

Iowa City Community School District Comprehensive Equity Plan Updating Public Input Report

June 2019

Introduction

The Iowa City Community School District (ICCSA) is engaging in a strategic planning process to update the Comprehensive Equity Plan. The process is being facilitated by the Equity Implemented Partnership using guiding principles and a development process that is modeled after the process the University of Iowa engaged in over the past year to create the University of Iowa’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan which was completed in April 2019. The Comprehensive Equity Plan Development Group of approximately 40 people was convened to assist in the development of the ICCSD’s 2019-2022 Comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan. The Development Group reviews existing District goals and data, as well as the key equity concerns and suggestions that emerge from strategic interviews conducted with the ICCSD Executive Committee and Cabinet, listening sessions convened with key stakeholder groups, and public input received through two open community forums and survey responses.

This report details public input received through two open community forums, feedback survey responses, and open-ended comments from the 2019 School Climate Survey. The table below describes the groups, dates, and attendance for the listening sessions.

Group	Date	Attendance
Public Forum #1	May 21 st	13
Public Forum #2	May 22 nd	9
Public Feedback Survey	May	305
Students		68
Parents		154
Teachers		74
Other Employees		32
Community Members		48
Student Climate Survey	February	166

The public forums were facilitated by Dr. Sarah Bruch. The data collected, analyzed and summarized in this report includes the notes from the discussions during the public forums as well as responses to the Public Forum Questions form provided to each participant and the Public Feedback Survey. The primary questions asked were: (1) What do you think are the most important or pressing equity-related concern(s) facing the ICCSD? (2) How do you think the ICCSD should go about addressing the equity concern(s) you identified above? (3) What is the main takeaway that we really need to know about improving equity in the ICCSD? (4) If you could only make one recommendation for enhancing equity in the ICCSD, what would be your top recommendation?

The data collected were categorized into six broad categories of equity considerations: (1) Student Academic Performance and Access to Learning Opportunities; (2) Student Behavior or Discipline; (3) Equitable, Inclusive, and Supportive School Environments; (4) Teachers, Administrators, and Staff; (5) Stakeholder Engagement; and (6) District Policies and Practices. Within these broad categories, the data were further analyzed the primary themes and suggestions described.

Organization of Report

Executive Summary (Pages 3 to 8)

The Executive Summary is organized into two summary tables that organize the key themes from the public forum and public feedback survey by category and group. Each table summarizes the main topics and suggestions provided from each group. The first table displays equity considerations while the second displays ideas for addressing. Each listening session is represented as a row in the table. Bold indicates that the theme was mentioned most frequently within the category compared to the others. When there is no bold within a box, this indicates that all themes were noted with equal frequency.

Public Forum and Feedback Survey Write-Up (Pages 9 to 43)

The bulk of the report provides a summary of key equity concerns and suggestions from each of the public groups. The report is organized by six broad categories of equity considerations (listed below). Within each topic, the information obtained from each stakeholder group is described separately including illuminating quotes from members of each group.

- 1.) Student Academic Performance and Access to Learning (Pages 9 to 15)
- 2.) Student Behavior or Discipline (Pages 16 to 21)
- 3.) Equitable, Inclusive, & Supportive School Environments (Pages 22 to 28)
- 4.) Teachers, Administrators, and Staff (Pages 29 to 33)
- 5.) Stakeholder Engagement (Pages 34 to 38)
- 6.) District Policies and Practices (Pages 39 to 43)

Executive Summary: Equity Considerations from Listening Sessions

	Student Academic Performance and Access to Learning Opportunities	Student Behavior or Discipline	Equitable, Inclusive, and Supportive School Environments	Teachers, Administrators, and Staff	Stakeholder Engagement	District Policies and Practices
<i>Public Forum #1</i>	<p>Academic achievement disparities and lack of ownership of data</p> <p>Inequitable access to advanced courses and programs</p> <p>ELL barriers</p> <p>Disproportionate identification of students in special education</p> <p>Lack of civic education</p>	<p>Disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions</p> <p>Lack of communication with parents and staff</p> <p>Lack of restorative practices</p> <p>Lack of time, personnel, and space for ISS</p>	<p>Inequitable student and staff experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion</p> <p>Lack of culturally inclusive curriculum</p> <p>Lack of support and validation for staff of color</p>	<p>Lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators</p> <p>Lack of culturally proficient educators</p>	<p>Lack of parent and community engagement</p> <p>Lack of parent communication</p> <p>Lack of awareness and support for equity goals</p>	<p>Unaccountable administration and abuse of power</p> <p>Disparities in resource and funding allocations</p> <p>Lack of support and capacity for equity goals</p> <p>Unclear criteria for Cultural Proficiency Team selection</p>
<i>Public Forum #2</i>	<p>College or postsecondary readiness divide</p> <p>Assessments for ELL are not culturally inclusive</p> <p>Lack of knowledge of how assessments are used for tracking placement</p> <p>Lack of academic support for ELL students</p> <p>Disparities in achievement and graduation</p> <p>AP testing cost</p> <p>Lack of inclusion in advanced courses</p>	<p>Disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions</p> <p>Inequitable discipline by hall monitors</p> <p>Lack of support and inclusion for students with disciplinary infractions</p> <p>Student unawareness of bullying and harassment resources</p>	<p>Lack of emotional, mental, and social supports for students and staff</p> <p>Lack of awareness of current resources</p> <p>Student housing and homelessness</p>	<p>Lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators</p> <p>Lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices</p>	<p>Lack of student voice in decision-making</p> <p>Inaccessibility of information for all families</p> <p>Lack of support for parents and community</p>	<p>Racial or socioeconomic status concentration</p> <p>Lack of accountability structure for equity goals</p>
<i>Students</i>	<p>Inequitable access to learning opportunities</p> <p>Disparities in advanced courses and programs</p> <p>Achievement gap</p> <p>Lack of support for IEP students</p>	<p>Bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments about race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc.</p> <p>Lack of disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency</p>	<p>Inequitable student experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion</p> <p>Lack of culturally inclusive curriculum</p> <p>Negative peer and teacher relations</p> <p>Lack of emotional and mental health supports for all students</p>	<p>Inequitable treatment from teachers</p> <p>Lack of diverse teachers</p>	<p>Lack of student voice</p>	<p>Transportation issues</p> <p>Segregation between Liberty and West</p> <p>Disapproval of school assignment policies</p>

Executive Summary: Equity Considerations from Listening Sessions

<p><i>Parents</i></p>	<p>Inequitable access to learning opportunities Academic achievement disparities Disparities in courses and programs Disproportionate representation administration, faculty and staff</p>	<p>Bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments about race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc. Lack of disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency</p>	<p>Lack of culturally inclusive curriculum Lack of emotional and mental health supports for all students Inequitable access and transportation to extra-curricular activities Lack of social support for all students</p>	<p>Lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators Lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices Lack of training on bias and mental health Inequitable treatment from teachers</p>	<p>Lack of parent and community engagement Lack of parent communication Lack of awareness and support for equity goals Lack of support for basic needs and home life</p>	<p>Disparities in resource and funding allocations Attendance zones Large class sizes Racial or socioeconomic status concentration Lack of accountability structure for equity goals</p>
<p><i>Teachers</i></p>	<p>Inequitable access to learning opportunities Academic achievement disparities Disparities in advanced courses and programs Disproportionate representation in special education</p>	<p>Disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions Lack of responsive discipline and behavior plans Behavioral and attendance issues Lack of disciplinary equity Lack of culturally responsive practices</p>	<p>Lack of culturally inclusive curriculum Lack of emotional and mental health supports for all students Inequitable access and transportation to extra-curricular activities Lack of social support for all students</p>	<p>Lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators Lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices Lack of training on bias and mental health Lack of support for teachers and staff</p>	<p>Inequitable PTO fundraising between schools Inequitable parent communication, engagement, and advocacy Lack of student voice</p>	<p>Disparities in resource and funding allocations Attendance zones Large class sizes Racial or socioeconomic status concentration</p>
<p><i>Other Staff</i></p>	<p>Inequitable access to learning opportunities Academic achievement disparities</p>	<p>Disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions Behavioral and attendance issues Lack of disciplinary equity</p>	<p>Inequitable student experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion Lack of culturally inclusive curriculum Inequitable access to extra-curricular activities Lack of emotional and mental health supports for all students</p>	<p>Lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators Lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices</p>	<p>Inequitable parent communication, engagement, and advocacy</p>	<p>Disparities in resource and funding allocations Racial or socioeconomic status concentration</p>

