

**Feedback from the Community Input Session
March 15, 2016 @ John Marshall High School Cafeteria**

1. *What barriers do you see our black and brown students face in our district?*

- White staff (Cultural differences)
- Data – higher poverty rates , complexity and challenges
- Varying system from home county
- Language/communication (paper vs emails vs phone)
- Housing (Basic needs)
- Fear in community
- Scheduling
- Early childhood, access SpEd (Resources, transportation)
- Staff doesn't look like families/students
- Positive social opportunities (sports, arts)
- Mental Health Access (knowledge)
- Choices (Arts, vocational)
- Family – school disconnect (Elementary - High School)
- Creating relationships
- Child's power over parents
- Lack of staff that represent our student population more equity positions
- Relating/understanding culture
 - Does RPS have cultural competency courses for staff, teachers, and students
 - One size does not fit all
 - Defining "blackness"/Any color/culture
 - Understanding the differences between culture and ethnicity
- Parents
 - Schools need to reach parents more often/more consistency
 - Engagement between teacher/parent
- Access to information
 - Equity in technology (Digital device)
- Relatable content and activities
- Lack of family support
- Lack of opportunity
- Poverty undermines a families ability to give good support
- Families "stuck" in poverty drives hopelessness
- Lack of mentors
- Language barriers of parents and kids
- Report unclear as to cause of discipline
- High School
- Lack of opportunity
- Relationships
- Isolation

- Under represented in c
- Enrichment activities
- Threat
- Misunderstanding
- Access to extracurricular activities – could be lack of information or encouragement to join not just financial
- Access to additional supports – if they don't understand something in class they may not know where else to go; emotional supports like encouragement
- Lack of professionals working in the district who look like them – suspect it may make students feel lonely; students don't see teaching as a career to go into because they don't see others like them
- Because of the achievement gap, there are barriers to higher level AP or GATE classes; unconscious bias that black or brown students would qualify for a higher level of rigor
- Lack of access to preschool programs; lack of transportation to get there
- Not getting enrolled into district-wide option schools; they are not equitable if they are not enrolled in the same percentages as the demographics
- An economic barrier – as shown by the number of resources available like back to school supply programs
- Access to good nutrition/wellness
- Internet connections at home – not so much in handheld devices (cell phones)
- Ability to purchase items needed like advanced graphing calculators
- Students who have to stay home with younger siblings because parents can't take a sick day at work
- Lack of cultural sensitivity – staff who may have fixed opinions about issues and are not open to new ideas/ways of thinking
- Can't do something at an older age because of a prerequisite missed at a younger age, i.e., can't do drum line at an older age because didn't have piano at a younger age
- Longstanding practices or policies
- Transportation/travel at the beginning – hard to make the high school hockey team if you couldn't afford to play at a younger age

- White privilege
- Ignorance
 - Assumptions from majority
 - Assumptions from minority
- Students of minority are judge differently
- Different set of rules for students of color

- Prejudices
- Different reactions depending on who providing the message and who is receiving the message
- Lack of cultural competency
- Staff does not reflect the diversity of students
- Lack of effective communication
- Barriers – sports, academics, economics
- Lack of expectations
- Socioeconomic status
 - Affordability of necessities
 - Out of school resources and availability, foster growth and nurturment
- Cultural differentiation and flexibility (discipline)
- Inclusive and conversation
 - Adults and youth coming together and learning/sharing differences and cultures
- Forgotten to have conversations
 - “Walking in their shoes”
 - More opportunity to share life experiences.
- Lack in representation in staff (all levels)
 - Staff/Teachers of color
 - Mentors/Adult role models of color
 - Attracting teachers of color
- Safety in the schools as a student of color
- Teacher/staff training in de-escalation and cultural competency
- Staff needs to have these conversations
- Communication
- Privilege
- Poverty
- Connections
- Parents
- Prejudice
- Need for more student advisory groups
- School Counselors
- Not social economic
- Not parents fault
- It is teacher bias/language/cultural barriers
- Teachers are not reflective of student population
 - Different backgrounds and experiences/culture
- Is there a challenge of fitting into “American” culture and not losing a student(s) identity
- Behavioral expectations are different in each home/culture
 - Could be interpreted as being disrespectful
- Lack of cultural proficientcy training for stall
- Economic impacts on basic needs which impacts behavior

