

Arlington Public Schools

Minority Achievement Program Evaluation Report

Prepared by the Office of Planning and Evaluation
Response from the Minority Achievement Office

February 2016

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SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

Data collection for the Minority Achievement evaluation was originally scheduled for the 2011-12 school year. The timing of the program evaluation process was adjusted due to a discussion among the Superintendent, School Board, community members, and the Office of Minority Achievement concerning the scope of the evaluation. The discussion centered on whether the evaluation would follow the broader format used for the evaluations of ESOL/HILT and services for students with special needs, or whether it would follow the more traditional format, focusing on programs administered by the Office of Minority Achievement.

Given that there are numerous APS services and activities that support minority student achievement that are not administered by the Office of Minority Achievement, the decision was ultimately to focus on the original scope of the evaluation: services provided through the office/program. The evaluation of the Minority Achievement Program began in 2013-14 with the development of a program evaluation design. A planning committee met regularly throughout the year to develop the evaluation questions that would guide data collection for this report. Committee members included staff from Planning and Evaluation, the Office of Minority Achievement, and schools; as well as community members. Data collection for the evaluation occurred during the 2014-15 school year.

This evaluation employed various methodologies to collect data with which to examine the success of the Minority Achievement program over time. In particular, this report addresses the following three components outlined in Arlington Public Schools (APS) policy and procedures (45-3) for accountability and evaluation:

1. A description of the department, program, or service
2. Evaluation questions that ask
 - a. How effectively was the Minority Achievement program implemented?
 - b. What were the outcomes?
3. Recommendations

The executive summary and appendices that contain definitions, original data sets, and various reports used to inform this evaluation are located online at www.apsva.us/evaluationreports.

Minority Achievement Program Description - Prepared by the Office of Minority Achievement

Program Overview

The APS Office of Minority Achievement (OMA) seeks to provide opportunities for students of color to achieve academic success and to feel safe, valued, and supported in their learning environments. To this end, the office offers a variety of programs that nurture academic and socio-emotional development, and it serves as a bridge to community-based organizations that also accomplish this goal. In addition, the office strives to communicate the importance of culturally responsive instructional practices as a way to facilitate engagement, academic success, and a sense of belonging among students of color.

Goals and Objectives

The Office of Minority Achievement is a part of the Department of Instruction (DOI) and its services are aligned with the department's management plan and the APS Strategic Plan goals. APS develops six-year strategic plans with staff and community involvement to identify focus areas for school system improvement. Each year, the School Board and the public receive reports on the progress made relative to each Strategic Plan goal area during the preceding year.

The current Strategic Plan runs through the 2016-17 school year and focuses on five areas:

Goal 1: Ensure that Every Student is Challenged and Engaged

Goal 2: Eliminate Achievement Gaps

Goal 3: Recruit, Retain, and Develop High-Quality Staff

Goal 4: Provide Optimal Learning Environments

Goal 5: Meet the Needs of the Whole Child

The Office of Minority Achievement supports the Strategic Plan Goals by providing programs and services for students. In general, programs are regular opportunities with participation based on specific criteria. Examples include affinity groups, transition groups, and courses for which students receive elective credits. The success of programs is measured by students' grades, course rigor, graduation rates, and other indicators established in the Strategic Plan.

Services are activities where participation is optional, may be offered over time, or may be singular events. Examples include field trips, summer opportunities, Transition Saturday, awards, scholarships, or opportunities offered by organizations within the community. Success of the programs and services includes the following outcomes:

- Students enroll in coursework that matches aptitude
- Students demonstrate self-advocacy skills
- Parents and family members are aware of their rights and advocate effectively on behalf of their children
- Parents are able to access relevant services and programs provided by the district

Table 1 displays the alignment between programs and services offered by the Office of Minority Achievement and the APS Strategic Plan goals.

Table 1: Alignment between Strategic Plan Goals and Programs/Services Provided by OMA

Programs and Services Provided by OMA					
County wide offerings	Program/ Service	Strategic Plan Goals the programs and services address			
		Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 5
SAT preparation classes offered district wide for students in grade 10-12	Program		✓		✓
Transition Saturday	Service		✓		✓
George Mason Early Identification Program (EIP) for students in grades 9-12 who will be the first in their families to graduate from college	Program	✓			
George Mason Early Identification Pre-EIP for students in grade 8	Program	✓	✓		✓
Cohort and Affinity groups at each school	Program	✓	✓		✓
College Pre and College Awareness	Service		✓		✓
Parent/Family Advising	Service				
Student Advising	Service				
Collaborate with school staff to create a culture of achievement	Service				
School awards, enrichment opportunities, and scholarships	Service	✓	✓		✓
Professional Development Activities	Program		✓	✓	✓
Parent Empowerment	Program/ Service	✓		✓	✓
Workshops for families	Service	✓	✓		✓

The goal of the Office of Minority Achievement is to maintain relationships that assist students, families and schools in the attainment of academic excellence and to ensure equal access for all students to all academic programs by:

1. encouraging students to take challenging courses throughout their academic careers.
2. exposing students to the rigors and expectations of the next level of education.
3. analyzing available data to match and monitor students' involvement with established educational and/or culturally enriching opportunities, as well as to initiate programming to meet student needs.
4. encouraging students to discover and utilize resources that will help them progress towards their goals.
5. teaching students and families to become positive and effective self-advocates and to navigate the system so that educational goals are realistic and attainable.
6. serving as a resource by providing staff with direct support and strategies for working with students and families of diverse ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds.
7. advocating for practices, policies, and procedures with school leadership and key staff that create equitable learning environments for all students.

Elementary Level

In 2011, the School Board approved one elementary Minority Achievement Coordinator position. The position provides .50 support for countywide responsibilities and .50 direct services to the staff, students, and families at Drew Model School. In both capacities, the coordinator provides workshops for parents and students and creates community connections that support student learning. In addition, the coordinator works with students individually and in small groups, organizes before and after school tutorial services, provides coaching for staff, and professional development at Drew.

Secondary Level

Most secondary schools have Minority Achievement Coordinators. Washington-Lee and Wakefield High Schools have fulltime coordinators; Yorktown High School, Williamsburg Middle School, Swanson Middle School, Kenmore Middle School, and Jefferson Middle Schools each have .50 allocations; and H-B Woodlawn Secondary School has a .20 allocation. Gunston Middle School also has a .50 allocation, but that school has created a fulltime position using school funds. There also is a .50 secondary countywide position. The Arlington Career Center, Arlington Mill, Langston, and New Directions have no allocation for Minority Achievement Coordinators.

Professional Development for Staff

OMA Coordinators share best practices with their colleagues at staff meetings, by posting recent articles, and offering trainings that focus on working effectively with diverse families and students. Additionally, most coordinators are trained in the art of facilitating difficult conversations, Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED), Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA), Parent Expectations Supporting Achievement (PESA), and Strengthening the Family.

Resources

The FY 2016 OMA budget includes \$401,427.00 that is used to cover the cost of services and programs:

Countywide Services and Programs

- Tuition for the George Mason Early Identification Program, transportation for weekend events, the Summer Academy, lunches, materials and supplies, site coordinator for summer activities
- Transportation for the students in Pre-EIP
- Contracting a vendor for two 10-week sessions of SAT preparation classes for 80 students and cost of site coordinators, materials and supplies, and the registration for the actual SAT test
- Materials and supplies for events, such as Transition Saturday and the Ballston College Fair
- Community-based experiences, including but not limited to, summer experiences, college visits and fairs, and registration fees for conferences for students
- Leadership development activities, such as the middle school boys' and girls' conferences and the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) conference
- Salaries for curriculum work done by parent empowerment activities (i.e., teachers)
- Salaries and cost for in-service professionals, including outside consultants, contract courses and payment to staff for participating in professional learning outside of contract hours
- Conference registration fees for presenters and attendees
- Support for parent engagement curricula, such as PESA in English and Spanish, Participa, Strengthening the Family, and Strengthening Black Families
- Transition Summer School
- Support for community partnerships

School-based Services and Programs

- Support for pilot programs, such as Drew Summer School
- Support for the work in cohort and affinity groups and school-specific activities

Implementation of the Minority Achievement Program is the responsibility of the two fulltime employees and two halftime employees in the Office of Minority Achievement, as well as three fulltime and seven halftime school-based Minority Achievement Coordinators. The primary responsibilities of the four Office of Minority Achievement employees are described in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Office of Minority Achievement Staff and Responsibilities

Employee	Primary Responsibilities
Minority Achievement Supervisor (fulltime)	Responsibilities of the Minority Achievement Supervisor fall in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning and Assessment<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Coordinates programming for EIP and pre EIP Programs;○ Collaborates to support the use of CLASS for professional development and for program evaluations○ Supports the work of the Council for Cultural Competence

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Serves on the MSAN Research practitioner’s group and the Committee for MTSS implementation in APS ○ Encourages OMA staff to find new ways to support the development of students, family members, and staff ● Organizational Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Manages multiple tasks designed for students, including but not limited to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Color of Leadership Girls Conference and Boys Conference ▪ Transition Saturday ▪ EIP and pre-EIP tutoring programs ▪ Hispanic student conference for HACU ▪ Numerous community-based opportunities ▪ Ballston College Fair ○ Provides opportunities for parent and family support, such as Strengthening Families, Conversations about Race, PESA, Participa, Positive Parenting, and the multicultural conference ● Communication and Community Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Serves as staff liaison for the Superintendent’s Advisory Committee on the Elimination of the Achievement Gaps ○ Demonstrates effective facilitation skills and meeting and event planning
<p>Minority Achievement Coordinators (2 halftime)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work collaboratively with designated staff to address the needs of identified students. ● Design, monitor, and implement ongoing initiatives that support student achievement that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - working with students individually and in small groups to enhance academic and social/emotional growth - meeting with teachers staff to support students' academic success - matching students with resources within and outside of the school system, such as award ceremonies, scholarships, community-based opportunities, seminars, tutorial and mentoring programs, academic summer programs - designing and implementing parent support - working with students and staff to help students transition from middle school to high school and from high school to post-secondary opportunities - monitor EIP and Pre-EIP student achievement through quarterly data collection and analysis. - serve as an advocate for identified students

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - coordinate/participate on Girls' and Boys' Conference Planning Committees - other duties as assigned
Administrative Assistant (fulltime)	Responsibilities of the Administrative Assistant fall in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel: Arranges professional travel for Supervisor and coordinators; processes reimbursements for professional and local travel. • CCMA Awards: Requests schools to send information on students who may qualify for awards; compiles information and sends to Coalition; makes and mails invitations to selected students and principals; makes certificates and programs for the Coalition to present to students at event • Budget: Checks balances weekly to avoid overspending • ERO: Inputs information to generate courses, workshops, and attendance • Facilities: Secures sites for various OMA-sponsored meetings, workshops, and conferences through EMS and building facilitators • EIP/EIP Prep: Arranges travel for EIP students for various weekend events and summer academy; contacts meals vendor for lunch for Summer Academy participants; updates incoming and outgoing students and information; secures sites for Arlington events • SAT Prep: Contacts SAT Prep company; secures a facility for the course; mails invitation letters to families; registers participants; sends registrants' confirmation letters; contacts waitlisted students; receives and records payments and sends to finance; contacts and reminds students/parents about orientation; makes packets for orientation; attends orientation to oversee workshop registration/attendance and electronic SAT test registration; pays for each test individually (include fee waivers for those who qualify; includes IEP testing accommodations for those who qualify); makes copies and disperses completed registrations • Outside Conferences & Workshops: Registers participants/presenters; makes travel/hotel arrangements; enters payment request into STARS • OMA Webpage: Site manager • The Achiever Newsletter (defunct): Collected articles from various sources; formatted newsletter; submitted to Print Shop for printing; labeled to be mailed to families • Timesheets: Reports time for self, Supervisor, and coordinators • Professional Development Pay: Submits pay memos to payroll; keeps log of those who have been paid • STARS: Inputs all supplies, orders, and reimbursements for the OMA for all workshops, conferences, and meetings • Transportation: Arranges for student transportation to college trips, conferences, and workshops

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle School Conferences: Girls’ conference planner (Fall); Boys’ conference committee member (Spring) • Miscellaneous: Proofs and edits documents of OMA; sets up for various meetings, workshops, conferences; answers OMA phone
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Update on Recommendations from the Previous Evaluation

The Minority Achievement Program was last evaluated in 2004. The prior evaluation examined four programs and services provided by the Office of Minority Achievement: Project Greater Opportunities (Project GO), work of the Minority Achievement Coordinators, George Mason University Early Identification Program (EIP), and Teacher Expectations, Student Achievement (TESA). The evaluation included the following recommendations:

Table 3: Status of Recommendations Made in Previous Evaluation

Recommendation	Status
Recommendations to be implemented by Office of Minority Achievement:	
Design and implement a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence to support students, families, and staff to increase number of minority students participating in higher level courses and receiving advanced diplomas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority Achievement Coordinators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordinators facilitate programs, like the George Mason University EIP Program and the Emerging Scholars Cohort, and engage in academic advising to develop a pipeline of students who are prepared to enroll in higher level courses.
Provide principals with a standardized method to evaluate effectiveness of the Minority Achievement Coordinator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority Achievement Coordinators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordinators are held accountable to the same teacher evaluation system as all T-scale employees. ○ A standardized method for evaluating work specific to coordinators has yet to be developed.
Remove Project Go services from the school day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project GO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Removed Project GO services from the school day in 2006 per recommendation from 2004 evaluation.
Supervisor will work with EIP office and the school counselors to create a support system that will reduce attrition rate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Mason University Early Identification Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Currently, the George Mason University EIP Program provides a variety of supports, including tutoring, mentoring, the summer academy, and parent training, to reduce attrition.

Recommendations requiring work with other programs, schools, and/or departments:	
Minority Achievement Coordinators will work with building administrators to include duties of the coordinators in the school management plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority Achievement Coordinators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Varies by school
Establish more effective partnerships with Gifted Services, the IB Program, guidance services, special education, attendance, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with Gifted Services to implement new identification tool that has been in use for three years.
Design a more streamlined method to maintain student data and to identify in the student database students who work with coordinators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with Information Services in 2015 to create new fields in Synergy to document annual program participation, but not yet implemented by coordinators.
Redirect Project GO funds and allocations to create a supplementary program that exists outside the school day for black students in grades 4 and 5. Convene stakeholders to help frame an elementary program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project GO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Added 0.5 allocation for Minority Achievement Coordinator position at Drew Elementary School and 0.5 as a countywide elementary coordinator.
Recommendations for consideration by the School Board	
Increase the allocation of Minority Achievement Coordinators so each secondary school has a fulltime coordinator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, there are two fulltime Minority Achievement Coordinators at the secondary level, one at Washington-Lee HS and one at Wakefield HS. Each of the remaining secondary schools has a 0.5 allocation.

Methodology

Evaluation Design and Questions

The design for this evaluation was developed during the 2012-13 school year. A planning committee met regularly throughout the year to develop the evaluation questions that would guide data collection for this report. Committee members included staff from Planning and Evaluation, the Office of Minority Achievement, and schools; as well as community members. Additional staff were consulted as well.

Table 4 displays the Minority Achievement evaluation design, which is aligned to the stated goals of the

program listed in the program description on page 11. Data collection for the evaluation occurred during the 2013-14 school year and fall 2014.

Table 4: Minority Achievement Evaluation Design

Program/Service Objective	Program/Service Question	Data Source(s)
<i>Evaluation Question 1: How effectively was the Minority Achievement program implemented?</i>		
All program goals	1a What is the level of alignment between the seven goals of the Office of Minority Achievement, the Minority Achievement Coordinator position description, and the day-to-day activities of the coordinators in the schools?	Existing Tools and Data Sources:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current position descriptions Developed Tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinator running records • Staff survey • coordinator focus group • Student focus groups • Parent survey • Parent focus groups
Goal 3: Minority Achievement Coordinators analyze available to data to match and monitor students' involvement with pre-existing, as well as self-initiated educational and/or culturally enriching opportunities.	2a Identify school-based and district-wide programs and services that specifically target minority students. 2b How are students identified to participate in Minority Achievement programs and services? Are these processes consistent across the district? 2c To what extent is communication about opportunities for minority students stated consistently so that all students have access to the available services? 2d To what extent are minority students and their families aware of the resources and opportunities available for minority students? 2a Do all identified students participate in the programs? If not, why?	Existing Tools and Data Sources:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program descriptions Developed Tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program participation lists • Staff survey • coordinator focus group • Student focus groups • Parent survey • Parent focus groups

Program/Service Objective	Program/Service Question	Data Source(s)
Evaluation Question 1: <i>How effectively was the Minority Achievement program implemented?</i>		
<p>Goal 6: Minority Achievement Coordinators work directly with school-based staff to provide support and strategies for working with families of a diverse student population.</p>	<p>3a To what extent are teachers and other staff aware of the resources and opportunities available for minority students?</p> <p>3b To what extent do teachers and other staff feel they are supported in working with families of a diverse student population?</p>	<p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey
<p>Goal 7: Minority Achievement Coordinators advocate for practices, policies, and procedures with school leadership and key staff that create equitable learning environments for all students.</p>	<p>4a In what ways do coordinators advocate for equitable practices, policies, and procedures with school leadership and key staff?</p>	<p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey • coordinator focus group • coordinator running records

Program/Service Objective	Program/Service Question	Data Source(s)
<i>Evaluation Question 2: What were the outcomes for students and parents?</i>		
<p>Goal 1: Students who participate in Minority Achievement programs take challenging courses throughout their academic careers.</p> <p>Goal 2: Students who participate in Minority Achievement programs are exposed to the rigors and expectations of the next level of education.</p> <p>Goal 4: Students who participate in Minority Achievement programs discover and use resources that help them progress towards their personal goals.</p>	<p>5a To what extent do students who participate in identified Minority Achievement programs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enroll in accelerated coursework? b. Maintain or improve grades? c. Achieve high SAT scores? d. Apply and get accepted into post-secondary education? e. Graduate on time? <p>5b To what extent do students who participate in identified Minority Achievement programs discover and take advantage of opportunities and resources?</p>	<p>Existing Tools and Data Sources::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPA • Enrollment data • On-time graduation data • Senior survey • SAT scores <p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program participation lists • Staff survey • coordinator focus group • Student focus groups • Parent survey • Parent focus groups • Alumni survey
<p>Goal 5: Students and families become positive and effective self-advocates and navigate the system so that educational goals are realistic and attainable.</p>	<p>6a To what extent do students who participate in identified Minority Achievement programs report that their school/classroom environment is supportive and academically challenging?</p> <p>6b To what extent do students who participate in identified Minority Achievement programs become effective self-advocates?</p> <p>6c To what extent do parents of minority students report that they are comfortable navigating the system?</p>	<p>Developed Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program participation lists • Staff survey • coordinator focus group • Student focus groups • Parent survey • Parent focus groups • Alumni survey

Study Measures

Primary data sources were used to inform this evaluation and are described in detail.

APS Context: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool developed at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education to analyze the interactions between teachers and their students. CLASS observations were conducted across levels and content areas during nine weeks throughout the 2014-15 school year. Observations were conducted to inform the program evaluations for both Professional Development and Minority Achievement. For purposes of the Minority Achievement evaluation, secondary CLASS observations were analyzed to assess whether there are differences in average CLASS scores depending on the race/ethnicity of the students enrolled in the observed course. This analysis was not possible at the elementary level due to a lack of detailed course schedule information. The domains and dimensions of the CLASS tool are described in detail in **Appendix B1**. **Appendix B2** describes the alignment between CLASS dimensions and APS best instructional practices. A summary of CLASS data used in this evaluation is available in **Appendix B3**.

APS Context: Site-Based Survey and Community Satisfaction Survey

The biannual Site-Based Survey (SBS) is designed to provide school-level feedback from students, teachers, and parents on issues including school climate, instructional support, and cultural competence. In alternating years, the Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) provides a district-level snapshot, focusing on similar questions with a smaller sample of respondents. For purposes of this evaluation, an analysis of selected SBS and CSS questions was conducted to determine if there are differences among parents and students by race/ethnicity, and to gauge teachers' perceptions on issues relating to cultural competence and the achievement gap. The full report is available in **Appendix B4**.

APS Context: Strategic Plan

APS develops six-year strategic plans with staff and community involvement to identify focus areas for school system improvement. Data from the current Strategic Plan was included in this evaluation to provide context on gaps in student achievement by race/ethnicity. A summary of Strategic Plan data used in this report is in **Appendix B5**.

APS Context: Civil Rights Statistics

APS civil rights statistics are compiled each October. The data represents student race and ethnicity as self-reported by each student's family. This data was included in this report to provide context about the racial and ethnic diversity in APS schools. A summary of civil rights statistics used in this report can be found in **Appendix B6**.

Stakeholder Feedback: Staff Survey

The Office of Minority Achievement and the Office of Planning and Evaluation developed a staff survey that was distributed to all T-Scale (instructional) and P-Scale (administrative) staff at schools with a Minority Achievement Coordinator during winter 2014-15. Hanover Research (Hanover) completed an analysis of the survey responses. The Hanover report is available in **Appendix C1**.

Stakeholder Feedback: Parent Survey

The Office of Minority Achievement and the Office of Planning and Evaluation developed a parent survey that was sent to all parents of students who attended schools with a Minority Achievement Coordinator and whose race was listed as something other than white in the student information system. The survey was administered during spring 2015. The full survey analysis is available in **Appendix C2**.

Stakeholder Feedback: Focus Groups

APS contracted with an independent evaluator to conduct 11 focus groups in April, May, and June of 2015. In total, 80 people participated in the focus groups, including Minority Achievement Coordinators, students at all levels who participated in Minority Achievement programs, and parents at all levels whose children participated in Minority Achievement programs. A summary of the focus groups is available in **Appendix C3**.

Stakeholder Feedback: Alumni Survey

The Minority Achievement Office and the Office of Planning and Evaluation developed an alumni survey for former APS students who participated in Minority Achievement programs or events while attending high school. The survey was administered during the summer of 2015. Alumni were selected for the survey if they had participated in Minority Achievement programs or events as either a 10th, 11th, or 12th grader during the 2011-12 school year. The full survey analysis is available in **Appendix C4**.

Coordinator Role: Minority Achievement Programs and Participants

The Office of Planning and Evaluation collected a list of programs/services and participating students from each Minority Achievement Coordinator during the 2011-12, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. Data for 2012-13 was not collected due to a delay in the evaluation process. A full summary of the data is available in **Appendix D3**.

Coordinator Role: Running Records

During the 2014-15 school year, Minority Achievement Coordinators completed running records for three two-week periods in the fall, winter, and spring. The purpose of the running records was to document the day-to-day activities of the coordinators in order to evaluate how their activities align with the stated goals of the program. The Office of Planning and Evaluation coded activities and contracted with Hanover to complete an analysis of the data. The Hanover report is available in **Appendix D4**.

Student Outcomes: SAT Scores

Scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) were provided to the Office of Planning and Evaluation by Enterprise Solutions. An analysis of SAT results for students who participated in the SAT Prep program is available in **Appendix E1**.

Student Outcomes: Grade Point Average

Grade point average (GPA) data was provided to the Office of Planning and Evaluation by Enterprise Solutions. **Appendix E2** includes an analysis of average GPA for students who participated in Minority Achievement programs and services that had a goal of supporting students in maintaining or improving grades.

Student Outcomes: On-time Graduation

On-time graduation data from the Virginia Cohort Report provided by the Virginia Department of Education was used in an analysis of the on-time graduation rate for participating seniors. Students included in the analysis had participated in Minority Achievement programs and services that had a goal of supporting students in graduating on time. This data is available in **Appendix E3**.

Student Outcomes: Post-High School Plans

Data from the annual senior survey was used in an analysis of the post-high school plans of seniors who had participated in Minority Achievement programs and services that had a goal of supporting students in applying for and being accepted to college. This data is available in **Appendix E3**.

Student Outcomes: Enrollment in Advanced Coursework

Enrollment data from the data warehouse was used in an analysis of the rate at which participating students enroll in advanced coursework. Students included in the analysis had participated in Minority Achievement programs and services that had a goal of supporting students in selecting rigorous coursework. This data is available in **Appendix E4**.

APS Context: Experience and Achievement of Minority Students in APS

This section aims to describe the context in which the APS Minority Achievement Program exists. Data presented here are not presented as findings about the Minority Achievement Program itself, but include information about the experiences and achievement of minority students across Arlington Public Schools, including racial/ethnic diversity among schools; perceptions of parents, students, and teachers; test scores, enrollment, and graduation patterns; and classroom observations. Findings about the program begin in Section 2 on page 45.

APS Student Population by Race/Ethnicity

Civil rights statistics are compiled each October for students in grades K–12. The data represents student race as self-reported by each student’s family. Starting in 2010-11, the U.S. Department of Education required that school districts change the collection and reporting of student race and ethnicity information. Schools now ask families to answer two questions: (1) their child’s ethnicity as Hispanic or non-Hispanic, and (2) their child’s race as one or more of the following categories: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and White. Students whose ethnicity is Hispanic are reported as Hispanic. Students whose ethnicity is not Hispanic are reported as the race designated. If more than one race is indicated, a student’s race is reported as multiple. For local reporting, APS collapses the following racial categories into an “other” category: multiple, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Figure 1 presents civil rights statistics for APS from 1998 through 2015. Over that time period, the proportion of students who are white has increased from 41% to 47%, while the proportion of students who are black or Hispanic has decreased, from 17% to 10% for black students and from 32% to 28% for Hispanic students. The increase in students identified as “other” is most likely due to the changes in data collection/reporting described above.

Figure 1: Race/Ethnicity of APS students, 1998 through 2015

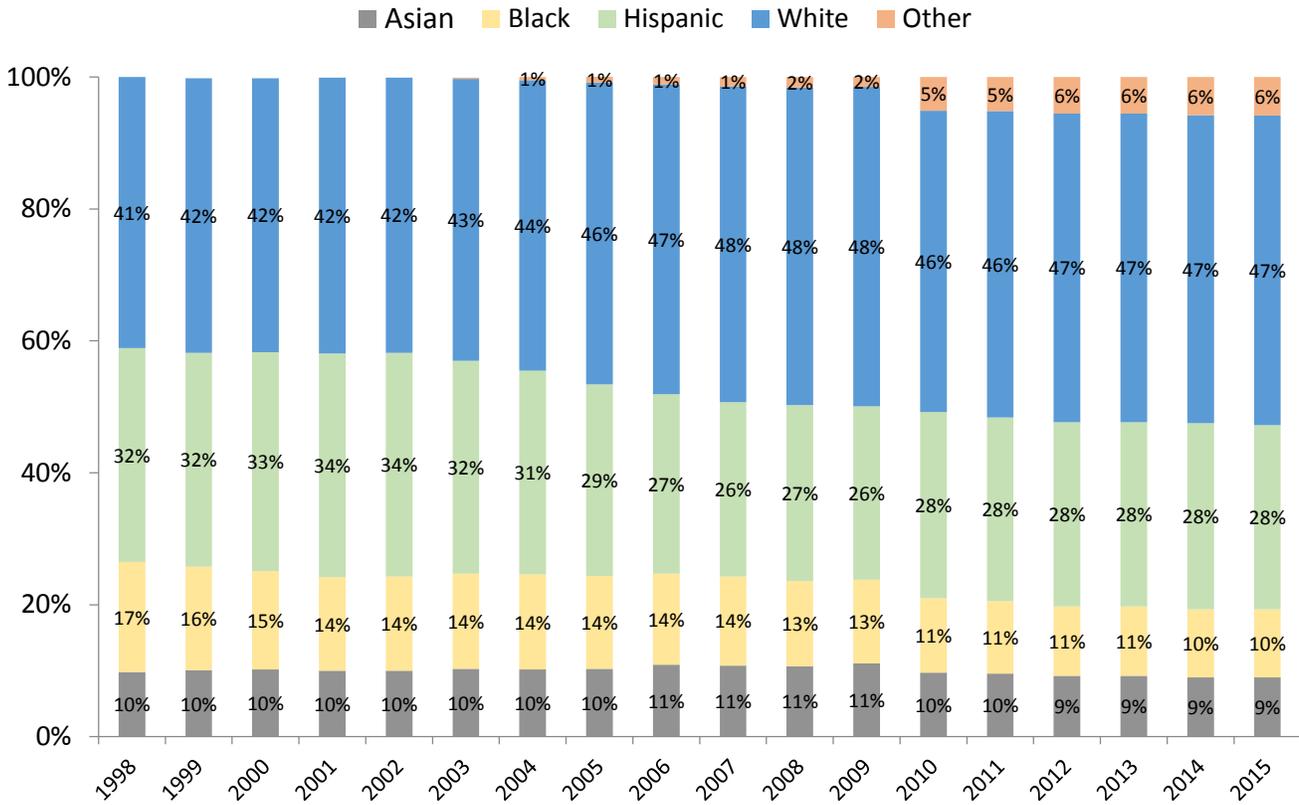


Figure 2 shows the APS student population by race/ethnicity at each elementary school for the current school year, 2015-16. There is a high amount of variation in the racial/ethnic diversity of APS elementary schools. Six elementary schools have low proportions of black or Hispanic students: the Discovery, Jamestown, McKinley, Nottingham, Taylor, and Tuckahoe student populations are just one to two percent black, and between four to six percent Hispanic. The student populations at these schools range from 78-83% white. At the other end of the spectrum, black students comprise more than 20% of the population at Drew (28%), Hoffman-Boston (35%), and Randolph (21%); and Hispanic students comprise more than 20% of the population at 11 schools, including six schools where they constitute half or more than half of the population: Barcroft (53%), Barrett (50%), Carlin Springs (70%), Claremont (52%), Key (52%), and Randolph (55%). Thirteen APS elementary schools are majority minority, with less than half of the student population consisting of white students.

Figure 2: Race/Ethnicity of APS Elementary Students by School, 2015-16

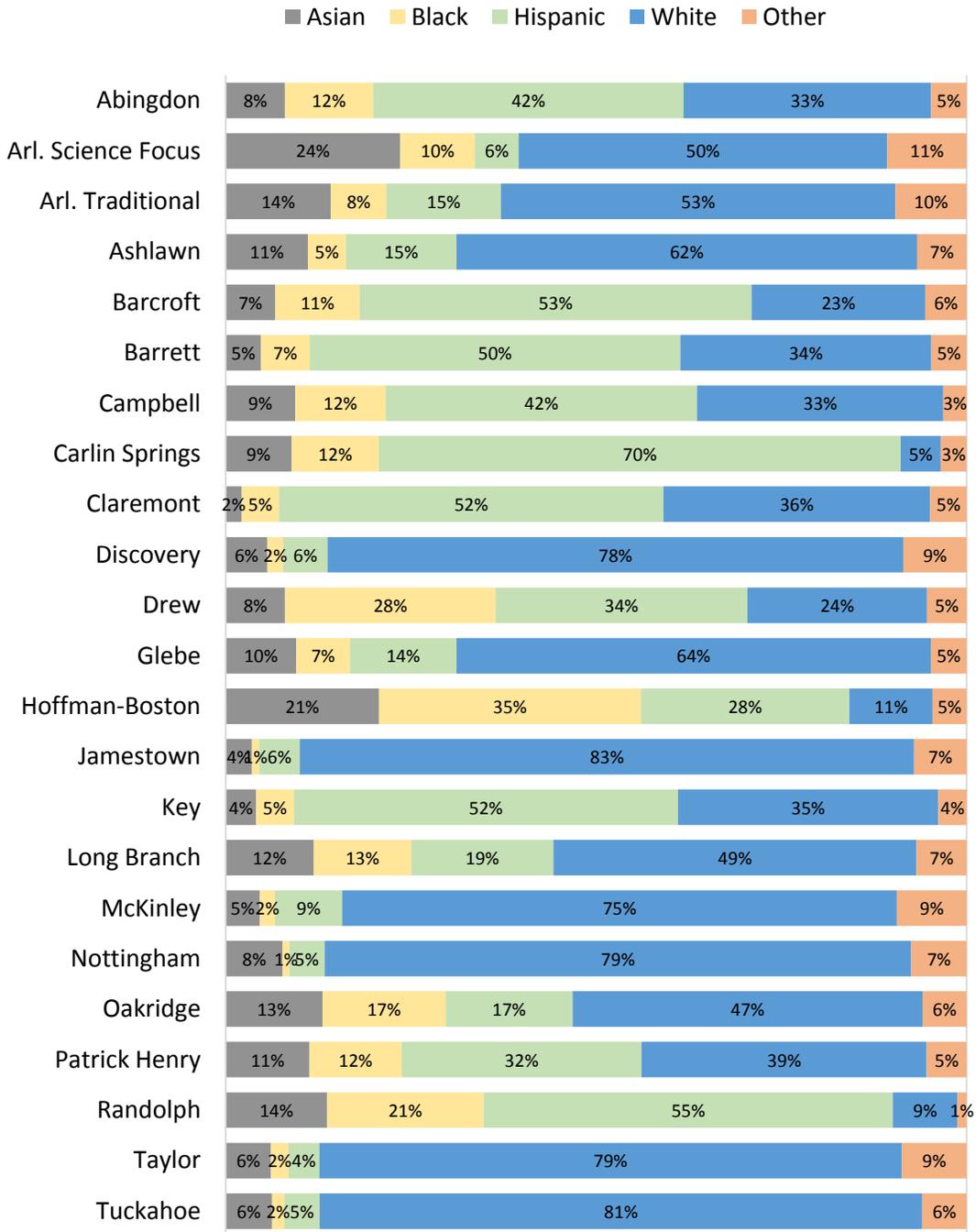
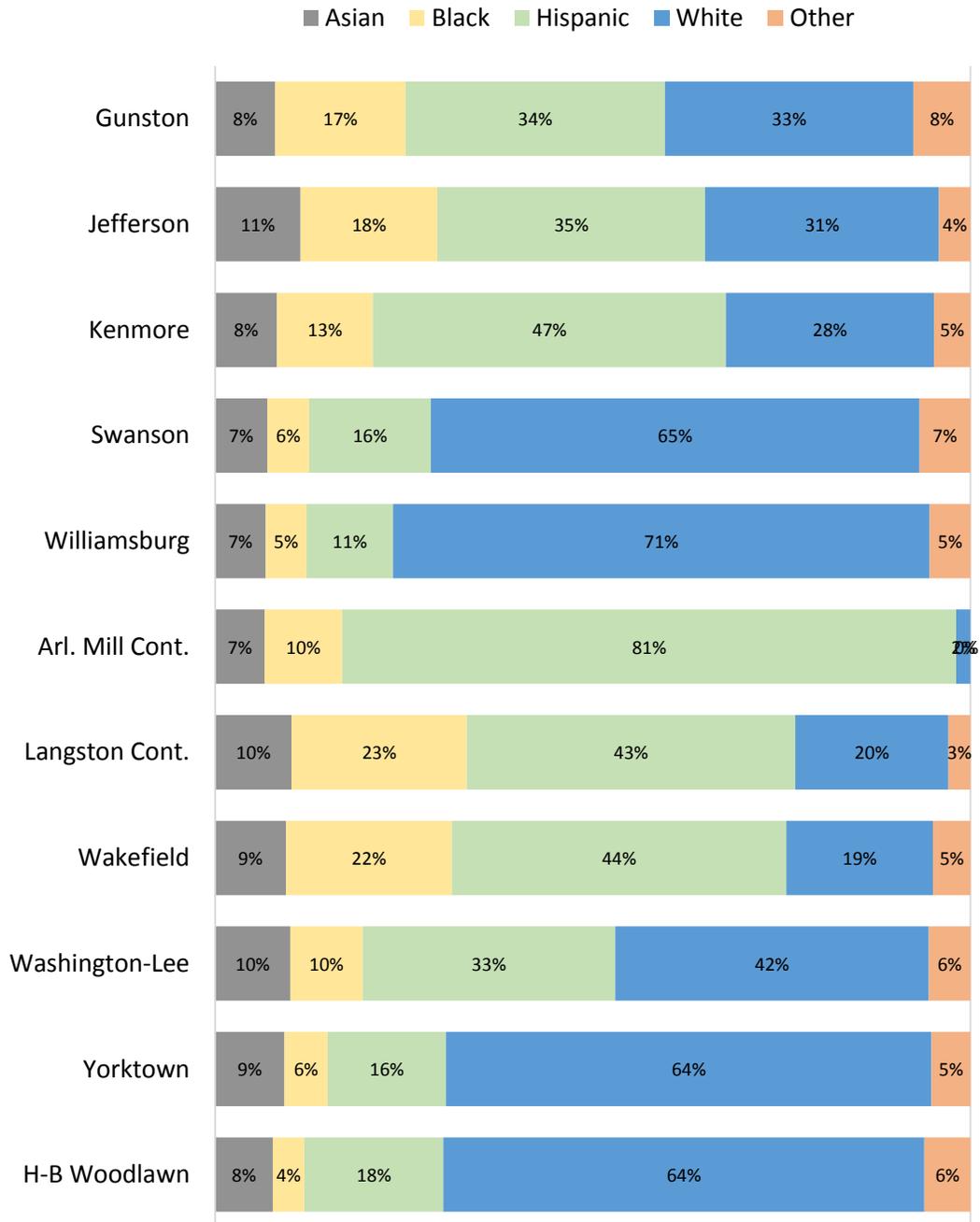


Figure 3 shows the APS student population by race/ethnicity at each secondary school for the current school year, 2015-16. Out of 11 schools, four are majority white: Swanson (65%), Williamsburg (71%), Yorktown (64%), and H-B Woodlawn (64%). Among the other schools, only one has a racial/ethnic group

that constitutes a majority of the student population: Arlington Mill, where 81% of the students are Hispanic.

