL teacher, while the rest of the schools are well under 20 students for a half time ELL teacher.

Support for students identified as gifted or advanced learners is less consistent across schools, with the highest ratio at .5 to 51 students compared to .5 for 21 students at another school.

Elementary schools report 12.6% to 22% of students receive Tier 2 interventions provided by the reading teacher as well as reading and math paraprofessionals. Tier 2 interventions, immediately places students who are identified, often 40 students to over 100 students in each elementary school, into a pull-out or deficit based practice. Pull-out or deficit based practices create a fragmented educational experience where students must synthesize information from multiple adults and environment back to the core of teaching and learning.

Four-year-old kindergarten is based in one school and then different pre-school sites throughout the community. Families may choose the 4K of their choice; however, often pre-schools have siblings or members of the church preferences by sibling or members, that limit access to other students. Students who attend childcare are often experiencing poverty and the staff believes that they are not receiving the same experiences as the 4K programs housed within the district's elementary schools.

The teachers in the child-care centers are not hired or evaluated by the District. Others believe that a four-year-old kindergarten in every elementary school would increase equitable early intervention.

Out of 260 students receiving 4K outside of the District, five students are identified with a primary disability other than speech and language and another 10 are identified with Speech and Language. At Willow River, 42% of the students meet eligibility for special education, speech and language or Tier 2 interventions. Many believe that early intervention in this manner assists students. Yet the research supports that the more a child is identified and removed from the core of teaching and learning, the further behind they are in high school often due to missing core instruction and the lack of cohesion of instructional opportunities in the core of teaching and learning[6]. Therefore, how a child receives support is essential and should be provided in the core of teaching and learning.

Figure 27:   Staffing Percentages and Ratios Relative to Students Identified for Special Education, Speech and Language, English Language Learners or linguistically diverse, Tier 2, and Advanced Learners for Elementary Schools

	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
101 **EP Rock** Note: 12.5% Special Education	Total: 440 KG: 67 1: 82 2: 72 3: 69 4: 73 5: 77	Total: 22 KG: 3 1: 4 2: 1 3: 1 4: 8 5: 5	Total: 33 KG: 5 1: 4 2: 7 3: 11 4: 2 5: 4	Total: 27 KG: 4 1: 5 2: 5 3: 4 4: 7 5: 2	Total: 97 KG: 21 1: 19 2: 12 3: 18 4: 24 5: 13	Total: 27 KG: 1 1: 2 2: 5 3: 6 4: 5 5: 8
Percent of Students Identified	46.5% Total	5%	7.5%	6%	22%	6%
Ratio of Staff to Students		1:5.5	1:33	.5:27		.5:27
	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
102 **Houlton** Note: 11.7% Special Education	Total: 226 KG: 10 1: 30 2: 29 3: 38 4: 39 5: 40	Total: 14 KG: 0 1: 0 2: 4 3: 4 4: 0 5: 6	Total: 13 KG: 4 1: 1 2: 4 3: 1 4: 3 5: 0	Total: 0 KG: 0 1: 0 2: 0 3: 0 4: 0 5: 0	Total: 31 KG: 3 1: 2 2: 12 3: 9 4: 3 5: 2	Total: 35 KG: 3 1: 0 2: 6 3: 10 4: 6 5: 10
Percent of Students Identified	41%	6.	5.7	0	13.7	15.4

[6] Jeannie Oakes and John Hattie

	Total					
Ratio of Staff to Students		1:9.3	.5:13	0		.4:35
	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
103 North Hudson Note: 19.4% Special Education Center-Based Intellectual Disabilities Program	Total: 288 KG: 47 1: 43 2: 52 3: 47 4: 43 5: 56	Total: 43 KG: 7 1: 5 2: 6 3: 7 4: 10 5: 8	Total: 13 KG: 2 1: 1 2: 4 3: 4 4: 0 5: 2	Total: 5 KG: 0 1: 1 2: 2 3: 0 4: 0 5: 2	Total: 40 KG: 5 1: 8 2: 10 3: 2 4: 6 5: 10	Total: 21 KG: 1 1: 2 2: 6 3: 4 4: 1 5: 7
Percent of Students Identified	42.3	14.9	4.5	1.7	13.8	7.2
Ratio of Staff to Students		1:10.75	1:8.6	0		.4:21
	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
104 Willow River Note: 19.1% Special Education Center-Based Autism Program	Total: 349 4K: 44 KG: 64 1: 35 2: 54 3: 47 4: 43 5: 62	Total: 47 4K: 4 KG: 14 1: 5 2: 5 3: 6 4: 5 5: 8	Total: 20 4K: 1 KG: 4 1: 4 2: 4 3: 4 4: 0 5: 3	Total: 5 4K: 0 KG: 0 1: 1 2: 0 3: 1 4: 1 5: 2	Total: 44 4K: KG: 8 1: 4 2: 13 3: 6 4: 6 5: 7	Total: 22 4K: NA KG: 1 1: 3 2: 5 3: 6 4: 6 5: 2
Percent of Students Identified	39.5	13.4	5.7	1.4	12.6	6.3
Ratio of Staff to Students		1:9.4	1:12.5	.5:5		.5:22
	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
105	Total: 477	Total: 35	Total: 20	Total: 12	Total: 30	Total: 51

