

PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS

# BRIDGING THE GAP

**END OF YEAR REPORT 2021-22**

ISSUED: SEPTEMBER 9, 2022



## Bridging the Gap Plan Overview

Bridging the Gap (BTG) is a Pinellas County Schools (PCS) initiative designed by the district to close or greatly narrow educational achievement gaps between Black students and their non-Black peers by the year 2027. With broad community input gathered during the plan's initial development in fall 2016, the BTG Plan outlines educational equity gaps across six goal areas:

**Goal 1:** Graduation Rate

**Goal 2:** Student Achievement

**Goal 3:** Advanced Coursework

**Goal 4:** Student Discipline

**Goal 5:** ESE Identification

**Goal 6:** Minority Hiring

The overarching goal of BTG is to provide pathways to improve the educational outcomes of Black students, particularly regarding equitable performance on standardized assessments, improved graduation rates, participation in advanced-level coursework, reductions in disproportionate disciplinary consequences and overrepresentation in Exceptional Student Education (specifically- Emotional/Behavioral Disability). Additionally, the district has prioritized increased teacher diversity to recruit and retain teachers of color.

The key findings presented in this report represent a summary of the implementation efforts for the six goals stated above. The ongoing evaluation of the BTG plan is designed to accomplish the following: (1) identify the extent to which PCS has developed structures and systems to support educational equity and meet stated goals; (2) highlight the successes of the BTG initiative, to date; (3) identify areas for refinement or improvement; and (4) establish a set of best-practice recommendations for improving the plan moving forward. The findings within this report are part of a multi-year evaluation of the BTG Plan which support annual improvements to the plan and district leadership.

### Bridging the Gap Oversight and Monitoring

The Bridging the Gap (BTG) plan is a systemic initiative and large-scale effort to improve persistent inequitable educational outcomes for Black students in Pinellas County Schools. To ensure alignment of the goals and desired outcomes, the district developed consistent methods and measures. Each year the BTG plan is refined to update strategies and actions aligned to current progress with quarterly updates communicated to the community. The Pinellas County School Board (Board) and district remain committed to the BTG plan, evident in the explicit inclusion of the plan each year within the Board-approved [District Strategic Plan](#). To ensure continuous improvement and attention to implementation, each goal within the BTG plan has a goal manager who works cross-functionally to develop, implement and monitor the strategic actions plans. Goal managers meet regularly with Executive Leadership, including the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent and Minority Achievement Officer, regarding progress and any barriers that need support.

The district has made progress particularly in the development and implementation of districtwide professional development opportunities and improving early warning systems. Within each BTG Goal, most action steps have focused on training for teachers and leaders, improved data monitoring and identifying and tracking of students who are at-risk. There is evidence of systems-change in each of these key areas as the district has built data systems that track and measure the progress of students in meeting graduation requirements and matching students to advanced courses. Additionally, the district has invested in partnerships with national experts in equitable practices, developed staff to become local trainers and developed a robust set of training options.

Data outcomes measured within the plan have demonstrated improvement, though the COVID-19 pandemic impacted progress during the 2019-20, 2020-21 and, ultimately, 2021-22 school years across the nation and state. As a district committed to continuous improvement, Pinellas County Schools recognizes there is still work to be done and is dedicated to ensuring the goals within the BTG plan are met or exceeded. Some goals within the BTG plan have demonstrated greater success in terms of student outcomes than others and the district will continue to refine and adapt the strategies and actions to align with current capacity and promote long-term systems-change and sustainability over time.

## **BTG 2021-22**

The Bridging the Gap Plan outlines the district 10-year goals, annual benchmarks and strategies set for each goal area. While progress is expected each year, it should be noted that the gaps are not likely to decrease equally every year. The district may find that some gaps decrease quickly while others remain stable (or widen) until the plan's actions work in unison to bring about the systemic change needed to impact all gaps.

As the district entered the fifth year of implementation in school year 2021-22, a significant review of strategies took place in the fall of 2021. The updated plan reflects new and enhanced in-process measures and actions to deepen implementation and increased impact for student outcomes. Strategies and actions that have been previously completed or become district ways of work remain documented within the overall plan but are now noted as *previous action steps and current ways of work* to acknowledge the work that has been accomplished and continues to be supported.

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**Goal 1: Graduation Rate- Eliminate the gap between the graduation rates for Black and non-Black students.**

**Goal Manager:** Rita Vasquez, Executive Director, High School Education

**Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16):** Pinellas County Schools has a graduation rate for all students of 80.1% and a rate for Black students of 65.5%. The district has seen a 10.9 percentage point increase in graduation rate among Black students since 2012, with an improvement among all students of 8.1 percentage points. A gap in graduation rates still exists between Black (65.5%) and non-Black (83.4%) students, a gap of 17.9 percentage points.

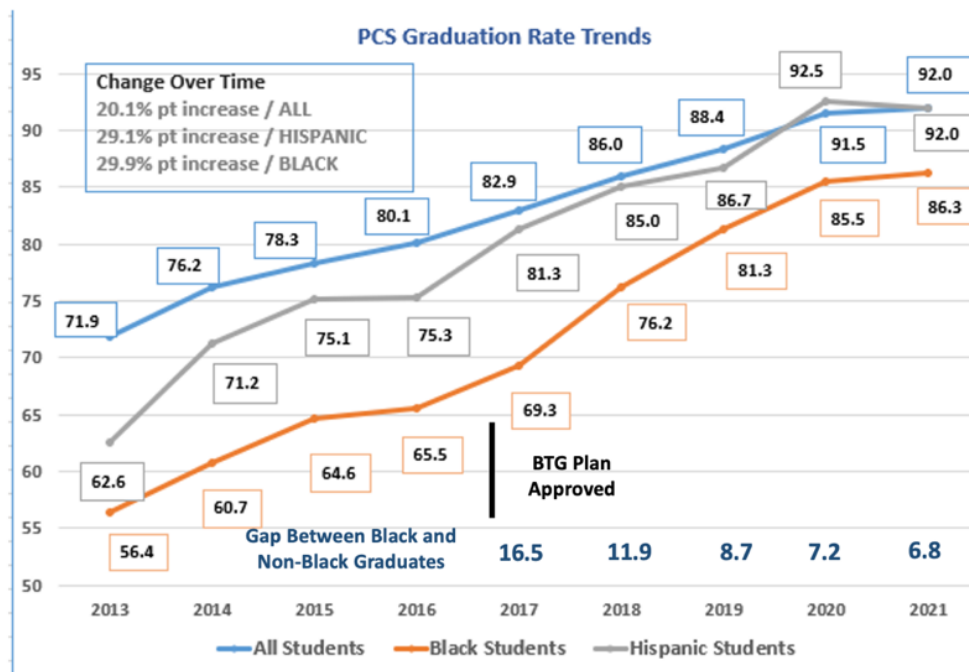
**Aspirational Goal:** Pinellas County will increase the graduation rates for Black learners each year at a higher rate than the non-Black graduation rate. The goal is to decrease the gap in graduation rates between Black and non-Black students by an average of 1.8 percentage points each year until the gap is eliminated or greatly narrowed.

**Outcome Overview**

The district’s Bridging the Gap plan continues to yield results and has helped produce the district’s highest graduation rate among Black students and the lowest gap in district history.

- The graduation rate among Black students for 2020-21 rose to 86.3%, up .8 percentage points from the previous year and nearly 30 percentage points since the 2012-13 school year.
- When the Bridging the Gap plan was instituted, the graduation gap between Black and non-Black students was 18 percentage points. This gap decreased by another .4 percentage points in 2020-21 to 6.8 percentage points.

**Class of 2021 Official Data Released in January 2022**



Source: FDOE. EdStats. AAR data pull / January 2022.

