



## Recent History of Equity Work in APS

Presented by: Rico Munn, Superintendent

Date: October 6, 2020

# Presentation Purpose

- Why is this topic on the board agenda?
  - This presentation is on the board agenda to provide background and history on APS' previous and current equity work.
- What are we asking the board to do with this information?
  - There is no action required. This presentation is provided to the Board for context.
- How is this linked to the Strategic Plan, Vision, Mission, Goals & Core Beliefs?
  - As one of its Core Beliefs, APS 2020 indicates that “All students must have equitable access to learning opportunities, technology and environments that support them in reaching their full potential.”
  - Overall APS 2020 is focused on getting all students to reach common outcomes, while the supports needed to reach those common outcomes may be different.
- Which Board policy does your presentation address?
  - AD--Educational Philosophy/School District Mission

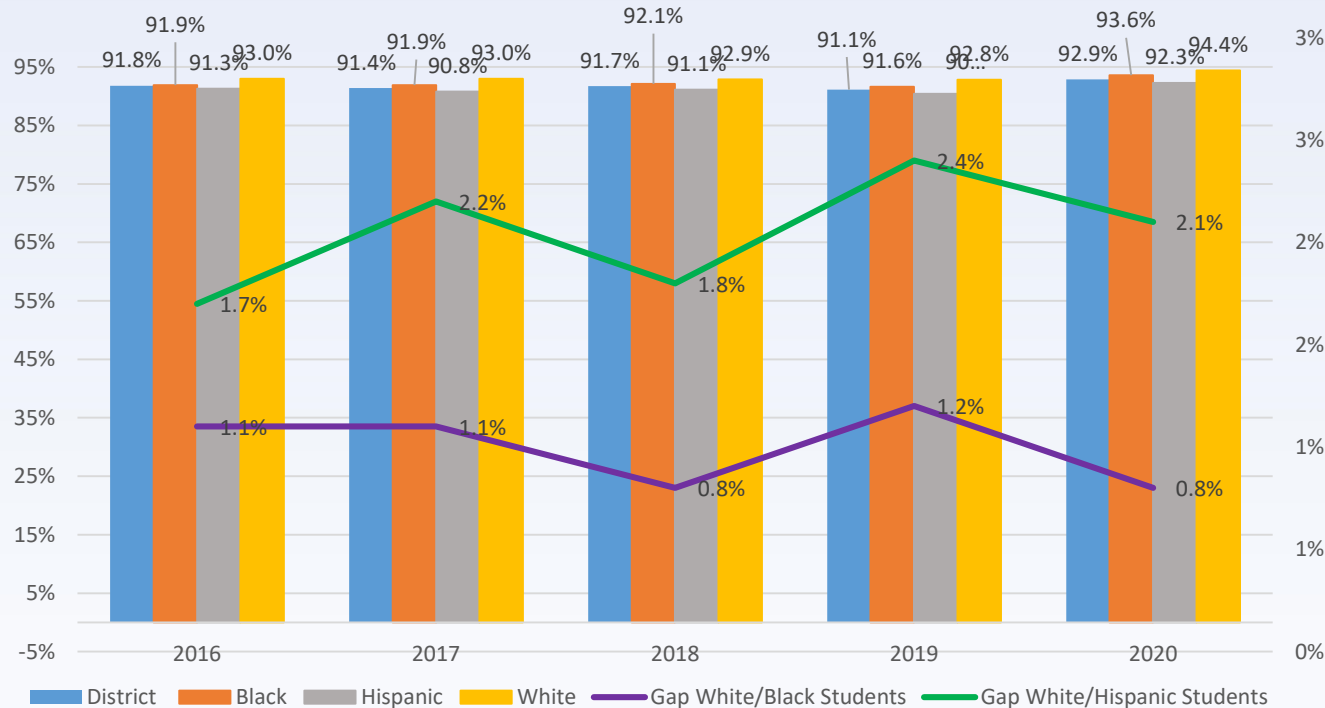


# Equity in Student Outcomes



# Attendance

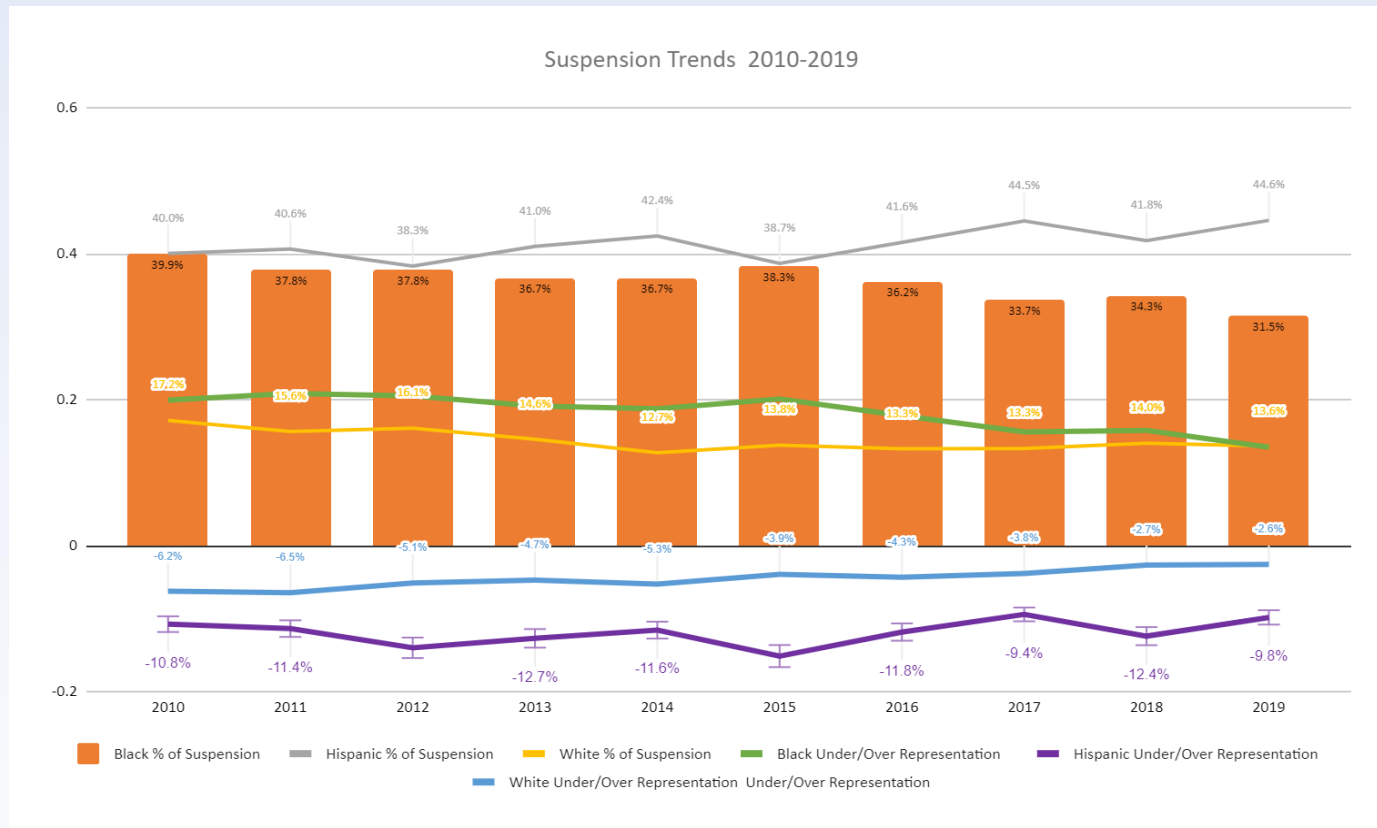
Average Daily Attendance Trends 2016-2020



- The Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for 2016 to 2020 increased slightly for all groups: District (+1.1 percentage points (ppts.)), Black (+1.7 ppts), Hispanic (+1 ppts), and White (+1.4 ppts).
- The gap between White and Black students decreased slightly by 0.3 percentage points and increased slightly between White and Hispanic students by 0.4 percentage points between 2016-20.