	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
Hudson Prairie Note: 11.4% Special Education Center Based Emotional Disability Behavioral Program	KG: 67 1: 82 2: 72 3: 71 4: 90 5: 95	KG: 4 1: 4 2: 2 3: 7 4: 9 5: 9	KG: 1 1: 5 2: 3 3: 4 4: 6 5: 1	KG: 1 1: 3 2: 3 3: 2 4: 3 5: 0	KG: 3 1: 7 2: 7 3: 6 4: 4 5: 3	KG: 0 1: 5 2: 9 3: 11 4: 9 5: 17
Percent of Students Identified	31.0	7.3	4.1	2.5	6.2	10.6
Ratio of Staff to Students		1:8.75	1:20	.5:12		.5:51
	Number of Students	**Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)**	**Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language**	**Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)**	**Number of Students Receiving Tier 2**	**Number of Advanced Learners**
106 **River Crest** Note: 21.2% Special Education	Total: 379 EC: 18 4K: 4 KG: 53 1: 55 2: 62 3: 56 4: 70 5: 61	Total: 50 EC: 11 4K: 0 KG: 5 1: 5 2: 4 3: 8 4: 9 5: 8	Total: 31 EC: 10 4K: 4 KG: 3 1: 2 2: 2 3: 3 4: 5 5: 2	Total: 14 EC: 0 4K: 0 KG: 4 1: 2 2: 5 3: 0 4: 1 5: 2	Total:65 EC: 0 4K: 0 KG: 15 1: 8 2: 16 3: 10 4: 8 5: 8	Total: 45 EC: NA 4K: KG: 2 1: 4 2: 17 3: 15 4: 3 5: 4
Percent of Students Identified	54.0	13.1	8.1	3.6	17.1	11.8
Ratio of Staff to Students		1:5.5 (EC) 1:13 (K4-5)	1:10	.5:14		.5:45

In Figure 28 below, the middle and high school are represented by grade and the number of students within in grade, followed by the number of students with disabilities, eligible for Speech and Language, linguistically diverse, students receiving Tier 2 intervention and the number of students who are advanced learners. The number of students who are identified as eligible for speech and language are specific to a primary disability. Caseloads are higher when including students who receive speech and language as a secondary disability. The percent of students identified within each school are delineated in the 2nd row of each school table. Followed by the ratio of staff to students. The percent of students identified is significant—21% at the middle school and 12% at the high school.

The ratio of staff to students with disabilities at the Middle school average is one to 11, while at the High School it is one special education teacher to every 13 students. All within acceptable ranges for staffing and could support a C3 Team structure. Support for ELL is either .5 staff to 13 to 19 students respectively for the Middle and High school. Students identified as gifted or advanced learners are 84 involved at the middle school level but 113 identified, which leads one to believe they no longer want to participate in such programming.

Figure 28:   Staffing Percentages and Ratios Relative to Students Identified for Special Education, Speech and Language, English Language Learners or linguistically diverse, Tier 2, and Advanced Learners for Middle and High School

	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
200 **Middle School** Note: 12.4% Special Education	Total: 1165 6: 356 7: 388 8: 421	Total: 137 6: 43 7: 44 8: 50	Total: 9 6: 5 7: 2 8: 2	Total: 19 6: 5 7: 8 8: 6	Total: 0 6: 0 7: 0 8: 0	Total: 84 Involved (113 Identified) 6: 24 Involved (38 Identified) 7: 25 Involved (37 Identified) 8: 35 Involved (38 Identified)
Percent of Students Identified	21.3	11.7	.07	1.6	0	9.6 Identified 7.2 Involved
Ratio of Staff to Students		1:11.4	1:9	.5:19	0	1:84
	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities (not including Speech)	Number of Students Eligible for Speech and Language	Number of students linguistically diverse (ELL)	Number of Students Receiving Tier 2	Number of Advanced Learners
400 **High School** Note: 11.7% Special Education	Total: 1812 9: 440 10: 480 11: 442 12: 450	Total: 207 9: 43 10: 58 11: 44 12: 62	Total: 6 9: 1 10: 1 11: 3 12: 1	Total: 13 9: 6 10: 4 11: 0 12: 3	Total: 0 9: 0 10: 0 11: 0 12: 0	Total: NA AP Courses – See Equity Audit Data
Percent of Students Identified	12.4	11.4	.03	.07	0	

Ratio of Staff to Students		1:13.8	.8:6	.5:13	0	

The current ratio of specialists, [including special education, speech and language, ELL, advanced learner, and Tier 1) would lend itself well to a Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn Alignment. Co-Plan and Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) Teams boost the core of teaching and learning and intentionally interrupt a deficit-based model thus advancing the learning of all students.

At the elementary level, C3 teams are created by grade level. As demonstrated in the table, all students are aligned to the chronological age-appropriate grade and then classroom. In this manner, each classroom mirrors the school's student demographics. Special educators are assigned cross-categorical by caseloads to better function on a single grade level team or at the most two grade level teams. ELL, Speech and Advance learning staff are also assigned to a C3 Team based on the number of students they are serving at each grade level and based on the expertise of the core teaching staff at each grade level.