While the graduation rate for the 2021-22 school year has not yet been released by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) at the time of this report, but the district estimates the graduation rate for Black students will decrease for the class of 2022 to an estimated 78.1%. A decrease in the overall district graduation rate is also expected for the class of 2022 (estimated 88%). Students in this cohort were in grade 10 during that school year and did not have the ability to take subject-area assessments when they were enrolled in the course due to school closures in March of 2020. The lack of standardized test administration (FSA, EOCs, SAT and ACT) in spring 2020 due to COVID-19 and no waiving of requirements had a greater impact on the class of 2022.

Even with this in mind, the improvement in the Black graduation rate and the reduction in the gap are trending ahead of the district's annual targets outlined in the BTG Plan. The district continues to implement data monitoring structures and individualized supports. The graduation rate for Black students reflects sustained, significant improvement since the baseline year of 2015-16. The success of Goal 1 can be attributed to the systemic, purposeful use of data, as well as changes in processes for the identification and support for at-risk students.

## Annual and Related Outcome Measures

Goal 1: Annual Outcome Measures		Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 <sup>1</sup>
Graduation Rate: # and % of Black students who graduated on time with a standard, high school diploma / 4-year senior cohort.	Black	65.5% (932)	Actual	69.3%	76.2%	81.3%	85.5%	86.3%	TBD
			Target	67.3%	69.1%	70.9%	72.7%	74.5%	76.3%
	Non-Black	83.4%	Actual	85.8%	88.1%	90.0%	92.7%	93.1%	TBD
	GAP	17.9	Actual	16.5	11.9	8.7	7.2	6.8	

Related Outcomes Measures (Data include all high school sites)	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 <sup>1</sup>
% of Black students in high school (grades 9-11) with a 2.0 or above GPA.	70.0%	Actual	70.0%	69.4%	76.6%	68.9%	66.0 %	57.2%
% of Black students in high school (grades 9-11) with Algebra 1 credit / passing score on state Algebra 1 EOC.	No Baseline Data Established	Actual	60.0%	65.3%	45.8%	Data not available	32.88%	33.6%
% of Black students in high school (grades 9-11) with required credits earned to date.	No Baseline Data Established	Actual	81.6%	81.0%	77.1%	79.7%	72.4%	71.10%
% of Black students in high school (grades 9-10) with Level 3 or above on state ELA assessment (FSA ELA).	(530) 21.8%	Actual	22.0%	24.0%	24.6%	Data not available	23.1%	21.9%
# and % of Black students who graduated with a standard diploma via a concordant assessment score (WFT).	(242) 26.0%	Actual	(371) 39.8%	(448) 42.9%	(471) 44.1%	(434) 41.0%	(401) 36.9%	TBD
# and % of Black students who graduated with standard diploma via an ESE assessment waiver (WFW or WRW).	(98) 10.5%	Actual	(100) 10.7%	(78) 7.5%	(53) 5.0%	(58) 5.5%	(57) 5.2%	TBD

### Key Actions and Findings

- Despite the adverse impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning, graduation rates demonstrated gains for the class of 2021.
- The district has continued to utilize the developed series of innovative tracking systems and checks-and-balances that have directly impacted the improvements in graduation rates for Black learners. The district's continued evaluation of graduation rate improvements illuminates consistent usage of these tracking systems by district and school staff, including school guidance counselors who monitor graduation requirements.

<sup>1</sup> The graduation data for 2021-22 are not final and have not been released by the state; therefore, items denoted as TBD are not yet available. Final graduation data for the cohort graduating class of 2022 are expected to be released by the state in December 2022 or early January 2023.



- Data analysis revealed a deeper level of future focus for Black students in Pinellas County Schools. Black male students' performance continues to lag Black female students. During the 2021-22 school year, the district launched a peer mentoring program for Black male students wherein upperclassmen work with underclassmen to support academic success. Anticipated impact of this strategy to be seen within the 2022-23 graduation rate for Black males.
- Trends across the district's seventeen (17) traditional high schools continue to show graduation rates for Black students are high. While maintaining the strategies for traditional high schools, additional attention to interventions within the district's dropout prevention and alternative school sites. In November 2021, the district piloted a hybrid (virtual and in-person) program for students at Pinellas Gulf Coast Academy and has demonstrated to be a promising practice.
- Tutoring efforts throughout the 2021-22 school year demonstrated that tutoring embedded within the school day garnered the most engagement and attendance. During the 2022-23 school year, the district will deepen the implementation of school day embedded tutoring in both middle and high schools.

### **Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research**

- Continue districtwide practices established at the high-school level for review and use of data for action and support including the implementation of preventative measures to develop and sustain a positive trend from entry through the graduation of high school for Black students.
- With the shift in graduation assessments to the new Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) assessments, the district and schools must be diligent in requirement tracking, communication of expectations with students and families while also enhancing strategies and supports for students to meet the expectations and outcomes.
- Continue to enhance the vertical articulation and implementation strategies for ongoing monitoring and support of Black students demonstrating graduation readiness standards at grades five (5), eight (8) and nine (9). Utilize the high-school and high-school readiness dashboards developed during the 2021-22 school year to proactively provide supports for Black students prior to their junior/senior years to support on-time graduation.
- Monitor and expand peer-to-peer mentoring program for Black male students to build the supports for Black male students as they enter high school.
- Expand the Pinellas Gulf Coast Academy program the 2022-23 school year to serve more students in need, specifically for those identified as at-risk for dropping out.
- Considerations should be given for additional areas of concentration within BTG Goal 1: With the increased number of district Level Up and virtual opportunities for students and families to learn about the requirements and specific supports for students, the district should consider how to ensure Black families are accessing and leveraging the information to support student success.

## **Goal 2: Student Achievement- Eliminate the gap between the proficiency rates in reading (ELA) and mathematics on state and national assessments for Black and non-Black students.**

**Goal Manager:** Kevin Hendrick, Associate Superintendent, Teaching and Learning (2021-22 school year)  
Dan Evans, Associate Superintendent, Teaching and Learning (2022-23 school year)

**Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16):** Pinellas County Schools has a proficiency rate on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) for ELA-Reading of 56.4% for non-Black students and 24.2% for Black students, a gap of 32.2. The proficiency rate on the FSA for Math is 60.9% for non-Black students and 27.9% for Black students, a 33-point gap. Smaller gaps are found on national norm-referenced tests such as the ACT and SAT. For purposes of this goal, the gap is defined as the difference in performance between Black and non-Black students on state and national norm-referenced assessments.

**Aspirational Goal:** Pinellas County will decrease the gap in ELA-Reading and Mathematics proficiency for Black students by an average of 3.2 percentage points each year on state assessments until the gap is eliminated or greatly narrowed.

### **Outcome Overview**

When looking at multi-year trends, Pinellas County students demonstrated stable performance districtwide in English/Language Arts (ELA) and demonstrates slight decreases in mathematics. Nationwide, learning loss in mathematics is still greater than reading.

The district trends in proficiency rates for all students, mirror the trends for the 2021-22 school year in English/Language Arts (ELA) for Black students (see Annual Outcome Measures chart below). The proficiency in ELA for the 2021-22 school year demonstrates a slight decrease since 2018-19; however, remains stable when compared to 2017-18. The 2021-22 ELA proficiency rate for Black students in the district was 25.3% compared to 56.2% for non-Black students, a gap of 30.9 percentage points. This does represent a reduction in the gap between Black and non-Black students by 1.3 points. The proficiency rates in in 2021-22 for mathematics demonstrate a similar achievement gap with 27.8% of Black students achieving a Level 3 and above compared to 60.1% of non-Black students. This represents a gap of 32.2 percentage points. While there was an increase in percentage of Black students demonstrating proficiency, there was an increase in the gap between Black and non-Black students by .3 points.

The district has demonstrated some progress in Black proficiency and reduction of the gap between Black and non-Black students, this remains an area for enhanced focus.

