

EQUITY REVIEW 2022

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28
Camden, Maine



EQUITY
ALLIANCE
MN

Authors

Equity Alliance MN Team

Equity Alliance MN
6063 Hudson Rd. #218
Woodbury, MN 55125
Phone: 651-379-2653
Email: info@ea-mn.org

About Equity Alliance MN

Equity Alliance MN has been leading educational equity work for over 25 years. We work with organizations to support systemic equity and integration through careful and intentional use of professional development; external supports, including equity reviews, facilitation and action planning; and student programming.

Vision:

Eliminate gaps in E-21 Educational opportunity and achievement.

Mission:

Through collaborative learning and advocacy, be the leading force for systemic educational equity and integration.

Core Values:

- Student Focused
- Equity
- Integration
- Opportunities
- Relationship

Educational Equity: is defined as each student, particularly students who belong to marginalized identities, receiving the support necessary to be successful in school.

- Access to rigorous courses
- Meaningful participation and engagement
- Cultural representation and voice
- Positive academic and social outcomes for every learner

This page intentionally left blank

Table of Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Methods</i>	<i>3</i>
Participants	4
Instruments	5
Analysis	6
<i>Findings</i>	<i>7</i>
Findings by Dimension	8
Dimension #1: Shared Vision for Equity (SVE)	8
Dimension #2: Efficacy of Programs (EP)	16
Dimension #3: Utilization of Resources (UR)	21
Dimension #4: Curriculum Represents Equity (CRE)	27
Dimension #5: Learner-Centered Practices (LCP)	32
Dimension #6: Inclusive & Responsive Communication (IRC)	36
<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Appendix A</i>	<i>42</i>
Student Demographics	42
Middle School	42
High School	46
Teachers	50
Non-Certified Staff	53
Parent/Guardian and Community	55
<i>Appendix B</i>	<i>57</i>
High School Survey Averages	57
Middle School Survey Averages	60
Teacher Survey Averages	63
Non-Certified Staff Survey Averages	65
Building Leaders Survey Averages	68
District Leaders Survey Averages	69
Parents/Guardians and Community Survey Averages	71

List of Tables

Table 1: Response Rates.....	7
Table 2: Safety questions for high school and middle school students.....	25

List of figures

Figure 1: In school, I have been asked to talk about what equity means to me.	8
Figure 2: I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from school staff.	13
Figure 3: I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from other students.....	13
Figure 4: Students who receive special education services do not face discrimination in my school.	14
Figure 5: Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my school.....	15
Figure 6: I know who to talk to if there is something at school that is not working well for me.	16
Figure 7: All students in my classroom have access to the appropriate technology to support and facilitate their learning.	22
Figure 8: I am aware of equitable practices in place to distribute technology to those in need.	23
Figure 9: My teachers ask for my opinion in class.....	33
Figure 10: I know why we are learning what we are learning.....	35
Figure 11: What grade are you in?	42
Figure 12: What is your gender Identity?	42
Figure 13: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?.....	43
Figure 14: Are you Hispanic, Latinx, or of Spanish origin?.....	43
Figure 15: Are you American Indian or an Alaskan Native?	44
Figure 16: What is your race/ethnicity?	44
Figure 17: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?	45
Figure 18: What is your current status in school?	46
Figure 19: To which gender identity do you most identify?	46
Figure 20: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?.....	47
Figure 21: Are you Hispanic, Latinx, or of Spanish origin?.....	47
Figure 22: Are you American Indian or an Alaskan Native?	48
Figure 23: What is your race/ethnicity?	48
Figure 24: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?	49
Figure 25: Which school do you spend most of your working hours in?.....	50
Figure 26: How many years have you been working as a teacher in this district?	50
Figure 27: To which gender identity do you most identify?.....	51

Figure 28: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?	51
Figure 29: What is your race/ethnicity?	52
Figure 30: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?	52
Figure 31: How many years have you been working as a staff in this district?	53
Figure 32: To which gender identity do you most identify?	53
Figure 33: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?	54
Figure 34: What is your race/ethnicity?	54
Figure 35: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?	55
Figure 36: To which gender identity do you most identify?	55
Figure 37: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?	56
Figure 38: What is your race/ethnicity?	56

Introduction

A comprehensive Equity Alliance MN (EA-MN) review can provide insights into an institution's current practices, educate about systemic and programmatic inequities, and aspires to provide foundational information on which to plan and implement identified processes for change. An equity review serves to support organizations through data-gathering practices to inform decision-making. Information gathered from this review was processed, analyzed, and presented to assist Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 to implement and develop context-specific strategies to address the unique configurations of its communities served. The review process utilized an approach to identify systemic issues that EA-MN believes can be addressed through Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 ongoing commitment to building relationships, confronting disparities, providing support, and focusing on results through continuous improvement.

Methods

Equity Alliance MN's framework was designed to provide voice for all stakeholders in districts and organizations. The framework underlying an EA-MN equity review is built upon the foundation of the following six dimensions:

- **Dimension #1: Shared Vision for Equity (SVE)** is a shared, articulated vision for the system and systematic equity for students from marginalized identities; this includes, but is not limited to, racial identity, religious identity, ethnic identity, physical ability, gender identity, social-economic status, emergent language status, and educational needs. When a system has collaboratively created, clearly articulated, and officially adopted its vision for equity, its stakeholders can aim at common goals. A shared vision for equity in highly functioning systems is defined by a culture where actions, practices, and purposes align with the common vision. Indicators of SVE can be found through interviews, surveys, observations, and reviews of policies and practices.
- **Dimension #2: Efficacy of Programs (EP)** is a systematic evaluation of effectiveness for programs and systems. When a system has instituted a schedule or cycle to continuously collect and analyze feedback on its programs relative to equity, it allows for a widespread consciousness of a district's commitment to excellence. When a system is high performing in this dimension, all programs (activities, curriculum, services, policies, etc.) engage in collection and analysis of feedback, review of outcomes, and reflection on a predictable, published cycle. This cycle includes an examination of equity as a core element of evaluation. EP can be observed through surveys, interviews, and observations of stakeholder groups.

- **Dimension #3: Utilization of Resources (UR)** includes strategic and effective provision and utilization of resources for all learners to attain success. Utilization of Resources as a dimension of the framework provides information regarding equity and alignment of access and expectations. When a system is high performing in this dimension relative to equity, no student groups are disadvantaged or disenfranchised because of systemic racism or inequitable practices or policies. Data to inform this dimension can be gathered through observations, perceptions, interviews, and reviews of student performance.
- **Dimension #4: Curriculum Represents Equity (CRE)** reflects the arts, achievements, histories, perspectives, languages, and journeys of the community served, and deepens learners' understanding of their roles in the global community. Curriculum Represents Equity as a dimension of the framework provides insight as to how and for whom the district's curriculum is representative. A high-performing system with representative equity as elements in the curriculum will reflect the literature, arts, philosophies, and world views of the learners and their families. In addition, best practices in this dimension will include articulated scope and sequence planned and delivered that introduces learners to history, art, culture, and thought from around the world. This dimension can be observed through the examination of curriculum maps, choices of curriculum materials, visible representations of cultures, knowledge, and awareness, and expectations for learners.
- **Dimension #5: Learner-Centered Practices (LCP)** is regarded as stewardship and instruction in leadership, collaboration, relationships, and clarity of expectations practiced, evaluated, and rewarded across the system. High-performing systems in this dimension exhibit welcoming cultures, representation of all stakeholder groups in leadership opportunities, valuation of voice, and provision of choice. Learner-Centered Practices can be evidenced through observations, surveys, interviews, and focus groups.
- **Dimension #6: Inclusive and Responsive Communication (IRC)** includes both internal and external means by which the system connects with its constituents. Systems that are high performing in this dimension communicate effectively in welcoming ways and through multiple modalities, provide clear direction, and offer multiple means through which to respond or request. Inclusive and Responsive Communication can be evidenced through observed interactions, perceptions, instructional models, and engagement.

Participants

Student participants for this equity review were recruited from Camden-Rockport Middle School, and Camden Hills Regional High School. Students had to be enrolled in one of the schools as of November 1, 2021. Also included were all licensed staff (teachers, social workers, counselors, etc.), all non-licensed staff (paraprofessionals, custodians, bus drivers, etc.), all building leaders (principals and vice/assistant principals), and all district leaders (the superintendent, supervisors, directors, etc.). Parents/guardians and community stakeholders were

also invited to participate in the review process. EA-MN worked with district leadership to identify all the student and staff participants to be included in the equity review. Survey questions were vetted and approved by district leadership. District leadership helped with the dissemination of the survey to parents/guardians and community members.

Focus groups participants were selected at random from the population sets listed above. The number of focus groups was determined based on population considerations and best practices established in human subjects' literature for content analysis saturation. Most focus groups averaged between 8-10 participants and lasted approximately 40 minutes. In all, nine student focus groups were conducted with participating students enrolled at the elementary, middle, and high school. Students in the focus groups were grouped by 1) type of school (elementary, middle, or high school), 2) gender identity, 3) students who identified as students of color or Indigenous, and 4) a general group containing a mix of students of different genders and similar grade levels. Ten staff focus groups were conducted with educators representing elementary, middle school, high school, and district operations staff. The staff groups were assigned based on teacher/instructional staff vs. non-licensed staff and affinity membership. Lastly, two focus groups were held for parents/guardians and community members. In addition to the focus groups, several one-on-one, semi-structured interviews were held with a variety of building and district leaders.

Instruments

The equity review collected data through a mixed-methods approach, utilizing surveys (quantitative) and focus groups and semi-structured interviews (qualitative). Additional data was collected through classroom and building walkthroughs by the EA-MN team. The survey was administered to all students via an online link that was distributed by building leaders to ensure student information remained secure and confidential. Building and district staff were emailed the link to the survey directly from EA-MN staff. District leaders were also given the link to the parent and community survey which they distributed to their community.

The survey is a proprietary instrument developed after extensive academic research into best practices in educational equity by EA-MN staff and professionals in the field of education policy, research, and evaluation. The survey contained a mix of questions on a five-point Likert scale and also included open-ended questions. The Likert scale answers were given a point designation from 1 through 5 with 1 corresponding to "strongly agree" with a given statement and a 5 corresponding to "strongly disagree" with that statement. A score of 3 corresponded to a response of "neither agree nor disagree" with that statement. Survey responses were used to inform the focus group questions. Depending on the population (for example, whether the respondent was a student or staff member), survey responses were used to inform the set of questions to be asked of the participants to triangulate the survey data with the focus group data.

Finally, building and classroom walkthrough information was examined by EA-MN staff. The walkthroughs were strictly observational and not intended to be evaluative. The purpose of the walkthroughs was to provide an objective perspective from an external lens of equity. The EA-MN team conducted building and classroom walkthroughs at the elementary, middle and high

school. Thirty-nine classrooms from 1st through 12th grade were visited and approximately 20 minutes was spent in each classroom. EA-MN team members utilized a survey tool for classroom walkthroughs that was calibrated to ensure levels of reliability. A similar tool was calibrated and employed for building walkthroughs.

Analysis

The first approach to analyzing the survey responses, once the data had been examined for outliers, was to calculate a mean or average score for the entire population (i.e., the mean of all high school students). Secondly, when able to, averages were obtained for demographic groups such as by gender identity or race/ethnicity so that demographic average scores could be compared to the overall average. The standard deviation (SD) of the overall population average was obtained so that the demographic averages could be compared. Special attention was given to questions in which the demographic averages that were plus or minus .5 from the mean. Demographic averages that were plus or minus 1 standard deviation from the mean were analyzed for statistical significance by a two-tail independent T-Test.

The approach to analyzing the focus groups was the following: focus groups were transcribed, and a content analysis was completed by EA-MN staff after examining all the transcribed data. The focus group data went through several rounds of content analysis to make sure all themes were identified. A similar approach was used with the interview data. Findings reported in this report had to be triangulated in order to be reported, meaning themes or patterns had to be repeated and observed among the survey data, focus groups or interviews. As a rule, EA-MN did not report a theme or finding unless it came up three times in our analysis.

Findings

The total survey response rate was 86% for middle school students, and 79% for high school students. Teacher/licensed staff had a strong response rate at 76% while non-licensed staff had a survey response rate of 65%. Among leadership, building leaders had a strong response rate at 63% and district leaders at 33% had to lowest response rates of all populations. The parent and community survey yielded 123 responses.

Table 1: Response Rates

	Total Survey Responses	Total Population	Response Rate
Camden-Rockport Middle School	315	368	85.6%
Camden-Rockport Regional High School	550	696	79.0%
Teachers/licensed Staff	118	155	76.1%
Educational Support Professional Staff	77	119	64.7%
Building Leaders	5	8	62.5%
District Leaders	3	9	33.3%
Parent/Guardian and Community Members	123		
Total	1191		

Given the high response rate of most of the surveys, along with the number of focus groups and interviews conducted, we can triangulate the different sources of data to provide conclusions with a high degree of accuracy. In other words, EA-MN can confidently say that we obtained a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena occurring in the Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Districts as it relates to equity.

It is important to note that many of the finding will be reported as aggregate counts or percentages. It EA-MN's policy to keep survey, focus groups, and interview respondents anonymous. As such EA-MN will suppress information about a population when they have less than 10 people. EA-MN also practices secondary suppression to make sure respondents stay anonymous.

Findings by Dimension

Dimension #1: Shared Vision for Equity (SVE)

Shared Vision for Equity is a known, operational, shared, articulated vision for the system and systematic equity for students from marginalized identities; this includes, but is not limited to, racial identity, religious identity, ethnic identity, physical ability, gender identity, social economic status, emergent language status, and educational needs. When a system has collaboratively created, clearly articulated, and officially adopted its vision for equity, its stakeholders can aim at common goals. Shared Vision for Equity in highly functioning systems is defined by a culture wherein actions, practices, and purposes align with the common vision. Indicators of systemic equity can be found through interviews, surveys, observations, and reviews of policies and practices.

Establishment of a Shared Vision for Equity for the institution was supported by the State of Maine in its December 2020 Joint Statement of Commitment and Support for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Maine Schools. In this statement, according to the Department of Education's website, "The Maine Department of Education, Maine School Boards Association, Maine School Superintendents Association, Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities, Maine Education Association, Maine Principals Association, and Maine Curriculum Leaders Association enthusiastically affirm the right of every student to an equitable education. We proudly and steadfastly support the educators and districts in Maine who are taking on the work of understanding and dismantling racism and inequity in our schools and communities. We urge all Maine schools and educators to accept their role and responsibilities in examining and addressing the inequities that have long existed in our society and institutions." The statement continues to explain its inclusive use of its wording, "We define educational equity as providing each student a legitimate opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive in school and beyond. Equity depends on a deliberate and systematic abolition of the inequities that have been sewn into the fabric of American society. These persistent inequities have long disadvantaged students based on race, sex, gender, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, indigenous origin, religion, and all aspects of human identity that have been subjugated within our society." The statement then challenges Maine school systems to respond, "We recognize that education is one of many systems that have had a role in perpetuating racial inequities, and that through close examination of our system, we can and must strive to attain diversity, equity, and inclusion of all voices and experiences. We believe this work is central to living up to our promises of providing an outstanding education for every Maine learner and continuing to be a public education system of excellence." The statement goes on to identify means by which schools

and systems can engage in examination and the organizations represented acknowledge the complexity of this work, “Examining racism and inequity is difficult work. As each student of Maine is a future citizen of our global society, we believe this is work that needs to be engaged respectfully and civilly by all the schools and communities in our state. Understanding and addressing racism and inequity will take many different forms, all of which are valid and needed. Already many educators, school districts, and organizations are exploring this work in some of the following ways: Defining with school and community members what makes a safe and welcoming place for all and committing to a well-articulated vision. The statement also identifies engagement in equity audits as valuable practice in adding perspective to these processes.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 has responded to the challenge of the state and to the challenge of our times through multiple initiatives and via a clear, focused message to its constituents. The Superintendent’s Message on the system’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webpage states, “A spark went off in the spring of '20 with the killing of George Floyd that shined a bright light on the serious racial inequities that continue to exist in America. As a school district, we have a part to play in addressing these issues. We need to unite around anti-racism and work harder to understand how our systematic privilege contributes to the pain and injustice inflicted upon Black people. It is not an option to assume, because of midcoastal Maine’s lack of diversity, that this is not our issue. It is. It is everyone’s responsibility to make things right. Not only is our school system educating students who will eventually sprinkle out all over this country, but as an institution that is part of the structure of American society, we are also part of a system that has perpetuated the problem. We need to listen, dig deep for understanding, be vulnerable, and commit ourselves to justice for all. We don’t believe we can do that by being silent. We need to take a deliberate antiracist stand. And through this lens, we realize the opportunity is before us to examine, unearth, and recommend changes to policies, curriculum, and environmental factors within our two districts that contribute to systemic racism, inequities, and exclusion toward all non-majority populations of students.” The system’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force was formed with its purpose delineated as “The Task Force will look at our district as an institution to determine if we are unintentionally contributing to systemic racism, inequities, and exclusion toward certain populations of students.” The Task Force’s Goals were specified as: 1. To better understand issues surrounding racism, inequity, and exclusion in our society, 2. To look at our districts’ institutional practices to identify potential areas of unintentional systemic racism, inequity, or exclusion to one or more groups, and 3. To make recommendations to the district administration by June, 2021, regarding ways in which the institution and its schools can improve practices to better promote equity and inclusion. The task force has been meeting since September of 2020. Its members, by design, include high school students, a school board member, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members. According to the task force’s most recent published minutes, the scope of its work includes, “The group has five areas of focus: Professional Development; Student

Environment/Experience; Curriculum; Policy, Program, and Process Review; and Workforce Equity. The job of the task force is to examine these areas across all the schools to unearth and recommend changes to areas that contribute to systematic racism, inequities, and exclusion toward any specific populations of students. This work supports equity for all students and staff when it comes to their opportunity to learn.”

In addition to the system-wide DEI Task Force, the website refers to school-based DEI teams as well. The high school’s link to its building DEI team was live at the time of this review, and reported multiple initiatives operating and/or planned, including the adoption of a DEI policy, strategy and work plan, the beginnings of a professional development plan, curriculum, and policy review, and plans for an equity review. The high school link refers to a system-wide DEI workshop series created by teachers for teachers, entitled Antiracism for Educators centered on culturally responsive teaching practices.

The system has engaged in multiple foundational initiatives and has established processes and procedures through which voices can be heard, ideas shared, and challenging conversations can take place to produce growth and increased understanding. The system’s stand relative to inclusion and equity is clearly stated. Its DEI Task Force has been established and the expectations for building-level teams is in place. The DEI Task Force has provided a model for inclusion and has made resources available through its webpage for constituent groups. In addition, administrators have engaged in book studies and opportunities for staff to do the same have been offered and accessed by multiple staff. The system has engaged Equity Alliance MN (EA-MN) to gather information from an outside perspective through surveys, focus groups, observations, and interviews to provide depth of field and inform the challenging work of “looking in our mirror.” The intent is to ensure that all learners are served well by the system and all learners experience the opportunity to Be Kind. Work Hard. and Keep Learning.

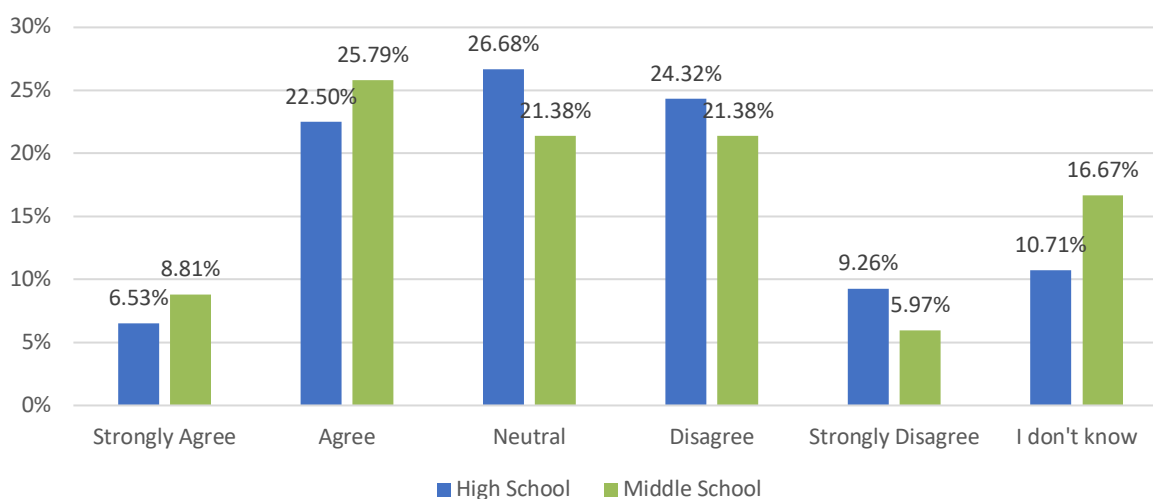
The system has clearly established its direction relative to equity and inclusion. Despite a worldwide, tragic, disruptive, and immensely chaotic and continuously challenging pandemic, the system’s Strategic Plan at the time of review was in its fourth and final year of implementation. The carefully constructed plan included a benchmark for this final year, “2.2 - Review educational opportunities and support services for all students to ensure equity - Review data and address inequities.” The Strategic Plan also includes a charge to determine professional development to ensure pedagogy, curriculum, processes, policies, practices, and procedures provide safe, welcoming access for all. The building of the system’s new strategic plan is expected to reflect what has been learned through the system’s reflection and review.

