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Sage Educational Consultants, LLC

Preliminary Findings Report - South Orange Maplewood
School District

August 2015

See full report for detailed information

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South Orange Maplewood School District Mission:

- To prepare each and every student, regardless of demographic or socioeconomic background, for postsecondary educational success, and to educate all students to be responsible and productive members of the global society at large and especially:
- caring, collaborative and ethical people
- critical thinkers and problem solvers
- effective writers and speakers
- thoughtful consumers and producers of media
- lifelong learners

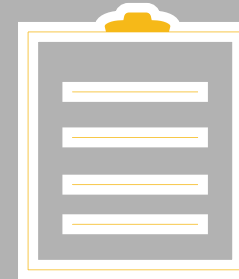


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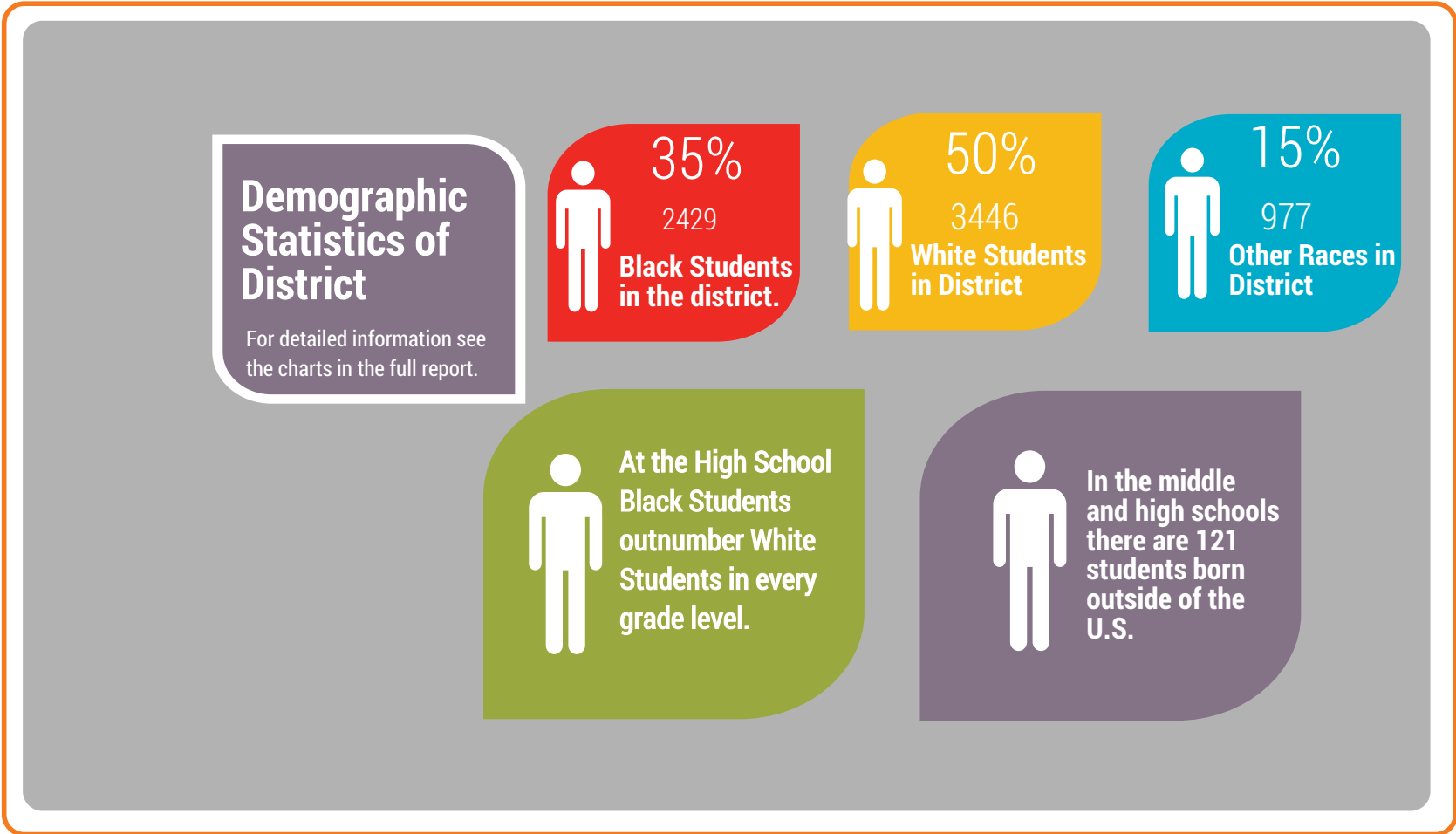
Data Collection Process - March through June