During the 2021-22 school year, the district developed and implemented programs with a focus on positively impacting the academic outcomes of Black students including:

- Expansion of Reading Recovery to a total of fifteen (15) schools to serve more students, with most students in Reading Recovery meeting grade-level standards. The Reading Recovery program ensures individual students in first grade who are below the 40th percentile in reading work one-to-one with a specially trained teacher for 12 to 20 weeks and receive daily 30-minute lessons. Among the students who received the intervention in 2021-22, 83% of students who began below a first grade reading level improved to at least grade-level ability and 28% improved from below first-grade level to second-grade performance or beyond.
- Launched Project 23, to implement strategic ELA and mathematics interventions at 23 targeted schools through dedicated ELA and Math staff members. Of the students in the Project 23 schools, 54% of students in kindergarten, 49% of students in first grade and 61% of students in second grade met their projected growth targets on the MAP assessment.

- Launched the Pinellas Early Literacy Initiative (PELI) in eight (8) high-minority schools in the 2021-22 school year. Teachers (117) were trained in foundational literacy skills and reading best practices across eight (8) schools. Administrators at all eight (8) schools were trained as well. Schools received literacy professional development and participated in a minimum of 4 hours of classroom visits and discussion with literacy consultant/experts.
- Increased the number of full-day, tuition-free Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) classrooms to 65. Black students (549) were supported via district-run VPK program, which represents 30.2% of all students enrolled in district VPK classrooms.

### Annual and Related Outcome Measures

Annual Outcome Measures ELA and Math	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 <sup>2</sup>	2020-21	2021-22
# and % of Black students districtwide scoring Level 3 or above on state FSA ELA/Reading	<b>Black</b> (2,494) <b>24.2%</b>	(2,654) 25.7%		(2,533) 24.6%	(2,831) 27.1%	No data in 2019-20.	(2,419) 25.6%	<b>(2,428)</b> <b>25.3%</b>
		Target	27.4%	30.6%	33.8%	37.0%	40.2%	42.6%
	<b>Non-Black</b>	Actual	57.7%	57.4%	59.7%	No data in 2019-20.	57.8%	<b>56.2%</b>
	<b>GAP</b>	Actual	32.0	32.8	32.6	No data in 2019-20.	32.2	<b>30.9</b>
# and % of Black students districtwide scoring Level 3 or above on FSA Math	<b>Black</b> (2,143) <b>27.9%</b>	(2,305) <b>29.0%</b>		(2,319) <b>29.2%</b>	(2,336) <b>30.0%</b>	No data in 2019-20.	(2,251) 24.9%	<b>(1,978)</b> <b>27.8%</b>
		Target	31.1%	34.3%	37.5%	40.7%	43.7%	46.9%
	<b>Non-Black</b>	Actual	62.0%	62.2%	62.8%	No data in 2019-20.	56.8%	<b>60.1%</b>
	<b>GAP</b>	Actual	33.0	33.0	32.8	No data in 2019-20.	31.9	<b>32.2</b>

Related Outcome Measures ELA and Math	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 <sup>3</sup>	2020-21	2021-22
# and % of Black students in Grades 3-5 scoring Level 3 or above on state FSA ELA-Reading / elementary.	(1,129) 26.5%	Actual	(1,302) 29.5%	(1,191) 27.0%	(1,302) 29.6%	Data not available	(1,108) 28.9%	<b>(1,209)</b> <b>31%</b>
# and % of Black students in Grades 6-8 scoring Level 3 or above on state FSA ELA-Reading / middle school.	(835) 23.1%	Actual	(859) 23.5%	(811) 22.0%	(970) 25.6%	Data not available	(791) 22.7%	<b>(752)</b> <b>21%</b>
# and % of Black students in Grades 9-10 scoring proficient / Level 3 or above on FSA ELA-Reading / high school.	(530) 21.8%	Actual	(493) 22.0%	(531) 24.0%	(559) 24.6%	Data not available	(520) 24.4%	<b>(467)</b> <b>22%</b>

<sup>2</sup> State Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) and End-of-Course (EOC) exams were not administered in the 2019-2020 school year as schools statewide were engaged in remote learning from March-June 2020.

<sup>3</sup> State Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) and End-of-Course (EOC) exams were not administered in the 2019-2020 school year as schools statewide were engaged in remote learning from March-June 2020.

## Key Actions and Findings

- During the 201-22 school year, Black student achievement remained stable in reading and in mathematics. Closing the significant achievement gap between Black and non-Black students continues to be a main focal point of BTG and the work of the district.
- Utilizing federal COVID funds, the district strategically invested in the development of programming to accelerate student learning including: Project 23, Reading Recovery, Pinellas Early Learning Initiative, expansion of Voluntary Prekindergarten, digital educational resources for students and families and tutoring services.
- [PCS Connects](#), the district's one-to-one student device initiative, began during the 2020-21 school year. In 2021-22, all students in grades three (3) through ten (10) were assigned a Dell laptop to be used during the school day and at home. Students in grades K-2 and 11-12 had access to technology during the school day. As part of PCS Connects, digital resources are embedded in daily face-to-face instruction to facilitate research, creation, critical thinking and collaboration. The goal of PCS Connects is to ensure students have access to the technology, devices and applications that transform their learning and can extend their learning after school hours for enrichment and curricular reinforcement that meets individual student needs. Additionally, families in need can also receive free Wi-Fi hotspots to support connectivity at home and outside the classroom.
- In collaboration with the Pinellas Education Foundation the district launched PCS Family e-Learning Coaching to provide families free, after-hours, in-person and virtual technology service and education for PCS Connects devices, Wi-Fi hotspots and digital programming.
- As part of PCS Connects, the district also launched [Level Up](#), a virtual enrichment opportunity that allows students and families to make the most of their PCS Connects digital learning devices and to help them remain connected to learning. There are a variety of enhancement options for all grade levels including quarterly Biology, Algebra 1 and Geometry reviews, virtual history and art museum tours and ACT and SAT preparation courses. In 2021-22 Level UP experiences also included opportunities to dive deeper into graduation requirements.

## Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Continue to collaborate within and outside of the district on new and innovative strategies to close the achievement gap for Black students.
- Enhance professional learning opportunities with an increased focus and mechanisms for implementation support at the school- and classroom-level to ensure strategies are implemented across the district. Leverage the expertise of school-based staff that have demonstrated effectiveness for increasing Black student achievement to help develop and facilitate professional learning opportunities for their peers.
- Black student success in PCS classes/courses (definitions of success found in 2.2) decreases as students progress from elementary, middle and then to high school. While this trend also matches the trajectory of non-Black students, additional attention should be paid to the school supports and experiences. In 2022-23, PCS has invested in embedding Instructional Staff Developers focused on the BTG plan within the district elementary, middle and high school subject area teams. Additionally, leveraging findings from embedded tutoring practices within high school will also be expanded to middle school.
- Maintain investment in free, full-day Prekindergarten programming to ensure youngest learners enter kindergarten ready academically and developmentally. Explore ability to sustain this investment through external funders once COVID funding sunsets.
- Continue to enhance the vertical articulation and implementation strategies for ongoing monitoring and support of Black students demonstrating graduation readiness standards at grades five (5), eight (8) and nine (9). Utilize the high-school and high-school readiness dashboards developed during the 2021-22 school year to proactively provide supports for Black students prior to entering high school.

- Continue implementation of PCS Connects so that in the 2022-23 school year all students in grades one (1) through twelve (12) will have a Dell laptop to be used during the school day and at home.
- Maintain or enhance financial, programmatic and evaluation support of programs and supports that have direct impact on the proficiency in ELA and mathematics for Black students (e.g., Reading Recovery, Project 23, Pinellas Early Literacy Initiative, PCS Connects/Level Up, School Climate Transformation Grant).
- Commit to implementing both district- and school-based data review protocols for Black student performance using the graduation processes as a model.
- Review strategies to support Black learners within all federal COVID-funded projects enhance strategies that have demonstrated success.