As EA-MN conducted focus group interviews, walk-throughs, observations and surveys, the words of the Superintendent’s Statement rose as more and more salient and vital to the system’s understanding of its work going forward. When representation is marginal, and when

‘non-majority’ takes on multiple definitions in populations that may appear to be relatively homogenous, it will be important that system stakeholders are made aware that the districts represented in the Fivetown CSD 28, has a published and clearly articulated board-supported vision for equity and inclusion so that those persons representing all the system’s non-majorities know clearly, they are safe, and their voices are valued.

Surveys administered to populations including district and building leaders, teachers and other certified or licensed staff and non-certified or unlicensed staff, high school and middle school students and parents/guardians or community members provided some data to inform systemic decisions going forward. Respondents to all surveys utilized a five-point scale, with 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neither agree or disagree, 4 = Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree. Responses to the survey prompt: *I have been involved in creating or revisiting the district’s vision for equity*, included district leaders’ averages of responses of 3.5, teacher averages of 3.2, non-certified staff averages of 3.6, and parents’ averages of 2.8 signaling the lack of involvement by these groups in creating or revisiting the district’s vision for equity. When students across the district were asked to respond to the prompt: *At school, I have been asked to talk about what equity, or fairness means to me*, the high school average of all responses was 3.2, while the middle school average was 2.4 suggesting that equity conversations are less likely to take place among high school students (Figure 1). EA-MN team members conducting building walk-throughs noted inconsistency across the district in display of building and district mission and vision statements that reflect valuing of equity and appreciation of difference. Individual building-level improvement plans including an equity and inclusion focus were not presented.

Figure 1: In school, I have been asked to talk about what equity means to me.



The system seems poised to establish an inclusive process to create its vision for equity and inclusion. At the point of this review, progress toward increased equity has been perceived relatively consistently across the district. Surveys administered to several internal populations yielded relatively homogenous results to prompts asking participants to rate levels of agreement as to perceptions of progress in buildings/district for students with marginalized identities or who belong to marginalized groups or communities. District and Building Leaders' responses averages were 2.2 and 2.0 respectively. Parents' responses averaged 2.6. Teachers and non-certified staff's averages were 2.2 and 2.4 respectively.

Identification with issues of equity and inclusion yielded slightly mixed results throughout populations surveyed and in the focus groups interviewed. District Leaders' average of responses to the prompt: *I am aware of staff of color in my district who have encountered racism and discrimination from their peers*, was 4.00 indicating disagreement. Teachers and non-certified staff responding to a similar prompt yielded a similar average of 3.5. When teachers responded to a prompt asking for awareness as to whether students encountered racism from staff the average of responses was 3.6 (Figure 2), and when asked whether they were aware of students encountering racism and discrimination from other students their average score was 2.6 (Figure 3), non-certified staff, 2.8. These results signal that racism and discrimination toward students from staff is not occurring at high frequencies and is more commonly occurring among students. It is also important to note that 19 of the 91 licensed staff who responded to the survey have witness discrimination by staff towards students from marginalized groups and similarly 52 licensed staff have witnessed students being discriminatory towards other students. These results are perhaps indicative of underlying racism and discrimination in the district. These results may lay the foundation for exploring a system-wide mode to address underlying racial and discriminatory actions by a few students and staff that negatively impact the ability of students with marginalized identities to succeed. When teachers were asked in the survey if equity issues among students deserve more attention than they currently receive at my school the average responses was 2.6, suggesting that teachers are aware that there are some underline equity issues among the student body that ought to be addressed. One such issue that was continuously highlighted during interviews and focus groups is that of the socioeconomics of the students.

“Teachers MUST be willing to address issues. Teachers need to talk about race, identity, equity and real histories. It is EVERYONE's job, not just the few of us who are passionate.” - Teacher

Figure 2: I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from school staff.

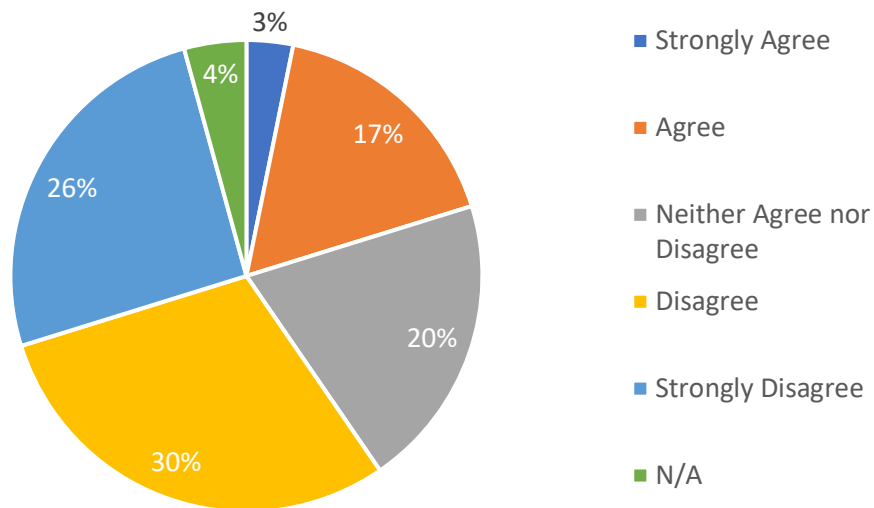
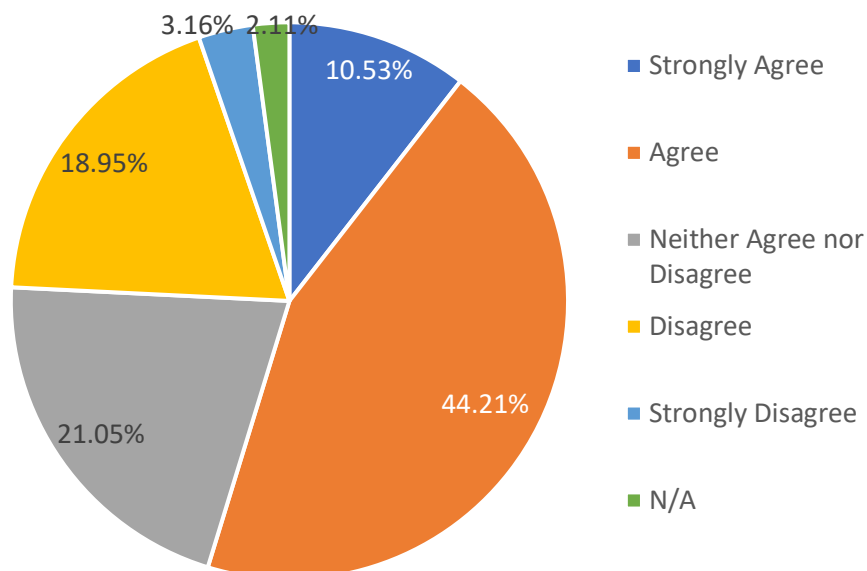
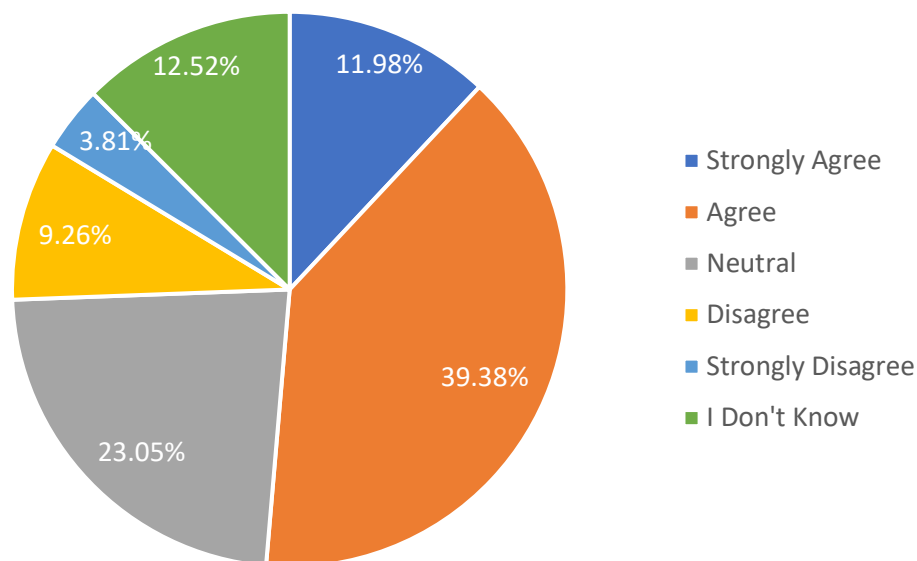


Figure 3: I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from other students.



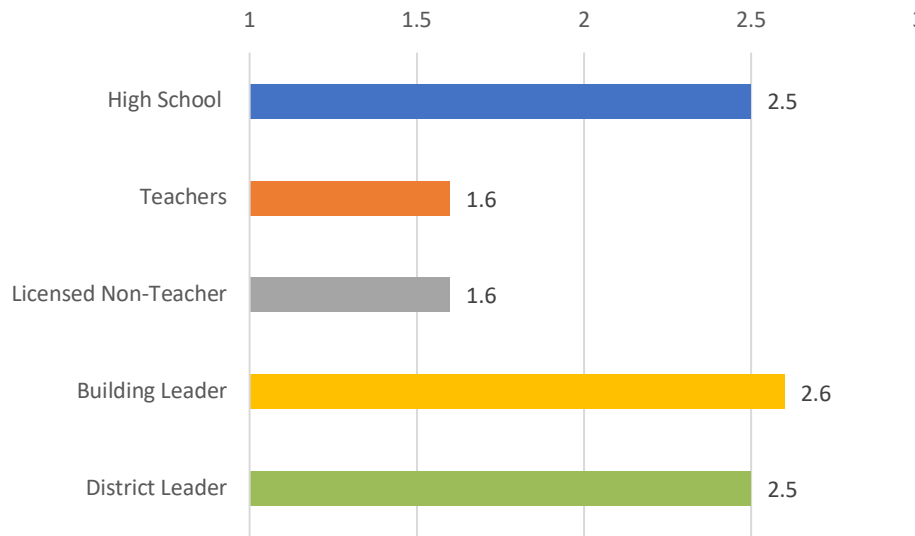
When students were asked to respond to the prompt: *Students who receive special education services do not face discrimination in my school*, the overall average of high school students' responses was 2.5, and although this score leans toward agreement with the statement it is important to note that about 72 (13%) of the 551 students who responded to the survey disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (Figure 4). District leaderships' average response to the same prompt was 3. Analysis of focus groups and interviews transcripts yielded similar themes which included perceptions of inequities for students qualifying for special education services relative to transitions from school to life after graduation. For example, staff expressed the need for "life skills" readiness for students in special education but a lack of funding prevents them for offering them. Staff also expressed that special education students are "not ready" for the real world and that there is no plan for them.

Figure 4: Students who receive special education services do not face discrimination in my school.



When asked to respond to the prompt: *Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my school*, high school students' average was 2.5, teachers – 1.6, building leaders – 2.6 and district leaders – 2.5 signaling that perhaps students with physical disabilities are encountering discrimination outside of the classroom since teachers are overwhelmingly agreeing with the statement (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my school



Responses to the prompt: *Students who identify as LGBTQ do not face discrimination in my school/classroom*, yielded a 2.6 average among high school students suggesting that overall, most students agree with the statement, however high school students who identified as having a marginalized gender identity (transgender, gender queer, non-binary, agender students) had an average mean of 3.29 for this prompt. This difference in mean is significant ($p < .005$). For additional context about 41 students who identified as having a marginalized identity are not in agreement with the statement meaning that LGBTQ students do face discrimination in their schools, and classrooms. Responses to the same prompt from teachers – 1.5, building leaders - 2.6 and district leaders – 3, indicate possible discrepancies in perceptions for how or if LGBTQ students are facing discrimination and these discrepancies align and change depending on the staffs’ role within the schools. Focus group and interview transcripts add another layer by citing cis-male privilege and perceived acceptance of harassment stating, “boys-will-be-boys”. It was mentioned in several focus groups that female students are often harassed by male students and this behavior goes largely unchecked by staff. Furthermore, high school student focus groups and survey results noted less than strong perceptions of students’ advocacy for one another when bullied.

“Staff are in very different places along the continuum of educating themselves on DEI and ABAR work; all of us need to continue that self-examination and reflection, and continue to educate ourselves, [teachers must] examine our classroom expectations, systems and routines through a DEI lens and address vocabulary/language that is not inclusive and change. Celebrate, be curious about, and welcoming of various heritages and backgrounds (often there can be an underlying pressure to 'assimilate' which is unintentionally reinforced by some staff/curriculum...” - Teacher

Parents and students, in focus groups and on survey comments noted equity disparity for those students attending high school from specific “sending schools.” Issues for those students included transportation after activities, inclusion, financial barriers and acceptance. Interviews and focus groups also acknowledged that the district has made progress through postponed student elections, various forms of financial support and continuous availability of food for all learners.

As the district prepares to begin its next strategic planning process, survey results, focus group interviews and walk-throughs may provide information regarding a baseline for aspects of the plan. At the time of the review, professional development regarding equity, advocacy, cultural competence and diversity was not known to be centralized and was reported to be optional for staff. The direction and spirit of the system’s equity and inclusion work was apparent, but its vision was not yet clearly articulated, nor were action and improvement steps delineated at the system, building and program levels.

The EA-MN Team recognizes the strong commitment of the system and the conscientious structures established to ensure progress toward equity through Fivetown CSD 28. Creation of a clearly articulated vision or framework for equity and inclusion that can serve as the common end-goal for all will make possible the alignment of building and program goals, annual improvement plans, and reflection of the vision in the new strategic plan that will guide the future of the system

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Strengths

- + The district has committed to conduct a meaningful diversity, equity and inclusion review and reflection and to use findings to inform strategic planning.
- + The system has created a DEI Task Force that has successfully provided resources and created processes to bring the voices of all into the conversations.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Growth Areas

- A school-board approved vision/framework for equity and inclusion can serve to provide common goals and articulate purpose.
- Provision of non-majority advocacy, along with common understanding of need for diversity in curriculum and representation are challenges this system is poised to support.

Dimension #2: Efficacy of Programs (EP)

Efficacy of Programs is systematic evaluation of effectiveness for programs and systems. When a system has instituted a cycle or schedule to continuously collect and analyze feedback on its programs regarding perceptions and outcomes relative to marginalized identities, transparency

and collective consciousness of the commitment becomes enculturated and measured. When a system is high performing in this dimension, all programs including but not limited to initiatives, activities, athletics, curriculum, services, and policies are engaged in collection and analysis of feedback, review of outcomes, and reflection on a predictable, published cycle and the cycle includes an examination of equity and inclusion as core elements of evaluation. Efficacy of Programs for students can be evidenced through surveys, interviews, and evaluations conducted before the time of this review.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 has followed a detailed strategic plan, complete with annual benchmarks through very challenging years that have included an on-going pandemic. EA-MN and all the districts with which the agency works have witnessed and been part of the struggles to serve the needs of learners in quarantine, educators in limitless stress and systems pushed to the very edges of capabilities. For serving the learners in your care during these very difficult times, EA-MN commends and salutes the leadership and hardworking staff of this district and their unparalleled work achieved to keep the students moving forward and safe. Furthermore, Fivetown CSD 28's commitment to, when at all possible, in person learning during the pandemic is unparalleled in our nation. During times when health and safety is at the forefront, planning and development often cannot progress at its projected pace. Yet, the system's current strategic plan has remained in place, and the board has committed to the steps assigned to its final year. These Year 4 steps include a review of data and development of a DEI Road Map for the following years. The district's current strategic plan includes three goals:

- Goal #1: We will meet the social, emotional, and cognitive needs of students and support staff wellness to improve student achievement and build strong character.
- Goal #2: Curriculum, instruction, and assessment will provide a continuum of learning opportunities that are engaging and meaningful to students and allow them to thrive.
- Goal #3: The district will provide effective and fiscally responsible oversight in the development of the middle school campus project that is sensitive to community needs.

For each of these broad goals, the district has determined benchmarks per year, with some labeled as "on-going." Goal #3 has resulted in the opening of a new campus. Goal 2 appears to have added systems to collect information and several professional development offerings while Goal 1 appears to have focused on establishment of a growth mindset and support for mental health. Action steps in the plan include persons reporting and the timelines. What were not apparent to the EA-MN Team were the metrics used to determine whether the goals had been attained. The "...as determined by" portion of the goals and benchmarks, whether written at the system level or created for each school or program were not clear. The relevant input actions could be noted, but the effect of the actions as perceived by constituent groups did not appear to be measured. It was unclear as to whether the work of the district has resulted in improved student achievement and building strong character. The definitions of achievement and character would be beneficial, especially if built by inclusive consensus as the system begins its next strategic planning. The district already ranks in the top 20% of Maine

schools relative to state testing, therefore progress for improvement in student achievement using a SMART goal format, perhaps specific to each school, could help to create common targets and common focus for professional development. Further disaggregation of student achievement by populations, as measured by testing, grades, perceptions, improvement, growth, or other indicators can assist in focusing the work of the MTSS and RTI processes that have emerged during the past few years. The construct of “strong character” is contextual, and exploration of the meaning of that phrase across demographic groups could bring insights that can help to form SMART goals that can be measurable in some ways, providing evidence of growth and pathways to modify or change interventions in response. For the current Goal #2, the system has provided multiple options for learners to explore and engage. Curriculum cycles appear to be in place. Adding a lens of equity and inclusion, as well as a goal of diversity will be helpful to prepare learners to enter a diverse world and a global economy. Interviews and survey results indicate that professional development has been offered to increase use of learner-centered practices, however supervision data, peer observation data and Professional Learning Community (PLC) data could be helpful in setting SMART goals for instruction that applies the learning. Survey and focus group data can inform the system as to levels of students’ perception of engaging and meaningful curriculum and delivery. Defining the construct of “thrive” after graduation will also create opportunities for measuring the district’s effectiveness through follow-up surveys. The current plan’s Goal #3 has resulted in a successful opening of a new building. Following up through qualitative means can provide insight as to whether the new middle school has addressed community needs across all populations served.

“...the work of ABAR [should not be on] marginalized staff. Work to normalize conversations about DEI and include marginalized perspectives and own voices in their communications” - Teacher

The mission statement Camden Hills Regional High School is A learning community that fosters intellectual and creative excellence while building strong character. While the mission statement for Camden-Rockport Elementary and Middle School is: Be kind. Work hard. Keep learning. Conducting evaluation of programs, processes, and policies on a continuing basis to ensure the mission is achieved with equity and inclusivity has been addressed by some of the board’s committees. According to the district’s website and data provided to the EA-MN Team, the board has instituted multiple standing and ad hoc committees and task forces. Charge statements for these working groups are published and transparent. As these working committees move forward, they can provide sound structures to apply an equity and inclusion focus for policy and curriculum review cycles, planning and professional development as the district moves forward.

Some established mandated programs in Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 have required accountability and reporting cycles determined by their funding or sponsors. Examination of mandated reporting requirements may reveal that required equity reporting, when aggregated for the district, could provide helpful information. The remainder of the district’s programs, when

scheduled in the future to enter a published formal evaluation cycle complete with equity elements added to determine access issues and seek to examine limitations across all populations served, can illuminate possibilities for the system. Review of the district's website specific to the board's operations, provided access to the school board's meeting minutes. The district's program evaluation cycle was not available on the website or presented to the EA-MN team. Systematic collection of feedback regarding the effects and effectiveness of board and building policies, curriculum choices and instructional delivery, as well as services and programs by all populations affected will be important to determine the need for accommodations, modifications or revisions as the processes, policies and procedures are continued, modified, and employed (implemented). The district's current Strategic Plan includes benchmarks for this current year to build an evaluation cycle for its programs, which clearly aligns and extends the possibilities for an equity lens to be incorporated into evaluation

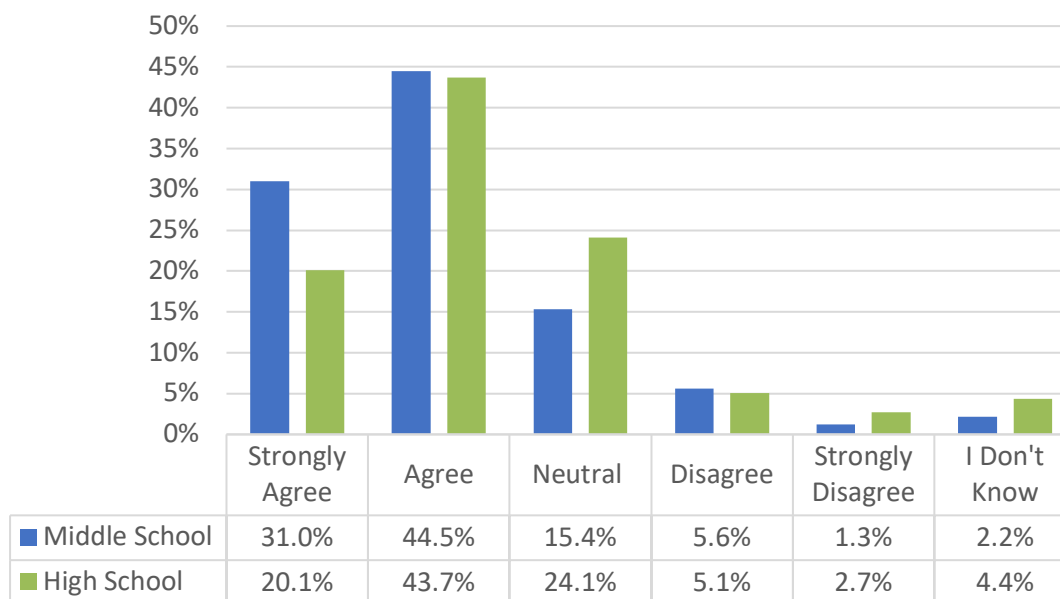
Survey results indicated awareness of formal program evaluations occurring mostly at an administrative level. When asked to respond to the prompt: I am aware of formal evaluations in my district that include an equity framework, lens or protocol, District Leaders' responses averaged 1.5, but when asked if they were involved in formal evaluation of programs using an equity lens, their responses averaged 3.5, meaning they tended to disagree with being involved in formal evaluations.