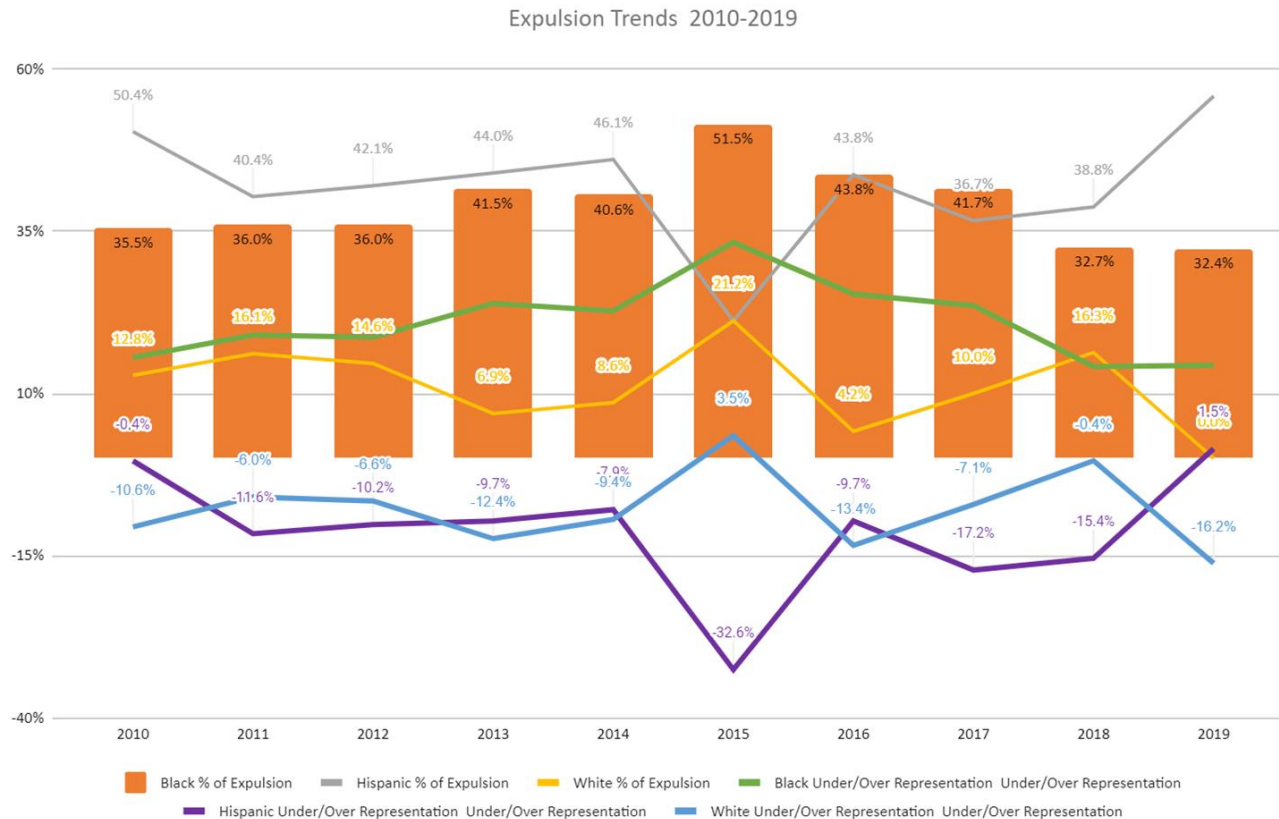
# Discipline: Suspension



- Between 2010 and 2019, the percentage of suspensions for Black students decreased by 8.4 pts., increased for Hispanic students by 4.6 pts., and decreased for White students by 3.6 pts.
- Under/Over reports look at the difference between the percentages a group of students comprises of an attribute (in this case, suspensions) and their percentage of the overall population. The percentage of total students represented by these groups decreased for Black (2 pts.) and White (7.2 pts.) students, while increasing for Hispanic (3.6 pts.) students. The under/over representation for Black students decreased 6.4 pts., increased 1 pts. for Hispanic students, and increased 3.6 pts. for White students.



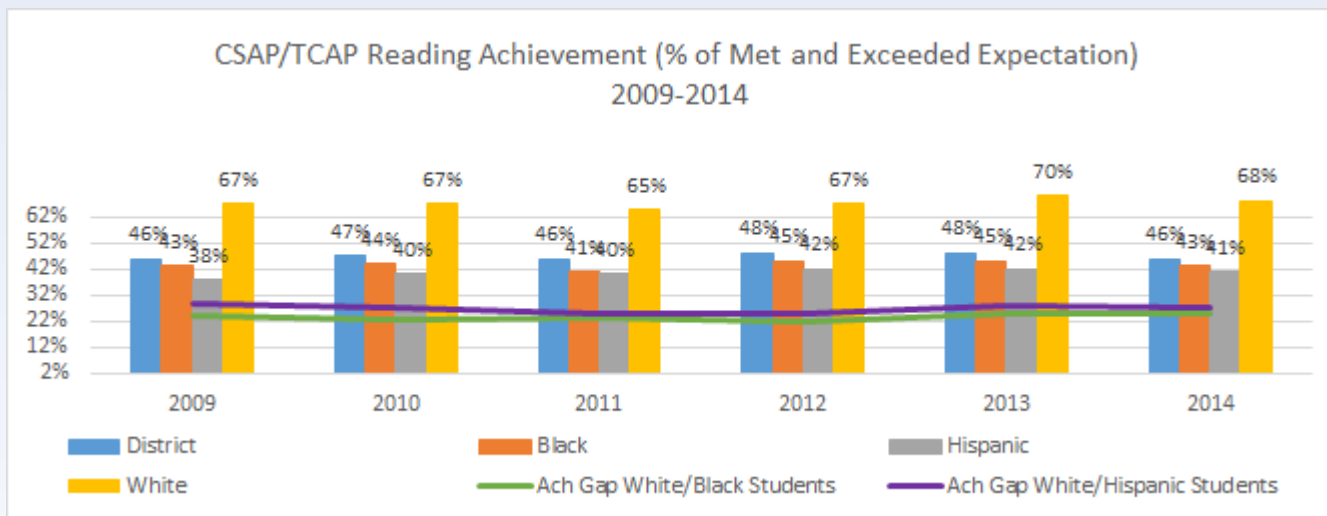
# Discipline: Expulsions



- Between 2010-2019, the percentage of suspensions for Black students decreased by 3.1 ppts., increased for Hispanic students by 5.5 ppts., and decreased for White students by 12.8 ppts..
- The percentage of total students represented by these groups decreased for Black (2 ppts.) and White (7.2 ppts.) students, while increasing for Hispanic (3.6 ppts.) students. The under/over representation for Black students decreased 1.1 ppts. and increased 5.6 ppts. for White students. For Hispanic students, the under/over representation dropped to -32.6% in 2015, but showed an increase of 1.9 ppts. from 2010 to 2019.



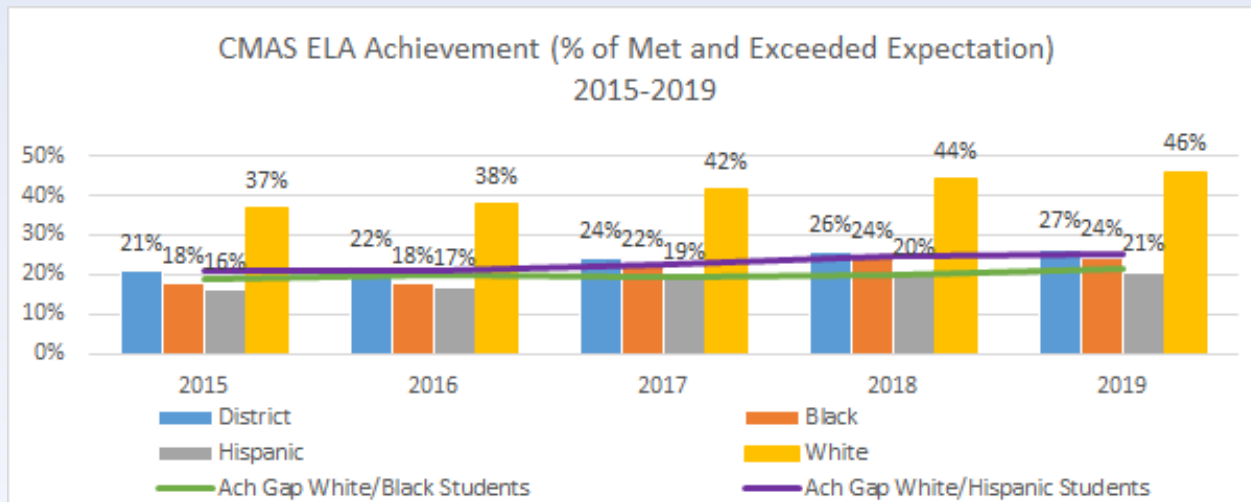
# Achievement: Grades 3-8, ELA



- Prior to the adoption of the CMAS assessment, the state of Colorado administered the CSAP and TCAP assessments (2009 – 2014).
- From 2009 to 2014, the performance of APS as a district and many of the subgroups was largely flat.
- Over that time, the achievement gap between Black and White students grew slightly (1.0 ppts.), while the gap between Hispanic and White students began to close (2.0 ppts.).