- **Ext vs Intro: American culture recognizes extr**

- Judgments are made about a student or group without knowing all parts of the students history or background
- Limited perspective on experiences students or parents may have had
- Language: Is it a barrier? What should be the process
- Identify
- Cultural competency
- Licensing barriers for teachers
- Finding way to partner with parents
- Acceptance of an evolved Rochester
- Talking to the kids more
- How to involve everyone together
- Home has to be the priority.
- Parents don't know how to be parents.
- Other things we are doing are band aids.
- Develop class rules with the students – ownership.
- Didn't read well – couldn't access learning.
- Set the proper tone for learning.
- Not knowing expectations
- Teachers have lost control of their classrooms. Another one at the table disagreed.
- If you haven't had experience with people who are different than you, it will be difficult for them to learn.
- Teachers scared and having anxiety; they need to own their own baggage and change.
- Have a system for early diagnosis.
- Teacher from China – (bilingual at Edison) respect differences. Newcomers Center. Teachers need to be educated in differences. Respect and action. Appreciative of this.
- Have to follow the culture – respect this land, join those who were born here (from another bi-lingual)
- U.S. – good heart to accept so many from different places. Peaceful life here.
- Educate (immigrant) students on American culture.
- Lots of conversation about immigrants, newcomers – learning English.
- Design of the learning environment.

- Leaders have to know how to manage diversity – in large corporations. Building relationships in the community.
- Teachers inherently think that some students have fewer abilities than they do have; and students internalize that. Lower expectations are a concern. Expectations are different dependent on if you speak the language, where your parents come from, etc.
- Lack of communication with regards to the discipline towards all children. It has gotten to the point that some children are ignored and feel frustrated. Parents try to work with teachers, counselors, and principals – and they always give the same response but none of it leads to a resolution. (Example given: family member was bullied, racial slurs were used. When family expressed concerns, were told it is not that serious. Has included physical altercations at this point – pushing that resulted in a sprained wrist. Still no action on behalf of the school.)
- When enrolled in honors courses, experienced a difference in grading, lack of consistency to the access to academic success. Parent had to advocate on her behalf.
- Schools are not willing and/or available to meet with parents when parents are available to work with them – especially minority families. Clear barriers for minority students and families exist.
- When children of color are speaking, they are not being heard. They feel like they have been marginalized.
- Child shared that this semester, he witnessed a group of guys hanging out. The monitor came up to the group; and told the African American student that he needed to get to class. Nothing was said to the White students who were also part of the group, doing the same thing.
- Daughter was placed in ISS for name calling of a student with special needs. The mom knew that it was not the daughter – so she requested a meeting. As it turned out, it was not her daughter.
- Parent/grandparent was told community members cannot visit classrooms. Requested to see the policy, and was not able to produce the policy. (Kellogg)

- Communication is important, and sometimes it feels as though people are at times seen as enemies.
- One parent shared that his son was concerned about a good friend that faced hostility based on perceived faith (Muslim).
- Things that come to social service from the elementary sites – disruptive behavior for example – the assumption for students of color; assumptions for Caucasian are that they are going through a rough period, and need support.
- After school programs – not all children have access to transportation and that creates a barrier for families (especially families of color).
- Economic – hungry
- Legacy
- Trauma, drug use
- Language barriers
- Teacher
- Poor driving example
- Neighborhood – Somali – no parent involvement, cultural norms, lawn mowing, “survival”
- Mentality
- Family
- JM – Somali – bullying
- Parents, disengaged, but need flexibility to attend meetings/conferences
- Education not priority because they have to work or sports
- Workforce shift changes, transportation
- Set up system or school not everyone is college bound
- Education neglect
- Parents and children excel (PACE) – child welfare system
- Standard curriculum
- Single parent homes
- Teacher as teacher and parent
- No parent involvement
- Judged/consequences for quickly
- Addressing behaviors, not root of the problem
- Generational experience with education
- Economics: Choir, Sports
- Opportunity gap

