

# Superintendent Update

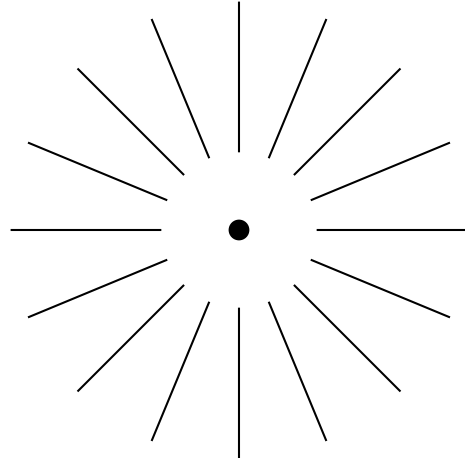
Dr. Ushma Shah  
May 28, 2024





# Tonight's Update

Identify themes  
we've heard in the  
feedback and  
concerns shared by  
staff and members  
of our community



Share what you  
need to know now  
about how the  
feedback and  
concerns are  
informing next steps

# Overview

Community Data & Feedback

Looking Ahead: 3-5 Years From Now

\*\*Integrating questions, feedback, concerns heard in the last month & tonight

# Community Data and Feedback



# Community Feedback: 2021 Survey

Comprehensive  
Oak Park  
community  
feedback was  
collected as part of  
the District 97  
superintendent  
search process in  
2021.



***“Creating a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child.”***

## **Oak Park School District 97 Leadership Profile Report Summary**

**October 12, 2021**

**HYA** | HAZARD  
YOUNG  
ATTEA  
ASSOCIATES







# Community Feedback: 2021 Survey

## Focus Groups/Interviews: Major challenges and issues

1. Community building and trust building.
2. Too many highly engaged parents either feel entitled or believe it necessary to jump “chain of command”
3. Creating effective, ambitious, clear, productive strategies for equity and building trust and buy in for it.
4. Need for better communication; poor quality, uneven frequency, and lack of transparency have created trust issues
5. Good schools but persistent gaps in opportunity and outcomes



# Community Feedback: 2021 Survey

## Focus Groups/Interviews: Major challenges and issues

6. Need a framework to assess how we are doing and the extent to which interventions and programs work (or not)
7. Rebuilding positive working relationships between and among board/district office/staff
8. Working productively with both the OPTA and the Board so all clearly understand and commit to their roles and relationships
9. Too many initiatives and lack of sustained support for seeing them through
10. Managing the “loudest voices” and social media

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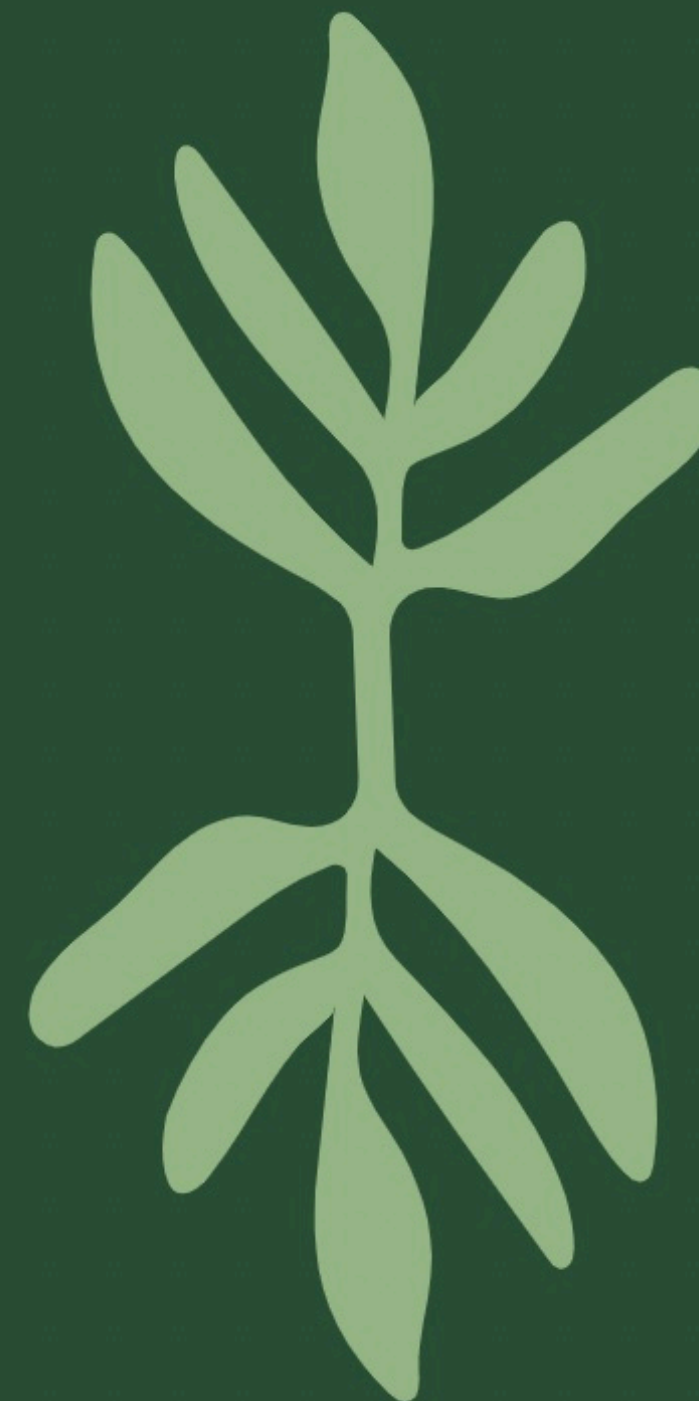