Teachers and other Licensed Staff response average was 3.3 for involvement in formal evaluations and 3.1 for awareness of equity evaluations. Non-certified Staff averages for involvement and awareness were 3.7 and 2.7. This indicates a general lack of involvement in district wide evaluations by staff. When parents and community members responded to the prompt: I have been asked by staff for input on how programs offered in the schools are working, the responses averaged 3.4. These differences may signal that inclusive evaluation procedures that include an equity framework could provide new insights for the district.

The district personnel interviewed referred to internal surveys administered, which could provide excellent information when disaggregated and analyzed for equity, access, and inclusion. Other relevant information regarding perceptions of success or indications of problems with programs could be gathered by asking populations if they had awareness of feedback channels. Middle school students responded to the EA-MN survey prompt: I know who to talk to if there is something at school that is not working well for me, with an average of 1.9 and high school students averaged 2.3 signaling that middle school students agree or strongly agree to knowing a person to whom they could go if something wasn't working well for them (figure 6). It is important to note that among high school students with a marginalized sexual orientation and those who identified as pansexual and among Black high school students

their average scores for the same prompt were higher (2.8 and 2.9 respectively) but not statistically significant.

Figure 6: I know who to talk to if there is something at school that is not working well for me.



Teacher responses to the prompt: I am able to and feel comfortable with letting someone in authority know that a program or process at my school is not working well (i.e., not serving the people who were intended to be served or the program is not meeting its goals) averaged a 2 and non-certified a 2.3. Parents responding to the prompt: If I wanted to discuss a program or process at school, I would feel comfortable talking to a teacher, administrator, or school board member, yielded an average of 2.2. When asked in focus groups and interviews, themes emerged regarding access to extra-curricular activities and events, access to higher level mathematics courses, favoritism shown to Camden residents, perceived discrimination on basis of gender and socio-economic status, and a divide in future planning options and services between honors students and those who are not.

State test results published do not reflect the past year for Fivetown CSD 28. Disaggregation of student performance results, using the Maine State's Assessments or other normed metrics will also provide excellent insight as to how the district's academic programs are serving student populations. Analysis of these data and performance goals can inform professional development and guide professional conversations as the district moves forward.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Strengths

- + The board has established multiple committees that can serve to provide pathways to institute cycles of formal evaluation utilizing equity, diversity and inclusion lenses.

- + The district is ready to commit to a new strategic plan that will incorporate the learning, reflection and build on the remarkable progress achieved during the current plan.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Growth Areas

- Schedules for formal review of programs with and equity and inclusion focus was not presented
- The current Strategic Plan states bold, ambitious and achievable goals, however metrics were not embedded in the plan.

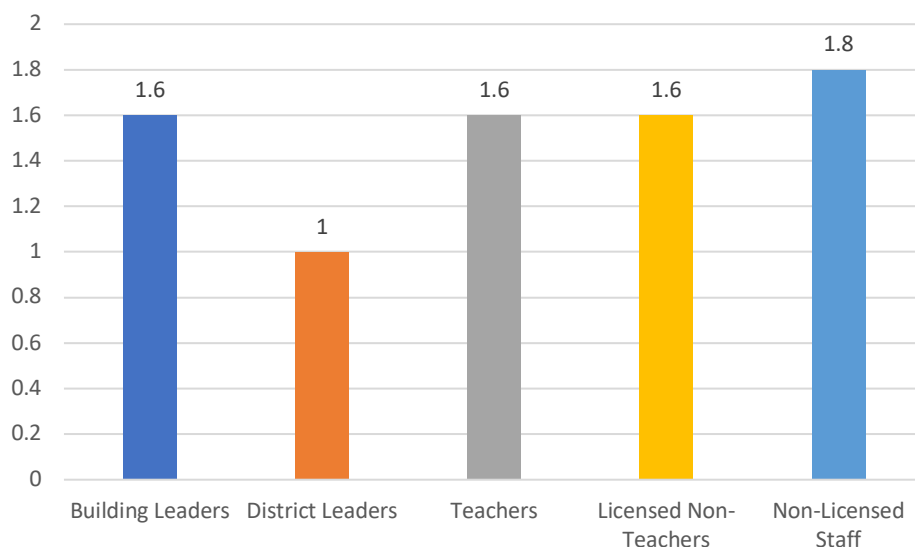
Dimension #3: Utilization of Resources (UR)

Utilization of Resources includes strategic and effective provision and utilization of resources for all learners to attain success. Utilization of Resources as a dimension of the framework provides information regarding equity and alignment of access, assurance of safety and ensuring high expectations for all. When a system is high performing in this dimension relative to equity, no student groups are disadvantaged or disenfranchised because of systemic racism or inequitable practices or policies. Data to inform this dimension can be gathered through observations, perceptions, and reviews of student performance.

Camden Hills Regional High School has approximately 60% of high school students matriculated from the towns of Camden and Rockport, while approximately 40% from Lincolnville, Hope and Appleton. The district offers Advanced Placement, Early College, Graduation with Distinction, and multiple honors options. The high school has established multiple opportunities for students to engage in travel and exchange programs, the arts, athletics, and many extra- and co-curricular offerings. Evaluation of effectiveness of support programs and practices using an inclusion and equity lens could help to determine if culturally inappropriate, identity, socio-economic status, demographics, geography or any discrimination or issues of access impede levels of effectiveness of the district's multiple extension and support programs and practices offered.

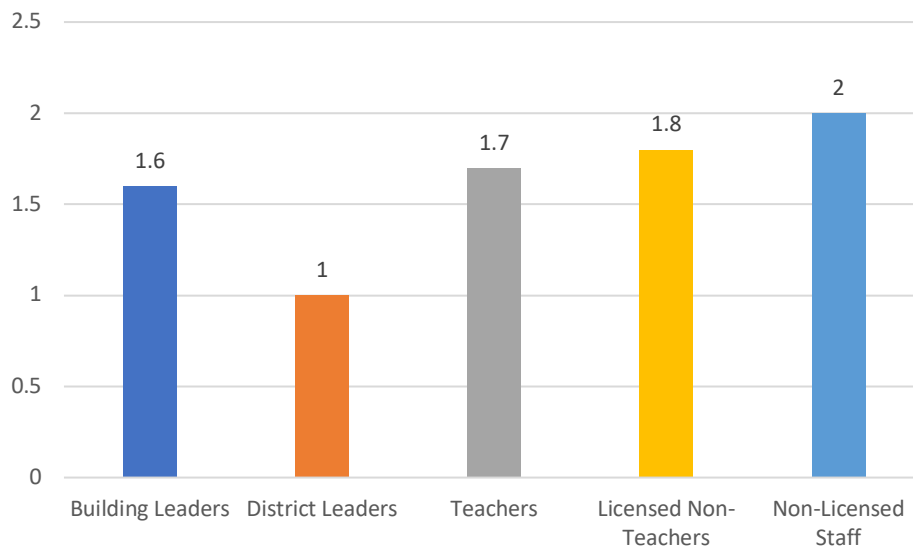
The EA-MN Team noted the district's ready availability and access to educational technology. Observations and walk-throughs revealed that materials, including but not limited to textbooks, computers, manipulatives, and other classroom equipment appeared to be current and of good quality and sufficient variety. When asked to respond to prompts asking for levels of agreement as to whether students have access to appropriate technology to facilitate learning at school, responses from District Leaders, Building Leaders, teachers, non-certified staff and Parents and Community Members surveyed averaged between 1 to 1.8 (Figure 7). Students asked a similar question at the high school yielded an average response of 1.6 and 1.9 at the middle school.

Figure 7: All students in my classroom have access to the appropriate technology to support and facilitate their learning.



When asked to respond to the prompt; Students in my district have access to internet services at home, responses from District Leaders averaged 2, and the average of responses from high school and middle school students and teachers were 1.7, 1.9 and 2 indicating that most students do have access to internet at home. Parents/guardians and community members responded to the internet access at home prompt with an average of 1.5. In response to prompts asking if students had technology available to communicate, create and complete work with classmates, District Leaders' average of responses was 1.6 and teachers' average of responses was 1.7. Students responding to survey questions regarding if technology was used in classes to engage learners in collaboration, creation, problem solving and researching revealed that many students have used technology for those purposes and these responses align with sound educational practices. District and Building Leaders as well as teachers and non-certified staff surveyed also indicated awareness of equitable practices to distribute technology to those in need (Figure 8).

Figure 8: I am aware of equitable practices in place to distribute technology to those in need.



Resource allocation at Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 appears to have often occurred based on needs assessments according to responses to survey prompts. Answers to the prompt; *I have allocated resources in our district based on an analysis of student needs, rather than student enrollment*, averaged at 2.00 for District and Building Leaders. Focus groups and interviews, however, identified some practices that distributed resources equally, without needs analysis, which may or may not have utilized funds for purchases that were already present for some students. Building Leaders average of responses to the prompt, *I allocate the appropriate number of resources to support and facilitate student learning needs*, was 1.8. Parents surveyed indicated agreement as their responses to the prompt: *I believe the schools in this district do all they can to help students succeed*, was 2.4.

The district has taken conscientious, well supported steps to increase its diverse representation in its curriculum and through its Media Center. According to the high school's website, the Edna St. Vincent Millay (ESVM) Library and Humanities departments are focused on purchasing representative texts and have invested in a digital collection of audios- and eBooks representing fiction and nonfiction works that relate to DEI themes.

The results of the EA surveys, focus groups and observations identified two recurring issues of significance: safety and access to opportunities. Providing safe environments is essential for students to learn. The Maine Department of Education's Statement includes a list of supportive characteristics for schools and districts and includes, "We recognize and commit to our role and duty as Maine public education leaders to actively partner with all schools in constructing a new educational paradigm, founded on the certainty that every student can and will be successful

when...” The statement goes on to list the characteristics, beginning with, “School is a welcoming, safe place for all school community members to bring their whole identities with them.”

Interviews with stakeholder groups, observations and walk-throughs provide examples of how the district has achieved a safe environment for its staff and for most of its learners. Parents responding to the survey prompt; *“My child(ren) feel safe at school,* yielded an average response of 1.8. Parents’ responses to; *My child(ren) feels safe going to and coming from school,* also averaged 1.8. EA-MN walk-throughs and observations noted the posting of behavior expectations to be inconsistent among classroom and buildings although when asked teachers and non-licensed staff responded to survey prompts generally indicating that behavior expectations are posted in classrooms (2.9 and 2.4 respectively). When asked to respond to the survey prompt, *I feel safe in my classrooms,* high school students averaged 2, and middle school, 2.1. However, when disaggregated by sexual orientation, race and gender identity, the results include some statistically significant differences. For example, those with marginalized gender identities had average scores ranging from 2.5 to 2.7 which were statistically significant ($p < .005$). Differences in averages for marginalized sexual orientations and Asian, Multiracial and those who identified as being American Indian or Alaskan Native were also statistically significant¹.

When asked the questions regarding safety for various areas in school buildings, the range of averages for all areas listed for the high school fell between 2.0 and 2.4. Middle school students’ responses ranged higher, 1.7 to 2.1 (Table 1). Overall, students in both schools’ results indicate that practice or athletic fields, their gym, and locker rooms felt least safe for marginalized populations. For high school students who belonged to marginalized gender and sexual orientations, locker rooms, athletic or practice fields, and bathrooms during regular classroom breaks had average scores that were .5 to 1 standard deviation higher than the mean indicating that the averages tended to lean towards the unsafe side of the scales. For some additional context, 21 out of 185 students who had a marginalized sexual orientation felt unsafe or very unsafe in the bathroom during regular classroom breaks, 10 out of the 67 students with a marginalized gender identity felt unsafe or very unsafe in the practice or athletic fields, 14 out of 67 students with a marginalized gender identity felt unsafe or very unsafe in the locker room and an additional 27 students with a marginalized sexual orientation felt unsafe or very unsafe in the locker room also.

Focus groups and interview’s themes aligned with survey results illustrating examples of misplaced trust, harassment, and incidents of bullying. These averages may well be attributed to outside influences; however, it may also be beneficial to consider the survey responses to

¹ It is important to note that although the differences in averages by marginalized identities are higher than the overall averages this does not necessarily indicate a problem. More data is needed to arrive at a conclusion.

the prompt, *Students at my school try to stop others from teasing, harassing and bullying others*. The average of students' responses from the high school was 2.9 with higher rates of disagreement from marginalized gender identity groups. The averages of responses to the same prompt from middle school students was 2.3.

Table 2: Safety questions for high school and middle school students.

Safety Questions	High School Average	Middle School Average
My classrooms	2.0	1.7
In the school hallways	2.3	2.1
In the entrance to the school	2.1	1.8
The bathroom during regular classroom breaks	2.3	1.9
The bathroom when I go alone with a hall pass	2.2	1.8
The lunchroom	2.1	1.8
Practice or athletic fields	2.0	1.7
The locker room	2.2	1.7
The gym	2.1	1.8
The auditorium	2.0	1.7
The principal's office	2.3	1.9
The counselor's office	2.0	1.8
The school building before school	2.2	1.7
The school building after school	2.2	1.8
School bus	2.4	1.8

Students, staff and leaders were asked in the survey to respond to prompts asking if they agreed that they could be their true selves in their school/district. Building leaders' average was 1.8, teachers and non-certified staff - 2.0. High school students' average to the same prompt was 2.7, and middle school students' average was 2.3. Teachers responding to the prompt: *My students can be their true selves in my classroom* averaged 1.5. When asked if they felt free to express their religious beliefs at school, high school students responded with a 2.4 average and middle school a 2.0. When asked the same regarding gender identity, middle school responses averaged 1.8. High school responses averaged 2.0 with significantly less agreement from marginalized gender identity groups. In fact, among high school students who identified as being gender queer or non-binary the average scores were 3.0 and 2.8 respectively. Both scores were statistically significant ($p < 0.005$).

Access as a theme emerged through interviews and open-ended survey responses. Although the district has many students involved in extracurricular activities, students and parents of students attending from outside Camden expressed frustration over transportation obstacles preventing participation. Students from “sending schools” also expressed feelings of being outsiders and frustration from being assigned directed study halls which were non-credit bearing, hence their academic opportunities were diminished because of the number of classes they were able to take. Although directed study halls provide an intentional positive intervention during the school day, which is an intentional positive outcome, there is an unintended negative impact on academic achievement. Student survey results were mid-range (1.7 - 2.8) on prompts regarding families being welcomed and students being assigned a peer to serve to welcome and help them acclimate. Access to competitive athletic teams, referral and access to rigorous and advanced coursework also emerged as common concerns. Students not in honors programs and their parents expressed disappointment over pathways offered and options available. Review of these practices using an equity lens could also serve to inform future programs.

As Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 completes the benchmarks of its Year 4 of the current action plan and begins its new planning cycle, disaggregation of data and consideration of the district’s systematic and systemic provision of resources to identify and address academic achievement gaps, assure safety for all learners, and ensure of equity of access to programs, futures planning, and advanced courses will make public the district’s commitment to equity and inclusion.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Strengths

- + The district has committed to the use of an equity lens to examine distribution of resources.
- + Educational technology use is valued and supported throughout the district.
- + The district has taken laudable steps to provide diverse perspectives through literature and curriculum offerings

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Growth Areas

- Areas of buildings and the district’s transportations feel unsafe for portions of the student population.
- Distribution does not always follow needs assessment.
- Access to advanced coursework and some extracurricular activities is structurally difficult for some student populations.

Dimension #4: Curriculum Represents Equity (CRE)

The dimension, Curriculum Represents Equity (CRE) ensures that the system's formal, implicit and null curriculum reflect the arts, achievements, histories, perspectives, languages, and journeys of the community served, and learners grow to understand their roles in the global community. Curriculum Represents Equity as a dimension of the framework provides insight as to how and for whom the district's curriculum is representative and in what context content is presented. A high-performing system with representative equity as elements in the curriculum will reflect the literature, arts, philosophies, and world views of the learners and their families. In addition, best practices in this dimension will include articulated scope and sequence planned and delivered that introduces learners to history, art, culture, and thought from around the world. This dimension can be evidenced through examination of curriculum maps, choices of curriculum materials, visible representations of cultures, knowledge, and awareness, expectations for learners and the context established that welcomes every learner into a cognitive space where new knowledge can be connected and can build upon unique neural pathways that are not exclusive but inviting to all who wish to learn and grow.

The State Department of Education has identified means by which districts can address issues of equity, including, "Reviewing and revising curricula and materials to ensure they are well-rounded, decolonized, and representing all experiences." The system's strategic plan includes this major goal, "The curriculum will be meaningful, instruction will be engaging, and our students' educational experience will provide a strong foundation from which to pursue their goals after high school." This goal addresses three key concepts of strong curriculum revision and implementation using an equity and inclusion lens: Context, Content and Construct. Examination of the context or environment that learners encounter during instruction is foundational to effective teaching. Review of content for accuracy, inclusion and relevance is essential to prepare our learners for success in the world today and in their futures. It is also important to ensure that all learners have experience, understanding and/or common knowledge to serve as scaffolding for new information will allow for meaning to occur in the minds of all students so that they can develop new ideas, solve difficult problems and design remarkable art, inventions and solutions far into the future.

Developing a ready context for learning in a diverse community requires new learning for most schools' staff members, listening and deliberations conducted as a system, individually by educators and by students and families. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, learning, for children, adolescents, teens or adults does not thrive in an environment that is perceived as unsafe. Learning is also difficult if the learner is hungry, cold, physically miserable, very stressed or worried. The district has taken steps to ensure that healthy food is always readily available for all learners at any time, and that learners needing supplies have access to pantries and other resources without fear of stigma.

Learning is optimized when the learner feels welcome and a sense of belonging. Focus group interviews, observations, walk-throughs and survey results provided some inferences regarding

the sense of belonging perceived by learners and those working to establish learning environments. Staff members of Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 reported a feeling of belonging, of being able to be themselves, and of being part of an organization they respected. Responding to the survey prompt; *I welcome each of my students to classes or sessions*, teachers averaged 1.9 and non-certified staff averaged 2.0. To the prompt, *I feel that we have built a welcoming community in our district's schools*, district leaders responded with an average of 2.0 and building leaders responded with an average of 1.6. High school students responded to the prompt: *My teachers use my name to welcome me to their classrooms*, with an average of 2.2 and the middle school average was 2.0, suggesting overall agreement with that statement. There were some notable differences in how marginalized populations of students answered that question both at the high school level and the middle school. For example, high school students with marginalized gender identities answered that prompt with an average score of 2.8 which is statistically significant ($p < .05$). Of all students with a marginalized gender identity, those who identified as being gender non-binary leaned toward disagreeing with the prompt with more regularity. Similarly, among both high school and middle school students, Asian and Black students had higher average scores for the prompt ($SD > .5$). Responses from high school students to the prompt: *I feel that I am a part of a community or group in most of my classes*, yielded an average of 2.4 and middle school's average was 1.9. With this prompt, much like the previous one, there were significant differences in how middle school students with a marginalized gender identity answered the prompt with an overall average of 2.5, which was statistically significant ($p < .005$). Once again middle school students who identified as gender non-binary had scores which leaned towards the disagreement with the prompt.

High school students responded to the prompt "I know something about the backgrounds of most of my classmates at school" with an average of 2.8, while the middle school average was 1.7. suggesting that many students are forming meaningful connections among one another at the middle school level, but that across the district, opportunities for student to discuss and understanding the backgrounds of others has not been systematic. Teachers responded to the prompt: *I have established practices by which students in my care come to know about each other and each other's families*, with an average of 2.4 and non-certified staff - 2.9. District leaders responded to the prompt: *I am aware of opportunities in my building/district for students to get to know each other's families* with an average of 4.5. Parents' average of responses to the prompt; *My child(ren) has the opportunity to get to know other children's families*, was 2.8. Systemic processes to provide opportunities for students to understand one another may increase perceptions of belonging, establish connections with district leaders, and create productive relationships across citizens from all five of the represented towns whose children attend the schools. Focus group interviews identified the interest and richness provided through cultural exchanges that the district has offered and noted that diversity does not always need to come from outside the district. There are many stories and histories that are present in the homes of the children that arrive at school every day.

Establishing a curricular environment that is inclusive has been a focus of the district's work over the past years. As stated in the high school's report on their DEI work, "At CHRHS we are

committed to listening and learning from our students and the community on DEI issues and incorporating pressing needs into our curriculum...currently our Civics, Geography, Economics, and History learning standards explicitly address DEI through the study of Unity and Diversity in American History, World History and all elective seminar courses. In addition to the Civics, Geography and History specific learning targets, our English Language Arts (ELA) curricula are beginning to support students in constructive conversations around race, identity, and equity. We understand things are changing in our world rapidly. We want students to come to school feeling comfortable and supported to have conversations about these changes. In response to current events and students' need for greater understanding and awareness of DEI, entire courses are offered around topics of race, identity, and equity, including Active Citizenship, Race and Identity, and Maine History." These changes are significant and impactful. Focus group participants identified review of curriculum as vital to equity and diversity work and noted a need for mandatory professional development regarding history, impact, and representation.