# Achievement: Grades 3-8, ELA



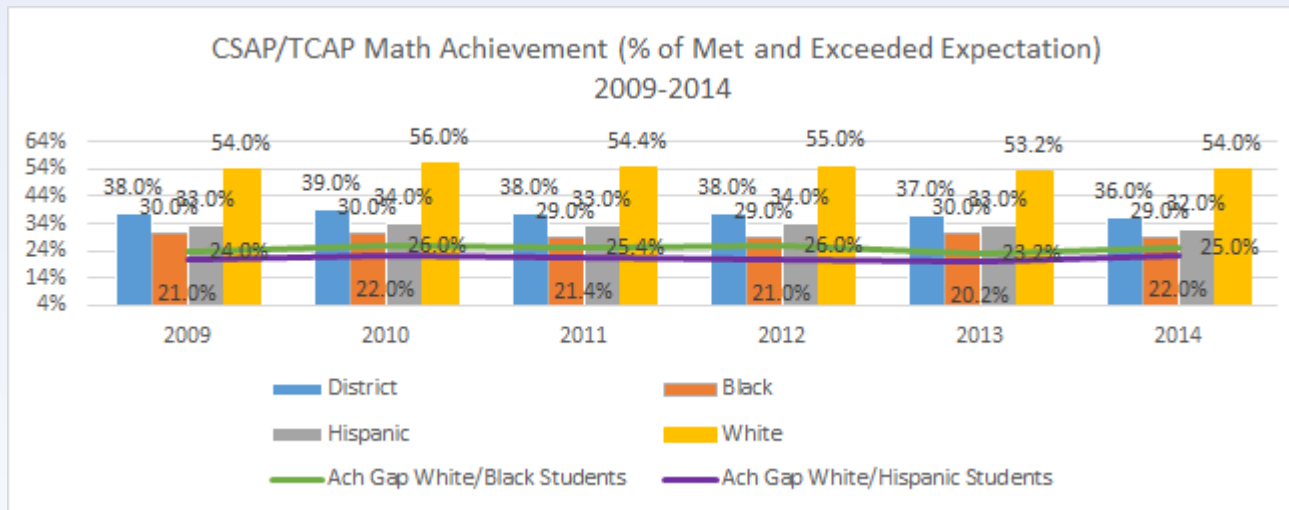
- The state of Colorado has administered the CMAS/ELA Assessment since 2015. Over that time, APS has increased the students in the Met and Exceeded categories (also known as “at-level”) by 5.5 ppts.
- Over that same time, Black students (+6.4ppts.), Hispanic students (+4.7 ppts.), and White students (+9.1 ppts.) also improved their proficiency; however, the achievement gap has increased between White students and Black students (+2.7 ppts.) and Hispanic students (+4.4 ppts.). The State gaps also grew and were comparatively higher than APS’ gaps.

APS		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ach Gap White/Black Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	19	20	20	20	22
Ach Gap White/Hispanic Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	21	21	23	25	25
State		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ach Gap White/Black Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	N/A	25.0	25.2	25.5	26.7
Ach Gap White/Hispanic Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	N/A	25.8	26.2	26.3	27.3





# Achievement: Grades 3-8, Math

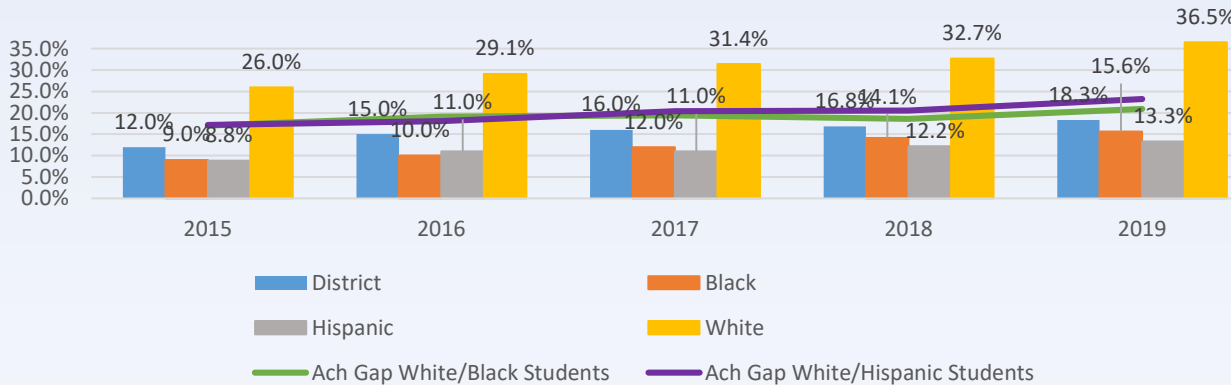


- From 2009 to 2014, the CSAP/TCAP Math performance of APS students and many of the subgroups has also remained flat.
- The achievement gap grew slightly between Black and White students (1.0 pts.) and Hispanic and White students (1.0 pts.).



# Achievement: Grades 3-8, Math

CMAS-Math Achievement (% of Met and Exceeded Expectation)  
2015-2019

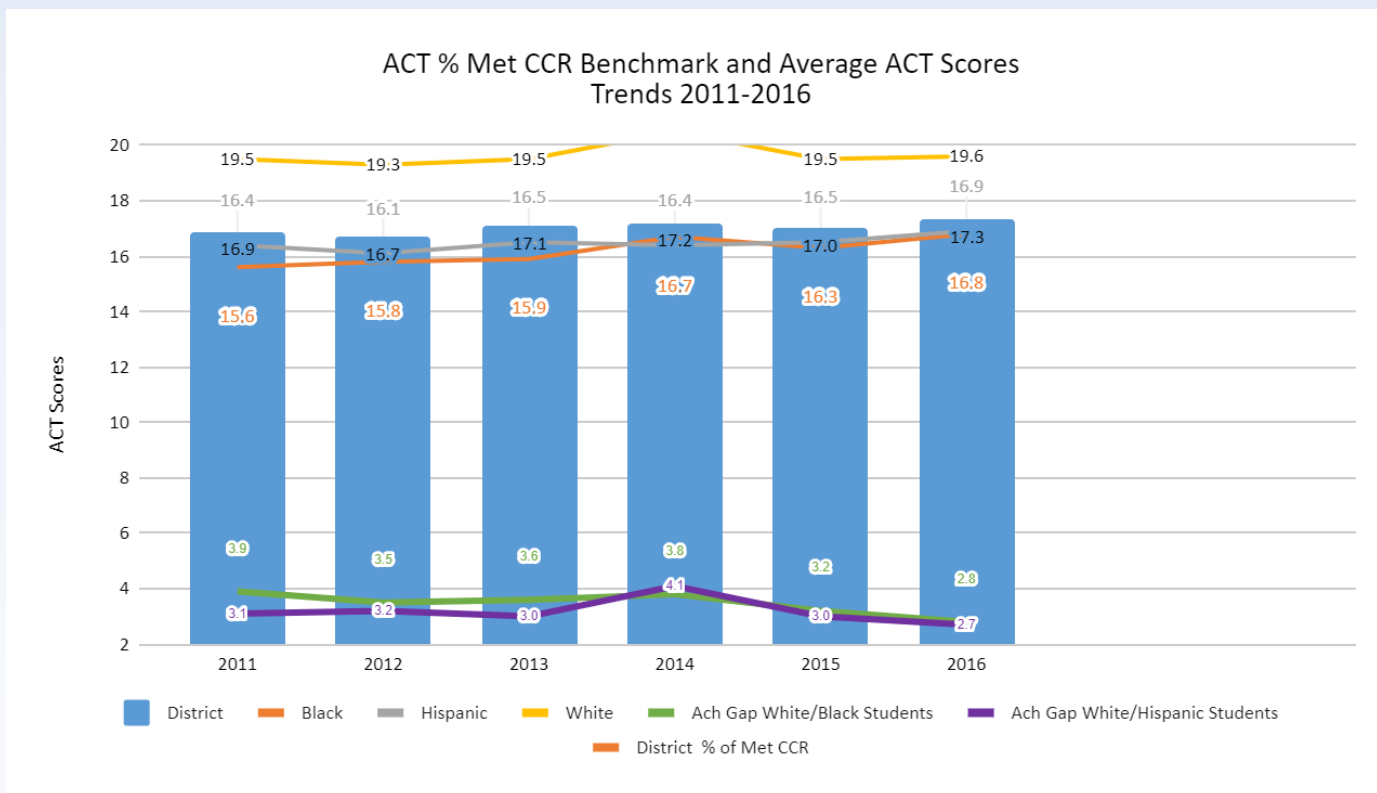


- The state of Colorado also has administered the CMAS/Math Assessment since 2015. Over that time, APS has increased the students in the Met and Exceeded categories (also known as “at-level”) by 6.3 ppts.. Over that same time, Black students (+6.6 ppts.), Hispanic students (+4.5 ppts.), and White students (+10.5 ppts.) also improved their proficiency; however, the achievement gap has increased between White students and Black students (+3.9 ppts.) and Hispanic students (+6.0 ppts.). The State gaps fluctuated over time and were comparatively higher than APS' gaps.

