



Field Trip Participation: A Policy Discussion

**DISCUSSION
ITEM**

October 10, 2023
D97 Board of Education Meeting



Field Trip Participation

01 **GROUNDING**

02 **DISCUSSION**

03 **RECOMMENDATION**

04 **NEXT STEPS**



Board Policy 6:240 *Field Trips*

Field trips are permissible when the experiences are a part of the school curriculum and/or contribute to the District's educational objectives. All field trips must have the Superintendent or designee's prior approval, except that field trips beyond a 200-mile radius of the school or extending overnight must have the prior approval of the Board of Education.

The Superintendent or designee shall analyze the following factors to determine whether to approve a field trip: educational value, student safety, parent concerns, heightened security alerts, and liability concerns. On all field trips, a bus fee set by the Superintendent or designee may be charged to help defray the transportation costs.

Parents/guardians of students: (1) shall be given the opportunity to consent to their child's participation in any field trip; and (2) are responsible for all entrance fees, food, lodging, or other costs, ***except that the District will pay such costs for students who qualify for a fee waiver under Board policy 4:140, Waiver of Student Fees.*** All non-participating students shall be provided an alternative experience. Any field trip may be cancelled without notice due to an unforeseen event or condition.

Privately arranged trips, including those led by District staff members, shall not be represented as or construed to be sponsored by the District or school. The District does not provide liability protection for privately arranged trips and is not responsible for any damages arising from them.



Board Policy 4:140 *Waiver of Student Fees*

Eligibility Criteria

A student shall be eligible for a fee and fine waiver when:

1. The student currently lives in a household that meets the same income guidelines, with the same limits based on household size, that are used for the federal free meals program;
2. The student's parents/guardians are veterans or active-duty military personnel with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line; or
3. The student is homeless, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11434a).

The Superintendent or designee will give additional consideration when one or more of the following factors are present:

- Illness in the family;
- Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
- Unemployment;
- Emergency situations;
- When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.



Board Policy 7:12 *Ensuring Racial and Educational Equity*

“practices, procedures and programs that result in over- or under-representation of any group of students compared to peers shall be subject to close review to assure that such results are due to meeting students’ legitimate educational, social or emotional needs. In the event that a practice or program is not equitably accessible, the practice will either be modified to meet the requirements of this Policy, or eliminated if no modifications can be made or agreed upon.”



Family Interest

As of September 28, 2023, 540 eighth-grade families have expressed an interest in attending the Washington D.C 8th grade field trip (this represents an increase of 98 families who have expressed interest compared to the 442 families who completed the form last year). Of the 540 families, 121 families have expressed an interest in financial assistance. Sixty-two of the families expressing an interest in financial assistance qualify for free or reduced lunch (52 families qualify for free lunch and 10 qualify for reduced lunch). Financial assistance based on 100% coverage of field trip fees would amount to \$89,076 for students receiving free lunch. Financial assistance based on 60% coverage of said fees would amount to \$10,278 for students receiving reduced-price lunch for a total fee waiver coverage amount of \$99,354. A \$500 deposit is due on October 17th in order to plan for student participation.

The number of eighth-grade students who receive free or reduced lunch as of October 5, 2023 totals 130 - 110 students receive free lunch and 20 students receive reduced price lunch. If all students who receive free lunch participated in the field trip, the financial assistance required would amount to \$188, 430. If all students who receive reduced price lunch participated, the assistance required would total \$34, 260 with all financial assistance amounting to \$222,690.