Executive Summary: Equity Considerations from Listening Sessions

<p><i>Comm. Members</i></p>	<p>Inequitable access to learning opportunities Academic achievement disparities Lack of ELL support Disparities in IEP status Disparities in advanced courses and programs Disparities in graduation rates</p>	<p>Disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions Bullying and harassment Lack of responsive discipline and behavior plans</p>	<p>Inequitable student experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion Lack of culturally inclusive curriculum Inequitable access to extra-curricular activities Lack of mental health supports Lack of social supports</p>	<p>Lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices Lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators Lack of training on bias and mental health</p>	<p>Disparities in parent advocacy Lack of support for basic needs and home life Inequitable PTO fundraising between schools Lack of communication to immigrant parents</p>	<p>Disparities in resource and funding allocations Racial or socioeconomic status concentration Inadequate staffing at high-needs schools</p>
<p><i>Student Climate Survey</i></p>	<p>Disparities in advanced courses and programs Lack of support for college applications</p>	<p>Bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments about race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc. Lack of responsiveness to bullying and harassment Lack of disciplinary consistency and equity</p>	<p>Lack of emotional and mental health supports Lack of social support Inequitable student experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion Lack of culturally inclusive curriculum and discussions</p>	<p>Lack of concern, emotional support, and equitable treatment Lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed teaching practices</p>	<p>Lack of student voice</p>	<p>Issues with transportation i.e. late buses, lack of behavior management</p>

Executive Summary: Ideas for Addressing Equity Concerns from Listening Sessions

	Student Academic Performance and Access to Learning Opportunities	Student Behavior or Discipline	Equitable, Inclusive, and Supportive School Environments	Teachers, Administrators, and Staff	Stakeholder Engagement	District Policies and Practices
<i>Public Forum #1</i>	<p>Change qualifications for ELP</p> <p>Pre-K programs, day care, BASP</p> <p>High expectations and high hope</p> <p>Transform high FRL schools to magnet schools</p> <p>Encourage and require civic literacy</p>	<p>Greater transparency and communication with parents and staff</p> <p>Revise DPP to reflect restorative practices and remove subjective language</p> <p>More space, personnel, and SEL supports for ISS</p>	<p>School climate survey analysis</p> <p>Create workplace communities and mentorship opportunities</p>	<p>Differentiated cultural competency training</p> <p>Hiring, supporting, and retaining teachers, administrators, and staff of color</p> <p>Increase accountability for addressing equity</p>	<p>Recruit minority parents to PTO</p> <p>Multi-lingual communication with parents</p> <p>Increase community awareness</p>	<p>360 degree reviews for administrative accountability</p> <p>Present an impact statement related to resource allocations</p> <p>Increase awareness of equity across district</p> <p>Prioritize and lead the work</p> <p>Establish, define, and clarify criteria for coach selection</p>
<i>Public Forum #2</i>	<p>Preparation for college readiness</p> <p>Accessible funding for ACT, SAT, and AP tests</p> <p>Greater support for ELL students</p> <p>Provide information about assessments and advanced courses and programs</p> <p>Post-graduate follow ups</p>	<p>Restorative practices/ limited suspensions</p> <p>Public bullying/harassment resources</p> <p>Hold hall monitors accountable for equitable treatment</p>	<p>Social support and community building activities</p> <p>Mentoring relationships for teachers and students</p> <p>Coalitions of staff of color for support</p>	<p>Recruit and retain teachers, administrators, and staff of color</p> <p>Training on cultural competency</p>	<p>Improve communication with parents and students – create more points of contact and reach out</p> <p>Develop communities of parents that support each other</p> <p>Translate more school handouts</p>	<p>Distribute diversity more equally throughout the schools</p> <p>Set goals and systems of accountability</p>
<i>Students</i>	<p>Greater academic support</p> <p>Equal access to learning opportunities</p> <p>Encourage all students to take honor/AP classes</p> <p>Scholarships for AP tests</p> <p>Greater support for IEP students</p>	<p>Responsiveness to bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments</p> <p>Increase disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency</p> <p>Rewards for positive behavior</p>	<p>Promote inclusive, equitable, and welcoming school environments</p> <p>Encourage positive peer and teacher relations</p> <p>Student education on equity issues (i.e. racist comments)</p> <p>Culturally inclusive curriculum and extra-curricular activities</p>	<p>Hire diverse teachers</p> <p>More equitable and respectful treatment</p> <p>Greater emotional support to students</p>	<p>Talk with, listen to, and engage student voices</p>	<p>Reduce segregation between Liberty and West</p> <p>Provide transportation assistance to extracurricular activities</p> <p>More inclusive busing program</p>

Executive Summary: Ideas for Addressing Equity Concerns from Listening Sessions

<p><i>Parents</i></p>	<p>Provide consistent and equitable access to educational opportunities Greater academic support More, varied academic opportunities for all students Inclusion of vocation-track training</p>	<p>Increase disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency Elimination of seclusion and constraint Hold students accountable for inappropriate behavior</p>	<p>Promote inclusive, equitable, and welcoming school environments Review and implement culturally inclusive curriculum</p>	<p>Hire diverse teachers Recruit and retain teachers, administrators, and staff of color More equitable and respectful treatment Culturally responsive and equity-informed practices Holding teachers accountable</p>	<p>Improve communication with parents and students – create more points of contact and reach out Develop communities of parents that support each other Better translation and interpretation to improve communication</p>	<p>Set goals and systems of accountability Equitable distribution of funding and resources Smaller class sizes Reduce racial and socioeconomic status concentration through changing boundaries Improve transportation access and have a more inclusive busing program</p>
<p><i>Teachers</i></p>	<p>Provide equitable access to educational opportunities, a range of classes, and technology Use Iowa Core instruction Differentiate teaching methods Utilize interventions and supports De-track K-8 Greater support for ELL students</p>	<p>Disciplinary consistency Restorative practices Greater behavioral supports Culturally responsive disciplinary policies and practices Disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency</p>	<p>Review and implement culturally inclusive curriculum Invest in mental and emotional health supports – hire counselors, form partnerships, social emotional learning curriculum Equitable access to extracurricular activities Greater social support for all students</p>	<p>Cultural competency training Hire and retain teachers, administrators, and staff of color Culturally responsive and equity-informed practices</p>	<p>Educate parents on their role and ways to help Combine and equally divide PTO funds More translation and interpretation to improve communication Listen to student, parent, and teacher concerns Greater parent and community engagement</p>	<p>Equitable distribution of funding and resources Smaller class sizes Reduce racial and socioeconomic status concentration through changing boundaries Reduce hiring administrators and hire more teachers</p>
<p><i>Other Staff</i></p>	<p>High quality instructional practice and programming Similar course offerings across schools Foreign language in lower grades</p>	<p>Consistent behavioral expectations Implement PBIS more effectively Partner with the county on reducing disproportionate suspensions</p>	<p>Promote inclusive, equitable, and welcoming school environments Review and implement culturally inclusive curriculum Invest in mental and emotional health supports Culturally inclusive curriculum and extra-curricular activities</p>	<p>Recruit and retain teachers, administrators, and staff of color More equitable and respectful treatment</p>	<p>Greater parent and community engagement</p>	<p>Set goals and systems of accountability Attendance boundaries to balance schools socioeconomically and racially</p>

Executive Summary: Ideas for Addressing Equity Concerns from Listening Sessions

				Culturally responsive and equity-informed practices Be more informed, tolerant, and inclusive of students		Equitable distribution of funding and resources
<i>Comm. Members</i>	Research and identify factors contributing to achievement gap Equitable access to learning opportunities Greater support for ELL students Greater academic support Culturally inclusive requirements for advanced courses	Culturally responsive disciplinary practices Increase responsiveness to bullying and harassment Restorative practices Data transparency	Review and implement a culturally inclusive curriculum Build a more inclusive and positive school climate Invest in mental and emotional health supports Mentorship program Equitable access to extracurricular activities	Cultural competency training Hiring teachers, administrators, and staff of color Culturally responsive and equity-informed practices	Listen to all parent, teacher, and staff voices Combine and equally divide PTO funds Programs to help students and families (i.e. food pantry) Build communities of parents	Attendance boundaries to balance schools socioeconomically and racially Equitable distribution of funding and resources Reduce hiring administrators and hire more teachers
<i>Student Climate Survey</i>	Include and encourage every student take advanced courses Broader range of courses Support the college application process	Responsiveness to bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments Restorative practices	More support and discussions about mental health Culturally inclusive curriculum and discussions Create inclusive environment for LGBTQ students i.e. gender neutral bathrooms More time to socialize	Greater concern, emotional support, and equitable treatment Accountability for culturally responsive practices	Listening to student voices	Behavior management on buses Public bus passes

Student Academic Performance and Access to Learning Opportunities

Public Forum #1

Equity Considerations

Key considerations mentioned in this forum were disparities in academic achievement, a lack of ownership over the data, inequitable access to extended learning programs, ELL student barriers, and disproportionate identification for special education. For example, one member noted, *“I think people need to own our data and the fact that lowering the achievement gap is the responsibility of us all.”* Another member shared, *“Equity and access to ELP for all,”* while another noted, *“Lack of fidelity with MTSS and PBIS which leads to over-identification of students in special education.”*

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address these considerations, forum members suggested changing the qualifications for ELP to be more culturally inclusive, implementing pre-K programs and daycare/before and after school care, holding high expectations and high hope, and transforming schools with highest FRL to magnet schools. In an example, one member shared, *“Changes to qualifications for ELP. The current ones are not culturally relevant to most minorities.”* In regards to pre-K, a member suggested, *“Possible Pre-K programs/alternate kindergarten. Starting them off early can give them a fighting chance to close achievement gap.”* Another member suggested, *“Transform our schools with highest FRL to magnet schools to give a sense of ownership and pride to that school like they will be the schools of the arts.”*

“Changes to qualifications for ELP. The current ones are not culturally relevant to most minorities.”