APS		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Achievement Gap White/Black Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	17	19.1	19.4	18.6	20.9
Ach Gap White/Hispanic Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	17.2	18.1	20.4	20.5	23.2
State		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ach Gap White/Black Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	25.8	25.9	27.1	26.9	25.8
Ach Gap White/Hispanic Students	Percentage Point Difference between Met or Exceeded	24.7	24.6	25.8	25.9	24.7



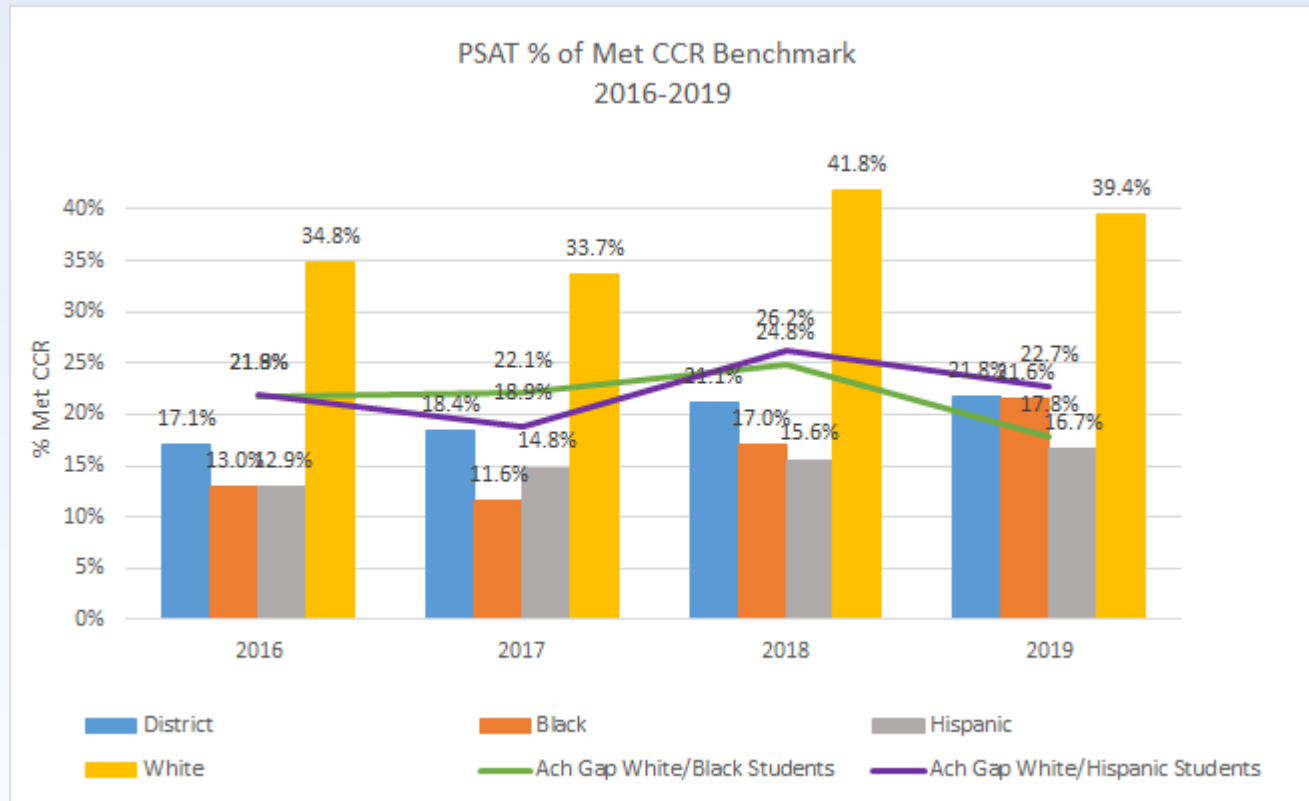
# Achievement: High School ACT



- Between 2011 and 2016, APS administered the ACT assessment.
- The average composite scores during that time remained relatively flat for all groups: District (+0.4 pts.), Black (+1.2 pts.), Hispanic (+0.5 pts.), and White (+0.1 pts.).
- The achievement gap decreased slightly for White and Black students by 1.1 pts. and decreased even less for White and Hispanic students by 0.4 pts.



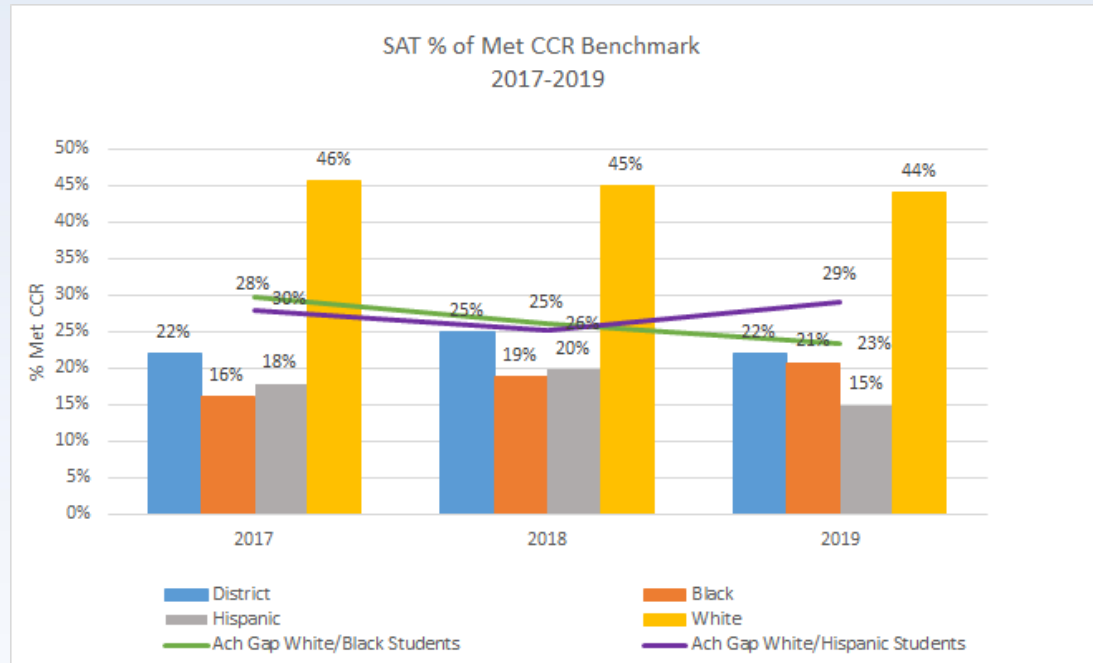
# Achievement: High School PSAT



- The trends for the percentage of students who met the College and Career Ready (CCR) score of the PSAT have steadily increased for all groups between 2016 and 2019: District (+4.7 pts.), Black (+8.6 pts.), Hispanic (+3.8 pts.), and White (+4.6 pts.).
- While the achievement gap for White and Black students decreased 4 pts. during that time, it increased slightly for White and Hispanic students (+0.8 pts.).
- State gap data is not available for comparison.