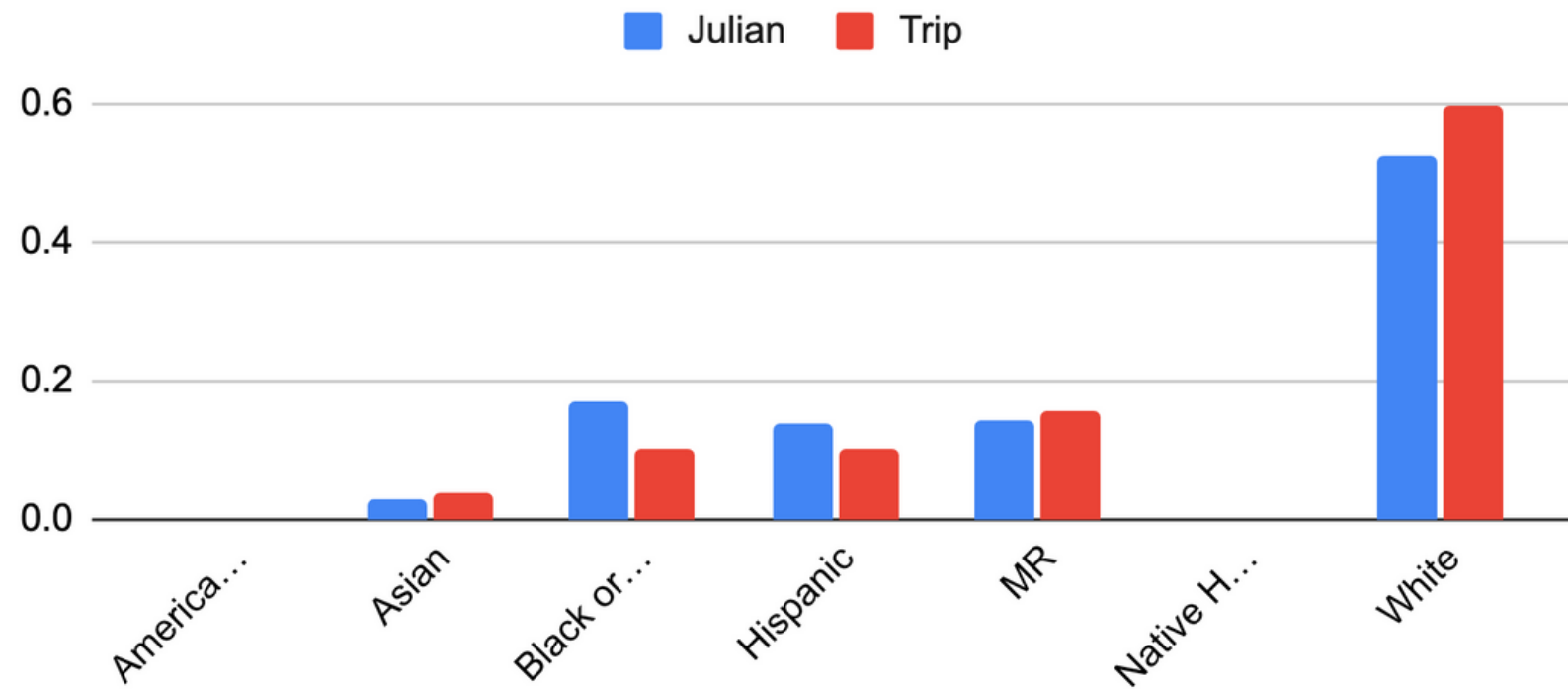
Funding Efforts to Date

- In SY23, fundraising efforts provided financial support to some students for whom the cost of the annual DC trip was a barrier.
- In SY24 and for students who qualify for free/reduced lunch, ISBE has been contacted to consider reallocation of existing Title I federal funds that are intended to increase access. Unfortunately, Title I funds can not be leveraged for this purpose.
- We have continued to seek funding options to increase access, including researching the possibility of ESSER III funds. Unfortunately, out-of-state trips are not an option for the use of these funds.
- Previous fundraising streams have not yet caught up with the need for families to make the requisite deposit by the October 17th deadline and are at times uneven across schools.
- The district is seeking to align with Policies 6:240 and 4:140 and determine sustainable and reliable funding avenues for student participation