### **Goal 3: Advanced Coursework- Eliminate the gap in advanced and accelerated participation and performance rates for Black and non-Black students.**

**Goal Manager:** Judith Vigue, Director, Advanced Studies

**Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16):** Pinellas County Schools has a current participation rate for Black students that ranges from 12.8% in high school honors courses to 9.1% in accelerated courses (8.5% in AP courses and 12.3% in Dual Enrollment as examples) and career programs (CAPE enrollment is 17%). Middle school enrollments follow a similar pattern. The total gap for 2015-16 for all secondary students enrolled in advanced or accelerated courses was 5.9 percentage points and that gap widened slightly for 2016-17 to 6.1 points. The gap for enrollment in Gifted was 14.2 percentage points in 2015-16 and that gap improved slightly for 2016-17 to 14.0 points. There is presently no gap in the total enrollment across the district in application programs, though some gaps do exist in specific programs at certain schools. For purposes of this goal, the gap is defined as the difference between Black and non-Black students in the following areas:

- All students identified and enrolled in gifted (participation rates).
- Secondary students enrolled in advanced or accelerated courses (participation and performance rates).
- All students enrolled in district application programs (participation rates).

**Aspirational Goal:** Pinellas County Schools will increase the percentage of Black students enrolled in gifted, advanced and accelerated courses by an average 1% each year to meet or exceed the percentage enrollment of Black students (18% in 2015-16) and increase the percentage of Black students earning satisfactory performance standards by an average of .5% each year until that percentage meets or exceeds the district or state average. The district will also maintain or increase its current Black enrollment in district application programs (24.1% Black enrollment in 2015-16) across the district and increase its Black enrollment in specific application programs until they all meet or exceed the percentage enrollment of Black students.

#### **Outcome Overview**

The district continues to meet its annual BTG benchmarks for increased enrollment of Black students in advanced and accelerated courses. The trends are tied to specific BTG actions and demonstrate the impact and the commitment of the district to continue and accelerate progress are evident. Since the BTG plan was approved, the district has more than doubled enrollment in advanced coursework for Black students. With the long-term goal to ensure that the enrollment of students taking advanced/accelerated coursework mirrors the district's student population by race (18% Black students), the district has almost hit this target with Black students comprising 17% of the students enrolled (unique students). As students can enroll in more than one advanced/accelerated course, Black students comprise 22% of total advanced/accelerated course enrollment.

Increases in enrollment continue to also be seen at the middle- and high-school level within advanced/honors or accelerated coursework. The district has seen impressive increases and narrowing of enrollment gaps across all types of courses, from middle school advanced classes to Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment. Steps to increase Black student participation in advanced coursework include early identification of gifted and talented learners and open access to advanced courses in middle school. Additionally, district tracking systems have improved, including the development of a color-coded accelerated course report that has resulted in a more efficient course registration process, including a timeline for master scheduling and embedded checkpoints for accelerated registrations. This includes the district's strategic use of the AVID elective (Advancement Via Individual Determination) to support students who are new to advanced coursework and need additional study and organizational skills.

Additionally, the number and percent of Black students enrolled in gifted increased again in the 2020-21 school year, though a gap remains. The steady improvement is connected to the district’s commitment to universal screening for all students by the end of first grade as well as continued implementation to “Plan B” as an alternative method of identification that considers students with both gifted and talented potential against a matrix that includes multiple criteria and not just a single screening assessment.

School Year	Gifted Enrollment (K-8)		Middle School Advanced Course Enrollment		Middle School Accelerated Course Enrollment		High School Honors Course Enrollment		High School Accelerated Course Enrollment		Middle/High School Advanced and Accelerated Courses Enrolled	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
2021-22	518	6.6%	3,351	20.7%	610	12.3%	3,072	16.1%	1,892	11.5%	8,925	22.1%
2020-21	521	6.5%	3,485	20.1%	458	10.1%	3,098	15.6%	1,505	11.5%	8,546	26.0%
2019-20	448	6.3%	2,521	15.5%	451	9.5%	2,899	15.6%	1,335	10.9%	5,666	15.1%
2016-17	281	4.0%	1,540	12.5%	309	8.1%	2,225	12.8%	857	9.1%	3,775	11.9%

While there is continued growth in participation within all categories of advanced/accelerated coursework, there opportunity remains to expand access and support increased successful outcomes. Increased supports for students preparing for advanced and accelerated coursework at all levels. PCS is committed to creating innovative efforts to mitigate future barriers to performance growth.

The district launched pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP) courses in all middle schools. During the 2020-21 school year, offerings included Pre-AP World History, Pre-AP Geography and Pre-AP Art. In launching Pre-AP programs in middle schools, they receive an official Pre-AP designation for each course and the opportunity to bring engaging, meaningful, foundational coursework to all their students across varying levels of abilities. This designation signals consistent high standards in focused courses that help build, strengthen and reinforce students’ content knowledge and critical thinking skills. All middle schools offered Pre-AP courses in the 2021-22 school year.

Between 2018 and 2021, Pinellas County Schools has demonstrated:

- 48% increase in the number of Black students taking college-level courses in high school;
- 50% increase in the number of Black students enrolled in AP courses;
- 55% increase in the number of Black students taking dual-enrollment courses; and
- 45% increase in the number of Black students enrolled in AICE or IB courses.

There was an increased focus on strategies to support successful completion of advanced/accelerated courses 2021-22 school year. The district is dedicated to providing equitable access and the corresponding strategies and instructional resources for successful student outcomes. The percent of Black middle school students earning high-school credit through accelerated coursework continued to increase to 11.9% of all Black students in 2021-22, an increase of 1.6 points. Additionally, 15.9% of Black students in grades 6-12 earning a passing grade in any middle or high school advanced or accelerated course (as measured by total number of Black students in grades 6-12).

The district also continued to enhance and expand opportunities for Black students for college- and career-readiness including:

- Expansion of [College and Career Centers](#) continued with full implementation at: Boca Ciega, Clearwater, East Lake, Gibbs, Lakewood, Largo, Osceola Fundamental, Pinellas Park and Seminole high schools. All 17 traditional high schools will have a staffed College and Career Center in 2022-23.
  - In 2021-22, Black students represented 25% of the students who engaged with the College and Career Centers and 32% of the total interactions (as students often utilize the center more than once).
- College Planning Boot Camps, where Black students engaged in large group presentations, small group discussions, self-guided learning, narrative writing and college/scholarship research. In 2022, the fourth year of our PCS Program, despite the COVID-19 disruptions to schools and learning, 108 students were served in some capacity through the college-planning process.

## Annual and Related Outcome Measures

Annual Outcome Measures	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 <sup>4</sup>	2021-22
Grades 6-12: # and % of total Black students in grades 6-12 enrolled in any middle or high school advanced or accelerated course.	(3,792) 12.1%	Actual (3,775) 11.9%	(4,691) 13.7%	(5,269) 14.5%	(5,666) 15.1%	(5,792) 16.3%	<b>(6,908)</b> <b>17.1%</b>
		Target 13%	14%	15%	16%	17%	18%

Related Outcome Measures	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
# and % of Black middle school students enrolled in an advanced course.	(1,583) 12.6%	(1,540) 12.5%	(1,859) 13.3%	(2,253) 14.2%	(2,521) 15.5%	(3,485) 20.1%	<b>(3,350)</b> <b>20.7%</b>
# and % of Black middle school students enrolled in an accelerated (high school)	(443) 8.9%	(309) 8.1%	(368) 8.3%	(378) 8.2%	(451) 9.5%	(458) 10.1%	<b>(610)</b> <b>12.3%</b>
# and % of Black high school students enrolled in an honors	(2,052) 12.3%	(2,225) 12.8%	(2,528) 14.9%	(2,656) 15.3%	(2,899) 15.6%	(3,098) 19.6%	<b>(3,072)</b> <b>16.1%</b>
# and % of Black high school students enrolled in an accelerated course (AP, IB, AICE, or Dual Enrollment).	(718) 8.6%	(857) 9.1%	(996) 9.6%	(1,020) 9.6%	(1,335) 10.9%	(1,505) 11.5%	<b>(1,892)</b> <b>11.5%</b>
# and % of Black students in high school enrolled in a career, technical education course (high	(2,503) 14.2%	(2,459) 13.8%	(2,555) 13.8%	(2,507) 13.4%	(2,589) 14.0%	(2,448) 13.5%	<b>(2,599)</b> <b>14.0%</b>
# and % of Black students enrolled in district choice / application programs / total across the district	(1,167) 6.3%	(1,235) 6.8%	(3,830) 18.9%	(4,428) 18.3%	(4,479) 18.4%	(4,362) 18.2%	<b>(4,298)</b> <b>18.3%</b>
% Black middle school students earning high school credit through accelerated coursework. <sup>5</sup>	(663) 3.3%	(509) 2.5%	(604) 3.0%	(408) 8.2%	(484) 9%	(482) 10.3%	<b>(853)</b> <b>11.9%</b>

<sup>4</sup> Data reviewed and updated. Number reported in quarter 2 in 2020-21 included duplicate students.