- School visits to South Orange Middle School, Maplewood Middle School and Columbia High School.
- Meetings with Administration of Each Building and Central Office Staff.
- Meetings and surveys of staff from each of the schools.
- Two Public Community Forums.
- Data is was collected from school based administration and district personnel.
- All data was compiled manually



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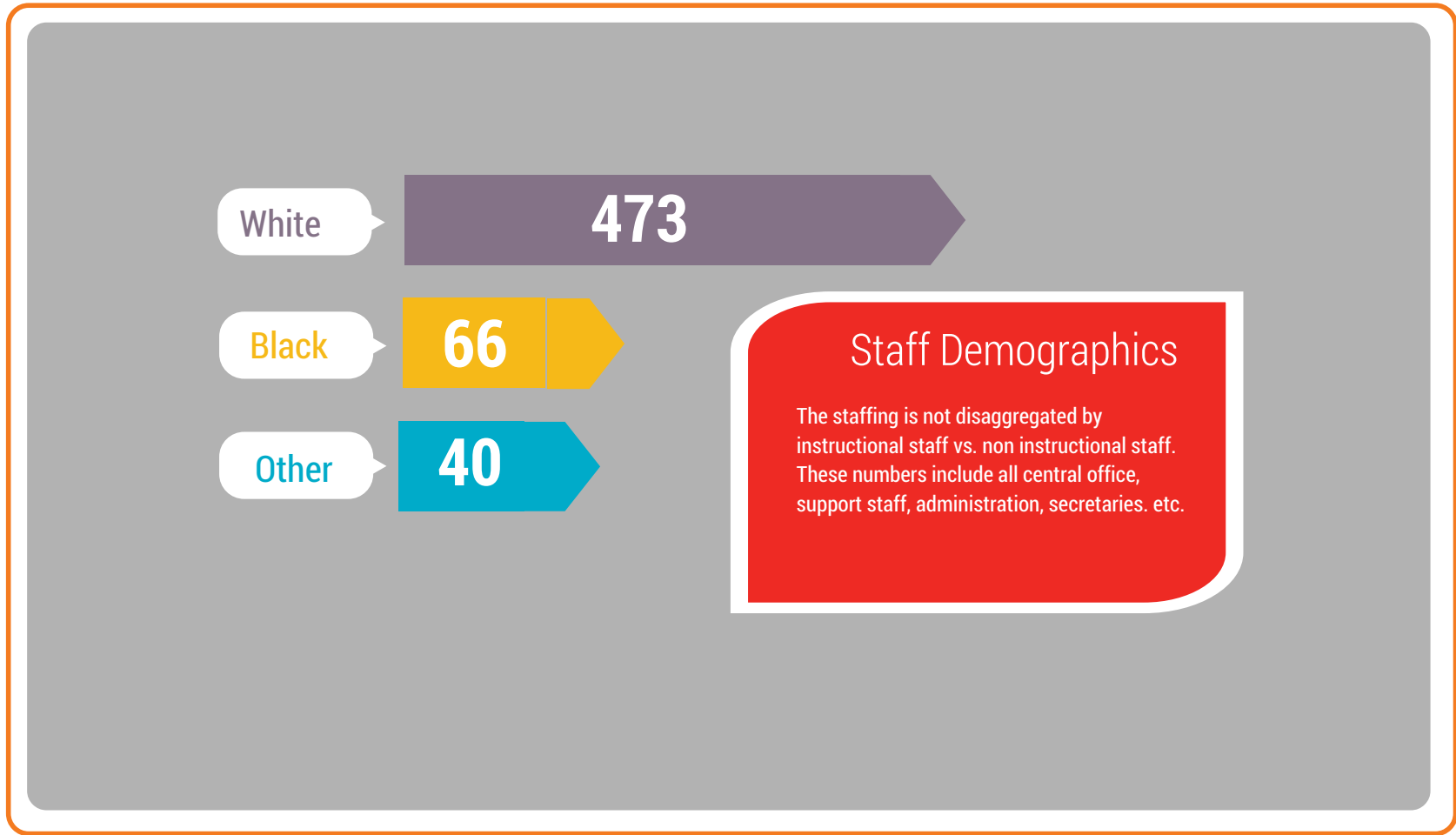
Finding One:

The instructional staff does not mirror the racial makeup of the schools.