One possible opportunity for learners to be welcomed and to "see themselves" as adults and for students from all constituent groups to learn about multiple ways of being contributing members in a global community is to display art and history from all students' backgrounds. District leaders' average of responses to the survey prompt; *We have provided our staff information and resources that represent the communities/cultures of all of the students in our district*, was 3.5, indicating an area for possible growth. Response averages from students to the prompt; *Art created by and representing my own community, culture and identity hangs on the walls in my school*, were 1.8 for middle school respondents that included alternative perceptions for students identifying as members of marginalized ethnic groups and 2.1 for high school respondents with higher levels of disagreement in results from marginalized ethnic groups. Building walk-throughs by EA-MN Team members witnessed some examples of art and histories displayed, although the accuracy and consistency of these artifacts were not systemic. Classroom observations produced various ratings regarding visibility of art and accuracy of cultural reflections, perspectives, languages and histories illustrating the stories of families like those of the students in the schools. In some of the classrooms observed, images of people displayed were diverse, non-stereotypical, accurate and accurately voiced. Other displays would benefit from review to ensure accuracy and to avoid stereotypes. Bringing strong practices of representation to scale systematically could capitalize on the scholarship and diligence of those the EA-MN Team observed to the benefit of all.

Addressing the context for review and establishment of curriculum is vital to equity and inclusion, as is the essence of curriculum itself, which is content. The structure of public education allows great freedom in determination of what will be used to teach the adopted state standards, as well as what additional standards and objectives districts may add or prioritize. Reviewing district curriculum using equity and inclusion as part of criteria brings individually held beliefs, values and understandings into discourse. Determination of what

constitutes equal, equity, fairness and inclusion is complex and sometimes can become contentious. As Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 has committed to move forward toward equity and inclusion as an institution, it is important to remember that we each bring years of experiences and learning into these conversations; each of us has a set of beliefs and values and each of us believes that what we do is in the best interest of the children in our schools. At times, it is helpful to use some common terms and definitions and perhaps some common models to help visualize our possible pathways. Dr. Milton Bennett's work over his lifetime has been helpful to many, as his Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) rests firmly in the understanding that we all start where we are and move forward one step at a time, without judgment and with the common understanding that this is good and necessary work done by good and necessary people. Dr. Bennett's model identifies six stages of intercultural development. At times, being able to identify the relative stage from which a person speaks helps to shape dialog, bringing individuals into discussions without defensiveness and less misunderstandings. Assuming that an entire building's staff, teams of professionals, or groups of parents can relate to the same messages is a flawed strategy. Conversations addressing unintended impacts of certain curricula, offensive language or topics, insensitive choices of art, violations of space, modesty or varied interpretations of history must be prefaced with understandings of each participant's point of view and experience with cultural competency. Identification of opportunities in curricular areas for additions of contributions of artists, scientists, mathematicians and others from the students' constituent groups represented and from cultures unknown or experienced could enrich current curriculum and add to inclusivity. Providing systematic options to learn more about the histories, philosophies, politics and journeys of the families of students in the district may serve to clarify misunderstandings and prepare all learners for success in a global society.

Review of comments submitted by Teachers and non-certified staff through the surveys roughly indicated that the majority understood that prejudice and racism have had consequences for students and staff in the district and many respondents were asking for additional support, training and/or opportunities to learn and work together to address barriers inherent in curriculum relative to some of the subgroups present in the system. A subset of teachers and non-certified staff also recognized the negative impact of racism in the district and cited a willingness to work to revise curriculum. The difference, however, between the two groups was that the second group did not articulate that the solution would be found in understanding of each subgroup, but in seeing all as equals, not different. A smaller set of comments reflected appreciation for classroom and building celebrations of cultural holidays and sharing food from ethnic groups. This group suggested more of this type of sharing would be beneficial to increase inclusivity. Also, a small group shared thoughts indicating that the district was doing enough. Comments from parents fell mostly into the first category citing that they know racism and discrimination are present in the district but lack the tools or knowhow to address it. These broad generalizations may be useful in interpreting other data sets relating to professional development relative to equity and inclusion in curriculum. Focus group interview comments also reflected these assigned categories generally and strongly indicated openness to learning more about cultural competence. Survey results indicated that training had occurred for many

staff members, however no record of systematic mandatory cultural competency training was presented, nor did staff report systematic district-level professional development attended by all to address working with students with marginalized identities.

Students responding to a survey prompt regarding whether they had opportunities to learn about other cultures yielded responses as follows: Middle School - 1.9, and High School – 2.2. District leaders indicated that the district had hosted speakers or seminars about race and equity. Students responding to the prompt regarding speakers and seminars responded with a high school average of 3.1 and middle school average of 2.1. Signaling that there might be a disconnect between how district leaders view opportunities to learn about other cultures and how students viewed those opportunities. When asked if the importance of respecting all cultural beliefs and practices had been discussed and supported in their school, the average of high school students' responses was 2.2, and the average of middle school students' responses was 1.7. Students, staff and parents in focus groups and open-ended options on surveys responded to questions about curriculum. Themes that emerged included use of perceived offensive language, lack of depth applied to complex cultures, and current issues. The focus on increasing the diversity of the canon, adding perspectives to courses, adding courses to offerings and the openness of the system to examine curriculum was also noted.

The district has established a curriculum review cycle and has begun work with curriculum to address equity. In response to the prompt: *I have been involved in developing the curriculum and content of the district's equity effort*; district leaders' average of responses was 3.5, perhaps indicating an opportunity for involvement in future planning. Establishment of a systematic professional development plan, a deliberate learning plan, and then integrating equity, inclusion and diversity into a review cycle for each subject area will provide learners with a curriculum that reflects the world in which they live and will prepare them to thrive in their futures.

“Slow down and remember to engage with each other. Remember that everyone is coming from a different place (have grace). Be thoughtful about how we talk about kids and members of our community because we, as adults, have often had experiences that are similar and can be triggered by condescension. Ask more questions. Engage in hard conversations. Feel feelings of discomfort in your body and talk about it anyway.” – Non-certified Staff

Providing scaffolding for learners to tie new learning to established understandings is a basic educational methodology. When educators are familiar with the lives, histories, families and backgrounds of students, establishing scaffolding is less challenging than when learners are less known. To construct meaning may be more or less difficult for students depending on shared backgrounds and experiences. In addition, a key to learners' identities is their own language, which shapes their understanding and frames their world. Review of curriculum for equity and

inclusion without consideration of language can leave chasms unexamined. Reaching out to learners using language can extend a bridge, a welcome hand, signal respect and begin to establish scaffolding essential to future knowledge construction. When asked to respond to the prompt; *I have learned some words and phrases in each of the native languages represented in our schools to use as appropriate*, the average of responses from teachers was 3.4, building leaders, 3.0 (this prompt added “and also use”) and from district leaders 4.5. This data suggests an area for growth for Fivetown CSD 28.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Strengths

- + Well-structured curriculum cycle is in place
- + Work on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Curriculum has clearly been initiated

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Growth Areas

- Staff at various levels of readiness
- Systemic and systematic professional development plan regarding curriculum and curriculum development has not yet presented

Dimension #5: Learner-Centered Practices (LCP)

The Learner-Centered Practices dimension includes stewardship of equity and inclusion in instructional practices that are evaluated and rewarded across the system. High-performing systems in this dimension exhibit representation of all stakeholder groups in leadership opportunities, valuation of voice, inclusive, culturally appropriate instructional methodologies applied throughout the system and provision of choice in order to capitalize on the strengths of learners. Learner-Centered Practices can be evidenced through observations, surveys, and examples.

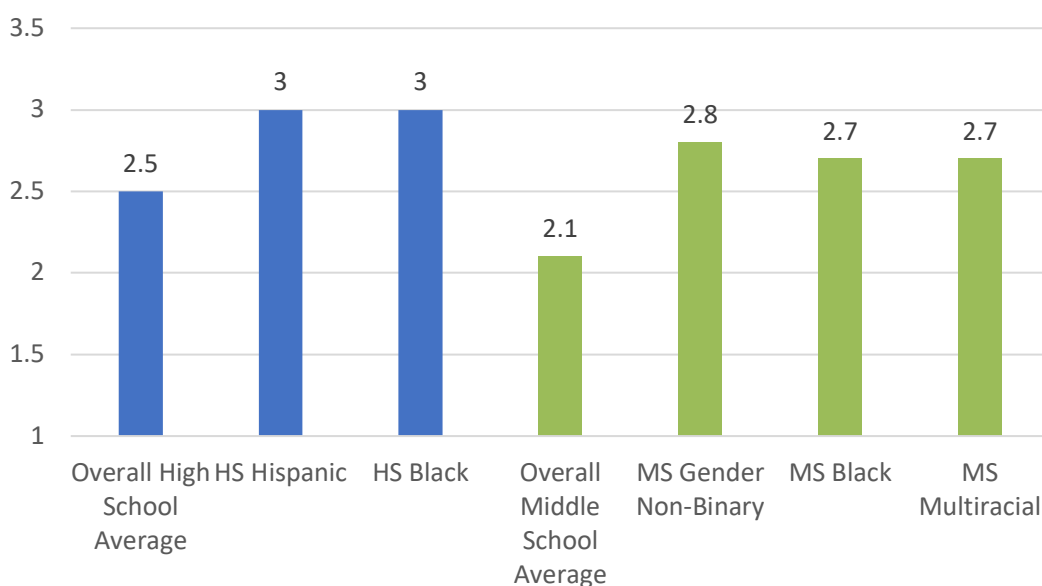
In the system’s summary of its Strategic Plan, the document lists five commitments the schools make to students. The commitments include: 1). We will strive to provide the highest quality education possible in order to prepare you to set and reach your goals. 2). We will recognize and cultivate everyone’s passions, aspirations, and sense of joy. 3). We will provide the culture and resources to grow your mind, body, and heart. 4). We will challenge and expand your limits of thought, tolerance, and performance, and 5). We will inspire and enable you to create a positive impact on your community. To realize these commitments, review of instructional methods and practices and analysis to determine which practices are most effective for which students can help to ensure that the system cultivates each learner’s passions, aspirations, senses of joy, that each student is challenged, and thoughts expanded and that every learner is prepared to set and reach goals. Creating a plan of progress for each student and tracking

effective practices has begun in the system with the initiation of MTSS processes and professional learning regarding culturally sensitive instruction. To continue will necessitate district staff and leadership to examine current delivery of instruction through the schools and programs for limitations and representation and to make changes that provide voice, access, choice and engagement opportunities for all learners.

Leaders, teachers, and non-certified staff members responding to the open-ended survey questions asking what staff and leadership could do to improve equity and inclusion in the district demonstrated willingness to learn and do more.

Classroom observations provided some inferences regarding voice and choice access for learners during the school day. In classes observed, the EA-MN team noted that student voice was sought in several classes. Furthermore, in many of the classrooms, students dominated classroom discussions when observed. High school students' response average to the survey prompt; *My teachers ask for my opinion in class*, was 2.5, and middle school students, 2.1. Survey responses from both schools in response to the above prompt demonstrated less agreement among students with marginalized identities (Figure 9).

Figure 9: My teachers ask for my opinion in class.



When asked to respond to the prompt; *I have had the opportunity to lead activities in one or more of my classes*, High school students' response average was 2.7. Middle School students' response average was 2.1, again with less agreement demonstrated among high school students who identified as gender queer (3.3 average). Teachers and Non-certified staffs' average responses to the prompt; *I provide multiple opportunities for each learner to lead in*

classes or sessions were 2.2 and 2.5 respectively. Leaders' response averages to the prompt; *All learners in my school/district are provided with leadership opportunities*, were 1.8 from the district level and 3.5 from the building level indicating a significant gap in responses regarding opportunities for student leadership. The difference in how teacher and support staff versus administration respond to leadership questions perhaps signals that although there are building-wide leadership opportunities for students, those same leadership opportunities may not be present in the classroom. Assuring that all voices become part of the process of individual progress planning is essential to the success of each plan.

Culturally relevant pedagogy requires openness to learning about the history, values, contributions and the journey of the constituent groups present in the schools. Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 has demonstrated this openness in its pursuit of representative materials, course offerings, and review of curriculum. In addition, relevant pedagogy must be able to connect with the learners' strengths, experiences and engage in consistent conversations with learners through dialog and assessments to capture what was learned and what remains to be learned. The system has taken several positive steps toward achieving these aims. A teacher-created and led workshop has been offered and staff in focus groups reported that rarely are individual professional development requests denied. Opportunities to engage in book studies have also taken place. The system-wide DEI Task Force has provided access to several important resources via its webpages. Focus group participants and interviews with administrators did not garner information regarding peer observations or supervision that included incorporation of culturally inclusive pedagogy.

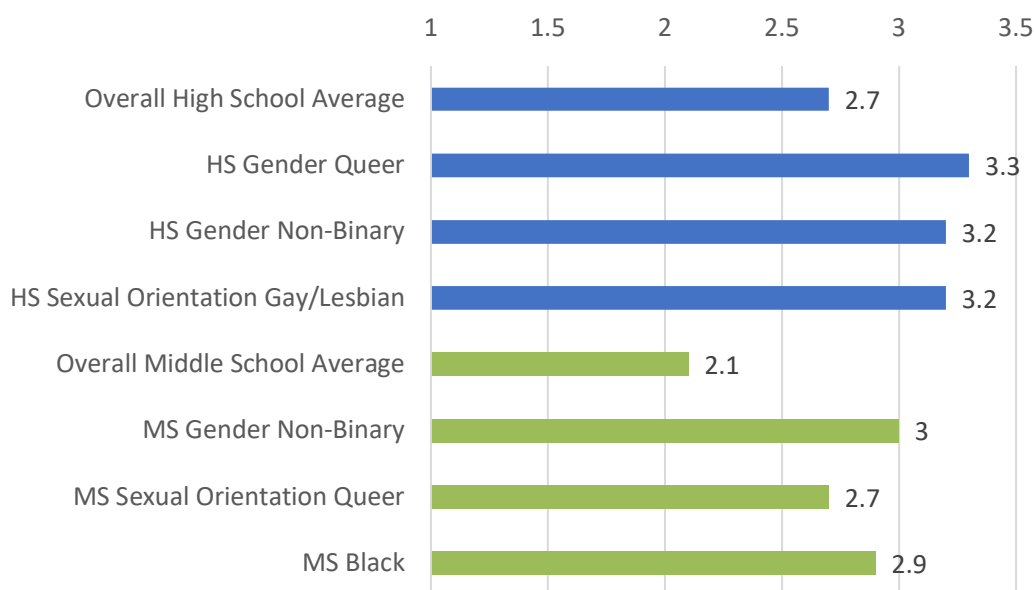
Providing learners options to show their learning using their strengths is a key to relevant pedagogy. Responding to the survey prompt; *Most of the work I assign gives students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned in a variety of ways*, yielded an average of 2.0 from teachers. Responding to the prompt; *In school, I am able to show my thoughts and what I have learned in many different ways*, the middle and high school averages of responses were 2.2, and 2.3 indicating an alignment between students and teachers on the opportunities students have and are given to demonstrate their learning. When asked if they could make class presentations using various means, the average of responses from high school students and middle school students was 1.9. These responses may indicate agency relative to demonstration of mastery in various courses and assignments.

Assessments and grading-focused prompts from the survey resulted in averages that indicated less agreement, especially among teachers. Middle school students' average responses to the prompt, *I have input on how I will be graded before I begin class projects or assignments*, was 2.0, while the high school average was 2.6. Teachers responded to the prompt; *My students are asked for their input on how they will be graded before they begin classroom projects or assignments*, with an average of 3.0, indicating that input on grading from students may not be systemic. Being encouraged to employ individual strengths to show what has been learned and creating clear expectations can serve as elements of pedagogically sound, individualized

instruction and assessment. Continuing to increase these capacities will not only raise cultural relevance and competence for all, but also increase student success across populations.

A cornerstone of excellent instruction is building new understanding through scaffolding that is grounded in a learner's prior knowledge. The EA-MN Team noted in the preponderance of classes observed, the instructors deliberately built upon students' prior knowledge. Another cornerstone is making it apparent to the learner that what is to be learned will make a difference in the learner's life. Investment in what is to be learned increases engagement and ultimately success. Learners' perceptions of understanding the reason behind their study is reflected in the results' averages from the prompt presented to middle and high school students; *I know why we are learning what we are learning*, which yielded 2.1 and 2.7, with less agreement registering from marginalized gender, ethnic, and sexual identity groups (Figure 10).

Figure 10: I know why we are learning what we are learning.



When asked to respond to the prompt, *My teachers notice me and make sure I am learning*, results yielded 2.1 and 2.3 from the middle and high school, again with less agreement

“Be kind, empathetic to each other, understand differences, not necessarily cultural, just different personalities. I think most teachers are kind and understanding to students, I think the staff needs more work on that.” - Teacher

registering from marginalized gender, ethnic, and sexual identity groups. Classroom observations aligned with the survey results. Continued focused collaboration and structured conversations with parent and community groups, along with structured, expected professional development designed to increase cultural competence and introduce strategic best practices will assist to align instructional methods, systems, and processes with the commitment of the Strategic Plan throughout Fivetown CSD 28.

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Strengths

- + Committed, active and involved staff and leadership who have put in place systems and practices that align with the work of equity and diversity
- + Support for professional development and resources for professional reflection and collaboration

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Growth Areas

- Systemic and systematic practices for review of student work with equity lens by professional learning communities were not presented
- Systemic and systematic professional development for culturally competent pedagogy is undefined

Dimension #6: Inclusive & Responsive Communication (IRC)

This dimension includes both internal and external means by which the system connects with its constituents. Systems that are high performing in this dimension communicate in welcoming ways effectively through multiple modalities, provide clear direction, and offer multiple means through which to respond or request. Inclusive & Responsive Communication can be evidenced through observed interactions, perceptions, and engagement. This dimension is key to ensuring that all the dimensions attain agency.

This dimension is grounded in trust that communication is honest, and that communication is heard and acted upon appropriately, and that the voices of all constituents are valued. Focus group interviews produced a theme that the system had in place formal channels of communication that did serve specific purposes as designed. However, participants also noted the perception of informal channels that had been constructed over time through familiarity, generational access, and privilege appeared powerful. Students and parents expressed mixed impressions of the schools' advising and counseling systems, as participants had experienced inconsistent responses to reporting of harassment incidents and/or requests. From focus groups, students in the middle school reported there was little trust between staff and students. Staff also expressed mixed perceptions of support from administration.

Students' responses to the survey prompt; *I have teachers or staff at school that I trust*, including high school students who responded with an average of 2.0 and middle school students with 1.8. Responses from high school students indicated most agreed with this statement regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity or religious identity. In fact, high school students who identified as having a queer sexual orientation responded with an average of 1.3 which leans towards strongly agree. Among middle school students the same prompt garnered a different array of responses among marginalized groups. Gender non-binary middle school students had an average of 2.8 for the same prompt and overall, those with a marginalized gender identity had an average of 2.4. Although both averages were not statistically significant, it is important to point out that about a quarter of students with marginalized gender identities disagreed or strongly disagreed with the prompt. Furthermore, middle school students who identified as being Asian or Multiracial also had higher than average scores for this prompt.

An additional element of communication includes representation. EA-MN Building walk-throughs and classroom observations noted inconsistency of signage in multiple languages or formats. Focus groups identified the district and buildings' use of English only on multiple occasions. District leaders' average of responses to the survey prompt, *Information shared district-wide is communicated in multiple languages*, was 4.5. That same prompt applied to buildings elicited an average of responses of 4.1 from teachers. An evaluation of internal and external communications for effectiveness, access, inclusion and equity could increase parent involvement, improve trust across constituent groups and increase student success.

*"Find ways to acknowledge and celebrate things that the "have nots" do - we get all excited about sports, but many kids can't afford club sports but are great readers, writers, artists, chess players, musicians, etc. and highlight that there is more than just where we can go to college and what sports we play" –
Non-certified Staff*

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Strengths

- + Trust appears to have been built between staff members in buildings

Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 Shared Vision for Equity Growth Areas

- The district appears to be mostly mono-lingual in communications

Recommendations

1. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 is well positioned to build upon the previous professional development opportunities that have supported the action items in the district's most recent Strategic Plan. As the district prepares to begin its next strategic planning process, district leadership, in partnership with school board leadership, building leadership, the district DE&I Task Force and school building DE&I teams, may consider expanding the district-wide DEI workshop series, *Anti-Racism for Educators*. Continued professional development may include learning that not only deepens one's knowledge of issues related to DE&I and culturally responsive instructional practices but could include professional learning that equips and prepares each Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 staff member with the necessary language, skills, and tools to effectively disrupt and address any speech or behavior that is harmful including bias, prejudice, discrimination, hate speech or other harassment. This professional development could be embedded as action items within the new strategic plan and could be accompanied by clear objectives with attached indicators of progress that may include input from students on how safe and confident, they feel all staff members will uphold and maintain a safe, inclusive learning environment for every student in Fivetown CSD 28.
2. **DISTRICT WIDE EQUITY FRAMEWORK:** Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 is to be commended for investing in the development of a foundation from which continued Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) district efforts can become even more systematic in its expansion and implementation. Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 will greatly benefit from the creation of a district-wide equity framework that is informed by input and feedback from all valued stakeholder groups. An equity framework could also be created in tandem with, or embedded within, the district's Strategic Plan. Such a process could help ensure that all strategic directives are guided through an equity lens with a focus on high achievement and high support for each and every learner. This framework could serve to be a guidepost for how decisions are made and could help identify gaps that may exist throughout the district's myriad systems. An equity framework that is aligned with the Strategic Plan could serve as a powerful, mobilizing force by which all students, staff, families and the greater Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 community can coalesce to ensure that every student has access to the emotional, social, and academic support they need to reach their fullest potential.