In addition, the center-based programs would be phased out over time to place students back in the schools they would attend if not disabled to support natural proportions of students across identifiers (ELL, special education, gifted, Tier 2) in the core of teaching and learning. See Figure 29 for an Elementary example. Secondary, schools would align in the same manner, by grade and then by content or specific courses.

Figure 29:   Elementary Example of Realignment by Grade Level

Grade Level/ 3 Sections/ Grade	Number of Students	Number of Students with Disabilities/ Someplace Else	Linguistically Diverse/Identified as Tier 2	Recommended Staff	Certification	SL & BRS in Class Support
5K	84	9	10	1 Intervention Specialist	EC OT	Speech
Sec. 1	28	3	4			
Sec. 2	28	3	3			
Sec. 3	28	3	3			
1st Grade (2 Teachers with Sp.Ed. Cert)	87	12	9	.5 Intervention Specialist .5 Reading Teacher	K-8 Cross-Categorical Reading Specialist PT	Speech

Sec. 1	29	4	3			
Sec. 2	29	4	3			
Sec. 3	29	4	3			
2nd Grade	86	14	6/1	1 Intervention Specialist .10 Psych	K-8 LD Reading Specialist Psych	BRS
Sec. 1	28	5	2			
Sec. 2	29	4	3			
Sec. 3	29	5	2			
3rd Grade	91	12/1	6	1 Intervention Specialist .5 Reading Teacher 1 Para .2 Gifted	k-8 Cross Categorical Reading Specialist Gifted	BRS
Sec. 1	30	4	2			
Sec. 2	30	4	2			
Sec. 3	31	5	2			
4th Grade	89	14	10	1 Intervention Specialist .5 Reading Teacher	K-8 CD Reading Specialist PT	Speech
Sec. 1	30	5	3			
Sec. 2	30	4	3			
Sec. 3	29	5	4			
5th Grade	78	13/1	12	1 Intervention Specialist .5 Reading Teacher 1 Para .2 Gifted	K-12 EBD .5 Reading Specialist Gifted	Speech
Sec. 1	26	5	4			
Sec. 2	26	5	4			
Sec. 3	26	4	4			

* BRS = Bilingual Resource Specialist

Essential Next Steps:

1. Complete a process at the District and school level to realign staff for C3 Teams and create all environments in the core of teaching and learning and extra-curricular that are proportionally represented.
2. Begin the process of phasing out the 3 center-based programs at the elementary school to align with the development and functioning of C3 teams across the Elementary Level.

3. Begin the process of returning students with disabilities from tuitioned out of District placements to again, align with the development and functioning of the C3 Teams across the District.

4. Identify the demographics of the high school's school within a school and of the high school's pull out study hall with one staff member for students who struggle, to determine whether or not particular demographic groups are over-identified. Do not increase the capacity of these programs. Collect student outcome data (high school and post high school) on both these programs to determine the effectiveness of these programs.

2.   Construct Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) Teams

The District has begun increasing the opportunities for access in the core of teaching and learning through goals of co-teaching, Universal Design for Learning, and Multi-Level Systems of Support as detailed in Figure 29.

Figure 30:   Hudson School District Goals and Plans for Co-Teaching, UDL, and MLSS (Tier 2)

	Goal Statement	April Benchmark	2020-2021 Goal
Co-Teaching EL	Goal 3: Professional Development/Training for both Co-teachers	Survey elementary school staffs to Identify 2 teachers in all buildings who are interested in exploring co-teaching in math and/or ELA next year; training would be provided for both co-teachers	- Understanding framework and definition - rubric and continuum. Could use DPI Doc as base - Couple with district level supports - training, scheduling, etc. what will we do to support the work - Establish coteaching partner pairs- unsure what this really means
Co-Teaching MS	Goal 2: Explore structure for co teaching in relation to the schedule, PLCs, etc.	Finish *"Yes, We Can…"* book study and let that inform process to identify obstacles and realities in logistics	- Understanding framework and definition - rubric and continuum. Could use DPI Doc as base - Couple with district level supports - training, scheduling, etc. what will we do to support the work

			• Establish coteaching partner pairs- unsure what this really means
Co-Teaching HS	Goal 1: Share vision and framework for all Staff	Offer Co-teaching strategies as part of EdCamp (Feb) PD through collegial discussion (with current co-teaching pairs)	Cultural barrier -resistance to the concept More HS involvement in the team
UDL/Core	• Develop first steps of communicating UDL strategies/resources with staff. • Connect with colleagues to populate examples of UDL in action. (Using the form we already.)	• Each team member will find 2 or 3 examples of UDL in action. • Make an email group and email each other of examples we see. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1T85tbVNM43uWL1bjzj5IQMca_WODReABwadAflhD4ZY/edit?usp=sharing	What can we do structurally? • Phase 3 of curriculum improvement process- consider UDL when creating learning experiences • Continue new teacher training What can we do in the classroom? Curriculum and training for teachers Summer Academy- How to reach/engage all learners at a distance/in person?
MLSS/SST/TIER 2	Create a common definition and mission to better understand MLSS. Create a document to share guidelines from each level		Review common definition Share MLSS document Increase Tier 1 Capacity

Some educators in the focus groups recalled the usefulness of co-teaching, yet the co-teaching does not reflect achievement gains for students with disabilities in the district's equity audit. A co-teaching model is often defined as an instructional arrangement where one special educator and one general educator are assigned to teach a specific group of students with disabilities who have been clustered into one classroom or a course section. A co-teaching model usually requires one general educator and one special educator to focus on the same group of students all day at the elementary and middle school levels and with a course section at the secondary level.