- White staff members impose our values on students; put students in our “white box”
- Voicing opinion in class/ cultural differences such as this get in the way of success in classroom
- Data – 39 out of 100 are in poverty
- System of education is different so it is difficult
- Language of the children
- Parents work late and cannot support as much at home
- Multiple family members in one home
- Issues going on in the neighborhood make them afraid to go out
- Schedules: times of school at the different levels
- Modes of communication are a problem – we do so much over email, paper, etc.
- Access to early childhood education/ transportation barriers
- Older siblings need to take care of their younger siblings
- Students and families do not see themselves reflected in staff
- Early childhood special education – lack of awareness
- Unable to access after school activities, programs such as fine arts
- Mental health services; understanding and access to resources
- Need more educational programs: schools that focus on fine arts, sciences, language, etc.
- Mobility issues, how do we help students who have missed so much, lack of systems in place and resources to help them catch up
- Not knowing how to help students “catch up”
- Disconnect as the students get older; more difficult as the students get older
- Children have power over parents
- Creating relationships
- Language gap between children and parents
- Systemic racism – black children don’t matter in the current system
- Diversity council
- Work in classrooms – in some classes teachers are not in control; when out of control, kids of color seem to get the reprimand.

- Lack of self-awareness and inexperience. Some need further education.
- System needs to equip the teachers
- Own experience – lack of teachers who looked like me. Puts a “lid” on our potential
- Lack of cultural programs
 - Come from Chicago, etc., and expected to assimilate. Might miss 30 days of school in Chicago and not hear a word. Here you hear at day 1. Need transition specialists to assist parents and students with the system. Kids take out their frustration, often of their own background. Speak a whole different language, need someone from both worlds.
- White female teachers are afraid of African American males, especially at the older level
- Daughter talking loud, teacher assumed her hearing was off. Didn't realize this was normal in their family
- Like physicians, teachers see students on” teacher’s turf”. Behavior that’s ok in home court is seen as wrong in the teacher’s court
- Need a community learning effort to help people really know their neighbors
- We dishonor people where descendants of slaves in same group as Africans who immigrated to U.S.
- System procedures favor people who know the system. Often see the same families at district-wide option schools
- Some school district staff do not appreciate the cultural difference and interpret behavior differently. Haircut example: common to slap back of head when someone gets a haircut
- Lack of family support
- Lack of opportunity
- Poverty undermines a family’s ability to give good support
- Family’s stuck in poverty – drive is hopelessness, lack of access
- Lack of transport, can’t even get a library card without forms and parents signature
- Lack of mentors
- Parents don’t understand language/education
- Language barriers

- St. Paul lowered behavior standards/behaviors increased exponentially
- Home has to be the priority – not sure if parents know how to parent
- What is the home life like?
- Dynamic in the classrooms – teaching and learning is a relationship
- Students having difficulty accessing learning (struggling learner)
- Expectations – teachers have lost control
- Experiences – may increase anxiety (teacher and student)
- Respect differences
- Educate the teachers on diversity, educate students on American culture
- New kids to RPS don't know the ropes – don't want to be singled out (NCC program)
- Stigma of being sent to ALC
- Resources for students – at home school
- Elementary school things seem fine – but by middle school feel resources need to change
- Repeat offenders – skew data
- Underrepresentation – not participating in accelerated classes, activities
- Outreach needed
- Welcoming issue
- Awareness access
- Demographics of staff/admin
- No diversity training for staff or students
- Cost, time transportation
- Not same amount of focus on diversity training as training athletes
- Racism
- Learning
- Being equal
- No compassion
- No communication
- Teacher's hearts desire
- More teachers of color

- More employees of color
- What is the actual problem? Finding the root of the actions
- More training for all the employees
- Barriers not being addressed
- Same kids getting “labeled” and disciplined
- Need to know the student for who they are and not their siblings
- Kids need to see themselves in the staff
- More programming with adults of color
- Keep kids encouraged and safe zone
- Opportunities and access to resources, financial and social resources, jobs
- Curriculum, teaching children about their heritage
- Parents having someone that relates to them

2. *What do you see as potential root causes to the disproportionality that is represented in out discipline data?*

- Early Childhood Access
- Solving problem
- Historical racial bias
- Lack of exposure
- Communication
- Expected structure
 - Students may not know/understand
- Varying systems
- Basic needs unmet
- Policies (look at things differently) consistency and fairness
- Unequally enforced rules (zero tolerance)
- Historical (generational trauma)
- Early identification (addressing)
- Family/school collaboration
- Unaddressed mental health
- Lack of cultural competency
- Enforcement of discipline varies from site to site
- Transition of students from level to level (elementary, Middle School, High School)