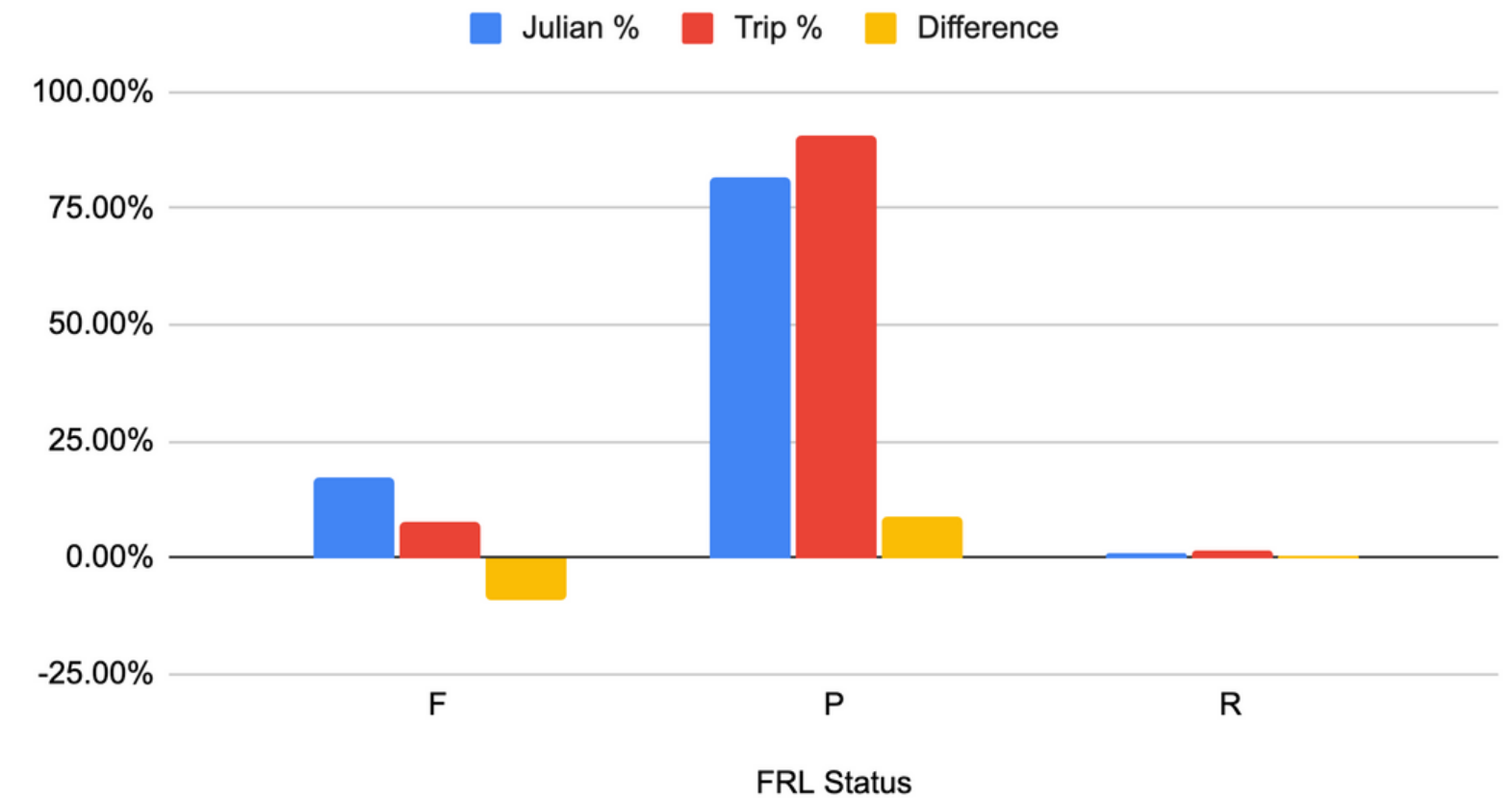


SY23 Trip Attendance: *Julian MS*

Julian MS Demographics and Julian MS DC