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Finding Two:

There is a clear disparity of placement by race in higher level classes in Math and Language Arts beginning at the Middle School.



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Maplewood Middle-College Prep Math

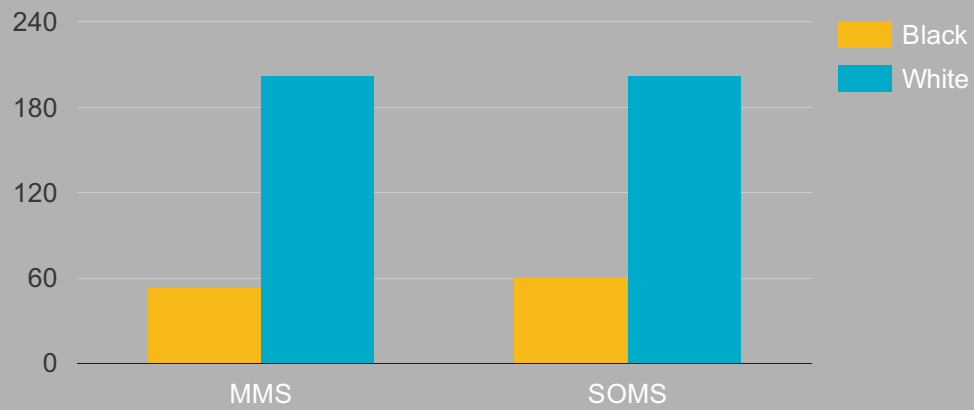
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South Orange Middle-College Prep-Math

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Honors Math-All Grades

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"Grade 6 to 7- Grade 7 students are placed in Acceleration, Honors, or College Preparatory mathematics. Grade 7 to 8 -Grade 8 students are placed in Acceleration, Advanced Honors Algebra, Honors Grade 8 Math, or College Preparatory Math" (pg. 1 of 17)

Snapshot of Board Policy

Although the placement does not explicitly state that middle school students are placed in "levels" the practice of level placement is evident.

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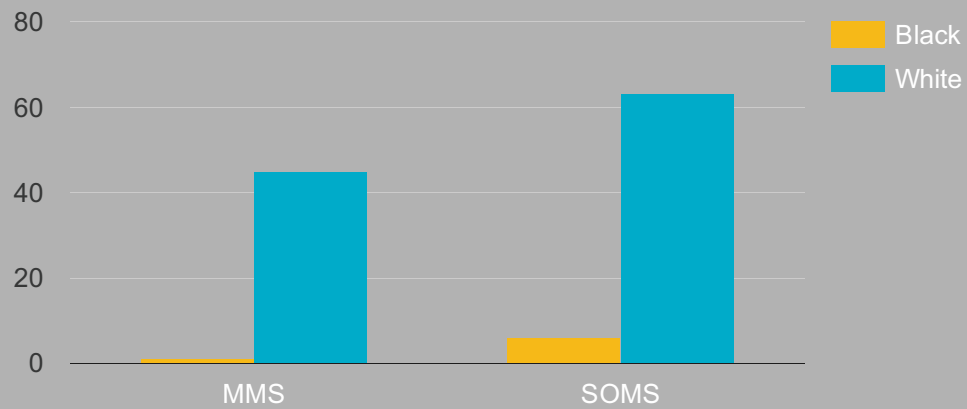
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LEVELS	COURSE LEVEL DEFINITION	NUMERIC SYSTEM
Level 6	An "advanced placement level" designed for students who are doing college level work in a particular subject area	6000
Level 5	An "advanced honors level" designed for students with exceptional academic ability in a particular subject area	5000
Level 4	An "honors level"	4000
Level 3	An academic "College preparatory" level	3000
Level 2	An academic "general" level for students who are in need of additional skill development	2000

Course Level Definitions

The course level definitions describe what was formally defined as levels.