Figure 3: Race/Ethnicity of APS Secondary Students by School, 2015-16



The full report on APS civil right statistics is available in **Appendix B6**.

Perceptions among Parents, Students, and Teachers

The biannual Site-Based Survey (SBS) is designed to provide school-level feedback from students, teachers, and parents on issues including school climate, instructional support, and cultural competence. In alternating years, the Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) provides a district-level snapshot, focusing on similar questions with a smaller sample of respondents. For purposes of the Minority Achievement evaluation, an analysis of selected SBS and CSS questions was conducted to determine if there are differences among parents and students by race/ethnicity, and to gauge teachers' perceptions on issues relating to cultural competence and the achievement gap.

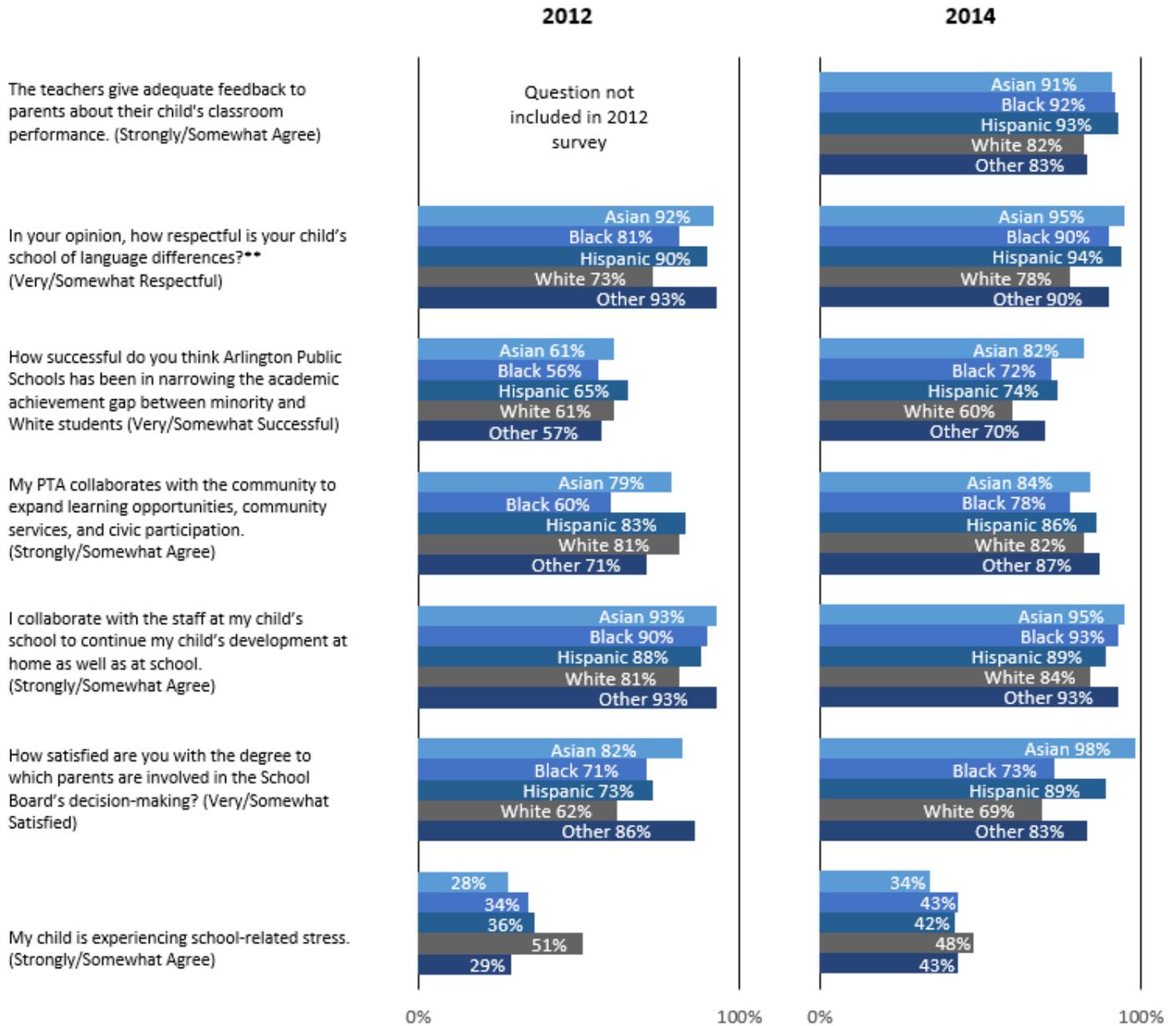
Parents

The parent version of the SBS did not include questions about the respondent's race/ethnicity during the years included in this analysis, so data from the SBS years has not been included. The responses included in this report are from the CSS, but this data does not include information about the grade level of the respondent's child (elementary, middle school, or high school).

Figure 4 displays parent responses for CSS questions for which there were multiple differences of 10 percentage points or greater between racial/ethnic groups. White parents were less likely to report that their child's school was **respectful of language differences** (73-78% vs 81-95% among other groups), and less likely to report **satisfaction with the degree to which parents are involved in the School Board's decision-making** (62-69% vs 71-98% for other groups). White parents were also the most likely to report that their child is experiencing **school-related stress** (48-51% vs 28-43% among other groups).

Black parents had the lowest rate of agreement with the statement, "**My PTA collaborates with the community to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.**" Just 60% of black parents agreed with this statement in 2012, but this had increased to 78% in 2014. This was still lower than other groups, who agreed with this statement between 82-87% of the time in 2014.

Figure 4: CSS Parent Responses by Race/Ethnicity, 2012 and 2014 – Questions with large differences



**2012 survey included the response option, "neither respectful nor disrespectful." 2014 survey did not include this option.

Students

Figure 5-Figure 7 display student responses to questions from the student SBS and CSS that address students' perceptions of how students of their race/ethnicity are treated at school. With a few exceptions, white students were more likely than others to indicate that they *somewhat* or *strongly agree* with the statements about treatment of students of their race/ethnicity.

Figure 5: Student SBS & CSS: My teachers treat students fairly, regardless of race, culture, or language.

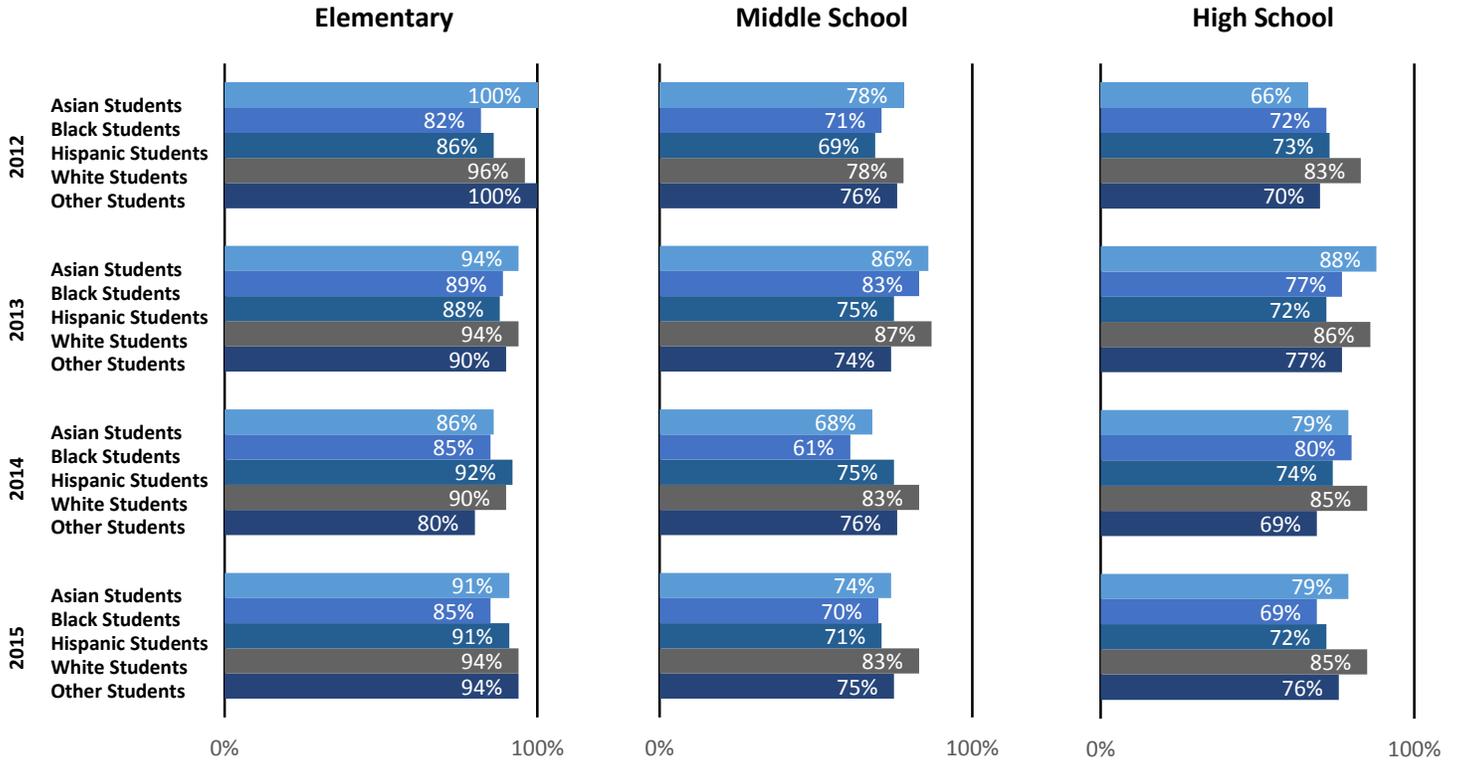


Figure 6: Student SBS & CSS: I feel students of my race or culture are accepted by students at school.

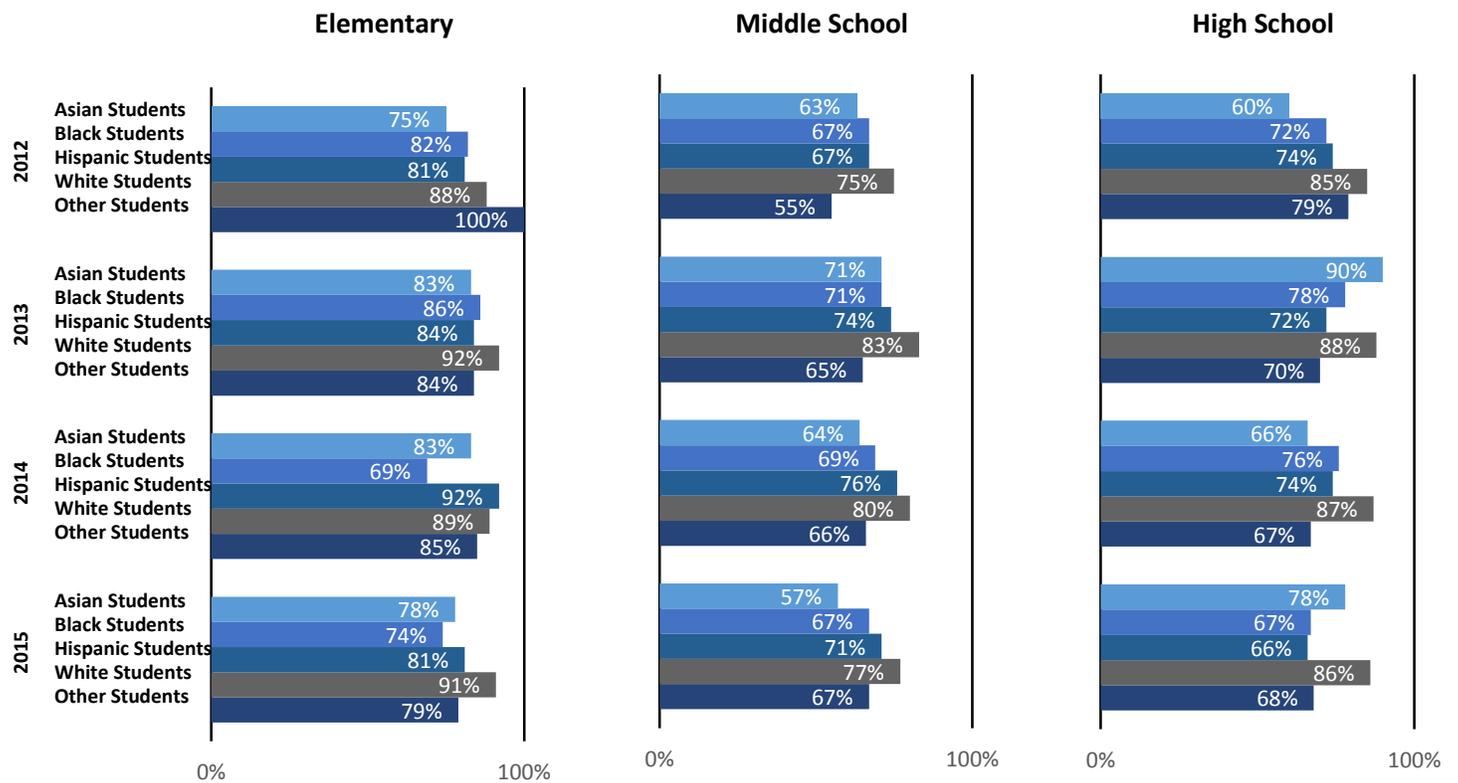
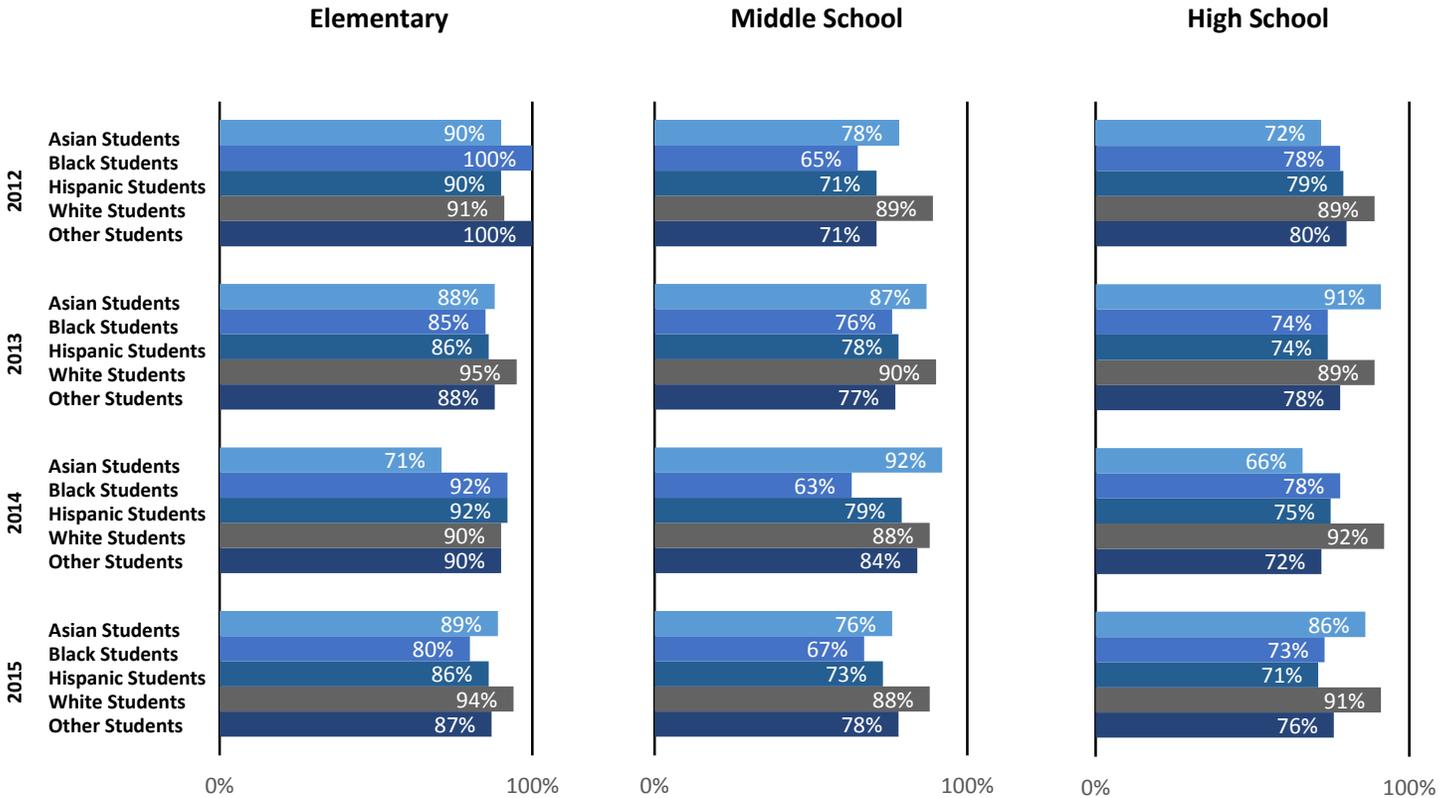


Figure 7: Student SBS & CSS: I feel students of my race or culture are accepted by staff at school.



Teachers

Several questions on the teacher SBS and CSS address issues of cultural competence and the achievement gap.

Figure 8 displays the percentage of teachers responding *Always* or *Sometimes* to a series of statements:

- My school is respectful of **cultural** differences.
- My school is respectful of **language** differences.
- My school is respectful of **racial/ethnic** differences.

Almost all teachers reported that these statements were true *always* or *sometimes*, although there are differences by level in the proportion responding *always* vs *sometimes*. Among teachers at comprehensive schools, elementary teachers were the most likely to select *always* (67-70%). High school teachers selected this response between 58-64% of the time, and middle school teachers selected this response between 51-58% of the time.

Figure 8: Teacher SBS & CSS: My school is respectful of cultural, language, racial/ethnic differences.

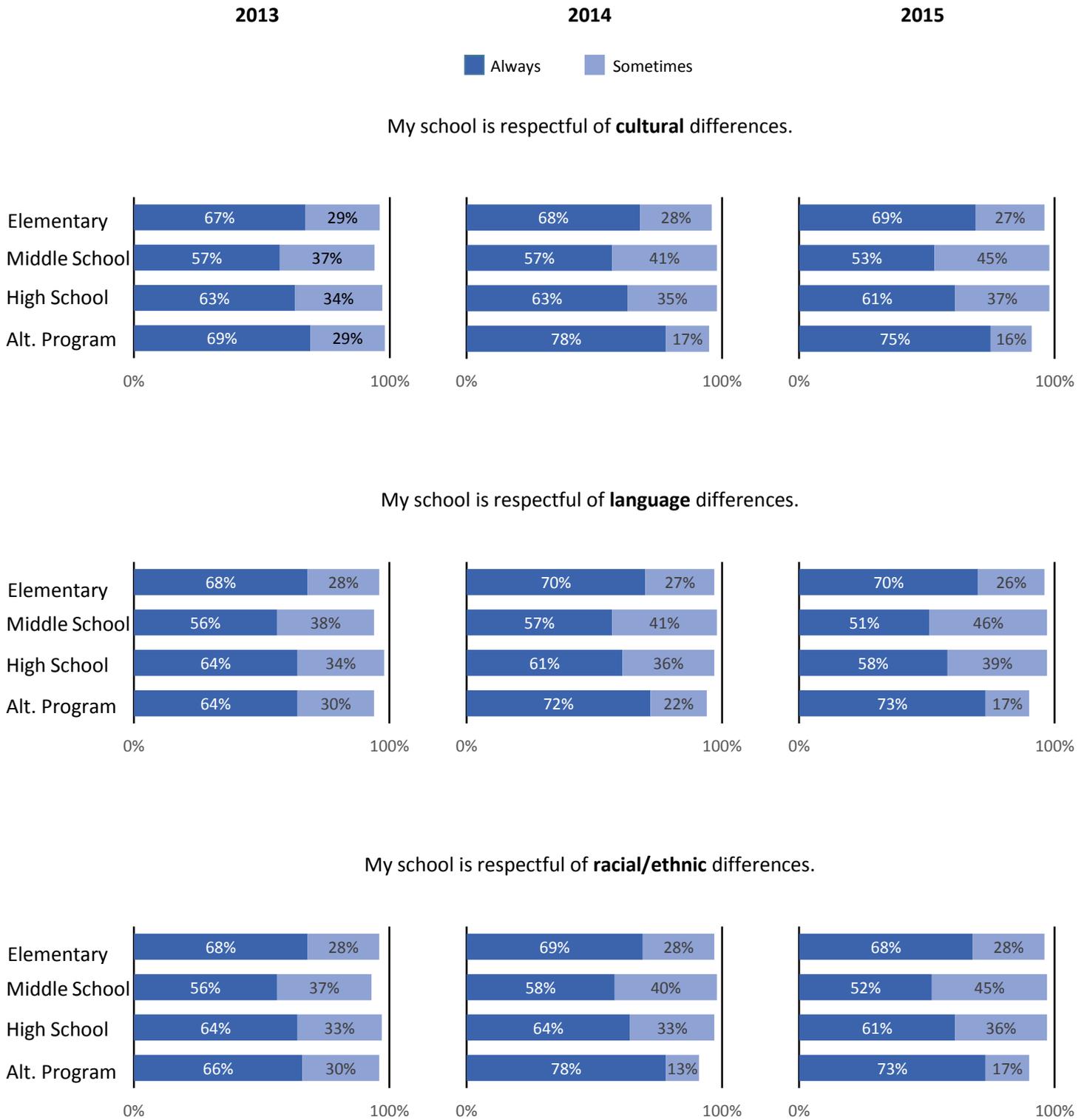


Figure 9 displays teachers’ responses to the question, “**In your opinion, how important do you think it is to close the academic achievement gap between White students and Black and Hispanic students?**” Following the pattern above, elementary teachers were the most likely to indicate that closing the achievement gap is *very important* (73-80%). Middle school teachers selected this response 60-64% of the time and high school teachers selected this response 59-67% of the time.

Figure 9: Teacher SBS & CSS: In your opinion, how important do you think it is to close the academic achievement gap between White students and Black and Hispanic students?

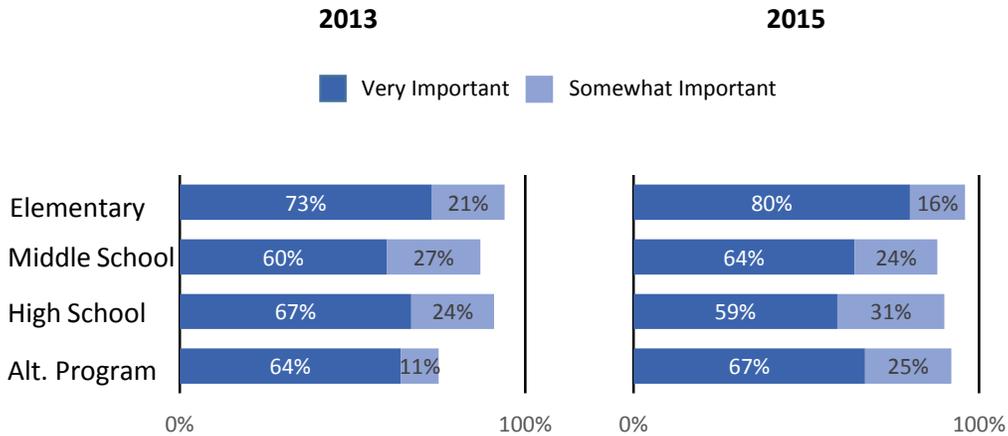


Figure 10 displays teachers’ responses to the question, “**Do you believe that the achievement gap can be narrowed substantially while maintaining high standards for all children?**” Again, elementary teachers were the most likely to respond positively, with 73-76% selecting *yes*. Around a quarter of middle and high school teacher selected *unsure*, with between 15-19% selecting *no*.

Figure 10: Teacher SBS & CSS: Do you believe that the achievement gap can be narrowed substantially while maintaining high standards for all children?

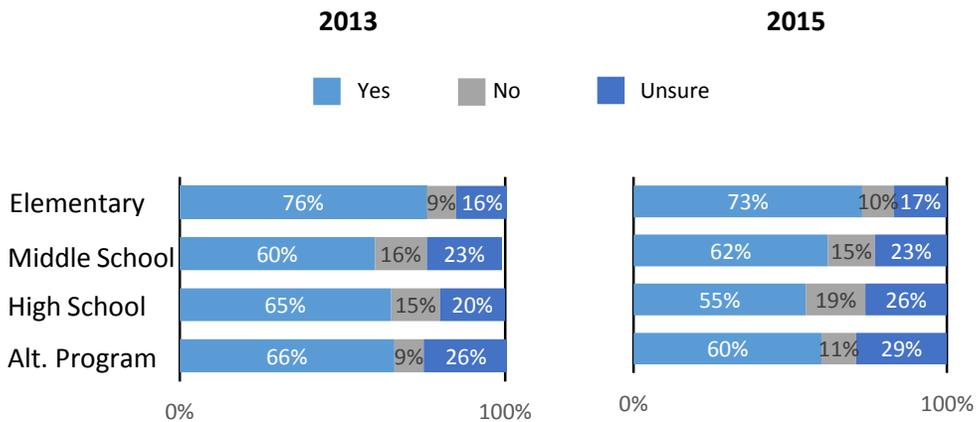
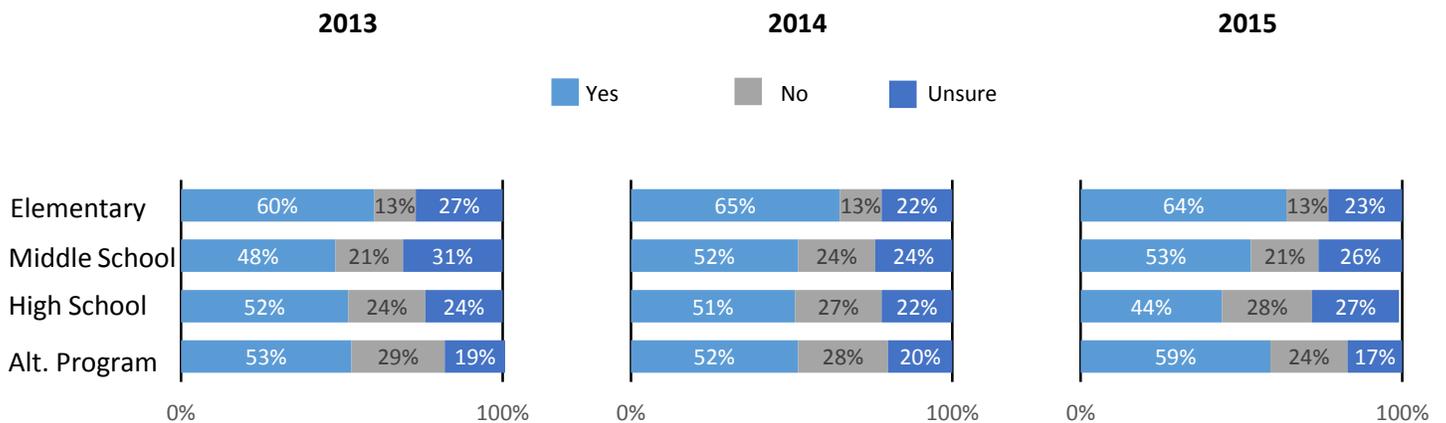


Figure 11 displays teachers’ responses to the question, “**In your opinion, is it the responsibility of the public schools to close the achievement gap between White students and Black and Hispanic**

students?” Elementary teachers were again the most likely to respond positively, with 60-65% selecting *yes*. At the middle and high school levels, around half selected this response, with between 21-28% selecting *no*, and 22-31% selecting *unsure*.

Figure 11: Teacher SBS & CSS: In your opinion, is it the responsibility of the public schools to close the achievement gap between White students and Black and Hispanic students?



The full report on SBS and CSS results is available in **Appendix B4**.

Student Achievement

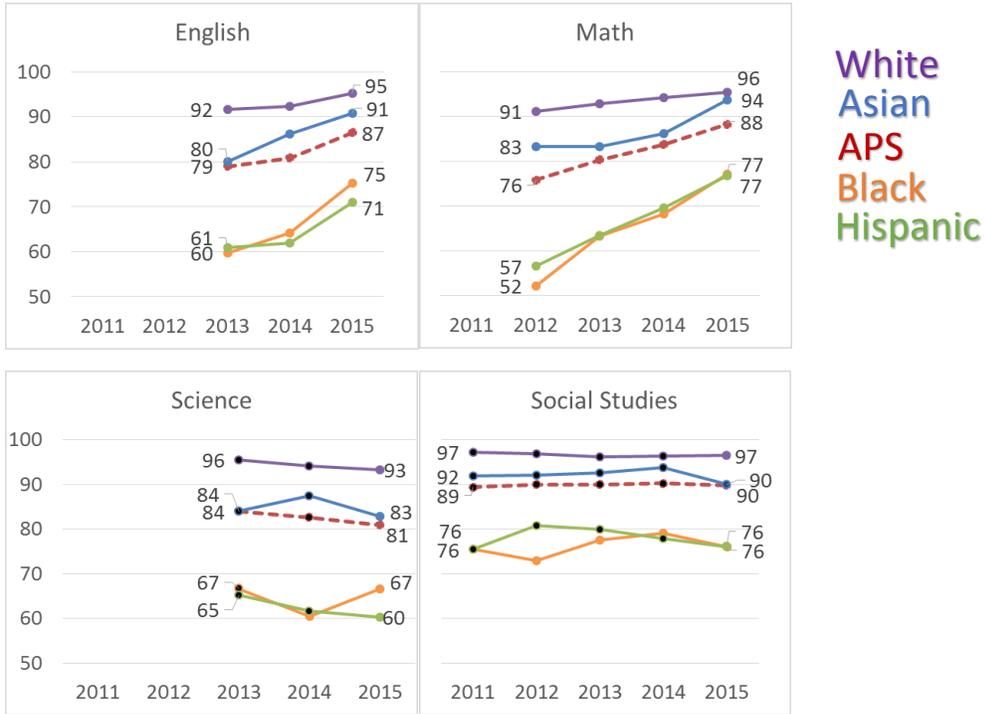
APS develops six-year strategic plans with staff and community involvement to identify focus areas for school system improvement. Each year, the School Board and the public receive reports on the progress made within each Strategic Plan goal area during the preceding year. This report includes data on key performance indicators that address Goal 1 (**Challenge and Engage All Students**) and Goal 2 (**Eliminate Achievement Gaps**).

Standards of Learning Pass Rates

The Commonwealth of Virginia measures academic achievement through annual Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. Students take grade-level assessments in grades 3-8, and end-of-course (EOC) exams for high school-level courses. Years included in this report vary; if the start year is later than 2011, it indicates that new content area standards were implemented that year.

Figure 12 includes elementary SOL pass rates for English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The gap in performance among racial/ethnic groups has narrowed on both the English and Math SOL assessments between 2012-2015, although large gaps remain. Gaps for Asian and Hispanic students decreased by seven percentage points on both assessments, and gaps for black students decreased by 11-12 percentage points. Social Studies and Science have seen less progress in terms of overall growth and narrowing of the gap, although both assessments had higher overall pass rates to begin with.

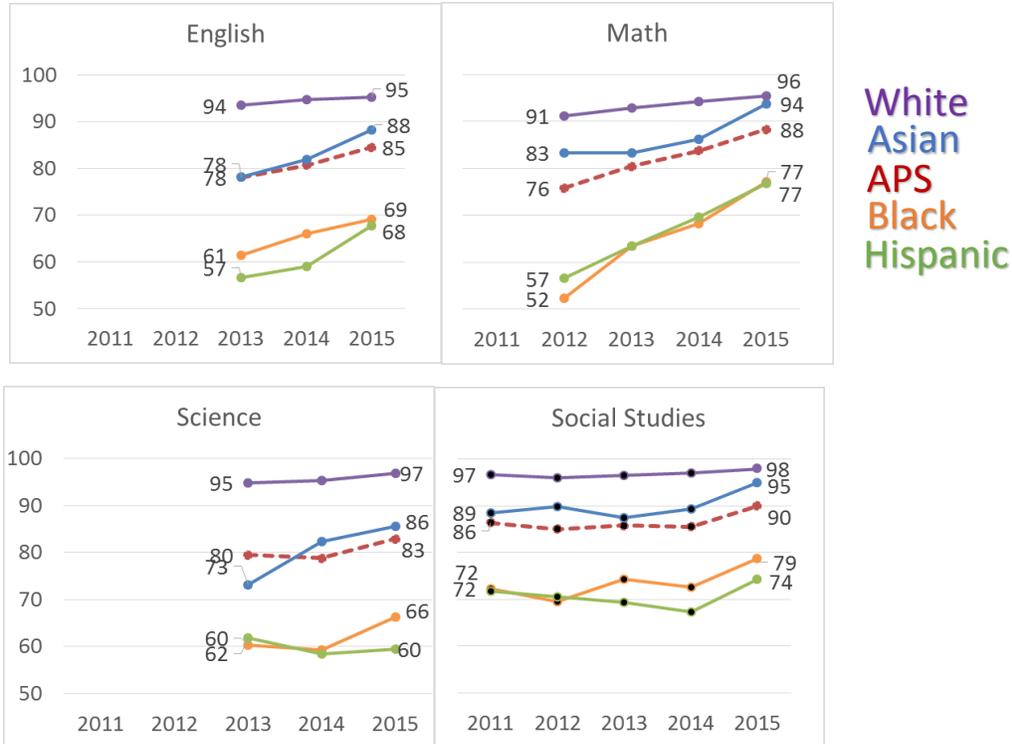
Figure 12: Elementary SOL Pass Rates



Note: The Virginia General Assembly eliminated the Grade 3 Science and Grade 3 History and Social Science SOL assessments. 2015 passing rates for Science and Social Studies exclude the Grade 3 Science and Grade 3 History and Social Science SOL assessments.