Research has confirmed that a co-teaching model (Hattie, 2012), does not positively impact student achievement. Below are the differences between a co-teaching model and a C3 structure:

1. Co-teaching or team-taught classrooms often host an unnatural proportion of students who struggle academically or behaviorally or who are eligible for special education. With a C3 Team, all students are naturally proportioned.

2. Co-teaching or team-taught classrooms are supported classroom by classroom; whereas the C3 Team plans across all classrooms at the grade level or multiple sections of a specific course at the secondary level.

3. Little co-planning often occurs in a co-teaching or team-taught model in the manner in which we expect C3 Teams to co-create a lesson. Specifically, within-in co-teaching the lesson is often developed by the general educator and the special educator adapts and modifies the lesson – often limited to instruction for students with disabilities.

4. Special education teachers tend to do more turn-taking as compared to the general educator who remains the content expert and the special educator often functions as a support to the general education teacher. With a C3 Team, all team members facilitate learning.

5. At the secondary level, co-teaching or team-taught classrooms are low-tracked classrooms. With a C3 Team, all course sections are at grade level or above.

6. Co-teaching or team-taught classrooms often become a teacher dependent model – with the special education teacher and general education teacher dependent on each other. With a C3 Team, all teachers share expertise to intentionally develop each other's capacity.

Within Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) teams, educators purposely develop each other's *Collective Equity Capacity.* C3 teams work together to determine how a child learns best and the teachers incorporate those understandings into their co-plan. In so doing, the C3 team can more effectively co-serve all students within heterogeneous large and small groups, one to one within Tier 1, or within the core of teaching and learning.

According to Rose and Meyer(2008), the three Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles are:

1. To support recognition learning, provide multiple means of representation - that is, offer flexible ways to present what we teach and learn.

2. To support strategic learning, provide multiple means of action and expression - that is, flexible options for *how* we learn and express what we know.

3. To support affective learning, provide multiple means of engagement - that is, flexible options for generating and sustaining motivation, the *why* of learning.

To date, the principles and practices of UDL nationally and in the Hudson School District have not considered nor been informed by identity relevant pedagogy. That is, a teacher could engage in effective UDL practices of representation, expression, and engagement, per se, yet the teaching remain may not be relevant to cultural difference nor developing critical consciousness in students as does culturally relevant pedagogy. Thus, we suggest the that a UDL framework for lesson development be supported with identity relevant pedagogy through a C3 Team.

The first time a district places a student in a remediation or intervention group, low ability group, skill-specific group, or a group based on their disability, also becomes the first step to institutional marginalization that denies students access to high expectations and high-quality teaching and learning. These practices result in students falling further behind as described in the Cycle of Student Failure (see Figure 31 below).

Figure 31: Cycle of Student Failure
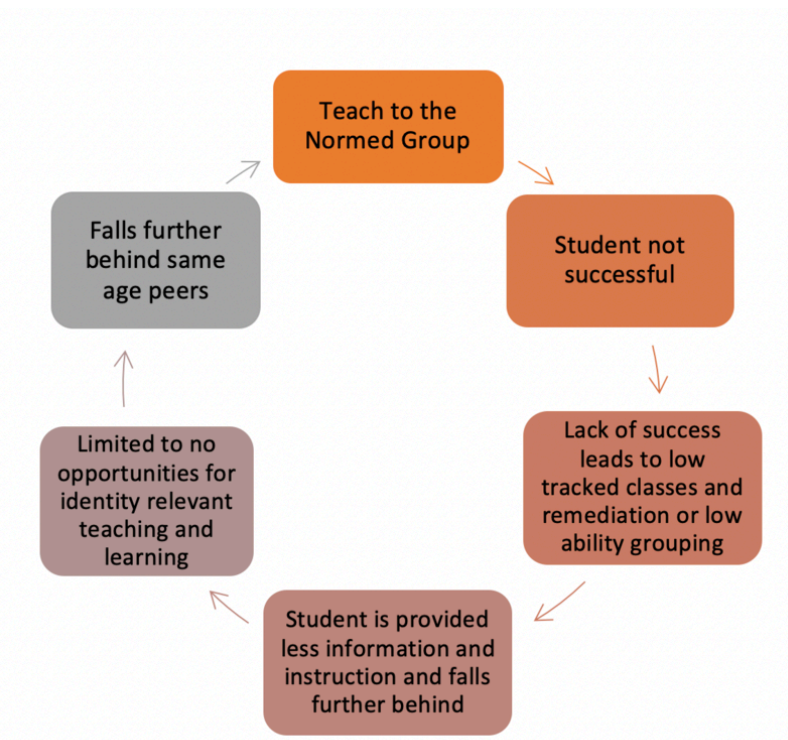
To intentionally interrupt this deficit-based, reactive cycle, rigorous, identity relevant core instruction must be paired with common formative and summative assessments. When Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) teams design instruction based on each learner, the amount of fragmented and non-instructional time decreases, while instructional time and continuity

increase. Thus, the MLSS process should be completed in the core of teaching and learning. In so doing, C3 Teams will need to complete the following agenda when they meet:

> a. Confirm meeting times and the C3 Team's agenda
> b. Develop a Skills at a Glance template
> c. Develop the Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn template
> d. Define the role of team members
> e. Provide a step-by-step process to co-create a lesson
> f. Determine how the lesson will be staffed or facilitated

Most educators in the focus groups reported that only teachers with specific certifications may work with those students who have specific diagnoses. For example, many educators referred to the special educator as the only professional who can provide the Specially Designed Instruction (SDI). Such a misperception perpetuates a pull-out model, even though most teachers agree that students who need the most continuity in instruction receive the most fragmented education. In addition, such practices require the student to synthesize information from a number of different experts and environments, and often generalize what is taught in a pull-out environment back to the general education classroom in which they have missed significant instructional content.

