PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS BRIDGING THE GAP ACHIEVEMENT GAP GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Annual Report 2020-21

Issued: October 12, 2021 Updated: October 29, 2021, following FDOE data release confirmina district data for Goal 2





Contents

| Executive Summary | 3 |
|--|-----|
| Bridging the Gap Oversight and Monitoring | 3 |
| Goal Area Summaries | 4 |
| Goal 1: Graduation Rate | 4 |
| Goal 2: Academic Achievement | 4 |
| Goal 3: Advanced Coursework | 5 |
| Goal 4: Student Discipline | 6 |
| Goal 5: ESE Identification | 6 |
| Goal 6: Minority Hiring | 7 |
| Staff Professional Development | 7 |
| Goal 1: Graduation Rate- Eliminate the gap between graduation rates for black and non-black students | 8 |
| Outcome Overview | 8 |
| Annual Outcome Measures | |
| Key Actions and Findings | |
| Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research | 10 |
| Goal 2: Academic Achievement- Eliminate the gap between the proficiency rates in reading (ELA) and mathematics | |
| national assessments for black and non-black students. | 11 |
| Annual Outcome Measures | |
| Key Actions and Findings | |
| Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research | |
| Goal 3: Advanced Coursework- Eliminate the gap in advanced or accelerated participation and performance rates f | |
| non-black students | |
| Outcome Overview | |
| Annual Outcome Measures | |
| Key Actions and Findings | |
| Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research | |
| Goal 4: Student Discipline- Reduce the total number of disciplinary infractions (referrals) and suspensions for black | |
| the disparity in referrals and suspensions for black students to reach a level that is representative of the black stud | |
| population Outcome Overview | |
| Annual Outcome Measures | |
| | |
| Key Actions and Findings | |
| Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research | |
| Goal 5: ESE Identification- Reduce the disparity of black students being found eligible for Exceptional Student Education Outcome Overview | • • |
| | |
| Annual Outcome Measures | |
| Key Actions and Findings | |
| Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research | |
| Goal 6: Minority Hiring- Increase the number of black teachers and administrators to closely mirror the student en ethnicity. | - |
| Outcome Overview | |
| Annual Outcome Measures | |
| Key Actions and Findings | |
| Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research | |
| | |



Executive Summary

Bridging the Gap (BTG) is a Pinellas County Schools (PCS) initiative designed by the district to close or greatly narrow educational achievement gaps between black students and their non-black peers by the year 2027. The BTG Plan outlines educational equity gaps across six goal areas:

| Goal 1: Graduation Rate | Goal 4: Student Discipline |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Goal 2: Student Achievement | Goal 5: ESE Identification |
| Goal 3: Advanced Coursework | Goal 6: Minority Hiring |

The overarching goal of BTG is to provide pathways to improve the educational outcomes of black students, particularly regarding equitable performance on standardized assessments, improved graduation rates, participation in advanced level coursework, reductions in disproportionate disciplinary consequences and overrepresentation in Exceptional Student Education (specifically- Emotional/Behavioral Disability). Additionally, the district has prioritized increased teacher diversity to recruit and retain teachers of color.

The key findings presented in this report represent a summary of the implementation efforts for the six goals stated above. The ongoing evaluation of the BTG plan is designed to accomplish the following: (1) identify the extent to which PCS has developed structures and systems to support educational equity and meet stated goals; (2) highlight the successes of the BTG initiative, to date; (3) identify areas for refinement or improvement; and (4) establish a set of best-practice recommendations for improving the plan moving forward. The findings within this report are part of a multi-year evaluation of the BTG Plan which support annual improvements to the plan and district leadership.

Bridging the Gap Oversight and Monitoring

The Bridging the Gap (BTG) plan is a systemic initiative and large-scale effort to improve persistent inequitable educational outcomes for black students in Pinellas County Schools. To ensure alignment of the goals and desired outcomes, the district developed consistent methods and measures. Each year the BTG plan is refined to update strategies and actions aligned to current progress with quarterly updates communicated to the community. The Pinellas County School Board (Board) and district remain committed to the BTG plan, evident in the explicit inclusion of the plan each year within the Board approved <u>District Strategic Plan</u>. To ensure continuous improvement and attention to implementation, each goal within the BTG plan has a goal manager who works cross-functionally to develop, implement and monitor the strategic actions plans. Goal managers meet regularly with Executive Leadership, including the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and Minority Achievement Officer, regarding progress and any barriers that need support.

The district has focused on three essential approaches for systemic change to promote educational equity aimed at developing employee and system awareness of achievement gaps in order to increase application and advocacy of best practices to improve educational outcomes for black learners. Thus far in implementation, essential approaches have been:

- 1. Supporting a deeper understanding of systemic inequities and implicit bias to better understand root causes of the achievement gap through equity-centered professional development.
- 2. Expanding data use to identify inequities, plan for improvement, and monitor progress of equity efforts.
- 3. Integrating culturally relevant and restorative practices within school structures as well as instructional and classroom management strategies to foster student learning environments that meet the needs of diverse learners.

The district has made progress particularly in the development and implementation of districtwide professional development opportunities and improving early warning systems. Within each BTG Goal, most action steps have focused on training for teachers and leaders, improved data monitoring and identifying and tracking of students who are at-risk. There is evidence of systems-change in each of these key areas as the district has built data systems that track and measure the progress of students in meeting graduation requirements and matching students to advanced courses.



Additionally, the district has invested in partnerships with national experts in equitable practices, developed staff to become local trainers and developed a robust set of training options.

Data outcomes measured within the plan have demonstrated improvement, though the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted progress during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As a district committed to continuous improvement, Pinellas County Schools recognizes there is still work to be done and is dedicated to ensuring the goals within the BTG plan are met or exceeded. Some goals within the BTG plan have demonstrated greater success in terms of student outcomes than others and the district will continue to refine and adapt the strategies and actions to align with current capacity and promote long-term systems-change and sustainability over time.

Goal Area Summaries

The Bridging the Gap Plan outlines the district 10-year goals, annual benchmarks and strategies set for each goal area. While progress is expected each year, it should be noted that the gaps are not likely to decrease equally every year. The district may find that some gaps decrease quickly while others remain stable (or widen) until the plan's actions work in unison to bring about the systemic change needed to impact all gaps. The goal summaries below for the 2020-2021 school year, give high-level overviews of progress. Each goal area also has separate, more detailed, outcomes within this report.

Goal 1: Graduation Rate

The district continues to see positive increases in its black graduation rate, which has improved by 20 percentage points since the baseline year of 2015-16 (from 65.5% in 2015-16 to 85.5% in 2019-20). The district continues to sustain and grow the graduation rate of Black students. While the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has not yet released the 2020-2021 graduation as of the publication of this report, district metrics demonstrate that the graduation rate for black students will increase again this year to an estimated 85.9%. Despite the adverse impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning, graduation rates demonstrated gains which illuminate the sustainability and commitment of district staff, students, parents and community to this initiative. The interventions, supports and advanced data protocols outlined in the BTG Plan have contributed to steady increases. The 2020-2021 graduation rate is expected to be released by the FDOE in December 2021/early January 2022.

Goal 2: Academic Achievement

In an atypical and challenging year that brought major adjustments to instructional practices, the FSA and EOC results identified some learning gaps, but demonstrate the commitment of the staff, students and families of Pinellas County Schools. Across the district, 95 percent of students participated in 2020-21 state assessments. The high participation rate shows that families, students and staff recognize the importance that assessment results play in identifying student-specific supports to minimize learning loss. Overall, the district performance remained consistent with state trends; however, the proficiency rates for all students demonstrated slight decreases over the 2018-2019 performance. The district trends in proficiency rates for all students, mirror the trends for the 2020-2021 school year in English/Language Arts (ELA) for black students.

The proficiency in ELA for the 2020-21 school year demonstrates a slight decrease since 2018-19; however, remains stable when compared to 2017-18. The 2020-2021 ELA proficiency rate for black students in the district was 25.6% compared to 57.8% for non-black students, a gap of 32.2 percentage points. This represents a slight reduction in the gap between black and non-black students by .4 points. The proficiency rates in 2020-2021 for mathematics demonstrate a similar achievement gap with 24.9% of black students achieving a Level 3 and above compared to 58.6% of non-black students. This represents a gap of 31.9 percentage points and a reduction in the gap between black and non-black students by .9 points.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the district developed and implemented programs for increased academic outcomes with a focus on implementation impact for Black students including:

• Expansion of Reading Recovery at twelve (12) schools to serve more students, with most students in Reading Recovery meeting grade level standards. The percentage of students above the 40th percentile at Reading Recovery schools has gone from 36% in 2018-19, to 40% in 2019-20 to 49% in 2020-21. Reading Recovery's



design is not only to improve literacy for the most struggling learners, but to improve the core literacy performance of all students in the grade level.

- To increase the educational outcomes starting with the earliest learners, the district invested in the establishment of a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten pilot programs with the Early Learning Coalition in which the programs meet at least five (5) of the ten (10) <u>national standards of the National Institute for Early Education</u> <u>Research</u>. Pilot programs began at four (4) PCS elementary schools (High Point, Campbell Park, Lakeview and Lealman) and four (4) private providers. PCS pilot programs met seven (7) of ten (10) standards during the 2020-21 school year.
- <u>PCS Connects</u>, the district's one-to-one student device initiative, began during the 2020-2021 school year. All students in grades four (4) through nine (9) were assigned a Dell laptop to be used during the school day and at home. Students in grades K-3 and 10 -12 had access to technology during the school day. As part of PCS Connects, digital resources are embedded in daily face-to-face instruction to facilitate research, creation, critical thinking, and collaboration. The goal of PCS Connects is to ensure students have access to the technology, devices and applications that transform their learning and can extend their learning after school hours for enrichment and curricular reinforcement that meets individual student need.
- The <u>School Climate Transformation Grant</u> implementation with intensified supports at five (5) pilot middle schools and universal supports for all middle schools. The project is designed to reduce disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes for students of color by enhancing and expanding systems of support for (and technical assistance to) schools implementing a multi-tiered system of support.
- Teacher professional development using AVID: Culturally Relevant Teaching materials. To date, over 3,000 teachers have taken the training since this strategy was added to the BTG plan in 2018. <u>AVID Culturally Relevant</u> <u>Teaching training</u> focuses on nine (9) things educators do to ensure they are meeting the needs of their students.