<sup>5</sup> Data reviewed for data rules and updated in 2020-21 for all previous years to ensure consistency of reporting.



Related Outcome Measures	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
% of Black students in high school completing an industry certification (measured as % of Black graduates).	No Baseline data established	Actual 31%	23%	16%	15%	15%	TBD <sup>6</sup>
<b>NEW 2021-22:</b> # and % of Black students in grades 6-12 earning a passing grade in any middle or high school advanced or accelerated course (as measured by total number of Black students enrolled in such courses in grades 6-12).							(6,654) 95%

### Key Actions and Findings

- The trends are promising and BTG actions specific to these outcomes demonstrate impact and the commitment of the district to continue and accelerate progress are evident. The district must maintain intense monitoring of student enrollment in advanced and accelerated courses. This has contributed to greater awareness among teachers and counselors for students who show potential to be successful in these courses but are not yet enrolled. The district has made great strides in developing tracking mechanisms (reports, dashboards) to chart enrollment in advanced studies and gifted programs.
- Given 184 AP teachers out of 300 (61%) were new to teaching AP courses in the 2021-22 school year, the district created AP Teacher Professional Learning Communities and Advisory Groups which:
  - Provided monthly, virtual sessions on Teams by subject area;
  - Embedded training on scaffolding the writing process;
  - Supported the use of AP Classroom for monitoring student progress; and
  - Implemented Marco Learning, a platform to obtain comprehensive feedback for each student on two or more writing assignments in preparation for the AP Exam.
- The district continues to invest in outcomes for gifted/talented learners in many ways. Increasing micro-credentialing is one of the strategies as it is a way to enhance knowledge and implementation of strategies and supports across the district. The district is also in year 4 of a 5-year national, competitively-awarded Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program grant. This year 2,391 students were served in the Talent Development program with 54 of 55 Talent Development teachers earning either the gifted endorsement or gifted micro-credential.

### Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Continue long-standing investment in on-campus, open-access testing for all students in taking the PSAT, SAT and ACT.
- Given the gap between student performance in accelerated courses (see 3.2), the district partnered with Hanover Research to conduct a survey with Black students/families engaged in rigorous courses. Based on feedback from participants, the district should: invest in the needs at the middle school level to improve successful pathways for high school and investigate ways to improve communication on student progress.

<sup>6</sup> Industry certification data for Class of 2022 not finalized until official graduation rate released by FDOE in late December 2022 or early January 2023.

- Continue to enhance and expand programs such as talent development, AVID and Pre-AP to encourage and support Black students with lower GPAs and/or test scores to take and succeed in advanced courses starting in elementary school.
- Increase focus on strategies and resources to support successful completion of advanced/accelerated courses for Black students.
- Increase communication with families of Black learners regarding student performance, scheduling and resources to support increased performance and outcomes.

## **Goal 4: Student Discipline- Reduce the total number of disciplinary infractions (referrals) and suspensions for Black students and decrease the disparity in referrals and suspensions for Black students to reach a level that is representative of the Black student population.**

**Goal Manager:** Michael Vigue, Area Superintendent

**Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16):** Pinellas County Schools has reduced its number of referrals (a decrease of 30.3%) and out-of-school suspensions (a decrease of 56.7%) for Black students significantly since 2013-14, though the district has not reduced the disparity gap as the number and percentage of referrals and suspensions for non-Black students has decreased at a similar rate. The gap has remained somewhat constant. The gap is typically represented by a “risk ratio” and that number is just over 2.0 for referrals and 4.0 for out of school suspensions, which means that Black students remain about two times more likely to receive a referral and four times more likely to receive an out of school suspension.

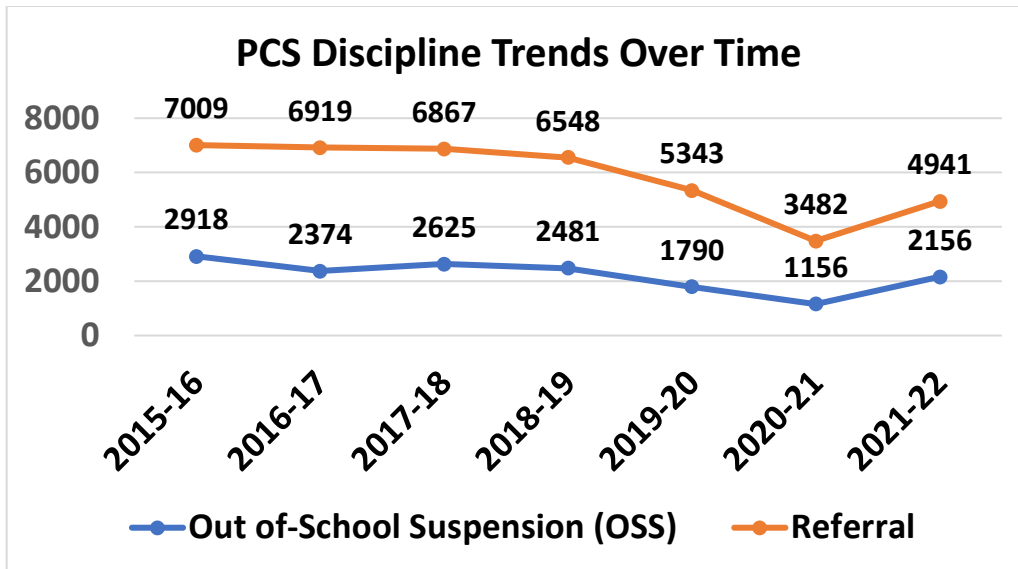
**Aspirational Goal:** Pinellas County Schools will decrease the number of referrals and suspensions given to Black students until it meets or is less than the percentage enrollment of Black students (18% in 2015-16) and until the risk ratio is at or near 1.0. The district will closely monitor its out-of-school suspensions given to Black students with a goal of decreasing its disparity rate by one-third (.33) each year.

### **Outcome Overview**

Since the 2015-16 school year, the district has significantly reduced the number of suspensions for Black students and the number of Black students being suspended. Although there were increases in both the numbers of Black students receiving a referral and out-of-school suspension (OSS) in the 2021-22 school year, there were also corresponding increases for non-Black students. The increases for non-Black students were higher than for Black students as the disciplinary disparity rate for Black students decreased risk ratio for both referrals (2.25) and out-of-school suspensions (4.0) in the 2021-22 school year.

The 2021-22 school year saw the return of all students to in-person learning and many students (approximately 20%) had not been in classroom settings for nearly 18 months. Throughout the 2021-22 school year, principal supervisors (Area Superintendents and Chief Transformation Officer) focused efforts on using monthly discipline reports and Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS)/Restorative Practices (RP) data to inform professional learning, school-based planning and onsite support for school teams. *Note: discipline data in 2019-20 and the 2020-21 represents data anomalies as not all students were in-person due to COVID impacts.*

The district continues to research, identify and implement strategies to improve Black student experiences and outcomes in Pinellas County Schools (PCS) while deepening implementation of research- and evidence-based strategies and practices.