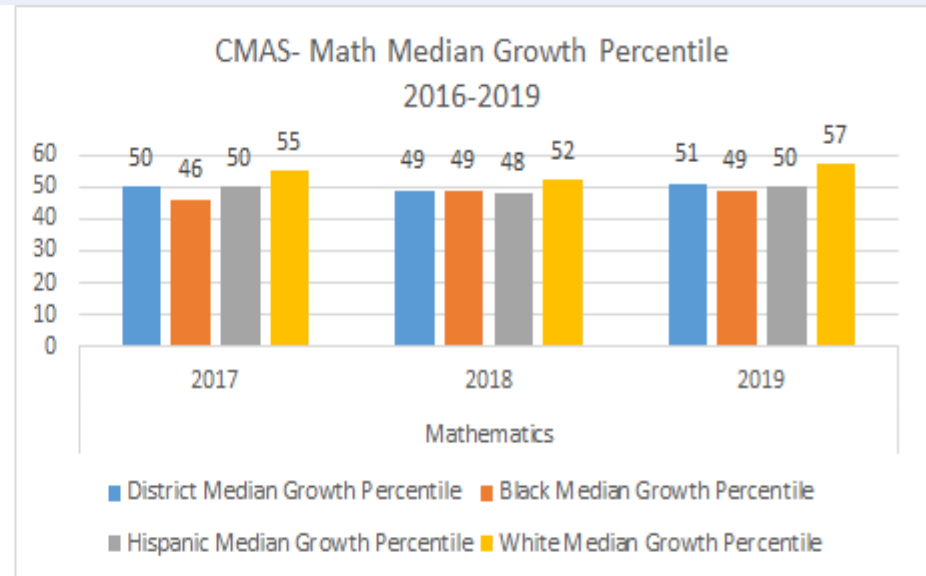
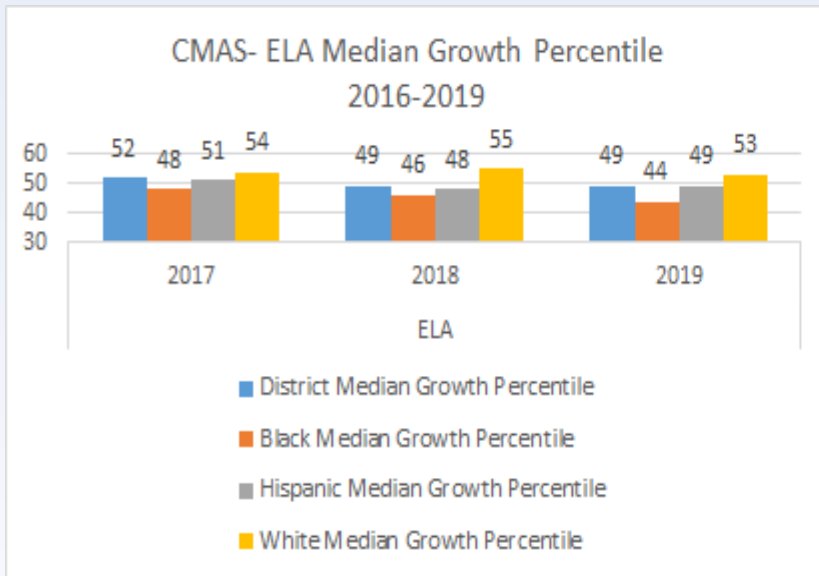
# Achievement: High School SAT



- APS has been administering the SAT since 2017.
- The trends for the percentage of students who Met the CCR score of the SAT from 2017 to 2019 have increased 3 pts. and then dropped 3 pts. for the District.
- The percentages steadily increased for Black students (+5 pts.), increased 2 pts. and then decreased 5 pts. for Hispanic students, and declined (2 pts.) for White students.
- While the achievement gap for White and Black students decreased 7 pts. during that time, it decreased 3 pts. and then increased 4 pts. for White and Hispanic students.
- State gap data is not available for comparison.



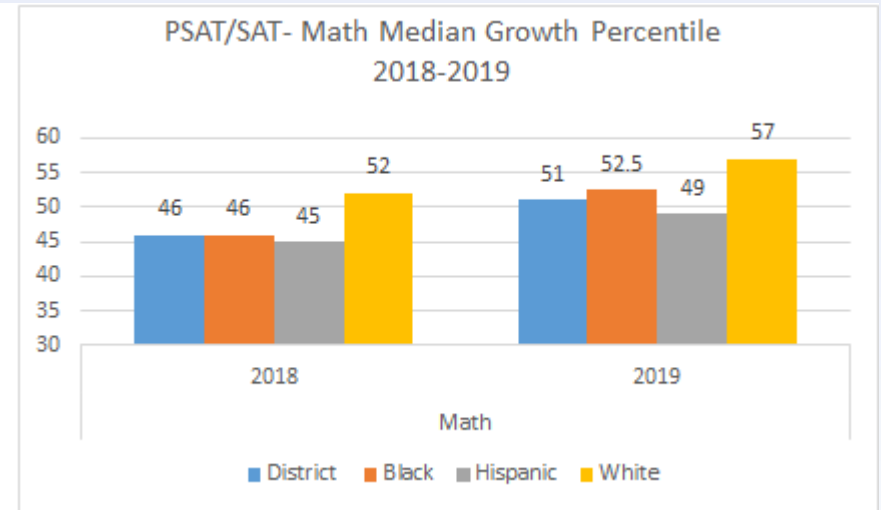
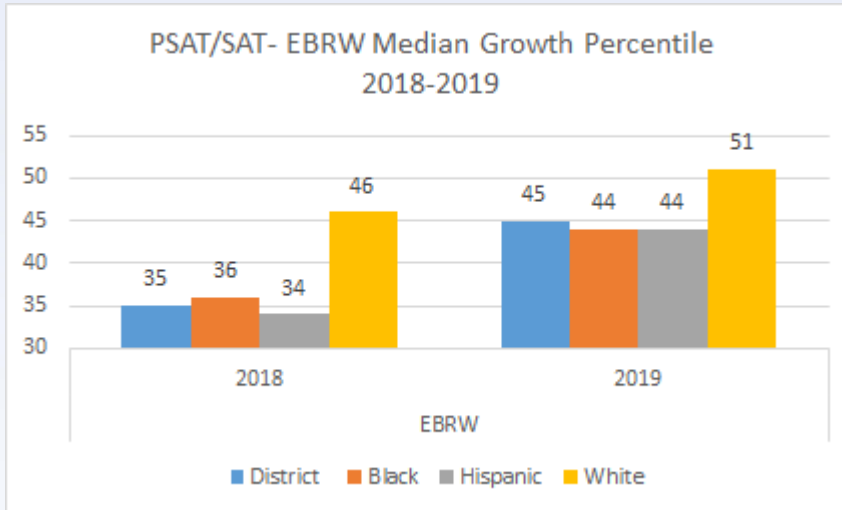
# Growth: CMAS



- The Median Growth Percentile in CMAS/ELA for all groups decreased between 2017 and 2019: District (-3 pts.), Black (-4 pts.), Hispanic (-2 pts.), and White (-1 pts.).
- For CMAS/Math, the Median Growth Percentile increased for most groups: District (+1 pts.), Black (+3 pts.), and White (+2 pts.), while remaining the same for Hispanic students (decreasing from 2017 to 2018 by 2 pts., but increasing from 2018 to 2019 by 2 pts.).



# Growth: PSAT/SAT

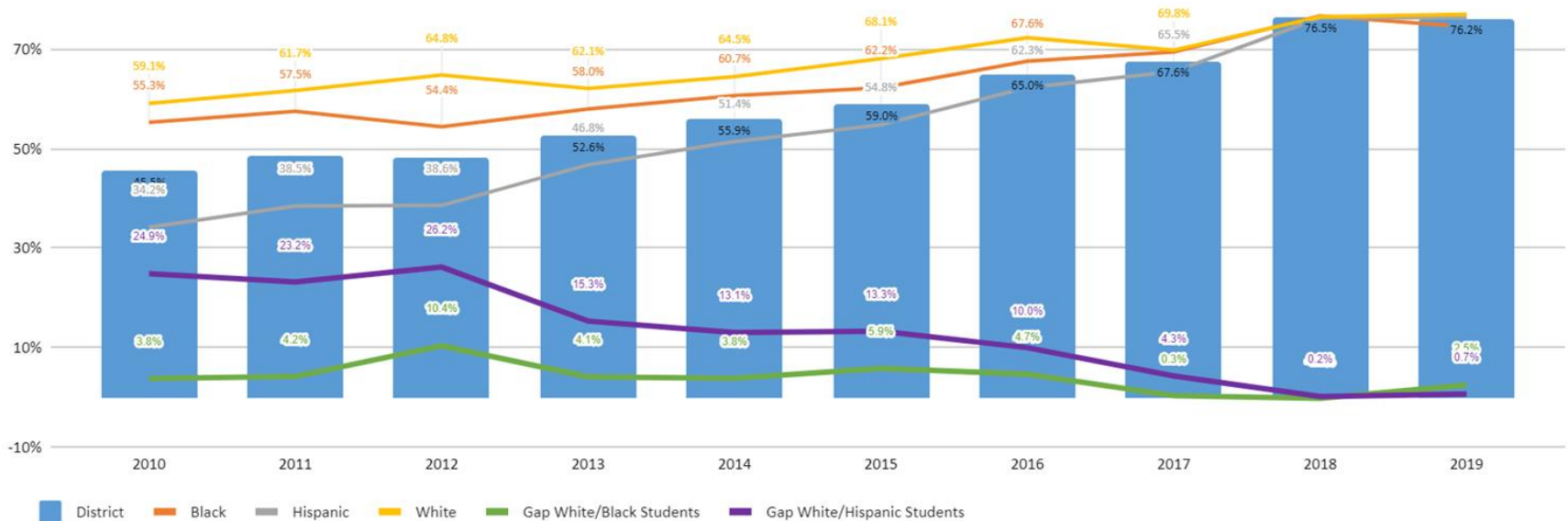


- The Median Growth Percentile in PSAT/EBRW for all groups increased between 2018 and 2019: District (+10 pts.), Black (+8 pts.), Hispanic (+10 pts.), and White (+5 pts.).
- For PSAT/Math, the Median Growth Percentile increased for all groups: District (+5 pts.), Black (+6.5 pts.), Hispanic (+4 pts.), and White (+5 pts.).