These programmatic strategies and supports demonstrate the commitment of the district to increase the proficiency of black students and narrow the gap in performance through actions that provide both short-term results and long-term outcomes and sustainability across the district. BTG goal managers collaborate with District leadership to explicitly embed programmatic strategies and supports specific to addressing achievement gaps within the actions for these District initiatives.

Goal 3: Advanced Coursework

The district continues to meet its annual BTG benchmarks for increased enrollment of black students in advanced and accelerated courses. Since the BTG plan was approved, the district has more than doubled enrollment in advanced coursework for black students. With the long-term goal to ensure that the enrollment of students taking advanced/accelerated coursework mirrors the district's student population by race (18% black students), the district surpassed this target with black students comprising 26% of the enrollment of in advanced/accelerated courses in 2020-21. This surpasses the original target goal by 8 percentage points. The district is committed to continuing to raise the bar of excellence for black students in future years.

Additionally, the number and percent of black students enrolled in gifted increased again in the 2020-2021 school year, though a gap remains. The steady improvement is connected to the district's commitment to universal screening for all students by the end of first grade as well as continued implementation to "Plan B" as an alternative method of identification that considers students with both gifted and talented potential against a matrix that includes multiple criteria and not just a single screening assessment.

While there is continued growth in participation within all categories of advanced/accelerated coursework, there remains continued opportunity to expand access and support increased successful outcomes. Increased supports for students preparing for advanced and accelerated coursework at all levels. PCS is committed to creating innovative efforts to mitigate future barriers to performance growth by expanding training opportunities for school counselors and providing coaching and data support to increase acceleration plans.



Goal 4: Student Discipline

Since the 2015-16 school year, the district has significantly reduced the number of suspensions for black students and the number of black students being suspended. During the 2020-21 school year PCS continued to see decreases in both the numbers of black students receiving a referral and out-of-school suspension (OSS), though the disciplinary disparity rate for black students remains (risk ratio of 4.80 in the 2020-2021 school year).

The district continues to increase and improve strategies aimed to decrease gaps, monitor implementation and pinpoint opportunities for growth. During the 2020-21 school year, an investment to build the capacity of stakeholders in equity training for leaders and teachers continued including:

- Enhanced implementation supports for Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) and Restorative Practices as a Tier I strategies for black students.
 - Schools identified an administrator (assistant principal) to lead the PBIS planning, implementation and monitoring throughout the school year.
 - All schools received updated training with 100% of school administrators receiving training in the use of restorative circles, conferences and related best practices during the first semester
- 20 schools engaged in an intensive restorative practice training cycle. The schools engaged in coaching days with the <u>International Institute for Restorative Practices</u> (IIRP), principals of the schools participated in Putting Theory into Practice Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and twenty restorative practices-licensed trainers participated in the IIRP restorative justice training.
- Dedicated time to development and review of data and strategy implementation occurred with principals during the monthly Area meetings.
- Implementation of the <u>School Climate Transformation Grant</u> (SCTG) with intensive supports at five (5) pilot middle schools and universal supports for all middle schools. The project is designed to reduce disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes for students of color by enhancing and expanding systems of support for (and technical assistance to) schools implementing a multi-tiered system of support.
- In concert with the SCTG, a district-level team consisting of members from different divisions developed a framework and process for addressing root causes of discipline disparities in Pinellas County Schools.

Goal 5: ESE Identification

The ESE Department aspires to reduce the disparity of black students found eligible for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) with a district-wide approach. The district has made steady progress in reducing the risk ratio for black students for both ESE eligibility and EBD designation. The ESE risk ratio for black students has decreased to 1.43 as of 2019-20, from 1.45 in the baseline year of 2015-16. The EBD risk ratio for black students has narrowed to 3.50 as of 2019-20, from 4.20 in the baseline year of 2015-16. The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) issues the risk ratios each year for school districts. While this data is usually available each summer, as of the issuance of this report FDOE has not issued data for the 2020-2021 school year.

The district has implemented strategies and actions that have yielded positive results including:

- Records review process by the district ESE Department for any new PCS transfer student with an EBD eligibility. Students receive current IEP services during the time they are being re-evaluated.
- District provided Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) Behavior Specialists to provide intensive support to students with a focus in schools with a high-minority population.
- Intensive and intentional early intervening services, using direct resources, to students prior to being identified as having an Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD).
- Targeted and sustainable professional development to school-based behavior specialists who include studentspecific data and interventions within behavior intervention plans. District behavior specialists provide side-byside coaching support for school-based staff.
- District ESE Behavior Specialists to provide support to ESE students in all schools.
- Enhanced professional learning opportunities for administrators, general education instructional staff and ESE instructional staff regarding responding to challenging behaviors and how to support students and provide/teach pro-active strategies to address behaviors in the classroom/school community.



- Implementation of a collaborative coaching and continuum of support with schools to model the expectations for working with students. As an effort to support the whole child, Trauma Informed Approach training was provided for all behavior specialists to respond to the wide range of social emotional needs of students.
- Investments to provide nationally recognized credentials for district and school staff that work directly to support student behavior.
- Developed and piloted a functional analysis referral system in spring 2021 specifically aligned with the trauma informed approaches at Calvin Hunsinger and Richard L. Sanders schools through choice grants.

Goal 6: Minority Hiring

The district has seen steady increases in the number of district black teachers who are black, with the number and percentage of black teachers hired increasing slightly in 2020-21. The gap for Goal 6 is defined as the percentage of black teachers in comparison to the district's black student population of 18%. The district has increased the percentage of black teachers from 8.3% (622) in 2015-16 to 9.5% (674) in 2020-21.

The district has established intentional practices through the human resource department to support BTG Goal 6, including:

- Increased the number of advanced contracts with 19% of all advanced contracts signed with Black educators;
- Hired a Manager of Talent Acquisition and additional hiring specialists to focus on minority hiring and filling critical shortage areas;
- Maintained recruitment efforts at historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) within and outside of the state of Florida;
- Enhanced social media campaigns;
- Developed Call Me MiSTER, a pipeline program for black male teachers which is currently the only program in the state of Florida; and
- Expanded the <u>Pinellas Alliance of Black School Educators (PABSE)</u> mentorship program to support black educators who are new or early in their career.

Staff Professional Development

A successful, comprehensive professional development plan must include continuing education beyond introductory offerings (awareness level training) which emphasize how stakeholders can more effectively act in response to biases and systemic barriers in building equitable, culturally responsive schools and classrooms (application and advocacy level training). This remains an ongoing challenge for a district that employees more than 7,000 teachers and administrators and hires new employees year-round. The district remains focused on training all teachers and staff in the three primary equity training courses offered:

 1. Restorative Practices
 2. AVID: Culturally Relevant Teaching
 3. Equity Champions

As of the summer of 2021, the district continued training in restorative practices, in AVID: Culturally Relevant Teaching, and the Equity Champions cohort. It should be noted that equity mindset training (Equity Champions) has extended its offerings to a broader scale. Many additional offerings are now available as some teachers and leaders have expressed an interest in deepening their understanding and use of equitable practices. The breadth and depth of trainings specific to equity, bias, anti-racism, and culturally responsive practices were limited prior to the development of the BTG Plan and have been a primary focus for the district for the past five years.

While development opportunities have expanded considerably, and more schools are implementing the practices consistent with the key strategies provided in the training(s), systemic implementation in every school is not yet evident across the district. Implementation with fidelity will be a critical next step for the district success in meeting its long-term achievement gap targets. Recognizing the need to continue professional development opportunities while also deepening support for classroom implementation, the district invested in the development of an Equity department beginning in the 2021-22 school year. The Equity department will be responsible for deploying cycles of implementation support and development to ensure that the knowledge gained during professional development moves from theory to application within classrooms.



Goal 1: Graduation Rate- Eliminate the gap between graduation rates for black and non-black students.

Outcome Overview

Goal 1: Graduation Rate

Action Goal (1.a.): Eliminate the gap between the graduation rates for black and non-black students.

Goal Manager: Rita Vasquez, Executive Director, High School Education

Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16): Pinellas County Schools has a graduation rate for all students of 80.1% and a rate for black students of 65.5%. The district has seen a 10.9 percentage point increase in graduation rate among black students since 2012, with an improvement among all students of 8.1 percentage points. A gap in graduation rates still exists between black (65.5%) and non-black (83.4%) students, a gap of 17.9 percentage points.

Short-Range Target: Increase the graduation rate for black students and decrease the gap by an average of 1.8% each year.

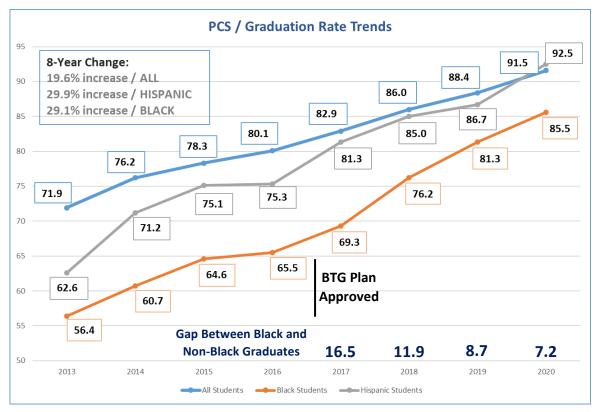
Long-Range Target: Increase the graduation rate for black students each year with the goal of eliminating or greatly narrowing the gap within 10 years.

The district's Bridging the Gap plan continues to yield results and has helped produce the district's highest graduation rate among black students and the lowest gap in district history.