### Annual and Related Outcome Measures

Annual Outcome Measures	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 <sup>7</sup>	2020-21 <sup>8</sup>	2021-22
Discipline Disparity Rate (Risk Ratio) Referrals of Black students	2.38	Actual 2.64	2.43	2.60	2.64	2.66	2.25
		Target 2.30	2.20	2.10	2.00	1.90	1.80
Discipline Disparity Rate (Risk Ratio) Out of School Suspensions of Black students	4.33	Actual 4.07	3.61	3.79	4.34	4.80	4.00
		Target 4.0	3.70	3.40	3.00	2.70	2.40
Related Outcome Measures	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 <sup>4</sup>	2020-21 <sup>5</sup>	2021-22
# and % of Black students with an office disciplinary referral	(7,009) 35.7% of all referrals	Actual (6,919) 38.0%	(6,867) 37.6%	(6,548) 38.3%	(5,343) 38.5%	(3,482) 38.9%	(4,941) 36.9%
# and % of Black students with an out-of-school suspension (OSS)	(2,918) 49.5% of all OSS	Actual (2,374) 48.5%	(2,625) 47.2%	(2,481) 47.6%	(1,790) 50.7%	(1,156) 53.4%	(2,156) 49%

<sup>7</sup> In the 2019-20 school year, all instruction went remote for the final quarter of the school year due to COVID-19.

<sup>8</sup> Data in the 2020-21 school year is impacted by enrollment shifts which occurred in Learning Options (in-person, MyPCS Online and Pinellas Virtual School) throughout the school year.

## **Key Actions and Findings**

- Based on site-level data, principal supervisors identified 25 schools to take part in a summer 2022 reboot of climate and behavior strategies with ongoing, strategic supports throughout the 2022-23 school year.
- Efforts for positively impacting Black student discipline should focus on non-violent infractions and corresponding actions/consequences assigned to them within and across the district.
- Utilizing federal COVID funds, the district strategically invested in the development of an equity office to support the implementation and coaching support for discipline disparities beginning in the 2021-22 school year.
- Given the impacts on student attendance/enrollment for in-person learning due to COVID-19, discipline data from the 2021-22 will be critical to reviewing implementation and effectiveness of current strategies on student outcomes.

## **Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research**

- Leverage the newly formed district Climate and Behavior teams to support schools to decrease number and variance of Black student discipline incidents.
- Continue to refine district discipline policies and the Code of Student Conduct to integrate restorative practices for non-violent incidents.
- Continue collaborative structures, training and practices related to law enforcement agencies to ensure student discipline continues to be handled by school administrators, not law enforcement officials.

## **Goal 5: ESE Identification- Reduce the disparity of Black students being found eligible for Exceptional Student Education (ESE).**

**Goal Manager:** Lynne Mowatt, Executive Director, Exceptional Student Education

**Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16):** Pinellas County Schools percentage of overall placements for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) is 14%. However, disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories exist; specifically, the number of Black students identified for placement (25%) is not representative of the Black student population at PCS and remains disparate from the number of non-Black students identified. The disproportionality of Black and non-Black students is represented by risk ratios. The disproportionate representation is largely found within the Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) designation. The risk ratio for overall placement in ESE in the 2015-16 school year was 1.45, which means that Black students were nearly one and a half times as likely to be identified as an ESE student than non-Black students. The risk ratio for EBD eligibility in the 2015-16 school year was 4.20, which means that Black students were four times more likely to be referred for EBD services than non-Black students.

**Aspirational Goal:** Pinellas County Schools will reduce all ESE eligibilities for Black students each year until it meets a risk ratio that is at or near 1.0. The district will closely monitor its placements for EBD until the percentage meets or is less than the percentage enrollment of Black students (18% in 2015-16) and the risk ratio drops each year by one-quarter (.25) until the ratio is at or near 1.0.

### **Outcome Overview**

The ESE Department continues their efforts to reduce the disparity of Black students found eligible for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) with a districtwide approach. The district has made steady progress in reducing the risk ratio for Black students for both ESE eligibility and EBD designation. The ESE risk ratio for Black students has dropped and reached 1.43 as of 2020-21, from 1.45 in the baseline year of 2015-16. The EBD risk ratio for Black students has dropped steadily and reached 3.64 as of 2020-21, from 4.20 in the baseline year of 2015-16. The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) issues the risk ratios each year for school districts. While this data is usually available each summer, FDOE has not issued data for the 2021-22 school year.

The district has maintained the strategies and actions that have yielded positive results including:

- Records review process by the district ESE Department for any new PCS transfer student with an EBD eligibility. Students receive current IEP services during the time they are being re-evaluated.
- The district provides Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) Behavior Specialists to provide intensive support to students with a focus in schools with a high-minority population.
- Intensive and intentional early intervening services, using direct resources, are provided to students prior to being identified as having an Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD).
- Targeted and sustainable professional development continues to occur for school-based behavior specialist and includes student-specific data and interventions within behavior intervention plans. District behavior specialists provide side-by-side coaching support for school-based staff.
- District ESE Behavior Specialists support ESE students in all schools.

In addition to changes in systemic practices, staff knowledge and capacity building has also been key to sustained change. The ESE department has enhanced professional learning opportunities for administrators, general education instructional staff and ESE instructional staff regarding responding to challenging behaviors along with teaching proactive strategies to address behaviors in the classroom/school community.

The ESE department continues to invest in district behavior specialists to ensure all have completed, or are working toward, certification for Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) or Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBA). This level of certification denotes a nationally recognized level of expertise to support student behavior. This systemic commitment will impact the training and support at all schools over time. Throughout the 2021-22 school year the district leveraged six (6) credentialed behavior analysts to support schools and specific students.

### Annual and Related Outcome Measures

Annual Outcome Measures	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 <sup>9</sup>
Risk Ratio (ESE overall) / Black	1.45	Actual	1.45	1.46	1.40	1.43	1.43	TBD
		Target	1.45	1.40	1.35	1.30	1.25	1.20
Risk Ratio (EBD) / Black	4.20	Actual	3.94	3.84	3.34	3.50	3.64	TBD
		Target	3.95	3.70	3.45	3.20	2.95	2.7
Related Outcomes Measures	Baseline (2015-16)	Planning Year (2016-17)		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
# and % of Black students eligible for ESE services	(3,618) 25%	Actual	(3,371) 25%	(3,947) 23%	(3,945) 25%	(4,033) 25%	(4,000) 26%	(4,052) 25%
# and % of Black students eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification / Total	(427) 49%	Actual	(335) 49%	(363) 48%	(300) 46%	(255) 46%	(219) 47%	(187) 44%
# and % of Black students found eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification / Identified in Pinellas	(20) 47%	Actual	(14) 50%	(14) 52%	(19) 29%	(5) 29%	(5) 24%	(3) 15.8%
# and % of Black students found eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification / Transfers Into County	(24) 42%	Actual	(17) 30%	(13) 39%	(9) 35%	(7) 23%	(3) 33%	(9) 32%

### Key Actions and Findings

- District ESE protocols regarding record reviews and supports for eligibility have become systemic practices within the district that have led to the following outcomes:
  - Number of Black students eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification decreased to 187 from 219 in 2020-21 and 427 in the baseline year of 2015-16.
  - Number of Black students newly eligible for Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) identification by Pinellas County Schools decreased to 3 from 5 in 2020-21 and 20 in the baseline year of 2015-16.
- The district has invested in research- and evidence-based approaches to behavior training for the adults who support students. Investment in these practices have led to systemic district changes in 2022-23 including: every school having a behavior specialist onsite at least once per week and inclusion of the district behavior specialist on the newly formed School Climate and Behavior department. These

<sup>9</sup> Annual Outcome Measure data for Goal 5 has not been released by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) at the time of this report. Once issued by FDOE, this report will be updated to reflect official risk ratios.

practices will support both schoolwide climate and reduction in ESE evaluation that occur due to lack of school-based interventions.