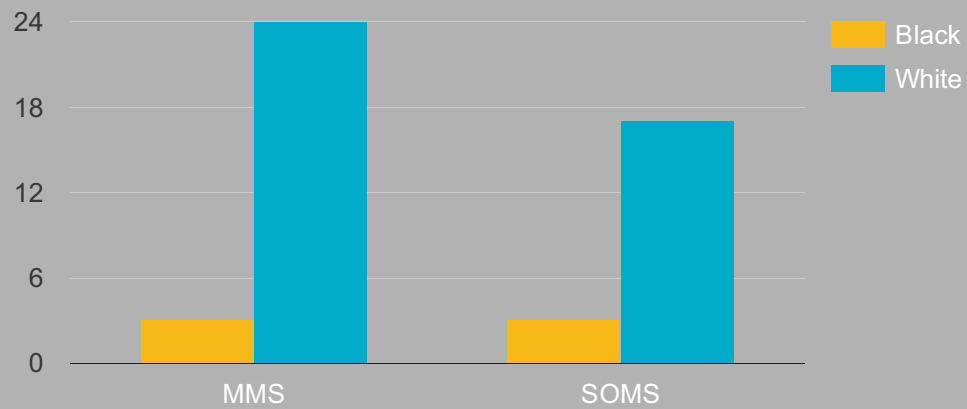
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7th Grade Math - (Advanced Honors) = 7th grade students taking 8th grade Math.

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8th Grade Math - Advanced Honors = 8th grade students taking 9th grade Math

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- Students are given an opportunity to attend a summer program that will allow them to move up a level upon successful completion
- Curriculum department made changes to criteria which allowed more students to move up in 7th and 8th grade
- Fifty-seven students total moved up as a result of the new criteria; 19 were Black students

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Key Takeaways



It is clear that there is a distinct tracking of students being in the 6th grade.



The middle school numbers support the findings by the OCR at the high school level.



The findings show that it makes it very difficult for a black student to move to honors level courses.



The new criteria for movement in one step, in the right direction for increasing "access"

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Total Amount of Students Taking Core Subject AP Courses(unduplicated count):



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2014-2015 High School Course Makeup

College Prep	black	white
Algebra	84	34
Algebra 2/Trig	43	5
Algebra 2	54	29
Calculus	1	2
English I	108	26
English II	112	33
English III	115	17
English Essentials	72	4
Geometry	36	18
Precalculus	11	8
Biology	114	29
Chemistry	78	27
Environmental Sci	2	0
Physics	3	1
US 1	84	17
US 2	55	5
World History 2	124	31
total	1096	286

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2014-2015 High School Course Makeup

Honors	Black	white
Algebra	60	106
Algebra 2	51	88
Calculus	2	20
Precalculus	38	62
Precal Functions	1	2
Topics in Cal	3	4
English I Honors	93	184
English II Honors	72	218
English III Honors	89	127
Geometry Honors	49	46
Biology	97	213
Chemistry Adv	6	44
Chemistry HN	53	82
Physics Honors	59	86
US 1 Honors	107	86
US 2 Honors	150	110
World Hist. 2 Honors	93	211
Adv. Topics in math	4	24
Cal. III	2	16
Alg. 2 Adv.	1	45
Alg. Adv. 9	2	37
Precal adv	13	25
Geom adv	6	39
Linear Alg.	1	3
Precal 10	2	26
Total	1054	1904

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2014-2015 High School Course Makeup

Advanced placement		
Calculus AB	21	40
Calculus BC	8	31
Statistics	7	32
English Lang Comp	14	52
Engl Lit	11	31
Biology	9	30
Chemistry	12	17
Environmental Sci	9	29
Physics	5	16
Europ. History	9	25
US History 1	25	84
US History 2	25	69
Gov Politics/Comparative	5	9
Gov. Politics -US	10	30
total	170	495

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Key Takeaways



College Prep Course are overwhelmingly made up of black students.



There appears to be within school segregation. It is possible that a white student or black student could (in their core classes) not see a student of another race.



It is possible that a white student in a college prep course - may be **the** only white student within a class.