Oak Park Elementary School District 97

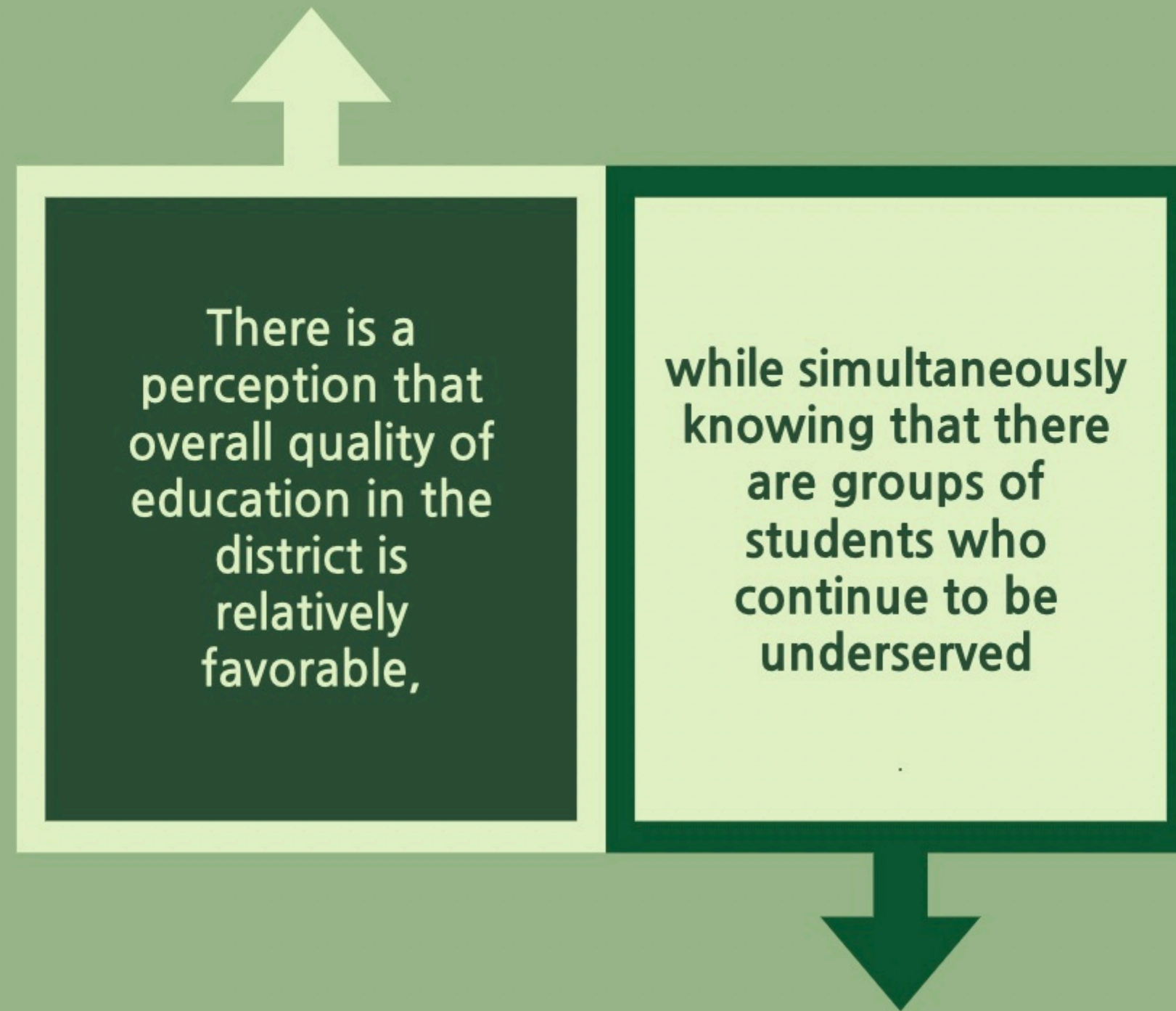
The First 60-days:  
*Superintendent Update*

Board of Education Meeting  
August 2022





# Dilemma #1



Screenshot from Ushma's First 60-day Report to the Board of Education in August 2022

# Related Data Inquiry

	Percentage of Positive Responses (Excellent/Good or Strongly Agree/Agree)					
	COMPOSITE	PARENTS	TEACHERS	SUPPORT	ADMIN	TAXPAYERS
	n=1474	1103	237	42	29	60
<i>Responses: Excellent/Good/Average</i>						
Q4. The overall quality of education in the District.	79	78	85	86	95	64
Q5. The high school readiness of OP 97 graduates.	70	70	75	72	94	51
Q6. Meeting the needs of my child (or me)	68	67	74	63	100	38
Q7. Meeting the needs of students with disabilities.	59	56	66	64	93	26
Q8. Meeting the needs of English Language Learners.	58	64	47	44	76	46
Q9. Meeting the needs of exceptionally talented students.	45	40	57	56	89	36
Q10. Meeting the needs of historically underrepresented students	43	46	36	28	32	31
Q11. The district's ability to attract and retain excellent teachers.	56	61	46	35	65	48
Q12. The quality of communication from the district.	50	59	49	56	75	16
<i>Responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree</i>						
Q13. The district has high standards for student performance.	77	74	92	96	100	59
Q14. Helps students feel connected to/ belong at OP 97	88	87	82	88	100	67
Q15. Working successfully to close achievement/opportunity gaps	68	69	65	64	79	40
Q16. Provides well-rounded educational experience for all students.	75	76	74	60	84	47
Q17. Meeting the social emotional needs of students.	78	77	85	61	100	48
Q18. The district encourages and supports active parent engagement	82	80	96	81	100	58
Q19. Strives to build community partnerships.	77	75	89	84	100	36
Q 20. The district's curriculum is relevant to our community's culture.	81	83	77	81	83	62
Q21. The district is fiscally responsible.	55	57	50	61	87	23
Q22. The district employs effective teachers.	92	92	97	92	84	83
Q23. Would encourage families to move to district	79	78	89	81	95	48
KEY: Green Shading = POSITIVE response ratio is 4 to 1 or greater						
Red Shading = There are more negative responses than positive responses						

SOURCE: Hazard, Young, Attea Associates. "District 97 Leadership Profile Report."

<https://hyasearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Leadership-Profile-Report-2021-Oak-Park-SD-97-IL.pdf>

Screenshot from Ushma's First 60-day Report to the Board of Education in August 2022



# Achieving our community's vision of universal student success will be an adaptive challenge.

Technical Problem	Adaptive Challenge
It is easy to identify	It is difficult to identify
Most of the time has quick and easy solutions ( tried and tested)	It requires changes in the way things are done (changes in approach to work)
It can be solved by expertise or authority generally	People who are working from where the problem is generated are able to solve it.
Requires small changes that also within organizational boundaries	Requires changes at lot of places which may cross organizational boundaries
People are receptive to technical solutions	People resist to acknowledge adaptive challenges
Solutions can be implemented fast and by authority	Solutions emerge from experimentation and discovery, take long time to implement

SOURCE: *Restoring Sanctuary: A New Operating System for Trauma-Informed Systems of Care*  
Adapted from Ronald A. Heifetz & Donald L. Laurie's *The Work of Leadership*.