Public Forum #2

Equity Considerations

Forum members discussed several considerations which included the divide in college or postsecondary readiness, how assessments for ELL are not culturally inclusive, a general lack of knowledge amongst students about how assessments are used for tracking, a lack of academic support for ELL students, disparities in academic achievement and graduation, the cost of AP testing, and a lack of inclusion in advanced courses. In one example, a member shared, *“Junior year is pretty well known for being the most academically rigors, but this year I was able to see the big divide in college readiness or postsecondary readiness in my own grade. There are people still taking algebra in my grade and some are taking classes at the University. How did they go to the same elementary school and end up in different paths?”* Another member discussed how students get placed into ELL, *“If English is not your first language the assessment are not representative of that and students get placed into different classes based on that.”* Members also shared, *“It’s not really known to the student body how important these assessments are for tracking or for what colleges want. I knew about that because my parents knew about it, but I think that if those students knew more about that they would maybe*

double up on classes or test harder to get in.” There was also concern about, “Support for ELL students,” “Academic achievement disparities,” and “AP testing costs.” Lastly, members described how the divide between students in AP and honors classes and those not in those classes grows larger as students move throughout high school.

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, members suggested greater preparation for college readiness, accessible funding for ACT, SAT, and AP testing, greater support for ELL students, more accessible information about assessments and advanced courses and programs, and conducting follow-ups with graduates. For example, a member suggested, “Mandatory college-prep/college readiness.” Another member suggested, “Accessible/affordable test preparation resources,” and “Continuing funding AP test for free/reduced priced lunch.” Another example of a suggestion is a member who shared, “More support for ELL students and those who are considering dropping out.” Members also discussed making information about assessments and their implications for tracking placements more accessible, for example, one member shared, “Talking about AP classes and who it’s for and making it seem more general to the open public. They don’t know AP Spanish we just talk about art and poems and the message isn’t set that it isn’t for just this one group of privileged white people. You can give it a shot.” Lastly, members suggested, “Doing follow ups with our graduates. We don’t track what happens to students once they graduate from high school. If we want to continue to advance equity, we have to see what happens after they graduate.”

Students

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for students who completed the public feedback survey were inequitable access to learning opportunities, disparities in advanced courses and programs, the

“The racial divide between honors/AP classes and non-honors classes creates a “group think” gap.”

achievement gap, and a lack of support for IEP students. For example, one student shared, “Not everyone gets the same opportunity,” while another noted, “Accessibility of classes to fit student needs.” They also described a lack of access to a range of classes, including health, civic education, classes at Kirkwood. Another concern for students was the unaffordability of AP tests and implications of the divide that honors and AP classes creates, for example, one student shared, “AP tests being available to low

income students. AP tests are EXPENSIVE and some kids rely on college credit to cut down on college cost but these same kids are the ones who are unable to afford an AP test fee. I’m sure our school has ways to help those kids out but it’s not very clear and it’s also kind of embarrassing to ask for economic help.” Another member shared, “The racial divide between honors/AP classes and non-honors classes creates a “group think” gap.” Students additionally mentioned support for IEP students, with a member who noted, “Disabled kids are sometimes not given extra help that is NEEDED.”

Ideas for Addressing

Students suggested several ideas to address these concerns, including greater academic support, equal access to learning opportunities, encourage all students to take AP and honor classes,

scholarships for AP tests, and greater support for IEP students. For example, a member suggested, “Provide support for helping kids get their work done and make sure they know how to get support for themselves,” and another suggested, “Have kids do individual learning with teachers.” In regard to increasing access to learning opportunities, a student suggested, “Giving everyone equal opportunities to help them find themselves and to realize that if they work hard in life, they can change the world. Sometimes, all you need is that equity of activities to help people find what they needed all along. Kids that are doing good in school shouldn't only be the ones with all of the extra opportunities.” Students suggested making sure all students have access to technology and Wi-Fi, as well as offering a broader range of classes, for example, one member suggested, “Having a broader range of classes, so students can better find where they fit.” They also suggested helping kids register and making health classes mandatory. To encourage students to take AP classes, students suggested, “Teaching students in junior high schools about the AP classes and opportunities,” while another suggested, “Encourage non-honor students to take honor/AP classes to make classes more racially heterogeneous.” A student also suggested scholarships for AP tests when they noted, “Promoting the idea of scholarships for AP tests. Like parents who have the money can choose to pay for both their child and another.” Lastly, students suggested greater support for IEP students, for example, a student suggested, “I would suggest that there should be more communication and respect for learning abilities in the schools, like daily announcements over the intercom from the principal or a teacher that would like to do so, and more opportunities to get in-school help with disabilities or learning needs.”

Parents

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for parents include access to learning opportunities, disparities in academic achievement, including course offerings and programs, and disproportionate academic support. Parents described low support and academic opportunity for both special education and lower socioeconomic status students. They also expressed concern for achievement gaps, saying there are “poorer educational outcomes for kids of color (graduation rates, participation in gifted AP courses, etc.)” Another parent said there is a “lack of support for those children who are behind in reading and math, and they do not qualify for tutoring help. They are behind and need support, but they are not that behind, so they do not have access to extra support.”

“Poorer educational outcomes for kids of color (graduation rates, participation in gifted AP courses, etc.)”

Ideas for Addressing

To address these considerations, parents suggested providing consistent and equitable access to educational opportunities, including preschool for all children, increasing the academic support, and including vocational track training for high school students. One parent suggested “Making sure that all students, whether across elementary, junior high or high schools, be given the same access, including extra-curricular activities,” while another said to “Ensure that students in the same grade level have the same classes and educational opportunities across all buildings in the district.”

Teachers

Equity Considerations

Teachers were mainly concerned with inequitable access to learning opportunities, academic achievement disparities, disparities in advanced courses and programs, and disproportionate representation in special education. Teachers noted inequitable access to rigorous curriculum and elective classes, racial opportunity gaps, inequitable access to technology between schools. For example, teachers shared, *“The opportunity for all students to have access to high level curriculum and teaching,” “Students of color not receiving same opportunities as white students,”* and *“Technology is not matched across the buildings.”* Several teachers also were concerned about the achievement gap, for example, one teacher noted, *“Students of color being less proficient in academic areas.”* Disparities in advanced courses and programs was another concern, for example, a teacher shared, *“Racial disparity in AP and Honors Classes,”* and another teacher shared, *“Lack of students of color or ELL students in extension programs like ELP.”* Lastly, members mentioned racial differences in special education, for example, a member shared, *“Disproportionate representation of black and brown students in Spec Ed.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Suggestions to address these concerns included providing equitable access to educational opportunities, a range of a classes, and technology, using Iowa Core instruction, differentiating teaching methods, utilizing interventions and supports, de-tracking K-8 curriculum, and providing greater support for ELL students. For example, one teacher suggested, *“Access to information literacy, resources, and technology available to all students from licensed teachers supporting their learning needs.”* Other teachers suggested, *“Early interventions, more structured supports and mentorship programs within schools,”* and *“All students deserve consistent access to technology around the clock. If our district uses technology to teach, there should be no barrier to student access.”* Teachers suggested using Iowa Core instruction, for example, a teacher suggested, *“Make sure (using accountability measures) that all teachers are using the Iowa Core to guide instruction for all students. Fully use the MTSS process--even at the Secondary level!--to make sure all students receive the support they need to achieve the Iowa Core.”* Another teacher proposed, *“Use the Iowa Core to guide standards-based instruction and grading.”* They also suggested differentiating, for example, a teacher suggested, *“Teachers should be taught how to engage students in a variety of ways. They should be expected to provide learning that reaches students from all backgrounds.”* Utilizing interventions and supports is also a strategy, for example, a teacher suggested, *“Identify struggling readers through several means: standardized tests, individual observations. Get young students help,”* while another teacher shared, *“Teachers need to have data to prove that interventions are being used (behavioral and academic) to close the achievement gap, and then prove when a student needs more support.”* Teachers also suggested, *“De-tracking all curricular areas K-8,”* and, *“NEED ell push in many more rooms.”*

Other Employees

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for other employees include inequitable access to learning opportunities and academic achievement disparities. One employee cited, *“The achievement and opportunity gaps between racially/ethnically diverse students”* along with the need for having, *“Access to resources/support in utilizing those resources (basic things like medical professionals, therapists, after school activities, summer enrichments...)”*.