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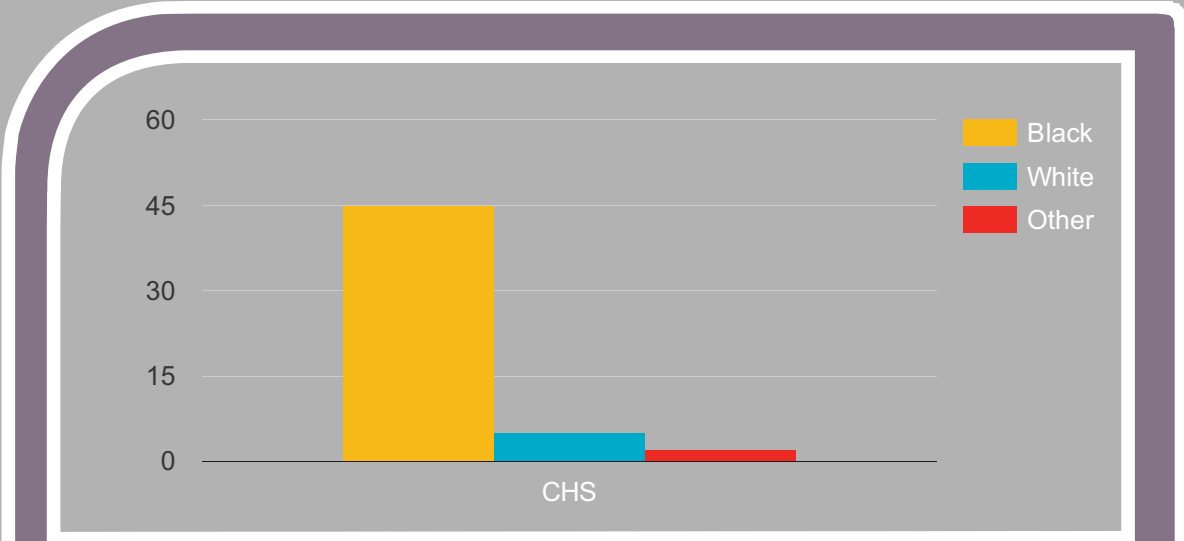
Finding Three:

The discipline data supports the ACLU findings that black students are suspended at a higher rate than white students at the High School.



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High School Suspension Data: 52 students account for 73 incidents of suspension. They represent a small % of the HS however most were students of color.

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Discipline Referral Data:

Referrals are generated via a triplicate form and then submitted electronically by the discipline secretary.

The Administrative team at the High School has begun to look at restorative practices for the upcoming school year

This makes it difficult to observe the referral data for trends; i.e. teachers making frequent referrals, male/female, special education referrals, types of referrals

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Areas with Incomplete or Lacking Data

Post Secondary Information -
Where do students go to
college (i.e. 2 year, 4 year or
trade school) ?



Data is not readily available at the
school level. This makes it difficult
to make instructional/programmatic
decisions.



Suspension data is very
limited. Received no data
from the middle schools.
There was no data
regarding teacher referrals
to discipline.

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Finding Four:

The limited use of data and the accessibility of the data makes it difficult to make programmatic or instructional decisions.



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Data and information

All data was provided by Central Office. It was very difficult to get data at the school level. The school administration routinely gets their data or information from Central Office Staff.

This causes a delay in being able to make instructional and programmatic decisions because Central Office staff provides data for all schools



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Recommendations - Part One:

- Establish a data team (at a minimum) at the Middle & High Schools.
- Develop School Manuals/handbooks that clearly delineate how to access higher level courses.
- Increase the Recruitment and Retention Efforts for Instructional Staff Members of Color.



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Recommendations - Part Two:

- Establish informational workshops for parents about Honors and AP - multiple times a year in different community location i.e.- Dehart Center, Churches, Baird Center, YMCA.
- Timely communication with parents and the community regarding program changes/ opportunities to access advanced placement
- Offer students the opportunity to sample Honor and AP classes (summer pre-ap academy, course sampling during the school year)
- Transition programs for rising 5th graders/rising 8th graders



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Recommendations - Part Three:

- Train Instructional Staff (professional development) in the Following Areas:
- Culturally Responsive Teaching
- Differentiated Instruction
- Infusing Technology into Instruction
- Data driven instruction /Overall use of data to support instructional and programmatic decisions



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Recommendations - Part Four:

- Development of a district wide action plan for schools at elementary, middle and high school level to address instructional practices that will address all students at all levels
- Administrative walkthrough schedule to establish trends and areas that need to be addressed in professional development
- Regular data meetings and reports to staff



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