Trip Attendance



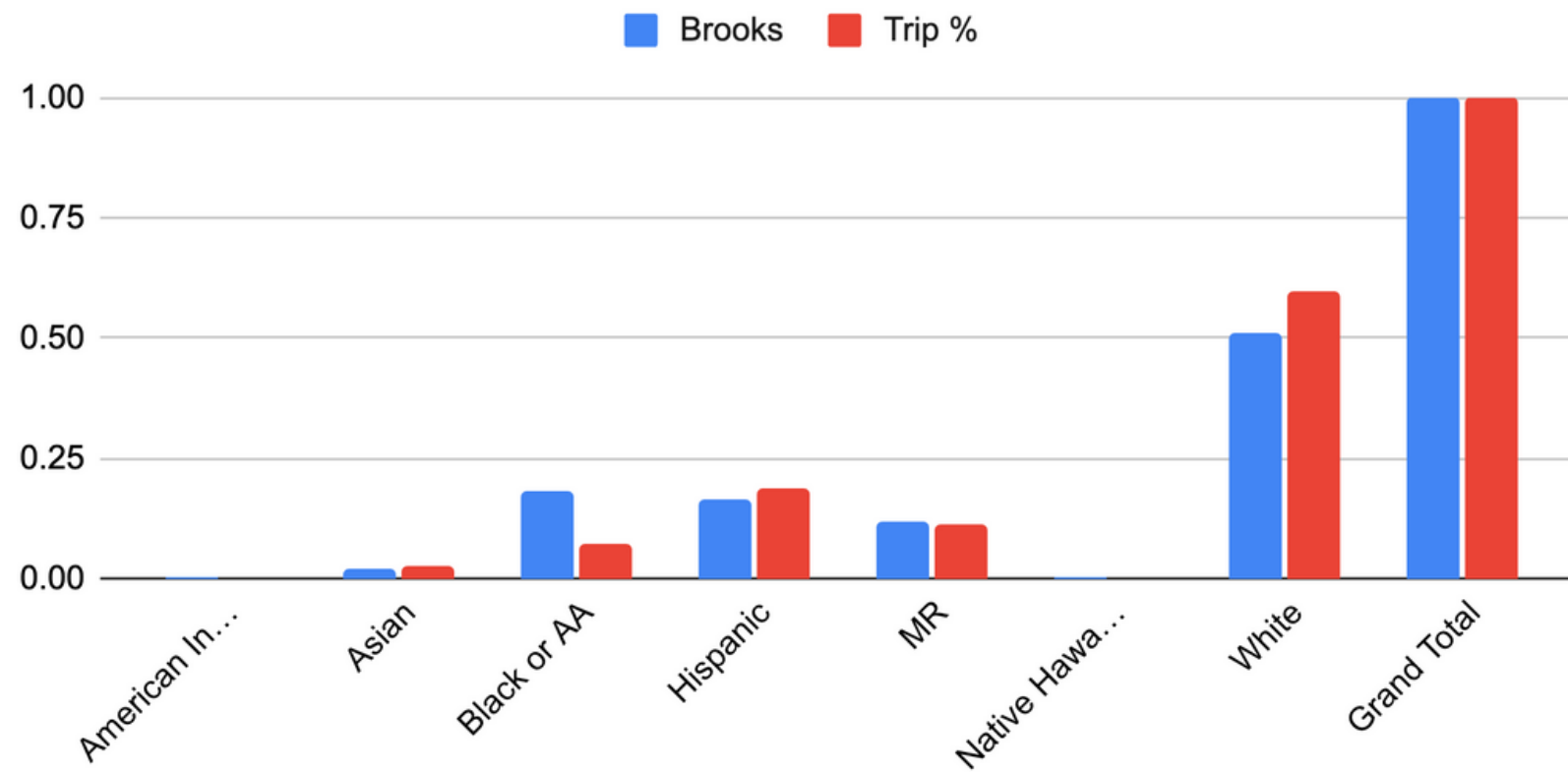
Julian FRL Percentage, Trip Percentage and Difference