Figure 13 includes middle school SOL pass rates for English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Similar to the elementary level, the gap in performance among racial/ethnic groups has narrowed on both the English and Math SOL assessments between 2012-2015, with particularly large decreases for Math (21 percentage point decrease for black students and 16 percentage points for Hispanic students). The gap in pass rates on Science assessments has narrowed for Asian and black students, and increased for Hispanic students. Similarly, the gap on Social Studies assessments has narrowed for Asian and black students, and remained steady for Hispanic students.

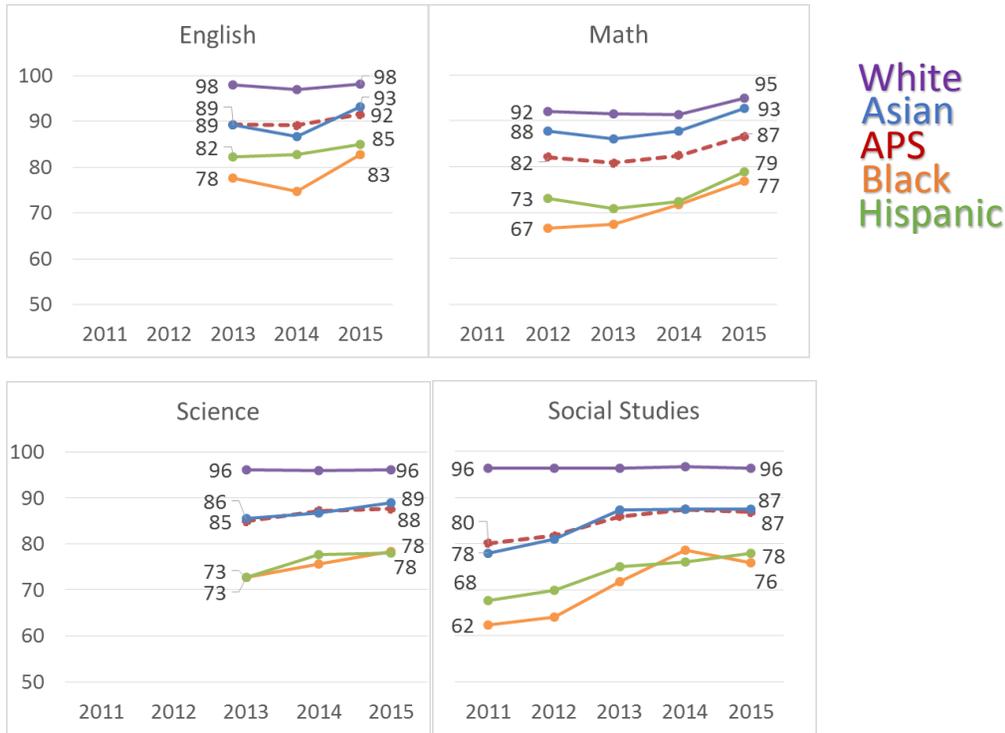
Figure 13: Middle School SOL Pass Rates



Note: The Virginia General Assembly eliminated the United States History I and II assessments given to students in grades 6 and 7. 2015 passing rates for Social Studies is limited to Grade 8 World Geography.

Figure 14 includes high school SOL pass rates for English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Gaps in pass rates have narrowed for all content areas at the high school level, with the most notable improvement in the area of Social Studies. On Social Studies tests from 2011 to 2015, the gap between white and Asian students decreased by nine percentage points, the gap between white and black students decreased by 13 percentage points, and the gap between white and Hispanic students decreased by 10 percentage points.

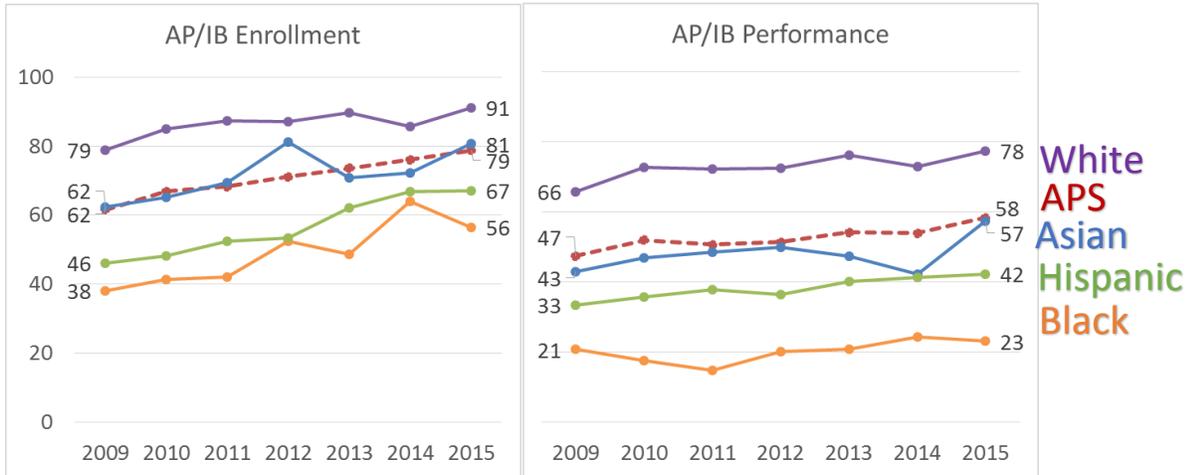
Figure 14: High School SOL Pass Rates



Enrollment and Performance in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate

Figure 15 shows the percentage of APS graduates who had enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) course by the time they graduated, as well as the percentage of graduates who earned a qualifying score (3 or higher for AP, 4 or higher for IB). While there has been a decrease in the enrollment gap for all groups, there has been an increase in the gap in the percentage of students earning a qualifying score for both black and Hispanic students, and the gaps are substantial. The gap between the percentage of black and white graduates who had taken at least one AP/IB course decreased from 41 to 35 percentage points from 2009 to 2015, but the gap in the percentage earning qualifying scores increased from 45 to 55 percentage points during the same time period. Likewise, the gap between the percentage of Hispanic and white graduates who had taken at least one AP/IB course decreased from 33 to 24 percentage points, but the gap in the percentage earning qualifying scores increased from 32 to 35 percentage points.

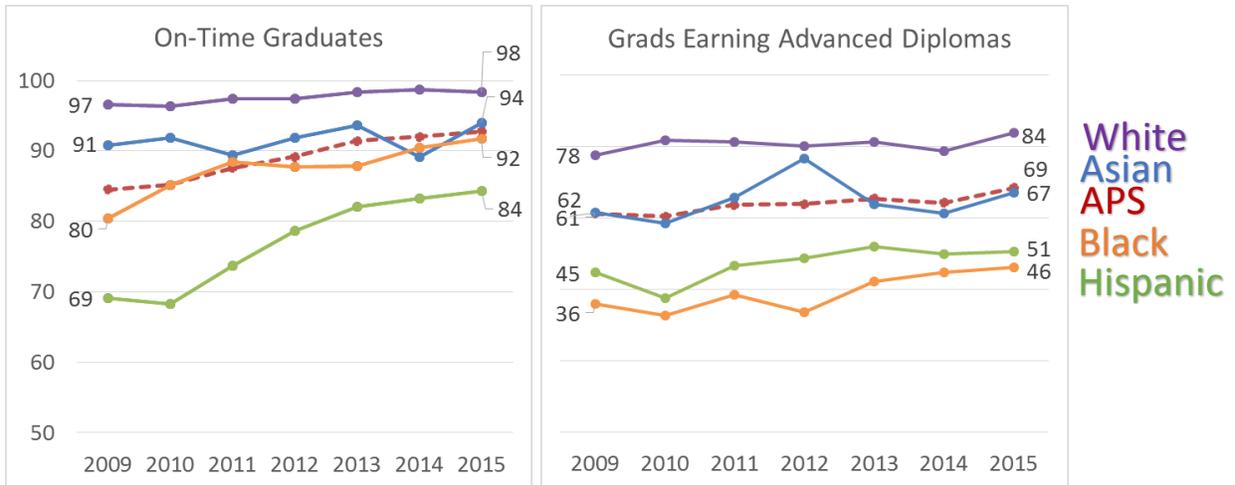
Figure 15: AP/IB Enrollment and Performance among Graduates



On-time Graduation and Advanced Diplomas

Figure 16 shows the percentage of APS students who graduated on time between 2009 and 2015, as well as the percentage of graduates who earned an advanced diploma. While there has been substantial progress narrowing the gap in on-time graduation for black and Hispanic students, there has not been much movement in the rate of students earning an advanced diploma.

Figure 16: On-time Graduation Rate and Advanced Diplomas Earned by Graduates



Participation and Performance on SAT and ACT

Figure 17 shows the percentage of APS graduates who had taken the SAT or ACT test by the time they graduated. Participation rates have increased among all student groups, but there has been little movement in narrowing gaps in participation rates between white students and Asian, black, and Hispanic students between 2009 and 2015. In 2015, there was a gap of 10, 24, and 37 percentage points for Asian, black, and Hispanic students, respectively.

Figure 17: SAT/ACT Participation among Graduates

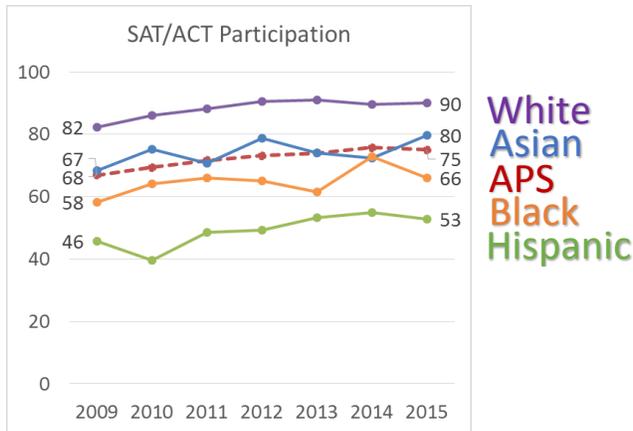
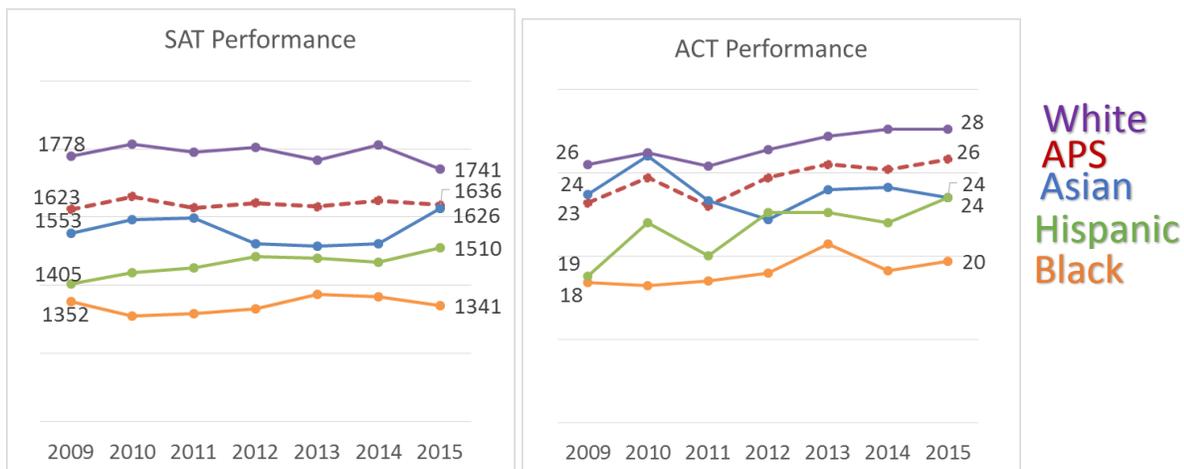


Figure 18 shows the average highest combined SAT and composite ACT scores for APS graduates. Average SAT scores show little movement overall although the average score for Hispanic students has shown an increase most years, and the average score for Asian students increased substantially in 2015. The gap in average scores between white and Hispanic students decreased by 142 points over this time period, but the gap between white and black students has remained relatively steady. Average ACT scores have increased for white, black, and Hispanic students and remained steady for Asian students.

Figure 18: SAT/ACT Performance among Graduates

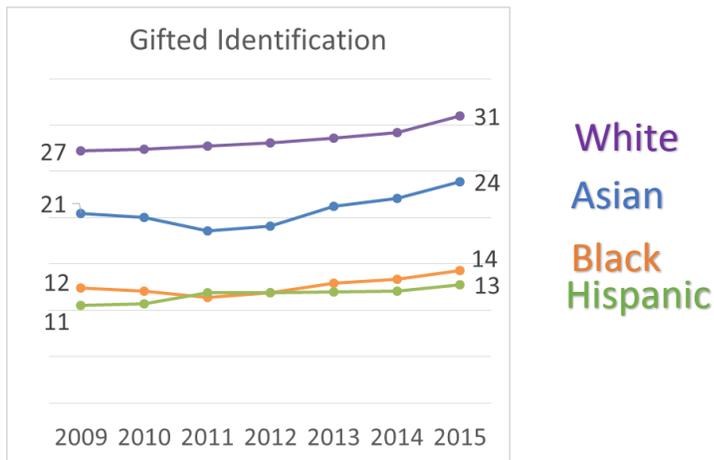


Identification of Gifted Students

Figure 19 shows the percentage of APS students identified as gifted between 2009 and 2015. There has been little movement in gaps in identification between student groups during this time. In 2015, there was a gap of 7, 17, and 18 percentage points for Asian, black, and Hispanic students, respectively.

In the fall of 2013, APS implemented universal screening tools in an attempt to address the gap in referrals and identification of gifted students. The Gifted Services evaluation, which will be reported out in September 2017, will address whether there has been a change in the rate of **referrals** for all student groups since the implementation of these tools (Naglieri for 2nd graders and CogAT for 4th graders).

Figure 19: Percentage of APS students identified as gifted

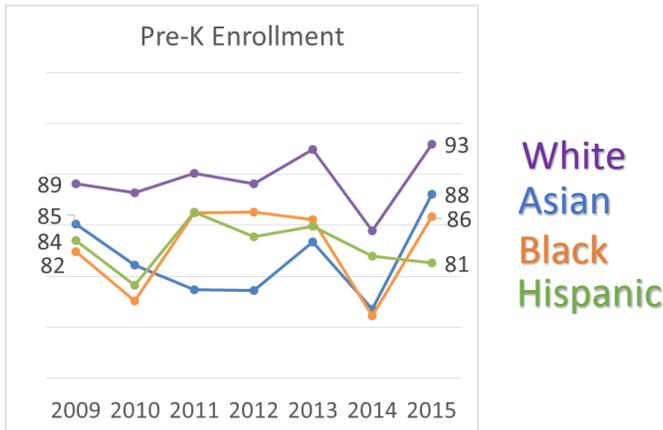


Pre-Kindergarten Enrollment

Annually, almost 1,200 children enroll in APS pre-kindergarten. For more than a decade, the School Board has expanded the number of Pre-K classrooms, with the goal of providing high quality early childhood educational programs to all APS students, and specifically for students who come from families of lesser financial means.

Figure 20 shows the percentage of kindergarten students who had enrolled in a Pre-K program prior to starting kindergarten. Among kindergarten students who enrolled in fall of 2015, there are differences in the proportion who entered with no Pre-K experience, ranging from 19% of Hispanic students, 14% of black students, 12% of Asian students and 7% of white students.

Figure 20: Percentage of Kindergarten students previously enrolled in a Pre-K program



The full report on Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators is available in **Appendix B5**.

Suspensions

Administrative Services compiles suspension data to submit to the state as part of the Virginia School Safety Results. Information Services prepares a report for that summarizes suspensions, students suspended and the related gaps by race/ethnicity by schools.

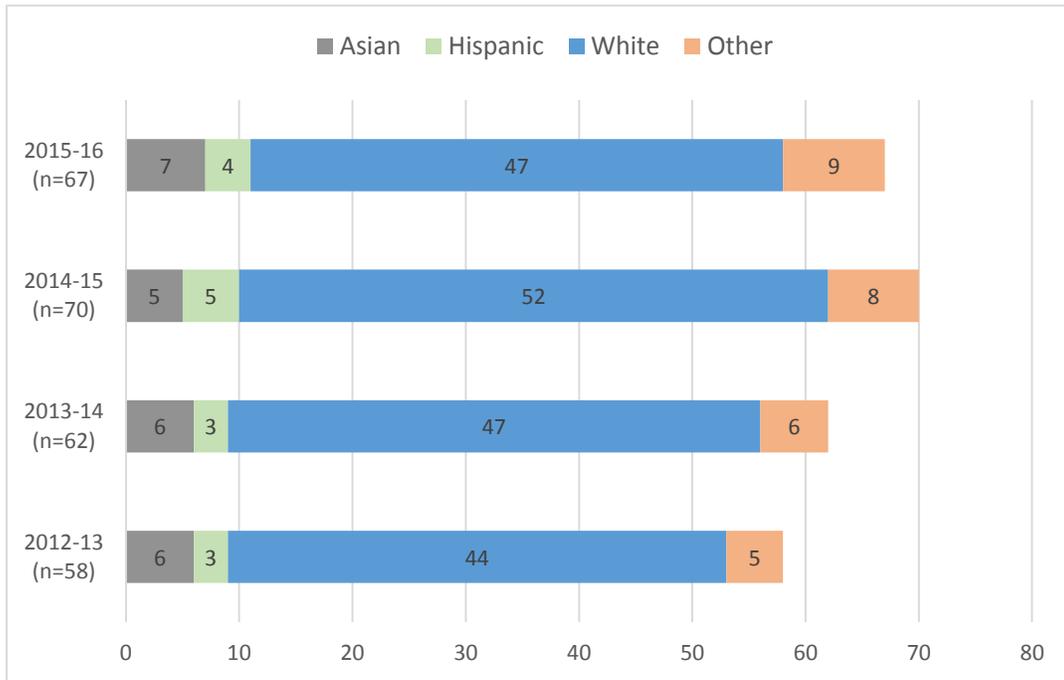
Suspension data is not included in this report as the most current available report reflects suspensions during the 2012-13 school year. Information Services is working to update the information.

Thomas Jefferson School for Science and Technology

APS high schools offer a comprehensive program to meet the intellectual and social/emotional needs of students. In addition to comprehensive high schools, Arlington Public Schools has a number of other options which families may wish to explore. One option is the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST), a Fairfax County public school designated by the Virginia Department of Education as a Governor's regional school offering a comprehensive college preparatory program emphasizing the sciences, mathematics, and technology. Any Arlington County student enrolled in grade 8 may apply, and if selected, attend TJHSST tuition-free. APS covers the cost of tuition.

Figure 21 shows the number of Arlington students enrolled at TJHSST for the past four years, by race and ethnicity. White students constitute a substantial majority, outnumbering all other groups combined each year. In the four years included in this report, no black students from Arlington have enrolled at TJHSST.

Figure 21: Number of Arlington Students Enrolled at TJHSST by Race/Ethnicity



Observations of Student-Teacher Interactions

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool developed at the University of Virginia’s Curry School of Education to analyze the interactions between teachers and their students. Research shows that students in classrooms where teachers earn higher CLASS scores achieve at higher levels than their peers in classrooms with lower CLASS scores.¹

CLASS observations were conducted across levels and content areas during nine weeks throughout the 2014-15 school year. For purposes of this evaluation, secondary CLASS observations have been analyzed to assess whether there are differences in average CLASS scores depending on the race/ethnicity of the students enrolled in the observed course as identified in the student information system (Synergy). This analysis was not possible at the elementary level due to a lack of detailed course schedule information.

Table 5 outlines the dimensions included in each domain of the CLASS tool. Dimensions are scored on a 7-point scale consisting of Low (1, 2), Mid (3, 4, 5), and High (6, 7) ranges.

Table 5: CLASS Domains and Dimensions

Domain	Dimension	Grade Level	Measures
Emotional Support	<i>Positive Climate</i>	K – 12	Emotional connection among teachers and students, verbal and non-verbal

¹ Observations of effective teacher-student interactions in secondary school classrooms: predicting student achievement with the classroom assessment scoring system – Secondary (<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED556047.pdf>)

Domain	Dimension	Grade Level	Measures
	Teacher Sensitivity	K – 12	Teacher awareness and responsiveness to students’ academic and developmental needs
	Regard for Student/Adolescent Perspectives	K – 3	Degree to which lessons tap into students’ interests and promote responsibility
		4 – 12	Degree to which lessons value students’ ideas and opinions and promote autonomy
Classroom Organization	Behavior Management	K – 12	Teachers’ use of clear behavioral expectations and effectiveness at redirecting misbehavior
	Productivity	K – 12	How well the teacher manages time and routines so instructional time is maximized
	Negative Climate²	K – 12	Expressed negativity among teachers and students, verbal and non-verbal
Instructional Support	Concept Development	K – 3	Use of instructional discussions to promote higher level thinking skills
	Content Understanding	4 – 12	Depth of lesson and approaches used to support comprehension
	Analysis and Inquiry	4 – 12	Degree of higher-level thinking skills, such as metacognition (i.e., thinking about thinking)
	Instructional Learning Formats³	K – 12	Teachers’ employment of lessons and materials to support different learning styles
	Quality of Feedback	K – 12	Degree to which feedback expands learning and understanding
	Language Modeling	K – 3	Quality and amount of language-stimulation and facilitation techniques
	Instructional Dialogue	4 – 12	Use of purposeful dialogue distributed among students and with teacher

² This dimension falls under the Emotional Support domain at the lower elementary level.

³ This dimension falls under the Classroom Organization domain at the lower elementary level.

Domain	Dimension	Grade Level	Measures
Student Engagement		4 – 12	Degree to which all students are focused and participating

CLASS domains and dimensions are described in detail in **Appendix B1**. The alignment between CLASS dimensions and APS best instructional practices can be found in **Appendix B2**.

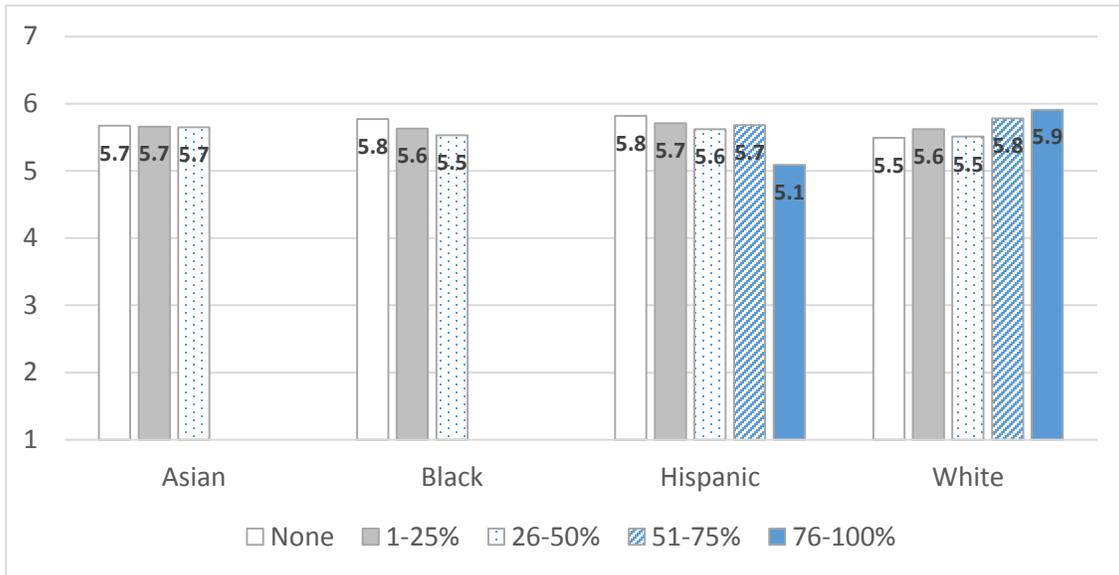
A total of 386 middle school classes were observed during the 2014-15 school year, which represents 21% of available classes, with a margin of error of 4.4 at the 95% confidence level. At the high school level, 356 classes were observed, representing 15% of available classes and a margin of error of 4.8. A sample of data is generally considered representative of the overall population when the margin of error is 5 or less.

Based on enrollment data, each observed class was categorized as having the following percentages of Asian, black, Hispanic, or white students: none, 1-25%, 26-50%, 51-75%, or 76-100%. Average CLASS scores were then disaggregated by these ranges to determine if there were educationally significant differences in CLASS scores depending on the racial/ethnic makeup of the class. Typically, half a point to a point difference is considered to be educationally significant; in other words, a difference that would impact outcomes for students⁴. **Figure 22-Figure 24** display average scores for CLASS domains that showed **educationally significant differences** among observed classrooms by race/ethnicity of enrolled students.

Figure 22 shows average **Student Engagement** scores for middle school observations. Average scores increase as the percentage of white students exceeds 50%, and decrease as the percentage of Hispanic students exceeds 75%. The average Student Engagement score is 0.6 to 0.7 points lower for classes with high percentages of Hispanic students (76-100%) than for classes with no Hispanic students or 1-25% Hispanic students.

⁴ Teachstone, personal communication, June 13, 2014 and January 5, 2016

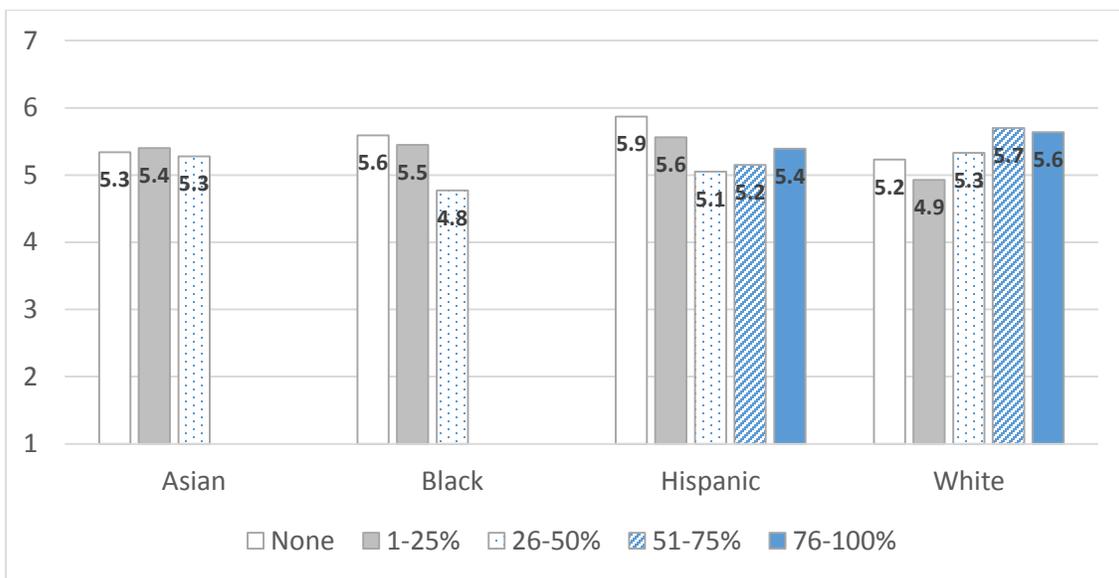
Figure 22: Middle School Student Engagement CLASS Scores by Race



Observations did not include enough classes with more than 50% of students who were Asian or black to include in this graph.

Figure 23 shows average **Emotional Support** scores for high school observations. Generally, average scores increase as the percentage of white students increases, although the average score in classes with no white students is higher than in those that are 1-25% white. There is a reverse trend for black students: the greater the percentage of black students in a class, the lower the average score. This pattern holds true for classes that are less than 51% Hispanic, but average scores increase as the proportion of Hispanic students becomes greater than 50%. The average Emotional Support score is 0.7 to 0.8 points lower for classes that are 26-50% black than classes that have no black students or 1-25% black students.

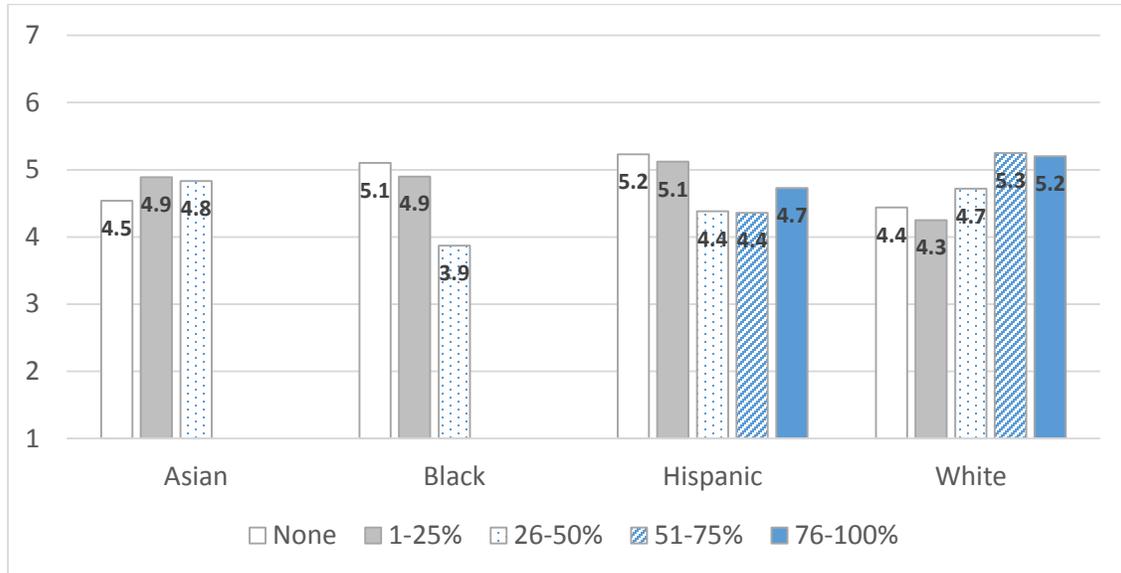
Figure 23: High School Emotional Support CLASS Scores by Race



Observations did not include enough classes with more than 50% of students who were Asian or black to include in this graph.

Figure 24 shows average **Instructional Support** scores for high school observations. This is the domain with the highest discrepancies among different classes by racial/ethnic makeup. Similar to Emotional Support, there is a general trend that average scores increase as the percentage of white students increases, with a reverse trend for black and Hispanic students. The average Instructional Support score is 0.4 to 0.5 points lower for classes that are 76-100% Hispanic than classes that have no Hispanic students or 1-25% Hispanic students. There is a difference of 1.2 points between classes with no black students and classes that are 26-50% black.

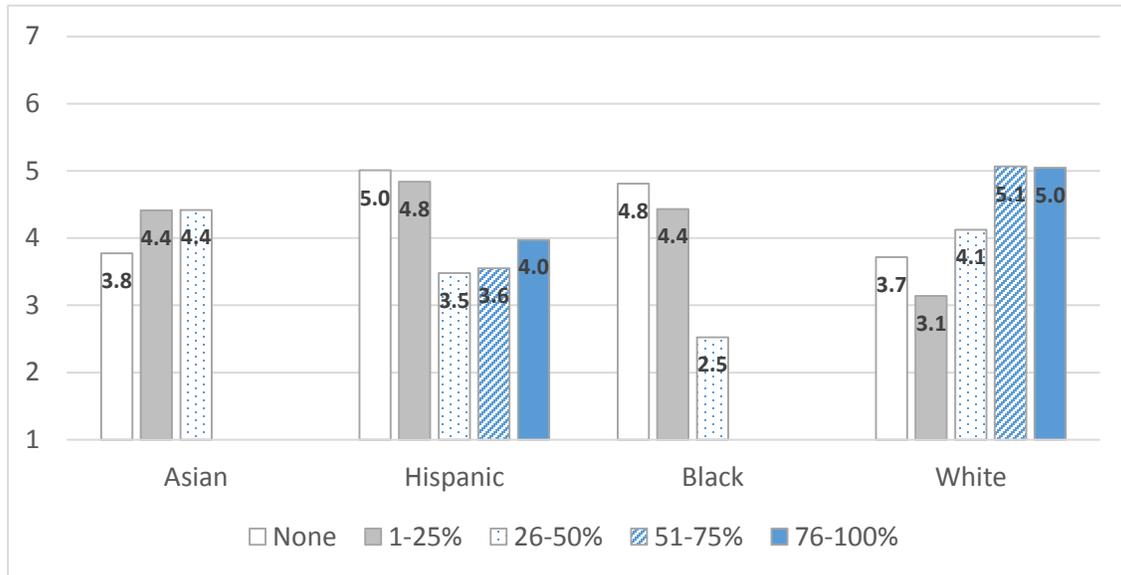
Figure 24: High School Instructional Support CLASS Scores by Race



Observations did not include enough classes with more than 50% of students who were Asian or black to include in this graph.

Within the domain of Instructional Support, the greatest discrepancies occur within the dimension of **Analysis and Inquiry**, as displayed in **Figure 25**. Within this dimension there is a negative 1-point difference between classes with no Hispanic students and classes that are 76-100% Hispanic, and a negative 2.3-point difference between classes with no black students and classes that are 26-50% black. Conversely, there is a positive 1.3-point difference between classes with no white students and classes that are 76-100% white.

Figure 25: High School Analysis and Inquiry CLASS Scores by Race



Observations did not include enough classes with more than 50% of students who were Asian or black to include in this graph.

The full report on CLASS domains and dimensions is available in **Appendix B3**.

SECTION 2: FINDINGS

Evaluation Question #1: How effectively was the Minority Achievement program implemented?

To address this question, the evaluation focused on several areas: familiarity with the Minority Achievement program, the role of the Minority Achievement Coordinator, and student participation.

Familiarity with Program

Several surveys and focus groups aimed to gauge the level of familiarity with Minority Achievement programs and services among staff, parents, and students. Teachers, administrators, and parents of minority students at schools with Minority Achievement Coordinators received a survey administered in winter 2014-15 (staff) and spring 2015 (parents). In addition, a series of focus groups was conducted by an external evaluator in spring 2015 with participating students and parents of participating students.

Teachers and Administrators

Figure 26 and Figure 27 show staff responses to the question, “How familiar are you with the work of the Minority Achievement Coordinator at your school?” Responses indicate that P-scale staff (administrators) are more likely to be familiar with the work of the Minority Achievement Coordinator than T-scale staff (instructional staff), and that high school T-scale staff are somewhat more likely to be familiar with coordinators’ work than elementary and middle school T-scale staff. Eighty-one percent of P-scale staff indicated that they are *extremely or very familiar* with the work of the coordinator at their school, whereas 41% of high school T-scale respondents selected this response and 32% of elementary and middle school T-scale respondents selected this response. Among T-scale staff, teachers were less likely than other T-scale staff (e.g. librarians, specialists, coaches, counselors, etc.) to be familiar with the work of the coordinator (56% vs 33% extremely/very familiar).