Ideas for Addressing

To address these considerations, employees suggested providing consistent and equitable access to educational opportunities, saying, *“define high quality instructional practice, then hold staff accountable for those practices”* and *“Provide opportunities for minority high school students to learn more about being a teacher, school nurse, electrician, carpenter, etc. For example, offer minority high school students an opportunity to shadow a district electrician for a day and learn more about the type of training is required for this job.”*

Community Members

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for community members were inequitable access to learning opportunities, academic achievement disparities, lack of ELL support, disparities in special education, disparities in advanced courses and programs, and disparities in graduation rates. Members noted the lack of learning supports for students with academic and emotional struggles, lack of skill development for future jobs, and inequitable access to all academic classes and activities. For example, one member shared, *“Learning support for struggling students, this includes students struggling academically as well as emotionally,”* and another one shared, *“Equity in preparation for the 21st century. Skills development for jobs that do not require a college education.”* Several community members also were concerned about the achievement gap, for example, one member noted, *“Racial disparity in achievement.”* Concerns about ELL support were also mentioned, for example, a member shared, *“Expert and consistent support for English Language Learners,”* while another noted, *“Not providing the best model for ELL students (pull out is the least effective model) and teachers do not have the knowledge to teach ELL students.”* Members also discussed disparities in IEP status, for example, a member noted, *“Disproportionality of minority groups who have IEPs”* Disparities in

“Not doing anything to identify more minority and FRL students for ELP.”

advanced courses and programs was another concern, for example, a member shared, *“AP/Upper level classes are not available to students of minority groups,”* and another member shared, *“Not doing anything to identify more minority and FRL students for ELP.”* Lastly, members mentioned racial differences in graduation rates, for example, a member shared, *“Disparity in graduation rates for POC.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Community members suggested several ideas to address these concerns, including researching and identifying factors contributing to achievement gap, equitable access to learning opportunities, greater support for ELL students, greater academic support, and culturally inclusive requirements for advanced courses. For example, community members suggested, *“Identify factors associated with instructional effort in the district that are contributing to academic achievement gaps,”* and, *“Investigate different models for helping students make progress.”* To improve access to learning, one member suggested, *“Readjust goals to be more realist toward kids who may never attend college,”* and another suggested, *“Solid CORE instruction for ELL students and students of color. Provide more services to the schools instead of every school getting the same support. Make it equitable.”* There were suggestions additionally for greater ELL support, for example, a member shared, *“Start a Spanish and other top language bilingual school. Holding ongoing learning about ELs, strategies.”* They also suggested greater academic support more generally, for example, a member suggested, *“More academic counseling.”* Community member also suggested changing the requirements from advanced course and programs, for example, a member suggested, *“Change the requirements to qualify for ELP so more minorities and FRL students qualify. Offer qualifying tests that are not biased to identify mainly affluent people.”*

Student Climate Survey

Equity Considerations

Equity considerations from the student climate survey included disparities in advanced courses and programs and a lack of college readiness. For example, one member shared, *“The most prominent issue at the moment is the total lack of diversity in advanced -more specifically AP- classes. I am only rarely seeing the diversity of cultures or skin colors that I would expect from this school.”* Another student shared, *“I still think that something that really needs to be improved is the diversity of students in AP and honors classes. I’ve taken a total of around 20 AP and honors classes over my four years of high school, and the people in each of the classes are basically the same, with the exception of AP Psych. To clarify, this means that I see the same faces in every one of my classes, leading to less new thoughts and similar perspectives.”* The lack of college readiness was another concern, for

example, a student noted, *“As a senior, I’ve seen some major problems with the way that we go about the college application process. I am a student in the AP and honors classes and I feel like in this school, you expect that students in AP classes to know how to go through the college application process or the students who are not in AP and honors classes are just expected to go to a community college or not at all. I went to the guidance office for this expecting that I would be helped and my guidance counselor and they told me to just google the application process and scholarships. I can’t even tell you how disappointed this makes me and how my parents, who had to learn this process along with me, feel the same way.”* Another student raised concern with testing when they shared, *“I wasn’t able to take the*

“The most prominent issue at the moment is the total lack of diversity in advanced -more specifically AP- classes. I am only rarely seeing the diversity of cultures or skin colors that I would expect from this school.”

PSATs because I wasn't made aware that it was happening by my teachers. Make testing dates more commonly known."

Ideas for Addressing

Students suggested including and encourage every student to take advanced courses, offering a broader range of courses, and supporting the college application process. For example, a student suggested, *"I think there should be more of a push that harder and AP classes are open to and a good idea for everyone. I'm in a lot of honors/harder classes and it seems that there is a division growing between certain kids who will take those classes and those who don't, making it harder to get to know more people and connect. There are people in my grade who I don't even recognize, which is really sad because it's caused by these divisions that came up so quickly. I think harder classes need to be much more inclusive."* Another student suggested, *"I think that the school initiatives to include both lower-income and minority students are a good start, but I still think that more needs to be done to include and encourage every student to take challenging classes."* Students also suggested additional courses, for example, a student suggested, *"You should have more art or robotics class,"* and another suggested, *"We should have a class about dealing with stress and time management."* Lastly, students recommended greater support for going to college. For example, one student suggested, *"Minority students are important and they do want to go to college and be more than drop outs and drug dealers, so dedicate your resources to helping first generation college students and not just white people."*

Student Behavior or Discipline

Public Forum #1

Equity Considerations

Key considerations mentioned in this forum were racial disparities in office referrals and suspensions, a lack of communication with parents and staff about student discipline, a lack of restorative practices, and issues about the time, space, and personnel dedicated for in-school suspensions. For example, one member noted, “High number of disproportionate behavioral referrals for black/Latino students.” Another member shared, “For tier 2, they have so many breaks throughout the day and if the teacher or lunch lady isn’t familiar with that plan and the student leaves throughout the entire break they are being written up for leaving. Communicate with parents too what’s happening with their students. There’s parents that have parts PBIS that doesn’t work for their child. For tier 2, I have heard from parents my child shouldn’t have a break. So communication about why these things are happening and how they are being implemented.”

“High number of disproportionate behavioral referrals for black/Latino students.”

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address these considerations, forum members suggested greater communication with parents and staff about student discipline, revising the DPP to incorporate restorative practices and remove subjective language, and to dedicate more space, time, and personnel for ISS. For example, one member shared, “Communication regarding student discipline/BIP implementation w/parents and staff.” Another member suggested, “The current DPP for discipline- have it reflect restorative practices. It doesn’t reflect that and it should,” while another member suggested, “Removal of subjective language/terminology. Look over language, like disrespect and defiance. Because that looks different from everyone so clarify.” In regards to ISS, a member suggested, “Implement an ISS to decrease OSS and provide SEL behavior supports in those particular situations where we have in school.”

Public Forum #2

Equity Considerations

Major considerations for members in this forum were disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions, inequitable discipline by hall monitors, a lack of support and inclusion for student with disciplinary infractions, and a lack of awareness of bullying and harassment resources. One member shared, for example, “There’s a huge racial disparity in suspensions rates.” Members also discussed concerns with hall monitors, “Our hall monitors interact with students very differently. I witnessed a hall monitor physically removing black students from the line for cutting and walking white student to the front of the line. I was shocked he was willing to do that in front of everyone in the lunchroom. Its little things like that the happen every day that have snowball effect.” There was also concern about what happens after students are disciplined, for example, a member shared, “I’ve seen so many

people just disappear only to hear they are now attending Tate because of disciplinary infraction or poor attendance. It's not like they are stupid or more violent. I feel as if we don't support all of our students equally and we don't take the time as a district to take a personalized approach to whatever issues. It's been frustrating to watch my friends disappear and see their potential disappear." Members also mentioned concern about, "Student unawareness of bullying/harassment resources."

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, members suggested restorative practices and limited suspensions, public bullying and harassment resources, and holding hall monitors accountable for equitable disciplinary treatment. For example, a member suggested, "Focused restorative practices/limited suspensions." Another member suggested, "Public bullying/harassment resources." Members also discussed accountability for discipline, for example, "Holding hall monitors accountable... someone with the power to discipline students should be trained."

Students

Equity Considerations

The greatest concern for students was bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments about race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, appearance, etc. They also mentioned a lack of disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency. Many students noted bullying, racist comments, hate speech, sexual harassment, homophobic comments and bullying, sexism, and disrespect among students. For example, one student shared, "Making sure there aren't homophobic comments or bullying," while another student noted, "People with disabilities get made fun of." More examples include, "Racist comments," "People with less money get bashed about it", and "Minor sexual harassment issues is a major issue because, though they are sometimes perceived as harmless, these issues can create a poor environment for girls." In terms of discipline, students described a lack of disciplinary equity. For example, a student shared, "Students of color feel that when they get punished that their consequences are more heavy than what it would be if the student were white." Another concern was disciplinary strictness, for example, one student noted, "Lack of disciplinary action when needed," and another noted, "Hard to get expelled (make it easier)." The last concern was a lack of disciplinary transparency, with students who shared, "Lack of knowledge of rules," and, "Lack of communication for rules of the school."