# Graduation

Graduation Rate Trends 2010-2019

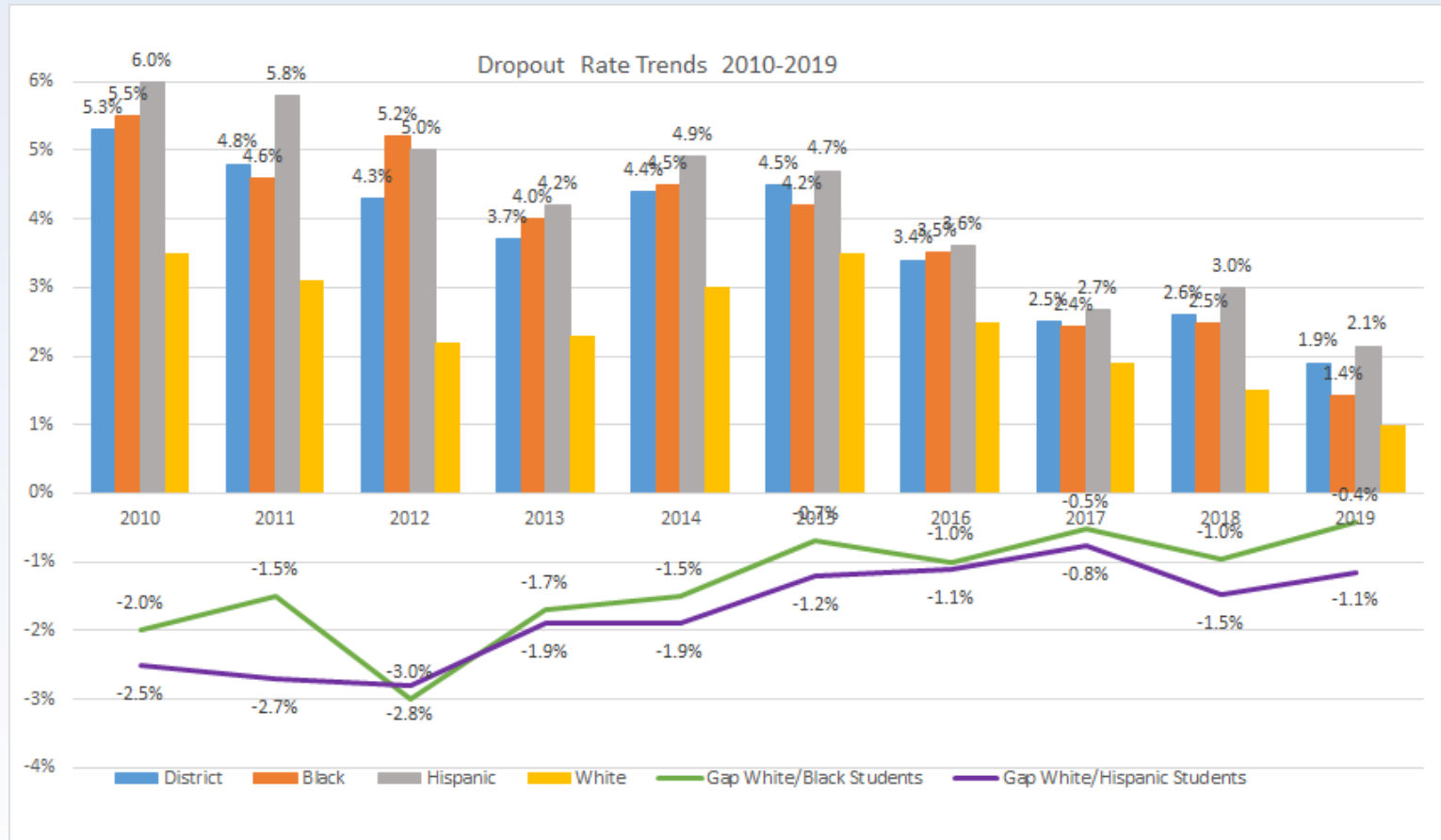


- Graduation Rate Trend percentages from 2010 to 2019 increased for all groups: District (+30.7 pts.), Black (+19.2 pts.), Hispanic (+42.1pts.), and White (+17.9 pts.).
- The gap decreased somewhat between White and Black students by 1.3 pts. and more significantly between White and Hispanic students by 24.2 pts..





# Dropout Rate



- The Dropout Rate Trend percentages between 2010 and 2019 decreased for all groups: District (-3.4 ppt.), Black (-4.1 ppt.), Hispanic (-3.9 ppt.), and White (-2.5 ppt.).



# Dropout Rate

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>APS</b>										
Gap White/Black Students	-2.0%	-1.5%	-3.0%	-1.7%	-1.5%	-0.7%	-1.0%	-0.5%	-1.0%	-0.4%
Gap White/Hispanic Students	-2.5%	-2.7%	-2.8%	-1.9%	-1.9%	-1.2%	-1.1%	-0.8%	-1.5%	-1.1%
<b>State</b>										
Gap White/Black Students	-2.6%	-2.4%	-2.5%	-1.9%	-2.1%	-2.1%	-1.9%	-1.9%	-1.7%	-1.8%
Gap White/Hispanic Students	-3.4%	-2.9%	-2.8%	-2.4%	-2.2%	-2.3%	-2.2%	-2.0%	-2.1%	-2.0%

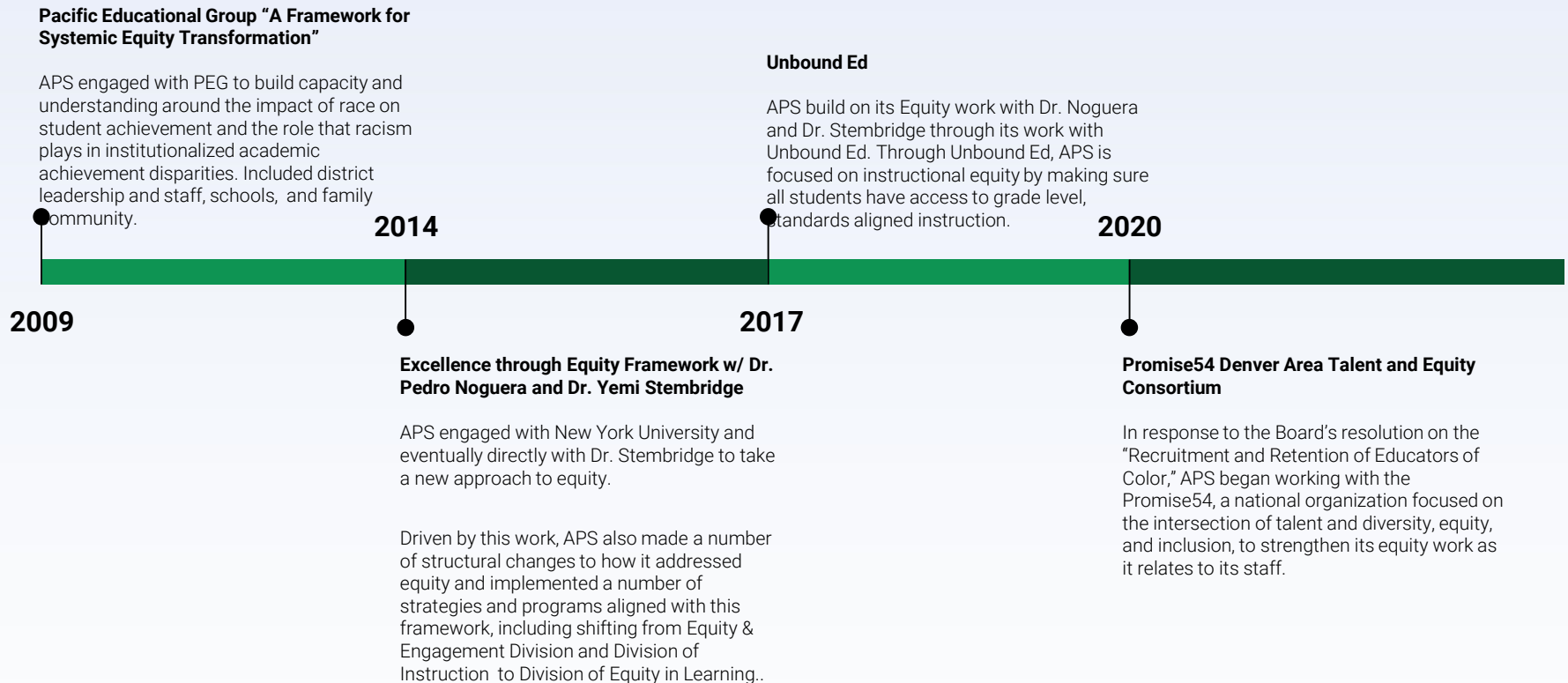
- For APS, between 2010 to 2019, the gap decreased by 1.6 pts. for White and Black students and by 1.4 pts. for White and Hispanic students.
- The State gaps also decreased, but APS gaps were lower comparatively.