- The graduation rate among black students for 2019-2020 rose to 85.5%, up 4.2 percentage points from the previous year and nearly 30 percentage points since the 2012-13 school year.
- When the Bridging the Gap plan was instituted, the graduation gap between black and non-black students was 18 percentage points. This gap decreased by another 1.5 percentage points in 2019-2020 to 7.2 percentage points.

While the graduation rate for the 2020-21 school year was not yet released by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) at the time of this report, the district anticipates the graduation rate for black students will increase again for the class of 2021 to an estimated 85.9%* with the gap continuing to close. Both the improvement in the black graduation rate and the reduction in the gap are trending ahead of the district's annual targets outlined in the BTG Plan. The graduation rate for black students reflects sustained, significant improvement since the baseline year of 2015-16. The success of Goal 1 efforts is largely attributable to the systemic, purposeful use of data for action and support, as well as changes in processes for the identification of at-risk students. Once the 2020-21 graduation rate is finalized by the state, the district is expected to have the highest black graduation rate in its history. This is consistent with the previous five-year trend data that show a 20.4 percentage point increase in black student graduation rate. Though graduation rates have improved for all student subgroups across the district, racial gaps remain, and black students graduate at a lesser rate than their non-black peers.





Source: FDOE- EdStats AAR data pull January 2021

Annual Outcome Measures

| Goal 1: Annual Outcome Measures | | Baseline (2015-16) | Plannin (2016 | - | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 ¹ | |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------------|--|
| Graduation Rate: # and % of black students who graduated on time with a standard, high school diploma / 4-year senior cohort. | Diask | (932) | Actual | 69.3% | 76.2% | 81.3% | 85.5% | TRD | |
| | Black | 65.5% | Target | 67.3% | 69.1% | 70.9% | 72.7% | TBD | |
| | Non- Black | 83.4% | Actual | 85.8% | 88.1% | 90.0% | 92.7% | TBD | |
| | GAP | 17.9 | Actual | 16.5 | 11.9 | 8.7 | 7.2 | עסו | |

Key Actions and Findings

- Despite the adverse impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning, graduation rates demonstrated gains indicative of systems improvement. A series of interventions and advanced data protocols outlined in the BTG Plan have contributed to steady increases.
- The district has continued to utilize the developed series of innovative tracking systems and checks-andbalances that have directly impacted the improvements in graduation rates for black learners. The district's continued evaluation of graduation rate improvements evidence consistent usage of these tracking systems by district and school staff, including school guidance counselors who monitor graduation requirements.
- COVID-19 impact on the graduation rate, specifically the waiving of requirements had between .3-.4 percentage point impact on the district graduation rates for the class of 2020. Lack of standardized test administration (FSA, EOCs, SAT and ACT) during the 2019-2020 school year will have greater impact on the class of 2021 and 2022 as

¹ The graduation rates for 2020-2021 are not final and have not been released by the state. The percentage provided here is an internal estimate only and is provided for BTG planning purposes. The data should be viewed only as an approximation of the final totals. Final graduation rates are expected to be released by the state in December 2021 or early January 2022.



students in those cohorts were in grade 10 and 11 during that school year and did not have the ability to take some subject area assessments when they were in the course. Strategies for support must be taken into consideration for these students.

- Data reviews suggest a lack of efficacy for the 'Check and Connect' program for black students during the 2020-2021 school year. Further review and attention to program implementation with fidelity during the 2021-2022 school year are advised as implementation during the 2020-2021 school year may have been impacted by COVID-19 variables.
- Data analysis revealed a deeper level of future focus for black students in Pinellas County Schools. Black male students' performance continues to lag black female students by approximately 5 percentage points. The district is actively acquiring research and resources to close the gender gap found within the black student community.
- Trends across the district's seventeen (17) traditional high schools reveal consistently high black student
 graduation rates, moving forward a closer attention to interventions within the district's dropout prevention and
 alternative school sites is necessary to continue to reduce the graduation gap.
- During the 2020-2021 school year, all black students not on track for graduation participated in APEX credit recovery during the school day or through extended learning. Furthermore, 100% of black junior and senior students who were not on track to graduate registered for the March 2021 testing administration window.

Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Continue to collaborate within and outside of the district to determine new and innovative measures to close the gender achievement gap for black students.
- Continue districtwide practices established at the high school level for review and use of data for action and support including the implementation of preventative measures to develop and sustain a positive trend from entry through the graduation of high school for black students.
- Enhance the vertical articulation and implementation strategies for ongoing monitoring and support of black students demonstrating graduation readiness standards at grades five (5), eight (8) and nine (9). Research, develop and implement innovative academic and engagement supports which increase demonstrated graduation readiness for black students earlier in their high school careers.
- Given that the Check and Connect initiative has not indicated success for closing the gap, the district should review this practice and focus on implementing preventative measures to develop and sustain a positive trend from entry through graduation of high school.
- Explore the expansion of school credit recovery to allow students who need this support to have access to additional credit recovery periods through the school day at all south county schools.
- With the shift in graduation assessment requirements for <u>concordant scores for the class of 2022</u> (first time ninth graders in the 2018-19 school year), district and schools must continue enhanced strategies and supports for students to meet the increased expectations and outcomes².
- Considerations should be given for two additional areas of concentration within BTG Goal 1: (b.) ensuring that an effective mechanism is in place to monitor interventions plans for students who are off track as early as ninth grade. Though individual student plans have been developed, the specific goals, timelines, and progress monitoring of those plans are not always executed with fidelity. The evolution of the BTG Plan will require the district to determine the efficacy and fidelity of individual student plans and build in tighter accountability methods to ensure that interventions such as tutoring, and after-school programs are in place and working.

² See Appendix A for historical trends in graduation withdrawal codes including concordant/comparative scores.



Goal 2: Academic Achievement- Eliminate the gap between the proficiency rates in reading (ELA) and mathematics on state and national assessments for black and non-black students.

Outcome Overview

Goal 2: Student Achievement

Action Goal (1.b.): Eliminate the gap between the proficiency rates on state and national assessments for black and non-black students.

Goal Manager: Kevin Hendrick, Associate Superintendent, Teaching and Learning

Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16): Pinellas County Schools has a proficiency rate on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) for ELA-Reading of 56.4% for non-black students and 24.2% for black students, a gap of 32.2. The proficiency rate on the FSA for Math is 60.9% for non-black students and 27.9% for black students, a 33-point gap. Smaller gaps are found on national norm-referenced tests such as the ACT and SAT._For purposes of this goal, the gap is defined as the difference in performance between black and non-black students on state and national normreferenced assessments.

Short-Range Target: Decrease the gap in ELA-Reading and Math proficiency for black students by an average of 3.2% each year on state assessments.

Long-Range Target: Increase the proficiency for black students and decrease the gap on state assessments by an average of 3.2% each year, with a target of equal proficiency for black and non-black students on state assessments.

In an atypical and challenging year that brought major adjustments to instructional practices, the FSA and EOC results identified some learning gaps, but demonstrate the commitment of the staff, students and families of Pinellas County Schools. Across the district, 95 percent of students participated in state assessments. The high participation rate shows that families, students and staff recognize the importance that assessment results play in identifying student-specific supports to minimize learning loss. Overall, the district performance remained consistent with state trends; however, the proficiency rates for all students demonstrated slight decreases from the 2018-2019 performance (the most immediate comparative year as state assessments were not administered during the 2019-20 school year When looking at multi-year trends, Pinellas County students demonstrated stable performance districtwide in English/Language Arts (ELA) and demonstrates slight decreases in mathematics. Nationwide, COVID-19 related learning loss in mathematics has been greater than reading.

The district trends in proficiency rates for black students, mirror the trends for the 2020-2021 school year in English/Language Arts (ELA) for all students (see Annual Outcome Measures chart below). The proficiency in ELA for the 2020-21 school year demonstrates a slight decrease since 2018-19; however, remains stable when compared to 2017-18. The 2020-2021 ELA proficiency rate for black students in the district was 25.6% compared to 57.8% for non-black students, a gap of 32.2 percentage points. This represents a reduction in the gap between black and non-black students by .4 points. The proficiency rates in in 2020-2021 for mathematics demonstrate a similar achievement gap with 24.9% of black students achieving a Level 3 and above compared to 58.6% of non-black students. This represents a gap of 31.9 percentage points and a reduction in the gap between black and non-black students by .9 points. Note: Statewide during the 2020-21 school year, the proficiency for Black students decreased by 4 percentage points in ELA 3-10 and 13 percentage points in mathematics (3-8).