Figure 26: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: How familiar are you with the work of the Minority Achievement Coordinator at your school? (By Pay Scale and School Level)

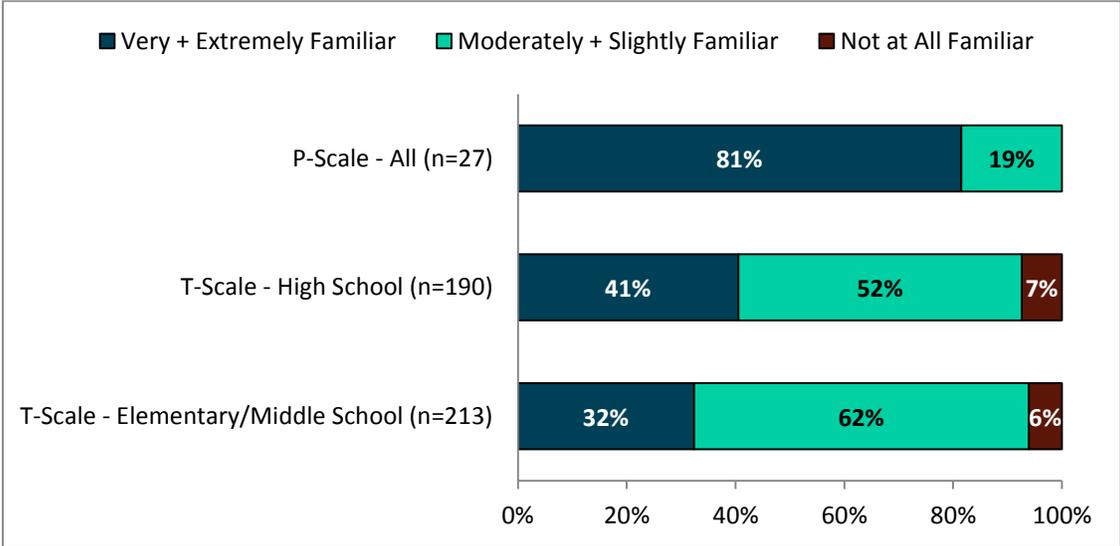


Figure 27: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: How familiar are you with the work of the Minority Achievement Coordinator at your school? (By Teacher vs. “Other” T-Scale)

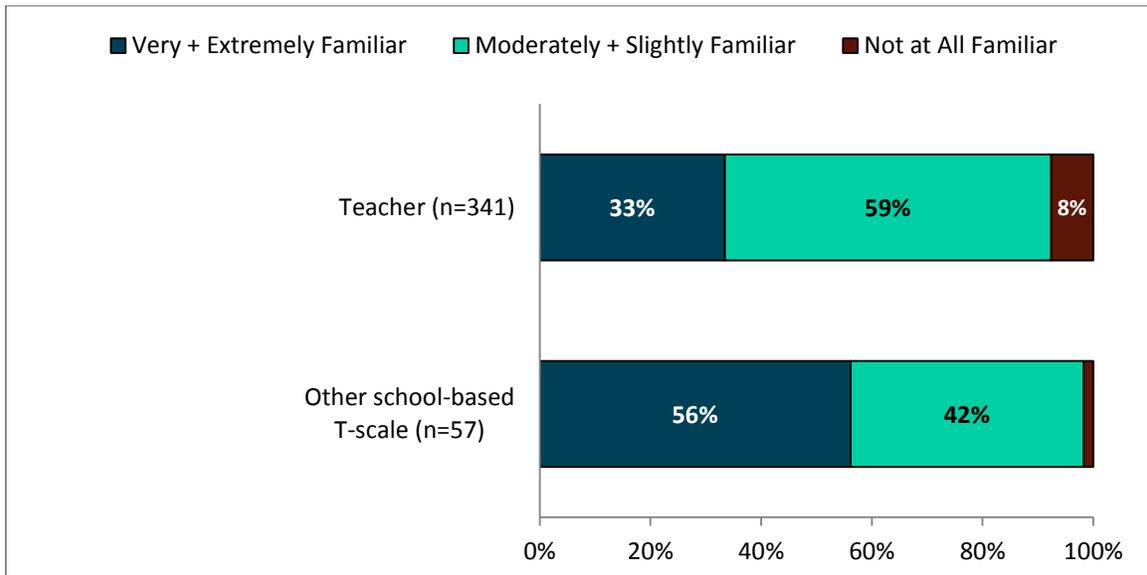


Figure 28 shows the percentage of respondents selecting *extremely* or *very familiar* for the question, “How familiar are you with the following programs and services offered by the Office of Minority Achievement?” Respondents are most familiar with **affinity or cohort groups** and **individual student advising**. They are also fairly familiar with **college preparation-related services**, such as the George Mason University Early Identification Program. Respondents are least familiar with programs and services for **summer opportunities** and **preparing students to transition** to new schools in APS.

There are some differences between elementary/middle school T-Scale respondents and high school T-Scale respondents.⁵ High school respondents are generally more likely to be aware of activities and programs for students (including field trips, summer opportunities, etc.), while elementary and middle school respondents are more likely to be aware of activities and programs for parents.

⁵ Some elementary and middle school responses were excluded for certain questions pertaining to college readiness, etc.

Figure 28: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: How familiar are you with the following programs and services offered by the Office of Minority Achievement? (Extremely/Very Familiar, by Pay Scale and School Level)

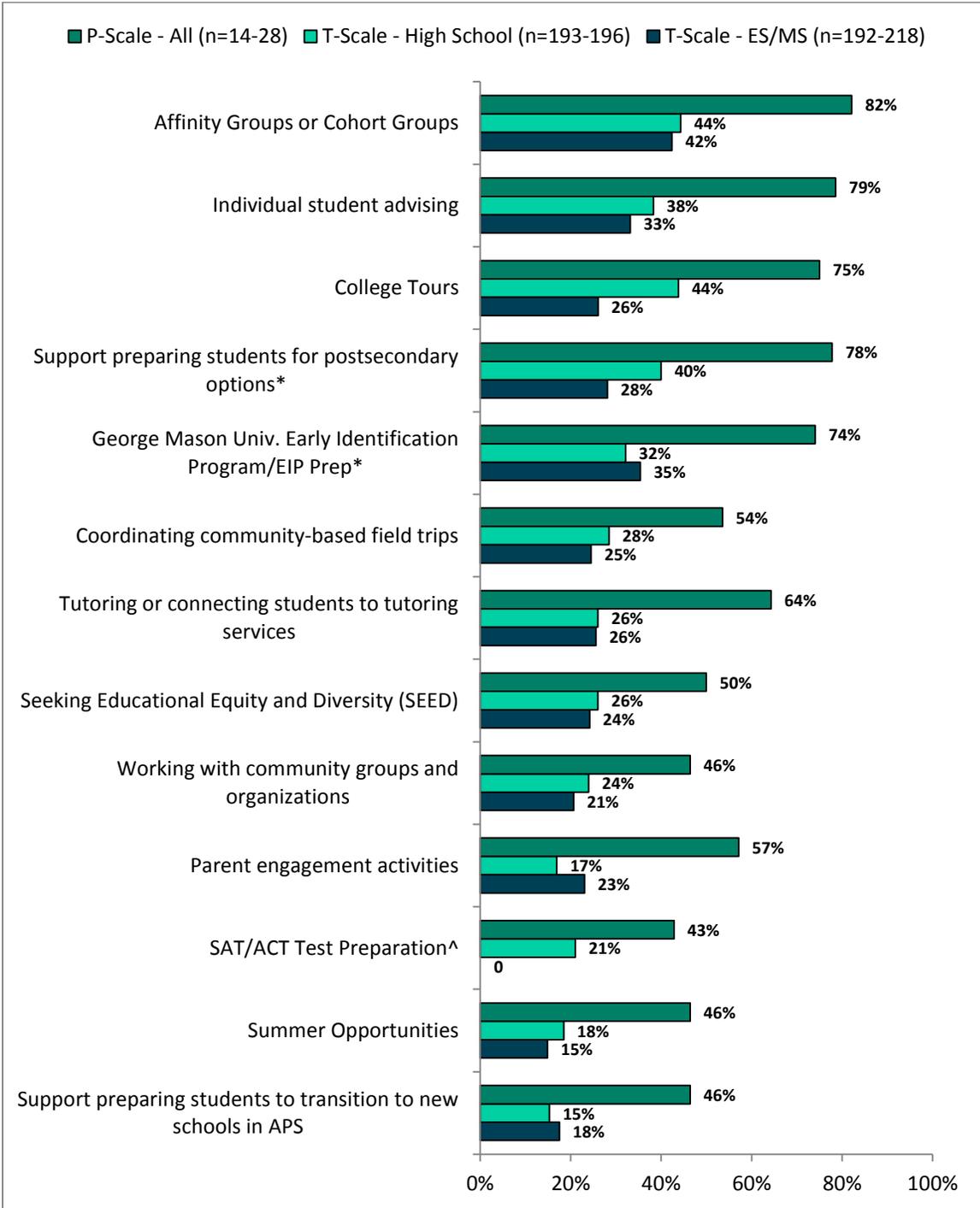
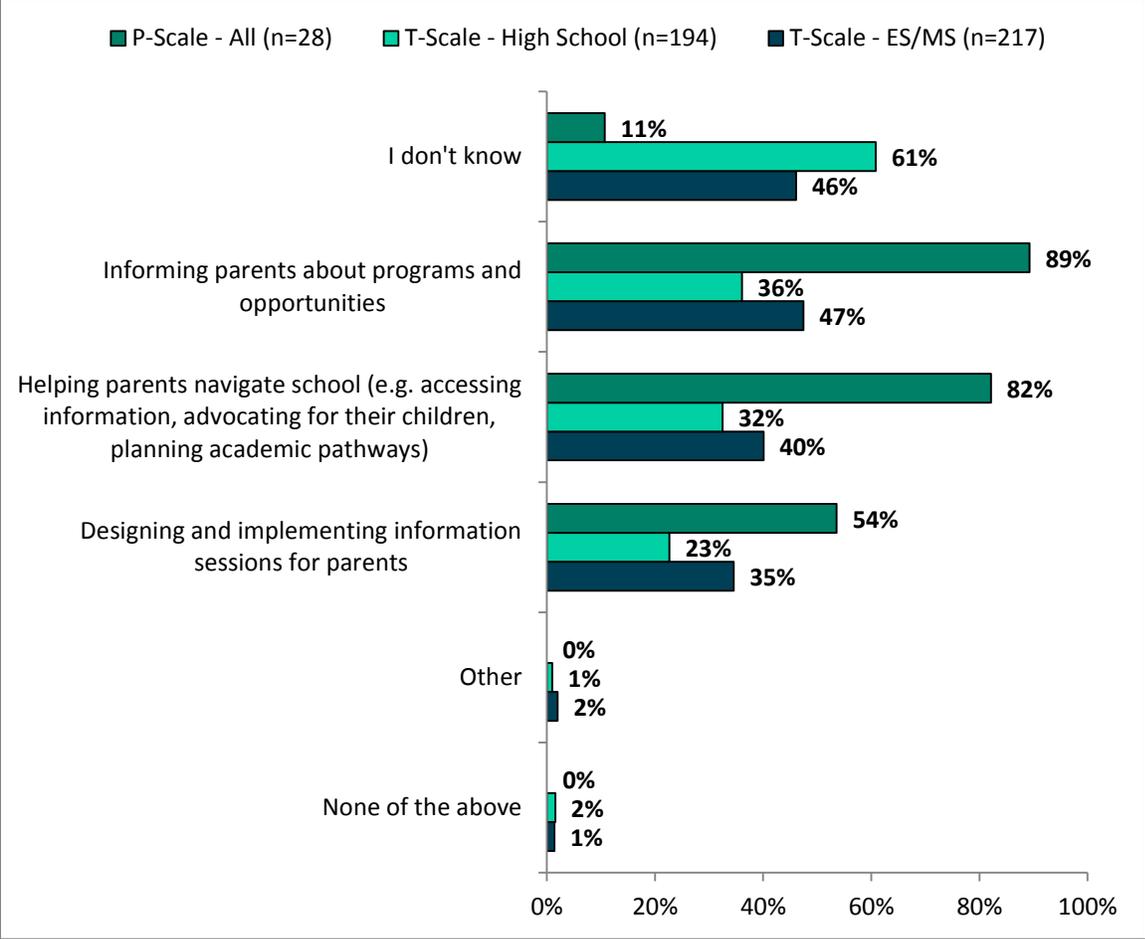


Figure 29 shows the percentage of respondents indicating that the Minority Achievement Coordinator provides indicated services for parents at their school. While 61% of T-scale high school and 46% of T-scale elementary and middle school respondents do not know what services are offered to parents, only

11% of P-Scale respondents selected this response. Overall, elementary and middle school T-Scale respondents are more aware of services for parents than high school T-scale respondents.

Figure 29: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: Which of the following services does the Minority Achievement Coordinator offer to parents at your school? (By Pay Scale and School Level)



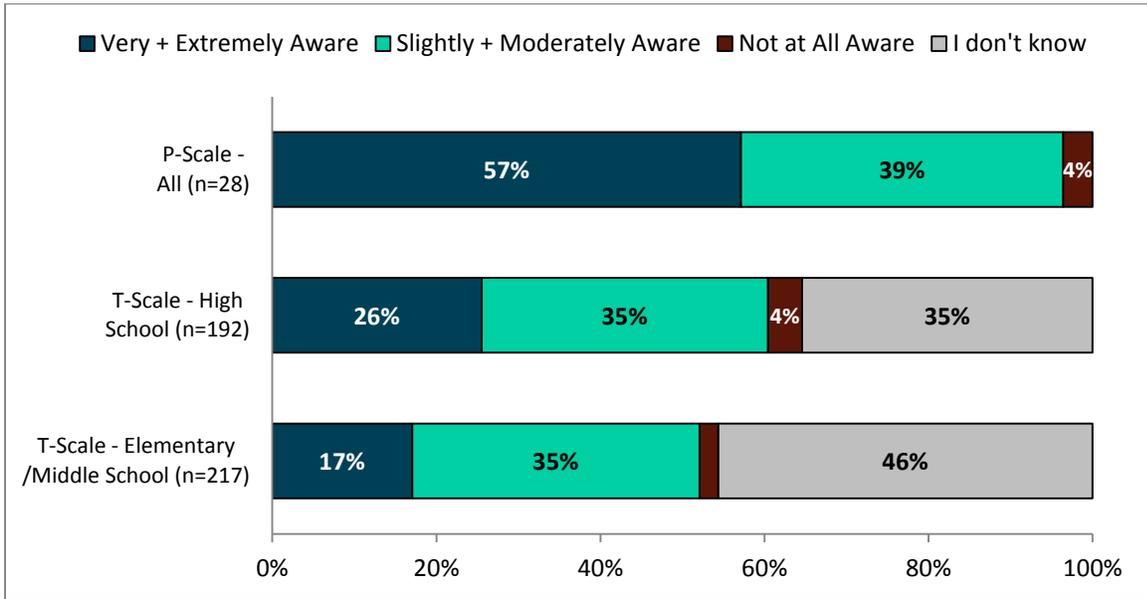
Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

The full report on the staff survey is available in **Appendix C1**.

Parents

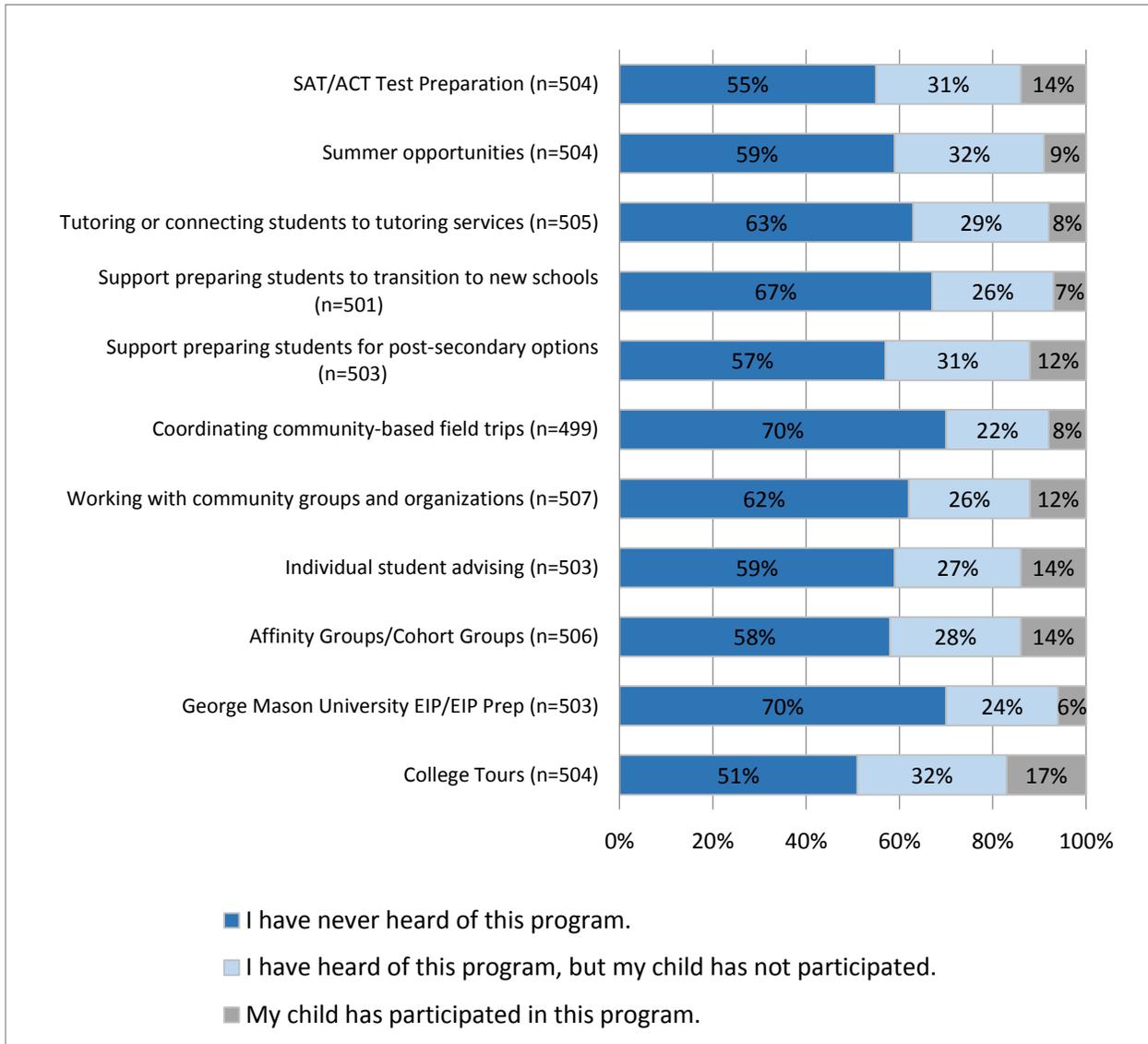
Staff were also asked to share their perceptions of the level of awareness among students and their families about resources and opportunities for minority students. **Figure 30** displays the responses to this question. P-scale respondents were far more likely to believe that minority students and families are aware of resources and opportunities, with only four percent indicating that they are *not at all aware*, and 57% indicating that they are *extremely* or *very aware*. In contrast, just 26% of high school T-scale staff, and 17% of elementary and middle school T-scale staff, believe that students and their families are *extremely* or *very aware* of resources and opportunities. Thirty-five percent of high school T-scale staff, and 46% of elementary and middle school T-scale staff, reported that they do not know what the level of awareness is among students and their families.

Figure 30: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: How aware are minority students and their families of the resources and opportunities available for minority students? (By Pay Scale and School Level)



Several questions on the parent survey addressed the level of awareness among parents about the Minority Achievement program at their child’s school. The survey was sent to all parents of students who attended schools with a coordinator and whose race was listed as something other than white in the student information system. Just over half of all respondents (55%) reported that they were not aware that there is a Minority Achievement Coordinator at their child’s school, while 45% reported that they were aware. **Figure 31** displays parents’ level of familiarity with a list of specific programs and services offered by the Minority Achievement Program. In all cases, a majority of respondents had never heard of the program or service. Generally between a quarter and a third of respondents reported that they had heard of a program or service, but their child did not participate. Between 6-17% of respondents reported that their child had participated in each program or service.

Figure 31: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: How familiar are you with the following programs and services offered by the Office of Minority Achievement?



The full report on the parent survey is available in **Appendix C2**.

Coordinator Role

The current position description for secondary Minority Achievement Coordinators describes the duties and responsibilities as the following:

- The coordinator works collaboratively with designated staff to address the needs of targeted students, and to design and implement ongoing initiatives that support student achievement. This includes:
 - working with students individually and in small groups
 - meeting with teachers and other staff to support students' academic success

- matching students with resources within and outside of the school system, such as award ceremonies, scholarships, community based field trips, seminars, tutorial and mentoring programs, prep classes, and academic summer programs
- meeting with parents individually and in small groups
- working with students, staff and families to help students transition from middle to high school
- Working with students, staff and families to help students transition to post-secondary education
- other duties as assigned
- Monitor student achievement through quarterly data collection and analysis
- Monitor and provide support for students in programs such as the George Mason Early Identification Program, S.O.A.R. (Yorktown), The Boys Cohort Programs (Gunston Middle School and Wakefield High School), and Emerging Scholars (Swanson Middle School)
- Maintain updated student profile sheets and academic plans
- Provide submissions to newsletters and other APS publications
- Work with families to improve the partnership between home and schools
- Serve as an advocate for targeted students
- Support professional development focusing on the impact of race and culture on learning

The position description for the one elementary position includes many of the same responsibilities, but puts less emphasis on individual work with students, and more emphasis on developing community partnerships. The full elementary position description is available in **Appendix D1**. The full secondary position description is available in **Appendix D2**.

Alignment of Program Goals and Coordinator Activities

During the 2014-15 school year, Minority Achievement Coordinators completed running records for three two-week periods:

- September 22 - October 3
- January 26 – February 6
- April 13 – April 24

The purpose of the running records was to document the day-to-day activities of the coordinators in order to evaluate how their activities align with the stated goals of the program. The running record template provided by the Office of Planning and Evaluation included several data entry categories, including the amount of time devoted to a given task, the specific nature of the task, and the number of participants involved in the task. Using an unaided, free response format, Minority Achievement Coordinators entered each activity/task and provided a description. Coordinators also indicated the amount of time spent on each activity and the number of participants. The Office of Planning and Evaluation then coded activities and contracted with Hanover Research (Hanover) to complete an analysis of the data.

Nature of Activities

Table 6 shows the percentage of coordinators' time spent on different types of activities by school level. **Providing advising and academic support** is a primary job function. Across levels, coordinators spend approximately 18 percent of their time engaged with students in advising and support activities, and an additional 12 percent **facilitating meetings and discussions with students**. They spend 14 percent of their time supporting **leadership development**, 12 percent of their time **supporting cultural awareness**, and 4 percent of their time **supporting social skills development**. Cultural awareness initiatives occupy 15 to 17 percent of Minority Achievement Coordinators' time at the elementary and middle school levels, compared to 5 percent at the high school level.

Table 6: Running Records: Activities by Level (Percentage of Total Time)

Activity	Percent of Time Allocated			
	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Overall Average
Provide advising/academic support	26%	15%	20%	18%
Plan for upcoming event/trip/student group meeting	26%	16%	14%	17%
Meet/communicate with teachers/staff	10%	15%	12%	14%
Facilitate meeting or discussion with group of students	5%	9%	18%	12%
Student event/trip	4%	11%	8%	9%
Administrative	8%	8%	9%	8%
Meet/communicate with parents/families	5%	8%	5%	6%
Recruit/identify/provide support for students for opportunities, events, programs, groups	0%	9%	3%	6%
Taking students on a college trip	0%	4%	5%	4%
Attend professional development	10%	2%	0%	2%
Provide support for the college application process/obtaining scholarships and financial aid	0%	1%	4%	2%
Network/communicate with community partners	6%	2%	0%	2%

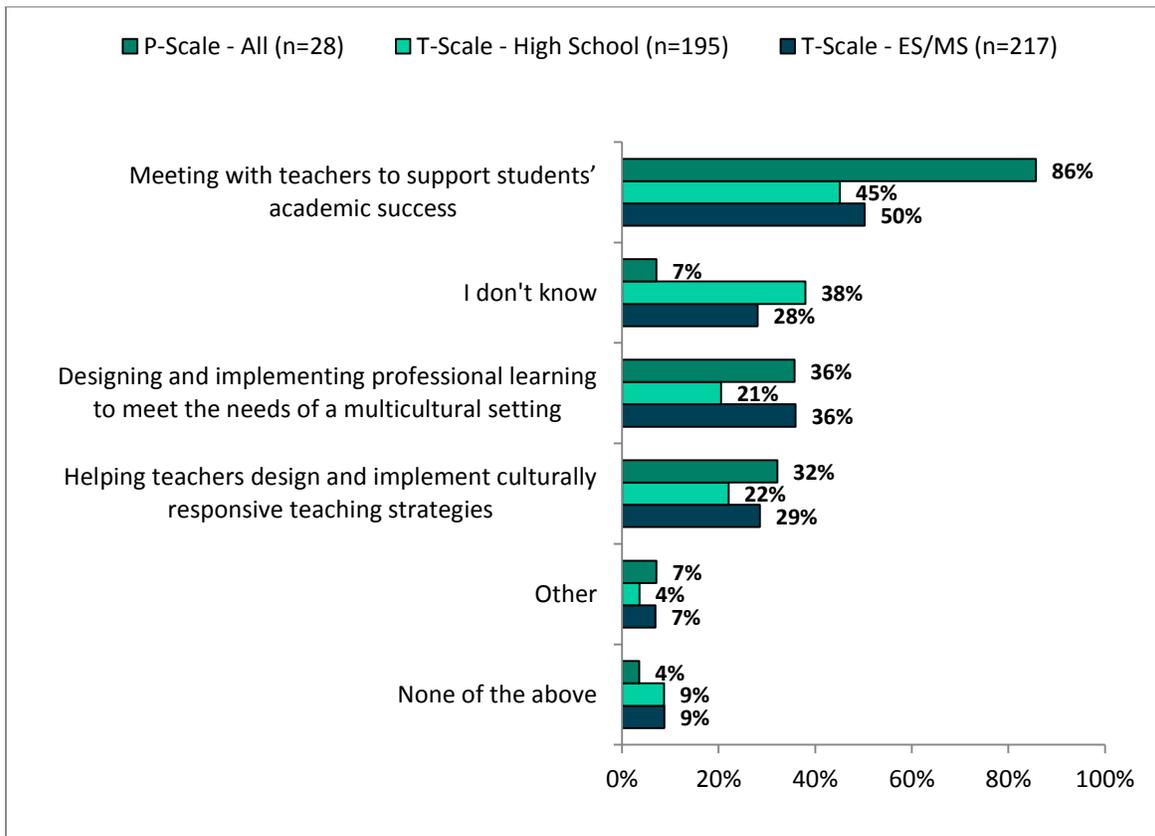
Activity	Percent of Time Allocated			
	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Overall Average
Lunch/bus duty	0%	2%	0%	1%
Speaking with/supporting Alumni	0%	0%	1%	1%

Teachers, administrators, and parents of minority students at schools with Minority Achievement Coordinators were also asked to share their perceptions of the role of coordinators in surveys administered in winter 2014-15 (staff) and spring 2015 (parents).

Staff Perceptions

Figure 32 displays staff responses to the question, “Which of the following services does the Minority Achievement Coordinator offer to teachers at your school?” Responses are reported separately for P-Scale staff, high school T-scale staff, and elementary and middle school T-scale staff. Respondents were most likely to report that the Minority Achievement Coordinator at their school **meets with teachers to support students' academic success**.

Figure 32: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: Which of the following services does the Minority Achievement Coordinator offer to teachers at your school? (By Pay Scale and School Level)



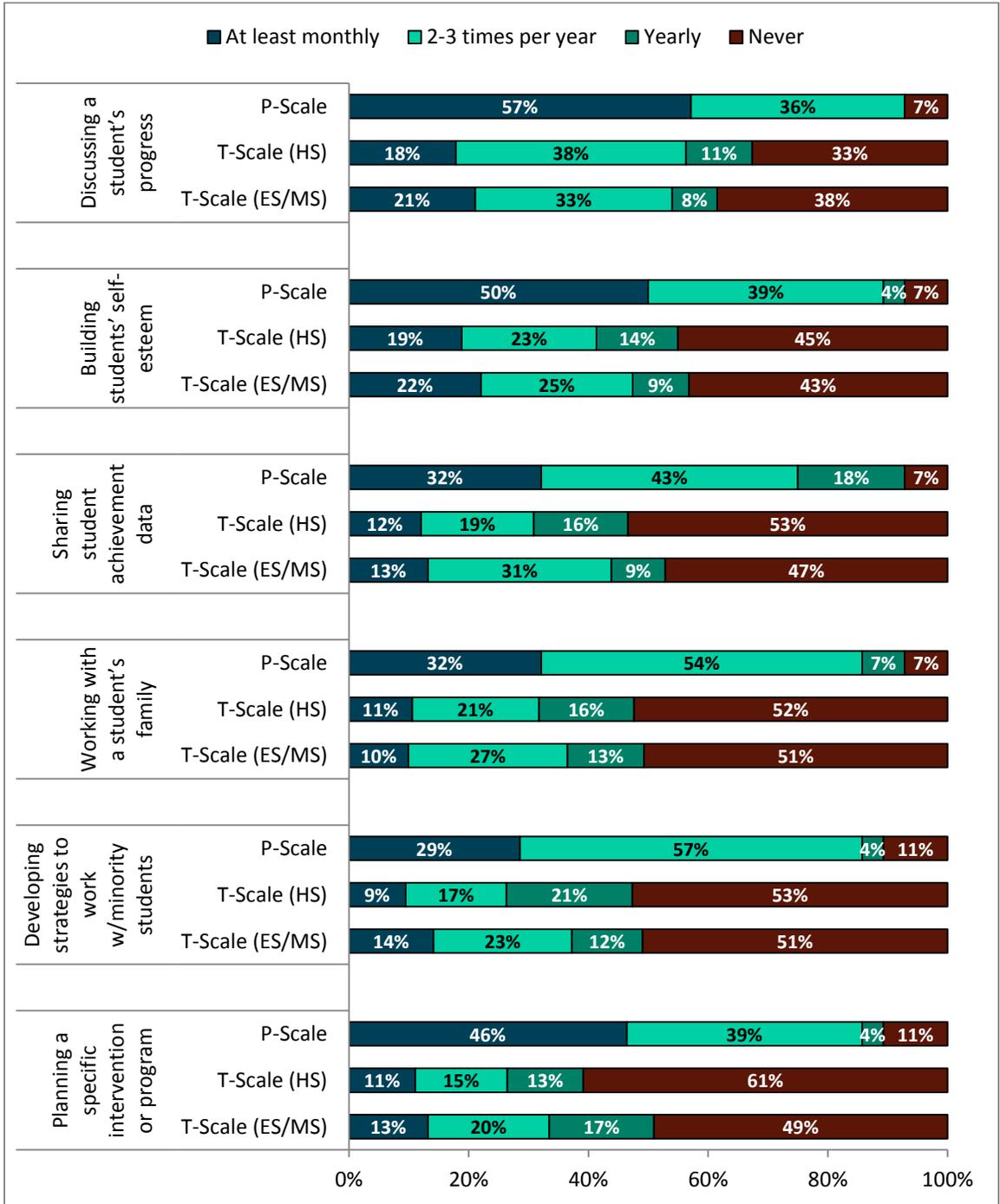
Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

Figure 33 displays respondents' answers to the question, "How frequently do you collaborate with the Minority Achievement Coordinator for the following?" Respondents indicated that they collaborate most frequently with the Minority Achievement Coordinator in **discussing a student's progress** or **building a student's self-esteem**, while the least frequent types of collaboration are **developing new strategies to work with minority students** and **planning a specific intervention or program**.

These responses differ substantially when looking at results segmented by pay scale and school level. P-Scale respondents report engaging in all types of collaboration more frequently than either level of T-Scale respondents. Only approximately one-tenth of P-Scale respondents indicate that they never engage in any of collaboration types, while 33 to 61 percent of T-Scale respondents indicate that these types of collaboration never occur.

An open-ended question asked about additional ways in which they collaborate with the Minority Achievement Coordinator. Respondents primarily mentioned **informal help** and **advice when needed about particular students or families**. Others noted collaboration in terms of **events, groups, and extracurricular activities**. Others indicated that they would like more collaboration, but that the Minority Achievement Coordinator is only a part-time position, which does not leave enough time to help everyone.

Figure 33: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: How frequently do you collaborate with the Minority Achievement Coordinator for the following? (By Pay Scale and School Level)



(T-Scale - Elementary/Middle School n=211-213)

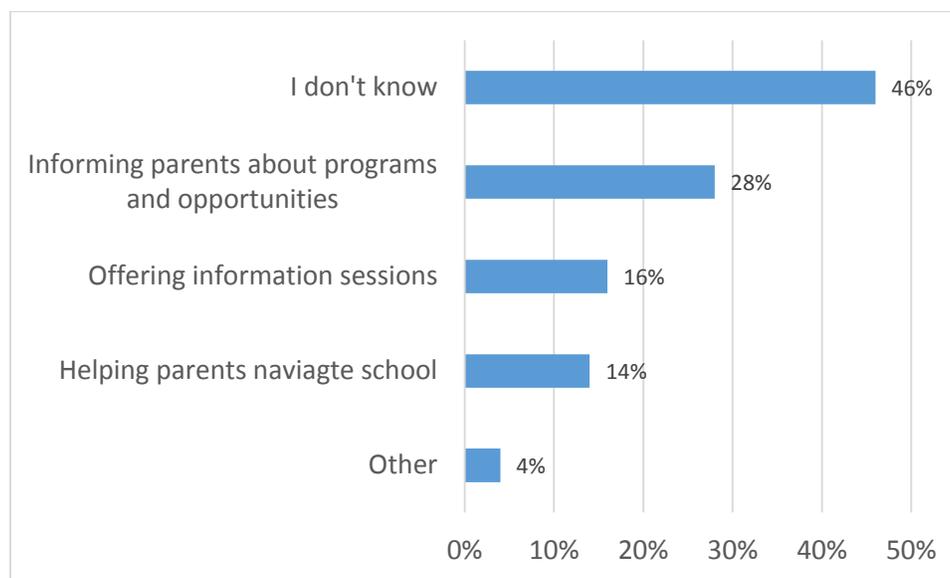
(T-Scale - High School n=189-191)

(P-Scale - All n=28)

Parent Perceptions

Figure 34 displays parent responses to the question, “Which of the following services does the Minority Achievement Coordinator currently offer to you as a parent/guardian?” Almost half reported that they don’t know. About a third were aware of the coordinator’s role **informing parents about programs and opportunities** (28%), and 14% reported that the coordinator **helps parents navigate school**.

Figure 34: Minority Achievement Parent Survey: Which of the following services does the Minority Achievement Coordinator currently offer to you as a parent/guardian? (n=530)



The full analysis of the running records can be found in **Appendix D4**. The full staff survey report is available in **Appendix C1**. The full parent survey report is available in **Appendix C2**.

Coordinator Interactions with Students, Parents, and Staff

In the spring of 2015, APS contracted with an external evaluator to conduct a series of focus groups about the Minority Achievement Program, including a focus group with all nine of the coordinators. One theme that emerged is coordinators’ belief that **forging relationships with students is central to their positive impact**. In other words, they expressed a belief that a lot of good work and impact happens outside of formal groups. High school coordinators, especially, described drop-in visits at lunch and other times during which students connect with one another and with the coordinator. Such time together allows for one-on-one support that ranges from managing college applications to handling day-to-day school matters to addressing life challenges.

There are a lot of kids that just come to my office that want to talk to me. Some of that is because of the connections I have through those groups but other kids know and say [to other students at school] that you can come to me. (Coordinator)

...a lot of the groups are somewhat informal groups.... A lot of it is also a one-on-one counseling. A lot of it is doing paperwork with kids. So college acceptances, calling the college, making sure their residence stuff is in, making sure they know how to pay the cost. [This is needed] because

the parents often may not have that capacity to help the kids...that “roll-up-the-sleeves” type of work. I do groups but a lot of my time is spent working one-on-one with kids. (Coordinator)

In focus groups with students who participate in Minority Achievement programs/services, participants echoed the importance of the relationship between the coordinator and students.