3. **INCREASING ACCESS AND EFFICACY OF DISTRICT’S SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES:** The Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 School Boards, in partnership with district leadership, may consider establishing an ongoing evaluation and formal review process that would consider existing programming and resources that are currently being offered to students, including but not limited to, activities, AP courses, academic supports, counseling services, Student Council, and district sanctioned clubs. Components to be reviewed through a lens of equity would include any programmatic processes, procedures, practices and policies. The review process may also identify ways to measure the efficacy of existing programming and may create SMART goals to increase and sustain representation in courses, activities, and other offerings. This evaluative process could help to identify any barriers within current programming and could address any unintended exclusionary practices, procedures, or policies that may exist. A formal review process could help ensure that every student has equitable access to the myriad robust opportunities, activities, and supports that are currently offered in Fivetown CSD 28.

Guiding Questions

1. How might the recommendations from the Equity Review inform Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 new strategic plan? With the information gathered from the Equity Review, what are the next steps that need to be considered as the district prepares to embark on their equity journey?
2. How can Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 create and implement an inclusive process that allows for all stakeholders to be informed and to participate in the current and future development of district-wide equity initiatives?
3. How might Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 provide additional support for students with marginalized identities? In partnership with students and building leadership, could the district explore affinity groups or other opportunities for voice and engagement? How might the district work toward a culture and climate where all students feel safe, regardless of their identity?

Conclusion

The EA-MN team’s findings can serve as a foundation from which to identify and prioritize equity goals and initiatives, as well as provide scaffolding for an Equity Action Plan. Equity work is an ever-evolving, complex, and arduous process that has only become more complicated by the pandemic, and the surveys and focus groups gave the team insight into areas of growth for Fivetown CSD 28. It’s undeniable that Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 is setting up the foundations for a successful and equitable learning environment. Continued progress will require regular evaluations of the district’s policies, practices, programs, and procedures through an equity lens and clear communication of the district’s equity goals and strategies. Moving forward, the

district will benefit from generating systems to ensure that its equity work is supported with a strong foundation formed by the contributions of ALL its stakeholders.

The EA-MN team is grateful for the opportunity to work alongside the students, staff, and families in Fivetown CSD 28. Our team saw no shortage of dedicated, talented, and passionate individuals who are invested in ensuring a high-quality, equitable education for all learners in Fivetown CSD 28. We would especially like to thank and acknowledge all of the students. We recognize what an honor and privilege it is to serve young people, and we have much gratitude and appreciation for their honesty and courage in sharing their lived experiences with us. In partnership with Fivetown CSD 28, we remain steadfast in our commitment toward ensuring each student receives the resources they need to reach their fullest potential.

Equity Alliance MN is encouraged that by continuing to hold all learners at the center of its purpose, Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 will surely be successful moving forward in providing excellence and ensuring success for all learners in their care.

In gratitude and solidarity,

Equity Alliance MN Team

Equity Alliance MN has included the resource “Decision Making Through an Equity Lens” which provides guidance on how to center equity in the district’s policies, practices, programs, and decisions.

Equity Alliance MN is also available to work with Five Town CSD/MSAD 28 to both operationalize and systematize its Equity Action Plan. Our process is structured to be effective, efficient, and inclusive and will ensure equity is supported throughout all levels of the system. Please contact Paula O’Loughlin at poloughlin@ea-mn.org to learn more.

DECISION MAKING THROUGH AN EQUITY LENS



Below are equity-centered questions that may be used in the planning, decision making and implementation of district policies, practices, procedures or programs. These questions are intended only as a guide, as there are likely additional factors that need to be considered.

This tool is designed to strengthen the equity consciousness of individuals, teams and organizations so that every student can be supported to reach their fullest potential. It is strongly recommended that groups utilizing this tool have established the following: the "why" of this work, shared understanding of what educational equity is (and what it is not), and the impact that bias, prejudice, historical patterns of exclusion, and systemic racism has on the current disparities in our education system.

Foundational Equity Lens

1. What is the policy, practice, procedure or program to be examined?
2. What does the data reveal regarding the disparities related to this policy, practice, procedure or decision?
3. How have the people most impacted by this policy, practice, procedure or decision been intentionally included and empowered to participate in this decision making process? What other voices are we missing? Have we offered equitable access for stakeholders to participate and if not, what changes need to be made before we move forward?
4. How might this policy, practice, procedure or decision improve or worsen existing disparities? What are the benefits or unintended consequences for the affected groups? How do we know?
5. Based on the above responses, what are potential revisions that can be made to the policy, practice, procedure or decision that is being examined?
6. How will we measure and monitor the impact of this revised policy, practice, procedure or decision? What are our indicators of progress? How will we hold ourselves accountable?
7. What next step is being recommended and how will it be advanced?

Adapted from: Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Equity Lens for Decision Making, and Balajee, Sonali S., et al., (2012). Equity and Empowerment Lens, Portland, OR; Multnomah County.

Equity Alliance MN



www.equityalliancemn.org

Appendix A

Student Demographics

Middle School

Figure 11: What grade are you in?

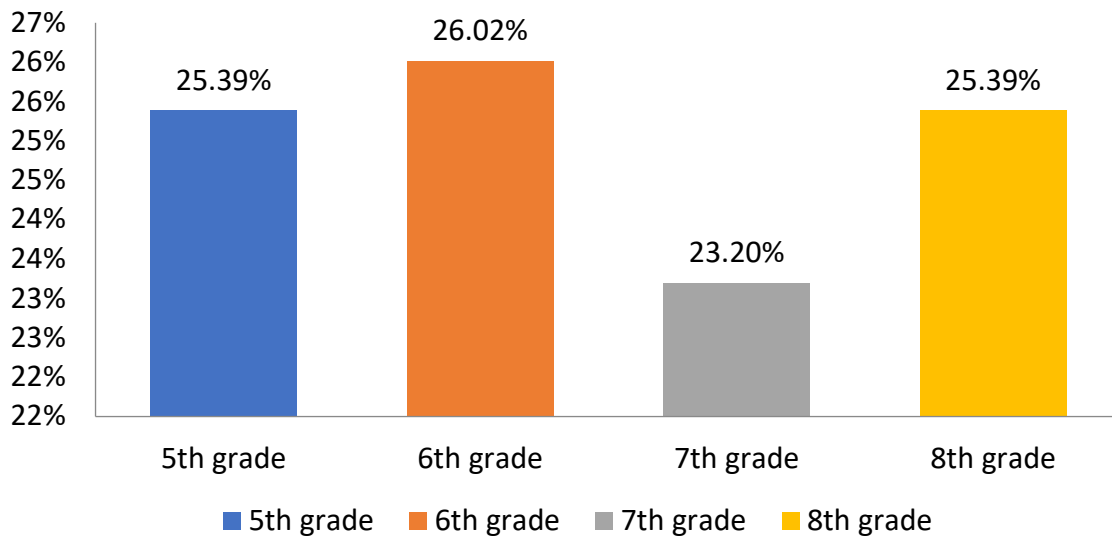


Figure 12: What is your gender Identity?

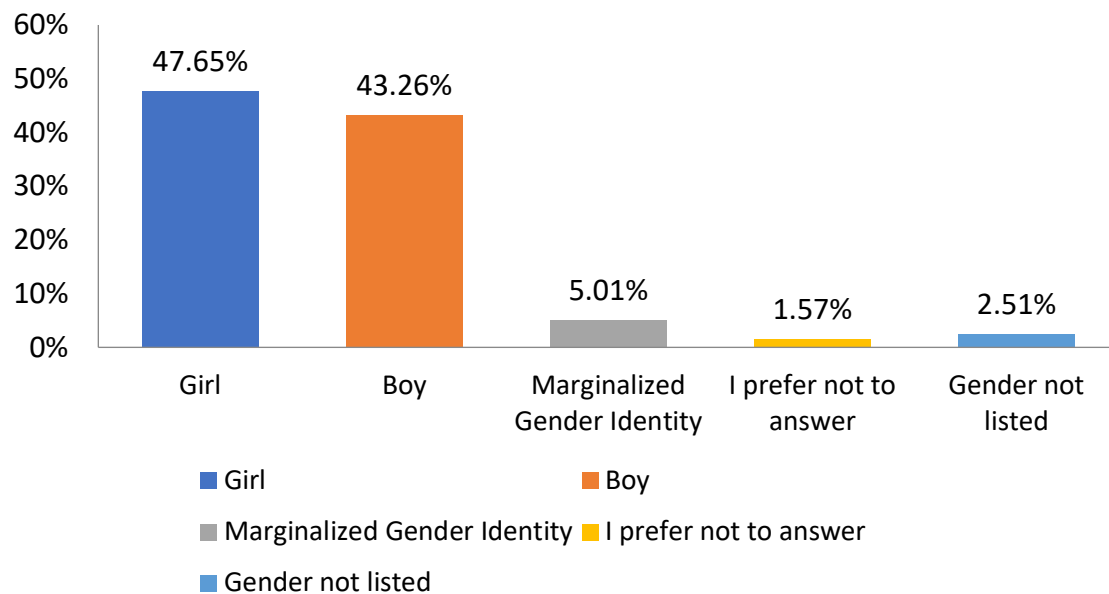


Figure 13: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?

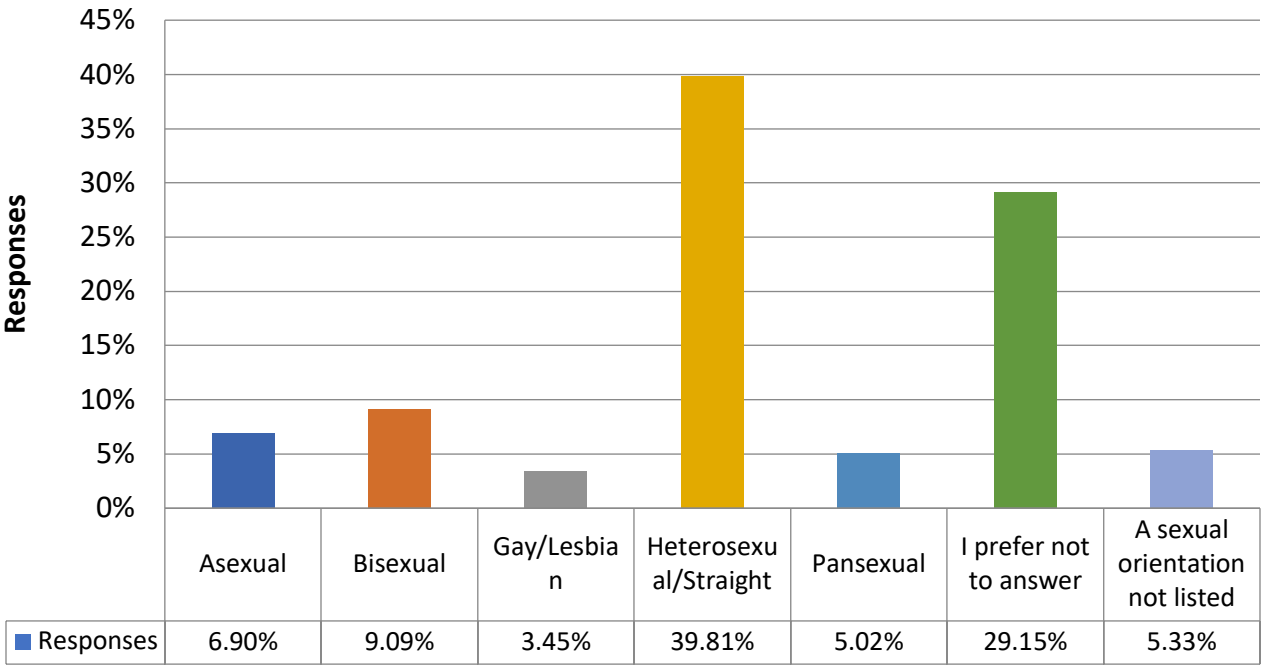


Figure 14: Are you Hispanic, Latinx, or of Spanish origin?

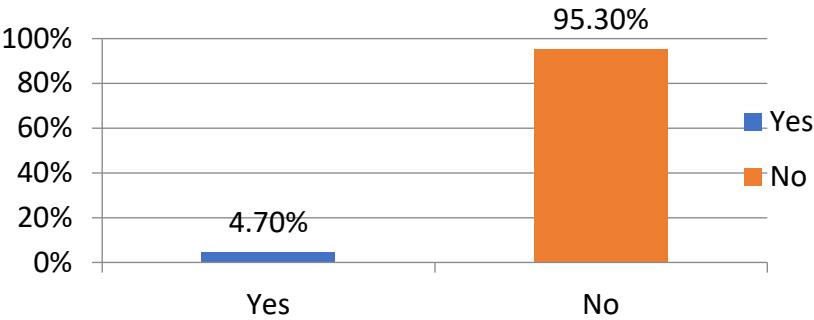


Figure 15: Are you American Indian or an Alaskan Native?

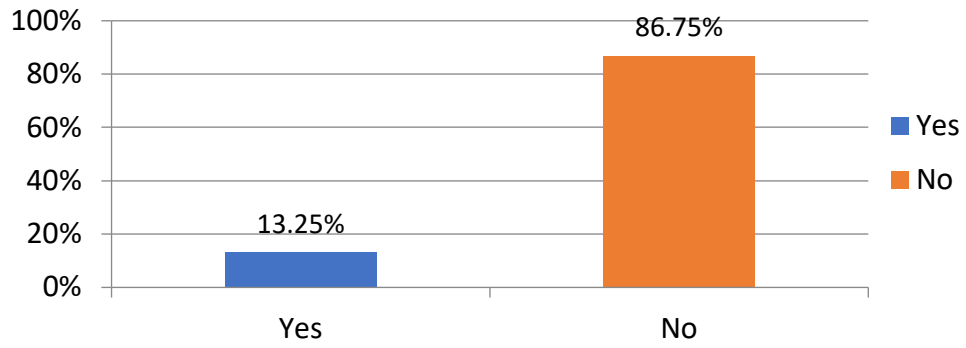


Figure 16: What is your race/ethnicity?

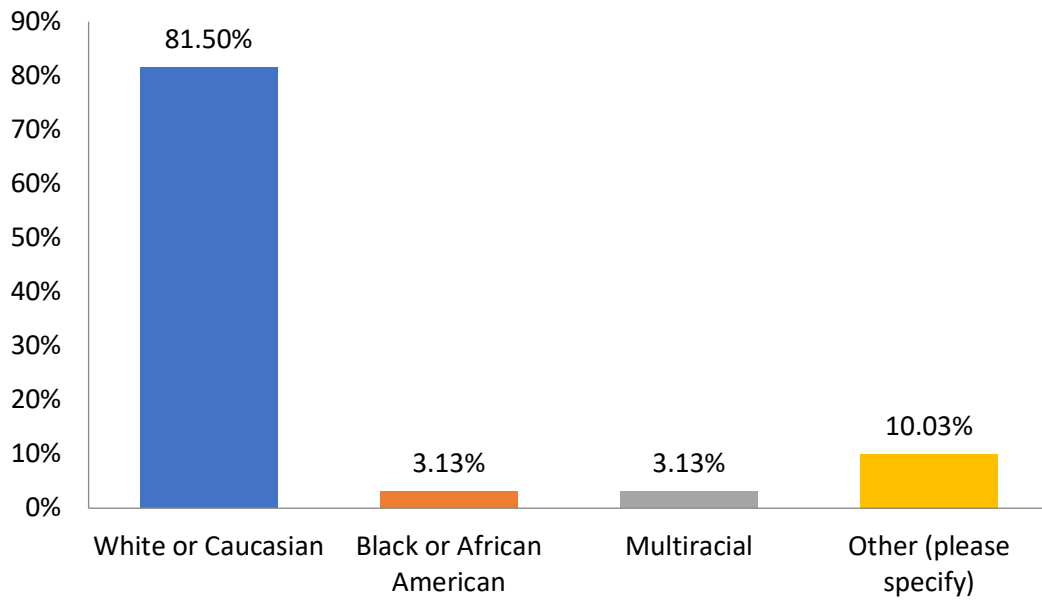
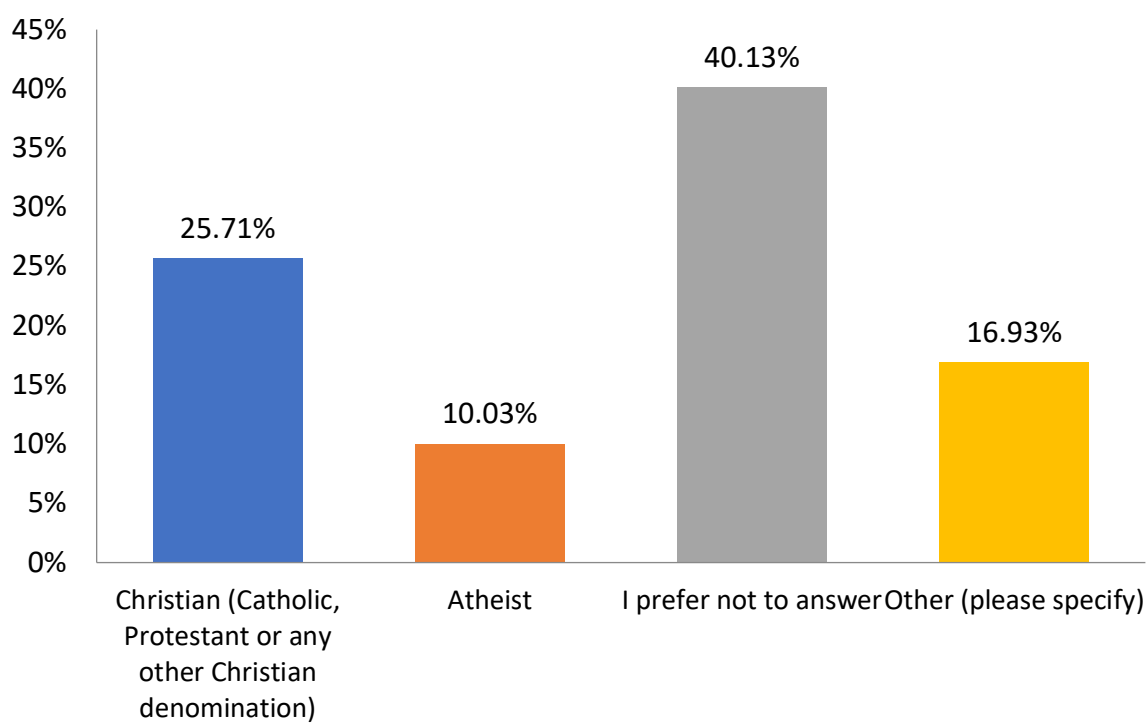


Figure 17: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?



High School

Figure 18: What is your current status in school?

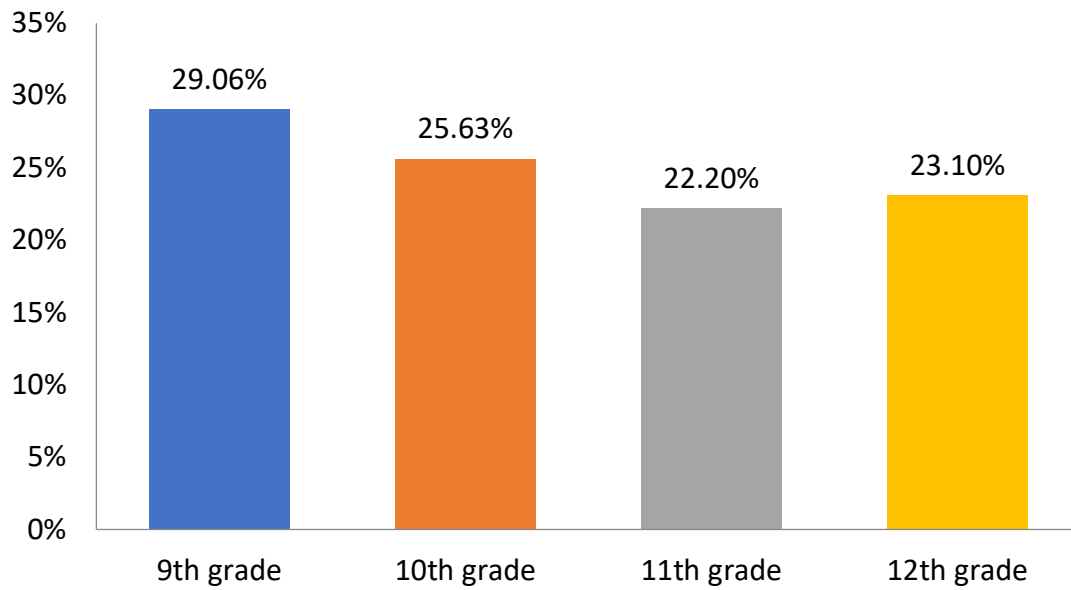


Figure 19: To which gender identity do you most identify?