While the district has demonstrated minimal progress in black proficiency and reduction of the gap between black and non-black students, this remains an area for focused commitment. During the opening four years of implementation of the Bridging the Gap Plan, the district ensured foundational systems were in-place at the district level and all schools. With a focus on high outcomes for black students, these efforts continue to be successful in meeting district implementation benchmarks related to the training of teachers around equity, the development of improved data



systems to track student performance, and targeted interventions designed to identify and support black learners who are under-performing.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the district developed and implemented programs with a focus on positively impacting the academic outcomes of black students including:

- Expansion of Reading Recovery at twelve (12) schools to serve more students, with most students in Reading Recovery meeting grade level standards. The Reading Recovery program ensures individual students in first grade who are below the 40th percentile in reading work one-to-one with a specially trained teacher for 12 to 20 weeks and receive daily 30-minute lessons. The percentage of students above the 40th percentile at Reading Recovery schools has gone from 36% in 2018-19, to 40% in 2019-20 to 49% in 2020-21. Reading Recovery's design is not only to improve literacy for the most struggling learners, but to improve the core literacy performance of all students in the grade level. This "prevention" model of literacy—preventing reading deficiencies at early ages—is one of the key research tenets of Reading Recovery. All students below the 40th percentile have a student-specific progress monitoring plan with interventions. Students that are not above the 40th percentile are also invited to participate in Summer Bridge. This is a direct follow-up service to support all non-proficient students. In these Reading Recovery schools, an additional layer of support was added two summers ago that included the Ladders to Literacy Summer Bridge program. Students from Reading Recovery schools attend Summer Bridge with teachers that are concurrently receiving training and coaching from PCS and the UF Lastinger Center to improve student reading proficiency. These students also receive follow-up direct support from their first grade Reading Recovery teacher in second grade during small group instruction.
- To increase the educational outcomes starting with the earliest learners, the district invested in the establishment of Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten pilot programs with the Early Learning Coalition with the goal of meeting at least five (5) of the ten (10) <u>national standards of the National Institute for Early Education Research</u>. Pilots began at four (4) PCS elementary schools (High Point, Campbell Park, Lakeview and Lealman) and four (4) private providers. PCS pilot programs met seven (7) of ten (10) NIEER Standards in the 2020-21 school year, with the state only requiring programs to meet two (2):

| State Requirement | NIEER Benchmarks for High Quality PreK | Pinellas County Schools Pilot Classrooms |
|-------------------|--|---|
| X | Early Learning and Developmental Standards | Х |
| | Teachers have Bachelor's Degree | Х |
| | Teachers have Specialized Training in PreK | |
| | Assistant Teachers have CDA or Equivalent | Х |
| | Professional Development, Coaching for Staff | Х |
| X | Class Size of 20 Students or Lower | Х |
| | Staff-Child Ratio 1:10 or Better | Х |
| | Vision, Hearing, and Health Screenings and Referrals | |
| | Curriculum Supports | X |
| | Continuous Quality Improvement System | |

- PCS Connects, the district's one-to-one student device initiative, began during the 2021-2022 school year. All students in grades four (4) through nine (9) were assigned a Dell laptop to be used during the school day and at home. Students in grades K-3 and 10 -12 had access to technology during the school day. As part of PCS Connects, digital resources are embedded in daily face-to-face instruction to facilitate research, creation, critical thinking, and collaboration. The goal of PCS Connects is to ensure students have access to the technology, devices and applications that transform their learning and can extend their learning after school hours for enrichment and curricular reinforcement that meets individual student need. As part of PCS Connects, the district also launched Level Up, a virtual enrichment opportunity that allows students and families to make the most of their PCS Connects digital learning devices and to help them remain connected to learning. There are a variety of enhancement options for all grade levels including quarterly Biology, Algebra 1 and Geometry reviews, virtual history and art museum tours and ACT and SAT preparation courses.
- Implementation of the <u>School Climate Transformation Grant</u> with intensive supports at five (5) pilot middle schools and universal supports for all middle schools. The project is designed to reduce disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes for students of color by enhancing and expanding systems of support for (and technical assistance to) schools implementing a multi-tiered system of support. One of the signature features of this grant is the implementation of Learning Labs to facilitate authentic family, school and community



collaboration and inclusive problem-solving. Each Learning Lab includes parent representatives and address several topics during each lab including academic performance and suggestions for improvement with school leaders.

- Teacher professional development using AVID: Culturally Relevant Teaching materials. To date, over 3,000 teachers have taken the training since this strategy was added to the BTG plan in 2018. <u>AVID Culturally Relevant</u> <u>Teaching training</u> focuses on nine (9) things educators do to ensure they are meeting the needs of their students:
 - 1. Use High-Engagement Strategies
 - 2. Celebrate Academic Success
 - 3. Build Relational Capacity
 - 4. Provide Scaffolding
 - 5. Include All Learning Styles
 - 6. Build Movement and Collaboration into Lessons

- 7. Activate Prior Knowledge
- 8. Identify and Develop Talents
- 9. Try New Seating Arrangements

(BONUS) Establish Verbal and Non-Verbal Cues

These programmatic strategies and supports demonstrate the commitment of the district to increase the proficiency of black students and narrow the gap in performance through actions that provide both short-term results and long-term outcomes and sustainability across the district. BTG goal managers collaborate with District leadership to explicitly embed programmatic strategies and supports specific to addressing achievement gaps within the actions for these District initiatives.

Annual Outcome Measures

| Annual Outcome Measures ELA and Math | Baseline (2015-16) | - | Planning Year (2016-17) | | - | | 2018-19 | 2019-20 ³ | 2020-21 |
|--|-------------------------|--------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|
| | Black | 25.7/0 | | (2,533) 24.6% | (2,831) 27.1% | No data in 2019-20. | (2419) | | |
| # and % of black students districtwide | (2,494) 24.2% | Target | 27.4 | 30.6 | 33.8 | 37.0 | 25.6% | | |
| scoring Level 3 or above on state FSA ELA/Reading | Non-Black | Actual | 57.7 | 57.4 | 59.7 | No data in 2019-20. | 57.8 | | |
| | GAP | Actual | 32.0 | 32.8 | 32.6 | No data in 2019-20. | 32.2 | | |
| | Black | - | (2,305) 29.0% | | (2,336) 30.0% | No data in 2019-20. | (2251) | | |
| # and % of black students districtwide | (2,143) 27.9% | Target | 31.1 | 34.3 | 37.5 | 40.7 | 24.9% | | |
| scoring Level 3 or above on FSA Math | Non-Black | Actual | 62.0 | 62.2 | 62.8 | No data in 2019-20. | 56.8 | | |
| | GAP | Actual | 33.0 | 33.0 | 32.8 | No data in 2019-20. | 31.9 | | |

Key Actions and Findings

- Professional learning opportunities were in place to train all teachers in culturally relevant teaching strategies and equity mindset that sets high expectations for all children. The execution of this plan in support of staff has included a robust variety of equity training opportunities offering more than 15 equity focused courses offered through the district. In addition to trainings that were embedded within school-based offerings:
 - 2,704 staff members attended district facilitated equity trainings;
 - 571 employees completed the Equity Champion Micro-credential (series of development opportunities, engagement in coaching and project);

³ State Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) and End-of-Course (EOC) exams were not administered in the 2019-2020 school year as schools statewide were engaged in remote learning from March-June 2020.



- o 93% of current Equity Champions recertified their micro-credential; and
- A majority of schools now have two or more Equity Champions (other than their principal):
 - 55% of elementary schools

67% of high schools

82% of middle schools

- 83% of ESE centers
- During the 2020-2021 school year, black student achievement decreased in reading and in mathematics. Closing the significant achievement gap between black and non-black students continues to be a main focal point of BTG and the work of the district.
- Through the combination of a number of actions and supports (e.g., equitable grading practices, culturally relevant teaching, equity mindset, direct student supports, etc.), the percent of black male middle school students on-track for high school increased from mid-year to the end of the year in the 2020-2021 school year (Second Quarter: 42.3% to Fourth Quarter: 50.4%).
- Investment in the expansion of Reading Recovery is yielding results with the percentage of students above the 40th percentile at Reading Recovery schools has gone from 36% in 2018-19, to 40% in 2019-20 to 49% in 2020-21. Additionally, the professional learning of teachers to support increased literacy outcomes for students at the earliest grade levels demonstrates commitment to ensure students are reading on-grade level by grade three is critical.
- The aim in increasing high-quality Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten programs both within PCS and private providers in targeted communities in Pinellas County is to impact the academic and developmental readiness for kindergarten for black students.
- Initial roll-out of PCS Connects ensured students had access to digital devices and educational applications to extend learning. Continued focus on both in-school and at-home instructional use and benefit will be critical to educational outcomes.
- Utilizing federal COVID funds, the district strategically invested in the development of programming to impact the acceleration of student learning to begin in the 2021-22 school year including: Project 23, Reading Recovery, expansion of Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten, digital educational resources for students and families and tutoring services.

Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Continue to collaborate within and outside of the district on new and innovative strategies to close the achievement gap for black students.
- Continue content-specific and equity-based professional learning opportunities with an increased focus and mechanisms for implementation support at the school and classroom level to ensure strategies are implemented across the district.
- Increase investment in free, full-day Pre-Kindergarten programming to ensure the youngest learners enter kindergarten ready academically and developmentally.
- Enhance financial, programmatic and evaluation support of programs and supports that have direct impact on the proficiency in ELA and mathematics for black students (e.g., Reading Recovery, Project 23, Early Literacy Initiative, PCS Connects/Level Up, School Climate Transformation Grant).
- Develop district and school-based data review protocols for black student performance using the graduation processes as a model.
- Ensure strategies to support black learners are embedded and articulated within all federal COVID funded projects.



Goal 3: Advanced Coursework- Eliminate the gap in advanced or accelerated participation and performance rates for black and non-black students.

Outcome Overview

Goal 3: Advanced Coursework

Action Goal (1.c.): Eliminate the gap between accelerated participation and performance rates for black and nonblack students.

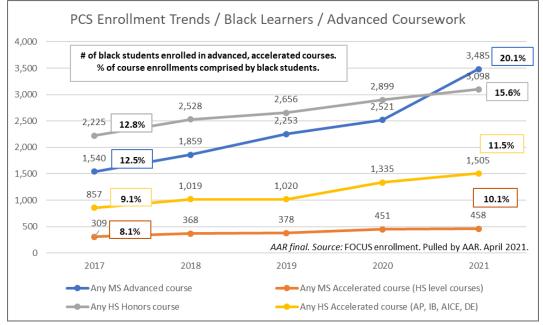
Goal Manager: Judith Vigue, Director, Advanced Studies

Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16): Pinellas County Schools has a participation rate that ranges from 12.8% for black students in high school honors classes to 9.1% in high school accelerated courses. The percentage of black students enrolled in career programs (CAPE) is about 17%. The total gap in enrollment among all advanced and accelerated courses for 2015-16 was 5.9 percentage points.

Short-Range Target: Increase the percentage of black students enrolled in advanced and accelerated courses by an average of 1% each year and increase the percentage of black students earning college credit and industry certifications by .5% each year.

Long-Range Target: Increase the percentage of black students enrolled in advanced and accelerated courses by 1% each year to meet or exceed the percentage enrollment of black students (which was 18% in 2015-16), as well as increase the percentage of black students earning college credit and industry certifications to meet or exceed the district or state average.