He just really believes in you. ...Honestly, he does truly care about the students that he works with and he builds a personal relationship with them. Then he becomes comfortable with them, like, “No [don’t take the easy path], I know that you can do this.” Even if it’s something that maybe the student hasn’t tackled before, he pushes them to do it because he knows that it will benefit them. He always tries to find opportunities for us and says, “You can put this on your resume,” or “This will prepare you for what you want to do in college or what you want to major in.” He just really pushes you to do your best. (HS Student)

In open-ended responses on the staff survey, many teachers mentioned building personal relationships as a particular strength of the coordinator at their school:

[The coordinator] has been extremely helpful interceding with some of my students who have been underachieving, and/or are a little overwhelmed by their first AP and IB classes. When these kids are hearing the same messages from both me and the Minority Achievement Coordinator (with whom they already have a relationship) it builds positive relationships inside my own classroom. (HS Teacher)

I have seen the Minority Achievement Coordinator at my school...offer a lot of social/emotional support to students of color. She and her programs serve as a way for many students who feel "out of place" or "don't belong" at [school] become engaged and more connected. I have seen the tremendous value that these programs have served for many of my 12th grade students. [HS Teacher]

The minority achievement coordinator has built relationships with students and their families. They sometimes serve as parents to the students and communicate with teachers as needed. [MS Teacher]

Coordinators provided information in the running record about the number and type of participants for each task they listed. They spend 85% of their time working with students, teachers, and parents, and just 15% of their time working alone. Approximately 16% of their time is working individually with another stakeholder. Coordinators spend nearly half (49%) of their work hours working with groups of six individuals or more. Overall, data suggest that coordinators’ time is distributed fairly evenly between solitary, one-on-one, and small group settings.

Figure 35 shows the distribution of the number of participants for each activity by level. Middle and high school coordinators spend 19% and 14% of their time, respectively, working alone. By contrast, the elementary school coordinator spends just 1% of his time working alone. Relative to the district average, the elementary coordinator is more likely to work in one-on-one (31%) and large-group settings with over 20 participants (36%).

Figure 35: Running Records: Number of Participants in Activity/Task by School Level (Percentage of Total Time)

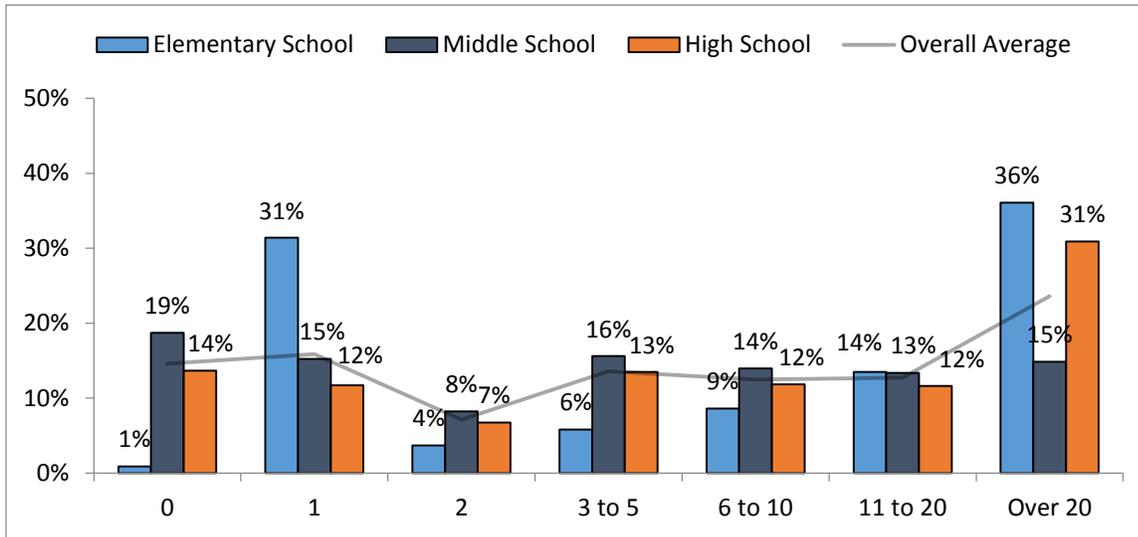
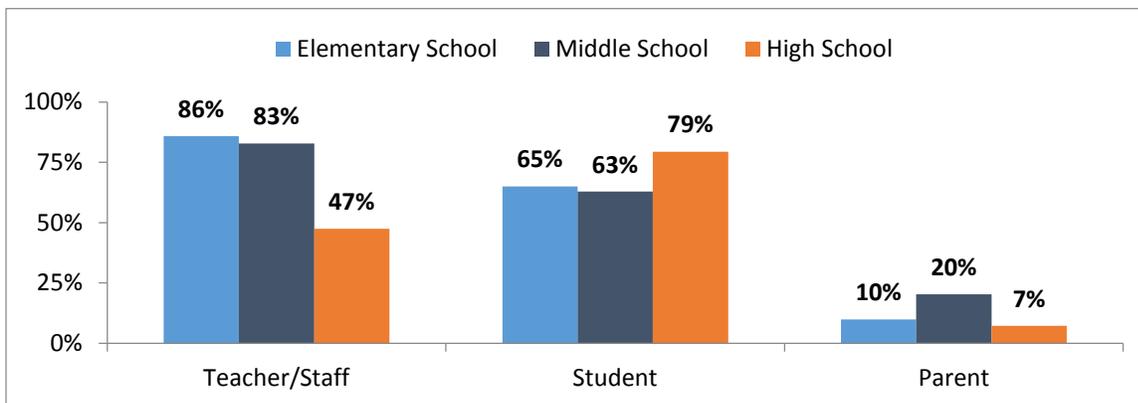


Figure 36 shows the percentage of coordinators’ time working with teachers or staff, students, and parents. High school coordinators spend nearly 80% of their time with students, compared to about 65% at the elementary and middle school levels. Conversely, high school coordinators spend relatively less time working with teachers and staff members.

Figure 36: Running Records: Type of Participant by School Level (Percentage of Total Time)



Note: This information was collected only during the second and third running record data collections.

The full report on focus groups is available in **Appendix C3**. The running record analysis is available in **Appendix D4**.

Alignment with Goals

In the focus group, coordinators broadly described their role as having two major priorities: First, at the school level, fostering a school environment that is culturally competent. Second, for individual students, striving for each student to reach a point at which they feel that their race matters to them in a positive way.

The Office of Planning and Evaluation collected a list of programs/services and participating students from each Minority Achievement Coordinator during the 2011-12, 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. Data for 2012-13 was not collected due to a delay in the evaluation process. **Table 7-Table 9** list the programs or services provided at each school during the time period covered, as well as the program goal aligned to each program or service. The full-time equivalent status of the coordinator at each school is included for context.

Table 7: Elementary Minority Achievement Programs and Goals

Elementary Programs/Services	Program Goals			Number of Schools with Program/Service
	Academic Support	Social Skills Development	Family Engagement	
NBCDI Parent Education			x	1
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)	x			1
Youth Experiencing Success		x		1
Jireh's Place Girls Mentoring Club		x		1
Black Tie Chess Club		x		1
Girls Character Club		x		1
Macedonia Baptist Church	x		x	1
Nauck Civic Association			x	1
Northern Virginia Urban League's Young Professionals Network	x		x	1
Boys Lunch Group	x			1
Girls Lunch Group	x			1
1 st /2 nd Grade Mentor Group		x		1
Before School Tutoring	x			1
Bonder and Amanda Johnson Community Development Center	x			1
Strengthening Families			x	1

Table 8: Middle School Minority Achievement Programs and Goals

Middle School Programs/Services	Program Goals					Number of Schools with Program/Service
	Academic Support	Social Skills Development	Family Engagement	Leadership development	Transition	
Latinas Leading Tomorrow				x		1
Boys Group		x				1
6th grade Lunch Bunch	x					1
7th Gr Girls Cohort		x				1
Tutoring	x					2

Middle School Programs/Services	Program Goals					Number of Schools with Program/Service
	Academic Support	Social Skills Development	Family Engagement	Leadership development	Transition	
Sister Circle	x					2
Girls/Boys Conference		x		x		5
National Coalition of 100 Black Women		x				5
Strengthening Families			x			2
College Trips	x	x				5
Transition Saturday	x				x	4
Jack Kent Cooke Young Scholars Nomination Process		x		x		5
EIP Prep	x					5
Tolerance Club		x				1
AHC tutoring Program	x					2
U.VA. IDEA Program	x					1
Jefferson Family Engagement Kick-Off			x			1
Algebra Support/Geometry Group	x					2
Jefferson Staff/Student Mentoring Program		x				1
Latinas Leading Tomorrow				x		1
Mindset Works online Program		x				1
FIRST Lego Robotics Teams	x					1
Affinity Groups	x					4
SEED	x					1

Middle School Programs/Services	Program Goals					Number of Schools with Program/Service
	Academic Support	Social Skills Development	Family Engagement	Leadership development	Transition	
MLK Essay and Visual Arts Competition	x	x				1
Words Out Loud competition	x	x				1
Scholarships	x					2
Study Club	x					1
BAM (Boys Academic Mentoring Club)	x					1
College Bound Groups	x					1
Get Your Mind Right		x				1
Career Exploration	x					1
Advising	x	x				5
Lunch Talk- Race and Identity		x				2
UVA-Reading Tutoring Program	x					1
Multicultural Night			X			1
Back to School Night Spanish			x		x	1
Emerging Scholars	x					1
The Youth Ballroom Dance Sport Club		x				1
Partnership with Gates of Ballston	x					1
NBCDI Parent Education			x			2
Arlington Black Association			x			2
Global Leading Ladies	x			x		1
Young Scholars	x			x		1
Jeans to Jackets		x		x		1

Table 9: High School Minority Achievement Programs and Goals

High School Programs/Services	Program Goals					Number of Schools with Program/Service
	Academic Support	Social Skills Development	Family Engagement	Leadership development	Transition	
Quarterly family workshops (Q1-Q4)			x			1
Transition Tuesday					x	1
College Trips		x			x	4
Advising	x	x				4
Urban Alliance				X		1
Hobsons Internships				X		1
Dream Project				x		1
Cohort	x	x				1
United Minority Girls	x			x		1
SAT Prep						4
EIP	x					4
Boys/Girls Conference				x		1
Lunch Group	x					2
General's Period	x					1
Scholarships					x	4
Black History Program				x		1
Minority Male Mentoring	x					1
Community Leader Mentor Group		x				1
College Essay Mentor Group					x	1
MSAN				X		1
MNAN Leaders United				X		1
Latinas Leading Ladies	X			x		1
Sister Circle		x				1
MGA	X					1
College Bound	X				x	1
SOAR	x					1

To assess alignment of coordinator activities with program goals, activities reported in the running records were coded for alignment with program goals based on the seven overarching goals of the program as well as the Minority Achievement Coordinator position description. In general, Minority Achievement Coordinators' activities are well-aligned with Minority Achievement Program objectives. **Table 10** shows the percentage of coordinators' time spent working towards specified program goals. Across levels, Minority Achievement Coordinators spend approximately 23% of their time **supporting students' academic success**, 14% **supporting leadership skills development**, and an additional 13% **preparing students for the next level of education**. About 9% of activities were coded as "none of the above;" this was primarily due to a lack of sufficient information in the description provided.

Table 10: Activities Supporting Minority Achievement Program Goals by School Level (Percentage of Total Time)

Activity	Percent of Time Allocated			
	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Overall Average
Support a student's academic success	22%	18%	28%	23%
Support student's leadership skills development	14%	12%	17%	14%
Expose/prepare students to the next level of education/transition	0%	11%	17%	13%
Support cultural awareness among staff and/or students	15%	17%	5%	12%
Match/support students with opportunities/resources	12%	16%	5%	12%
Engage/support families	6%	10%	5%	8%
Serve as a resource for staff	19%	5%	5%	7%
Support student's social skills development	7%	3%	5%	4%
Professional growth	4%	4%	2%	3%
Advocate for student	1%	2%	2%	2%
None of the above	9%	10%	8%	9%

Note: 1) This table omits 9% of activities, which were left uncoded due to insufficient information in the running record to assign a code. 2) Percentages do not sum to 100, as each activity may be coded as more than one theme.

On the staff survey, respondents were asked for their perceptions about coordinators' support of specific program goals. A majority of staff indicated that they *strongly agree* or *somewhat agree* with the following statements:

- The MAC teaches students and families to become positive and effective self-advocates and to navigate the system so that educational goals are realistic and attainable. (60%)

- The MAC encourages students to discover and utilize resources that will help them progress towards their goals. (68%)
- The MAC serves as a resource by providing staff with direct support and strategies for working with students and families of diverse ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds. (59%)

Those not selecting *strongly/somewhat agree* were far more likely to select the response *I don't know* than *strongly* or *somewhat disagree*. For the above statements, between 29-36% of respondents selected *I don't know*.

Just one statement on the staff survey garnered a response of *strongly/somewhat agree* less than half the time: Only 46% of respondents selected these responses for the statement, **“The MAC analyzes available data to match and monitor students’ involvement with established educational and/or culturally enriching opportunities, as well as initiates programming to meet student needs.”**

The staff survey supports the idea that one of the roles of the coordinators is to **advocate for students**. A majority of respondents (59%) indicated that they *strongly agree* or *somewhat agree* with the statement, **“The MAC advocates for practices, policies, and procedures with school leadership and key staff that create equitable learning environments for all students.”** And while **advocate for students** was a goal that took up a relatively small amount of coordinators’ time in the running records, the focus group discussion made it clear that coordinators see themselves as advocates and are keenly aware of that role. This apparent contradiction may simply be due to the amount of time involved in tasks related to advocacy, as opposed to the amount of time required for other types of tasks such as one-on-one work with a student.

I think one of the most effective ways that I've found to advocate really can be those hallway conversations. Sometimes it's an informal advocacy but you're very present in that moment and you're able to talk to the stakeholder, whether it's the teacher, the counselor, the principal, the assistant principal, the head of another program...Also serving on committees and leadership teams [aids advocacy]....So, when I sit at that table and listen to the discussion...I'm always bringing minority achievement to mind and making sure that equity and best practices, all these types of things are present in the discussion. (Coordinator)

Some of it is calling it out. We had, for example...a black student who was on the [sport] team and one of his teachers came down to the game and saw him playing and said, "He's failing my class. He shouldn't be playing." They weren't going to let him play at the next game. ... I brought up that if we have [class-by-class] grade requirement to play sports, then we should have one. But, we shouldn't be just pulling kids at random... If he knows ahead of time, [that would be fair]. [So], now we adopted a grade policy and the students can't have a D or E...I think calling it when we see these practices, because it wasn't a policy. (Coordinator)

Survey respondents were asked to describe a time when advocacy by the Minority Achievement Coordinator contributed to a systemic change at their school. A sample of responses, edited for clarity, are listed below.

- The Minority Achievement Coordinator is working directly with the Resource Teacher for the Gifted to help teachers better understand the learning profile of minority students and be able to identify giftedness in typically underrepresented groups. I am confident that this work will broaden the understanding of our teachers as well as recognize the strengths of students who may not otherwise be recognized.
- The Minority Achievement Coordinator instituted single-handedly a yearly review of each minority student's February course request form to review reaching for advanced classes.
- Discussion about disciplinary consequences for students from different backgrounds
- The Minority Achievement Coordinator has been involved in many of the committees that have created and led programs which focus on supporting minority students.
- Our Parent Engagement Team, under the leadership of our Minority Achievement Coordinator, has been incredibly influential in our school - changing the conversation, really, about how to support all families and students.

In survey responses, staff report that they see the work of Minority Achievement Coordinators as aligned to the goal of **academically challenging minority students**. A majority of staff selected *strongly agree* or *somewhat agree* for the following questions:

- The MAC encourages students to take challenging courses throughout their academic careers. (64%)
- The MAC exposes students to the rigors and expectations of the next level of education. (62%)

In the focus groups, the coordinators expressed that progress towards this goal well underway.

My job has really shifted. [In the past] a lot of it was how to get a kid in. How do we fight to get a kid in AP classes? Now it's how do you support them, how do you make sure they're doing well?...[I watched] a group of African-American kids [leave after] an AP Psych exam...When they left...I said, "Oh my God, that would not have happened 10 years ago." Because minorities often were put in regular psychology, not AP psychology. It's natural [now]. It's not a phenomenon to see [minority] kids in AP physics. It's just more about how to support them. That's a huge shift.
(Coordinator)

Variability of Programs

Though staff and parent feedback about the coordinators' work and the alignment of their work with program goals was widely positive, there was some concern expressed in the parent focus groups and the staff survey about variation in the quality of programs and services offered.

In the focus groups, a couple of parents said their children's experience in middle school peer groups that meet after school had been a letdown. In these cases, the parents perceived the groups as being so loosely run that they had little specific cultural or peer-to-peer benefit. In one example, the adult in charge took a laissez faire approach, which the parent felt resulted in cliques of students merely hanging out and not "doing," discussing, or learning in a purposeful way. The group "looked good on paper" said the parent, but the execution did not match.

Among mostly positive open-ended comments about the work and impact of Minority Achievement Coordinators, some staff expressed a belief that coordinators do not do much that is meaningful or impactful:

Our Minority Achievement person is not very involved with the school at large. Students go to the office because they love to "hang out" but I do not see structured time. All I see is play and leisure time.

I am confident in my interactions with minority families but not because of MAC. I find my resources through other channels. I do not find the MAC advice useful since this advice always looks "hands off". The MAC does not take ownership.

The MAC could actually help teachers in some way. I have no idea what he does all day, every day. I have never seen him work with a teacher.

I have seen minimal impact in their work. No coordination with administration about outreach. Not all the programs are systemic in nature. It appears to be up to the individual MAC. If you have a strong MAC, you have access to programs, if you don't, then there is limited access.

Similarly, some staff also expressed a belief that Minority Achievement programs and services only serve high-achieving students.

The only kids I see him working with are already high achievers. He does nothing with kids who may need extra help that have potential.

I don't think we have a lot of support in place specifically for those minority students who are struggling.

[We need] support for less successful students, not just cohort eligible.

This appears to be a select group of students that reap the benefits of the program.

More needs to be done to recognize and support low achieving minority students.

The full report on focus groups is available in **Appendix C3**. The full running record analysis is available in **Appendix D4**. Program and participation data is available in **Appendix D3**. The full staff survey report is available in **Appendix C1**.

Support for Staff in Working with Families

The staff survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements:

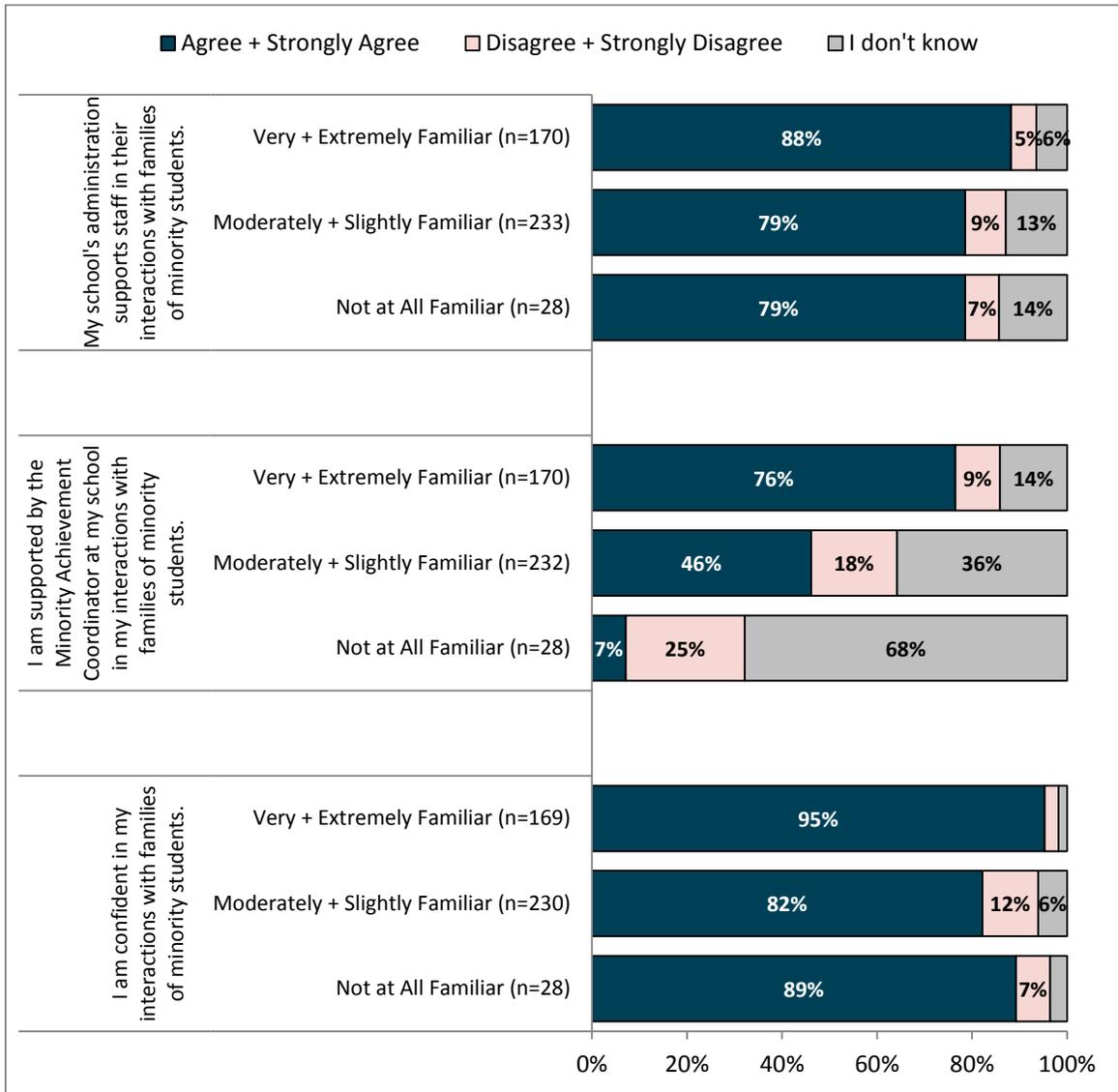
- My school's administration supports staff in their interactions with families of minority students.
- I am supported by the Minority Achievement Coordinator at my school in my interactions with families of minority students.
- I am confident in my interactions with families of minority students.

Figure 37 displays responses to these questions disaggregated by the respondents' level of familiarity with the work of the Minority Achievement Coordinator. There is a positive relationship between respondents' familiarity with the coordinator's work and the likelihood that they feel supported by either their administration or the coordinator in their interactions with families of minority students. Not surprisingly, this relationship is particularly strong in terms of support from the coordinator. Three quarters of respondents who were *very* or *extremely familiar* with the coordinator's work reported that they felt **supported by the coordinator in their interactions with families of minority students**, while just under half of those who were *moderately* or *slightly familiar* felt this way, and only 7% of those who were *not at all familiar* with the coordinator's work felt this way.

Respondents who indicated feeling supported by the Minority Achievement Coordinator were asked to describe these types of support. Most of the open-ended responses indicated that the Minority Achievement Coordinator supports them in **communication**, primarily with families, and as **an informal resource for advice and help**.

Respondents who were *very* or *extremely familiar* with the coordinator's work were also more likely to report that they feel **confident in their interactions with families of minority students**. Ninety-five percent of these respondents reported feeling confident, while 82% of those who were *moderately* or *slightly familiar*, and 89% of those who were *not at all familiar*, reported feeling confident.

Figure 37: Minority Achievement Staff Survey: How strongly do you agree with the following? (By familiarity with Minority Achievement Coordinator's work)



The full staff survey report is available in **Appendix C1**.

Student Participation

Availability of and Participation in Programs and Services at Schools

There is a Minority Achievement Coordinator at each comprehensive secondary school and one elementary school (Drew). Using the lists of programs and participating students provided by coordinators over three years, the Office of Planning and Evaluation conducted an analysis of the number and types of students who participate in Minority Achievement programs and services.

Table 11 and **Table 12** show the number of students who participated in a Minority Achievement program or service, and the average number of programs per participating student, for each of the years included in the data collection. The decrease in the number of participating students at Drew

Elementary School was due to adjustments made after the first year of implementation there and a shift to focus more on a select group of students. This corresponds with the increase in the average number of programs per student.

Table 11: Number of Students in a Minority Achievement Program, as Reported by coordinators

Level	Number of Students Participating in a Minority Achievement Program		
	2011-12	2013-14	2014-15
Drew Elementary	*	71	35
Middle School	712	801	1081
High School	737	857	715

*Minority Achievement program was not active until 2013-14.

Table 12: Average Number of Minority Achievement Programs Students Participate in, As Reported by coordinators

Level	Average Number of Programs		
	2011-12	2013-14	2014-15
Elementary	*	1.4	2.1
Middle School	2.0	1.8	1.7
High School	1.5	2.0	2.1

*Minority Achievement program was not active until 2013-14.

While the original focus of the Minority Achievement Program was black students, the scope of work for the program evolved with the adoption of the 1999-2005 Strategic Plan, and the goal of eliminating the achievement gap between white students and black students and white students and Hispanic students. From that point on, the goal of the Minority Achievement Program has been to provide programs and services to both black and Hispanic students, although participation is not limited to students of any particular race/ethnicity.

Figure 38 - Figure 40 show the percentages of student participants by race/ethnicity at the elementary, middle, and high school level. At all levels, most students who participate in Minority Achievement programs or services are either black or Hispanic. At the middle and high school levels, Hispanic students constitute the largest group of participants (41-49%), followed by black students (22-35%). In middle and high school, Asian students constitute between 10-11% of participants with the exception of middle school in 2011-12, when they made up 20% of participants. A sizeable proportion of secondary

participants is made up of white students (9-18% at the middle school level and 3-6% at the high school level).

Figure 38: Number of Elementary Students in Minority Achievement Programs by Race/Ethnicity

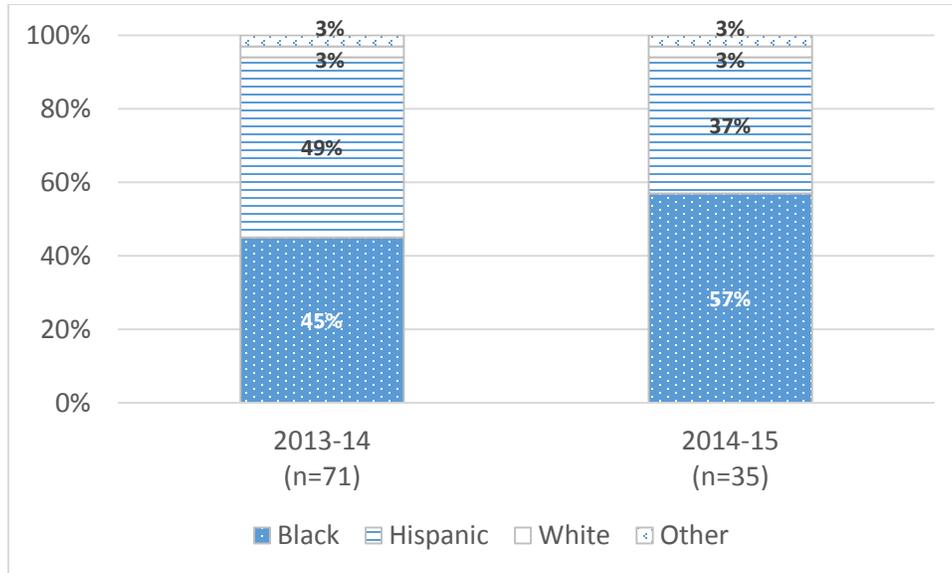


Figure 39: Number of Middle School Students in Minority Achievement Programs by Race/Ethnicity

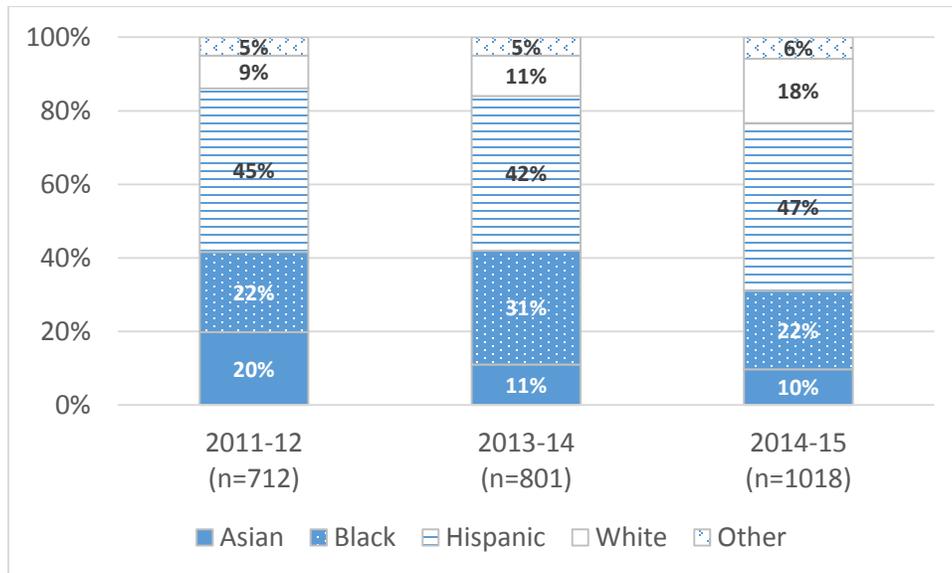
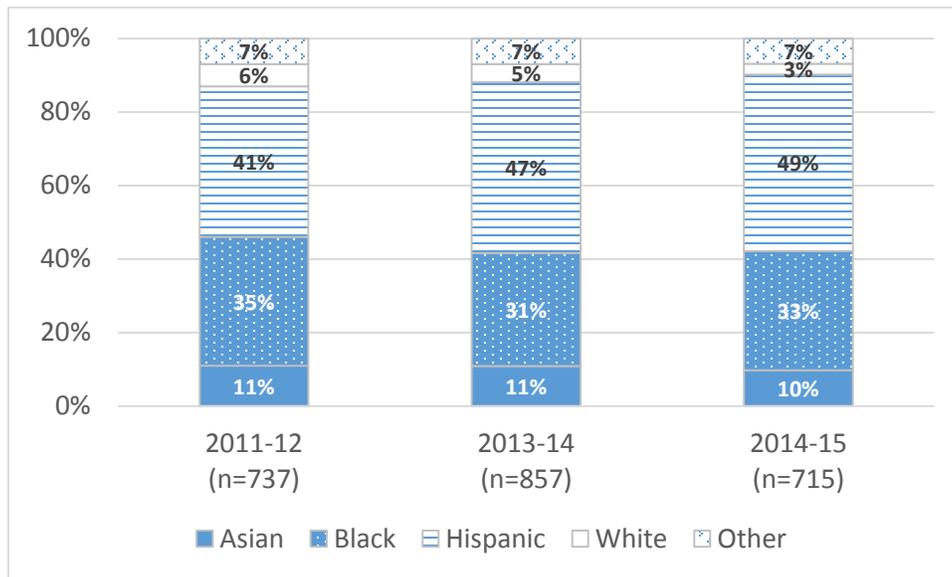


Figure 40: Number of High School Students in Minority Achievement Programs by Race/Ethnicity



These percentages belie a perception that emerged in the staff survey. While negative feedback about the Minority Achievement Program or Minority Achievement Coordinators was fairly limited on the staff survey, one theme that emerged among some of the open-ended responses was a perception among some staff that the Minority Achievement Program only serves select groups of students. While these responses in no way represented a majority of respondents, the perception that Minority Achievement programs and services only serve African American students, or only African American and Hispanic students, came up several times despite not being the specific topic of any survey question. Sample comments include:

- I think that the Minority Achievement Program needs to concentrate on ALL minority students and NOT just black students.
- This office needs to address the cultural and academic needs of all minorities rather than a specific few. Asian students in general...are not addressed at our school and do not have specific programs for their cultural background.
- I feel like the sole focus of this program is on African American students, not the majority of my students who are minorities and need extra support, such as the Central and South American students, the Middle Eastern students, the Southeast Asian students, and the Mongolian students.
- Office of Minority Achievement only targets African American Students, so there is little work seen at my school.
- [The Minority Achievement Coordinator] position...only serves specific minority groups of Latino/Hispanic and black/African American. There are no publicized programs targeted for East Asian, Middle Eastern or South Asian students.

Program and participation data is available in **Appendix D3**. The staff survey report is available in **Appendix C1**.

Identification and Recruitment of Participating Students

Focus groups with coordinators, students, and parents addressed the question of how students are identified and recruited to participate in Minority Achievement programs and services. All focus groups stressed the importance of interpersonal and informal channels in this process, in addition to more standardized methods such as pulling lists of students who meet certain criteria from the student information system.

Coordinators described a truly wraparound process in which students reach them via widely varied avenues. For example, they invite students who they meet on field trips or come to know at school. They receive candidate suggestions from teachers. And, coordinators, teachers, and administrators work together to bridge from elementary to middle to high school—with adults sharing information and asking questions both from the younger grade levels up and older grade levels down. Minority Achievement program participants refer their siblings. Some students initiate participation themselves.

This network of support relies, in part, on strong interpersonal relationships and proactive outreach, and it was not clear from focus group discussions whether all coordinators' networks and outreach were equally strong. However, the group clearly believed in the effectiveness and importance of these means of opening doors for students who fit well with various Minority Achievement Programs.

[In addition to my own outreach], I get referrals from teachers, like, "Hey this kid really seems lost. Can you connect him somehow?" (Coordinator)

...even with things like EIP at the middle school level... I know usually about 10 to 15 students each year that are good candidates but then I'll reach out to the counselors and the teams of teachers and the gifted resource teacher. I have good partnerships with those staff members. I can say, "I know my list is not complete. Give me your candidates." So collaboration is key. (Coordinator)

Likewise, in the parents' and students' experience, outreach can be both formal (e.g., a note distributed to all students who qualify for a particular group) and informal (e.g., a direct verbal invitation from the coordinator).

Our school counselor came up to our class and asked if we wanted to join [YES Club]. She gave the whole class permission slip. You had a certain amount of time to bring it. (ES Student)

How I found out about the program...and I really appreciate this about Arlington...during the PALS period, [acronym for] "packet, agenda, lockers, something like that." It's a week before school. You go to [school]. They have pizza and stuff. You bring your child and the child gets to go to their locker and stuff like that. That's where I initially met [coordinator]. She came up and just introduced herself. So, that's how I knew about it. And, I get things in the mail. I get email. I get calls. They communicate a lot. (MS Parent)

[Coordinator] came by personally and said, "Hey, I want you to join this group. It'd be really good for you." (HS Student)

A few students indicated they found out purely by happenstance and pursued the opportunity of their own accord. This manner of learning about programs or services was far less common than hearing from school staff, friends, or siblings, but some high school students worried that too few know about available opportunities.