- Is school too structured – various hours – antinomy to self-govern within reason
- Culture of trust
- Parent engagement at home and school
- Services for parents – parent coaches
- Parents unfamiliar with the system may not be able to catch bad behavior early
- Bad behavior from students
- Teachers discipline students of color more readily because they know their parents not follow-up
- Kids who aren't able to keep up may be more inclined to “act out”
- Racism
- Minority students are sometimes subject to closer scrutiny which provokes incidents which become “discipline” matters
- Young students may play into racial stereo-types and act out with poor friend choices
- Lack of empowering authentic relationships need to prevent isolation
- Don't know how to navigate the resources available in the school community
- Lack of diverse teachers (role model)
 - De-valuation of the profession
 - Detracts the likeability of a person of color to take up a teaching job.
- Systemic devaluation of students of color
 - EL in the basement
 - Support classrooms in segregated areas
- Data collection problems
- Lack of community support in the first place
- Devaluation of incoming culture groups, misrepresentation in historical figures, societal contributors
- Staff assumptions and reactions
- Cultural competency
- Lack of understanding and knowledge
- Students of color misbehave more (classroom, lunchroom, buses)
- Students feeling target and unsafe

- Disparity and consequences
- Don not know the root causes of why more minority are misbehaving
- Family values are different from school values
- Developing trust and building a relationships
- Legislation
- Value of education
- Suspension policy
- Finding qualified educators
- Honesty
- Who's issue is this, is it the schools problem
- Are there more behavior referrals because the students are behaving or misbehaving more often?
- Environment outside of school could be impacting the family data?
- Is there a different reaction to behavior between majority/minority behaviors
- Is there a different lens worn that causes a different reaction to minority behavior
- A student may be granted more opportunities to improve based on a student's culture race, parents, grade, social economic status
- Another reference to home, society, and upbringing
- Behaviors did not happen because they came to school
 - This happened before they came to school
- Minority students experience bullying which in turn contributes to that child's behavior
- Family backgrounds impact, but not all black/brown students experience behavior referrals have broken homes
- Institutional racism – white people get a “free” pass; lack of understanding – people believe they are the last person to be racist but they will make an assumption or a comment without even knowing
- Rigor of policies and procedures
- Disrespect is sort of subjective
- Racial profiling

- Perception that certain students will escalate faster so they get shut down faster
- Lack of continuity in how discipline is administered
- Does staff know their students and what their background is? Understanding their personality or situation helps when diagnosing a discipline matter – students under stress outside of school will react in school
- Class size. Too big. Fewer incidents of poor behavior.
- People need to care about their neighbors.
- Afraid of people who are different.
- Brown and black students disciplined more for subjective things. White students disciplined for more concrete/objective things.
- Might not be able to read or have another academic issue.
- We see success when kids feel successful.
- Be positive and give them more encouragement.
- Parents and students don't understand the expectations. Or they don't care about the expectations. Lack of understanding of policies, etc.
- Students who have been traumatized in refugee camps. – Parents also, and maybe they are just checked out because of the trauma.
- Kids don't have support.
- FOCUS MORE ON CULTURE RESPONSIVENESS, culturally aware is not enough.
- CONCERN THAT the media has taught us much about what we believe about cultures different than our own.
- Black child got suspended; the White child did not when involved in altercation. When our children go to the Principals office, there are going to be different circumstances for them
- Same behavior is perceived very differently dependent on who did it. This is driven significantly by race. Behaviors include profanity, positive behavior, academic behaviors (i.e. assignment says 'show your work' and a Caucasian student

does not show it, they still get half credit), a bad day is perceived differently.

- Media has taught us a lot about what we think we know about various cultures; but that really doesn't tell us the full story.
- Particularly when it comes to males, preconceived notion regarding who they are. Partner this with low expectations, and a lack of ability to communicate to each other, and that is not a good recipe. Teachers do not want to hear what Black Males have to say.
- "You don't talk like them" – was said to some Blacks if they acted in a manner that the White student perceived them to be.
- A Somali student broke up a fight between two Somali students, and was automatically assumed to be a part of the fight. He was sent to ISS. Parent had to come in to help address the concern.
- Parent teacher conferences - parents are marginalized and resolutions are minimum
- Many of the teacher behaviors are subconscious; however, they do feel malicious.
- Children can feel if they are accepted. Children begin feeling defeated.
- History needs to include representation from all cultures – including American Indian, Hispanic, Black, etc.
- All students should have the same punishments if involved in the same fight.
- Survivors – do the best they can
- When students are more similar it is easier
- Rochester – Class structure: Judgment, if only few students of color in class, it is easy to have the mentality that everyone can
- If the rulebook is not used correctly, equitably, then problems persist
- Racial slurs – starting there – leads to escalation in discipline
- Causes of disproportion:
 - Home life – sometimes single mothers had/have kids without rules
 - One set of rules – does not allow for individual situations
 - Can't address everything going on at home
 - Systematic change
 - When consequences are not meted out same