# Middle School Staff Feedback from 2019



WEDNESDAY  
**JOURNAL**  
*of Oak Park and River Forest*

DONATE

News ▾

Opinion

High School Sports

Community

Oak Park Eats

Obituaries

Public Notices

## ■ NEWS

# Acting out

*Most teachers think safety, discipline are lacking at Julian and Brooks, survey shows*



# Wednesday Journal article from May 2019

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*Teachers at Oak Park District 97 middle schools have reached a troubling consensus about Julian and Brooks — they're increasingly unsafe because of the bad behavior of some students, which often goes unchecked.*

# Wednesday Journal article from May 2019

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*The teachers at the middle schools wrote that they've seen an increase in major fights and the general level of disrespect among students.*

*"The culture at Julian is toxic," wrote one teacher at the school.*

# Wednesday Journal article from May 2019

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*“Administrators have normalized and encouraged the current level of disrespect and aggression from students toward teachers by refusing to support teachers [and] often undermine teachers in front of the students,” one teacher wrote, adding that it is a “weekly occurrence to be sworn at by students.”*

# Wednesday Journal article from May 2019

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*“Overall, I think our standards are low and students are sinking to that,” wrote another Julian teacher. “The kids at the top are bored, the kids near the bottom who are well-behaved are ignored and the kids who are at-risk learn that they can get away with a lot.”*





# Five Years Later...

A sample of public comment quotes from the May 14, 2019 Board of Education meeting would overlap in theme to a sample of quotes from the May 14, 2024 Board of Education meeting, with some of the same staff members making parallels comments exactly five years later.

So if key themes from 2019  
and 2021 can be found in  
feedback from 2024...

*then how are we going to make sure our  
student outcomes and experiences are  
different 3-5 years from now?*

# Looking Ahead: 3-5 Years from Now



Design for ALL

Align Resources (time, people, money and technology)

Learn and Lead Together  
(including with youth)

**Design for ALL**





## Collective Interests of the Oak Park Community

Student, family and community voice



## District 97 Board of Education

Seven democratically-elected representatives who set policy



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



## Superintendent

Hired to develop and implement action plans and procedures



## Portrait of an Oak Park 8th Grade Graduate

### Core Instruction

All Instructional Leaders  
Elementary School  
Middle Schools

### Operational Excellence

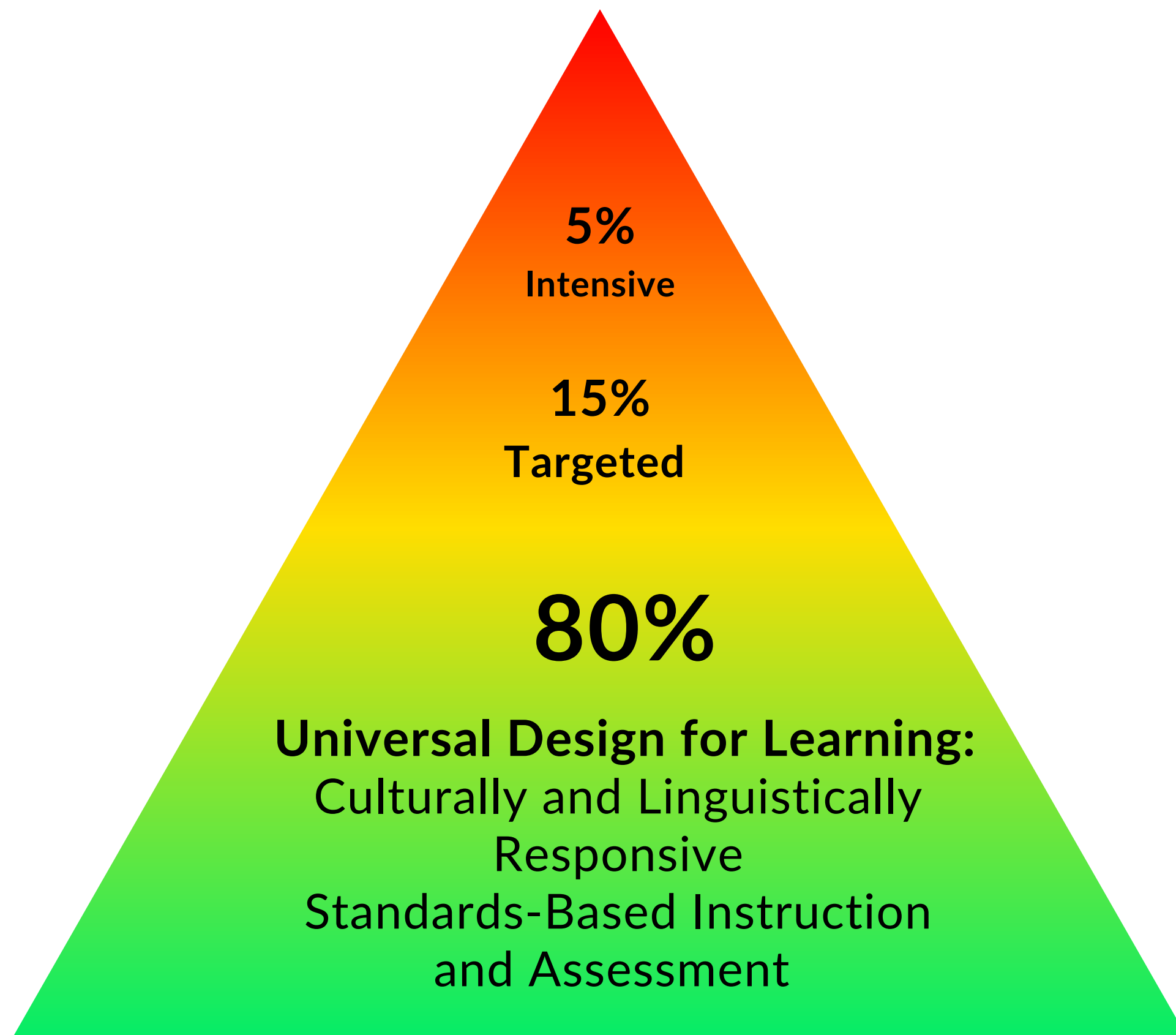
Communications and Engagement  
Data Analytics and Research  
Finance and Operations  
Human Resources  
Technology  
Safety