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, student's core idea was to improve responsiveness to bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments. They also suggested increasing disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency, as well as providing rewards for positive behaviors. For responsiveness, students suggested telling people to stop bullying, having rules about appropriate language, and punishing students for bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments. In an example, a student suggested, "Punishment for use of racial slurs & comments," while another student suggested, "Making more concrete rules to determine what counts as verbal bullying. Don't just tell people they will be better off than the people who bully them in the future, fix the problem." Others suggested, "Tell people to stop," and

"Punishment for use of racial slurs & comments."

“Watch what people are saying.” To improve disciplinary practices, students suggested being more strict. For example, students suggested, *“giving better consequences,” “Make all students respect quietness in the halls and be more polite,”* and, *“Abolish the dumb and unnecessary rules, and actually enforce the useful ones.”* They also suggested greater disciplinary equity and transparency, for example, a student suggested, *“Make consequences for actions fairly for example; if a colored student gets into a fight with another colored student they should get the same consequences that someone who is not of color receives,”* and another suggested, *“Have all the school rules visible so students don't get persecuted for breaking a rule they didn't know existed.”* Lastly, students suggested rewards for positive behaviors, with a student who suggested, *“Certain things require certain rewards, there should be school wide rewards handed out to those that show above and beyond behavior or grades.”*

Parents

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for parents included bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments as well as lack of disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency. Parents cited, *“Differences in disciplinary structures from school to school,” “racial disproportionality in discipline,”* as well as *“Differences in disciplinary structure for kids with special needs, disabilities, mental health issues and the general population, i.e. these kids have special needs in the discipline category.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Parents suggested increasing disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency, eliminating seclusion and constraint, as well as holding students accountable for inappropriate behavior. One parent said, *“All students should receive the same discipline for the same behaviors unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as an IEP, etc.”* while another said *“Do something to address bullying. Just going around saying that bullying is not tolerated does absolutely nothing.”*

Teachers

Equity Considerations

Teachers were concerned about disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions, a lack of responsive discipline and behavior plans, behavioral and attendance issues, a lack of disciplinary equity, and a lack of culturally responsive practices. For example, one teacher shared, *“Disproportionate outcomes in disciplinary actions for black and Latino students.”* Teachers also discussed concerns with responsiveness, for example, a teacher noted, *responsive discipline plans,”* and another shared, *“Limited use of MTSS.”* There was also concern about behavioral and attendance issues, for example, a teacher shared, *“Students of color more consistently absent/tardy,”* and another teacher shared, *“Problem behaviors not clearly defined.”* Teachers additionally raised concern about disciplinary equity, for example, one teacher shared, *“Equal enforcement of discipline,”* and another shared, *“Leniency towards certain students.”* Lastly, teachers noted the lack of cultural responsiveness, for example, a teacher shared, *“Behavior misunderstandings between staff and students of color,”* and, *“Racist discipline procedures.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Suggestions to address these considerations included disciplinary consistency between students and schools, restorative practices, greater behavioral supports, culturally responsive disciplinary policies and practices, and disciplinary equity, strictness, and transparency. For example, a teacher suggested, “A better, more consistent plan for addressing behaviors as they happen- with follow through,” and another suggested, “All students should be held accountable for school appropriate behavior. While accommodations can be made for the occasional misstep, all students should be given a consistent message of school appropriate language and conduct.” Restorative justice was another suggested strategy, for example, a teacher suggested, “Restorative Practices / Circles,” and another suggested, “Working district-wide to work on restorative justice practices so we can avoid cultural differences becoming large-scale behavior problems and misunderstandings between staff and students of color.” Examples of greater behavioral support come from one teacher who suggested, “Be sure

“Working district-wide to work on restorative justice practices so we can avoid cultural differences becoming large-scale behavior problems and misunderstandings between staff and students of color.”

schools are identifying at-risk students early and providing supports at home high schools. Right now it just seems the only supports are parent meetings, ISS or OSS. Not very much mentoring, check-in/check-out, or positive relationships with at-risk students. The first step is punishment instead of supports,” and another teacher who suggested, “Training teachers and administrators in PBIS / MTSS.” Teachers also suggested culturally responsive policies and practices, for example, a teacher suggested, “Review offenses and attendance policies for implicit bias and train to counter it.” Lastly, teachers

suggested greater equity, strictness, and transparency. For example, teachers suggested, “All students should be treated equally,” “Have an attendance policy with consequence,” and, “Policies need to be appropriate and clear from day 1. Of course there will always be exceptions and necessary changes in policies, but it is unclear to me what consequences there are for students and what power I have as a teacher to enforce policies/ consequences.”

Other Employees

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for other employees include disproportionate behavioral and attendance issues, along with lack of disciplinary equity. Employees said there is a “Large disparity in corrective actions for behavior students and students enrolled in the check-in/check-out program in relation to their peers who are not in these types of programs. It gives other students and staff the perception that these students are receiving rewards that are disproportionate to the good behavior that led to the reward (i.e. getting to play video games for sitting through class that other students cannot earn as a reward unless they have an IEP or other special accommodation)” along with a “Disproportionate rate that students of color are suspended/sent to the office”.

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, employees suggest disciplinary consistency and greater behavioral support by making *“expectations the same for ALL students. Teachers and guidance counselors need to be consistent with how they set expectations.”*

Community Members

Equity Considerations

Major considerations for members in this forum were disproportionate behavioral referrals and suspensions, bullying and harassment, and a lack of responsive discipline and behavior plans. For example, many members shared, *“Disproportionate behavioral referrals for students of color,”* and, *“Racial disparities in disciplinary action.”* Members also discussed concerns with bullying and harassment, for example, members shared, *“Violence and bullying in schools,”* and, *“The use of students disrespecting each other.”* There was also concern about responsiveness, for example, a member shared, *“The follow-through to protect students”* Another member noted, *“Trauma-informed care and students with behavior issues.”*

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, members suggested culturally responsive disciplinary practices, increasing responsiveness to bullying and harassment, restorative practices, and data transparency. For example, a member suggested, *“Address teacher bias,”* and another suggested, *“Teachers and staff need implicit bias training to prevent misunderstanding cultural differences for behavior issues.”* Members also discussed responsiveness, for example, a member suggested, *“Explicit policies written to address bigoted behavior. For example, all teachers and students shall use pronouns of preference for students regardless of personally held beliefs.”* Other members suggested restorative practices, for example, a member suggested, *“No bullying! Time must be set aside for class meetings at the beginning and end of every day. Teachers can be taught techniques for building respectful communities with children but it has to be included in those crazy required minutes.”* In regard to data transparency, a member suggested, *“Measure & report to each teacher, school, & principal. Report aggregate measures publicly.”*

Student Climate Survey

Equity Considerations

The greatest equity considerations for students were bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments about race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc., a lack of responsiveness to bullying and harassment, and a lack of disciplinary consistency and equity. Students described people being bullied, hurtful or mean comments calling people names or slurs, and sexual harassment. For example, students shared, *“I sometimes get bullied often get verbally bullied,”* *“At my school people sometimes mock or mistreat someone with autism. The word gay is also an insult, and it shouldn't be,”* and *“I have experienced sexual harassment amongst other students, I think sexual harassment is a major issue in the schools and needs to be recognized.”* The lack of responsiveness to these kinds of incidents was also a major concern for students. For example, one student shared, *“Sometimes I feel*

complaints about students harassing other students aren't taken that seriously especially if it happens over the internet. I also think kids being bullied for being gay/trans needs to be addressed more because of the constant comments made against these people, including myself.” Other students shared, “My

“I have been harassed in my school multiple times and sometimes the teachers did nothing.”

school does not take bullying seriously they do not enforce the rules I have been punched and called hurtful name,” and, “I have been harassed in my school multiple times and sometimes the teachers did nothing.” They also mentioned a lack of peer responsiveness, for example, a student noted, “I sometimes feel scared to stand up for myself when someone’s being mean to me and it’s the same for

other kids,” and another shared, “This school is toxic, people are bullies and no one stands up for the person being bullied.” Students additionally described a lack of disciplinary consistency and equity, for example, a student shared, “Some teachers treat certain kids differently than others like lessen punishments. Some favor one gender over the other,” and another student shared, “Too many teachers let the actions of students go if they like the students. Students who are popular and participate in a lot of activities get away with a lot of rule breaking and bullying.”

Ideas for Addressing

Students suggested greater responsiveness to bullying, harassment, and hurtful comments, and to use more restorative and less punitive response. For example, a member suggested, “One of the main ways we could improve our school system is a better look on sexual harassment. I personally have never been taught a lesson on personal boundaries for women and girls. Whether it be verbal or physical, we need to discuss how to treat girls in school. The boys in my school make many inappropriate jokes a day, insulting girls. They are often sexist and offensive, and I have experienced many comments directed toward me.” Another student suggested, “The teacher should call out the students in class. This way not only does the student learn from their mistakes but others can learn from his/her mistakes.” Another student suggested more security when they noted, “More security would increase the percentage of people feeling safer.” Students also described using restorative practices more, for example, a student suggested, “This school needs to do more restorative circles with classes.”