- The ESE department continues to provide a full array of professional development sessions for school-based staff to understand guidelines and procedures for EBD as well as quality components to be considered for positive behavior intervention plans and functional behavior assessments.

### **Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research**

- Although it is anticipated that the data trends for ESE risk ratios will decrease in the official data for 2021-22, district and school teams will need to continue to review and update action plans continue to occur as part of the support from behavior specialists on the School Climate and Behavior teams.
- Continue all systemic practices in place related to record review, eligibility support and professional learning regarding ESE eligibility and student behavior.
- Continue investment in nationally certified credentialing of behavior specialist and registered behavior technicians.
- Ensure strategies to support decreasing ESE disparities include explicit actions for Black learners within federal COVID funded projects for ESE students.



## **Goal 6: Minority Hiring- Increase the number of Black teachers and administrators to closely mirror the student enrollment by ethnicity.**

**Goal Manager:** Paula Texel, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources Services

**Baseline Condition (as of 2015-16):** Pinellas County Schools employs nearly 7,500 teachers, of which approximately 8% are Black. The percentage breakdown of administrators in the district is about 22% Black. For purposes of this goal, the gap is defined as the difference between the number of instructional staff who are Black compared to the population of Black students (which in 2015-16 was 18%). The percentage of Black instructional staff members in 2015-16 was 8.3%, a gap of 9.7 percentage points.

**Aspirational Goal:** Pinellas County Schools will increase its number of Black teachers by an average of 1% each year until it meets or exceeds the percentage enrollment of Black students (which was 18% in 2015-16) and maintain its current rate of administrative hires to ensure that it meets or exceeds the student enrollment by race.

### **Outcome Overview**

The district continues to demonstrate commitment to BTG Goal 6 through intentional practices through the human resources department; however, in the 2021-22 school year, the number and percentage of Black teachers hired decreased. The gap for Goal 6 is defined as the percentage of Black teachers in comparison to the district's Black student population of 18%. The district employed 668 Black teachers at the end of 2021-22, which is 8.6% of the district's total instructional staff. While the number of Black instructional staff only decreased by six (6) this does represent a .9 percentage point decrease.

The district continues to employ a Manager of Talent Acquisition (TA) and additional hiring specialists to focus on minority hiring and filling critical shortage areas. The team has taken critical steps to support recruitment and retention of minority candidates including:

- Building strong relationships with current minority candidates in keeping the candidate pool "warm."
- Reducing the hiring manager time by recommending the most qualified candidates for an interview and facilitating recommendations for hire.
- Rebranding PCS marketing materials to reflect the diversity of the Pinellas County community.
- Providing frequent "check ins" with first-year teachers in support of improved retention.
- Conducting weekly reviews of Black applicants via SearchSoft software.
- Continuing to reach out and provide guidance on certification, onboarding, etc.

During the 2021-22 school year, the TA department held employee resource group meetings to bring together Black teachers to build community for ongoing support outside the school setting. There were five (5) formal affinity group meetings throughout the school year, with participants connecting informally as well.

## Annual and Related Outcome Measures

Annual Outcome Measures	Baseline (2015/16)	Planning Year (2016-17)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	
# and % of total instructional positions / Black	(622) 8.3%	Actual	(647) 8.8%	(671) 9.2%	(651) 9.1%	(665) 9.2%	(674) 9.5%	<b>(668)</b> <b>8.6%</b>
		Target	9%	10%	11%	12%	13%	14%
Related Outcomes Measures	Baseline (2015/16)	Planning Year (2016-17)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	
# and % of new instructional hires / Black	No baseline	Actual	11.7%	(110 / 737) 14.9%	(88/664) 13.3%	(43/450) 9.6%	(56/452) 12.4%	<b>(80/1036)</b> <b>7.7%</b>
# and % of total administrative positions (combined district-based and school-based) / Black	(83) 21.2%	Actual	(86) 21.5%	(87) 22.0%	(91) 20.6%	(85) 20.3%	(79) 19.3%	<b>(80)</b> <b>17.02%</b>

### Key Actions and Findings

- The district strengthened the partnership with USF-Tampa. To support recruitment and hiring of student interns, final internships are now coordinated by Talent Acquisition (TA) to assist in relationship building. All student interns in their final semesters meet with the TA team, receive PCS welcome/swag bag, have a district interview scheduled, if successful in their internship receive an advanced contract for employment.
- The first cohort of Call Me MISTER with USF was launched this fall. The administrative Core Team (USF representative and TA) meet weekly to share information regarding funding, initiatives regarding workshops, recruitment, etc. A representative from the USF Admissions Office was recently added to the Core Team to help recruit future MISTERS. TA is actively meeting in high schools with AVID classes, educational prep courses and other student groups interested in the educational profession to present teaching as a career choice and provide recruitment materials and supports.
- The [Pinellas Alliance of Black School Educators \(PABSE\)](#) has significantly expanded their membership and support to retaining Black educators who are new or early in their career. Membership in PABSE increased from 40 members in 2018-19 to 137 members in 2021-22. PABSE continues to grow, and increase supports for new or early career educators. The president-elect of PABSE is the TA recruiter and actively engages members through monthly events, guest speakers, professional development, book studies, mentors' meetings and student scholarships.

### Recommendations for Next Steps and District Research

- Given the national teacher shortage, the district must continue to enhance efforts to both attract and retain all instructional staff while also focusing on staff of color to mirror the student population. During the 2022-23 school year, exploring both traditional and non-traditional methods of recruitment will be critical.
- Continue to collect perception data from staff, possibly through additional focus groups, as another method of identifying strategies for a more diversified district workforce. Include analysis and strategic use of feedback from veteran, new, and exiting teachers as an important method for identifying meaningful patterns regarding recruitment and retention and influencing responsive practices.
- Enhance practice of advanced contracts for high-quality Black candidates so commitment is made by both the district and potential educators.

- Focus efforts on improving retention rates for Black educators. The district must effectively communicate with and garner feedback from both new and veteran minority teachers to ensure they are properly onboarded and trained to ensure long-term retention.