### Community Learning and Entrepreneurialism

Out-of-School Time Access  
Partnership Agreements  
Early Childhood



# We design for ALL.



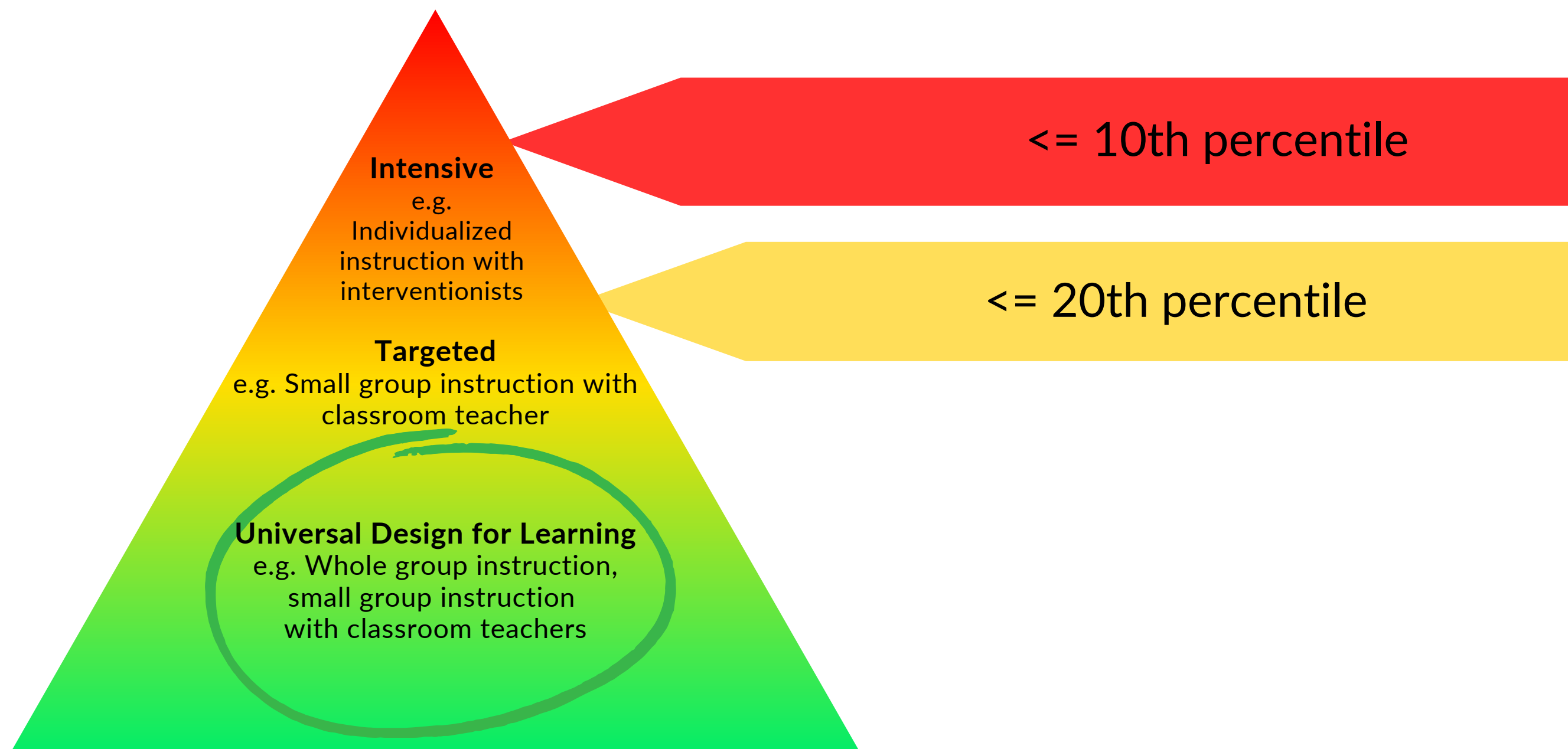


# We design for ALL.

## What is D97's approach to intervention services?

Delivery Model

Cut Scores





# We design for ALL.

## **Key Focus Area (presented tonight):**

- **Out-of-School Time**
  - Presentation tonight by Dr. Eboney Lofton, Chief Learning Innovation Officer