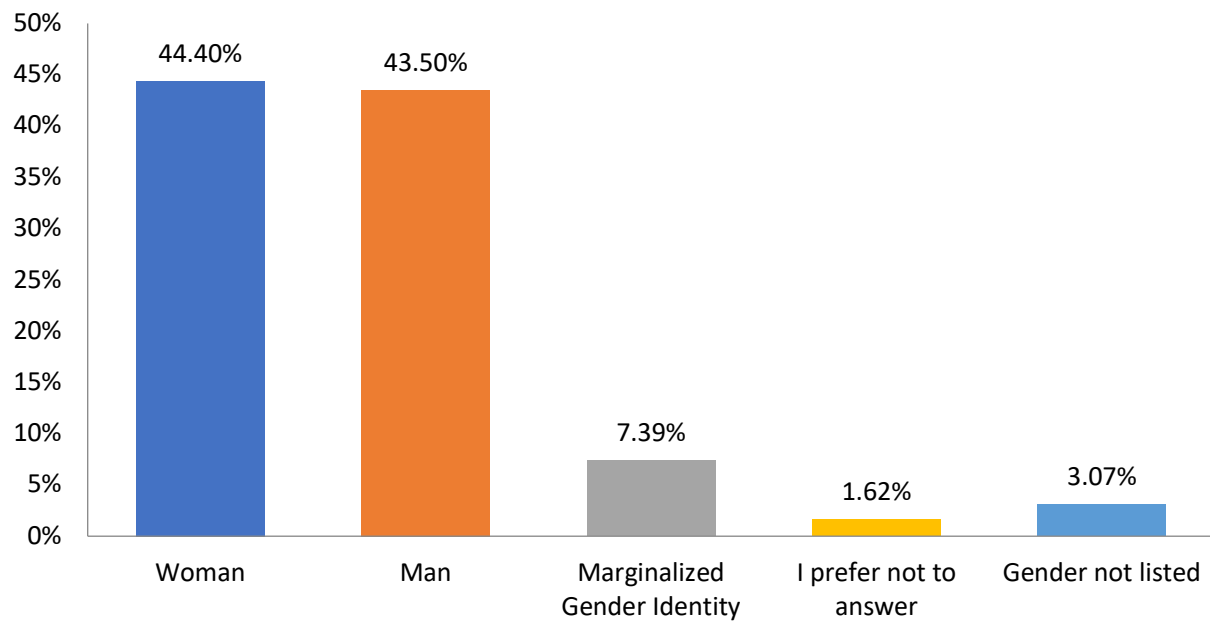


Figure 20: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?

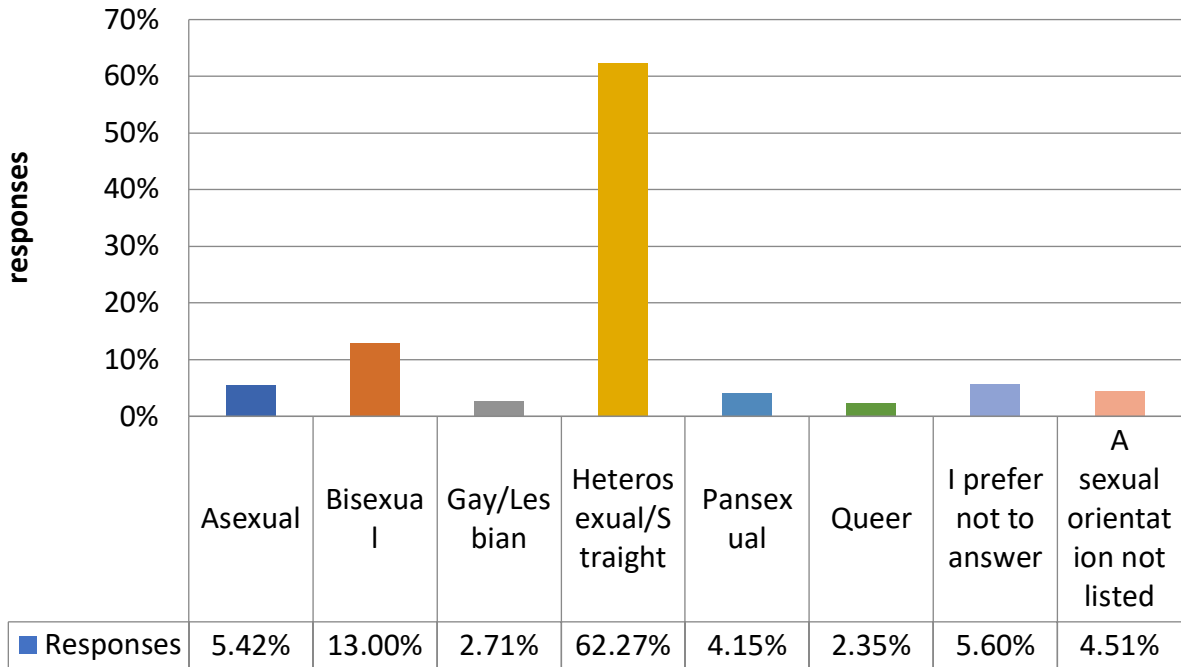


Figure 21: Are you Hispanic, Latinx, or of Spanish origin?

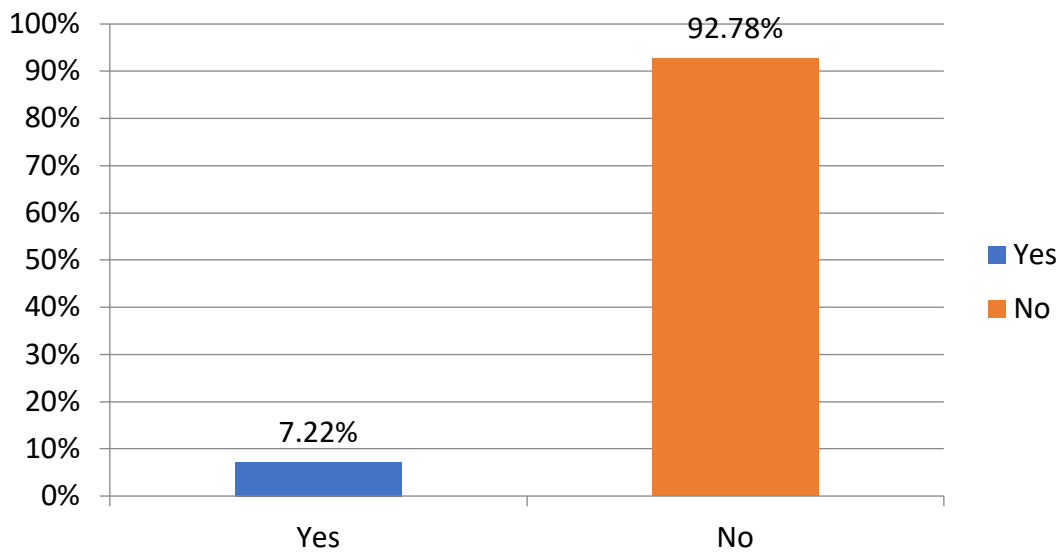


Figure 22: Are you American Indian or an Alaskan Native?

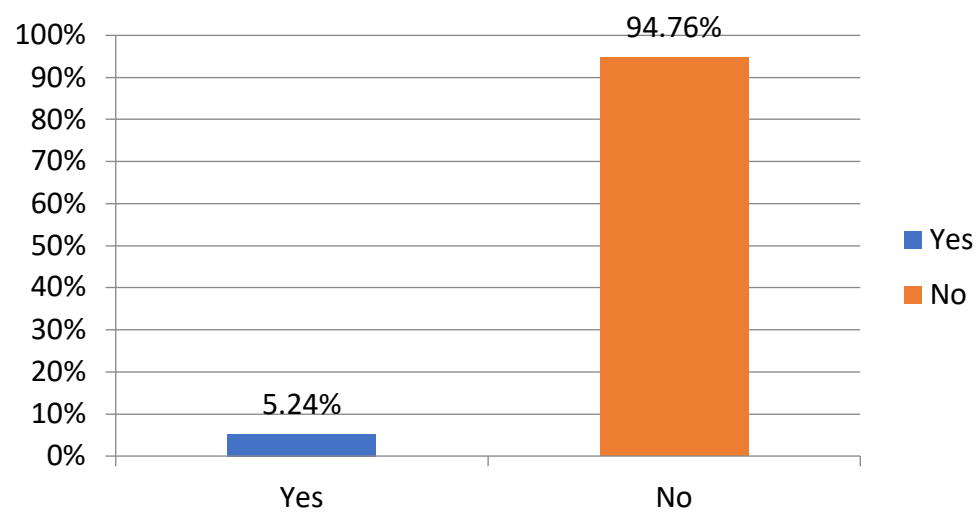


Figure 23: What is your race/ethnicity?

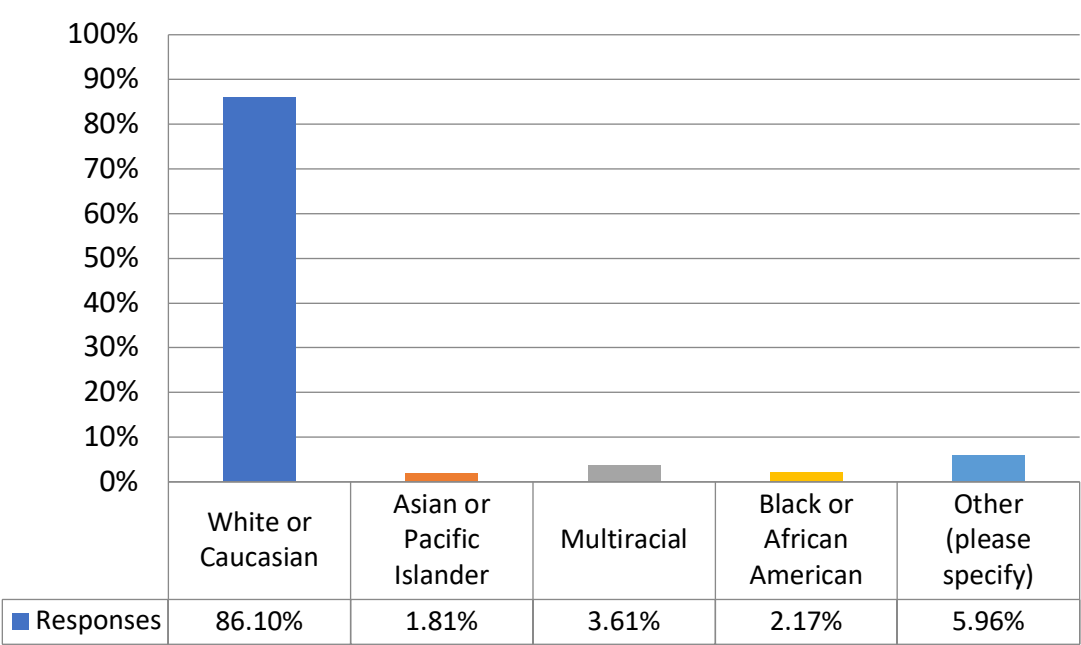


Figure 24: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?

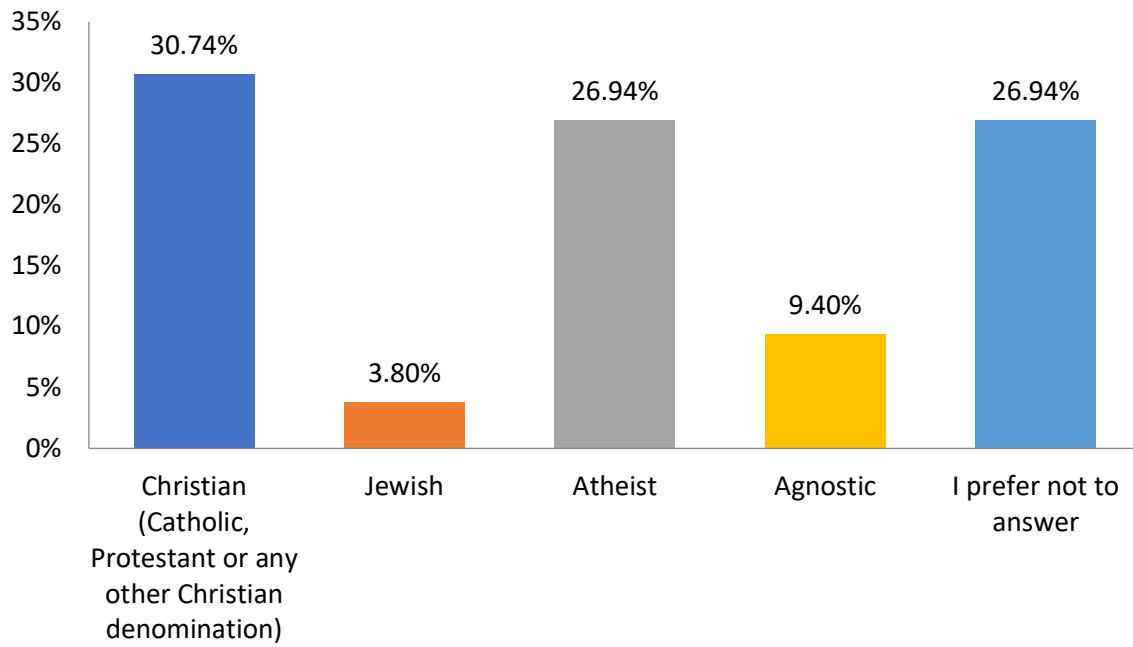


Figure 25: Which school do you spend most of your working hours in?

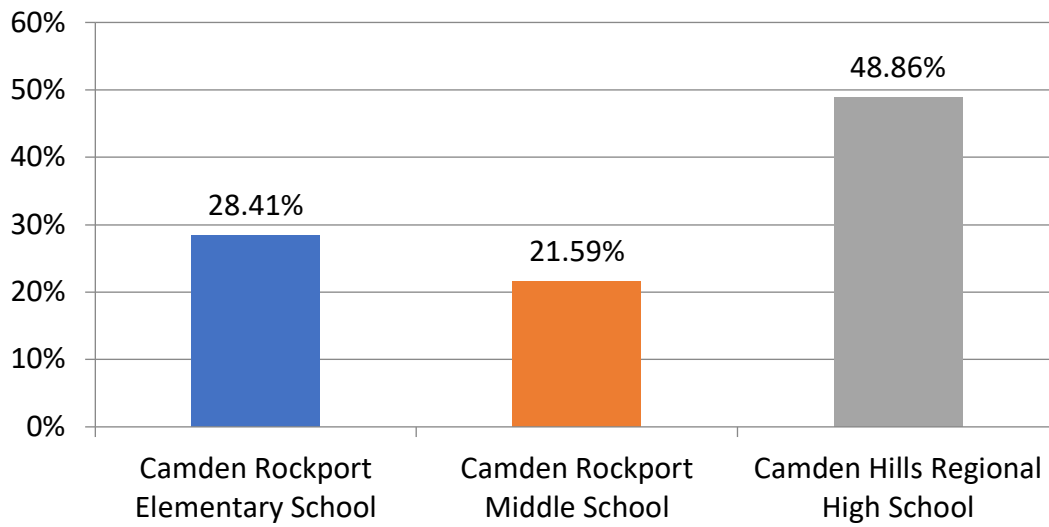


Figure 26: How many years have you been working as a teacher in this district?

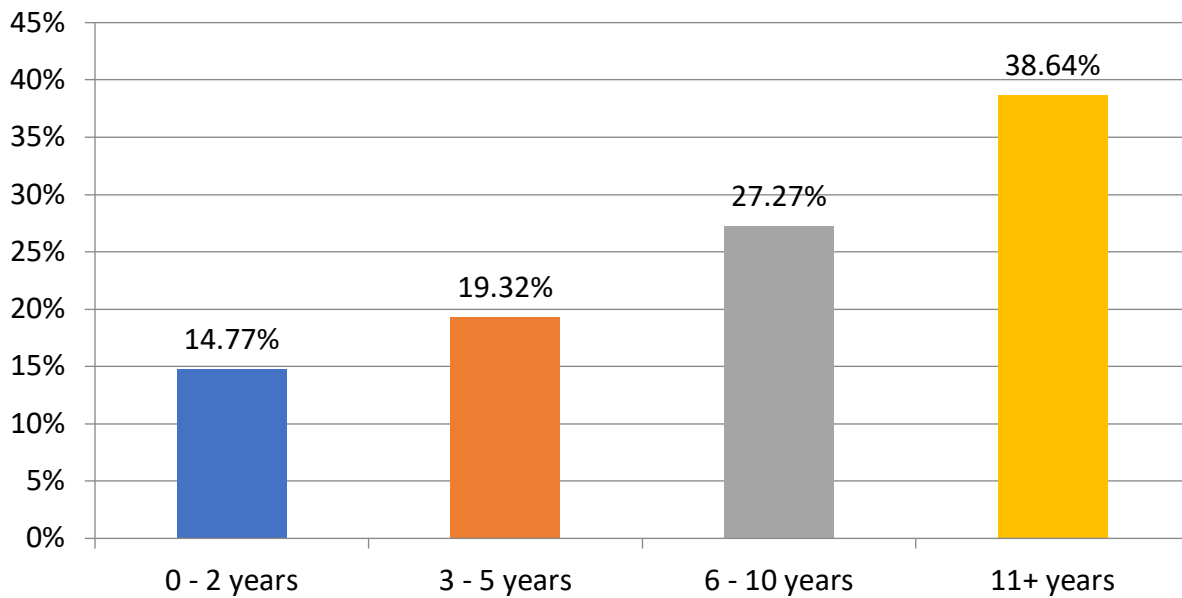


Figure 27: To which gender identity do you most identify?

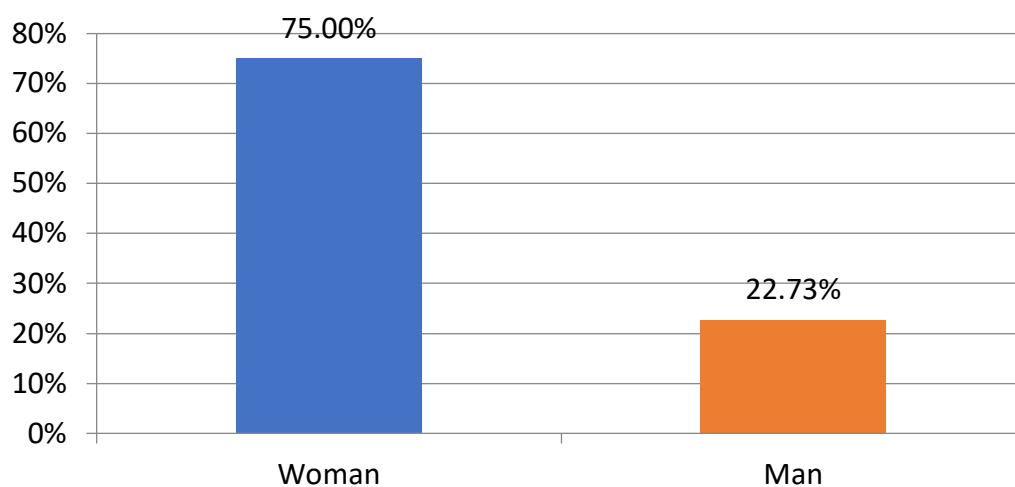


Figure 28: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?

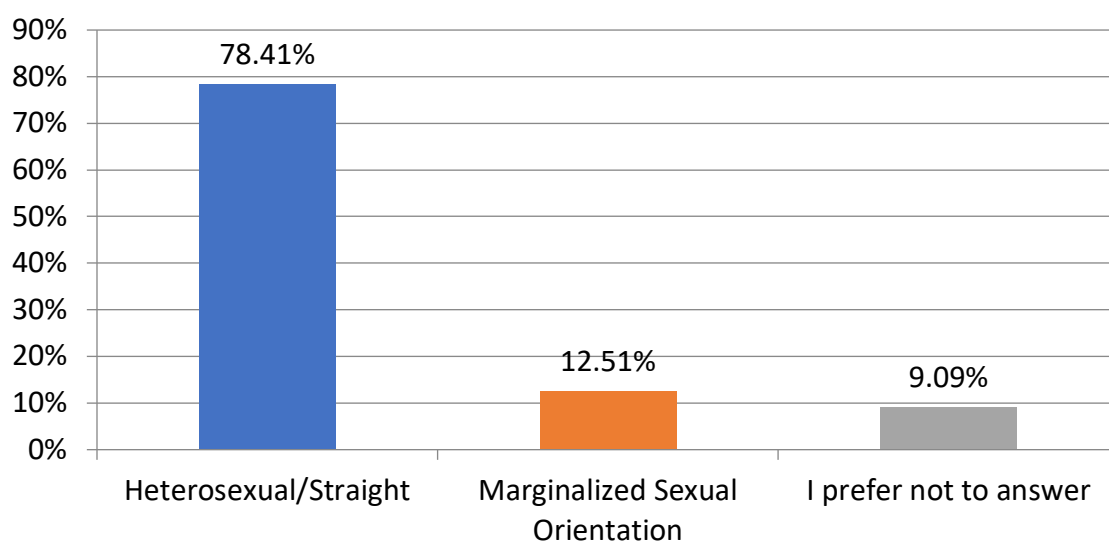


Figure 29: What is your race/ethnicity?