Equitable, Inclusive, and Supportive School Environments

Public Forum #1

Equity Considerations

The three main considerations mentioned in this forum were inequitable student and staff experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion, a lack of culturally inclusive curriculum, and a lack of support and validation for staff of color. For example, one member noted, *“People want better experiences.”* Another member shared, *“If you are in power and take advantage of people that are vulnerable that makes the working environment not safe anymore.”* Also, a member noted, *“Culturally inclusive and representative curriculum.”* In relation to support, one member shared, *“Validation of feelings, dispositions and thoughts of minority admin when confronting ongoing/daily microaggression.”* Another member shared, *“Black and brown teachers are not being heard.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Forum members suggested analyzing school climate surveys and creating workplace communities and mentorship opportunities. One member suggested, *“Building level climate survey - 360 degree - including students, staff, admin, parents - results revealed analyzed responded.”* In regards to improving the work environment, a member suggested, *“Mentors for all teachers of color, not just new teachers.”* This sentiment was shared by another member who noted, *“Create communities across disciplines, job titles, and work sites.”*

“Mentors for all teachers of color, not just new teachers.”

Public Forum #2

Equity Considerations

Key considerations for members in this forum were a lack of emotional, mental, and social supports for students and staff and a lack of awareness about the current resources and supports. They also discussed issues with student housing and homelessness. For example, one member noted, *“Mental health support services in JHS and HS.”* Another member shared, *“We have a room at City with sky painted on the ceiling and it’s a relaxing awesome room and I had no idea that existed. There was never an announcement of where to go to when you had an issue like that. Or to report an issue.”* A lack of social support for staff of color was also a key concern, for example, a member shared, *“Women of color have one of the highest turnover rates and it’s often because they don’t have mentors or figures to look like. The feelings of isolation lead them to leaving sooner. We’ve had principals or teachers of color staying here for a year and have no one to look to and leave.”* A member also noted, *“Student housing and homelessness.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Suggestions to address these concerns include increasing social support and community building activities, creating mentoring relationships for teachers and students, and having coalitions of staff of color for support. For example, one member suggested, *“Social support and community building events/activities,”* while another member suggested, *“Mentoring relationships for teachers/for students for social support.”* There was also a suggestion to, *“If our district created coalitions of staff of color they can look to each other for support.”*

Students

Equity Considerations

The greatest concern for students were inequitable student experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion. Other major concerns were a lack of culturally inclusive curriculum, negative peer and teacher relations, and a lack of emotional and mental health supports for all students. Students described concern with the school climate being unwelcoming, disrespectful, and non-inclusive of all students. For example, one student shared, *“Not all schools have a comfortable environment for LGBTQ+ students,”* while another student noted, *“Religions not respected.”* Students also noted, *“Lack of respect for students and teachers,”* and *“I’m concerned that students who belong to minority groups’ spaces to express themselves are not respected, and that their concerns and wishes are not addressed seriously.”* Students described issues with the curriculum not representing minorities and a

“Lack of LGBTQ+ discussions in our classrooms and curriculums.”

lack of discussion about different identities and equity concern. For example, one student shared, *“Showing the experiences of many different people not just white cis het people,”* and another shared, *“Lack of minority figures in the curriculum.”* Another student voiced, *“Lack of LGBTQ+ discussions in our classrooms and curriculums,”* while

another noted, *“Sexual Assault Education.”* Negative peer relations was a concern, for example, a student shared, *“Lack of adults to go to,”* and another shared, *“Some students excluded because not in sports and theater etc.”* Students also described the lack of mental and emotional health support. For example, a student shared, *“No support for mental health,”* and another noted, *“Kids with depression and anxiety but are too shy to talk about it feel like there are too many expectations of them.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Students suggested several ideas to address these issues, including promoting inclusive, equitable, and welcoming school environments, encourage positive peer and teacher relations, student education on equity issues, and culturally inclusive curriculum and extra-curricular activities. For a positive environment, students suggested making students feel more welcome and safe and treating everyone equally. For example, a student suggested, *“Make the school safe for everyone and make students feel welcome,”* while another student shared, *“Everyone wants to be treated the same way.”* To improve peer and teacher relations, student proposed promoting tolerance and connections among students. For example, a student suggested, *“Promoting tolerance among students,”* and another suggested, *“For everyone one to look out for each other so it most likely there will be no fights.”* Students also described improve teacher relationships, for example, a student suggested,

“Encouraging students and teachers to talk. Communication is the best way to overcome bias and build understanding,” and another suggested, *“Just make sure everyone has someone that is looking out for them, whether it be a teacher, a counselor, or another person, and make sure that everyone knows they have someone looking out for them.”* Students also desired greater education on equity issues such as racist comments and sexual harassment. For example, a student proposed, *“More education about sexual harassment, especially establishing that sexual comments about other people, and just in general, are not acceptable.”* Other students also shared, *“More people need to be educated about it, not less. My parents say that we shouldn't be learning about this stuff at our age, but most people know their sexuality, etc. by age 12. It's something that needs to be said, because some just don't understand it,”* and, *“Help students acknowledge other religions and help them understand them.”* Suggestions were also made about having a culturally inclusive curriculum and extra-curricular activities, for example, one student suggested, *“have different books and different sources, use images that don't just depict the most privileged people, etc.,”* and another suggested, *“An extra lesson on the cultures around the world.”* Students also suggested, *“Fairly play both students of color and non-color no matter how they rank playing wise,”* and to have equitable support for student clubs.

Parents

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for parents included a lack of culturally inclusive curriculum, a lack of social, emotional, and mental health support for all students, and inequitable access and transportation to extra-curricular activities. One parent said, *“Equity is not only defined by Socioeconomic Factors, but also the needs of both the remedial learners and advanced learners. Equitable access to learning should be based on the needs and abilities to optimize ALL students learning.”* Others stated that there is *“Lack of diversity of race and gender of teachers and especially senior leadership”* which contributes to a, *“hostile learning environment”*.

Ideas for Addressing

Parents suggested promoting inclusive and equitable school environments as well as reviewing curriculum to make sure it is culturally inclusive. They said, *“Keep having conversations about race at all levels of the district. From classroom to community. Every stakeholder at every level should be able and expected to talk about race and educational outcomes”* and *“Promote a culturally responsive pedagogy throughout the curriculum and all programs.”*

Teachers

Equity Considerations

Key considerations for teachers were a lack of culturally inclusive curriculum, a lack of emotional and mental supports for all students, inequitable access to extra-curricular activities, and a lack of social support. For example, one teacher noted, *“Have heard parent concerns about social studies/history textbooks not representing cultures and events accurately,”* and another teacher shared, *“Curriculum doesn't address the needs of all students.”* Emotional and mental health supports were also a concern, for example, teachers shared, *“Access to mental health and support services for all students,”* and another noted, *“Social-Emotional Learning; as a district we must allow time for and*

spend money on resources for SEL.” Issues with extra-curricular activities were another concern, for example, a teacher shared, “Lack of participation in extra curriculums by black and brown students,” and, “Intellectually disabled students do not have athletic activities that they can participate and succeed in. They can be token members of a sports team or become team managers. The ICCSD did away with Special Olympics years ago, and although the funding for this cannot be paid out of special education funding streams, it can and should be paid for out of the activity fund.” Transportation to these activities was also a concern, with teachers who shared, “Transportation to and from after school events that are school programs.” A lack of social support was also a concern, for example, a teacher shared, “Social skills acquisition. Students come from different backgrounds and have different experiences but need to learn to get along and work together in learning in the same environment. Social skills lessons are not delivered in a meaningful way for all students. There is not enough staff to reinforce the social skills we would like students to learn.”

Ideas for Addressing

Suggestions to address these concerns included reviewing and implementing culturally inclusive curriculum, investing in mental and emotional health supports, equitable access and transportation to extracurricular activities, and providing greater social support for all students. For culturally inclusive curriculum, teachers suggested, “It needs to be screened and make sure that what is in the context of the material is historically accurate. A 5th grade social studies text book should not say that

“A skilled review board made up of educators with a background in cultural competency to go through ALL textbooks and curriculum content at all levels.”

slaves enjoyed their weekends and earned wages for doing work,” and, “A skilled review board made up of educators with a background in cultural competency to go through ALL textbooks and curriculum content at all levels.”

Teachers suggested investing in mental and emotional health supports by hiring counselors, forming partnerships, and implementing a social and emotional learning curriculum. For teachers suggested, “Have on-site mental health professionals: SFA's school-based therapists,

school-based psychiatrist. Use secondary guidance counselors as mental health counselors, not just as test prep/college prep/and scheduling managers,” “Hire or partner with mental health providers,” and, “The district should provide adequate social-emotional learning age-appropriate curricula to guide teachers in teaching social-emotional skills.” Another suggestion was to improve access to extra-curricular activities, for example, a teacher suggested, “Making sure all students have access to school-funded and supported programs that happen before/after school hours.” Transportation access was another strategy, for example, teachers suggested, “Funding for after school transportation and care,” and, “Provide transportation for elementary after school activities (orchestra, band, sports, etc.)” Greater social support was another proposal, for example, a teacher suggested, “Social skills curriculum with minutes in the schedule for teaching the skills explicitly. Training on how to follow through with students when reteaching is necessary.”