**Align Our Resources**  
(people, time, money and technology)



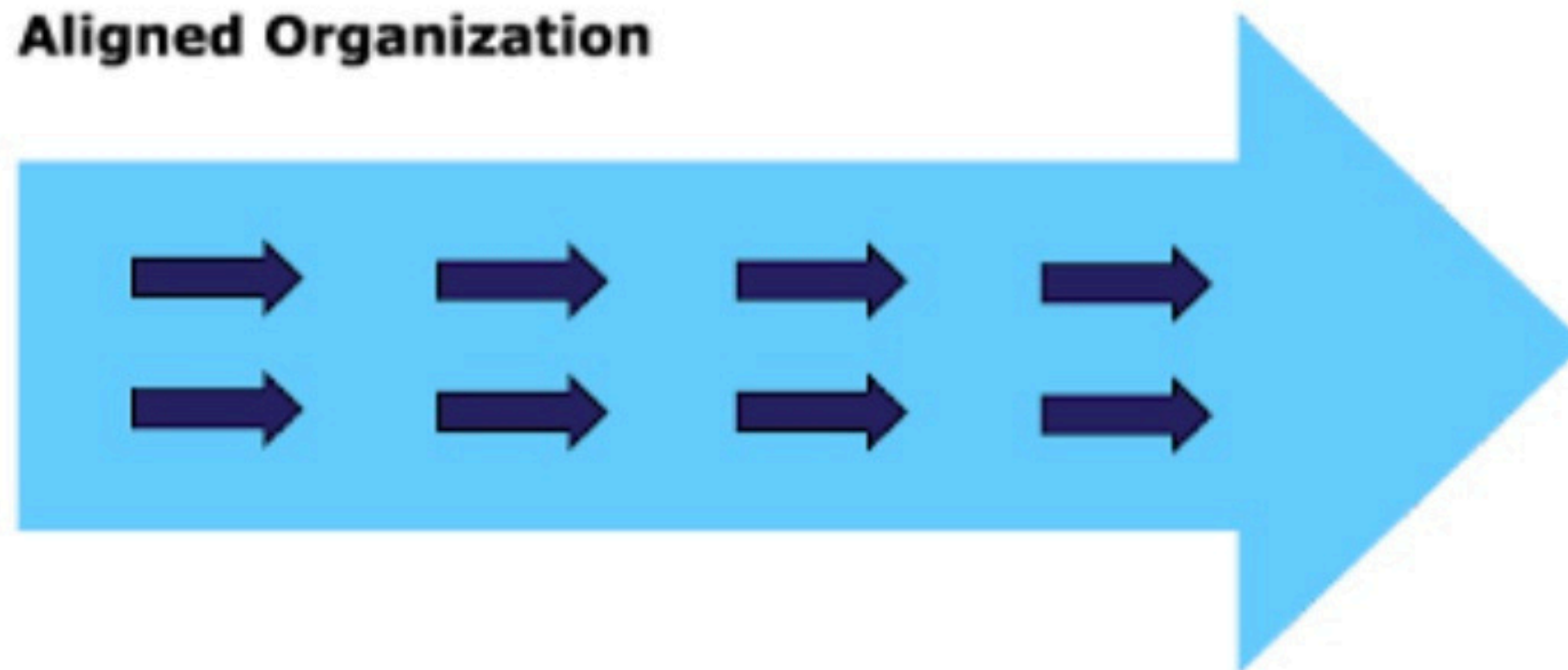


# We align our resources.

## Non-aligned Organization



## Aligned Organization

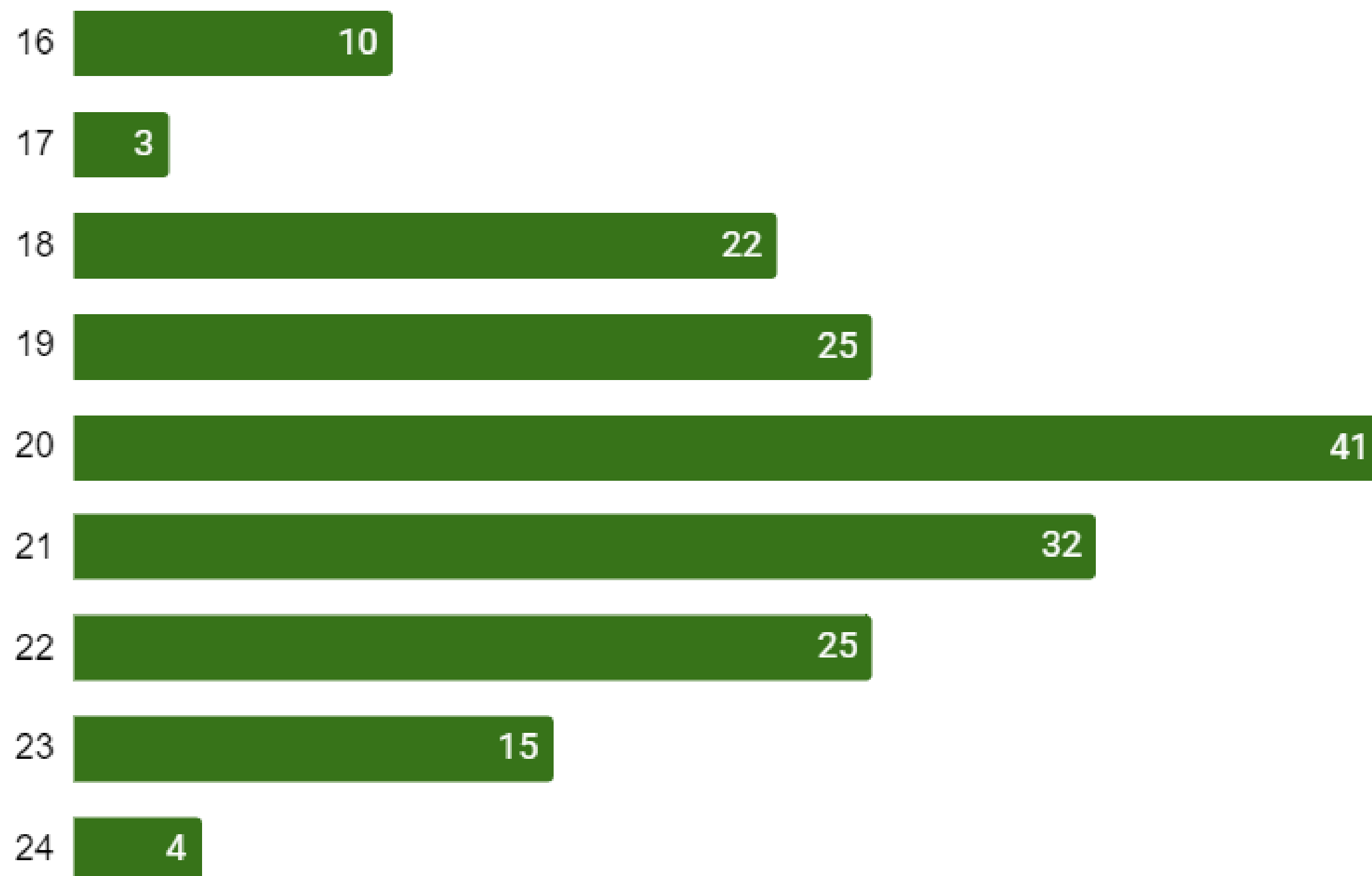




# People Resources: Elementary Sections

**What do section sizes look like disaggregated by school and grade level?**

Projected number of K-5 General Education sections by projected size



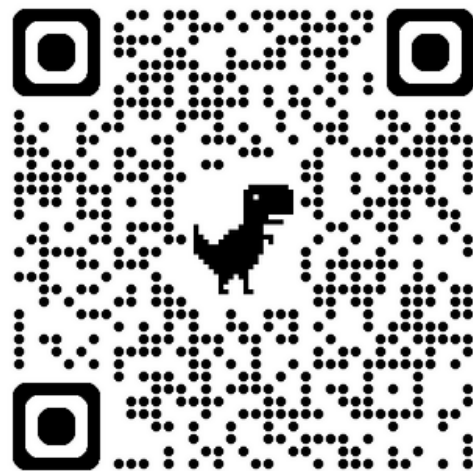
We project three-quarters of K-5 General Education sections in SY25 will be at or below size 21

These general education sizes account for all projected students at given grade-levels within each schools, including those with and without IEPs and ensures that all sections are able to stay below the 70/30 state mandate given current IEP numbers.