# Recent History of APS Equity Work



# Recent History of APS' Work Related to Equity



# Pacific Education Group: “A Framework for Systemic Equity Transformation” Overview (2009-14)

## SYSTEMIC EQUITY TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORK

**SKILL**  
COURAGEOUS  
CONVERSATION  
ABOUT RACE:  
PROTOCOL  
Having an effective  
way to talk about  
race and racism

**WILL**  
SYSTEMS  
THINKING: TOOLS  
Examining beliefs that  
drive behaviors and  
determine results



**CAPACITY**  
ADAPTIVE  
LEADERSHIP:  
PRINCIPLES  
Authorizing productive  
disequilibrium

**KNOWLEDGE**  
CRITICAL RACE  
THEORY: TENETS  
Developing racial literacy  
and consciousness



# Pacific Education Group: “A Framework for Systemic Equity Transformation” Overview (2009-14)

Nearly all district and school leaders participated in 2-day foundational seminar focused on helping “understand the impact of race on student achievement and the role that racism plays in institutionalized academic achievement disparities.”

- **Phase 1: District Equity Development (Year 1)**
  - Focus: Exploring institutionalized racism and its impact on student learning and providing professional development opportunities that support school staff to develop the will, skill, knowledge, and capacity to achieve district-wide equity transformation
  - Included:
    - Establishing District Equity Leadership Team
    - Equity Assessment
    - Workshops and Seminars on: Critical Race Theory and Schooling; Advancing Equity via Technology; Racial Equity Leadership, Systems Thinking, Professional Learning and School Culture; Culturally Relevant Schools and Classrooms; Empowering Families and Engaging Communities of Color; From Theory to Action: Designing and Implementing a Plan for Sustaining District-wide Equity Transformation
- **Phase 2: Site Equity Leadership Development (Year 2)**
  - Focus: Development of and strong support for school leaders who serve as the guiding coalition to ensure successful systemic equity transformation in their schools.
  - Included:
    - Formation of and professional Learning for each school's Equity Leadership Team to prepare them to develop and guide school's plan
    - Practicing Courageous Conversations; examine school's policies, practices, programs, structures, climate and culture to identify barriers to equity and excellence; and lead systemic change efforts that result in high levels of achievement for all students
    - Development and delivery of professional learning by equity team to colleagues



# Pacific Education Group: “A Framework for Systemic Equity Transformation” Overview (2009-2014)

- **Phase 3: Collaborative Action Research for Equity (CARE) Team Development (Year 2 or 3)**
  - Focus: This offshoot of the school based Equity team focuses accelerating responsiveness to the learning needs of students who are historically in the lowest-performing student groups--African American, Latinx, American Indian, Southeast Asians--by designing and delivering racial equity pedagogical practices that are explicitly and intentionally planned to improve engagement and achievement for underserved students of color.
  - Included:
    - Professional Learning, including seminars on Craft Knowledge and the Motivational Framework; Racializing the Motivational Framework and Building Racial/Cultural Competency; Bridging Cultures, Examining Collectivism; A Framework for Educating African American Students; Data-driven Decision Making, Action Research, and Application: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy; Developing a Peer Coaching Model: Sharing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
    - Collective action research to discover, develop, document, deliver, and disseminate culturally responsive teaching and learning strategies
- **Phase 4: Family/Community Team Development (Year 2 or 3)**
  - Focus: Develop a leadership cadre of African American, Latino, American Indian, and Southeast Asian families and community members who will begin to learn with and develop along side the district and school leadership teams as partners in a multi-year, systemic equity transformation effort.
  - Included: Parent Focus Groups; Empowered Parent Leadership Seminar; Engaging Parents in Implementing the District's/School's Equity Transformation Plan
- **Phase 4: Student Leadership Development (Year 4)**
  - Focus: Empowering students of color to take on the identity of “leader” in their schools and communities, and to see themselves as having no limits on who and what they can become
  - Included: Student Focus Groups; Student and Staff Racial Equity Leadership Seminar Series; Student Leadership Institute



# APS Structure: 2009-2014

**Division of Equity and  
Engagement**

**Division of Instruction**





# 2014: Challenges with Equity Work in APS



- Equity viewed as an initiative that is separate from the work of teaching and learning
- Since a definition of equity has not been consistently applied, progress cannot be measured
- Segmenting schools into S-DoSA groups by grade-levels has created a misalignment and a lack of coherence among school levels
- S-DoSA school groupings are viewed as engaged in different work that is determined by the priorities of the DoSA that is supervising the principals in that group
- Other “Directors” in the Division of Instruction are viewed as running separate programs that are not directly aligned to the work of the S-DoSA (English Language Development, Technology, Student Services, Professional Development & Curriculum)



# 2014: New Approach to Equity



“The more we do for equity in every child’s learning, the more we will do for excellence. When we combine equity and excellence in learning, we focus on all kids being exposed to high standards and quality teachers. All are learning high quality knowledge and skills to apply to their own situation.

When we do this, our students will succeed.”

Pedro Noguera, Ph.D



# 2014: New Approach to Equity

## Thoughts toward a Future State

### Our Working Definitions of Equity and Learning

#### **Equity:**

A set of practices where the acceleration of student learning is not predictable based on a child's race, ethnicity, class, background or prior experience, but is determined by the actions that we take to ensure success for every student. We understand that students have different strengths and needs and that equitable treatment of students requires different actions.

#### **Learning:**

The acquisition of knowledge or skill in a manner that is aligned to the strengths and needs of the learner are relevant and meaningful to their experience.

1-6-14 4:30 p.m.



# 2014: New Approach to Equity

## Thoughts toward a Future State

**Our Challenge:** We need to create a system of schools where a child's race or class does not predict his or her level of success in school.

**Our Response:** In the Division of Equity in Learning, we will ensure that equity is infused into the learning experience of every child. We will do this by:

- Evaluating our effectiveness through the progress of our students
- Valuing the background and experience every child brings to school with her or him
- Ensuring that every teacher and principal has the capacity and resources to provide high quality, differentiated learning experiences
- Engaging families and community as assets to learning

1-6-14 4:30 p.m.



# 2014: New Approach to Equity

## The Division of Equity in Learning: Our Job Description

*Our job is to accelerate the learning of  
every APS student every day.*

We do our job by ensuring that every decision we make  
and action we take is grounded in the practice of equity  
by providing the highest quality learning experience for  
every child we serve.

*Our community needs us to do our job.*

1-6-14 4:30 p.m.





# Excellence and Equity Project (2014-2017)

- APS partnered with New York University's Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, working with Dr. Adeyemi Stenbridge and Pedro Noguera
- Leverages the core principles of Culturally Responsive Education (CRE): Cultural Identity, Relationships, Asset-focused Factor, Vulnerability Models, Rigor, and Engagement
- Goals: Increase capacity and aligning for providing equitable opportunities for all APS students with particular attention paid to the support and development of initiatives designed to close equity gaps.
- Objectives:
  - Deepen the understanding of the student achievement outcomes in the context of equity
  - Identify through research and reflection the root causes of equity gaps
  - Design and prepare to implement strategies for improving more equitable outcomes
  - Reflect intentionally the progress toward the goals for equity

Process: Provide opportunities for key APS personnel in the Division of Equity in Learning and P-20 Support Teams along with specialists to engage in training that will ensure strategies, decisions and actions made at these levels are inherently grounded in knowledge and understandings of equity in the district system, school level systems, and teaching and learning activities and also aligned to support; equity gap closing initiatives in schools.