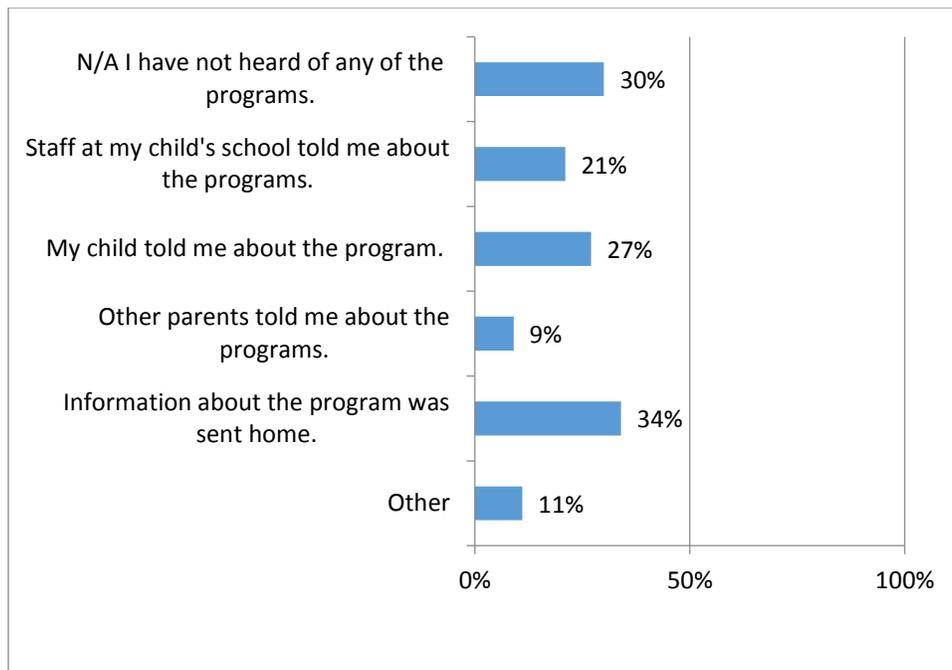
The role of word-of-mouth from friends and siblings in reaching new high school students, in particular, seemingly cannot be overstated. Middle school students mentioned word-of-mouth, but it was not as prominent a factor as for older students.

I actually got introduced to it because my sophomore year I transferred here from another high school, so I became friends with a bunch of people who were connected to the Minority Achievement and just one day they were like you should meet [coordinator]. I got to meet him and he introduced me to a bunch of things that I could do, like be involved in the assemblies, talent shows ... That's how I made new friends and got involved with that. (HS Student)

My sister, she's actually in college right now, and she knew [coordinator] very well and she introduced me to him and got me to do a lot of programs through him. (HS Student)

On the parent survey, respondents were asked how they had found out about any Minority Achievement programs or services. **Figure 41** displays responses to this question. While 30% reported that they hadn't heard of any programs, the most common method that parents cited was that **information about the programs was sent home** (34%). Other popular methods were **My child told me about the program** (27%) and **Staff at my child's school told me about the program** (21%).

Figure 41: Minority Achievement Parent Survey: How did you learn about the programs? (n=530)



When asked what hinders identification of students, coordinators pointed to problems they encounter with the student information system. For example, they may need to identify all students in a school who are male, minority, with a GPA over 3.0. In many instances they find mistakes (e.g., students omitted) or glitches (e.g., results showing no students at all meet criteria) or confounding factors. As a result, coordinators must double-check student lists either in painstaking ways such as reviewing paper files, following up with teachers about individual students, or by getting other staff members' lists to check for completeness.

Despite its imperfections, being able to use such a system is better than not being able to at all. One coordinator thought that the system might have all the capabilities the coordinators desire, although using the system is very cumbersome.

Well, like for [program]...you have to run a list of the kids that might be eligible. I think the [program] kids you have to have no grades below a C for one quarter [and it is for] black and Hispanic males. Well, it's not as easy with this current system to run those things. The first time we ran it... I looked at the names...I said to [name], my colleague, "This has never happened before. There are no black boys that have gotten all Cs or better in all their classes....This is weird." It was a computer glitch. It didn't identify all the kids. It's a hassle almost every time. She's had to go through and meet with people. It's a complicated process... to try and get an accurate list. (Coordinator)

Currently, coordinators primarily use the student information system to pull lists of students based on specific criteria, but they would like to have the ability to access additional information; for example, what classes their students are taking, what students are in particular AP classes to see how students stay or drop over time, and longitudinal data that may illuminate how engaged a student has been and at which schools. Regarding the latter, data are especially important for students who are not involved in small groups like EIP and SOAR and, as a result, are less well-known to coordinators.

I would love to be able to run a list of the kids on my caseload and what their classes are like.... [Or ask] So who's in AP Psych, by race? Then I could run it again in January and see if they're still there because that's an issue. (Coordinator)

Because when [we] send sixth graders, unless I go to the [cumulative] file, I can't see what they've been doing and how they've been engaged with grades since 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade, so that then I can pick up on [any issues]. Of course by the time they come through me and I start to send them out to high schools, [high school coordinators] have to call us to say, "Was this kid with you?" Or, "Do you know this child? What's going on?" (Coordinator)

Motivation to Participate

According to the students in the focus groups, especially middle and high school students, teachers can yield powerful influence in encouraging them to participate.

My teacher said, "You should do it!" She seemed really excited about it. "It's going to help you a lot." So, then I got excited about it, too. (MS Student)

[What made me decide to participate was] instead of 'peer pressure', 'teacher pressure.'
[Teacher said], "You should really do it. It would be really helpful for you. Especially when you go to [school name]. You'll be more comfortable because you'll be around people who are minorities as well as you." (HS Student)

Hearing about successes strongly encourages older students and their parents and to seek involvement in Minority Achievement programs. Likewise, success, usefulness, and in some cases selectivity, can make Minority Achievement clubs and informal groups a source of pride which attracts participants.

So, I got the letter. And, when I saw that you had to be selected, it made me feel sort of special, I guess—because people are actually noticing my efforts in school. And, not even everybody who got the letter will get in, only a few are gonna get in. I think it made me want it more. (MS Student)

[Some] parents, did not want to be a part of a [college] trip. But, when they would hear about scholarships or hear about successes, then those parents and some of the community would come around. (Coordinator)

Some of them see the change. For example if you are with a student and they go from D to C, this student would bring people over. I have students who, we have a meeting with the administration about students' behavioral problems and instead of sending them to the in-school suspension, they ask me if I can work with them. Then [other students] see they are there, that they listen to music in my office, they can do their homework, and we can work and talk about what happened and alternatives. Their friends, who are in the same kind of mood making [difficulty] in the classroom, they come to visit. Then after that there became a group who are coming too. I think when they see themselves succeeding and getting something that no one else gets....better grades, respect from a teacher....they come back. They feel good about it and they come back. They bring people over. (Coordinator)

On a more practical level, coordinators said that other factors including college trips, career fairs, and food encourage participation. These factors are not long-term commitments in themselves, but they allow that first positive contact between coordinators and students that opens up future possibility. High school students echoed the importance of college trips and food. Regarding the latter, one participant said she had joined the group on a friend's recommendation but she also gave a nod to food, saying, "And, there's pizza."

A lot of my contacts come from taking kids on a field trip and meeting them on a field trip and then connecting with them afterwards. (Coordinator)

For me, before I received the letter, I had already taken a field trip to tour George Mason. And, I just felt really interested in George Mason. So, when I received the letter [about EIP and its George Mason connection] I just decided to apply. As soon as I saw "George Mason," I was interested. (MS Student)

Barriers to Participation

Students in the focus groups – all of whom were current participants in Minority Achievement programs or services - perceived few barriers to participation. Specifically, students at all age levels thought that others who do not participate have other activities or are simply not interested. There were virtually no paperwork or application-type barriers. Only middle school students commented on having an involved application process for EIP and scholarships. For these students, the paperwork did not deter them. A couple speculated that it could be an advantage, resulting in only students who really want to participate making it into the group. A couple elementary school students mentioned parents' worry about being able to provide transportation if the student stays for an after school activity.

They [other students] were positive [about YES Club]. But, some people didn't join because they had choir. They didn't want it to interfere. Cause they had afterschool activities. (ES Student)

They may have better things to do. A lot of people here do sports. There's a lot of after school things. (HS Student)

When I was trying to get the paper from YES Club, it was hard because my grandma and dad were like, "Maybe I can't pick you up after school. I have work. I don't know." For a while I had to walk home every day. But, now my dad picks me up." (ES Student)

My first answer was, "No" [to YES Club] because he was in so many things and I couldn't keep up with what he was doing. He's hyper. But, he got really excited [about YES]. He told me they have their own lunch. They go on field trips. He actually asked [coordinator] to ask his mom. [Coordinator] took the time to speak with me. He asked, "What are your reservations?" He took that extra step. (ES Parent)

Students at all levels did mention a downside to participating in Minority Achievement programs; namely, that participating in one group or activity necessarily cuts time that could be spent in leisure or on another enjoyable group, activity, or elective course.

Everything we do is time consuming. Most kids our age are like, "Oh we want to go hang out, we want to go have a party, have a bonfire", stuff like that. And, we're just like, "Oh no we have to go to SAT Prep or we have to go to EIP or anything." It's like you don't make a personal life, you just already start growing up. (HS Student)

Like [Name] said, last year we were in [program]. We could've been taking an elective that we wanted or class we wanted, but instead we took [program]. (HS Student)

By far, the biggest perceived barrier among coordinators was that each is a solo person in a school building working with a large student population, in three cases full-time but in most others half-time (the coordinator at H-B Woodlawn is a 0.2 FTE position).

We cannot reach out to every student in the school but the expectation is that you do something about all of them. It's a mismatch between the expectation and the time that we are allowed to work with them. (Coordinator)

I think one of the things that, again, that works against that is just having the resources, the time, the manpower to do more of it. The kids that come to it, in my opinion, really benefit from it. Just want to do it on a broader scale. (Coordinator)

A couple people, coordinators and parents, noted some disincentives—perhaps that children at a majority white school felt they would be further singled out by participating or that children who were already achieving wondered why they would need to participate. But, these voices were few, thus the issue seems a relatively minor barrier among those mentioned. However, in this context, a couple coordinators mentioned that sometimes when they gather a group of minority students (e.g., middle school girls with Bs in science to form a robotics team), the students look around the room and observe their racial or ethnic similarities and wonder “Why are we all here?” or even “Are we in trouble?” A couple parents in one group proposed that ways to reduce any stigma include clarifying a group’s goal or purpose and to emphasize what the groups do for others or for the school and community, not just for participants.

... at [School] at least, ...the minority population's pretty small and so some kids don't want to be singled out as being part of a minority program because they're really the minority. (Coordinator)

When we got the letter, I thought, “What is this? Minority?” Do they think we’re poor? I thought it was insulting. Then, when I talked to my kids, they said, “No. Minority means this.” They explained for me. (MS Parent)

Unfortunately, my children did see it as a negative. [Another parent] I think [Child Name] did too. That was just her not understanding the whole picture....When she looks at all the things Arlington offers her. It’s a wonderful school system. When she views this type of program, it’s almost patronizing. Perhaps that’s very strong language. I don’t mean to offend anyone here. I think she views it, “That’s not for me.” But, I say, “No, but it can be.” When you identify the goals of what it’s trying to do. (MS Parent)

*I think the word choice for her of “achievement” was really difficult. She was like, “Mom, I’m an awesome student. I get good grades. I don’t belong there.” She was thinking about people who have so much less than she and she didn’t want to participate on that level either. But, then I was explaining to her how I feel and that she could **offer** so much. It’s not always about receiving, it’s also about giving. So, I think to have Minority Achievement across the whole county, which I think is a wonderful thing, to work to have it perceived by students from both perspectives because the students will get more out of the program, rather than as handout. (MS Parent)*

The staff survey included an open-ended question, “**Why do some students who are identified to participate in Minority Achievement programs choose not to?**” Among those who responded (139), almost half indicated that they were not sure. About a third of responses suggested that **students associate a stigma with the programs or feel singled out when invited to participate**. Many respondents also mentioned **scheduling conflicts** (15%) and the idea that students **don’t think the programs and services were beneficial enough** (12%) to merit the time commitment.

Additional time commitments would be the largest factor that I encounter.

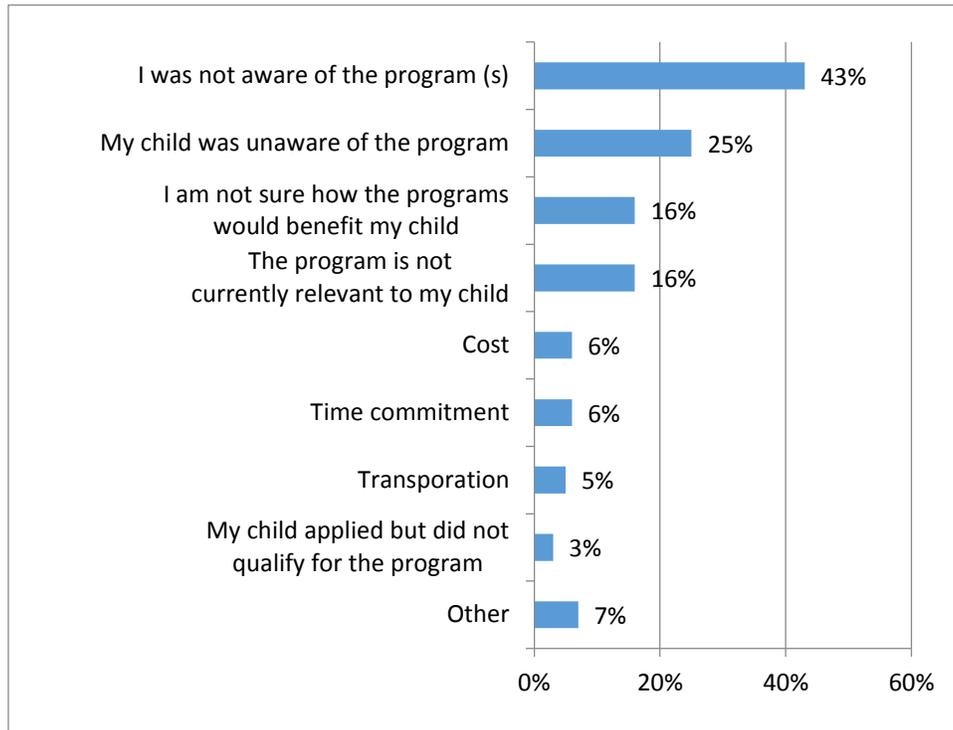
At our school I feel some students do not feel comfortable being in the minority because our numbers are less than other schools. I have heard from students over the past years that they don't want to be identified by their race because there are "so few" of them here. This becomes a difficult balance for our students being minority in a largely white school.

I know there are some students who do not wish to identify themselves as a minority.

Some students are surprised that they get invited to Latinas Leading Tomorrow or MSAN meetings. Some are embarrassed. They don't go because they don't want to be an "other". They "fit in" and when the passes come, their classmates are reminded that the recipient is different in some way. Perhaps students could be pulled individually and discretely before the big group meetings. Not sure if this will help because being "cool" is pretty important here.

The parent survey included the question, “**If your child does not participate in any of the programs, why not?**” **Figure 42** displays the responses. By far the most common reason cited was **lack of awareness**, either on the part of the parent (43%) or the child (25%). Sixteen percent indicated that they were **unsure how the programs would benefit their child**; the same percentage indicated that **programs are not relevant to their child**.

Figure 42: Minority Achievement Parent Survey: If your child does not participate in any of the programs, why not? (n=436)



Of the 22 parents who selected *Other*, several shared their or their child’s belief that the programs were not appropriate for their child:

My child is African, not African American and thinks the program is only for African Americans. She is uncomfortable accessing these services because she thinks it’s not for kids in the HILT program or for her as an African.

Just because we are minorities does not mean we need extra help.

She is a straight A student who will be very academically and culturally prepared for college.

Interestingly, these parent perceptions that Minority Achievement programs and services are for low-achieving students are in direct contrast with some staff perceptions that the programs and services only serve high-achieving students (see page 66).

Many parents also shared that their child does not identify as a minority or is not comfortable being singled out:

My child does not feel comfortable being affiliated w/specifically "minority" programs.

He's half Caucasian so probably doesn't consider himself a minority.

Don't think my child really fits into minority category.

My child doesn't want to be singled out as a minority.

The focus group report is available in **Appendix C3**. The parent survey report is available in **Appendix C2**. The staff survey report is available in **Appendix C1**.

Evaluation Question #2: What were the outcomes for students and parents?

Outcomes

This section addresses outcomes for students - including alumni - and parents. Student outcomes include different elements of achievement, such as enrollment in advanced coursework, on-time graduation, and post-high school plans. Other student outcomes explored in this report include the extent to which participating students become effective self-advocates, and the extent to which participating students feel that their school or classroom environment is supportive and academically challenging.

An outcome for parents explored in this evaluation is the extent to which parents of minority students report that they are comfortable navigating their child's school experience and progress.

Caution is required in interpreting results in this section, as it is not possible to directly tie student outcomes to participation in Minority Achievement programs or services. Where available, quantitative data is supplemented with qualitative feedback from participants about their own perception of the impact of the program, but this type of data is not available for all outcomes explored in this evaluation.

Student achievement

On the lists of programs and participating students provided collected from coordinators over three years, the Office of Planning and Evaluation also asked coordinators to indicate the alignment of each program/service with a list of measurable goals, including:

- Enrollment in advanced coursework
- Maintenance or improvement of grades
- Attainment of high SAT scores⁶
- On-time graduation
- Acceptance into post-secondary education

Planning and Evaluation then conducted analyses to determine the rate of success in each of the above areas for students **who had participated in programs or services aligned with each specific goal**.

Enrollment in Advanced Coursework

Middle school students may enroll in a math class that covers content higher than their grade level (for example, a 6th grade student may enroll in Math 7). The percentage of participating Minority Achievement students who enrolled in an advanced math course increased from 17% in 2011-12 to 27% in 2014-15. This aligns with an overall increase in middle school enrollment in advanced math during the same time period.

⁶ Information about student participation in the SAT Prep program was collected centrally from the Office of Minority Achievement

High school students have more opportunities than middle school students to enroll in advanced coursework. These options include intensified, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, as well as dual enrolled courses that allow students to receive college credit. Advanced coursework is available in most content areas. The percentage of participating Minority Achievement students who enrolled in an advanced high school course ranged from 66-70% during the three years included in the analysis.

Figure 43 shows the percentage of participating high school students who enrolled in advanced coursework, by race/ethnicity. Enrollment rates are fairly steady among the two largest groups of students, ranging from 64-69% of black and Hispanic students over the three years. This rate is higher among Asian students, increasing from 71% in 2011-12 to 90% in 2014-15. The rate varies for white students, but the number of participating white students is relatively low. Participating white students enrolled in advanced coursework between 78-100% of the time.

Figure 43: Percentage of high school students who enrolled in advanced coursework, by race/ethnicity (Students participating in Minority Achievement programs with a goal of encouraging students to enroll in advanced coursework)

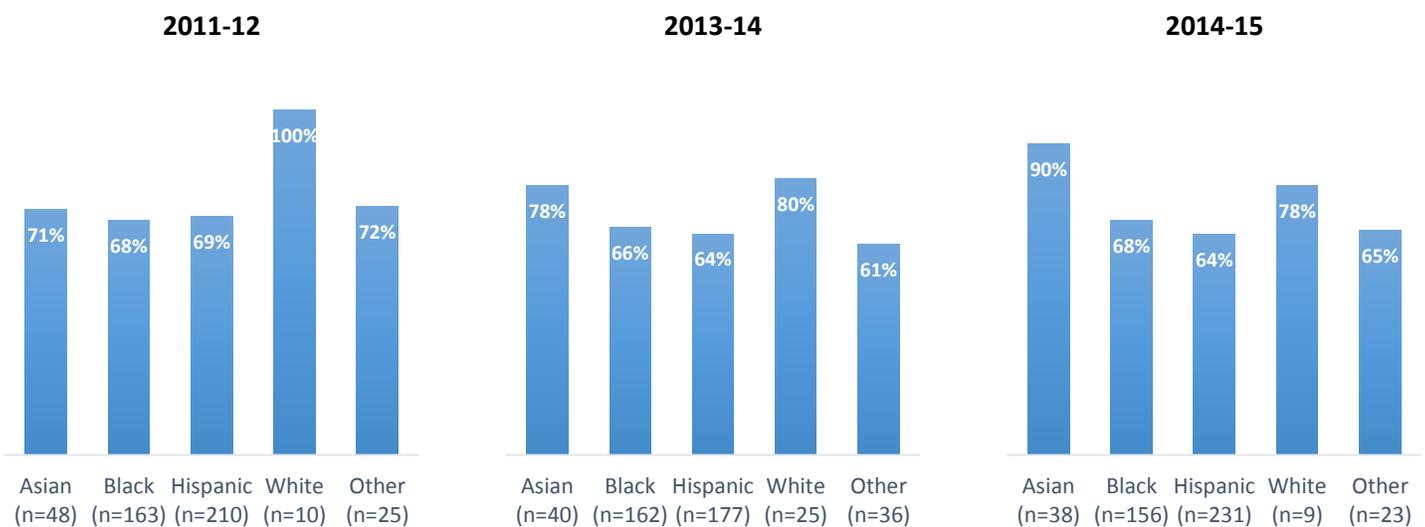


Table 13 shows the average number of advanced courses per participating student, for those students who were enrolled in any advanced class. Black and Hispanic students enrolled in an average of 1.7-1.8 advanced classes, while white students enrolled in an average of 3.0-3.3 advanced classes over the three years included in the analysis. The average number of advanced classes that Asian students enrolled in increased from 1.8 in 2011-12 to 2.8 in 2014-15.

Table 13: Among High School Students Participating in Select Minority Achievement Programs and Enrolled in Advanced Coursework, Average Number of Classes, by Race/Ethnicity

2011-12		2013-14		2014-15	
Asian (n=48)	1.8	Asian (n=40)	2.6	Asian (n=38)	2.8
Black (n=163)	1.7	Black (n=162)	1.8	Black (n=156)	1.7
Hispanic (n=210)	1.8	Hispanic (n=177)	1.7	Hispanic (n=231)	1.7
White (n=10)	3.1	White (n=25)	3	White (n=9)	3.3
Other (n=25)	2	Other (n=36)	1.9	Other (n=23)	2

The full report on enrollment in advanced coursework is available in **Appendix E4**.

Grades

Figure 44 shows the average grade point average (GPA) for middle school students who participated in identified Minority Achievement programs, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. The programs included in this analysis were all programs that had a goal of helping students to maintain or improve grades; there was variation among the programs in terms of the level of academic support needed (e.g., tutoring programs vs. EIP, which has academic entry requirements). The two largest groups of participating students consistently had the lowest average GPA: 3.0-3.1 for both black and Hispanic students. Asian students had the highest average GPA, increasing from 3.2 in 2011-12 to 3.5 in the two later years. White students' average GPA increased from 3.1 to 3.4 during the three years included in the analysis.

Figure 44: Average GPA for Middle School Students Participating in Minority Achievement Programs by Race/Ethnicity (Students participating in Minority Achievement programs with a goal of maintaining or improving grades)

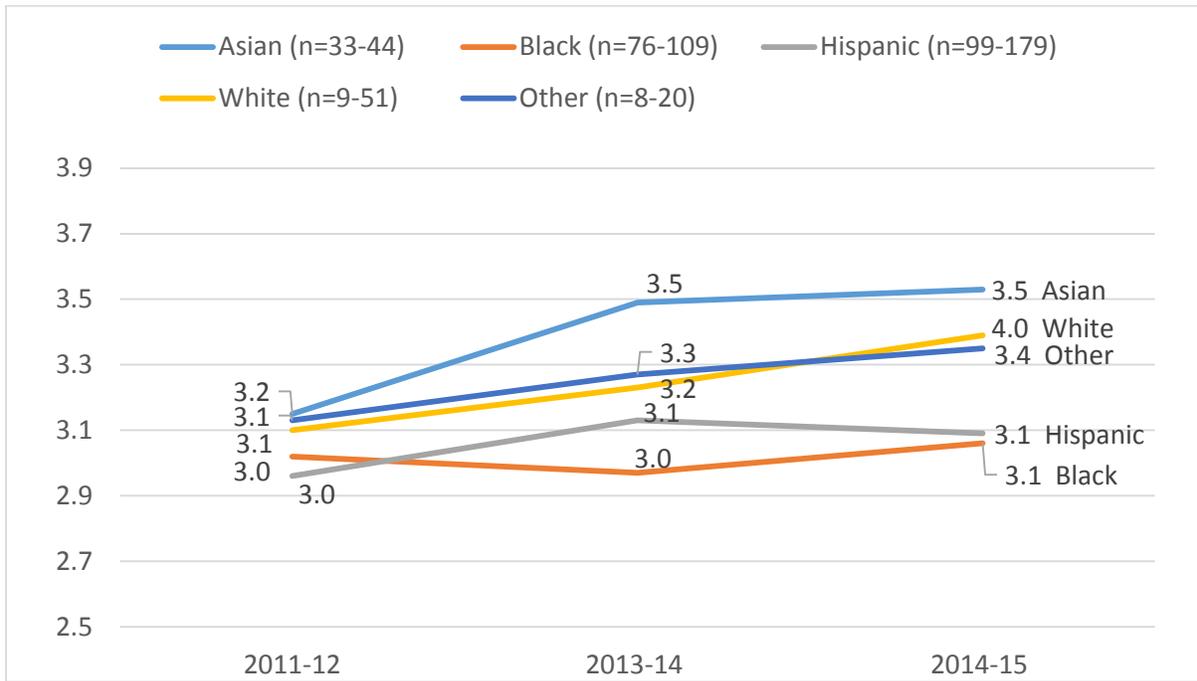
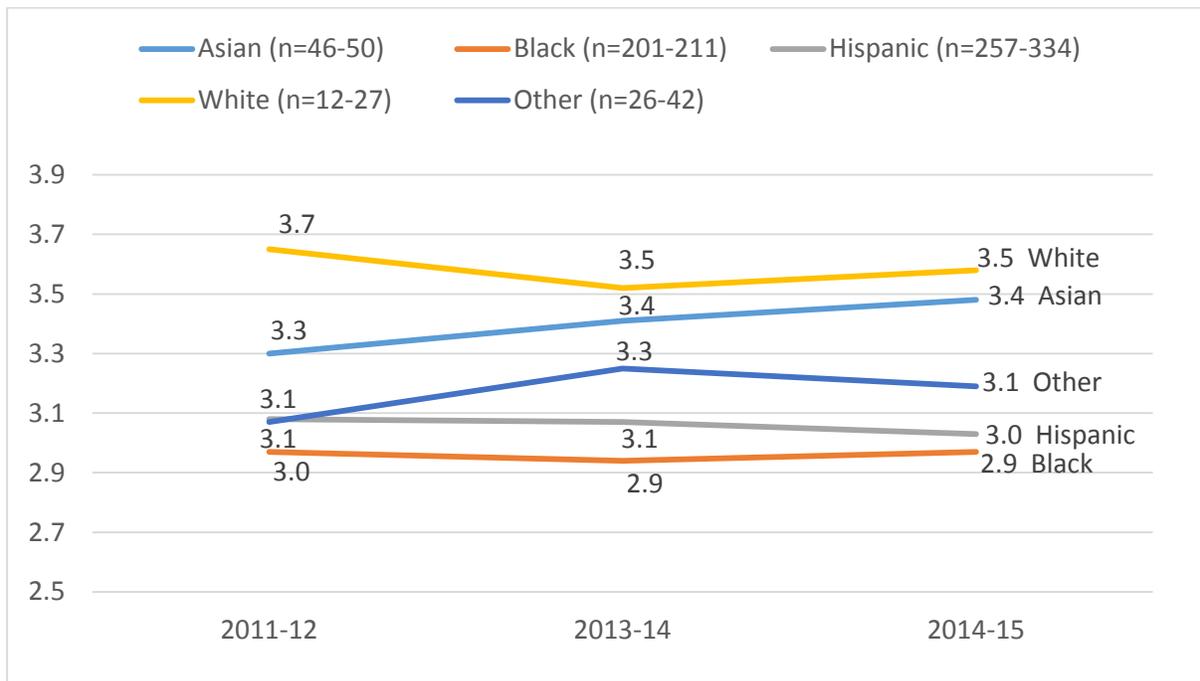


Figure 45 shows the average GPA for high school students who participated in identified programs, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. As with middle school, the two largest groups of participating students consistently had the lowest average GPA: 2.9-3.0 for black students and 3.0-3.1 for Hispanic students. White students had the highest average GPA, ranging from 3.5-3.7. The average GPA for Asian students increased from 3.3 in 2011-12 to 3.5 in 2014-15.

Figure 45: Average GPA for High School Students Participating in Minority Achievement Programs by Race (Students participating in Minority Achievement programs with a goal of maintaining or improving grades)

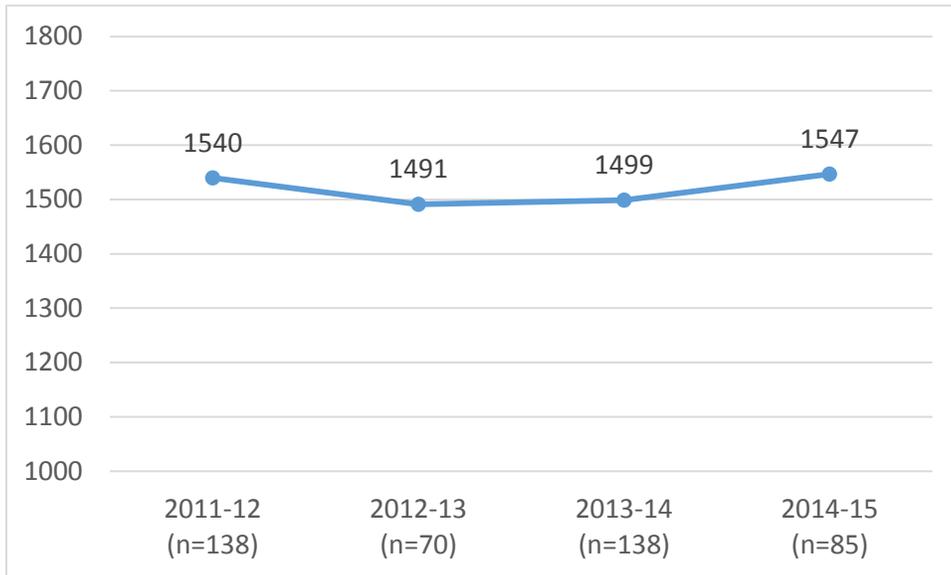


The full GPA report is available in **Appendix E2**.

SAT Performance

The Office of Minority Achievement offers an SAT prep course at two points during the school year. Information about participating students between 2011-12 and 2014-15 was provided by the Office of Minority Achievement. SAT scores included in this analysis consist of a student’s highest combined score, meaning that the highest score from each section of each test taken by a student is used to determine their best overall score. **Figure 46** shows the average highest combined score for SAT prep participants. Average scores dipped from 1540 in 2011-12 to 1491-99 in 2012-13 and 2013-14, but rose again to 1547 in 2014-15.

Figure 46: Average SAT Score for SAT Prep Student Participants



The APS Strategic Plan indicates a target score of 1617 for the year 2017. **Figure 47** shows the percentage of SAT prep students who scored above this target. In 2014-15, 38% of SAT prep participants scored above the Strategic Plan target.

Figure 47: Percentage of Scores above the Strategic Plan Target Score

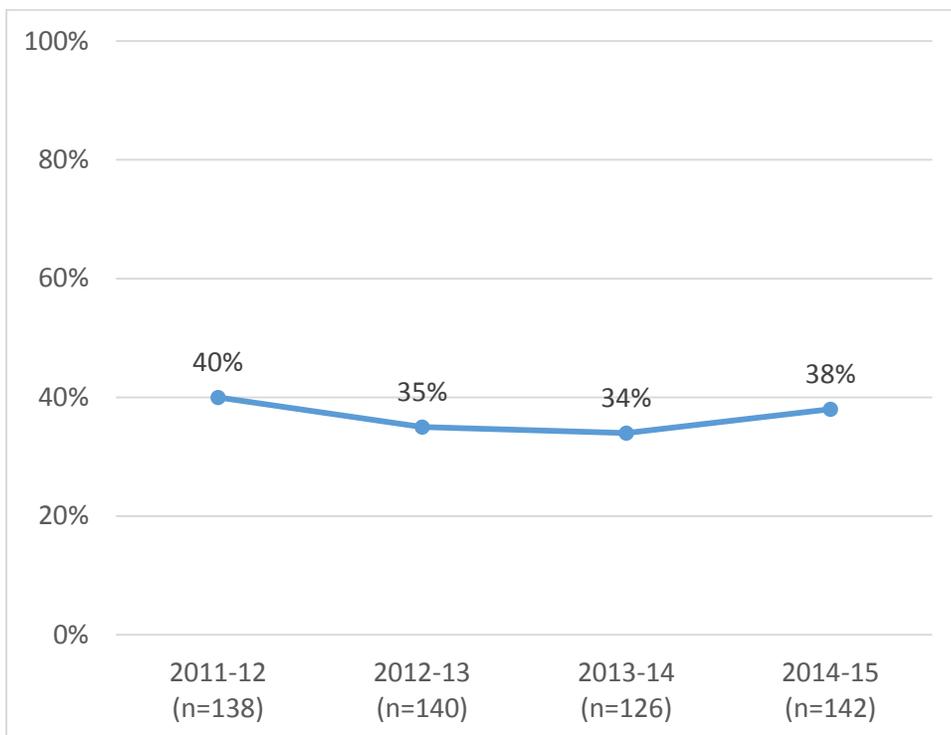


Table 14 shows the number of participants, the average SAT score, and the percentage of students who scored above the Strategic Plan target, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. Most of the students who participate in the SAT prep course are black or Hispanic, but there are also sizeable numbers of Asian

participants (between 18-29 per year). While 14 white students participated in 2011-12, the number ranged from 6-7 in more recent years. The proportion of black and Hispanic participants has reversed in the four years included in this analysis. In 2011-12, there were 53 black participants and 37 Hispanic participants. In 2014-15, there were 32 black participants and 52 Hispanic participants.

Black students' average SAT score increased in 2014-15 to 1503, from a range of 1377-1400 in previous years. The percentage of black students meeting the Strategic Plan target has remained fairly steady, between 21-25%. Average SAT scores for Hispanic students have decreased slightly over the four-year period, from 1539 in 2011-12 to 1494 in 2014-15. The percentage of Hispanic students meeting the Strategic Plan target was 35% in 2014-15.

Table 14: SAT Scores and Percent above the Strategic Plan Target Score by Race

	Race	Sample Size	Average SAT Score	Percent of Scores Above the Strategic Plan Target
2011-12	Asian	22	1634	55%
	Black	53	1390	25%
	Hispanic	37	1539	32%
	White	14	1846	86%
	Other	12	1674	50%
2012-13	Asian	22	1496	27%
	Black	52	1400	25%
	Hispanic	50	1528	40%
	White	7	1730	57%
	Other	9	1680	67%
2013-14	Asian	18	1691	67%
	Black	38	1377	21%
	Hispanic	56	1481	29%
	White	6	1688	50%
	Other	8	1645	50%

	Race	Sample Size	Average SAT Score	Percent of Scores Above the Strategic Plan Target
2014-15	Asian	29	1612	52%
	Black	32	1503	25%
	Hispanic	52	1494	35%
	White	7	1552	43%
	Other	22	1649	46%

*No scores are reported because the sample size is less than 5

The full SAT report is available in **Appendix E1**.

On-time Graduation

In each of the years included in this analysis, between 96-99% of all seniors who had participated in identified Minority Achievement programs and services graduated on time, and between 68-75% graduated with an advanced diploma. **Figure 48-Figure 50** show the diploma type for all seniors who participated in identified Minority Achievement programs and services during the years included in this analysis, disaggregated by race/ethnicity. While black students generally earned advanced diplomas at a lower rate than other groups, the percentage of black students earning an advanced diploma also rose steadily from 55% in 2011-12 to 72% in 2014-15. This percentage remained fairly steady for Hispanic students, ranging from 70-73% during the three years.