# Q&A: Annual Staffing Process

This and additional information will be added to our Staffing Q&A on the district website (linked under Human Resources)



2024-25 PLAN

ANNUAL STAFFING PROCESS

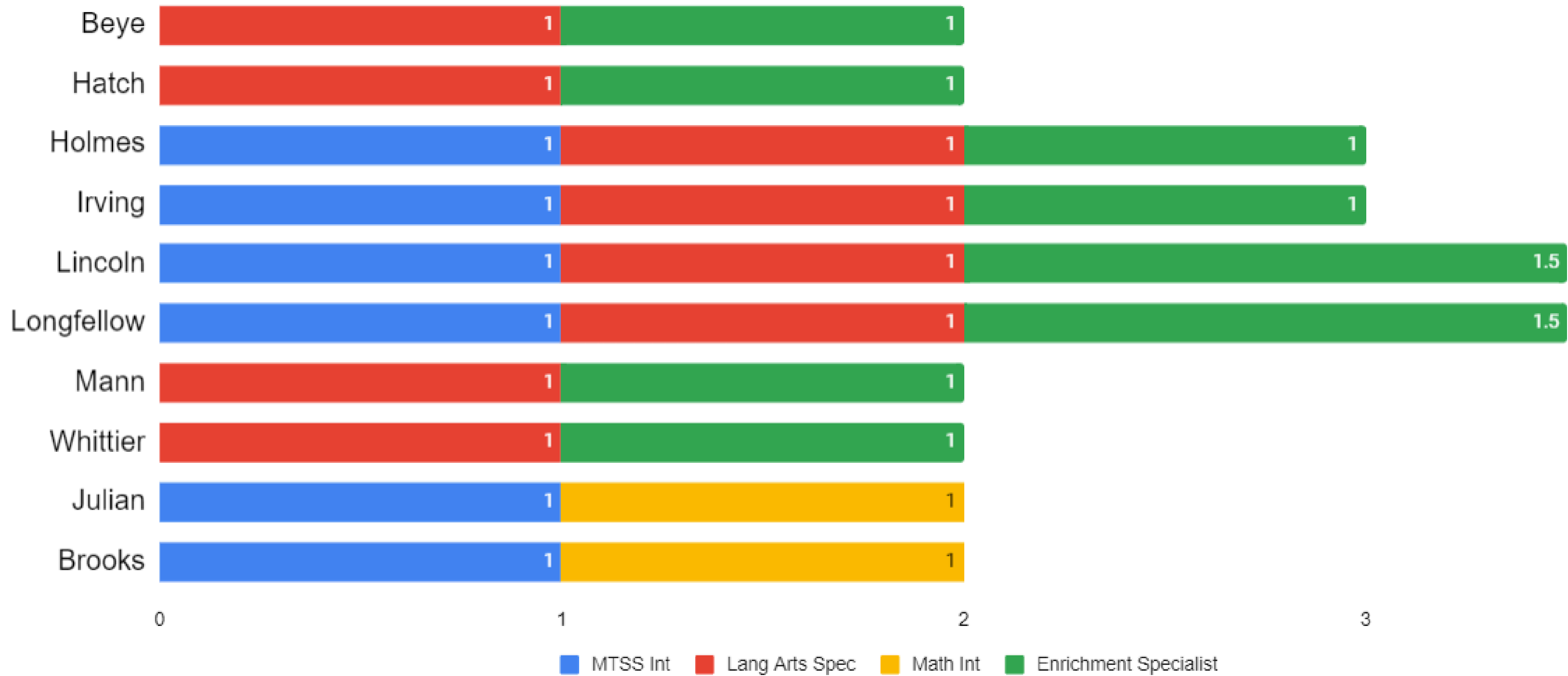
COMMUNITY QUESTIONS - SPRING 2024

- + What does the district mean when it refers to staffing plans?
- + What changes are being made for the 2024-25 school year?
- + Why are there changes being made to classroom sections?
- + Are class sizes projected to increase across the district in 2024-25?



# People Resources: Out-of-Classroom Positions

**What is the current distribution of full-time out-of-classroom teacher positions focused on academic interventions?**





# People & Time Resources: Clean Buildings

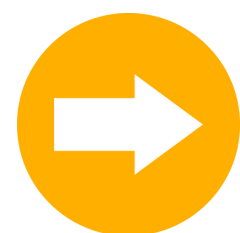
**What are we doing to ensure our physical spaces are safe and welcoming?**



Immediate additional cleaning by our District 97 staff team at Julian through end of the school year



Hiring campaigns to fill current vacancies districtwide



Longer-term: Create systems, expectations and annual cycles (e.g. handbooks and planned maintenance schedule). Updates will be provided Fall 2024.