In 2014-15 this included 62 days of professional learning

- Worked with:
  - District level Directors
  - P-20 District Level Support Teams and Specialists
  - APS Principals and Assistant Principals
  - School teams, starting with 5 pilot schools



# Excellence and Equity Project

## 10 Ways to Pursue Excellence through Equity



Challenge the  
normalization of  
failure



Speak up for  
equity



Embrace  
immigrant  
students and  
their culture



Provide students  
clear guidance  
on what it takes  
to succeed



Build  
partnerships  
with parents  
based on shared  
interests



Align discipline  
practices to  
educational  
goals



Rethink  
remediation,  
focus on  
acceleration



Implement  
evidence-based  
practices and  
evaluate for  
effectiveness



Build  
partnerships  
with community  
to address  
student needs



Teach the way  
students learn  
rather than  
expecting them  
to learn the way  
we teach

Source: Dr. Pedro Noguera, professor of education at UCLA



# Examples of APS' work to address Equity (2014-Present)

- **APS 2020: Shaping Successful Futures.** Focuses on student self-determination around their future plans and emphasizes the importance of having additional credentials beyond a high school diploma.
- **Differentiated Support Structures.** Uses a number of factors, such as percentage of students eligible for free/reduced price lunch, student stability, % of English Language Learners; staff mobility; discipline incidence to identify schools that are able to request additional supports and resources to address specific needs.
- **College & Career Centers.** APS, with support from the APS Foundation, has established College & Career Centers in all of its comprehensive high schools to support students in understanding what it takes and how to pursue their plans for after high school.
- **Urban Schools Human Capital Academy.** Since 2017, APS has been partnering with the Urban Schools Human Capital Academy to strengthen its human capital work around recruitment, retention and growth
- **APS Welcome Center.** Aurora Public Schools' Welcome Center aims to assist refugee and immigrant students in their transition to the school district and to provide academic support for these same students through targeted programming.
- **Central Language Services Office:** Creation of a single office that can support schools and district in meeting the needs of multilingual learners.





# Examples of APS' work to address Equity (2014-Present)

- **Communities in Schools/Community Schools in ACTION Zone.** APS implementing Communities in Schools in the five ACTION Zone schools to support schools in improving attendance and addressing graduation rates.
- **Parents in Action.** Groups of parent leaders who work collaboratively to identify and address key issues in their school that are impacting their students.
- **Rethinking Role of School Resource Officers.** Enhanced training by personnel from each entity; new directives from leadership to draw clearer lines between the work of police and the work of school personnel; Removal of police vehicles from permanent stations at the entrances of our high schools.
- **Common Sense Discipline.** Several APS schools engaged in the Denver Foundation's Common Sense Discipline work to address disparities in discipline data.
- **Gifted and Talented.** APS has continued to be a leader in providing more equitable opportunities for identification as Gifted and Talented. APS expanded its identification areas to include talent areas, beyond traditional academic domains; universal screening at 2nd and 7th grade; looking at ELL students rapidly acquiring English language skills for potential identification; and identifies students who are twice exceptional, and may have both an IEP and ALP. In 2018, APS also began piloting the use of Local Norms to identify students as Gifted/Talented to address the underrepresentation of students of color.



# UnboundED: Focus on Instructional Equity (2017-Present)



- Focus on closing the opportunity gaps caused by systemic bias and racism by making sure students have access to grade-level standards, engaging content, aligned curriculum and equitable instructional practices.
- Provide high-quality resources and professional learning opportunities for teachers and leaders
- APS has sent district staff and school leaders to UnboundED's Standards Institute, as well as brought trainings to APS in 2018 and 2019.



# Young Men of Color Collective Impact Program: Focused on Equitable Supports for YMOC (2019-Present)

- Purpose: Leverage the expertise of the community to drive improved outcomes by both:
  - providing enhanced supports and opportunities in support of our young men of color aimed at addressing common outcomes and
  - collaborating to identify other opportunities for further support and barriers to eliminate.
- Key Outcomes:
  - Improving Students Attendance
  - Reducing discipline incidents
  - Improving On-Track Rates
  - Positively Impacting other Measurable Indicators of Student Success
- \$1 million over two years; working with 10 schools



# APS BOE Resolution to Support the Recruitment and Retention of Educators of Color (Feb. 2020)



- Beliefs:
  - “APS’ responsibility to provide students with access to educators and leaders that mirror their racial identity and ethnic background while supporting the professional development of each educator’s unique assets and provide targeted supports that will help educators and leaders of color in successfully contributing to the success of all students”
- Possible barriers identified:
  - Lack of clarity about what equity means for APS and competing priorities impeding focus
  - Unclear data and expectations regarding what equitable outcomes we seek to achieve
  - Need for more effective structures for collaboration and cohesion of work across the district
  - Need for district team members at all levels to engage in and commit to the hard and intentional work of becoming more culturally proficient in service to our students and communities
- Declaration: “Board embraces the recruitment and retention of educators of color and will work with the District to prioritize and target their development through differentiated professional development opportunities and mentorship.”





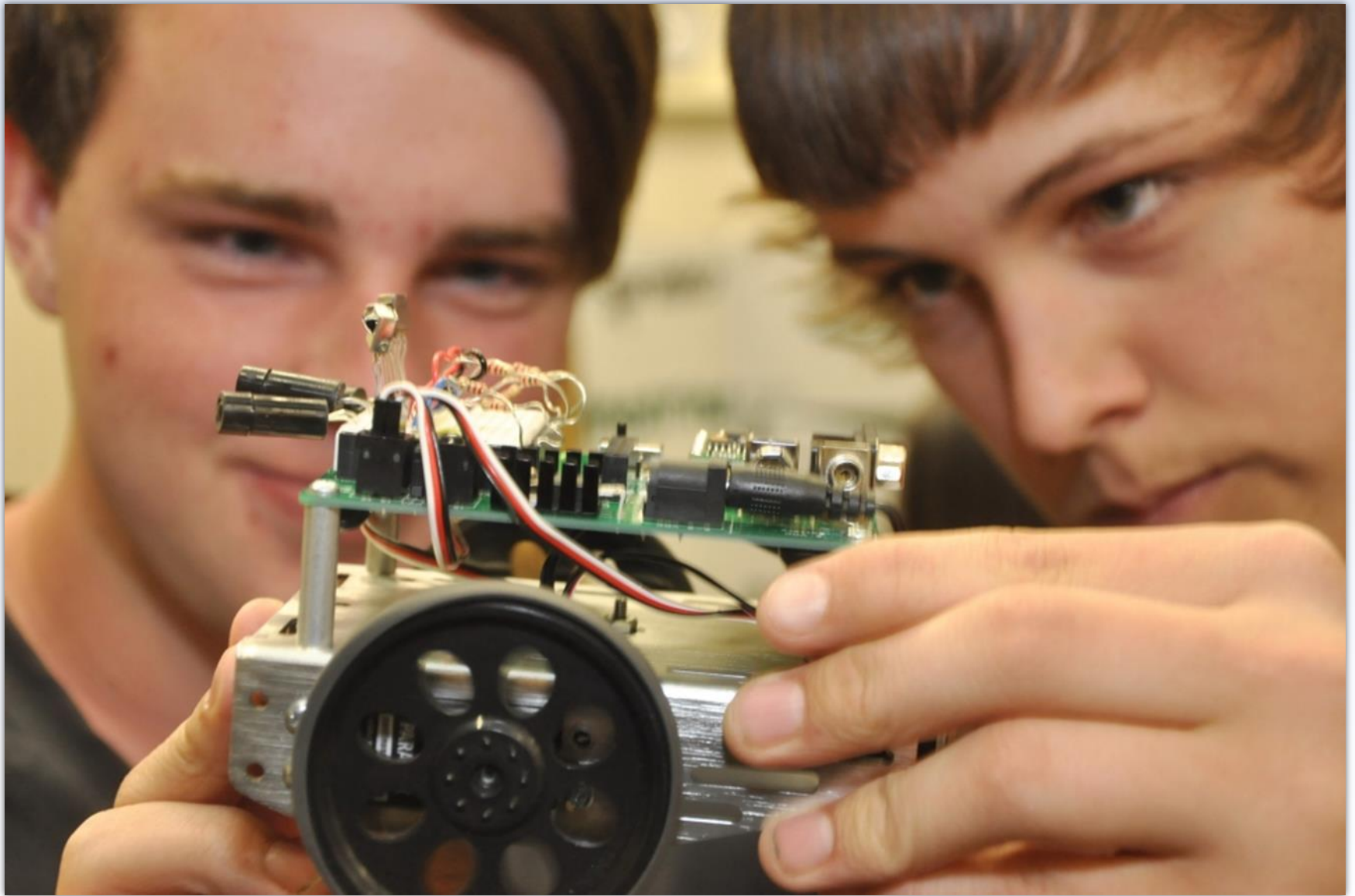
# Promise54: Focused on Talent & DEI

- APS joined Promise54's Denver Area Talent & Equity Consortium to receive support, coaching and collaboration with DEI and talent work
- Conducted surveys on DEI and Talent experiences of APS staff
- Developing and Implementing Action Plan to strengthen APS' DEI and Talent work, with particular focus on recruitment and retention of teachers of color



# Submitted Questions





# Thank You!