Other Employees

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for other employees include promoting inclusive, equitable, and welcoming school environments, having culturally inclusive curriculum, and investing in mental and emotional health supports. Employees said that there is “systemic racism in special education,” along with “micro-aggressions toward minority families and students”. Others said there is “ignorance of the impact of racism by district staff,” “low accountability for outcomes” and “More diversity in the language knowledge of all levels of staff, from teachers to admin to secretaries. Language line is not the same as having someone in the school you can talk to in your language!”

Ideas for Addressing

Employees suggested promoting inclusive and equitable school environments as well as reviewing curriculum to make sure it is culturally inclusive, as well as investing in mental and emotional health supports. One suggestion was, “Careful observation of students under consideration for special education to determine whether a delay in education is due to a language barrier, an inequity between previous and current education environment, and/or developmental delay.” Another said, “There has to be a sincere mission and commitment to implement the changes that will reduce disproportionate discipline, multicultural gender fair curriculum and recruit and retain a more diverse administrative Staff. We have talked for years in this community about these issues and had made progress in 2008 but since things have regressed. Talk, meetings, forums are futile changes must be implemented. The wheel need not be reinvented, this district and community have plenty of resources and talented individuals who can affect change.”

Community Members

Equity Considerations

The main considerations for community members were inequitable student experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion, a lack of culturally inclusive curriculum, inequitable access to extra-curricular activities, and a lack of mental health supports. For example, one member noted, “School climate that supports all students, that if accepting, respectful and curious about those who are different from one another.” Another member shared, “Inclusiveness of all different backgrounds and cultural experiences.” A lack of culturally inclusive curriculum was also a concern, for example, a member shared, “Educational materials used should reflect experiences outside of white, Eurocentric values,” and another shared, “Making curriculum accessible and meaningful for all students.” There were also concerns with inequitable access to extra-curricular activities, for example, a member shared, “Lack of access to extracurricular opportunities for low income students,” and another noted, “Affordable BASP.” In regard to mental health, members noted, “Mental health.”

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, community members suggested reviewing and implementing a culturally inclusive curriculum, building a more inclusive and positive school climate, investing in mental and emotional health supports, mentorship programs, and equitable access to extracurricular activities.

For example, one member suggested, “Selecting textbooks, particularly in social studies curriculum, that include viewpoints of people of different faiths, ethnic backgrounds, genders, and national origins,” while another member suggested, “Please review & revise your curricula.” There was also suggestions to, “Build a culture of inclusion”, and “Ensure all students have access to buildings, playgrounds, tables, portables, bathrooms etc. and all items work at all times.” Community members also suggested focusing more on mental and emotional health supports, for example, members suggested, “Investing in mental health supports would be my biggest priority. Cutting counselor hours to anything less than full time hurts children and staff,” and, “Stop isolating and shaming those with mental health issues.” Members also discussed building better relationships, for example, a member suggested, “Start district-wide mentorship program.” Lastly, members proposed greater access to extracurricular activities. For example, a member suggested, “Making sure that all students, whether across elementary, junior high or high schools, be given the same access, including extra-curricular activities. More staff needs to be able to provide these things as needed,” and another member suggested, “Hire transportation for all afterschool events. Make BASP information more uniformed between schools, make the public more aware, and give them resources to send home documents in other languages.”

Student Climate Survey

Equity Considerations

The main considerations for students were a lack of emotional and mental health supports, a lack of social support, inequitable student experiences of belonging, respect, and inclusion, and a lack of culturally inclusive curriculum and discussion. They described how many students have mental health challenges, the lack of awareness and support for mental health, and how school amplifies stress and anxiety. In some example, students shared, “I have anxiety and social anxiety, and this makes the school environment harder to be in sometimes, I feel like I’m always worrying about something,” “I think our school does not pay enough attention to mental health, I have never heard any teacher talk about how they would be there if someone needed to talk. People are basically trapped at school. There’s no place to go when you feel unsafe or you’re in a bad mental state. There’s nobody you can rely on other than your friends (if you have any),” and, “We have an absurd amount of homework that pushes us to high amounts of stress and anxiety.” Students discussed not having enough time to learn to socialize or talk about emotions, for example, one student shared, “We don’t really have time to just talk unless it is guidance or library,” and another noted, “Honestly school doesn’t even teach things that help u out in life. Like socializing talking and etc. School shouldn’t be just about grades and a GPA, it should include other things too like much more.” They also mentioned a negative peer experiences,

“The way students divide themselves socially. Example: the “popular” won’t take a chance to speak and meet other people unless those people are part of their group.”

such as people not having friends or being excluded from others. For example, one student shared, “The way students divide themselves socially. Example: the “popular” won’t take a chance to speak and meet other people unless those people are part of their group,” and another student shared, “Some people do not have anybody to talk to or sit by at lunch and some people do not have a friend to talk to or that cares about them.” Students also described an inequitable school climate, for example, one student

shared, “The school district and [High School] neglect to recognize the position of Asians in the school. We spend weeks preparing for a day solely to celebrate African Americans. We do not spend time celebrating the real diversity in our schools and we do not recognize how many different languages, ethnicities, and races our school have,” and another student shared, “Our gender-neutral bathroom was closed because cisgender kids used it for vaping and getting high. There are other bathrooms for those kids to use, other spaces for them to vape and do drugs - there aren't other options for our trans and gender-nonconforming students who just want a safe space.” Lastly, students mentioned issues with a lack of culturally inclusive curriculum and discussions. For example, a student shared, “I just feel like we need to talk more about race and sexual orientation.”

Ideas for Addressing

Students suggested several ideas to address these concerns, including more support and discussions about mental health, creating an inclusive environment for LGBTQ students, culturally inclusive curriculum and discussions, and having more time to socialize. Students wanted greater support for mental health, for example, one student shared, “I wish our school would talk more about mental illnesses and inform students about them and have more one-on-one support for kids with depression, anxiety, stress etc.” Another student suggested, “Make teachers more aware of student mental health and help train them to incorporate that into daily student interaction.” Students suggested improving the school climate for LGBTQ+ students by providing safe, accessible gender-neutral bathrooms, putting pronouns in PowerSchool, and providing private changing spaces in locker rooms. For example, a student suggested, “I do believe that if we could put pronouns in Power School things could be better, and more gender neutral bathrooms. I would also like another guidance counselor here, one that is non-binary, gender fluid, or genderqueer. I think that would help a lot more kids here who don't identify as the sex they were born with.” Students also suggested having a culturally inclusive curriculum and discussions, for example, a student suggested, “It would be better if Sex Ed classes included: gender identities other than the cisgender and binary; sexualities.” Additionally, students suggested having more time for socializing. For example, one student shared, “I think we should have more social time because people are holding in a lot of emotions and it helps to socialize and get some of those emotions out.”

“Make teachers more aware of student mental health and help train them to incorporate that into daily student interaction.”

Teachers, Administrators, and Staff

Public Forum #1

Equity Considerations

Forum members described two considerations in this area: a lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators and a lack of culturally proficient educators. For example, one member noted, “Staff members should reflect the populations of the students.” Another member shared, “*Lack of education regarding culturally proficient pedagogy, lack of support for staff of color, the absence of a growth mindset with district level personnel and removing the traditional barrier of “we’ve always done things this way!”*” A member also shared, “*District leaders modeling ethical and cultural expectations for educators and staff.*”

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address these considerations, forum members suggested differentiated cultural competency training, hiring, supporting, and retaining teachers of color, and increasing accountability for addressing equity. In one example, a member suggested, “*Differentiated cultural competency PD.*” Members also suggested, “*Continue pushing to hire teachers and staff that represent our students,*” and, “*More rigorous vetting for ICCSD principals - its carnage right now. Support structures for minority administrator’s commitment to their success - strong vetting.*” Members

“Differentiated cultural competency PD.”

additionally recommended placing greater accountability on educators for addressing equity concerns. For example, one member shared, “*Staff must be held accountable for implementation of the Equity Plan,*” while another suggested, “*Link equitable outcomes to staff evaluation.*”

Public Forum #2

Equity Considerations

The two main considerations for members in this forum were a lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators and a lack of culturally inclusive and equity-informed teaching practices. One member shared, “*Diverse representative teachers. I can only think of one teacher of color in my school and that’s not at all representative of the student body and I think that has a negative impact on students.*” Similarly, a member noted, “*Representation of minority teachers; specifically African-American teachers in the classroom.*” Members also discussed a lack of cultural responsiveness, for example, one member shared, “*Cultural competency in staff. I see some schools with more diverse staff and it stems from principals who have educated themselves and made strides to do that.*”

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, members suggested recruiting and retaining teachers, administrators, and staff of color and also providing training on cultural competency. In one example, a member suggested, *“Recruit and hire more people of color as teachers.”* Another member suggested, *“Increase diversity in staff and focus on cultural competency education. Educate building principals on the outcome that having a diverse staff has minority students.”* Another example is a member who noted, *“Teacher training on cultural competence... you can't teach what you don't know.”*

“Increase diversity in staff and focus on cultural competency education. Educate building principals on the outcome that having a diverse staff has minority students.”