**Building  
Maintenance**





# We align our resources.

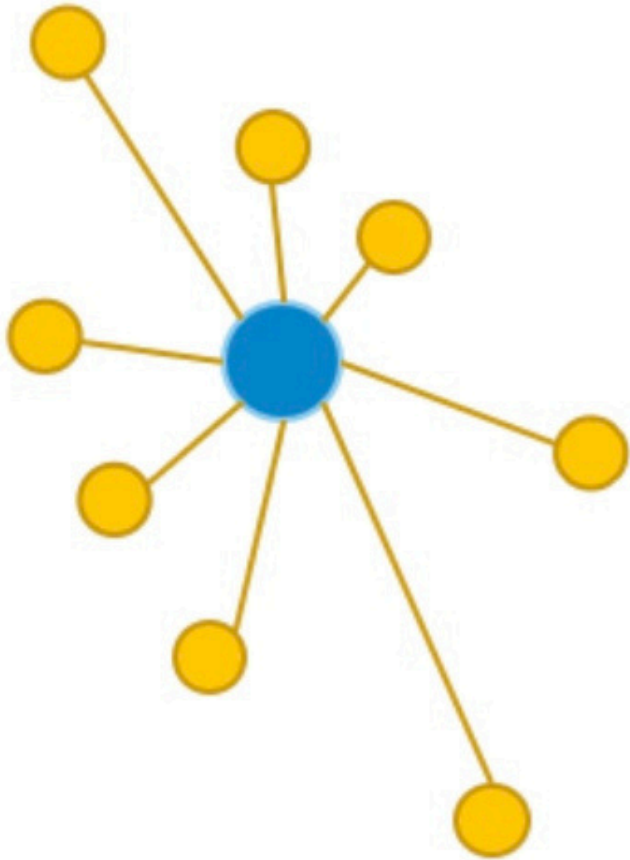
## **Key Focus Area (presented tonight):**

- **2024-25 Stipended Teacher Leaders Roles**
  - New stipended role focused on transition from early childhood to kindergarten
  - Increased alignment to school improvement planning in middle schools

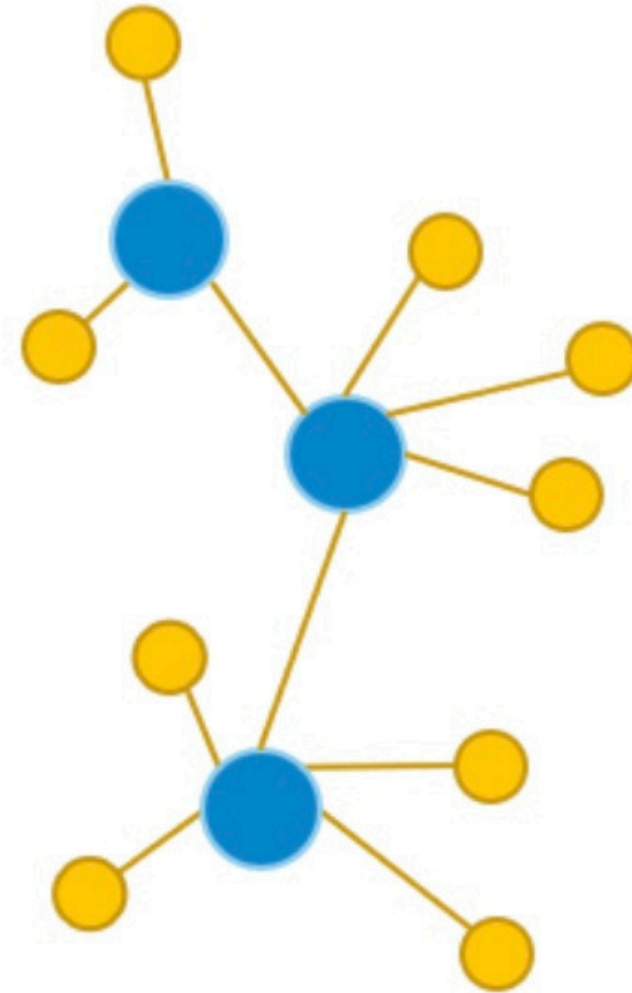
**Learn and Lead Together**



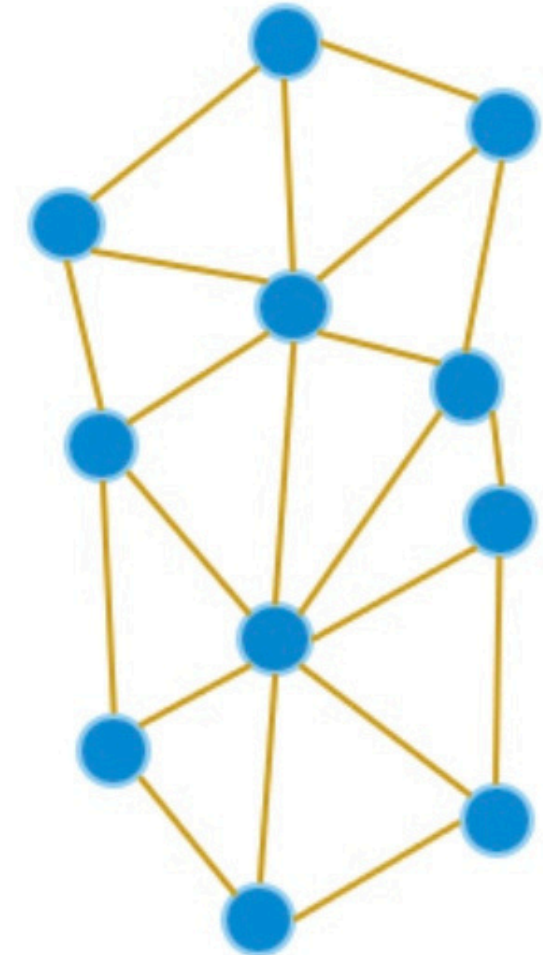
# We learn and lead together.