Co-plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) teams work together to determine how a child learns best. The team of teachers incorporate those understandings into their co-plan to better co-serve all students through heterogeneous-based small group, and 1:1 learning groupings in Tier 1 or the core of teaching and learning. Educators are then better able to move from a pull-out and self-contained model to a proactive education where teachers are aligned to each grade and students may be involved in large group, small group, and 1:1 instruction based on their individual interest and how each child brings in information and shares what they know the most often.

Essential Next Steps:

1. Understand the role and function of Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn Teams to create equitable practices for all learners.

Identity Relevant Teaching and Learning

1. Identity Relevant Teaching and Learning

C3 Teams must consistently rely on strategies and instructional practices that have the greatest impact on student achievement 100% of the time. These practices should occur in heterogeneous small groups that represent the diverse normative of students. In so doing, C3 Teams are better able to create lessons that lift all learners academically, emotionally, and behaviorally.

Hattie provides a list of practices that support those strategies that have the greatest impact on student learning in his 2018 publication, *10 Mindframes for Visible Learning: Teaching for Success*. Certainly, other researchers and practices can be included such as Max Teaching and Cooperative Learning. Below are just a few of those practices and their associated strategies that have the greatest impact on student learning from (Hattie & Zierer, 2018). The following practices are examples of opportunities to engage in high impact strategies for student learning:

- Worked examples(.67)

- Meta Cognitive Strategies (.69)

- Questioning (.48)

- Study Skills (.63)

- Dialogue vs Monologue (.82)

- Peer Tutoring (.55)

- Summarization (.74)

- Highlighting (.44)

- Small-Group Learning (.49)

- Reciprocal Learning (.74)

- Self-Reporting Grades (1.33)

More specifically, when educators use every minute of a student's educational time to intentionally prevent stereotype threats (.-33) and engage in collective teacher efficacy (1.33) through Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) Teams that are orchestrated within heterogenous (Peer influence .53) small groups (.47), while not labeling students (.61), educators support all students in positive self-esteem (.47) and learning more. In this way, literally all students in the district learn more.

Identity relevant curriculum is essential for District's who support all learners. The District is currently undergoing a curriculum analysis (see Figure 32) and we encourage them to continue this work full-heartedly.

Figure 32:   Curriculum Review Process

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Overview: Learning Services will be conducting a comprehensive review of potentially controversial curriculum. The outcomes of this review will include recommendations for refinement of our Curriculum Program Review and Evaluation Process (PREP) as well as communication recommendations related to controversial curriculum.

Scope: The primary focus of this review will be on topics that are generally considered to be potentially controversial. They include:
- Religion: Social Studies
- Politics: Social Studies
- Human Development: Science/Health

We will also be reviewing curriculum in other courses where these topics may be explored to a lesser degree.

Outcomes:
- Creation of comprehensive record of controversial curricular topics explored
- Improved proactive communication for parents regarding the instruction of potentially controversial topics
- Increased transparency for the public regarding our K-12 curriculum
- Clarify a parent's right to request an alternative learning experience pursuant to policy #330: *Curriculum Development and Improvement*
  - "Parents have the right to make a request that their child be excused from the study of a given book, instructional unit or particular literary work."
- Review Policy #381: *Teaching About Controversial Issues* and *Procedure* #381.1 *Rule Teaching About Controversial Issues*

Process:
- Learning Services and curricular teacher teams will meet to review potentially controversial topics beginning March 13th.
- We will use the following lenses to review the curriculum:
  - **Equitable**: Are we providing similar levels of exposure and exploration of various viewpoints related to the topic?
  - **Reasonable:** Is the depth of exploration and amount of time spent on any particular potentially controversial topic appropriate when compared to the other topics that are part of any particular course?
  - **Developmental:** Are the learning targets for a particular topic appropriate for the developmental level of the students for which the learning activities are intended?

Essential Next Steps:

1. Provide professional development in support of instructional practices and strategies that have the greatest impact on student achievement.

2. Evaluate current curriculum relative to the identities in the Wisconsin Pupil Nondiscrimination law and aligned with the intent of the law.

   2. Discipline and Behavior

Student behavior and thus discipline are directly related to the culture of the district and school. As such, educators have a choice to create school cultures that are cohesive rather than fragmented, comprehensive rather than not synthesized in the core of teaching and learning, and provide access to high quality teaching.