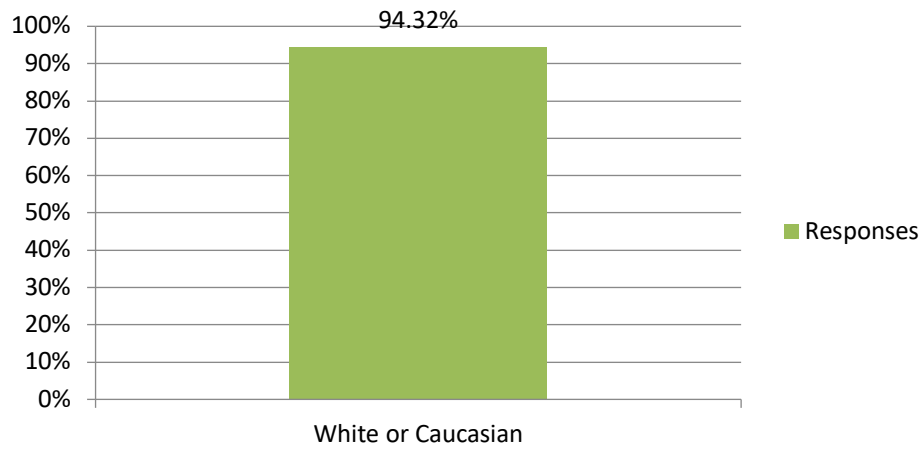
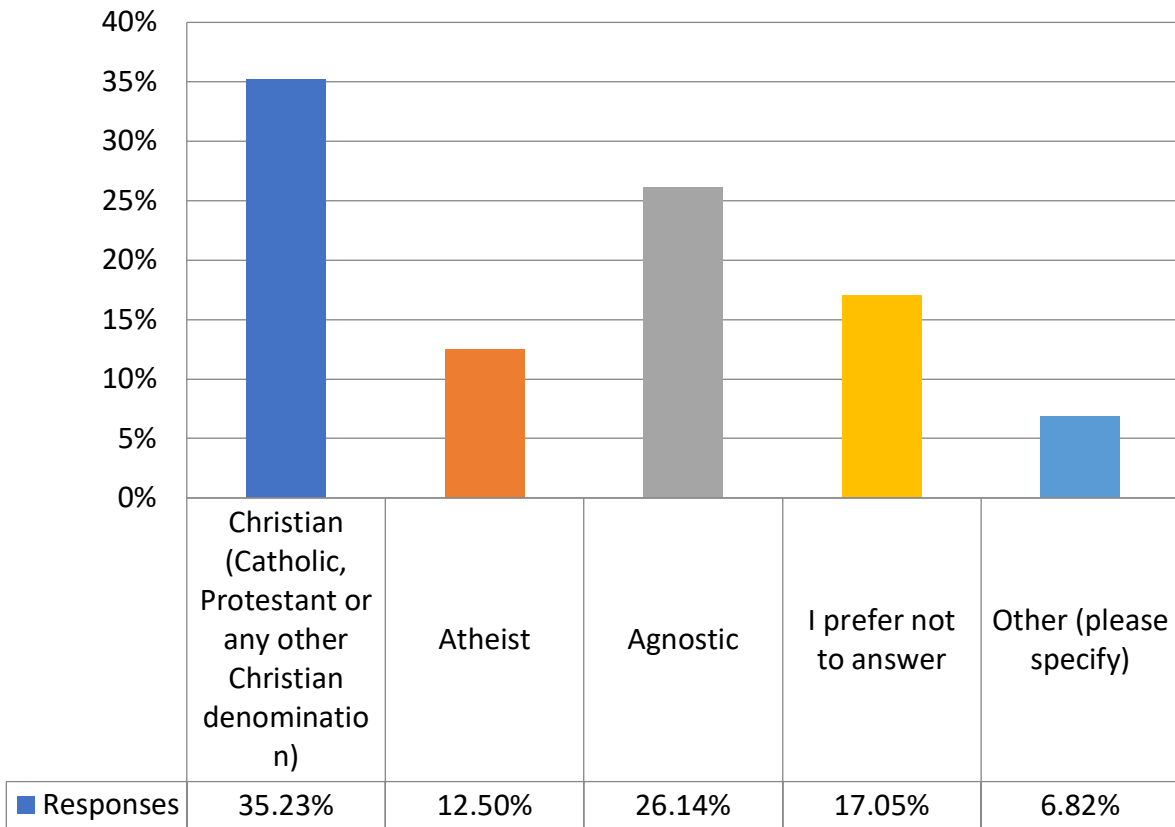


Figure 30: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?



Non-Certified Staff

Figure 31: How many years have you been working as a staff in this district?

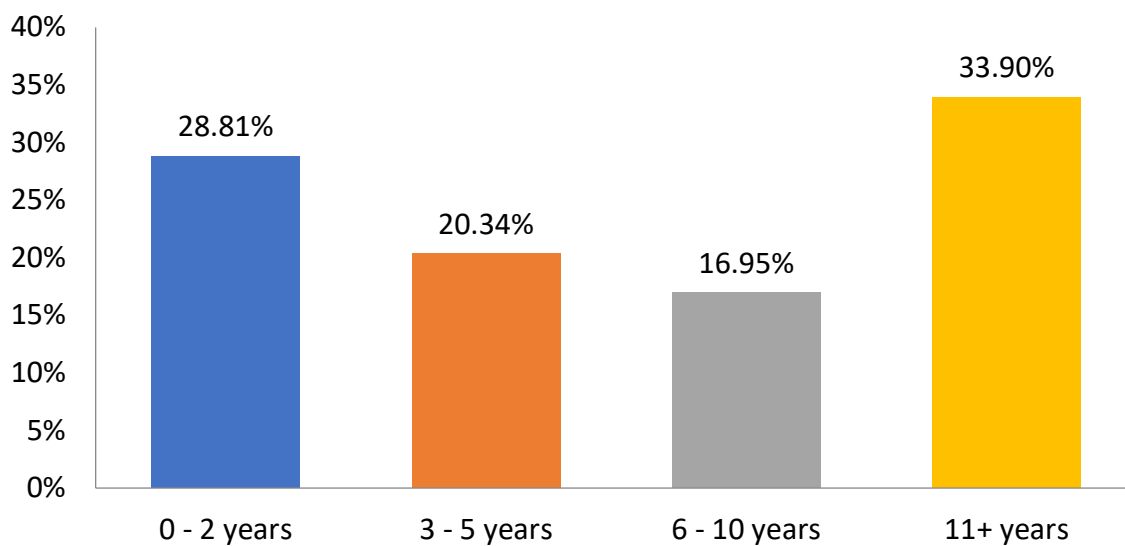


Figure 32: To which gender identity do you most identify?

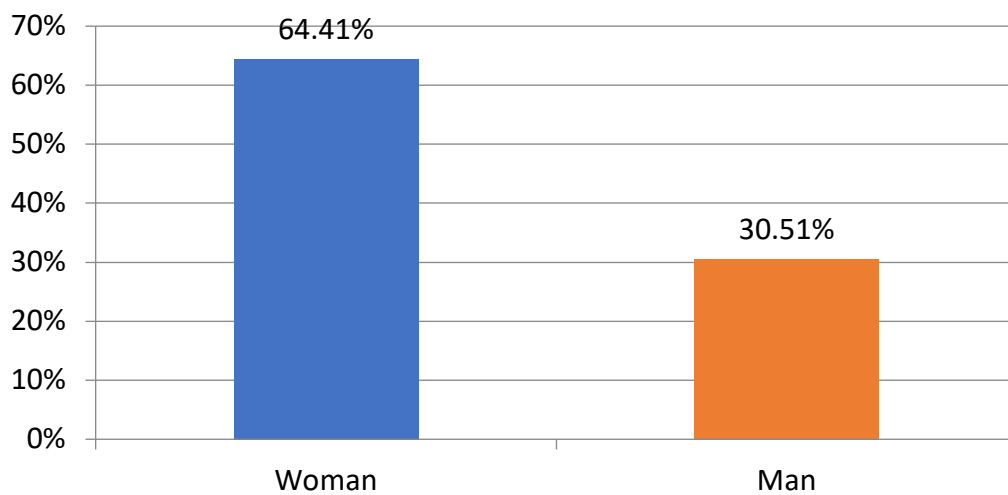


Figure 33: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?

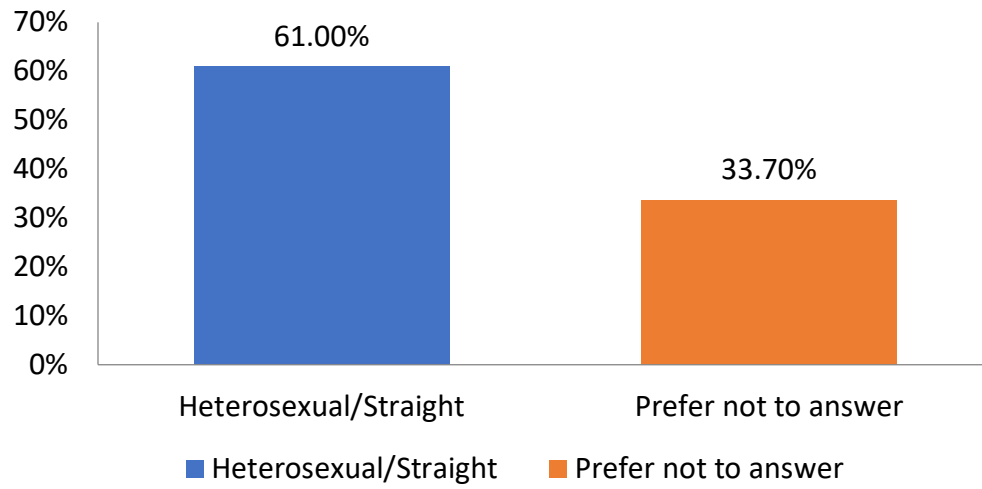


Figure 34: What is your race/ethnicity?

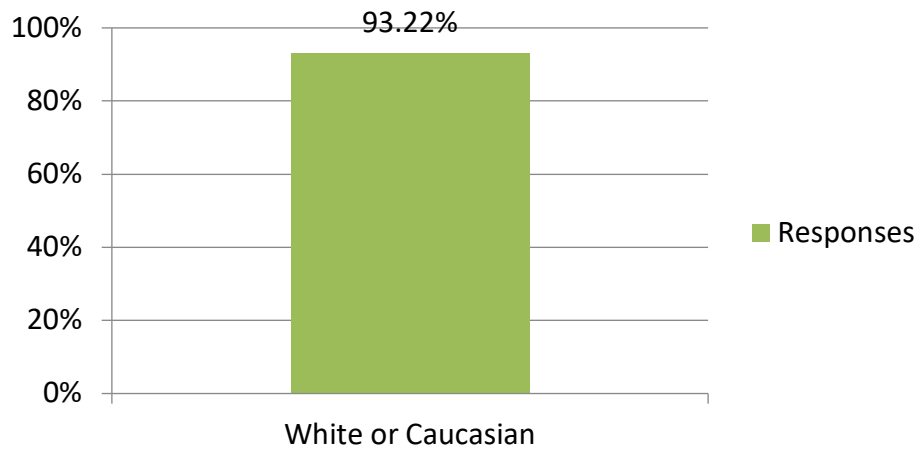
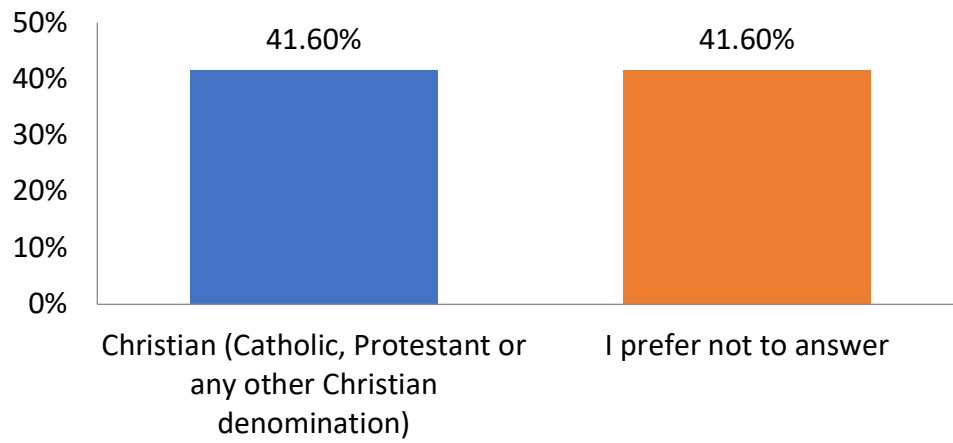


Figure 35: What religious or spiritual belief do you most closely identify with?



Parent/Guardian and Community

Figure 36: To which gender identity do you most identify?

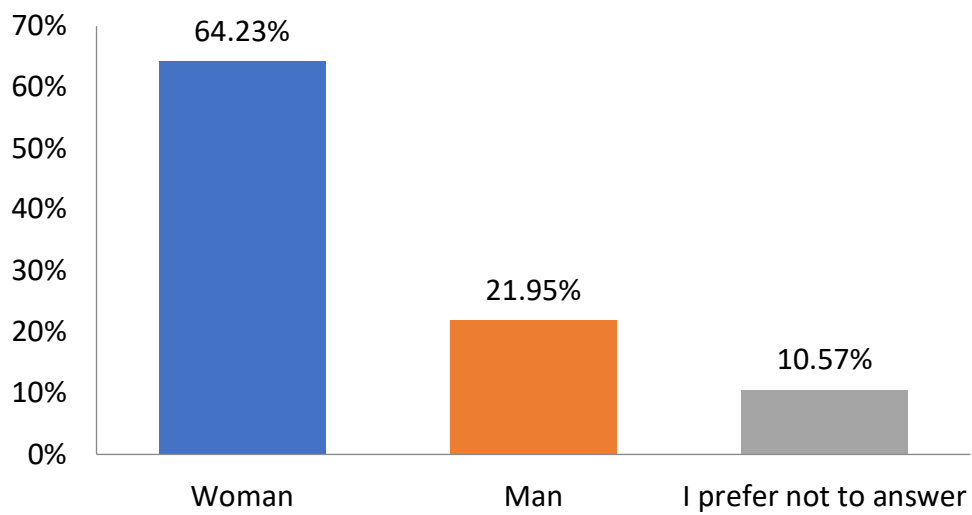


Figure 37: Which of these best describes your current sexual orientation?

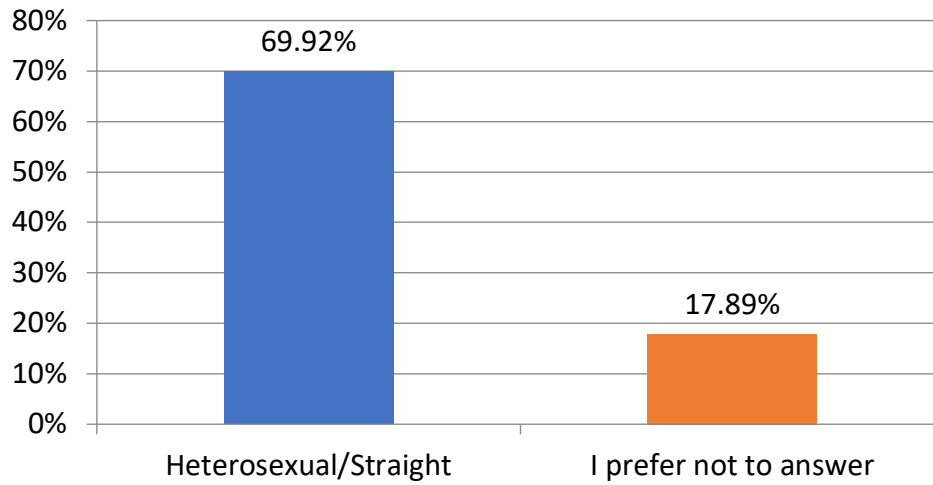
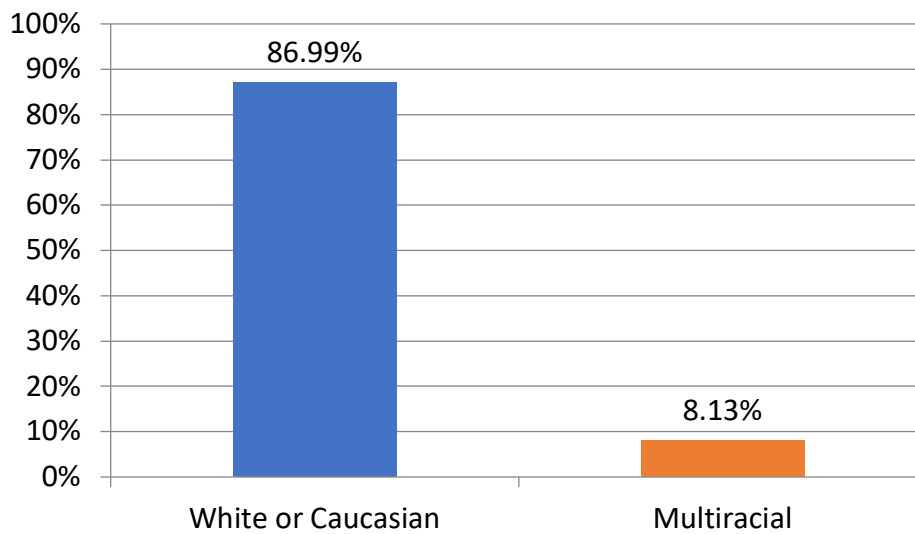


Figure 38: What is your race/ethnicity?



Appendix B

High School Survey Averages

Question	High School Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Art created by and representing my own community, culture, and identity hangs on walls in my school (including student art).	2.1	0.969
In school, I have been asked to talk about what equity means to me.	3.2	1.24
My school has had speakers or assemblies that were about race, ethnicity, culture, identity, or understanding others	3.1	1.212
My school has advocacy or alliance groups for students from various identities, cultures, and backgrounds.	2.2	0.888
The importance of respecting all cultural beliefs and practices is discussed and supported in my school.	2.2	0.964
I feel that I am a part of a community or group in most of my classes.	2.4	1.073
I feel like I can be my true self in school.	2.7	1.149
I have teachers or staff at school that I trust.	2.0	0.955
I am free to express my religious beliefs while at school.	2.4	1.049
I am free to express my gender identity while at school.	2.0	0.917
Someone from this school connected with my family to welcome us and is our family's contact if we have any needs.	2.7	1.186
My friends at school include students who are not the same race, ethnicity, culture or identity as I am.	2.4	1.043
I have had opportunities to learn about different cultures, races, or groups of people at school.	2.2	0.928
I am not afraid that I will be punished or made fun of for speaking up with ideas, concerns or mistakes in my classes.	2.6	1.139
When I started at this school, someone welcomed me, helped me find my way around and was my "go to person" until I was comfortable.	2.8	1.158
There are clubs or activities in my school that I could join that interest me.	2.2	1.046
My classrooms have clear rules that most students follow.	2.3	0.813
At my school, discipline is applied fairly to all students.	2.9	1.161
My school does a good job at supporting students from various cultures, races, backgrounds, and identities.	2.4	0.997
Written information in my classes is sometimes communicated in more than one language (excluding World Language classes).	3.6	1.368
I know who to talk to if there is something at school that is not working well for me.	2.3	0.965
My classrooms	2.0	0.806
In the school hallways	2.3	0.941
In the entrance to the school	2.1	0.853
The bathroom during regular classroom breaks	2.3	0.972
The bathroom when I go alone with a hall pass	2.2	0.92
The lunchroom	2.1	0.855
Practice or athletic fields	2.0	0.909
The locker room	2.2	1.014
The gym	2.1	0.905

Question	High School Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
The auditorium	2.0	0.853
The principal's office	2.3	1.135
The counselor's office	2.0	0.91
The school building before school	2.2	0.88
The school building after school	2.2	0.867
School bus	2.4	1.048
My classmates treat me with respect.	2.3	0.892
My friends at school include students who are not the same race, ethnicity or culture as I am.	2.4	1.005
Students in my school respect differences in backgrounds, cultures, or identities of our classmates.	2.4	0.972
At my school, students work together even if they are not part of a specific friend group.	2.4	0.986
Students at my school try to stop other students from teasing, harassing or bullying others.	2.9	1.103
Students at my school try to make new students feel welcome in school regardless of their background, race, or identity.	2.5	1.012
Most students at my school have someone to eat with during lunch.	2.4	0.999
Students who receive special education services do not face discrimination in my school.	2.5	1.058
Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my school.	2.5	1.05
Students who identify as LGBTQ+ do not face discrimination in my school.	2.6	1.173
I know something about the backgrounds of most of my classmates at school.	2.8	1.09
I have someone that can help me with my homework when I am not in school.	2.3	1.07
I have a place where I can work on homework when I am not in school.	1.9	0.83
In school, I am able to show my thoughts and what I have learned in many different ways (writing, drawing, speaking, performing, etc.).	2.2	0.875
My class presentations can be done using speech, dance, music, art or a combination of all of the above.	2.5	1.016
My work in school is often challenging and difficult to complete.	2.6	1.038
My homework is often challenging and difficult to complete.	2.5	1.038
I know why we are learning what we are learning.	2.7	1.04
I have input on how I will be graded before I begin class projects or assignments.	2.6	0.976
I have had the opportunity to lead activities in one or more of my classes.	2.7	1.016
My teacher(s) has placed me in work groups with students who belong to various races, cultures, and/or backgrounds.	2.5	1.006
My teachers notice me and do their best to make sure I am learning.	2.3	0.881
Teachers in my school expect me to do my best and succeed.	2.1	0.751
My teachers use my name to welcome me to their classrooms.	2.2	0.921
My teachers ask for my opinion in class.	2.5	0.915

Question	High School Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
I have talked to my teachers about my family and how we are doing this school year.	3.0	1.191
A teacher or staff member has asked me about my plans for after high school.	2.6	1.087
My teachers explain things clearly and in a way that I can understand.	2.5	0.887
My teachers use words or sentences from languages other than English that I or my classmates hear and use at home (excluding World Language classes).	3.3	1.335
I have a computer or device available to me when I am at school.	1.6	0.761
I have access to the technology needed (computer or software) to get my homework done when I am not at school.	1.7	0.788
I have access to the internet when I am not at school.	1.7	0.796
I use technology in my classes to create art, design and do other projects with my classmates.	1.9	0.894