The district continues to meet its annual BTG benchmarks for increased enrollment of black students in advanced and accelerated courses. The trends are promising and BTG actions specific to these outcomes demonstrate impact and the efforts of the district to continue and accelerate progress are evident. Since the BTG plan was approved, the district has more than doubled enrollment in advanced coursework for black students. With the long-term goal to ensure that the enrollment of students taking advanced/accelerated coursework mirrors the district's student population by race (18% black students), the district surpassed this target with black students comprising 26% of the enrollment of in advanced/accelerated courses the original target goal by 8 percentage points. The district is committed to continuing to raise the bar of excellence for black students in future years.





Increases in enrollment continue to be seen at the middle and high school level within advanced/honors or accelerated coursework. The district has seen impressive increases and narrowing of enrollment gaps across all types of courses, from middle school advanced classes to Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment. Steps to increase black student participation in advanced coursework include early identification of gifted and talented learners and open access to advanced courses in middle school. Additionally, district tracking systems have improved, including the development of an accelerated course report that has resulted in a more efficient course registration process, including a timeline for master scheduling and embedded checkpoints for accelerated registrations. This includes the district's strategic use of the AVID elective (Advancement Via Individual Determination) to support students who are new to advanced coursework and need additional study and organizational skills

Additionally, the number and percent of black students enrolled in gifted programs increased again in the 2020-2021 school year, though a gap remains. The steady improvement is connected to the district's commitment to universal screening for all students by the end of first grade as well as continued implementation to "Plan B" as an alternative method of identification that considers students with both gifted and talented potential against a matrix that includes multiple criteria and not just a single screening assessment.

| School Year | Enro | fted llment (-8) | Adva Cou | e School anced urse Iment | Acco C | Middle School Accelerated Course Enrollment | | Course High School Honors Course | | Course | Accelo Cou | School erated urse Iment | Middle/High School Advanced and Accelerated Course Enrollment | | |
|-------------|------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------|--|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|---------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 2020-21 | 448 | 6.6% | 3,485 | 20.1% | 458 | 10.1% | 3,098 | 15.6% | 1,505 | 11.5% | 8,546 | 26.0% | | | |
| 2019-20 | 521 | 6.3% | 2,521 | 15.5% | 451 | 9.5% | 2,899 | 15.6% | 1,335 | 10.9% | 5,666 | 15.1% | | | |
| 2016-17 | 281 | 4.0% | 1,540 | 12.5% | 309 | 8.1% | 2,225 | 12.8% | 857 | 9.1% | 3,775 | 11.9% | | | |

While there is continued growth in participation within all categories of advanced/accelerated coursework, there remains continued opportunity to expand access to increase support for successful outcomes. Increased supports for students preparing for advanced and accelerated coursework at all levels. PCS is committed to creating innovative efforts to mitigate future barriers to performance growth.

The district launched pre-Advanced Placement (pre-AP) courses in middle schools. During the 2020-21 school year, offerings included pre-AP World History, pre-AP Geography and pre-AP Art. In launching pre-AP programs in middle schools, they receive an official pre-AP designation for each course and the opportunity to bring engaging, meaningful, foundational coursework to all their students across varying levels of abilities. This designation signals consistent high standards in focused courses that help build, strengthen and reinforce students' content knowledge and critical thinking skills. This exciting addition is just the beginning as the district expanded these offerings in all schools in the 2021-22 school year.

Enrollment in AP courses plateaued during the 2020-21 school year, such offerings as pre-AP will increase the supports for success and the pipeline for Advanced Placement (AP) success in high school. While the consolidated College Board Report from the 2020-21 school year has not been released between 2016 and 2020, black students Pinellas County Schools demonstrated:

- 29.0% increase in the number of students taking AP exams;
- 24.3% increase in the number of AP exams taken; and
- 66.9% increase in the number of AP exams with a qualifying score (3, 4 or 5).

Based on the number of black students not demonstrating success in their advanced/accelerated courses at the end of the 2020-21 school year, increased focus on strategies to support successful completion of courses will be critical in the 2021-22 school year. The district is dedicated to providing equitable access and the corresponding strategies and instructional resources for successful student outcomes.



Even during the pandemic, the district continued to enhance and expand opportunities for black students for collegeand career- readiness including:

- Access to PSAT, SAT and ACT opportunities both in-school and on weekends;
- Districtwide implementation of <u>Naviance</u>, a college- and career- platform that supports students and families in grades 6-12 in reviewing and planning for their future;
- <u>Elevating Excellence</u>, a districtwide initiative to support students and families navigate their post-secondary planning with targeted supports for minority and low-income students;
- Implementation of <u>College and Career Centers</u> at: East Lake, Lakewood, Osceola Fundamental, and Seminole high schools. The centers first opened in 2019 at Boca Ciega, Clearwater, Gibbs, Largo and Pinellas Park high schools. In the 2020-21 school year over 1,000 Black students received services/supports through the College and Career Centers. The district will continue to open new College and Career Centers at all high schools;
- Virtual college and career fairs; and
- College Planning Boot Camp Cohorts where black students engaged in large group presentations, small group discussions, self-guided learning, narrative writing, and college/scholarship research. In 2021, the fourth year of our PCS Program, despite the COVID-10 disruptions to schools and learning, 57 students across 14 schools were served by our program in some capacity of the college planning process.

| Annual Outcome Measures | Baseline (2015/16) | | ning Year)16-17) | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Grades 6-12: # and % of total black students in grades 6-12 enrolled in any middle or high | (3,792) | Actual | (3,775) 11.9% | (4,691) 13.7% | (5,269) 14.5% | (5,666) 15.1% | (8,546) 26% | | | | |
| school advanced or accelerated course. | 12.1% | Target | 13% | 14% | 15% | 16% | 17% | | | | |
| Related Outcome Measures | Baseline (2015/16) | Planning Year (2016-17) | | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | | | | |
| # and % of black middle school students enrolled in an advanced course. | (1,583) 12.6% | | (1,540) 12.5% | | | | (2,253) 14.2% | (2,521) 15.5% | (3,485) 20.1% | | |
| # and % of black middle school students enrolled in an accelerated (high school) course. | (443) 8.9% | (309) 8.1% | | | | | | (368) 8.3% | (378) 8.2% | (451) 9.5% | (458) 10.1% |
| # and % of black high school students enrolled in an honors course. | (2,052) 12.3% | | (2,225) 12.8% | | | | (2,656) 15.3% | (2,899) 15.6% | (3,098) 19.6% | | |
| # and % of black high school students enrolled in an accelerated course (AP, IB, AICE, or Dual Enrollment). | (718) 8.6% | ``` | (857) 9.1% | | (1,020) 9.6% | (1,335) 10.9% | (1,505) 11.5% | | | | |
| # and % of black students in high school enrolled in a career, technical education course (high schools). | (2,503) 14.2% | | (2,459) 13.8% | | • • • | | (2,507) 13.4% | (2,589) 14.0% | (2,448) 13.5% | | |
| # and % of black students enrolled in district choice / application programs / total across the district | (1,167) 6.3% | | (1,235) 6.8% | | | | (4,428) 18.3% | (4,479) 18.4% | (4,362) 18.2% | | |
| % black middle school students earning high school credit through accelerated coursework. ⁴ | (294) 7.6% | (281) 7.5% | | (356) 8.0% | (408) 8.2% | (484) 9% | (482) 10.3% | | | | |
| % of black students in high school completing an industry certification (measured as % of black graduates). | No baseline data established | | actual 31% | 23% | 16% | 15% | TBD | | | | |

Annual Outcome Measures

⁴ Data reviewed for data rules and updated for all years to ensure consistency of reporting. Previous year reports can be accessed www.pcsb.org/btg.



Key Actions and Findings

- The trends are promising and BTG actions specific to these outcomes demonstrate impact and the commitment of the district to continue and accelerate progress are evident. District must maintain concentrated monitoring of student enrollments in advanced and accelerated courses as it has contributed to greater awareness among teachers and counselors of students who show potential to be successful in these courses but are not yet enrolled. The district has made great strides in developing tracking mechanisms (reports, dashboards) to chart enrollment in advanced studies and gifted programs.
- Teacher retention is a current issue of the Advanced Placement department as evident by a staff consisting of 184 new teachers out of 300 (61%) beginning the 2021-2022 school year. Teacher turnover in the AP department is due to retirement or resignations to work in other school districts. The advanced placement department is aware and equipped to provide instructional staff with systems of support.
- The district has invested increasing outcomes for gifted/talented learners in many ways. Increasing microcredentialing is one of the strategies as it is a way to enhance knowledge and implementation of strategies and supports across the district. The district is also in year 3 of a 5-year national, competitively awarded Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program grant. The goals and implementation in this work supports cluster grouping in grades 3-5, revamping the talent development program, and creating a gifted and talented summer camp (Camp Invention). Camp Invention had 859 students participate in summer 2021 with Black students accounting for 5% of the total enrollment of this in-person summer opportunity. As a joint effort between the ESOL and Gifted departments, the focus for recruitment in 2021 was not for Black students and is an opportunity for growth in upcoming summers.
- The district's Elevating Excellence, College and Career Centers and College Planning Boot Camps have been wellreceived in providing black students and their families a personalized path to post-secondary enrollment and success.

Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Enhance efforts to engage black students and families in the district choice programs. Efforts should include strategies for increased participation and reduction of any barriers identified for enrollment or academic success.
- Continued long-standing investment in on-campus, open-access testing for all students in taking the PSAT, SAT, and ACT.
- Continue and enhance systems to ensure access for enrollment of eligible black students into advanced courses. Specific development and communication with school counselors and assistant principals who oversee the master schedule must be prioritized and monitored in order for continued positive trends in enrollment.
- Invest in and continue to grow programs such as talent development, AVID and pre-AP to encourage and support black students with lower GPAs and/or test scores to take and succeed in advanced courses starting in elementary school.
- Increase focus on strategies and resources to support successful completion of advanced/accelerated courses for black students.
- Provide iterative, job-embedded training and support for new and under-performing AP teachers.
- Increase communication with families of black learners regarding student performance, scheduling and resources to support increased performance and outcomes, starting in elementary school.