An individualized student support plan provides both staff and the student continuity to proactively support a child and specifically teach how to navigate school through appropriate behavior. That is, the student knows that regardless of the environment they are in—whether it is the lunchroom, the school bus, the hall, or a particular class, that the proactive adult response will be consistent across all these environments. In addition, the process of developing the plan will help the adults who come in contact with the student to have a shared understanding of the

situations that trigger the student's inappropriate behavior(s) and the strategies that can help mitigate such behavior. In addition, a student support plan also allows for a layer of objectivity, which will help elicit clearer, more consistent staff responses. It is important to remember that student support plans must be written individually for each student. Using PBIS strategies, is useful across the District, but does not address individual student behaviors. We recommend the discontinuation of the clipboards and signatures, as it causes a stereotype threat, not to mention perpetuating gender stereotypes, by color coded clipboards (pink for girls, brown for boys).

Supporting a student with high behavior needs is never easy. It is important that students experience the district and school climate as supportive, that the C3 Teams work together with the student support plan developed by those individuals who are directly involved with the students, and that they never give up. We must approach every situation believing that we can prevail.

The work at the District level must begin by setting the standards of proactive behavioral supports for all learners. The following are 3 standards that are necessary for District Leadership Teams to support such a proactive culture.

> Standard 1: Develop a district culture of respect for and value of all learners through the Equity Non-Negotiables or Principles of Excellence.

> Standard 2: Collect district and school equity audit data - drill deeper into the district discipline data.

> Standard 3: Create Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA's) and Student Support Plans (SSP's) to support consistency across all staff for the small percent of the students who require such a plan

When the staff brainstorms proactive supports, keep in mind the importance of communication needs, instructional needs, proactive sensory support needs (provided through a daily sensory diet), and a consistent schedule (e.g., picture, written, auditory, etc.). In Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn Teams, the range of expertise can be found with the speech and language clinician in the area of communication, occupational therapist in the areas of sensory integration, general and special educators attending to Identity Relevant Teaching and Learning, and the special educator attending to the appropriate sensory schedule.

The C3 Teams must then analyze their results as a team and determine the top three behaviors to move on to use the information collected in the FBA to create a proactive Student Support Plan (SSP). See Appendix D for example forms.

Essential Next Steps:

1.   Provide professional development specific to how to develop Proactive Student
        Behavioral plans that are equitable and identity relevant.

3. Students with Significant Disabilities

The Hudson School District provides educational services for students with significant intellectual disabilities in centered-based programs and schools. Over thirty years of research confirms that students with significant disabilities should receive instruction in the natural environment (the environment the activity naturally occurs within for individuals without disabilities) or setting (Brown, 1988).[7] Though students with significant disabilities are educated in Hudson schools, five Hudson School District practices diminish the potential of students with more significant needs and serve as barriers to their individualized education in integrated comprehensive school and community environments.

> First, many educators continue to believe that students with significant disabilities need to be isolated in the special room down the hall. Often directors of student services and special education wait until they have enough students with a particular label for example, students with autism, that they can then segregate in one classroom in a school that often has extra classroom space versus the schools and classrooms the child would attend if not disabled.

> Second, educators often point with pride at their special classrooms. However, we know from research that students with significant disabilities often do not generalize skills learned in segregated environments, like these classrooms, but are better able to generalize skills learned in natural environments (Brown et al., 1983).[8]

> Third, schools continue to provide separate buses or transportation for students with disabilities and use such practices for large group field trips for functional skill development in the community. What we know is that when we place people with disabilities in groups with others who are only like themselves, we take away their individual identities and dignity, and deprive students without disability labels the opportunity to learn with and develop friendships with students of all abilities.

> Fourth, because it is sometimes difficult to plan individual employment opportunities for students with significant disabilities, schools are resorting to teaching vocational skills to students as a segregated group within their buildings. These practices are in contradiction to the district's inclusive aspirations. Moreover, these students are often asked to complete vocational tasks that would be demeaning for a peer without a disability to

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[7] Brown, et al (1988)
[8] Brown, at al (1983)

complete. In so doing, we elicit pity for students with significant disabilities which in turn undermines their dignity and self-respect.

Finally, if a student with significant challenges is included in the general education classroom, they are often assigned an individual teaching assistant, and then the child's education becomes the responsibility of the teaching assistant and general education classroom teacher, neither of whom may have seen the child's individualized educational plan or may not be able to implement that plan. These ineffective practices are initiated and continue in absence of setting district-wide Equity Non-Negotiables, that are inclusive of all students and of realigning staff in support of co-planning and co-serving teams to best support all learners in natural proportions in the core of teaching and learning.

Research and practice have shown that it is possible to educate children with significant disabilities in the schools and classrooms they would attend if not disabled. Brown identifies eight principles and practices that educators must consider to support an integrated and comprehensive education for students who experience significant disabilities:

1. Neighborhood Schools

2. Age-Appropriate General Education Classrooms and Instructional Practices

3. Proportional Representation

4. Functional Skill Development

5. Non-School Community Environments

6. Principle of Partial Participation

7. Student/Family Preferences

8. Opportunities for Real Work

Essential Next Steps:

1. Complete professional development in support of cross-categorical caseloads and proactively supporting students with significant needs in proportionally represented school and community environments.