- **When in Rome – Actions seen at home**

- Middle ground – parents need to know rules to teach “code shifting”
- Out dated rule book – phones
- Recognize context of interaction: ‘N’ word between buddies vs “N” word between fighters
- Enforcement of the book
- Have to problem solve, have to work with people
- What is ultimate goal? Fair, safe, education
- Why/what is the purpose of OSS and INSS?
- Early childhood access is limited: poverty/children of color are not exposed to how to do school
- Cultural beliefs
- Academic rigor has increased so the gap is even wider
- Basic needs are being met and behavior occurs because they are focused on that
- Policies/procedures that perpetuate the behavior issues
- Look at our system; what changes do we need to make
- Rules are not enforced equally/equitably
- Trauma – intentional intervention to block the generational trend that occurs
- Layers to work through to get to the root cause
- Time to really get to the root cause of the issue
- Root cause always relates back to the earliest years
- Collaboration between agencies; working together to address the concerns
- Different family rules/ expectations “I taught my child to fight back”
- Unaddressed mental health needs create stress/anxiety
- Lack of teachers of color
- Racial attitudes at home
- Political correctness can limit courageous conversation
- Misinterpretation of behavior: Fake boxing, snatching in the neck allowed in their previous district. Culturally accepted
- Lack of interaction at home with people of other cultures. Do our children see us modeling cross-cultural behaviors?
- Push people to the point of uncomfortable place to have courageous conversations

- People ask people of color to the table but are not invited to be part of the change
- Non-profits in town that say they are for at risk kids, but they have no staff or board members of color
- Kids do not feel that people care about them. We don't call the kids to the table because we don't want to hear what they have to say. Afraid we are going to spend a lot of money and never ask the kids
- Could stop some of the issues later by investing resources in cultural programs
- We say "all lives matter" instead of "black lives matter". Why are we afraid to say this?
- This is life or death for the children we're talking about. We have to be proactive instead of reactive. Need supports in place to keep the kids who are dealing with trauma.
- Lack of school funds to meet the behaviors our kids are exposed to
- We don't just want any African American teachers. Need leaders of the background of the students, not those who have assimilated.
- Lots of unconscious bias we won't change overnight. As a city, we need cultural ambassadors on school board, city council, teachers
- Major employer in Rochester struggle with diverse workforce. Physicians of color are talked down to. Norms at Mayo favor Caucasian. Mayo has become a stepping stone for people of color because they do not feel welcome here
- Class sizes: Too large = more issues
- Needs of students
- Building communities: school/home relationships, relationships outside of school
- Classroom communities
- Brown and black disciplined for subjective (talking back interpretations) vs objective (fighting)
- Teacher perception
- Student ability – students are successful when they feel successful
- Unclear expectations for students (families and students don't understand policies/expectations)

- Culture, the way people are taught
- Not culturally relevant curriculum
- Relatability
- Questions about data, patterns
- Systematic racism
- Someone to relate to them
- No teacher anti-bias training student
- Teacher skills, tool box
- Individualized discipline
- Teachers need anti-racism training
- Teachers need to be accountable and responsible: administration, employees
- Teachers need to lead by example
- Understanding in the long-term effect of having a teacher that doesn't believe in you
- Understanding and addressing the cultural differences in discipline
- Find a way to involve parents and communities of these students

3. *What suggestions do you have for RPS as we work to eliminate the disproportionality in our discipline data, student achievement data, our enrollment in AP/Honors courses, our graduation rates, and our dropout rates?*

- Early intervention in an inclusive environment
- Meet basic needs
- Mental Health
- Cultural education for educators
- Alternative punishments (for all students involved)
- Intentional family engagement
- Access to AP/Honors/GATE
- Transportation (before/afterschool, ARTS)
- Outreach to families (community)
- Homework help (tutoring)
- Access to technology, streamline communication