Figure 48: 2011-12 Diploma Type by Race

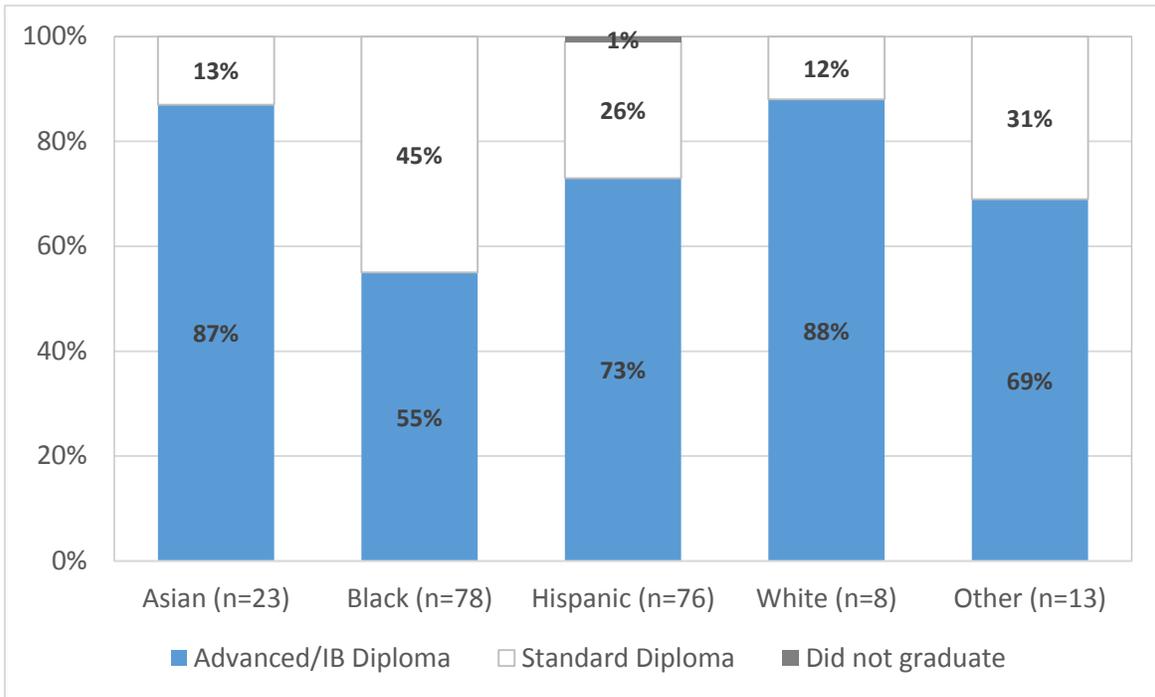


Figure 49: 2013-14 Diploma Type by Race

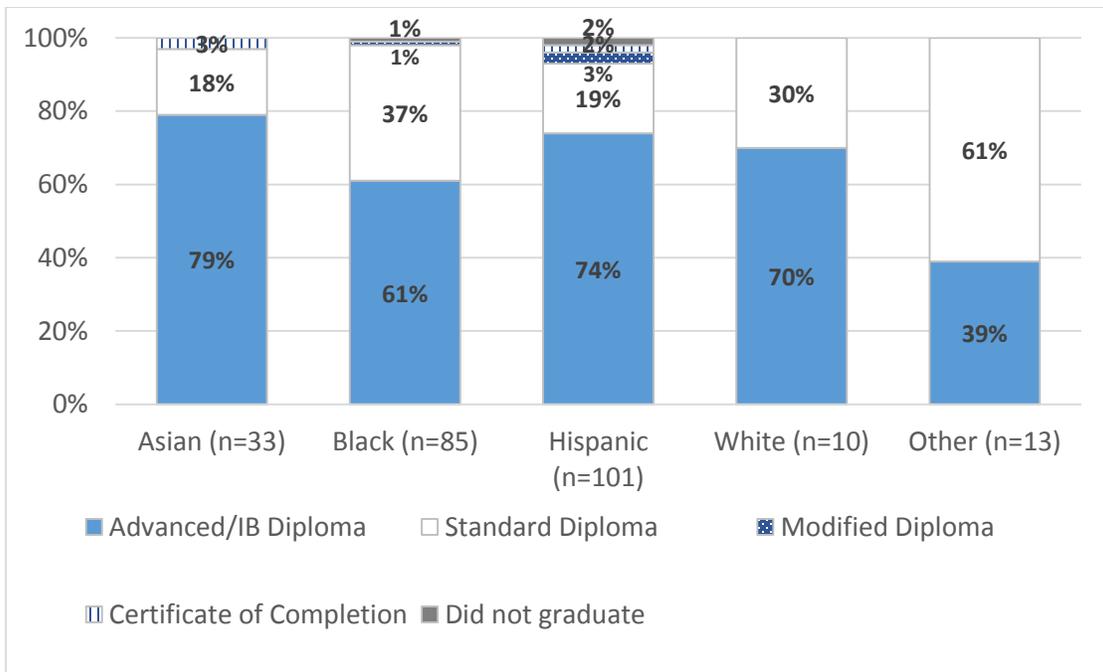
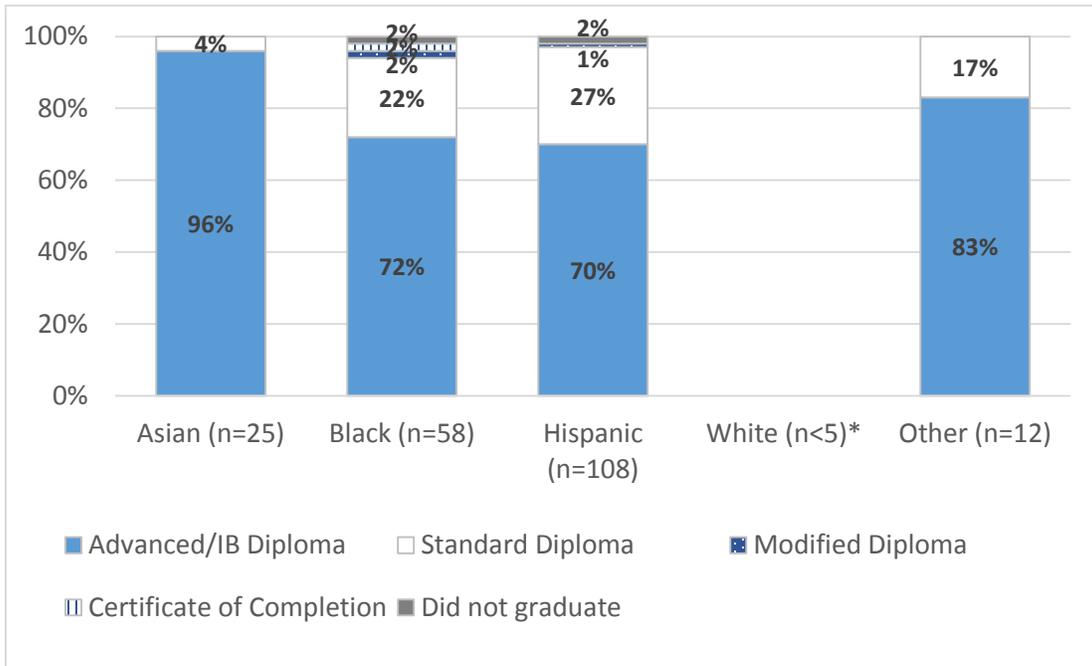


Figure 50: 2014-15 Diploma Type by Race



*Data with a sample size less than 5 is not reported

Post-High School Plans

All seniors are required to fill out the annual senior survey to collect information required by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), including post-high school plans. Data from this survey was used to determine the post-high school plans for seniors who had participated in identified Minority Achievement programs and services.

In 2011-12 and 2013-14, the percentage of participating seniors who reported that they planned to attend a **four-year college** was 78-81% and the percentage reporting that they planned to attend a **two-year college** was 17-20%. These proportions changed somewhat in 2014-15, when the percentage reporting that they planned to attend a four-year college dropped to 72% and the percentage reporting that they planned to attend a two-year college increased to 23%. Small percentages of participating seniors reported other post-high school plans such as business/technical school, military, work, and other.

These figures align with an alumni survey that was administered as part of this evaluation during summer 2015. Alumni included in the survey graduated in 2011-12 or later. In response to the question, **“After you graduated from high school, what was your next step?”** 78% of respondents selected four-year college and 18% selected two-year college.

Disaggregating post-high school plans by race/ethnicity, Hispanic Minority Achievement participants were the most likely group to attend a two-year college instead of a four-year college. Over the three years included in the analysis, between 79-86% of Asian and black students reported that they planned

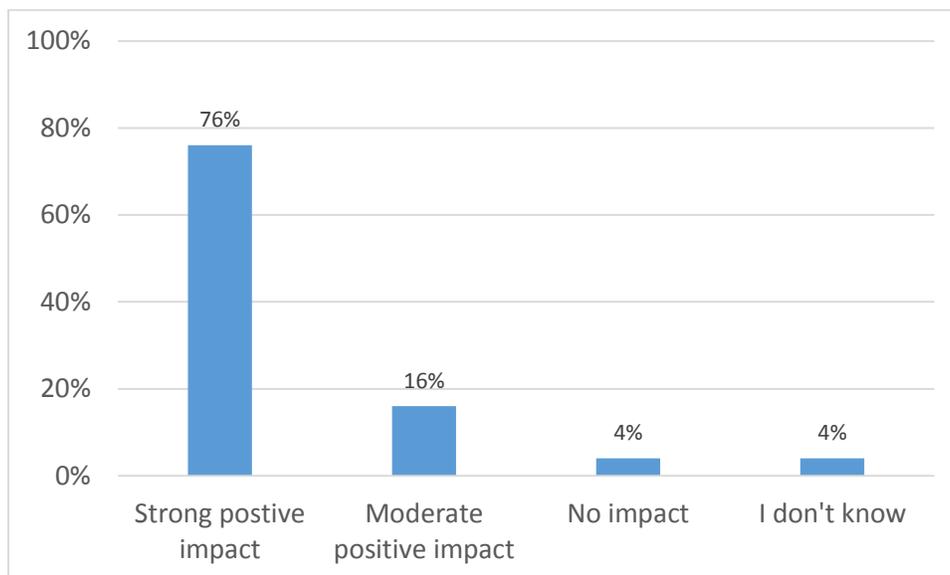
to attend a four-year college. In 2011-12 and 2013-14, between 71-73% of Hispanic students reported that they planned to attend a four-year college. This percentage dropped to 63% in 2014-15, accounting for most of the overall drop in students reporting plans to attend a four-year college that year.

Preparation for Post-High School

The alumni survey also addressed the question of how prepared alumni of Minority Achievement programs and services were for their next step after high school, and the role of the Minority Achievement Coordinator in preparing students for their next step. In response to the question, “**How prepared were you for your next step after high school?**” most alumni (56%) reported that they were *very prepared*, with 40% reporting they were *somewhat prepared*.

Figure 51 displays responses to the question, “**To what extent did the Minority Achievement Coordinator help prepare you for your next step after high school?**” Three quarters of alumni reported that they coordinator had a *strong positive impact* on their level of preparedness.

Figure 51: Minority Achievement Alumni Survey: To what extent did the Minority Achievement Coordinator help prepare you for your next step after high school? (n=49)



The full report on on-time graduation and post-high school plans is available in **Appendix E3**. The full report on the alumni survey is available in **Appendix C4**.

Supportive School and Classroom Environment and Academic Challenge

Perceptions of Inclusiveness

There was large-scale agreement across the focus groups that Arlington Public Schools puts effort into cultivating an inclusive culture that capitalizes on and appreciates diversity. Biases and imperfections were seen and widely acknowledged, but both students and adults felt strongly aware of the school system’s work and believed there is positive intent.

Many parent and student participants described a positive relationship between schools and families.

There is a lot of transparency when it comes to the teachers and children. I get notes, I get emails. If the note doesn't come back [from me to school], then I get an email. (ES Parent)

A lot of the people who work here, they know my family. A lot of them went here. (ES Student)

They usually stay in touch a lot. When I do something really good they call [my mom]. (ES Student)

[School Name] in my experience has been extremely responsive and very open. A lot of people will say things when they're not happy, [so] I'll say we've been extremely happy with the access to the teachers, with their concerns for our concerns. (MS Parent)

My counselor, she always calls home because her and my mom, they always talk. (HS Student)

Although the overall school experience is clearly positive, supportive, and academically challenging, a couple specific issues were raised by some high school students. The difficulty these students expressed largely occurred in situations in which they were the only minority student in a class or one of very few minorities in a class. In these instances, several students said that they felt uncomfortable asking or answering questions, fearing embarrassment coupled with race-based judgment should they say something "dumb" or incorrect.

... I would say that as a minority many times, because I take AP and IB classes, many times I would feel like an outsider in those classes because there's not many minorities, like all white. That's pretty much it. I know last year I took an IB class and there were only two other Hispanic kids. They were talking to me and were like, "Do you ever feel like you're out of the loop, or you don't understand certain things, you just feel isolated?" I was like, "Yeah, but it's not on purpose." (HS Student)

Expressing a similar sentiment in the reverse, an elementary school parent noted positive feelings about having her son in a school in which he is not the only student with black or brown skin. Some students at Wakefield High School said that they had transferred from other schools and found the Wakefield environment, which is majority minority, a good fit for them.

[My elementary-age son] doesn't experience any discrimination against him. His class is quite unique because there isn't one kid that is from one ethnicity only. So, he's not the only one who is different. He's the only [student of his ethnicity]. But, everybody is "something." (ES Parent.)

I had the same experience [as another participant]. I was [at another school] 2-3 months and I thought, "Yeah, this is not it," I thought, "Why am I the only Hispanic girl in my classes?" The teachers were also- I could see they treated me different because I was the only Hispanic. I thought, "Yeah, this is not it." So, I transferred here [Wakefield]. The first week, I loved it and I keep loving it and I'm so happy with decision I made. I don't have to feel like I'm alone because everyone else was different. (HS Student)

A couple high school students said they had experiences in which they felt ignored. This topic was noted, but was not a strong theme throughout the groups.

I've had this experience in my English class. The teacher would want the white kids to read stuff when she wants them to read stuff out loud and she wouldn't really call on the minorities. That's something that I noticed and my friend also told me that too. (HS Student)

A couple high school students and one coordinator shared the view that dress code violations are more heavily, rigidly enforced for African American students—girls, in particular—than for white students.

[Weather is] getting warmer. I'm waiting for it every year at school. There are kids at school, especially girls who complain about being called for the dress code violation and they say, "The white girls dress the same way, they don't get ..." There's certain conversations you have over and over and over but they send a negative message and the kids know it. They know it. (Coordinator)

...dress-code wise, if you're white and your shoulders are showing they don't say anything about that. I'm not kidding. I could be wearing the same tank top as another girl and they wouldn't say anything, they would say something to me. I noticed that with lots of my non-white friends, we agreed on that. I don't understand where that comes from. (HS Student)

Support from Adults

Students in the focus groups were asked to rate how supported by adults they feel at school on a 1 to 10 scale, where 10 is completely supported. Across the age groups, most students' ratings were high—mostly 8 or higher. Parents echoed this sense of support. When students were asked the reasons for their high ratings, they gave many specific examples of supportive people and what they do. Even students who said they had not asked for help said they felt they could do so. Several elementary students wanted to be able to say “100” or “1,000” on the 1 to 10 scale. Still, about a half-dozen middle school students from different schools rated support low—between 2 and 5. The middle school students who gave low ratings said that some teachers are not supportive or said that they do not have much closeness with their counselor.

[Adults] try to help us learn. Help us with tests, like SOLs. They notice if you're sad. They cheer you up. (ES Student)

I'm really bad at World History. It's my weakest subject. Last year I took AP Government and this year I'm taking APUSH. So, I have the same teacher and every time I go to him—could be during lunch or [open] period—even though he's doing something and I ask him if he can help me, he always puts his work aside. He helps me and he works me through whatever I don't understand. Every time I go there I know that he's there to help me. He won't say, "Oh can you come back later?" He'll say, "Okay, I'll help you right now." (HS Student)

My counselor and [coordinator] are supportive. I can go to [coordinator] any time of the day. And, then it's funny but, my freshman year math teacher still helps me. I go to her every single

day...me and my friend, we don't even have her class and we go there every single day....I was just so surprised how she was willing to help us although we're not even her students and she's working with us every day. She's always excited to, too. (HS Student)

[Counselor] has been supporting her since freshman year. They're very, very close. He'll call me if he has any questions or concerns. [Counselor] has been a big part of our lives. (HS Parent)

Support from Minority Achievement Coordinator

When parents and students in the focus groups were asked about the benefits of participating in Minority Achievement programs and services, nearly all emphasized finding their place in the school community as a key benefit. In addition, for middle- and high school parents and students, the help of Minority Achievement programs and services in opening up the possibility of college was a second prominently noted benefit. There were two nuances in that middle school comments focused on exposure to college as a possibility and to college life through campus visits, while high school students spoke more of specific guidance with the practical matters of applying. At the elementary level, the second main benefit—as opposed to college planning—was that Minority Achievement programs serve children's learning and developmental needs.

I think it helped me know that I'm actually a part of this school. Since this school is kind of small, [coordinator] will come to you personally...It helps you actually become used to this school. (HS Student)

I think he socializes a lot more. Gets friends. He has more friends. My son came back from camping [with Minority Achievement] a different child, more grown up. (ES Parent)

[Program] got me thinking about college, to take it more seriously. I was thinking about college before I joined [Program] but it took it to a different level, a higher level. (HS Student)

...a high percentage of college students in Virginia are white so having a group like this makes you feel like yeah, you have a chance, you can do anything you want. That feels really good. (HS Student)

[He gains] the opportunity to go to [visit] college. Because I don't have time to do that. It's good that they start early [in middle school]. (MS Parent)

My son learned how to behave differently in different situations. For example, if he's at the zoo, he acts like he's at the zoo. He also went to the White House. He learned how to behave. What I'm trying to say is, he learned. (ES Parent)

My son has been to National Airport. They had an African American pilot from the Second World War and, he told them all the experience of African American soldiers. My son felt very strongly about it. He still reads. He still Googles it. It's fun. But, they learned so much. (ES Parent)

The alumni survey addressed the question of support from Minority Achievement Coordinators. **Figure 52** shows responses to the question, “As a middle school/high school student in APS, to what extent did you feel supported by the Minority Achievement Coordinator at your school?” Alumni were more likely to report that they felt *very supported* by their high school coordinator (84%) than by their middle school coordinator (44%); about a quarter of alumni reported that they felt *somewhat supported* by their middle school coordinator. These results are not necessarily surprising given that high school was the more recent experience for all respondents.

Figure 52: Minority Achievement Alumni Survey: As a middle school/high school student in APS, to what extent did you feel supported by the Minority Achievement Coordinator at your school? (n=49)

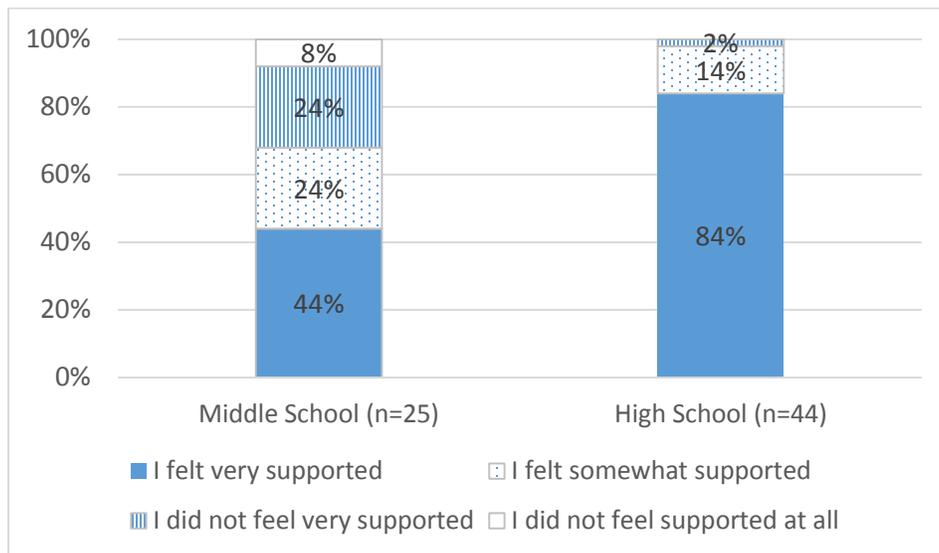
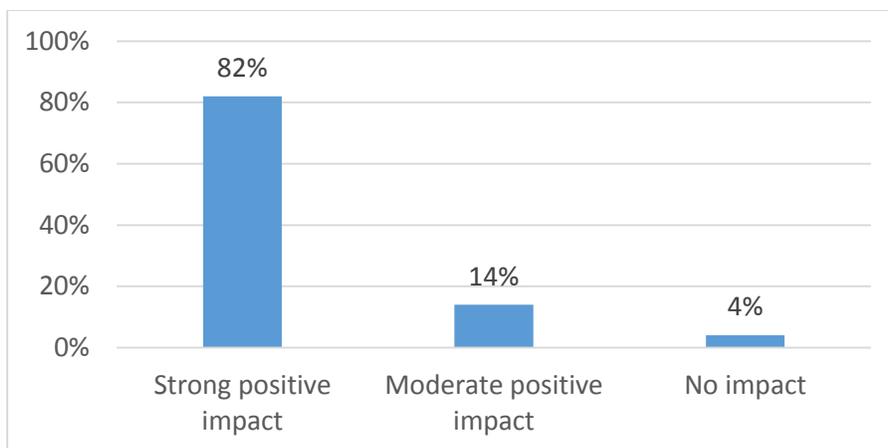


Figure 53 shows responses to the question, “What impact did your relationship with the Minority Achievement Coordinator at your school have on you?” A large majority reported that their coordinator had a *strong positive impact* on them, while 14% reported a *moderate positive impact*.

Figure 53: Minority Achievement Alumni Survey: What impact did your relationship with the Minority Achievement Coordinator at your school have on you? (n=49)



The alumni survey included an open-ended question asking for examples of experiences with the Minority Achievement Coordinator that had an impact on them. **Table 15** summarizes these responses. Just over half shared examples of the coordinator **providing encouragement or support for student achievement**, and the same percentage shared examples dealing specifically with **support for the college application process**.

Table 15: Minority Achievement Alumni Survey: Please share an experience that you had with a Minority Achievement Coordinator in middle school or high school that had an impact on you, your experience as a student, or on your preparedness for your next step after high school/middle school.

Categories of open-ended responses	Percent of Alumni Responses (n=29)	Examples
Minority Achievement Coordinator provides encouragement/support for student achievement	52%	I didn't believe I could actually take and succeed in an advanced placement class in high school and I tried so hard again and again to escape from it because I was so afraid of failure. My negative mindset alone was a recipe for failure and as I tried to drop these classes my coordinator never agreed with me and constantly encouraged me to get up and give it my all.
Minority Achievement Coordinator supports the college application process	52%	In high school my Minority Achievement Coordinator helped me figure out what I was able to financially afford after my financial aid letters. He outlined what everything was called, what it meant and most importantly, what it meant for my future. He helped me establish a decision about where I would go and how much I could afford.
Minority Achievement Coordinator is someone who listened	28%	He really cared for all of the minority students in cohort and UMG. His door was always open for anything I needed. He gives his undivided attention and what makes him special is that he actually cares enough to check back in with his students to make sure they're okay.
The Minority Achievement	24%	My minority achievement coordinators helped encourage me to participate in a lot

Categories of open-ended responses	Percent of Alumni Responses (n=29)	Examples
programs provided leadership/enrichment opportunities and resources		activities that I wouldn't have done by myself. They wanted to bring me more out of my shell and I appreciated that. They helped make my experience as a student more fulfilling.
The Minority Achievement Coordinators inspired self-confidence	21%	I was a really shy but intelligent student when I was in high school and my shyness was getting in the way of achieving my dreams but after I met the coordinator everything changed. I graduated high school feeling very confident in myself and my abilities as a black female.
Other	10%	Cohort lunches were not my absolute favorite thing in High School but I knew enough to know that I learned some of the most valuable lessons there, and now looking back I know that I wouldn't be at Stanford without the influence of the Minority Achievement programs

*Open-ended responses could be coded in multiple categories.

The focus group report is available in **Appendix C3**. The full report on the alumni survey is available in **Appendix C4**.

Academic Challenge

Most students in the focus groups felt they are sufficiently challenged academically. High school students felt more challenged as a group while younger students expressed more of a range. Parents' comments mirrored this pattern, with most feeling children are challenged, especially high school students' parents, but some parents of younger students saw the work as relatively easy.

Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is extremely challenged, virtually all of the high school students chose 7, 8, or 9. Just a couple high school students noted instances in which they felt minorities were given easier work. Although these instances are noted, the issue was not a prominent theme.

I was just thinking about my AP English and my AP [math] class, they're both challenging in a different way. My English class, he likes to give us so much work. Not hard, but it's just so much that it takes a really long time to do. Finding the time to do all that is challenging. But my math

class...Since the teacher does the flip class, you learn at home and then you practice in class, you actually have to learn the material at home and knowing how to study for it is a different type of challenge. (HS Student)

I actually think challenge is less than what it should be...I feel like they hold us sometimes to a lower standard. If we do the same thing as a different person, you would get more credit for it, or you will be congratulated for it. [Another agreeing] They have low expectations for us, but that's why our counselors try to push us. (HS Students)

...in my physics class, it's a pretty small class and more than half of the kids are white in that class and there are a couple minority kids and then the teacher he- I've noticed that and I've also talked to someone else because I thought I was the only one thinking that- the way he treats the white kids, he says, "Oh, you know this. This is easy, you know this," then when they ask him for help he's pretty happy to help them but when the other kids ask him questions he's like, "Oh, you're still on this question?" [as if to say] "Okay, let's dumb it down a little." (HS Student)

Among middle school students, there was more variation with some saying 2 on the 1 to 10 scale, many mid-range at 5 or 6, and some higher. Many middle school students needed help grasping the idea of “challenge” as it was intended—positive challenge, hard school work that you tackle and come out understanding better. Before that clarification, those giving higher ratings typically said that having too great a volume of work led them to feel challenged. Even those who chose low numbers said that they chose a low number because some classes were challenging and some were not. In sum, most of these students said that they felt sufficiently challenged—that is, that school is not too easy.

In Algebra, we always have to learn the next thing. It's coming fast. [Another agreeing] I think the same thing for Algebra. It's really hard and you've got to keep up. (MS Students)

Overall, elementary school students felt sufficiently challenged—although they, too, needed to grasp the concept of “challenge.”

In general, many parents of children in elementary and middle school thought their children’s work should be more challenging. When pressed on the question of whether minority students in particular had academic challenge similar to others, parents did not feel they have the big picture perspective to say. While some parents spoke of working “to keep grades up” as if doing so did not come easily, only a very small number shared any major worry that their children were not meeting the challenges of schoolwork.

For my daughter, it's a walk in the park. I want her to be more challenged all the time. She's got a lot else going on. But, I would say I wish the writing was more rigorous. The mathematics. I would say it's too easy for her. (MS Parent)

He's made A-B Honor Roll all year. I don't see him struggle a lot with homework. It's tough to know. (MS Parent)

Every time homework is given to him at a 5th grade level, he can't. So, the teacher gives him homework for a 3rd grade level. And, my son tells the teacher to help him do the 5th grade. And, she says he needs to do the 3rd grade, which is the one that he can do. So, he asks, "Why am I not doing what the rest of the class is doing" (ES Parent)

The focus group report is available in **Appendix C3**.

Self-Advocacy Skills

A key goal of the Minority Achievement Program is to foster self-advocacy skills, or resilience, among minority students. Focus group participants were introduced to the following definition of self-advocacy or resiliency.

People who are resilient...

- Feel like they can take actions to affect the outcome of an event
- Take advantage of opportunities
- Address challenges in a calm, rational way
- Ask for help
- Have supportive people around them
- Talk about challenges as a way to solve them
- Do not think of themselves as victims

They were then asked to review these qualities and think about which among them their Minority Achievement program participation most helped, if any. Resoundingly, students and parents said Minority Achievement programs and services help students **take advantage of opportunities, ask for help, and have supportive people around them**. At all three age levels, opinions tended to converge around these three points. Regarding supportive people, most focus was on supportive adults, but a couple middle and high school students also specifically noted the support of peers.

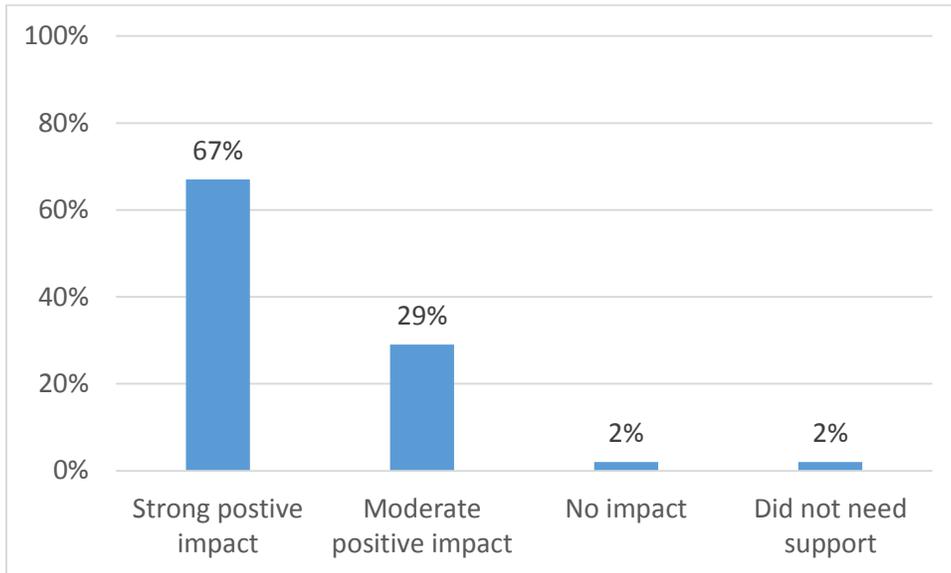
When he needs help, he asks. (ES Parent)

They also talk how your inaction can affect you. If you don't apply to college and stuff like that or if you don't you push yourself to take more challenging classes, how it can influence your path... (HS Student)

I've helped a lot of people and supported them and got them to join. I used to not ask for help from teachers or anything and after the groups, I ask for help. (HS Student)

The alumni survey included the same definition of self-advocacy skills/resiliency and asked how much of an impact participation in Minority Achievement programs had in helping them to develop their self-advocacy skills. **Figure 54** shows responses to this question. A large majority reported that their participation had a *strong positive impact* (67%) or a *moderate positive impact* (29%).

Figure 54: Minority Achievement Alumni Survey: To what extent did your participation in APS Minority Achievement programs help you to develop your self-advocacy skills? (n=49)



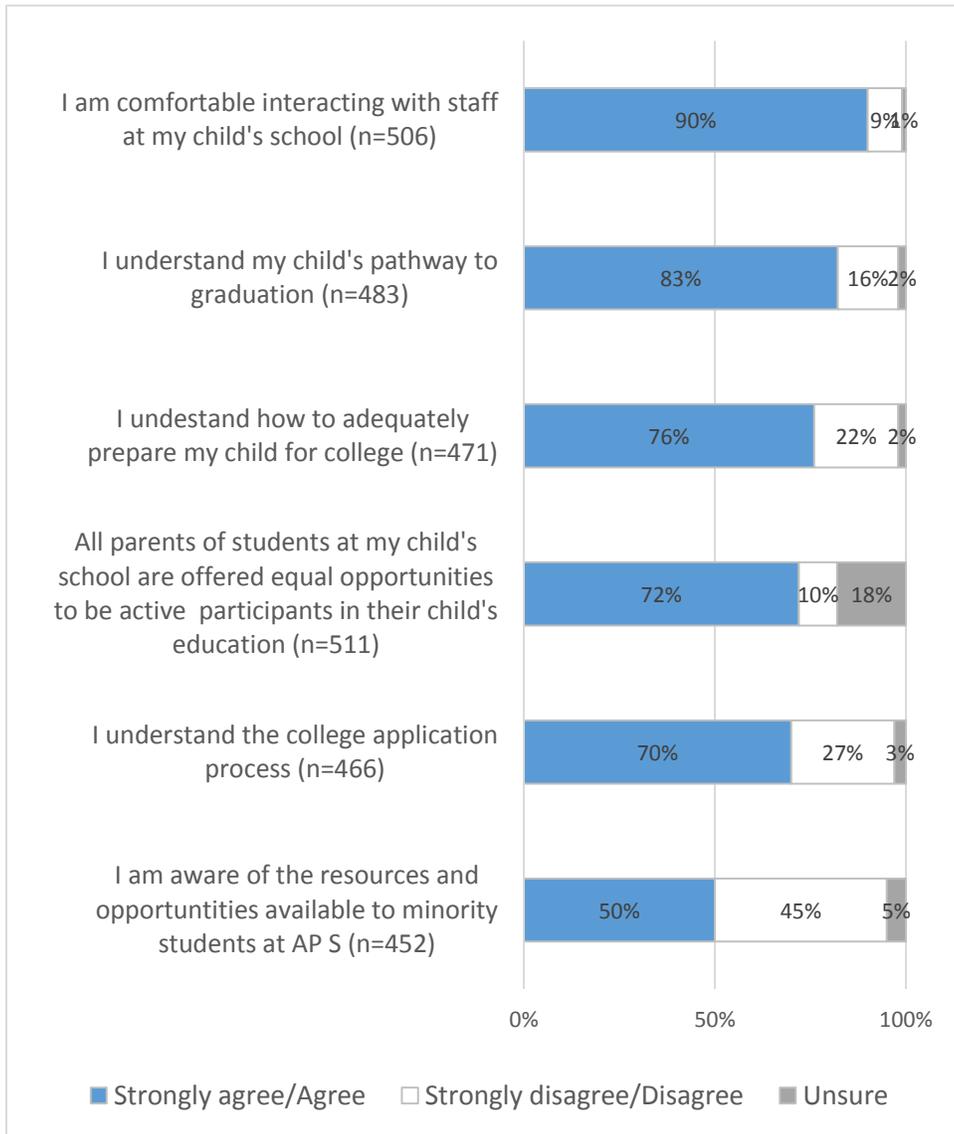
The focus group report is available in **Appendix C3**. The report on the alumni survey is available in **Appendix C4**.

Parent Comfort Navigating the System

The parent survey included a series of questions gauging their level of comfort navigating their child's school experience and progress, as well as their perceptions of the extent to which all parents have equal opportunities to participate in their child's education.

Figure 55 displays overall responses to these questions. Parents were most likely to agree that they are **comfortable interacting with staff at their child's school** (90%). Eighty-three percent agreed that they **understand their child's pathway to graduation**. The lowest level of agreement was with the statement, **I am aware of the resources and opportunities available to minority students at APS** (50%).

Figure 55: Minority Achievement Parent Survey: Level of agreement, comfort navigating system



Responses for these questions were disaggregated by the following demographic information provided on the survey: child’s participation in Minority Achievement programs/services, grade level of child, race/ethnicity of parent, and education level of parent.

Figure 56 displays parent responses disaggregated by their child’s participation in Minority Achievement programs and services. Having a child who participated in Minority Achievement programs and services had a **positive relationship** with respondents’ level of agreement with all of the statements regarding **their own comfort navigating the school system**. They were slightly less likely than parents whose children did not participate in Minority Achievement programs to agree with the statement, “All parents of students at my child's school are offered equal opportunities to be active participants in their child's education.”