Leveraging Policy and Funding

1. *Align Human Resource Systems*

Often within a deficit-based system, the roles of educators are reactionary and many feel that they cannot meet the needs of all the students. Special educators discussed how they are aligned to student IEP's, rather than co-planning teams. Teachers in the area of advanced learning and English Language Learners believed that they had no alternative but to remove students due to their caseloads. Most specialist teachers move from classroom to classroom "helping out," or "pulling-out" but are not organized to Co-plan to Co-serve to Co-learn (C3).

When the system is inverted to an asset-based system; one in which students are proportionally represented across all identities in the core of teaching and learning, staff roles transform from responding to student performance to facilitating student learning. Teachers are responsible for intentionally developing each other's capacity to better meet the needs of all students the first time the concept is taught, thus requiring the need to re-think those practices associated with traditional roles. When those traditional practices are inverted from reactionary to proactive or asset-based, teachers are better able to co-plan to co-serve and move to a co-learning paradigm. At that time, position descriptions, evaluation practices, and interview posting should be aligned to the District's Equity Non-Negotiables or Principles of Excellence.

In addition, a focus group theme across staff, community, and students included the need to hire staff who represent the diversity of the state or region. One focus group member identified key local universities who regularly graduate highly effective educators of color.

Essential Next Steps:

1. High quality teaching and learning for all becomes the responsibility of all leadership and staff. It will be necessary to take on a systematic approach where all staff are responsible for learning to advance learning for all versus hiring a District Equity Coordinator.

2. Create all position descriptions and interview questions for all District positions in alignment to the District's Equity Non-Negotiables or Principles of Excellence.

3. Create strategic partnerships with local universities to increase the number of high quality, diverse educational staff. Partner with local/regional organizations to establish a "grow your own" program for local diverse community members who are recruited for entry district positions and then supported to obtain education degrees and return to the district.

2. Leverage Funding

Staff believed that resources across the District were well managed. It will be important to create a system where expenditures can be re-evaluated by cross checking with the District's Equity Non-Negotiables. How a district spends money defines their priorities. When money is spent in alignment to the District's Equity Non-Negotiables or Principles of Excellence, the priorities of what matters to the District are clear. This can include professional development, the increase or decrease of specific positions, deciding not to use tuition dollars to support a child in a school district other than Hudson, or determining that financially supporting alternative education programs through segregated practices are not in alignment to the Equity Non-Negotiables, etc.

Focus group participants also identified a need for a late bus to ensure all students are provided access to the plethora of district extra-curricular offerings.

As the District confirms their equity Non-Negotiables, all policy and funding decisions can be cross-checked to consistently operationalizes and defines high quality teaching and learning for all students.

Essential Next Steps:

1. Upon the development of District Equity Non-Negotiables, complete an analysis of District expenditure practices.

2. Conduct an equity audit of student demographic representation in all extra and co-curricular activities for example in drama, football, soccer, music program, student council, etc.

3. Based on data results the District and Schools will increase options and access (late bus) for those students who may have limited access to student activities and athletics and provide financial support to students and families (in a way that does not demean) to ensure students have the equipment and materials needed to fully participate.

   3. Cross-Check Policy and Procedures

The district should cross check district policies and procedures against the District's Equity Non-Negotiables. Often districts choose to do this work as part of their policy revision cycle. Some policies are more pertinent than others, therefore rather than continue with a current policy, despite its contradictions to the Equity Non-Negotiables, it should be revised as soon as possible. That is, policies related to the implementation of curriculum and instruction, discipline, Title 1 supports, special education, gifted and talented, English as a Second Language or linguistically diverse, and so forth should be revised after the District's Principles of Excellence are solidified. The District Leadership Team can often determine the policies most essential to revise in this way. The list of policies selected for immediate revisions are then forwarded to the School Board

Policy and Procedure Committee. The most appropriate time to continue the dialogue of the importance of the Equity Non-Negotiables and how to operationalize such Equity Non-Negotiables is when the information is presented to the School Board.

Based on the analysis, the District will need to create a plan for revisions and a timeline for any form changes.

Essential Next Steps:

1.   Upon the development of the District Equity Non Negotiables, complete a cross check of policies and procedures to better leverage high quality teaching and learning for all and its sustainability.
2 .   The school board should receive training in high quality teaching and learning for all students to ensure members model the behaviors and attitudes the district expects of all staff and how to respond to community concerns related to this.

V.   Summary of Essential Next Steps

Know the History of Educational Marginalization

1.   Complete professional development on the educational history of marginalization for the community and school community to better understand current practices.

2.   Each school staff and district office should draw their current educational structures and determine what is proactive and reactive within their schools and the challenges for students that such practices present.

Shift from Deficit to Assets-Based Thinking, Language

1.   Complete an understanding of how perception plays a role in equity and practices of marginalization through shifting from deficit based language and practices to asset based language and practices as part of staff development.

2.   Participate in activities to reflect and better understand stereotypes, myths and assumptions to interrupt deficit based language, thinking and practices.

Engage in Identity Development

1.   Complete consistent and authentic professional development in the area if identity development as part and parcel of a plan and process to become an asset based equitable school district.

2.   All staff should participate in opportunities of their choice to increase their understanding of identities different from their own.

Apply Equity Research

1. Understand the research on high quality teaching and learning and best practices across all student identifiers (special education, ELL, advanced Learners, RtI, relative to current practices.

Develop Equity Non-Negotiables

1. Create District Principles of Excellence to operationalize high quality teaching and learning for all students and leverage the District vision and strategic plan.