Goal 4: Student Discipline- Reduce the total number of disciplinary infractions (referrals) and suspensions for black and decrease the disparity in referrals and suspensions for black students to reach a level that is representative of the black student population.

Outcome Overview

Goal 4: Student Discipline

Action Goal (1.d.): Reduce the disparity in the rates of disciplinary infractions between black and non-black students.

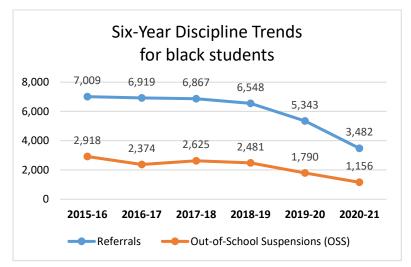
Goal Manager: Area Superintendents

Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16): Pinellas County Schools has reduced its number of referrals (a decrease of 30.3%) and out-of-school suspensions (a decrease of 56.7%) for black students significantly since 2013-14, though the district has not reduced the disparity gap, as the number and percentage of referrals and suspensions for non-black students has decreased at a similar rate. The gap has remained somewhat constant. The gap is represented by a "risk ratio" and that number is 2.38 for referrals and 4.33 for suspensions, which means that black students are two times more likely to receive a referral and four times more likely to receive a suspension.

Short-Range Target: Reduce the risk ratio for out of school suspensions by 0.33 each year.

Long-Range Target: Reduce the number of referrals and suspensions for black students and reduce the risk ratio for black students for referrals and suspensions until it reaches the target ratio of 1.0 within 10 years.

Since the 2015-16 school year, the district has significantly reduced the number of suspensions for black students and the number of black students being suspended. During the 2020-21 school year PCS continued to see decreases in both the numbers of black students receiving a referral and out-of-school suspension (OSS), though the disciplinary disparity rate for black students remains (risk ratio of 4.80 in the 2020-2021 school year). It is important to note that due to COVID-19 impacts, the discipline data in 2019-20 and the 2020-21 represent data anomalies as not all students were inperson for the entirety of either school year. Further review of data throughout the 2021-22 school year will be important to determine a new baseline for comparisons and progress. In addition to reduction of suspensions, student arrests continue to decrease⁵. Pinellas County Schools Police works collaboratively with all school leaders and local law enforcement agencies to ensure a school administrators address issues of discipline, not law enforcement.



Source: FOCUS discipline records (AAR data pull September 2021).

Note: See footnotes 8 and 9 for data clarifications for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.

⁵ See Appendix D- Arrests by Offense



Throughout the 2020-21 school year, the district worked to bridge the knowledge and implementation gap between Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) and Restorative Practices as a Tier I strategies for black students. PBIS implementation with fidelity will serve black students and the district enhanced efforts to ensure every school-based leadership team (SBLT) received ongoing professional learning and supports. Every school identified an administrator (assistant principal) to lead the PBIS planning, implementation and monitoring throughout the school year. The PBIS leads the SBLT in proactive, equitable practices for a welcoming and inclusive learning environment wherein routines and expectations are known, taught and supported by the entire school community. All schools engaged in the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Instrument- Restorative Practices version during the 2020-21 school year to self-assess, monitor and track schoolwide progress. In December 2020, 49 schools were awarded Model School Status by the Florida PBIS Project (24 Gold, 5 Silver and 20 Bronze). The number of schools awarded this status has more than doubled over the last three years and the district anticipates increases again when awarded in December 2021.

The implementation of restorative practices focused on preventative measures and culture/climate building. During the 2020-21 school year, the district ensured that all schools received updated training with 100% of school administrators receiving training in the use of restorative circles, restorative conferences and related best practices during the first semester to ensure strong implementation across schools. In addition to districtwide efforts, 20 schools engaged in an intensified restorative practice training cycle. School leaders and restorative practice leads engaged in a 6-week *Theory into Practice Training* focused on equity and restorative practices. The program was developed with over 30 schools applying to be part of the program. Twenty schools were selected and received targeted support from district equity team and MTSS staff. The schools engaged in coaching days with the <u>International Institute for Restorative Practices</u> (IIRP), principals of the schools participated in Putting Theory into Practice Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and twenty restorative practices-licensed trainers participated in the IIRP restorative justice training.

The district continues to increase strategies to decrease gaps, monitor implementation and pinpoint opportunities for growth. During the 2020-21 school year, an investment to build the capacity of stakeholders in equity training for leaders and teachers continued. As part of measure of quality implementation of all strategies through the MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) process, area superintendents play a critical role. Dedicated time to development and review of data and strategy implementation occurred with principals during the monthly Area meetings. The efforts of both PBIS, restorative practices and equity mindset are demonstrating positive impact on school climate as evidenced by fewer referrals and suspensions for both black and non-black students. The district will continue efforts to increase high-quality implementation of restorative practices and PBIS in every school.

As discussed in Goal 2, during the 2020-2021 school year, implementation of the <u>School Climate Transformation Grant</u> (SCTG) with intensive supports at five (5) pilot middle schools and universal supports for all middle schools. The project is designed to reduce disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes for students of color by enhancing and expanding systems of support for (and technical assistance to) schools implementing a multi-tiered system of support. The pilot schools engaged in the full coaching cycle of Teacher Learning Center which offered a safe space for educators to collaborate, reflect, and engage with inquiry-based strategies to help students access rigorous curriculum, develop critical thinking skills and see the link between what they learn at school and the meaningfulness in their lives.

Additionally, in concert with the SCTG, a district-level team consisting of members from different divisions engaged came together to develop a framework and process for addressing root causes of discipline disparities in Pinellas County Schools. The framework, still in process of being finalized, utilizes research-based and evidenced-based and technical assistance resources including: 1) *Addressing the Root Causes of Disparities in School Discipline* sourced from National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments and 2) The Educator's Action Planning Guide designed by American Institutes of Research under a U.S. Department of Education contract. The district team expanded the toolkit by incorporating equity-centered problem-solving into the process. This equity-centered problem-solving protocol is currently in use as a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) practice and was developed by PCS district equity leaders based on the work of education psychologist, Dr. Markeda Newell, drawing on information from the *Culturally Responsive Problem-Solving Guide: An Evidence-Based Guide for Team Practice*.



The root cause analysis process is a systematic investigation of the contributing factors or foundational ("root") causes of an identified problem to deepen the understanding of stakeholders as to why it is occurring to increase effective solutions. The protocols examine the school ecology in three focus areas: beliefs, conditions for learning, and policies/practices in an effort to dismantle existing barriers to equity and fairness in discipline practices. The protocols are deliberately connected to existing practices in professional development/capacity building, academic/behavior supports, and school improvement.

The district's strategies for reducing discipline disparity gaps continue to be increased through the monitoring of school discipline data by race, training with a focus on implementation and school-based support/coaching specific to both PBIS and restorative practices. The district is also continually researching and implementing innovative measures to improve Black student experiences and outcomes in Pinellas County Schools (PCS) while deepening implementation of research-and evidence-based strategies and practices.

Annual Outcome Measures

| Annual Outcome Measures | Baseline (2015-16) | Planning Year (2016-17) | | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 ⁶ | 2020-21 ⁷ |
|--|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Dissipling Disperity Data (Dick Datio | 2.38 | Actual | 2.64 | 2.43 | 2.60 | 2.64 | 2.66 |
| Discipline Disparity Rate / Risk Ratio (referrals) / black students | 2.30 | Target | 2.30 | 2.20 | 2.10 | 2.00 | 1.90 |
| Discipline Disparity Rate / Risk Ratio (OSS) | 4.22 | Actual | 4.07 | 3.61 | 3.79 | 4.34 | 4.80 |
| / black students | 4.33 | Target | 4.00 | 3.70 | 3.40 | 3.00 | 2.70 |
| Related Outcomes Measures | Baseline (2015-16) | | ng Year 6-17) | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
| # and % of black students with an office disciplinary referral (See Appendix B- Referrals by Reason) | (7,009) 35.7% of all referrals | Actual | (6,919) 38.0% | (6,867) 37.6% | (6,548) 38.3% | (5,343) 38.5% | (3,482) 38.9% |
| # and % of black students with an out-of- school suspension (OSS) (See Appendix C- Out-of-School Suspensions by Offense) | (2,918) 49.5% of all OSS | Actual | (2,374) 48.5% | (2,625) 47.2% | (2,481) 47.6% | (1,790) 50.7% | (1,156) 53.4% |

Key Actions and Findings

- The district has reduced the number of suspensions for black students and the number of black students being suspended. During the 2020-21 school year PCS continued to see decreases in both the numbers of black students receiving a referral and out-of-school suspension (OSS), though the disciplinary disparity rate for black students remains.
- The district has made significant investment in building staff capacity through PBIS and restorative practice, however, consistent implementation at the school level is not yet systemic. Based on the 2020-21 Stakeholder Survey responses, parents also report varying levels of knowledge regarding restorative practices and equity. This suggests the need for deepening implementation at the school and classroom level in order to ensure the foundational knowledge and learning is put into practice with regard to PBIS and restorative practices frameworks.
- Utilizing federal COVID funds, the district strategically invested in the development of an equity office to support the implementation and coaching support for discipline disparities beginning in the 2021-22 school year.

⁷ Data in the 2020-21 school year is impacted by enrollment shifts which occurred in Learning Options (in-person, MyPCS Online and Pinellas Virtual School) throughout the school year.



⁶ In the 2019-20 school year, all instruction went remote for the final quarter of the school year due to COVID-19.

• Given the impacts on student attendance/enrollment for in-person learning due to COVID-19, discipline data from the 2021-22 will be critical to reviewing implementation and effectiveness of current strategies on student outcomes.

Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Continue investment in building staff capacity as it relates to equitable discipline practices, while enhancing focus and support/coaching at the school and classroom implementation. District mindsets in combatting bias that leads to exclusionary discipline practices are shifting, though changes to practices specific to restorative solutions are not yet fully infused into district systems.
- Continue to refine district discipline policies and the Code of Student Conduct to integrate culturally responsive and restorative practices within existing frameworks.
- Continue collaborative structures and training related to law enforcement agencies to ensure student discipline continues to be handled by school administrators, not law enforcement officials.
- Leverage learnings from the School Climate Transformation Grant and the root cause analysis framework to develop districtwide protocols and best-practices related to discipline so they can be systemically scaled and aligned with PBIS and restorative practices expectations.
- Ensure strategies to support decreasing discipline disparities for black learners are embedded and articulated within federal COVID funded projects for equity.
- Engage minority vendors with expertise in working with Black youth who display disruptive behaviors.



Goal 5: ESE Identification- Reduce the disparity of black students being found eligible for Exceptional Student Education (ESE).

Outcome Overview

Goal 5: ESE Identification

Action Goal (1.e.): Reduce the disparity of black students being found eligible for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs.

Goal Manager: Lynne Mowatt, Executive Director, Exceptional Student Education

Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16): Pinellas County Schools percentage of overall placements for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) is 14%. However, disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories exist; specifically, the number of black students identified for placement (25%) is not representative of the black student population at PCS and remains disparate from the number of non-black students identified. The disproportionality of black and non- black students is represented by risk ratios. The disproportionate representation is largely found within the Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) designation. The risk ratio for overall placement in ESE in the 2015-16 school year was 1.45, which means that black students were nearly one- and one-half times as likely to be identified as an ESE student than non-black students. The risk ratio for EBD eligibility in 2015-16 school year was 4.20, which means that black students were four times more likely to be referred for EBD services than non-black students.

Short-Range Target: Reduce the risk ratio for EBD placement by one quarter (0.25) each year.

Long-Range Target: Reduce the risk ratio each year with a target disparity rate at or near 1.0 within 10 years.

The ESE Department aspires to reduce the disparity of black students found eligible for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) with a district-wide approach. The district has made steady progress in reducing the risk ratio for black students for both ESE eligibility and EBD designation. The risk ratio ESE for black students has decreased from 1.45 in the baseline year of 2015-16 to 1.43 as of 2019-20. The risk ratio EBD for black students has dropped steadily and reached 3.50 as of 2019-20, from 4.20 in the baseline year of 2015-16. The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) issues the risk ratios each year for school districts. While this data is usually available each summer, as of the issuance of this report FDOE has not issued data for the 2020-2021 school year.

The district has maintained the strategies and actions that have yielded positive results including:

- Records review process by the district ESE Department for any new PCS transfer student with an EBD eligibility. Students receive current IEP services during the time they are being re-evaluated.
- District provided Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) Behavior Specialists to provide intensive support to students with a focus in schools with a high-minority population.
- Intensive and intentional early intervening services, using direct resources, to students prior to being identified as having an Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD).
- Targeted and sustainable professional development to school-based behavior specialists who include studentspecific data and interventions within behavior intervention plans. District behavior specialists provide side-byside coaching support for school-based staff.
- District ESE Behavior Specialists to provide support to ESE students in all schools.
- Full implementation of programming where EBD students are served in the school closest to their home.
- Early student interventions to change behavior patterns prior to referral for ESE services.

In addition to changes in systemic practices, staff knowledge and capacity building has also been key to sustained change in practices. The ESE department has enhanced professional learning opportunities for administrators, general education instructional staff and ESE instructional staff regarding responding to challenging behaviors and how to support students and provide/teach pro-active strategies to address behaviors in the classroom/school community.



Offerings open to all staff include:

- Managing Behavior in the School Community
- Preventing Challenging Behaviors through De-escalation Skills
- Teacher's Encyclopedia of Behavior Management
- Mindful Support of Students with Challenging Behavior
- PDA PBS: Understanding Student Behavior
- Functional Behavior Assessment Facilitator Training for Student Services
- Creating a Safe Classroom to Reduce Bullying Behaviors for all students with and without disabilities
- Trauma-informed behavior approach
- Culturally Responsive PBIS

Investment in professional learning to further build the capacity of staff was a key focus of the ESE department. The department employees a collaborative coaching and continuum of support with schools to model the expectations for working with students. As an effort to support the whole child, Trauma Informed Approach training was provided for all behavior specialists to respond to the wide range of social emotional needs of students.

The district has invested in professional learning and certifications of staff to serve all students effectively. The ESE department has also continued to make investments in district behavior specialists to ensure all have completed or are working toward earning Board Certification for Behavior Analysis (BCBA or BCaBA). This level of certification denotes a nationally recognized level of expertise to support student behavior. This systemic commitment will impact the training and support at all schools over time. Another example is the Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) training. The Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT[®]) is a nationally recognized paraprofessional certification in behavior analysis. RBTs assist in areas such as delivering direct behavior-analytic services, aiding in implementing behavior plans which are developed by the BCBA or BCaBA, and collecting data. During the 2020-2021 school year, 162 PCS staff have completed Registered Behavior Technicians were added for the 2021-2022 school year.

In spring of the 2020-21 school year, the district developed and piloted a functional analysis referral system specifically align with the trauma informed approaches at Calvin Hunsinger and Richard L. Sanders schools through choice grants. The referral system pilot utilized Practical Functional Assessment (PFA) and Skills-Based Treatment (SBT) model for intensive behavioral intervention and enhancing the choice model of PFA/SBT for students with EBD. Based on initial implementation the district will work in consultation with Dr. Gregory Hanley, the creator of PFA/SBT, during the 2021-22 school year to refine and expand.

Annual Outcome Measures

| Annual Outcome Measures | Baseline (2015-16) | Plannir (2010 | ng Year 5-17) | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 ⁸ |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| Risk Ratio (ESE overall) / black | | Actual | 1.45 | 1.46 | 1.40 | 1.43 | TBD |
| RISK RALIO (ESE OVERAIL) / DIACK | 1.45 | Target | 1.45 | 1.40 | 1.35 | 1.30 | 1.25 |
| Disk Datio (EDD) / black | 4.20 | Actual | 3.94 | 3.84 | 3.34 | 3.50 | TBD |
| Risk Ratio (EBD) / black | 4.20 | Target | 3.95 | 3.70 | 3.45 | 3.20 | 2.95 |

⁸ Annual Outcome Measure data for Goal 5 has not been released by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) at the time of this report. Once issued by FDOE, this report will be updated to reflect official risk ratios.



| Related Outcomes Measures | Baseline (2015-16) | Planning Year (2016-17) | | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| # and % of black students eligible for ESE services | (3,618) 25% | Actual | (3,371) 25% | (3,947) 23% | (3,945) 25% | (4,033) 25% | (4,000) 26% |
| # and % of black students eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification / Total | (427) 49% | Actual | (335) 49% | (363) 48% | (300) 46% | (255) 46% | (219) 47% |
| # and % of black students found eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification / Identified in Pinellas | (20) 47% | Actual | (14) 50% | (14) 52% | (19) 29% | (5) 29% | (5) 24% |
| # and % of black students found eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification / Transfers Into County | (24) 42% | Actual | (17) 30% | (13) 39% | (9) 35% | (7) 23% | (3) 33% |

Key Actions and Findings

- District ESE protocols regarding record reviews and supports for eligibility have become systemic practices within the district.
- The district has invested in research- and evidence- based approaches to behavior training for the adults who support students.
- The ESE department has provided a full array of professional development sessions for school-based staff to understand the newly developed guidelines and procedures for EBD, to introduce expansion of effective response-to-intervention (Rtl) strategies, and to discuss cultural components to be considered with positive behavior intervention plans and functional behavior assessments.

Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- While it is anticipated that the data trends for ESE risk ratios will continue to decrease, review and updating action plans based on data must occur.
- Continue all systemic practices in place related to record review, eligibility support and professional learning regarding ESE eligibility and student behavior.
- Continue investment in nationally certified credentialling of behavior specialists and registered behavior technicians.
- Continue the pilot implementation of Practical Functional Assessment (PFA) and Skills-Based Treatment (SBT) model and review initial findings for areas for expansion with consultation from Dr. Gregory Hanley, the creator of PFA/SBT during the 21-22 school year.
- Ensure strategies to support decreasing ESE disparities include explicit actions for black learners within federal COVID funded projects for ESE students.



Goal 6: Minority Hiring- Increase the number of black teachers and administrators to closely mirror the student enrollment by ethnicity.

Outcome Overview

Goal 6: Minority Hiring

Action Goal (4.17) Increase the number of black teachers and administrators to closely mirror the student enrollment by ethnicity.

Goal Manager: Paula Texel, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources Services

Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16): Pinellas County Schools employs nearly 7,500 teachers, of which approximately 8% are black. The percentage breakdown of administrators in the district is about 22% black. The district enrollment of black students in 2015-16 was 18%.

Short-Range Target: Increase the number of black teachers hired by an average of 1% each year.

Long-Range Target: Increase the number of black teachers by 1% each year, with a target of meeting or exceeding the enrollment of the black student population.

The district has seen steady increases in the number of teachers who are black, with the number and percentage of black teachers hired increasing slightly in 2020-21. The gap for Goal 6 is defined as the percentage of black teachers in comparison to the district's black student population of 18%. The district employed 674 black teachers at the end of 2020-21, which is 9.5% of the district's total teaching staff. The district has increased the percentage of black teachers from 8.3% (622) in 2015-16 to 9.5% (674) in 2020-21.

The district has demonstrated commitment to BTG Goal 6 through intentional practices through the human resource department. The goal to increase the diversity of faculty to mirror that of the student population has increased significantly since the onset of the program. As of August 2021, 139 advanced contracts (19% of all advanced contracts) were with Black candidates who will serve in various capacities during the 2021-2022 school year.