- Open to help from community
 - Make special reach out to marginalized communities
- Fix loopholes
- Fix communication
- School board should not self-select what groups oversee
- Assumptions about others/situations base on our nation's history of racism viewed through the lens of white privilege
- Lack of knowledge
- Fear
- Interpreting behavior from an alternative cultural lens
- Criminalization of black/brown students
- Build up and system build on micro-inequities
- Staff diversity
- Overwhelmed teachers
- Training
- Lifelong cultural competency
 - Navigating another culture(s)
 - Understanding privilege
 - Eliminating bias
- Mentorships
- Open dialogue, publicly
- More community schools/environment
- More community collaboration
- Mentoring family if seeking help
- Early childhood education
- Teach parents how to sue skyward
- Institutionalized teacher in-service
 - RE: Diversity and Ethics
- Teach teachers how to constructively manage bad behavior
- Ensure administration supports teacher who is trying to achieve order in classroom
- Be proactive about addressing mental heal and family dis-function in the schools
- Better statistical discipline data
- Student advisory
- Year round learning
- Represented in curriculum

- Mandatory diversity group (6 hour seminars) in multiple subject areas.
- Ambassadors and peer mentors
- Seeing adults with similar faces and cultures
- Facilitation training for teachers to process situations rather than just react
- Elimination of out of school suspension to be replaced by “punishments” that fit and teach
- Teach emotional intelligence to students and staff
 - Step to reach proficiency
- Encouraging in-school mentoring program
 - Between grades and populations
- Dig deeper in data...
 - Referrals given by staff
 - More early interventions
- Involve students in the discussion
- Not sending kids home for suspension (ISS)
- Collaboration with teachers with administration
- Invite families whose students fall into the category.
 - What is keeping these families and community members from coming and taking action
 - What and why are these kids more likely to get a referral – input
- Meetings to action
- System-wide change that value people of color
- Staff climate
- Community sponsorship to help make meetings accessible
- Expand the honors program for all the middle schools
- Lack of knowledge for families of color district-wide choices
- All district schools should be the same caliber of education
- Students of color should be encouraged to take AP classes
- Middle schools need to be relevant and better prepared for honor classes
- Bias/Fear – subconscious
- Racial dynamics
- The way data is collected (forced choices/forms boxes)
- Blaming victim/child
- Path of least resistance (easier)

- Hold staff accountable
- Change beliefs
- Change POC% in staff/leadership/board
- Remove bias from testing/standards/criteria
- All ranges of successful people coming into schools
- Mandate cultural competency with board
- Parent involvement
- Open up doors to parents so they can see
- More parent participation
- Require parents time in school
- Recognize that our problems today require a different skill set than we implemented before
- Build skills in students to negotiate peacefully (non-violent)
- Reward positive behavior more frequently
- Find ways to highlight minority students who are demonstrating great success despite great odds
- Breaking the historical molds need to be celebrated
- Peer to peer support/motivator in schools
- Start mentoring in lower grades to create a system where it is presented a normal by intermediate grades\Children learn best from other children
- Expectations are very powerful and could impact performance
- The district needs to see this as a problem/stain
- The school district needs a better relationship with the community – mentors, connectivity with families
- Broader interventions to discipline issues so we can get to the issue
- Work on white privilege issues
- Anti-bias training (identify which biases you may be carrying around that you don't even realize)
- MNEEP – MN Education Equity Partners – look for their annual conference in the Cities
- Open to what is working in other places; what resources are available
- **Equity conversations in the exact same format with the students as we are doing with the adults**

- **360 reviews of our staff – include the students in rating how the staff are doing**
- Intercultural communication and training – society and family structures of other cultures
- PBIS – broader implementation at higher levels
- Accountability/policing/tracking/oversight
- Students need to feel safe with their teachers and principals; staff need to listen to the ugly truth
- Mental health counseling and practitioners for PTSD/traumas
- Community schools model
- Support for families when they come here. (Esp. from refugee camps, not knowing any English.)
- What is the mission and goal of the school – for immigrant parents?
- When minority students take AP and honors courses – more likely to graduate from HS and go to college.
- You can do it if you want to. Look at Dr. (Ben) Carson.
- Not all want to go to college. (Mentioned C-Tech)
- Dual path.
- Dual track in Germany – doesn't mean you can't change tracks.
- Teacher advocates for different groups.
- More counselors.
- Class size! Key!
- Legislators – cut, cut, cut. Especially at university level.
- More money for education. Not wars in Iraq.
- **ACKNOWLEDGE THE FEELINGS**
- **ENCOURAGE/BE POSITIVE/SUPPORT ALL CHILDREN**
- Look at our groups more closely – all students in the Black category for example, are very diverse. African Americans all have different experiences
- Taking ownership of where we are at – “it's a national issue, not just a Rochester issue”. The school district has to take ownership of where we are at.
- Starts at the preschool or elementary level!