Centralized



Decentralized



Distributed



# We learn and lead together.

**How do we develop a shared Oak Park D97 understanding of equity and excellence?**

**In the past...**

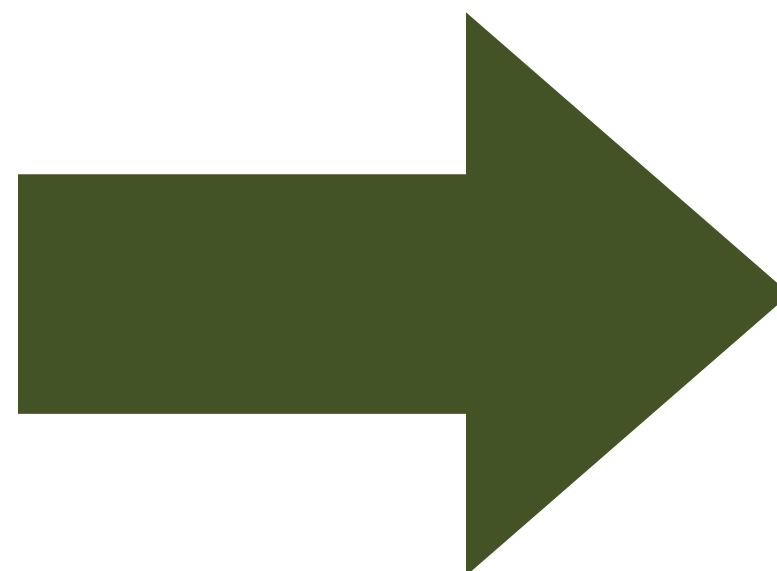
**Under Teaching & Learning**

**Episodic**

**Focused Primarily on Curricular Needs**

**Often Electronic**

**Often Voluntary**



**Looking ahead...**



**Under HR & Equity and Cross-Functional**

**On-going Learning**  
(Institute Days, staff meetings, PLCs)

**Job-embedded Reflection**  
(Focal Student Cohort)

**Multiple Employee Groups**

**In-Person (where possible)**

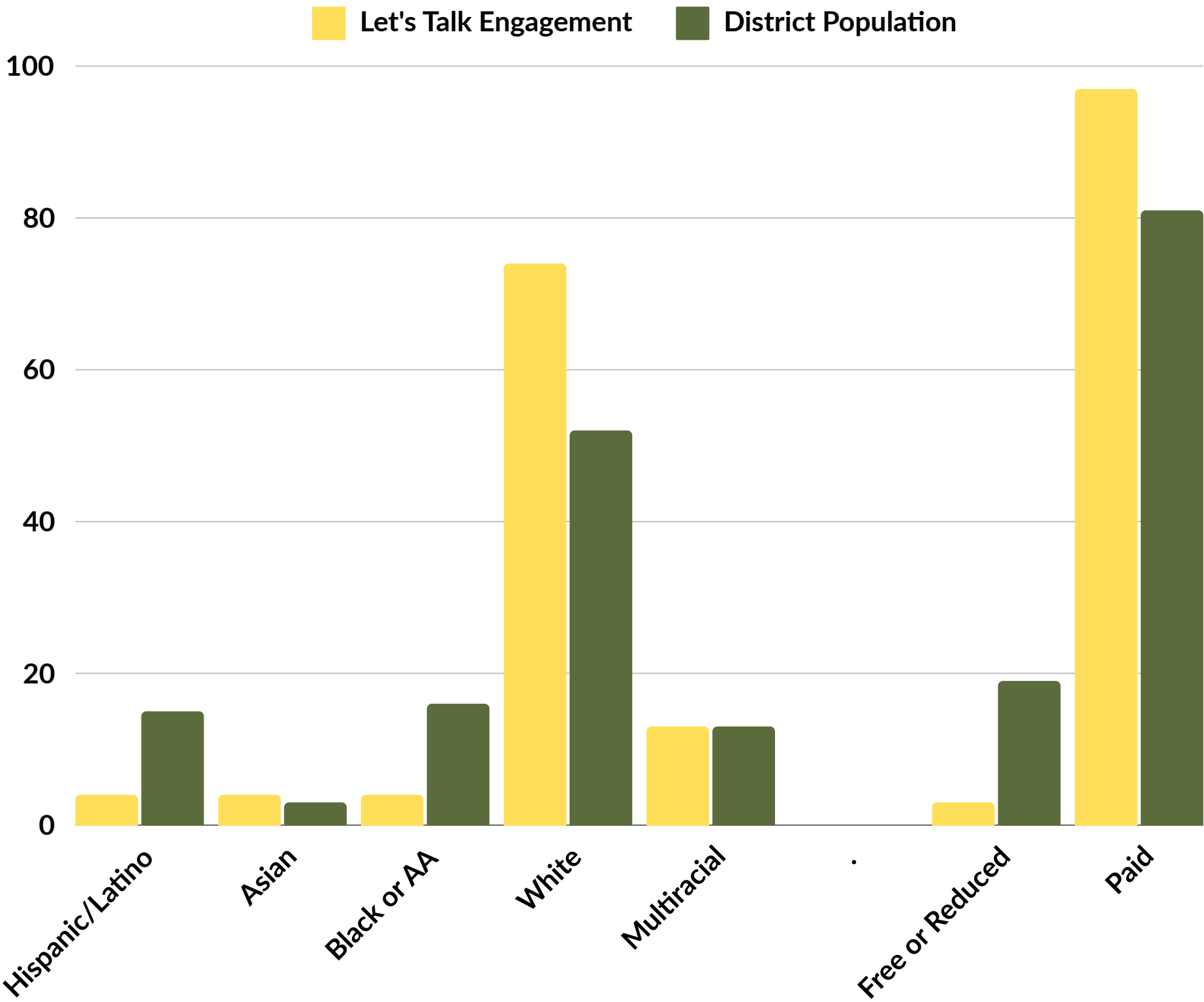
**Key Component Mandatory**

# Reflection

We received over 100 Let's Talk messages and emails regarding the proposed SY25 out-of-classroom reallocation, the majority of which were from D97 parents.

Our data indicates that we are less likely to hear from parents of students of color and from parents of students receiving free and reduced lunch supports.

Based on an analysis of parents who engaged on Let's Talk regarding staffing issues between 4.17.24 and 5.10.24







# We learn and lead together.

## **Key Focus Areas (presented tonight):**

- **Middle School Redesign**
  - June 5 Team Meeting: Goal is to develop a proposal for the superintendent review and feedback regarding the improvement and clarity of expectations of Tier 1 safety culture and climate systems and processes of our D97 middle schools.
- **School Improvement Logic Models (Building Leadership Teams)**
- **E-Learning (Ed Council)**



# Transparency and Timely Engagement

## Recent and Upcoming Opportunities to Connect with with Dr. Shah



**Meet, Greet, and  
Next Edge Feedback  
Listening Sessions**

(All D97 Staff)



**Community Events**

A Day in Our Village  
(Sunday, June 2)



**PTO Meetings**



**Ongoing  
Opportunities  
throughout School  
Year**

# Discussion