The district continues to employ a Manager of Talent Acquisition and additional hiring specialists to focus on minority hiring and filling critical shortage areas. The team has taken critical steps to support recruitment and retention of minority candidates including:

- Building strong relationships with current minority candidates in keeping the candidate pool engaged.
- Reducing the hiring manager's time by recommending the most qualified candidates for an interview and facilitating recommendations for hire.
- Rebranding PCS marketing materials to reflect the diversity of the Pinellas County community.
- Providing frequent check-ins with first year teachers in support of improved retention.
- Conducting weekly reviews of black applicants via Search Soft software. Continuing to reach out, provide guidance on certification, etc.

Strategies to diversify the instructional landscape of the district has been extensively executed over the 2020-2021 school year. In efforts to increase the number of black teachers to closely mirror student enrollment, hiring campaigns were initiated. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) recruitment campaigns within and outside of the state of Florida, attendance at minority Greek organizations at prominently white colleges, and a robust social media campaign are examples of the actions towards meeting Goal 6.

The district also became the only district in the state of Florida to initiate a Call Me MiSTER program. The program began at Clemson University in 2004 to create a pool of black male elementary teachers to serve in lower-performing schools. The Pinellas Call Me MiSTER program will serve both USF and Pinellas County Schools as USF will provide a direct pipeline for black male students admitted to the College of Education. Graduates will be offered an advance contract to



work in Pinellas County Schools. Call Me MiSTER provides mentorship, academic support and professional development. Participants will gain teaching and content expertise while also gaining professional experiences and career advancement. The Pinellas County cohort will also engage in the National Summer Leadership Institute with other Call Me MiSTER programs from across the nation. The first cohort of Call Me MiSTER began in fall 2021. Candidates will be placed in our Transformation Zone schools which serve high number and percent of Black students for all observation and internship hours. USF is continuing to explore additional financial scholarships for the program. Call Me MiSTER has the potential to make a significant impact the hiring and retention of black male teachers in the district.

The <u>Pinellas Alliance of Black School Educators (PABSE)</u> has significantly expanded their membership and support to retaining black educators who are new or early in their career. Membership in PABSE increased from 40 members in 2018-19 to 122 members in 2020-21. During the 2020-21 school year, PABSE:

- Held monthly general and executive board meetings have been scheduled;
- Matched 14 new mentee teachers with veteran mentors;
- Brought in guest speakers such as Licensed Mental Health Counselor and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker to discuss the topics of self-care for educators and organizational psychology.

The focus of the PABSE mentorship is around key issues relevant to individuals outside of the day-to-day ins and outs of being an educator. It is projected that the PABSE will continue to flourish and be a key strategy for retaining black educators in the coming years of the BTG.

| Annual Outcome Measures | Baseline (2015/16) | | Planning Year (2016-17) | | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---|-----------------------|--------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| # and % of total instructional positions / black | (622) | Actual | (647) 8.8% | (671) 9.2% | (651) 9.1% | (665) 9.2% | (674) 9.5% |
| | 8.3% | Target | 9% | 10% | 11% | 12% | 13% |
| Related Outcomes Measures | Baseline (2015/16) | | ng Year 6-17) | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
| # and % of new instructional hires / black | No baseline | Actual | 11.7% | (110 / 737) 14.9% | (88/664) 13.3% | (43/450) 9.6% | (56/452) 12.4% |
| # and % of total administrative positions (combined district-based and school-based) | (83) 21.2% | Actual | (86) 21.5% | (87) 22.0% | (91) 20.6% | (85) 20.3% | (79) 19.3% |

Annual Outcome Measures

Key Actions and Findings

- The Human Resources department has been innovative in its approaches to recruit talented black educators to Pinellas County Schools. The use of social media (including LinkedIn), updating of recruitment website and updated marketing materials support the strategy to increase recruitment of black educators.
- During the 2020-21 school year, the district engaged with partners for innovative approaches to recruitment and retention. The Call Me MiSTER program and collaboration with PASBE are promising practices for long-term, sustained impact for the district.
- Efforts for recruitment at HBCUs, even during the pandemic, will continue and be enhanced in years to come.

Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Continue to collect perception data from staff, possibly through additional focus groups, as another method of identifying strategies for a more diverse district workforce. Include analysis and strategic use of feedback from veteran, new, and exiting teachers as an important method for identifying meaningful patterns regarding recruitment and retention and influencing responsive practices.
- Increase the number of Black candidates through the practice of advanced contracts so commitment is made by both the district and potential educators.
- Explore the development of an educator referral program to increase the number of Black candidates.



- Focus efforts on improving retention rates for black educators. The district must effectively communicate with and garner feedback from both new and veteran teachers to ensure they are properly onboarded and trained to ensure long-term retention.
- Develop additional pipeline opportunities including expanding internal internship opportunities like the Summer Career Acceleration Program for current PCS students to see themselves as teachers in the district.



Appendix A- Graduation Data: Withdrawal Codes/Concordant Scores

| Standard Diplomas by Withdrawal (WD) Code | Pass | 2014-15 | | 2015-16 | | 2016-17 | | 2017-18 | | 2018-19 | | 2019-20 | |
|--|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| Standard Diplomas by Withdrawai (WD) Code | Race | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Standard Diploma with no concordant / comparative score: W06 | | | 82.2% | 4,759 | 77.6% | 4,126 | 65.1% | 3,968 | 59.4% | 3,599 | 53.5% | 3,659 | 53.9% |
| Standard Diploma via a concordant / comparative score (such as | Standard Diploma via a concordant / comparative score (such as ACT, SAT exam): WFT | | 10.5% | 632 | 10.3% | 1,352 | 21.3% | 1,722 | 25.8% | 2,004 | 29.8% | 1,652 | 24.3% |
| Concordant/Comparative Score: black / non-black | Black | 152 | 23.6% | 242 | 38.3% | 371 | 27.4% | 448 | 26.0% | 471 | 23.5% | 434 | 26.3% |
| | Non-Black | 491 | 76.4% | 390 | 61.7% | 981 | 72.6% | 1,274 | 74.0% | 1,533 | 76.5% | 1,218 | 73.7% |

Source: FOCUS and FDOE reports



2020-21

Referral Reasons by Level

Source: FOCUS; AAR Pull August 2021

| Elementary | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 02 - Strike/Student | 280 | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 235 | | | | |
| 07 - Defiance/Insubordination | 248 | | | | |
| 05 - Fight/Minor | 224 | | | | |
| 03 - Strike/Adult | 136 | | | | |

| K-8 Schools | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 31 | | | | |
| 14 - Bus Misconduct | 33 | | | | |
| 09 - Repeated Misconduct | 29 | | | | |
| 05 - Fight/Minor | 29 | | | | |
| 07 - Defiance/Insubordination | 21 | | | | |

| ESE Centers | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 03 - Strike/Adult | 116 | | | | |
| 02 - Strike/Student | 115 | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 91 | | | | |
| 06 - Leaving Campus | 74 | | | | |
| 09 - Repeated Misconduct | 45 | | | | |

| Middle School | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 1030 | | | | |
| 07 - Defiance/Insubordination | 752 | | | | |
| 05 - Fight/Minor | 587 | | | | |
| 10 - Skipping Class | 514 | | | | |
| 14 - Bus Misconduct | 426 | | | | |

| High School | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 10 - Skipping Class | 855 | | | | |
| 21 - Excessive Tardy | 300 | | | | |
| 07 - Defiance/Insubordination | 482 | | | | |
| 22 - Not Cooperating | 301 | | | | |
| 06 - Leaving Campus | 172 | | | | |



Appendix C- Out-of-School Suspensions by Offense

2020-21

OSS Discipline Reason by Level

Source: FOCUS; AAR Pull August 2021

| Elementary | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 05 - Fight/Minor | 49 | | | | |
| 02 - Strike/Student | 36 | | | | |
| 03 - Strike/Adult | 36 | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 28 | | | | |
| 09 - Repeated Misconduct | 28 | | | | |

| K-8 Schools | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | | |
| 05 - Fight/Minor | 23 | | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 13 | | | | | |
| 09 - Repeated Misconduct | 11 | | | | | |
| 11 - Tobacco - SESIR | 2 | | | | | |
| 35 - Threat/Intimidation - SESIR | 5 | | | | | |

| ESE Centers | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 03 - Strike/Adult | 15 | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 6 | | | | |
| 35 - Threat/Intimidation - SESIR | 7 | | | | |
| 02 - Strike/Student | 5 | | | | |
| 03S - Battery - SESIR | 5 | | | | |

| Middle School | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 05 - Fight/Minor | 288 | | | | |
| 02 - Strike/Student | 80 | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 79 | | | | |
| 05S - Fight/Major - SESIR | 76 | | | | |
| 04 - Drug Use - SESIR | 35 | | | | |

| High School | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Description/Code | Number of referrals (Black Students) | | | | |
| 05 - Fight/Minor | 109 | | | | |
| 04 - Drug Use - SESIR | 64 | | | | |
| 11 - Tobacco - SESIR | 5 | | | | |
| 16 - Class / Campus Disruption | 46 | | | | |
| 07 - Defiance/Insubordination | 29 | | | | |



Appendix D- Arrests by Offense

| RACE/GENDER | BATTERY | Disorderly Conduct | DRUGS | MISC | School Disruption | THEFT | THREAT | VOP | WEAPON | TOTALS |
|-----------------|---------|-----------------------|-------|------|----------------------|-------|--------|-----|--------|--------|
| Asian/Male | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Black/Male | 29 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 11 | 2 | 69 |
| Hispanic/Male | 5 | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 8 |
| White/Male | 6 | 1 | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 15 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black/Female | 14 | 10 | | | 3 | | | | 2 | 29 |
| Hispanic/Female | | 2 | | | | | | | | 2 |
| U/Female | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| White/Female | 2 | 1 | 2 | | | | 1 | | | 6 |
| Total | 56 | 25 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 11 | 6 | 129 |

2020 - 2021 Report by Race/Gender/Category

Source: Pinellas County Schools Police Data- July 2021