Conduct Equity Audit

1.   Complete a District and per school equity audit annually to measure the District's progress toward high quality teaching and learning for all students relative to the data represented in this report.

Re-align Staff and Students

1.   Complete a process at the District and school level to realign staff for C3 Teams and create all environments in the core of teaching and learning and extra-curricular that are proportionally represented.

2.   Begin the process of phasing out the 3 center-based programs at the elementary school to align with the development and functioning of C3 teams across the Elementary Level.

3.   Begin the process of returning students with disabilities from tuitioned out of District placements to again, align with the development and functioning of the C3 Teams across the District.

4. Identify the demographics of the high school's "school within a school" and of the high school's pull out study hall with one staff member for students who struggle, to determine whether or not particular demographic groups are over-identified. Do not increase the capacity of these programs. Collect student outcome data (high school and post high school) on both these programs to determine the effectiveness of these programs.

Construct Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn (C3) Teams

1. Understand the role and function of Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn Teams to create equitable practices for all learners.

Identity Relevant Teaching and Learning

1. Provide professional development in support of instructional practices and strategies that have the greatest impact on student achievement.

2. Evaluate current curriculum relative to the identities in the Wisconsin Pupil Nondiscrimination law and aligned with the intent of the law.

Discipline and Behavior

1. Provide professional development specific to how to develop Proactive Student Behavioral plans that are equitable and identity relevant.

Students with Significant Disabilities

1. Complete professional development in support of cross-categorical caseloads and proactively supporting students with significant needs in proportionally represented school and community environments.

Align Human Resource Systems

1. High quality teaching and learning for all becomes the responsibility of all leadership and staff. It will be necessary to take on a systematic approach where all staff are responsible for learning to advance learning for all versus hiring a District Equity Coordinator.

2. Create all position descriptions and interview questions for all District positions in alignment to the District's Principles of Excellence.

3.   Create strategic partnerships with local universities to increase the number of high quality, diverse educational staff. Partner with local/regional organizations to establish a "grow your own" program for local diverse community members who are recruited for entry district positions and then supported to obtain education degrees and return to the district.

Leverage Funding

1.   Upon the development of District Principles of Excellence, complete an analysis of District expenditure practices.

2.   Conduct an equity audit of student demographic representation in all extra and co-curricular activities for example in drama, football, soccer, music program, student council, etc.

3.   Based on data results the District and Schools will increase options and access (early morning and late bus) for those students who may have limited access to student activities and athletics and provide financial support to students and families (in a way that does not demean) to ensure students have the equipment and materials needed to fully participate.

Cross-Check Policy and Procedures

1.   Upon the development of the District Principles of Excellence, complete a cross check of policies and procedures to better leverage high quality teaching and learning for all and its sustainability.

2 .   The school board should receive training in high quality teaching and learning for all students to ensure members model the behaviors and attitudes the district expects of all staff and how to respond to community concerns related to this.

VI.   Appendices -

    A. Skills-at-a-Glance
    B. Co-Plan Lesson Template
    C. Behavioral Plan Templates

Appendix A
Skills at a Glance

Skills at a Glance (ISAAG) Template

Student Name_____   Grade_____

Students Areas of Engagement_____   Date ISAAG Created _____

_____

Check those subjects that the skill will be focused on and the application of instructional strategies

	Skills/Goals in Priority Order	Specific Instructional Strategies	Math	English Language Arts	Science	Social Studies	Specials/Electives
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

Appendix B
Lesson Plan Template

Co-Plan to Co-Serve to Co-Learn Team (C3 Team) Lesson Plan

Standards/Learning Targets:

Unit/Lesson:

Large Group Instruction (10%):

Student Grouped By	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Identity Relevant Engagement						
Identity Relevant Assessment and Expression						
Identity Relevant Instruction representation						
Staffing						
ISAAG Instructional Strategies						

Staff Completing Co-Planning

Signature   Title

_____   _____

_____   _____

Appendix C
Behavioral Support Plan Template
STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN (SSP)

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1. LIST THE PROACTIVE SYSTEM ASPECTS THAT ARE IN PLACE:
(INTEGRATED, PROPORTIONALLY REPRESENTED ENVIRONMENT (E.G., NO PULLOUT, ABILITY GROUPING OR TRACKING); ANTI-OPPRESSIVE TEACHER AND TEACHING)

2. LIST THE PROACTIVE SYSTEM ASPECTS THAT NEED TO BE DEVELOPED:
(INTEGRATED, PROPORTIONALLY REPRESENTED ENVIRONMENT (E.G., NO PULLOUT, ABILITY GROUPING OR TRACKING); ANTI-OPPRESSIVE TEACHER AND TEACHING)

3. LIST PROACTIVE STUDENT SUPPORTS THAT SHOULD BE PUT IN PLACE TO PREVENT CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR (e.g., morning swim, schedule, small heterogeneous grouping, sensory breaks, reinforcement, etc.),

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STUDENT BEHAVIOR	INTITIAL ADULT RESPONSE	FOLLOW-UP ADULT RESPONSE	RESOLUTION	Teachers Notes/Date

SIGNATURES OF SSP PARTICIPANTS
ROLE/RELATIONSHIP   DATE

_____   _____

_____   _____