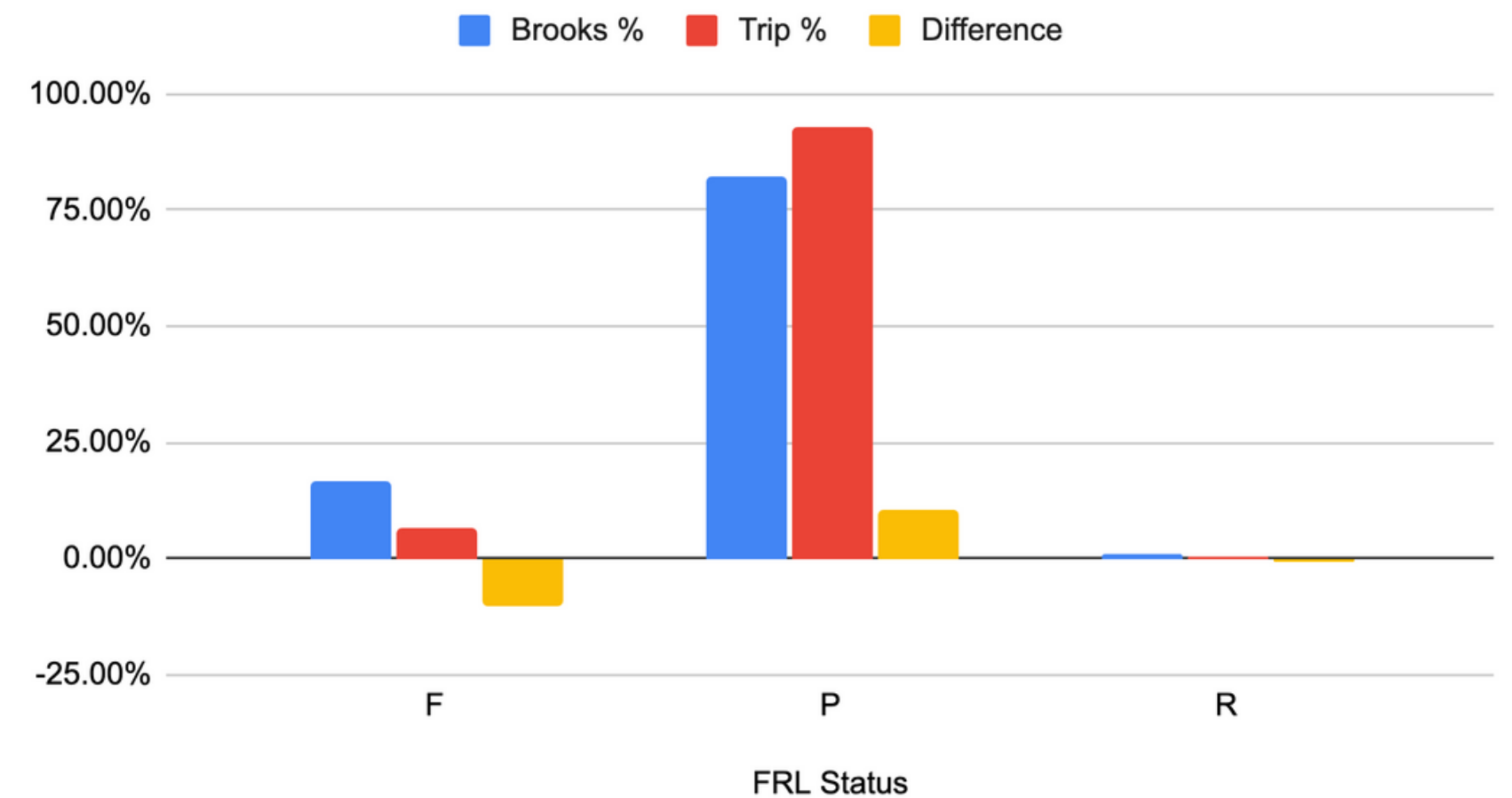


SY23 Trip Attendance: *Brooks Middle School*

Brooks MS Demographics and Brooks MS DC Trip Attendance



Brooks FRL Percentage, Trip Percentage and Difference





DISCUSSION

How can the district act on the obligations inherent in Policies 6:240, 4:140 and 7:12 to provide a reliable and sustainable funding path to enable students who receive free (and reduced) lunch access to field trips?





RECOMMENDATION

Option A: *Reallocate district funds for SY24 to meet the waiver of student fees requirement and leverage sustainable and reliable federal grant funding for in-state trips from SY25 forward. All students who receive free (and reduced) lunch can attend.*

Option B: Do not reallocate district funds. Move forward with the trip and depend solely on outside funding efforts. Some students who receive free (and reduced) lunch may be able to attend

Option C?



Next Steps