Figure 56: Minority Achievement Parent Survey: Comfort and Perceptions by Child's Participation in Minority Achievement Programs/Services

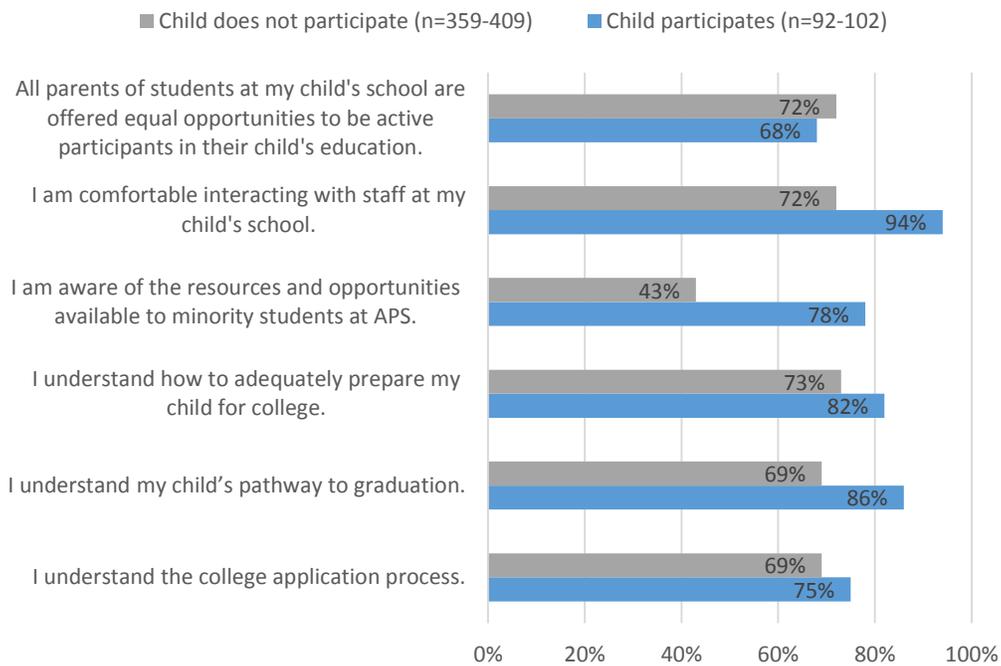


Figure 57 displays parent responses disaggregated by their race/ethnicity. Note that the parent's race/ethnicity may not represent the race/ethnicity of their child. While the survey was sent to all parents of students whose race in the student information system was listed as something other than white⁷, 15% of parent respondents identified themselves as white.

Hispanic parents were the least likely to express agreement with these statements regarding **graduation and college**:

- I understand my child's pathway to graduation. (76%)
- I understand the college application process. (64%)

Also regarding college, both black and Hispanic parents had relatively lower rates of agreement with the statement, "**I understand how to adequately prepare my child for college.**" (70% of black parents, 69% of Hispanic parents). Black and Hispanic parents were also the least likely groups to agree that "**All parents of students at my child's school are offered equal opportunities to be active participants in their child's education.**" (66% of black parents, 64% of Hispanic parents)

White parents of minority students were the least likely to express agreement with the following statements:

- I am aware of the resources and opportunities available to minority students at APS. (36%)
- I am comfortable interacting with staff at my child's school. (72%)

⁷ At schools with a Minority Achievement Coordinator

Figure 57: Minority Achievement Parent Survey: Comfort and Perceptions by Parent’s Race/Ethnicity

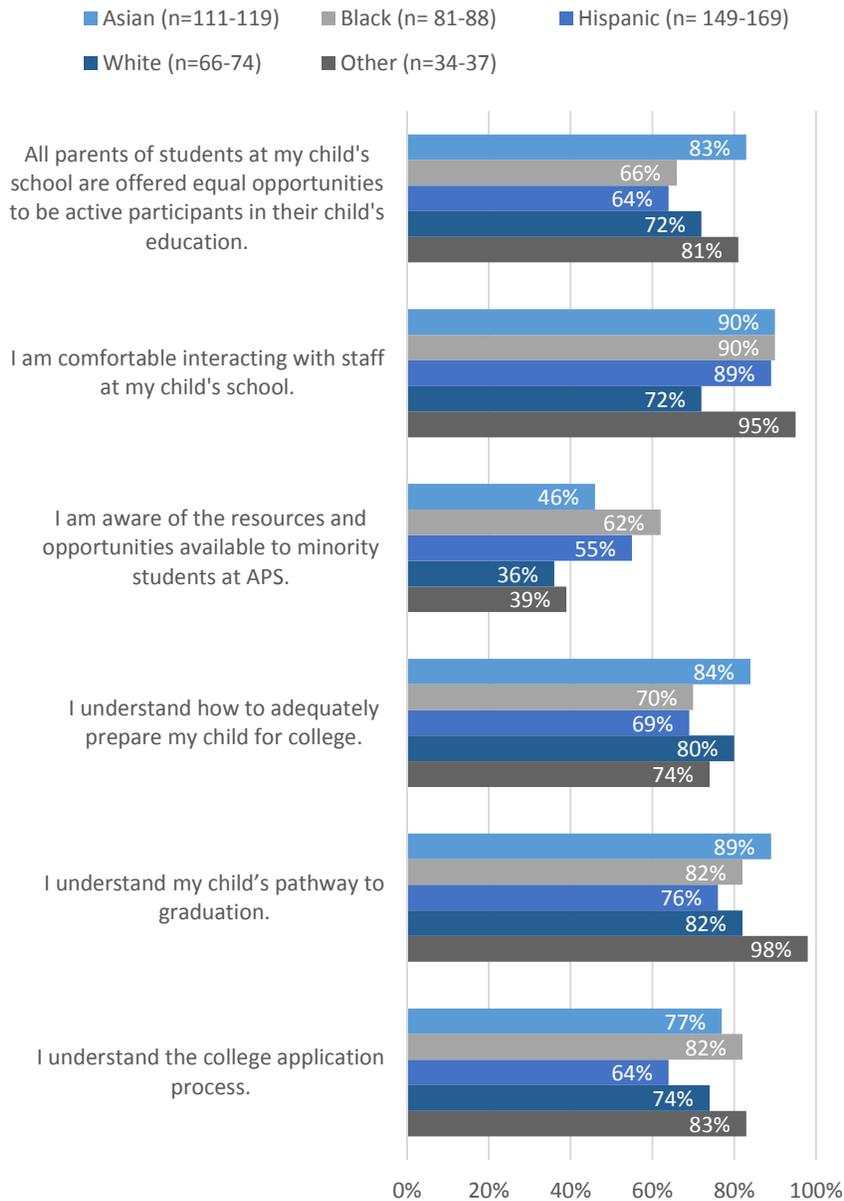
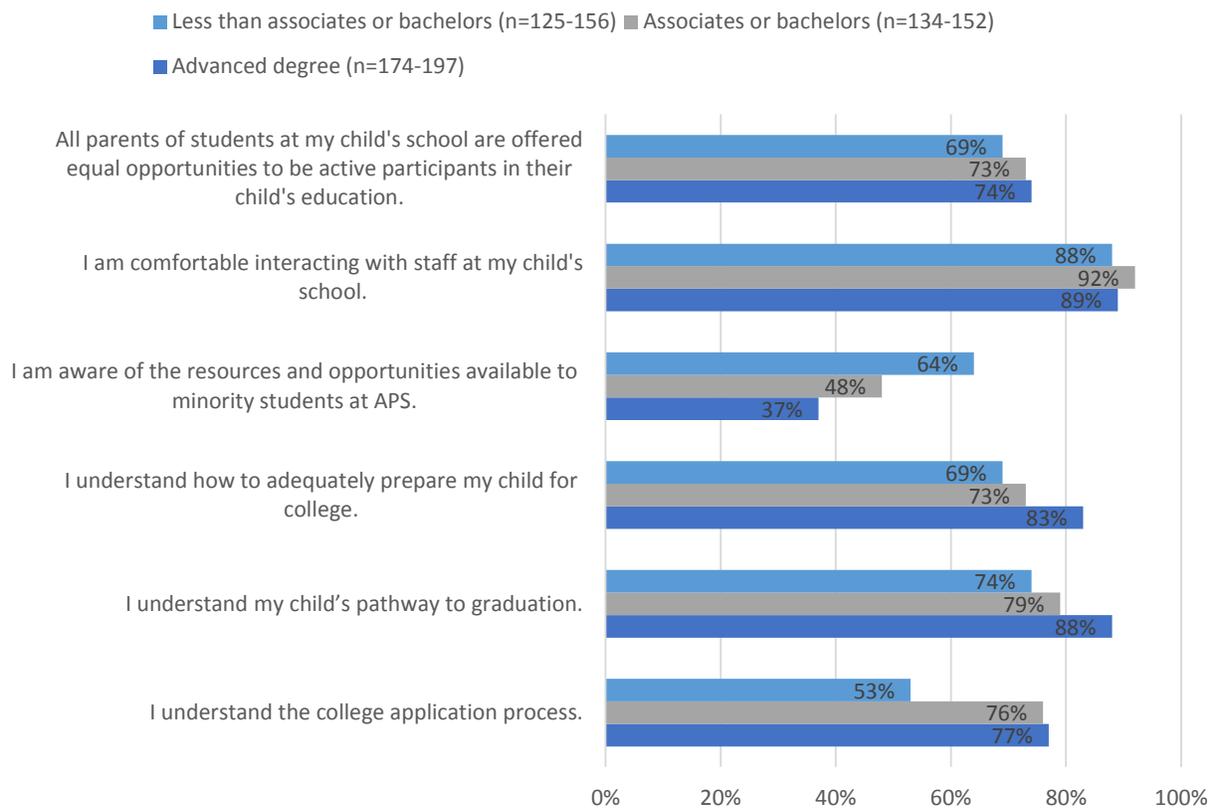


Figure 58 displays parent responses disaggregated by their education level. Generally, the higher the level of education, the more likely parents were to express agreement. There were three exceptions:

- The lower a parent’s level of education, the more likely they were to be **aware of resources and opportunities available to minority students in APS**.
- Parents with an associate’s or bachelor’s degree were more likely than parents with an advanced degree to feel **comfortable interacting with staff at their child’s school**.
- There was no substantial difference between parents with an associate’s or bachelor’s degree and parents with an advance degree regarding whether they **understand the college application process**.

Figure 58: Minority Achievement Parent Survey: Comfort and Perceptions by Parent’s Education Level



Differences between parent respondents based on the grade level of their child followed an expected pattern. For example, parents of high school students were more likely than parents of elementary students to report that they understand the college application process. Full details about differences by grade level are available in **Appendix C2**.

Parent focus groups explored one issue that may affect parents’ level of comfort interacting with their child’s school: access to native language support for parents who do not speak English. The few parents in the focus groups who primarily speak Spanish were asked whether they feel like they have ways to communicate with school that overcome language differences. Largely, they said they do. However, one parent said that she could not always easily find a bilingual person to help her at her son’s high school.

When I have a question, I go to the school to ask. I have communication with a lady who speaks Spanish. (MS Parent)

There is not always someone at [High School] who can speak Spanish. That is why I liked [Middle School] so much, there was always someone there who could. [At assemblies/events] I have to pay a lot of attention to understand just a little bit. (HS Parent)

One of the things the Engagement Committee [at School] does is try to make everybody feel welcome. Not only that, but also giving the information about school to the parents—where to

go, how to go to a teacher, what to talk about, what to ask...just finished a program called Face Time, geared specifically for non-English-speaking parents [to help them use ParentView]. That was a shock to the kids when they found out their parents could check grades...because the parents relied on the kids to tell them their grades. (MS Parent)

The full parent survey report is available in **Appendix C2**. The focus group report is available in **Appendix C3**.

SECTION 3: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

[APS Context: Experience and Achievement of Minority Students in APS \(page 22\)](#)

This section aims to describe the context in which the APS Minority Achievement Program exists. Data presented here are not presented as findings about the Minority Achievement Program itself, but include information about the experiences and achievement of minority students across Arlington Public Schools, including racial/ethnic diversity among schools; perceptions of parents, students, and teachers; test scores, grades, enrollment, and graduation patterns; and classroom observations.

[APS Student Population by Race/Ethnicity \(page 22\)](#)

There is a high amount of variation in the racial/ethnic diversity of APS schools. Civil rights statistics from 1998 through 2015 show that Arlington Public Schools has been a majority minority school system that entire time, but the proportion of white students is slowly increasing, while the proportion of black and Hispanic students has decreased over the same time period.

The variation is greatest at the elementary level. Thirteen APS elementary schools are majority minority, with less than half of the student population consisting of white students, and six elementary schools are more than three quarters white. Out of 11 secondary schools, four are majority white, and one is majority Hispanic. None of the other schools has a racial/ethnic group that constitutes a majority of the student population.

[Perceptions among Parents, Students, and Teachers \(page 25\)](#)

Site-Based and Community Satisfaction Survey results indicate differences among stakeholders by race/ethnicity:

- White parents were less likely to report **satisfaction with the degree to which parents are involved in the School Board’s decision-making.**
- White parents were most likely to report that their child is experiencing **school-related stress.**
- Black parents had the lowest rate of agreement with the statement, **“My PTA collaborates with the community to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation,”** but the percentage agreeing increased in 2014.
- With a few exceptions, white students were most likely to agree with the following statements:

My teachers treat students fairly, regardless of race, culture, or language.

I feel students of my race or culture accepted by **students** at school.

I feel students of my race or culture are accepted by **staff** at school.

Almost all teachers reported that the following statements were true *always* or *sometimes*, but elementary teachers were the most likely to select *always* and middle school teachers were the least likely.

My school is respectful of **cultural** differences.

My school is respectful of **language** differences.

My school is respectful of **racial/ethnic** differences.

There is variation among staff responses on items related to the achievement gap. Elementary teachers were the most likely to indicate that **closing the achievement gap** is *very important*, followed by middle school teachers, and then high school teachers.

Elementary teachers were the most likely to respond *yes* to the question, “**Do you believe that the achievement gap can be narrowed substantially while maintaining high standards for all children?**” Around a quarter of middle and high school teachers selected *unsure*, with a substantial proportion selecting *no*.

Elementary teachers were the most likely to respond *yes* to the question, “**In your opinion, is it the responsibility of the public schools to close the achievement gap between White students and Black and Hispanic students?**” At the middle and high school levels, around half selected this response, with around a quarter selecting *no*, and another quarter selecting *unsure*.

Student Achievement (page 32)

Overall there is progress on narrowing some of the achievement gaps, but substantial gaps remain.

The gap in pass rates on **elementary SOL tests** among racial/ethnic groups has narrowed on both the English and Math SOL assessments, although large gaps remain. Social Studies and Science have seen less progress in terms of overall growth and narrowing of the gap, although both assessments had higher overall pass rates to begin with.

The gap in pass rates on **middle school SOL tests** among racial/ethnic groups has narrowed on both the English and Math SOL assessments, with particularly large decreases for Math. The gap in pass rates on Science assessments has narrowed for Asian and black students, and increased for Hispanic students. Similarly, the gap on Social Studies assessments has narrowed for Asian and black students, and remained steady for Hispanic students.

The gap in pass rates on **high school SOL tests** has narrowed for all content areas, with the most notable improvement in the area of Social Studies.

While there has been a decrease in the **AP/IB enrollment** gap for all racial/ethnic groups, there has been an increase in the gap in **AP/IB pass rates** for both black and Hispanic students, and the gaps are substantial.

While there has been substantial progress narrowing the gap in **on-time graduation** for black and Hispanic students, there has not been much movement in the rate of students earning an **advanced diploma**.

SAT and ACT participation rates have increased among all student groups, but there has been little movement in narrowing gaps in participation rates between white students and Asian, black, and Hispanic students between 2009 and 2015.

Average **SAT scores** show little movement overall although the average score for Hispanic students has shown an increase most years, and the average score for Asian students increased substantially in 2015. Average **ACT scores** have increased for white, black, and Hispanic students and remained steady for Asian students.

There has been little movement in gaps in **gifted identification** between student groups.

Observations of Student-Teacher Interactions (page 38)

Research shows that students in classrooms where teachers earn higher scores on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) achieve at higher levels than their peers in classrooms with lower CLASS scores. APS CLASS observations reveal *educationally significant* differences (0.5-1.0 points) among observed classes based on the racial/ethnic makeup of the class. An educationally significant difference is one that would impact outcomes for students.

- Average middle school **Student Engagement** scores increase as the percentage of white students in an observed class exceeds 50%, and decrease as the percentage of Hispanic students exceeds 75%.
- Generally, average high school **Emotional Support** scores increase as the percentage of white students increases, although the average score in classes with no white students is higher than in those that are 1-25% white. There is a reverse trend for black students: the greater the percentage of black students in a class, the lower the average score.
- **Instructional Support** at the high school level is the domain with the highest discrepancies among different classes by racial/ethnic makeup. There is a general trend that average scores increase as the percentage of white students increases, with a reverse trend for black and Hispanic students. Within the domain of Instructional Support, the greatest discrepancies occur within the dimension of **Analysis and Inquiry**. There is a 1-point difference between classes with no Hispanic students and classes that are 76-100% Hispanic, and a 2.3-point difference between classes with no black students and classes that are 26-50% black. Conversely, there is a 1.3-point difference between classes with no white students and classes that are 76-100% white.

Evaluation Question #1: How effectively was the Minority Achievement program implemented? (page 46)

Familiarity with Program (page 46)

There is variation in staff familiarity with and perceptions about the Minority Achievement Program, what it does, and who it serves.

Staff survey responses indicate that administrators are more likely to be familiar with the work of the Minority Achievement Coordinator than instructional staff, and that high school instructional staff are somewhat more likely to be familiar with coordinators' work than elementary and middle school instructional staff. Among instructional staff, teachers were less likely than other T-scale staff (e.g. librarians, specialists, coaches, counselors, etc.) to be familiar with the work of the coordinator.

School staff are most familiar with **affinity or cohort groups** and **individual student advising**. They are also fairly familiar with **college preparation-related services**, such as the George Mason University Early Identification Program. Respondents are least familiar with programs and services for **summer opportunities** and **preparing students to transition** to new schools in APS.

High school staff are generally more likely to be aware of activities and programs for *students*, while elementary and middle school respondents are more likely to be aware of activities and programs for *parents*.

The majority of high school instructional staff and almost half of elementary and middle school instructional staff do not know what services are offered to *parents* by the Minority Achievement Program. About one in 10 administrators do not know.

A survey sent to all parents of minority students at schools with a Minority Achievement Coordinator indicates variation in parent familiarity with the program and services. Over half of all respondents reported that they were not aware that there is a Minority Achievement Coordinator at their child's school.

When asked about their familiarity with a specific program or service, in all cases, a majority of parents had never heard of the program or service. Generally, between a quarter and a third of respondents reported that they had heard of a program or service, but their child had not participated, and less than one-fifth reported that their child had participated in a specified program or service.

[Coordinator Role \(page 51\)](#)

Coordinators are busy implementing programs and services that support the specific needs of the students at their school. Students and parents report that coordinators make a positive difference in their school experiences. There is variation in the offerings by school, as well as the communication with students, staff, and families.

Running records collected during the 2014-15 school year indicate that **providing advising and academic support** is a primary job function of Minority Achievement Coordinators. Across levels, coordinators spend approximately 18 percent of their time engaged with students in advising and support activities, and an additional 12 percent **facilitating meetings and discussions with students**. They spend 14 percent of their time supporting **leadership development**, 12 percent of their time **supporting cultural awareness**, and 4 percent of their time **supporting social skills development**. Cultural awareness initiatives occupy 15 to 17 percent of Minority Achievement Coordinators' time at the elementary and middle school levels, compared to 5 percent at the high school level.

In response to a question on the staff survey about services offered by the coordinator to *teachers*, respondents were most likely to report that the Minority Achievement Coordinator at their school **meets with teachers to support students' academic success**. Staff indicated that they collaborate most frequently with the Minority Achievement Coordinator in **discussing a student's progress** or **building a student's self-esteem**.

In response to a question on the parent survey about services offered by the coordinator to *parents*, almost half reported that they don't know. About a third were aware of the coordinator's role **informing parents about programs and opportunities**, and 14% reported that the coordinator **helps parents navigate school**.

A theme that emerged from the coordinator focus group is their belief that **forging relationships with students is central to their positive impact**. Student focus groups and open-ended staff survey responses also highlighted the importance of personal relationships in the coordinators' work.

High school coordinators spend nearly four-fifths of their time with students, compared to about two-thirds at the elementary and middle school levels. Conversely, high school coordinators spend relatively less time working with teachers and staff members.

In the focus group, coordinators broadly described their role as having two major priorities: First, at the school level, **fostering a school environment that is culturally competent**. Second, for individual students, striving for each student to reach a point at which they feel that their **race matters to them in a positive way**.

In general, Minority Achievement Coordinators' reported activities were well-aligned with Minority Achievement Program objectives. Staff survey responses indicate that most staff agree that coordinators' work aligns with specified goals.

While **advocate for students** was a goal that took up a relatively small amount of coordinators' time in the running records, the focus group discussion made it clear that coordinators see themselves as advocates and are keenly aware of that role. This apparent contradiction may simply be due to the amount of time involved in tasks related to advocacy, as opposed to the amount of time required for other types of tasks such as one-on-one work with a student. Staff survey responses also indicate that school staff believe that coordinators advocate for students.

Though staff and parent feedback about the coordinators' work and the alignment of their work with program goals was widely positive, there was some concern expressed in the parent focus groups and the staff survey about **variation in the quality of programs and services** offered. Similarly, some staff also expressed a belief that Minority Achievement programs and services **only serve high-achieving students**.

There is a **positive relationship** between staff's familiarity with the coordinator's work and the likelihood that they **feel supported by either their administration or the coordinator in their interactions with families of minority students**. Respondents who were *very* or *extremely familiar* with the coordinator's work were also more likely to report that they feel **confident in their interactions with families of minority students**.

[Student Participation \(page 69\)](#)

While the majority of students who participate in Minority Achievement programs and services are Hispanic or black, students of all races and ethnicities participate.

There is a Minority Achievement Coordinator at each comprehensive secondary school and one elementary school (Drew). During the three years examined in this evaluation, the number of middle and high school students participating in Minority Achievement programs and services increased with a slight decrease in high school in the most recent year (2014-15). At Drew, the number of participating students decreased from the first year of implementation to the second year (2014-15). This decrease

was due to a shift to a focus on a more select group of students, and corresponds with the increase in the average number of programs per student.

Elementary students participated in an average of 2.1 programs or services in 2014-15. The average number of programs/services was 1.7 per middle school participant and 2.1 per high school student.

At the middle and high school levels, Hispanic students constitute the largest group of participants, followed by black students. In middle and high school, Asian students constitute about a tenth of participants. A sizeable proportion of secondary participants is made up of white students.

These percentages **belie a perception** that emerged in the staff survey that **the Minority Achievement Program only serves African American students, or only African American and Hispanic students.**

These open-ended survey responses in no way represented a majority of respondents, but it came up several times despite not being the specific topic of any survey question.

Focus groups with parents, students, and coordinators stressed the importance of **interpersonal and informal channels** in the **identification and recruitment of students** to participate in Minority Achievement programs and services, in addition to **more standardized methods** such as pulling lists of students who meet certain criteria from the student information system.

Coordinators described a **wraparound process** in which students reach them via widely varied avenues, such as meeting students on field trips, receiving candidate suggestions from teachers, or working with teachers and administrators to bridge from elementary to middle to high school.

Participating students – particularly at the high school level - mentioned the role of **word-of-mouth** from friends and siblings as a prominent factor in recruitment. A few students indicated they found out purely by **happenstance** and pursued the opportunity of their own accord.

The most common recruitment method parents cited on the parent survey was that **information about the programs was sent home.** Other popular methods were **My child told me about the program** and **Staff at my child's school told me about the program.**

Students reported that **teachers can yield powerful influence** in encouraging them to participate. **Hearing about successes** strongly encourages older students and their parents to seek involvement in Minority Achievement programs. Likewise, **usefulness**, and in some cases **selectivity**, can make Minority Achievement clubs and informal groups a source of pride which attracts participants.

On a more practical level, coordinators said that other factors including **college trips, career fairs, and food** encourage participation. These factors are not long-term commitments in themselves, but they allow the **first positive contact** between coordinators and students that opens up future possibility.

When asked what hinders identification of students, coordinators resoundingly pointed to problems they encounter with the **student information system.** Coordinators described a cumbersome system that frequently provides unreliable data that must then be double-checked in a time-consuming way.

Focus groups, the parent survey, and the staff survey addressed the question of why some students who could benefit do not participate in Minority Achievement programs or services. Several **disincentives** were mentioned: lack of awareness, uncertainty about how the program would be beneficial, a

potential stigma or lack of interest in being singled out as a minority, and conflicts with other extracurricular activities. By far, the biggest perceived barrier among coordinators was that each is a single person in a school building working with a large student population.

Evaluation Question #2: What were the outcomes for the targeted populations? (page 81)

Outcomes (page 81)

Outcomes explored in this evaluation include student achievement as well as less tangible outcomes such as self-advocacy skills, a feeling of being in a supportive and academically challenging school and classroom environment, and parents' comfort navigating their child's school experience and progress. Caution is required in interpreting results in this section, as it is not possible to directly tie student outcomes to participation in Minority Achievement programs or services. Where available, quantitative data is supplemented with qualitative feedback from participants about their own perception of the impact of the program.

Student Achievement (page 81)

The percentage of participating **middle school** students who enrolled in an **advanced math course** has increased in recent years. This aligns with an overall increase in middle school enrollment in advanced math during the same time period. Participating **high school** students, who have more opportunities to enroll in **advanced coursework**, did so at a rate of 66-70% during the three years included in the analysis. Black and Hispanic students – the largest groups of participating students - enrolled in an average of 1.7-1.8 advanced classes, while white students enrolled in an average of 3.0-3.3 advanced classes over the three years included in the analysis.

At both the middle and high school levels, the two largest groups of participating students consistently had the lowest average **GPA**: 2.9-3.1 for black and Hispanic students. Asian students had the highest average GPA at the middle school level, increasing from 3.2 in 2011-12 to 3.5 in the two later years. White students had the highest average GPA at the high school level, ranging from 3.5-3.7.

The average highest combined **SAT** score for SAT Prep participants dipped from 1540 in 2011-12 to 1491-99 in 2012-13 and 2013-14, but rose again to 1547 in 2014-15. In 2014-15, almost two-fifths of SAT prep participants scored above the Strategic Plan target of 1617.

Among SAT Prep participants, black students' average SAT score increased in 2014-15, and scores for Hispanic students decreased slightly over a four-year period.

In each of the years included in this analysis, almost all seniors who had participated in identified Minority Achievement programs and services **graduated on time**, and around three-quarters graduated with an **advanced diploma**. While black students generally earned advanced diplomas at a lower rate than other groups, the percentage of black students earning an advanced diploma also rose steadily over the past four years.

Approximately four out of five participating seniors reported that they planned to attend a **four-year college**, while most of the remaining students planned to attend a **two-year college**. These proportions

changed somewhat in 2014-15, when the percentage reporting that they planned to attend a four-year college dropped and the percentage reporting that they planned to attend a two-year college increased. Hispanic students accounted for most of this change.

In response to the survey question, “**How prepared were you for your next step after high school?**” more than half of the alumni reported that they were *very prepared*, with 40% reporting they were *somewhat prepared*. Three-quarters of alumni reported that the **coordinator had a strong positive impact** on their level of preparedness.

Supportive School and Classroom Environment and Academic Challenge (page 91)

Students, alumni and parents made it clear that they feel supported by adults; particularly the Minority Achievement Coordinators.

There was large-scale agreement across the focus groups that APS puts effort into cultivating an **inclusive culture that capitalizes on and appreciates diversity**, but students also expressed that they experience **challenges when the number of minority students is low in their classroom or school population**. In instances in which they were the only minority student in a class, several students said that they felt **uncomfortable asking or answering questions**, fearing embarrassment coupled with race-based judgment should they say something “dumb” or incorrect.

Expressing a similar sentiment in the reverse, an elementary school parent noted positive feelings about having her son in a school in which he is not the only student with black or brown skin. Some students at Wakefield High School said that they had transferred from other schools and found the Wakefield environment, which is **majority minority**, a good fit for them.

Students and parents expressed a strong sense that they or their children are **supported by adults** in their school. In terms of support specifically from the coordinator, alumni were more likely to report that they felt *very supported* by their high school coordinator (84%) than by their middle school coordinator (44%). A large majority of alumni reported that their **relationship with their Minority Achievement Coordinator had a strong positive impact** on them, while 14% reported a *moderate positive impact*.

Most students in the focus groups felt they are sufficiently **challenged academically**. High school students felt more challenged as a group while younger students expressed more of a range. Parents’ comments mirrored this pattern, with most feeling children are challenged, especially high school students’ parents, but some parents of younger students saw the work as relatively easy. Many parents of children in elementary and middle school thought their children’s work should be more challenging.

Self-Advocacy Skills (page 99)

Participating students and parents said Minority Achievement programs and services help students to become **effective self-advocates** by learning how to **take advantage of opportunities, ask for help, and have supportive people around them**. Most alumni reported that their participation in Minority Achievement programs and services had a *strong positive impact* (67%) or a *moderate positive impact* (29%) on their self-advocacy skills.

Parent Comfort Navigating the System (page 100)

Among various statements indicating **comfort navigating their child's school experience**, parent survey respondents were most likely to agree that they are **comfortable interacting with staff at their child's school**. A large majority agreed that they **understand their child's pathway to graduation**. Only half of the parents reported that they are **aware of the resources and opportunities available to minority students at APS**.

Having a child who participated in Minority Achievement programs and services had a **positive relationship** with respondents' level of agreement with all of the statements regarding comfort navigating their child's school experience.

Hispanic parents were the least likely to express agreement with statements regarding understanding **pathways to graduation and college**. Both Hispanic and black parents were less likely to agree that they **understand how to adequately prepare their child for college**, or that **"All parents of students at my child's school are offered equal opportunities to be active participants in their child's education."**

Generally, the higher the level of education, the more likely parents were to express agreement with these statements. There were three exceptions:

- The lower a parent's level of education, the more likely they were to be **aware of resources and opportunities available to minority students in APS**.
- Parents with an associate's or bachelor's degree were more likely than parents with an advanced degree to feel **comfortable interacting with staff at their child's school**.
- There was no substantial difference between parents with an associate's or bachelor's degree and parents with an advanced degree regarding whether they **understand the college application process**.

SECTION 4: PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

This evaluation is wrapping up during a period of transition for the Minority Achievement Program. Given the expectation that there will be a process to consider a restructuring of the program, the Office of Planning and Evaluation is suggesting these next steps.

Finding #1: Across APS there are different understandings about what the Minority Achievement Program is, the students who are served, and the goals of the programs and services. The programs and services vary by school.

Proposed Next Step: Reevaluate the goals and direction for the Minority Achievement Program. Using data collected through this evaluation, the Strategic Plan, and the School Board's priorities as a guide, **define a vision and goals** for minority achievement within APS, including the role of the Office of Minority Achievement, and consider the following:

- Specific programs and/or services that should be available across APS schools,
- The students who should be served by the program,
- How the program can be integrated/coordinated with ATSS, and
- Measures that APS should use to hold the program accountable for the services it is charged with providing.

Finding #2: Classroom observations and student feedback indicate that the classroom experience for minority students needs to improve. CLASS scores are higher for student engagement, emotional support, and instructional support when the classroom is made up of mostly white students. At the same time, minority students report that when they represent a small proportion of a classroom they often feel isolated and are less likely to engage.

Proposed Next Step: To eliminate achievement gaps, APS needs to expand its efforts to **ensure that instruction is culturally competent** across the system. Next steps should include:

- Define and communicate expectations for culturally competent instruction in the classroom, so that every teacher and administrator has the opportunity to clearly understand the expectations.
- Support understanding of culturally responsive practices by aligning all professional development and curriculum across all programs, departments, and schools with a core set of culturally responsive instructional practices.
- Provide tools and data that help individuals, schools, and the district monitor growth using the culturally responsive practices.

Finding #3: There is a lack of consistent tools and reports to identify students who need services and to track progress of the students who participate in services.

Proposed Next Step: Clarify program offerings and develop a portfolio of data tools and reports that support **monitoring and implementation of minority achievement and Minority Achievement programs**. Examples of this work include:

- Standardize descriptions of Minority Achievement programs and services
- Expand data collection; for example:
 - Start producing a suspension report again (last reported in 2013)
 - Expand information collected through elementary scheduling so that observational data can be analyzed by race/ethnicity of students in observed classes
 - Continue efforts to enter all Minority Achievement program participation in new fields in Synergy
- Develop standard reports for use by Minority Achievement Program staff in identifying students and monitoring progress of participating students.
- Develop capacity among staff who access this data.

SECTION 5: STAFF RESPONSE – *Prepared by the Office of Minority Achievement*

The Office of Minority Achievement will institute a three-year progressive plan to systematically address the recommendations presented in the Program Evaluation Report.

Proposed Next Step #1: Reevaluate the goals and direction for the Minority Achievement Program. Using data collected through this evaluation, the Strategic Plan, and the School Board’s priorities as a guide, **define a vision and goals** for minority achievement within APS, including the role of the Office of Minority Achievement.

Response: In 2015-2016, the Office of Minority Achievement will redefine its goals and direction to align with the Strategic Plan and the priorities of the School Board. As a part of this process, the Office will work with Information Services to develop profiles for each school that will include testing data and CLASS observation data by race. Once the Office has established and communicated goals to stakeholders and distributed profiles to schools, staff will meet with each principal to identify a school goal for 2016-17 related to minority achievement based on information compiled in the profile. At the end of 2016-17, the Office will work with principals to evaluate and refine goals for 2017-18. Staff also will participate in the Whole Child Working Group in 2015-16 and integrate relevant recommendations from the Working Group into the progressive plan in 2016-17.

Proposed Next step #2: To eliminate achievement gaps, APS needs to expand its efforts to **ensure that instruction is culturally competent** across the system.

Response: To address the need for professional development in culturally responsive pedagogy as an approach to minimize opportunity gaps, in 2015-16, the Office will develop a pilot at the elementary level that will place two full-time instructional coaches in a selected school. The coaches, one with an expertise in math and one with an expertise in language arts, will be trained to provide job-embedded professional development in culturally responsive math and language arts instructional strategies. The pilot will be executed in 2016-17. At the end of 2016-17, the Office will evaluate the pilot and make necessary changes for 2017-18 to include expansion of the coaching model to other elementary schools. In addition, in 2015-16, the Office will work with curriculum offices to provide instructional resources in content area culturally responsive pedagogy. In 2016-17 and 2017-18, the Office will continue to support curriculum offices in countywide professional development.

Proposed Next Step #3: **Clarify program offerings** and develop a portfolio of data tools and reports that support **monitoring and implementation of minority achievement and Minority Achievement programs**. Examples of this work include:

Response: In 2015-16, the Office will work with Information Services to identify and/or develop accountability tools to track students served by Minority Achievement Coordinators. At the beginning of 2016-17, Minority Achievement Coordinators will be trained to use these tools and will begin to use them. These tools will be refined at the end of 2016-17 and fully utilized in 2017-18. In addition, in 2015-16, the Office will work with coordinators to define goals and objectives of all Minority Achievement programs and to identify data sources to evaluate these programs. At the end 2016-17, data will be

collected to evaluate existing programs and to make programmatic decisions for 2017-18. Beginning in 2016-17, the Office also will work with secondary schools to develop a plan to transition existing halftime Minority Achievement Coordinators to fulltime.