- Look at the books in our library – are they representative of our students?
- At parent teacher conference, teacher asked “what do you like about school?” Child responded, “learning”. Teacher began to tell the child what most children respond as though his answer was inaccurate!
- Teachers have to build children up; they need to be encouraged! Children need to be listened to! Teachers can’t just assume – but it seems as though they do.
- Parent of Caucasian child reported that he felt some of these same things at the elementary level because the child had a lot of energy. Teacher did not have a lot of patience with the child and was not positive towards the child and the family.
- Schools don’t always contact minority families.
- Diffusing situations with someone of the same color works better
- Teachable moment: in-school suspension – meet with a community elder or ambassador to talk over situation
- Peer mediator? Conflict resolution?
- Non-disciplinary person to talk to
- Out of school suspension not working
- Early education in an inclusive setting; preschools in every elementary building
- Mental health resources; school linked MH services
- Cultural education for educators
- Alternatives to suspension programs
- Universal food program – breakfast/lunch
- Intentional family engagement
- Fair and equal punishments/ consequences
- Inclusive of kids of color in AP/Honors; gifted services
- Transportation – access that allows students to participate
- Outreach to families – we go to them
- Provide transportation to anyone who needs it/ shorten
- All schools should provide homework help – all students have access to homework assistance
- Areas of math/science are particularly hard for first generation; parents are not able to help
- Creating connections in the neighborhood area

- Limited technology in some of our families; access to technology for all; streamline the communication/ engagement with families
- Middle schools need high academic rigor/honors/ classes that challenge
- Need to simplify the communication process so all truly do have access
- Diversity in staff
- Discipline that removes a student cascades into weeks of missing work because they can't catch up. Parents are yelling at kids that they need to study harder, but they don't realize why the kids are behind
- Suspension is not effective. Need better alternatives. Detention too. No instruction going on
- EL students staying in EL too long. Need inclusion. System set up to enroll but not get out
 - Own experience – I had to pressure my counselors to let me out of EL. Was in AP class the next year
- Kids are being enrolled in EL based on names. Many were born here. EL creates a job for teachers. Keep them on and have them help
- Counselors are giving low expectation advice to kids of color (e.g., PCA, not doctor)
- Engage families
- Educations/support for families and students new to America, especially refugee, native speakers
- AP/Honors – more opportunities for rigorous coursework
- Applied learning classes: skill work, home-economics, automotive
- Student support services – advocates and mentors for students
- Early intervention for students who are struggling with academics and behaviors
- Reduce class sizes
- Minimal support at school drop out
- Support dealing with stuff at home
- IEP – support family about what this is and simplify for all families
- Help with college – starting at the middle school level
- Teacher anti-bias training and tool box

- Student anti-bias training
- Need for restorative punishment not punitive
- Staff representative of kids (relatable)
- Staff reach out for help
- Community mentors, network
- Break it down by race, gender, income (data)
- Uniforms for students
- More teacher aides/adults/more caring adults
- Smaller class sizes
- Not labeling students, remove the labels
- Engage with the student's strengths
- More strategies, being flexible, finding ways to keep their attention: Learning is fun, worthwhile, interesting
- Know your students' cultures for yourself
- Communities and parents aren't even aware of opportunities
- Recognizing/publicizing the racial communities more equitably
- Effective incentives and awards
- We'd like to see the achievement data
- Parent survey for communities of color

Next Steps:

- Community Focus Team will be reviewing all input
- Where changes need to be made
- Recommendations
- Information to be posted on district website
- Input sessions continue
- Input-plan-share plan
- Next Meeting – Community Focus Team – March 29th - 5:00-6:30, Edison Boardroom

*Please note the highlighted areas are highlighted because we had a hard time reading what was written