Middle School Survey Averages

Question	Middle School Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Art created by and representing my own community, culture, and identity hangs on walls in my school (including student art).	1.8	0.986
I feel that I am a part of a community or group in most of my classes.	1.9	0.824
My school has had speakers or assemblies that were about race, ethnicity, culture, identity, or understanding others.	2.1	1.391
In school, I have been asked to talk about what equity means to me.	2.4	1.486
My school has advocacy or alliance groups for students from various identities, cultures, and backgrounds.	1.7	1.399
The importance of respecting all cultural beliefs and practices is discussed and supported in my school.	1.9	1.024
I feel like I can be my true self in school.	2.3	1.118
I have teachers or staff at school that I trust.	1.8	0.934
I am free to express my religious beliefs while at school.	2.0	1.118
I am free to express my gender identity while at school.	1.8	1.014
My friends at school include students who are not the same race, ethnicity, culture or identity as I am.	1.6	0.879
Someone from this school connected with my family to welcome us and is our family's contact if we have any needs.	1.7	1.299
I have had opportunities to learn about different cultures, races, or groups of people at school.	1.9	1.063
When I started at this school, someone welcomed me, helped me find my way around and was my "go to person" until I got comfortable.	2.0	1.079
I know who to talk to if there is something at school that is not working well for me.	1.9	0.944
There are clubs or activities in my school that I could join that interest me.	1.9	1.008
My classrooms have clear rules that most students follow.	1.9	0.817
At my school, discipline is applied fairly to all students.	2.1	1.249
My school does a good job at supporting students from various cultures, races, backgrounds, and identities.	1.7	0.94
Written information in my classes is sometimes communicated in more than one language (excluding World Language classes).	2.1	1.66
My classroom	1.7	0.723
The school hallways	2.1	0.818
The school entrance	1.8	0.785
The bathroom during regular classroom breaks	1.9	0.874
The bathroom when I go alone with a hall pass	1.8	0.893
The lunchroom	1.8	0.789
The practice or athletic fields	1.7	0.948

Question	Middle School Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
The locker room	1.7	1.119
The gym	1.8	0.802
The auditorium	1.7	0.795
The principal's office	1.9	1.184
The counselor's office	1.8	1.264
The school building before school	1.7	1.015
The school building after school	1.8	0.967
The school bus	1.8	1.228
My classmates treat me with respect.	2.0	0.868
At my school, students work together even if they are not part of a specific friend group.	2.1	0.947
My friends at school include students who are not the same race, ethnicity or culture as I am.	1.7	0.845
Students in my school respect differences in backgrounds, cultures, or identities of our classmates.	2.0	0.926
Students at my school try to stop other students from teasing, harassing or bullying others.	2.2	1.225
I know something about the backgrounds of most of my classmates at school.	2.3	1.186
Students at my school try to make new students feel welcome in school regardless of their background, race, or identity.	1.9	0.931
Most students at my school have someone to eat with during lunch.	1.8	0.835
My teachers use my name to welcome me to their classrooms.	1.8	0.774
My teachers notice me and do their best to make sure I am learning.	1.8	0.768
My teacher(s) has placed me in work groups with students who belong to various races, cultures, and/or backgrounds.	1.7	1.085
Teachers in my school expect me to do my best and succeed.	1.7	0.707
My teachers ask for my opinion in class.	2.1	1.002
I have talked to my teachers about my family and how we are doing this school year.	2.3	1.255
My teachers explain things clearly and in a way that I can understand.	2.2	0.898
My teacher(s) uses words or sentences from languages other than English that my classmates or I hear and use at home (excluding World Language classes).	2.4	1.713
I have someone that can help me with my homework when I am not at school.	1.8	0.834
I have a place where I can work on homework when I am not at school.	1.7	0.795
In school, I am able to show my thoughts and what I have learned in many different ways (writing, drawing, speaking, performing, etc.).	1.9	0.879
My class presentations can be done using speech, dance, music, art or a combination of all of these.	2.0	1.204
My work in school is often challenging and difficult to complete.	2.5	1.053
My homework is often challenging and difficult to complete.	2.6	1.149

Question	Middle School Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
I know why we are learning what we are learning.	2.1	1.066
I have had the opportunity to lead activities in one or more of my classes.	2.1	1.256
I have input on how I will be graded before I begin class projects or assignments.	2.0	1.089
I have a computer or device available to me when I am at school.	1.4	0.664
I have access to the technology needed (computer or software) to get my homework done when I am not at school.	1.7	0.957
I have access to the internet when I am not at school.	1.6	0.806
I use technology in my classes to solve problems with my classmates.	1.9	1.15
I use technology in my classes to create art, design, and do other projects with my classmates.	1.9	1.019
I use technology to complete textbook exercises and worksheets (or assignments and assessments).	1.9	1.07
I use technology to play games.	2.5	1.395
I use technology in my classes to create and design.	2.0	1.022

Teacher Survey Averages

Question	Teacher Survey Average Scores	Standard Deviation
I have been involved in creating or revisiting the district's vision for equity.	3.2	1.21579287
I have participated in professional development or other learning opportunities that focused on people with marginalized identities or who belong to marginalized groups of communities other than my own.	2.1	0.90171295
I am aware of formal evaluations in my district that include an equity framework, lens, or protocol.	3.1	1.12390297
I am involved in formal evaluations of district or school programs.	3.3	1.23459294
I am able to and feel comfortable with letting someone in authority know that a program or process at my school is not working well (i.e., not serving the people who were intended to be served or the program is not meeting it's goals).	2.0	0.922846
My school has hosted speakers or assemblies that were about diverse cultures and/or understanding others.	2.2	0.85856339
I am aware of the unique communities and cultures of most of the students in my school.	2.5	0.99798229
I feel that my learners and I have built a welcoming community in each of my classes or sessions.	1.8	0.64633844
I have learned some words and phrases in each of the native languages represented in our school to use as appropriate.	3.4	1.09949622
I have asked my students about their families and how they are doing this school year.	1.9	0.90004355
Information shared in the building is communicated in multiple languages.	4.1	0.82738619
I feel that it is easier to connect with students who share my cultural background.	3.3	0.89687936
I have witnessed progress in this district regarding equity for students with marginalized identities or those who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	2.2	0.68914178
I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from other students.	2.6	1.0240219
I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from school staff.	3.6	1.1592326
I am aware of staff in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from their peers.	3.5	1.0982234
Issues related to equity amongst students deserve more attention than they currently receive at my school.	2.6	0.94160993
Race	3.0	0.94861894
Ethnicity	3.0	0.8681025
Gender identity	2.4	0.95896454
Sexual orientation	2.4	0.98743903
Mental health	1.9	0.78750393
Religion	3.5	0.82649561

Question	Teacher Survey Average Scores	Standard Deviation
Socioeconomics	2.7	1.16700675
Homelessness	3.0	0.98813182
Immigration status	3.7	0.81489529
Ability/disability	2.5	1.05686892
During this school year, I have consistently and intentionally placed students in diverse work groups.	2.3	0.8035489
I welcome each one of my students by name when they enter the classroom or session every day.	1.9	0.98560171
Most of the students in my classroom treat one another with respect.	1.7	0.5657737
In my classroom or office space, I have clearly posted behavior expectations.	2.4	1.20904828
I have established practices by which students in my care come to know about each other and each other's families.	2.4	0.93684647
I am aware of services that are available for students that might need extra support to succeed in our school environment.	1.6	0.59166073
Most of the work I assign gives students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned in a variety of ways.	2.0	0.7630676
I provide multiple opportunities for each learner to lead in classes or sessions.	2.2	0.86440211
I monitor learners closely to make sure they understand what is being taught.	1.6	0.59387216
My students are asked for their input on how they will be graded before they begin classroom projects or assignments.	3.0	1.14590994
I make certain that all my learners understand why they are learning what they are learning.	1.8	0.52830989
I explain things clearly and in a way that students understand.	1.7	0.51929079
Students feel comfortable talking to me if they are experiencing difficulties in their personal lives.	2.0	0.72158463
Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my classroom.	1.5	0.5479782
Students who identify as LGBTQ+ do not face discrimination in my classroom.	1.5	0.6073593
My students can be their authentic selves in my classroom.	1.5	0.58369438
All students in my classroom have access to the appropriate technology to support and facilitate their learning.	1.6	0.80261201
Students in my class have the technology available in classes or sessions to communicate, create, and complete work with their classmates.	1.5	0.66756251
My students use technology in my classes to solve problems and research information with their classmates.	1.8	0.84070811
I am aware of equitable practices in place to distribute technology to those in need.	1.7	0.81437159
Most students in my classroom have access to internet services in their homes.	2.0	0.80229556
When I was hired in this district, I was assigned a coach or mentor with experience in delivering equitable practices.	3.0	1.22625184
In training to become an educator, I received adequate preparation to address the needs of all my students.	2.8	1.11581207

Question	Teacher Survey Average Scores	Standard Deviation
It can be challenging for teachers at this school to address the needs of students with marginalized identities or those who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	3.2	0.98446661
Other staff at my school respond to concerns related to racism, cultural differences, and equity appropriately.	2.3	0.71378529
Leadership at my school responds to issues relating to racism, cultural differences, and equity appropriately.	2.0	0.8152158
I feel I can be my authentic self when working in my school building.	2.0	0.84294354
I feel that I will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, or concerns in my school building or district.	2.0	0.87689189
I feel like I belong while at work and among my peers.	2.0	0.76555619

Non-Certified Staff Survey Averages

Questions	Certified Non-Teacher Survey Mean Scores	Standard Deviation
I have been involved in creating or revisiting the district's vision for equity.	3.3	1.3764944
I have participated in professional development or other learning opportunities that focused on people with marginalized identities or who belong to marginalized groups or communities other than my own.	1.9	1.12527053
I am aware of formal evaluations in my district that include an equity framework, lens, or protocol.	3.1	1.26114083
I am involved in formal evaluations of district or school programs.	3.7	1.09757841
I am able to and feel comfortable with letting someone in authority know that a program or process at my school is not working well (i.e., not serving the people who were intended to be served or the program is not meeting its goals).	2.0	1.06904497
My school has hosted speakers or assemblies that were about diverse cultures and/or understanding others.	2.4	1.01739261
I am aware of the unique communities and cultures of most of the students in my school.	2.2	1.00647256
I feel that my learners and I have built a welcoming community in each of my classes or sessions.	1.8	0.70710678
I have learned some words and phrases in each of the native languages represented in our school to use as appropriate.	3.5	1.26352334
I have asked my students about their families and how they are doing this school year.	2.0	1.17421799
Information shared in the building is communicated in multiple languages.	4.3	0.91046547
I feel that it is easier to connect with students who share my cultural background.	3.3	1.08611863

Questions	Certified Non-Teacher Survey Mean Scores	Standard Deviation
I have witnessed progress in this district regarding equity for students with marginalized identities or those who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	2.4	0.85407097
I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from other students.	2.4	1.25959521
I am aware of students in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from school staff.	3.4	1.32899728
I am aware of staff in my school building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination from their peers.	3.4	1.22120514
Issues related to equity amongst students deserve more attention than they currently receive at my school.	2.3	1.04135277
Race	3.3	1.05559733
Ethnicity	3.3	1.01653005
Gender identity	2.4	1.02353263
Sexual orientation	2.5	1.10023921
Mental health	1.8	0.98076744
Religion	3.7	1.06458129
Socioeconomics	3.0	1.20317042
Homelessness	3.1	1.10840941
Immigration status	3.9	0.93658581
Ability/disability	2.5	1.32736761
During this school year, I have consistently and intentionally placed students in diverse work groups.	2.1	0.69006556
I welcome each one of my students by name when they enter the classroom or session every day.	1.7	1.15999493
Most of the students in my classroom treat one another with respect.	1.7	0.49236596
In my classroom or office space, I have clearly posted behavior expectations.	2.9	1.48183445
I have established practices by which students in my care come to know about each other and each other's families.	3.1	1.16666667
I am aware of services that are available for students that might need extra support to succeed in our school environment.	1.4	0.59824304
Most of the work I assign gives students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned in a variety of ways.	1.8	0.66666667
I provide multiple opportunities for each learner to lead in classes or sessions.	2.4	1.06066017
I monitor learners closely to make sure they understand what is being taught.	1.7	0.65133895

Questions	Certified Non-Teacher Survey Mean Scores	Standard Deviation
My students are asked for their input on how they will be graded before they begin classroom projects or assignments.	3.5	0.57735027
I make certain that all my learners understand why they are learning what they are learning.	2.0	0.67936622
I explain things clearly and in a way that students understand.	1.7	0.65694669
Students feel comfortable talking to me if they are experiencing difficulties in their personal lives.	1.8	0.63866637
Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my classroom.	1.6	0.89209491
Students who identify as LGBTQ+ do not face discrimination in my classroom.	1.4	0.60633906
My students can be their authentic selves in my classroom.	1.4	0.60633906
All students in my classroom have access to the appropriate technology to support and facilitate their learning.	1.8	0.9268087
Students in my class have the technology available in classes or sessions to communicate, create, and complete work with their classmates.	1.5	0.68755165
My students use technology in my classes to solve problems and research information with their classmates.	1.9	0.73786479
I am aware of equitable practices in place to distribute technology to those in need.	1.8	1.04682058
Most students in my classroom have access to internet services in their homes.	2.1	0.80622577
When I was hired in this district, I was assigned a coach or mentor with experience in delivering equitable practices.	3.8	1.22304265
In training to become an educator, I received adequate preparation to address the needs of all my students.	2.2	1.21423185
It can be challenging for teachers at this school to address the needs of students with marginalized identities or those who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	3.2	0.9581903
Other staff at my school respond to concerns related to racism, cultural differences, and equity appropriately.	2.2	0.78732651
Leadership at my school responds to issues relating to racism, cultural differences, and equity appropriately.	2.1	0.62126074
I feel I can be my authentic self when working in my school building.	1.8	0.8135753
I feel that I will not punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, or concerns in my school building or district.	1.9	0.79282497
I feel like I belong while at work and among my peers.	1.8	0.88908728

Building Leaders Survey Averages

Questions	Average Survey Mean Scores
As a building leader, I am aware of the unique communities and cultures of most students in my school.	1.8
I am aware of disproportionate numbers of discipline referrals and suspensions among students with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community.	1.8
I feel that we have built a welcoming community in our school, including classrooms and common spaces.	1.6
I learn and also use words and phrases from the different languages that are spoken in my school.	3
I have access to enough resources in our school to address any issues that arise related to racism, discrimination, and/or cultural differences.	1.8
Race	2.4
Ethnicity	3
Gender identity	2.2
Mental health	1.6
Religion	3.4
Socioeconomics	1.8
Homelessness	1.8
Immigration status	3.4
Ability/disability	1.8
In training to become a school leader, I received adequate preparation to address the needs of all our students.	2.6
In my building, students are assessed in ways that take into account their learning style (visual, performative, etc.)	2.4
I am aware of opportunities in my building for students to get to know each other's families.	2.8
I have allocated resources in our classrooms based on an analysis of student needs, rather than student enrollment.	2
Building staff consistently enforces rules and norms fairly and justly among all students.	2.2
I am aware of a disproportionate number of students with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who are chronically absent.	2
I intentionally acknowledge and communicate with students during the school day.	1.6
Students would feel comfortable talking to me if they were experiencing difficulties in their personal lives.	2.2
I feel that it's easier to connect with students that share my cultural background.	3.4
Issues related to equity amongst students deserve more attention than they currently receive at our school.	2.6
All learners in my school are provided with leadership opportunities.	1.8
In my school, teachers use culturally relevant pedagogies to instruct students.	2.8
I am aware of services that are available for students that might need extra support to succeed in our school environment.	1.4
I have witnessed progress toward equity for students in my building with marginalized identities or those who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	2.2
I feel district leadership will support me in addressing the unique needs of students with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community.	1.6

Questions	Average Survey Mean Scores
I am aware of students in my building with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community who face prejudice and discrimination.	1.8
Students who receive special education services do not face discrimination in my school building.	3
Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my school building.	2.6
Students who identify as LGBTQ+ do not face discrimination in my school building.	3
Teachers in my school use multiple instructional strategies to engage diverse learners.	2
Teachers in my school strive to make certain that all learners understand why they are learning what they are learning.	2.6
In my school, teachers and learners work together to decide how they will show their understanding of what they are learning.	2.6
It can be challenging for teachers at my school to address the needs of students of diverse backgrounds.	2.4
I have consistently and intentionally placed staff in diverse work groups.	2.4
I have deliberately recruited qualified diverse staff for positions in my district.	3
I have successfully hired qualified diverse staff for positions in our building.	3
I feel that the building leaders and staff treat each other with respect.	1.6
I feel that the building leaders and staff treat students with respect.	1.6
I am aware of teachers and staff from marginalized communities in my building who have encountered discrimination and prejudice from their peers.	2.6
I allocate the appropriate amount of resources needed to support and facilitate student learning needs.	1.8
I am aware of equitable practices in place to distribute technology to those in need.	1.6
All students in my building have access to the appropriate technology to support and facilitate their learning.	1.6
I acknowledge as well as communicate with parents and guardians on a weekly basis.	1.4
Information shared in the building is communicated in multiple languages.	3
I feel I can be my authentic self when working in my school building.	1.6
I feel I can be my authentic self when working in my school district.	1.8
I feel that I will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, or concerns in my school building or district.	1.8
I feel like I belong while at work and among my peers.	1.6

District Leaders Survey Averages

Questions	Average Survey Scores
I have been involved in creating or revisiting the district's vision for equity.	3.5
I have been involved in developing the curriculum and content of the district's equity efforts.	3.5
I am aware of formal evaluations in my district that include an equity framework, lens or protocol.	1.5
I am aware of channels or processes by which I can report if a program or process is not working.	2

Questions	Average Survey Scores
I am involved in a formal evaluation of district programs.	4.5
I feel that we have built a welcoming community in my district's schools.	2
My district has hosted speakers or held assemblies that were about diverse cultures and/or understanding others.	2
We have provided our staff information and resources that represent the communities/cultures of all of the students in this district.	3.5
I am aware of opportunities in my district for students to get to know each other's families.	4.5
I have learned some words and phrases in each of the native languages represented in our school district to use as appropriate.	4.5
Information shared district-wide is communicated in multiple languages.	4.5
I feel that it's easier to connect with teachers and staff that share my cultural background.	3
Race	2.5
Ethnicity	2.5
Gender identity	2.5
Sexual orientation	2.5
Mental health	2.5
Religion	2.5
Socioeconomic status	2.5
Homelessness	3
Immigration	3
Ability/disability	2.5
I have deliberately recruited diverse qualified staff from for positions in my district.	3
I have successfully hired qualified diverse staff for positions in our district.	3
When a teacher is hired in this district, they are assigned a coach or mentor with experience in delivering equitable practices.	2.5
My district offers professional development to staff around cultural awareness and culturally responsive teaching.	3.5
Teachers in my school district use multiple instructional strategies to engage diverse learners.	2.5
In my district, teachers use culturally relevant pedagogies to instruct students.	2.5
Building staff in my district consistently enforce rules and norms fairly and justly among all students.	2
I am aware of teachers and staff from marginalized communities in my district who have encountered discrimination and prejudice from their peers.	4
It can be challenging for teachers in this district to address the needs of students with marginalized identities or who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	3.5
Leadership at our district responds to issues relating to racism, cultural differences, and equity appropriately.	2
I have witnessed progress toward equity for students in my district with marginalized identities or who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	2
I have allocated resources in our district based on an analysis of student needs, rather than student enrollment.	2
Teachers in my district strive to make certain that all learners understand why they are learning what they are learning.	2.5
In my district, teachers and learners work together to decide how they will show their understanding of what they are learning.	2.5
All learners in my district are provided with leadership opportunities.	3.5

Questions	Average Survey Scores
I am aware of services that are available for students that might need extra support to succeed in our school environment.	1.333333333
For the majority of students in my district, racism or discrimination is not a problem that they face every day.	3
I am aware of students who belong to marginalized groups or communities in my district who face racism and/or discrimination.	2
Students who receive special education services do not face discrimination in my school district.	3
Students with physical disabilities do not face discrimination in my school district.	2.5
Students who identify as LGBTQ+ do not face discrimination in my school district.	3
Issues related to equity amongst students deserve more attention than they currently receive in our district.	1.5
Students in my district have access to the appropriate technology to support and facilitate their learning.	1
I am aware of equitable practices in place to distribute technology to those in need.	1
Students in my district have access to internet services in the home.	2
Students in my district have the technology available in classes or sessions to communicate, create, and complete work with their classmates.	1.666666667
Schools in my district post rules and expectations clearly.	1
I am aware of disproportionate numbers of discipline referrals and suspensions among students with marginalized identities or who belong to a marginalized group or community.	4.5

Parents/Guardians and Community Survey Averages

Questions	Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
I have been involved in creating or revisiting the district's vision for equity.	2.8	1.0
I have witnessed progress in this district regarding equity for students from marginalized groups or communities.	2.6	1.0
I have been asked by staff for input on how programs offered in the school are working.	3.4	1.0
My child(ren) has the opportunity to get to know other children's families.	2.8	1.2
I believe my child's(ren's) education is a partnership between the school and myself.	1.6	1.0
I feel welcomed when I come into the school building.	2.2	1.3
If I wanted to discuss a program or process at school, I would feel comfortable talking to a teacher, administrator, or school board member.	2.2	1.2
If needed, I have the opportunity to communicate with my child's(ren's) teacher(s).	1.6	0.8
When my child first started at this school, we were connected with someone from the school to make us feel welcomed.	2.9	1.3
School communications are available in different languages or different formats (visually, spoken), if needed.	2.2	1.0
My child(ren) is safe when attending after school programs and other school sponsored activities.	1.7	0.9

Questions	Survey Mean Score	Standard Deviation
If needed, transportation is available for my child(ren) to attend after school activities and extracurricular opportunities.	2.4	1.2
My child(ren) feels safe going to and coming from school.	1.8	0.8
My child(ren) feels safe at school.	1.8	0.8
My child(ren) is doing academically challenging work at school.	2.0	0.9
My child(ren) has been encouraged to take advanced level coursework or to stretch their levels of academic rigor.	2.4	1.3
My child(ren) has been encouraged to think about career paths after high school.	2.2	1.1
My child's school does a good job supporting students with marginalized identities or who belong to marginalized groups or communities.	2.6	1.0
School staff and teachers know my child by name.	1.9	0.9
I believe the schools in this district do all they can to help all children succeed.	2.4	1.2
My child(ren) has access to the appropriate technology to support and facilitate their learning.	1.8	0.9
My child(ren) has access to efficient internet at home.	1.5	0.8