## Appendix- Key Terms and Definitions

Term	Data Definitions	Data Rules
<b>Gap</b>	The disproportionality of outcomes related to Black students as compared to the performance of non-Black students.	The gaps for each goal are explained as sub-definitions under each goal. For purposes of this document, the 2015-16 school year is considered the baseline year for setting the district’s aspirational goals. 2016-17 is considered the first year of implementation.
<b>Black</b>	All students and employees who are “Black” under the federal race definition, which is defined in Pinellas County as the Local Ethnic Code. This definition is consistent with state and national reporting rules around race. The reporting of a student as “Black” is determined by the parent during the school registration process or by the employee via the hiring process.	The district no longer uses what was termed the “Bradley race variable” that some previous data documents utilized. This race variable was discontinued in 2016-17 as a way of creating a consistent definition around race matched to the federal and state reporting rules. It is important to note that data accuracy around race is dependent upon the accuracy of self-reporting.
<b>Non-Black</b>	All students or employees who are not “Black” under the federal race definition, which is defined in Pinellas County as the Local Ethnic Code. This definition is consistent with state and national reporting rules around race. The reporting of a student as “non-Black” is determined by the parent during the school registration process or by the employee via the hiring process.	The district provides data on all races per the Local Ethnic Code definition. It is important to note that data accuracy around race is dependent upon the accuracy of self-reporting.
<b>Graduation Rate</b>	The percentage of high school students from each four-year cohort who graduate with a standard high school diploma per the state’s definition, which includes all withdrawal codes (WD) that result in a standard high school diploma.	The district provides data on all withdrawal codes (WD) as a way of reporting students who graduated with a standard high school diploma, the routes they took in receiving their diplomas as well as an accounting for students who did not graduate. Withdrawal codes include: W06 (pass the state assessment), WFT (use of concordant score) and WFW (ESE waiver).
<b>Academic Achievement</b>	The annual performance of students on reading (now called English, Language Arts or ELA) and math standardized assessments. For purposes of this document, the state’s Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) is used as well as other nationally recognized normed assessments.	Though the district does review and provide data regarding other achievement factors (such as GPA), the gap for purposes of this section of the document refers to the gap in performance on standardized assessments.
<b>Advanced Coursework</b>	Advanced and accelerated courses and programs that are designed to provide more rigorous academic opportunities for students. For purposes of this document, this includes student enrollment in gifted in elementary and middle schools, and Advanced, Honors, and Accelerated (such as Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement courses) courses in middle and high schools. This also includes student enrollments in district application / choice programs.	Data include gifted in elementary school, gifted, advanced and high school-level courses in middle school, and honors, Dual Enrollment, AP, IB and AICE courses in high school. IB and AICE program enrollments are also included as part of the district’s monitoring of application / choice programs.
<b>Participation in Advanced Coursework</b>	Participation refers to the total enrollment of Black students in courses (see above) and / or attendance in activities (such as STEM programs) as outlined within this document. The goals for participation are defined as meeting or exceeding the percentage enrollment of Black students across the district (which in 2015-16 was 18%).	To be clear, participation per this document is defined as the percentage of Black students taking part in rigorous classes or programs as compared to their non-Black peers. As a caution, this does not mean that 18% of Black students should be enrolled in advanced courses but it does mean that at least 18% of those students enrolled in advanced courses are Black.
<b>Performance in Advanced Coursework</b>	Performance refers to the percentage of Black students earning satisfactory course credit (such as college credit in DE or AP) or earning an industry	Measuring performance of students in accelerated courses such as AP should be made with some caution as the district is committed to challenging students to take more rigorous courses and that sometimes results in higher

Term	Data Definitions	Data Rules
	certification. The performance of Black students should mirror the performance of non-Black students.	participation rates and, at least initially, with lower performance rates. The district has outlined plans to provide students with the assistance and support needed to succeed in these more challenging classes.
<b>Disciplinary Referral</b>	An office disciplinary referral received by a student and processed at the school per the district’s Code of Student Conduct.	Data are pulled for both the total number of referrals and total number of students who received a referral, typically titled “unique referrals” or “unique students” receiving a referral. Though the gap is defined by race, data are pulled also by gender and type of infraction as a way of monitoring progress and interventions.
<b>Disciplinary Suspension</b>	A consequence issued as a result of an office disciplinary referral that results in a student being removed temporarily from the campus. This is commonly referred to as “out of school suspension.”	Data are pulled for both total number of suspensions and total number of students who received a suspension, typically titled “unique suspensions” or “unique students” receiving a suspension. Though the gap is defined by race, data are pulled also by gender and type of infraction as a way of monitoring progress and interventions.
<b>Arrest</b>	A consequence issued by law enforcement agencies and not issued by a school administrator as an arrest is not a school consequence as outlined in the district’s Code of Student Conduct.	Arrests are recorded for purposes of this document as a “school-related arrest” when the following conditions are met: the offense is perpetrated by a student and the offense happens on school grounds. For example, a student might be arrested at school for an incident that occurred in the neighborhood, and, in that case, the arrest is not counted as a school-related arrest.
<b>ESE / EBD</b>	The percentage of student identified and staffed for Exceptional Student Education Services. One such designation that is tracked per this document are those students in need of significant behavioral support under the heading of Emotional Behavioral Disabilities (EBD).	For purposes of this document, students with a 504 Plan are not included.
<b>Risk Ratio</b>	A data point that represents the likelihood that a member of one group would incur a consequence as compared to other subgroups or as compared to all other students.	<p style="text-align: center;">Formula: Subgroup Risk ÷ Non-Subgroup Risk</p> $\frac{\# \text{ black students suspended} \div \text{total \# of black students}}{\# \text{ non - black students suspended} \div \text{total \# of non - black students}}$
<b>Minority Hiring</b>	The total number and percentage of instructional and administrative positions with the goal of increasing staff diversity by meeting or exceeding the total enrollment of Black students across the district (defined in 2015-16 as 18%).	The data for this document are pulled only for instructional and administrative positions and not for related staff positions that are non-instructional. As such, the gaps referred to herein are intended to impact the diversity of the teaching and administrative staffs.

## Appendix- Top Referral Categories by Level

### Elementary: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	Referral Count	Black	Non-Black
02 - Strike/Student	1199	581	618
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	685	388	297
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	399	211	188
03 - Strike/Adult	362	180	182
05 - Fight/Minor	361	260	101

### Middle: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	Referral Count	Black	Non-Black
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	3962	1813	2149
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	2951	1493	1458
10 - Skipping Class	2198	1077	1121
05 - Fight/Minor	1886	1055	831
02 - Strike/Student	1351	686	665

### K-8: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	Referral Count	Black	Non-Black
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	307	228	79
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	113	82	31
14 - Bus Misconduct	81	66	15
08 - Profanity/Obscene Language	79	50	29
05 - Fight/Minor	78	53	25

### High: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	Referral Count	Black	Non-Black
10 - Skipping Class	4217	1778	2439
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	1879	940	939
21 - Excessive Tardy	1682	456	1226
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	1455	767	688
06 - Leaving Campus	1035	260	775

### ESE Centers: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	Referral Count	Black	Non-Black
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	381	185	196
03 - Strike/Adult	379	104	275
02 - Strike/Student	301	116	185
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	136	67	69
06 - Leaving Campus	104	21	83

## Appendix- Top Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS) Categories by Level

### Elementary: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	OSS Count	Black	Non-Black
02 - Strike/Student	144	93	51
05 - Fight/Minor	123	105	18
03 - Strike/Adult	104	61	43
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	89	54	35
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	46	27	19

### Middle: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	OSS Count	Black	Non-Black
05 - Fight/Minor	999	642	357
02 - Strike/Student	370	235	135
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	337	218	119
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	326	199	127
42 - Physical Attack - SESIR	212	142	70

### K-8: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	OSS Count	Black	Non-Black
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	217	166	51
05 - Fight/Minor	61	41	20
02 - Strike/Student	49	37	12
08 - Profanity/Obscene Language	41	27	14
11 - Tobacco - SESIR	36	8	28

## Appendix- Top Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS) Categories by Level (continued)

### High: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	OSS Count	Black	Non-Black
05 - Fight/Minor	561	283	278
04 - Drug Use - SESIR	442	108	334
11 - Tobacco - SESIR	221	17	204
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	197	106	91
42 - Physical Attack - SESIR	141	92	49

### ESE Centers: 2021-22 End of Year

Description/Code	OSS Count	Black	Non-Black
03 - Strike/Adult	39	19	20
16 - Class / Campus Disruption	29	10	19
02 - Strike/Student	28	11	17
07 - Defiance/Insubordination	14	9	5
35 - Threat/Intimidation - SESIR	12	5	7



## Appendix- Arrest Information 2021-22

### 2021-22 Arrest Report by Race/Gender/Category

Race/gender	Battery	Disorderly conduct	Drugs	Misc.	School Disruption	Theft	Threat	VOP	Weapon	Totals
Asian/Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black/Male	33	18	5	8	10	5	5	3	14	101
Hispanic/Male	5	1	0	2	2	0	4	0	2	16
White/Male	20	7	8	4	2	1	5	3	6	56
Unknown/Male	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total Male Arrests</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>174</b>
Asian/Female	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Black/Female	31	8	0	2	1	3	1	5	16	67
Hispanic/Female	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
White/Female	5	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	11
<b>Total Female Arrests</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>TOTAL ARRESTS</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>256</b>