Students

Equity Considerations

The two main concerns for students were inequitable treatment from teachers and a lack of diverse teachers. For example, a student shared, *“Teachers treating students of different races differently,”* while another noted, *“Minority students being treated with unintended bias (or sometimes intended) that may make teachers more suspicious of them.”* Students also described the diversity of teachers, with one student who shared, *“Not enough racial equality among teachers, more white teachers than black, Hispanic, Asian, etc.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Ideas for addressing these considerations include hiring more diverse teachers, more equitable and respectful treatment, and greater emotional support from educators. Students suggested, *“Hire more teachers that are black, Hispanic, etc. rather than more than 95% of the teachers being white.”* and, *“I would maybe hire more other race teachers. Most teachers are Caucasian and I feel more students would feel welcome if there were more teachers of other races and religions too.”* Students also proposed more equitable and respectful treatment from teachers, for example, a student shared, *“The teachers should be more fair,”* and another shared, *“Requiring teachers to learn more about/receive more training in creating equitable environments for students of as many marginalized identities as possible.”*

Parents

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for parents include lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators, lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices, lack of training on bias and mental health, and inequitable treatment from teachers. One parent said, *“A lack of cultural awareness regarding people of differing backgrounds is widespread. I am not aware of a program that addresses teacher bias within this school district. Therefore, some teachers fail students of color more than they fail non-students of color, and their biases interfere with their ability to create equitable*

spaces. As a whole people who are different are treated differently by others in the district and equity needs to be taken more seriously in this district.”

Ideas for Addressing

Parents suggested hiring more diverse teachers, promoting a more equitable and respectful treatment, and holding teachers accountable. One parent said, *“Increase training and communication with parent teacher organizations about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the district, as well as training for how those organizations can integrate this commitment in their daily planning. For example, in event planning, volunteer recruitment and training, meeting facilitation, etc.”* Another said, *“Hold teachers, administration, and coaches accountable for ensuring that students of color are treated with respect and afforded equitable opportunities. Treat parents of color as partners.”*

Teachers

Equity Considerations

Teachers described several considerations in this area: a lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators, a lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices, and a lack of training on bias and mental health. For example, one teacher noted, *“More diversity in teaching staff throughout the district. As well as developing strategies to retain them,”* and another teacher noted, *“Lack of diversity in staff (educators and admin).”* Another member shared, *“Culturally appropriate teaching practices,”* and another shared, *“Staff implicit bias.”* A member also shared, *“More training on how to create a classroom and school that is welcoming to diverse learners and raises their voices,”* while another noted, *“Lack of mental health training.”*

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address these considerations, teachers suggested cultural competency training, hiring and retaining teachers, administrators, and staff of color, and culturally responsive and equity-informed practices. For example, a teacher suggested, *“Continue training for staff but also support staff. Para educators are with our children often,”* while another suggested, *“Implicit bias training for all staff multiple times a year.”* Members also suggested, *“Aggressively scouting around the country for educators of color. Providing monetary incentives to help with the cost of moving and housing. Using feedback from our diverse staff to continuously improve their experiences as educators in ICCSD,”* and, *“Hire many, many more black and brown teachers and administrators. Support the black and brown teachers and administrators we hire in culturally responsive ways.”* Members additionally recommended, *“Identify and encourage staff to integrate culturally appropriate teaching,”* while another suggested, *“Research, train, and expect staff to put into practice culturally appropriate/sensitive teaching strategies.”*

“Hire many, many more black and brown teachers and administrators. Support the black and brown teachers and administrators we hire in culturally responsive ways.”

Other Employees

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for other employees include lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators, lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices, lack of training on bias and mental health, and inequitable treatment from teachers, and for teachers to be more informed, tolerant, and inclusive of students. One employee said that there is a “culture of low expectations for students of marginalized groups”. Another said there is a “lack of cultural awareness regarding people of differing backgrounds is widespread. I am not aware of a program that addresses teacher bias within this school district. Therefore, some teachers fail students of color more than they fail non-students of color, and their biases interfere with their ability to create equitable spaces. As a whole people who are different are treated differently by others in the district and equity needs to be taken more seriously in this district.”

Ideas for Addressing

Ideas for addressing these concerns include recruiting and retaining teachers, administrators, and staff of color, along with more equitable and respectful environments and culturally responsive and equity-informed practices. One employee said, “As educators, we really do ourselves a disservice by not being educated about issues our students are facing. Training and on-going education is really what is needed.” Another said to “Hire more people who look like our students and have similar life.”

Community Members

Equity Considerations

Community members described three considerations in this area: a lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed practices, a lack of diverse and representative teachers, staff, and administrators, and a lack of training on bias and mental health. For example, one member noted, “Teachers not prepared to work with families and students of color,” and another member shared, “Teacher and Staff Biases: A lack of cultural awareness regarding people of differing backgrounds is widespread.” A member also shared, “Lack of representation at the schools,” and another noted, “Lack of diversity of race and gender of teachers and especially senior leadership.” Lastly, members raised concern about, “Lack of culturally sensitive training among support staff: janitors, bus drivers, para educators, lunch room staff.”

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address these considerations, community members suggested cultural competency training, hiring teachers, administrators, and staff of color, and culturally responsive and equity-informed practices. For example, a member suggested, “Deep, ongoing PD with an accountability component,” and another members also suggested, “Require continuing conversations and training around implicit bias.” Members also suggested, “Actively recruiting non-white teachers and staff,” and, “Hiring for diversity means interviewing with diversity in mind. You may need to interview more candidates of color or women for a leadership jobs in order to achieve equity.” Lastly, members suggested, “Make sure all teachers can teach all students in a fair and just way.”

Student Climate Survey

Equity Considerations

Students described two considerations in this area: a lack of concern, emotional support, and equitable treatment from adults and a lack of culturally responsive and equity-informed teaching practices. For example, one student noted, “I did go to a teacher at my school and asked for help but nobody actually wanted to help me,” and another shared,

“There are some teachers at school who don't respect they/them pronouns, even when talking about someone who doesn't identify as male or female.”

“Teachers can sometimes really not care about students, and sometimes be really rough on them when the student has clearly had a hard day.” There was also concern about the cultural responsiveness of teachers, for example, one student shared, “There are some teachers at school who don't respect they/them pronouns, even when talking about someone who doesn't identify as male or female,” while another student shared, “Some teachers are racist.”

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address these considerations, students suggested greater concern, emotional support, and equitable treatment from adults and accountability for culturally responsive practices. For example, a student suggested, “The implementation of implicit bias training is great but I feel as though one of my teachers can still approve upon their attitudes toward students. I think a report system **MUST** be more widely implemented and publicized because I have spoken with many students that have felt discriminated against because of the same teacher.” Another student suggested, “Some teachers should be fired for discriminating and using derogatory terms.”

Stakeholder Engagement

Public Forum #1

Equity Considerations

Key considerations mentioned in this forum were lack of parent and community engagement, lack of parent communication, and lack of awareness and support for equity goals. For example, one member shared, *“Ability of parents able to be involved (rewarding lines/language barrier),”* while another member shared, *“Parent-community inclusion.”* There were also concerns about communication with parents, for example, one member noted, *“ELL parent and school – communication.”* Additionally, one member noted, *“Alienated minority parents – deficiency model for contact and communication. Often the first contact are the mistake their students are making. They aren’t represented in parent leadership. I’d love to see that codified that we attempt to recruit minority parents.”* Lastly, members noted, *“Lack of awareness and support for equity goals.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Ideas to address these considerations include recruiting minority parents to PTO, providing multi-lingual communication to parents, and increasing community awareness. In an example, a member suggested, *“Recruit minority parents to PTO,”* echoed by another member, *“Codify – attempt to recruit minority parents to PTO. Make that a district goal. If we have 70% white women with no attempt to recruit minorities, make that an admin responsibility.”* For communication, one member suggested, *“More 1:1 community outreach - emails in other languages - phone call, text/letter.”* Another member discussed, *“Community awareness.”*

Public Forum #2

Equity Considerations

The major issues for members in this forum was a lack of student voice in decision-making, inaccessibility of information for all families, and a lack of support for parents and community. In an example, a member shared, *“The school board needs to listen to what the students are telling them... the decisions they make really affect us and we can’t vote.”* Another member shared, *“If you want to meet with the board or admin, you have to seek out the information and see what the meeting is or emails. It’s not that the information isn’t accessible, but students don’t know where to find it or know they can.”* In terms of communication with students, one member shared, *“We need to change our methods – the way we have been trying to reach students is not working and we continue to use the same methods. HS students we don’t really check email, were told to, but a lot of us don’t.”* Another example of a concern is a member who noted, *“Accessibility of information to all families (what, why and how we do things).”* Another member shared concern with, *“Parent support and community support - predominantly white authority figures (teachers/admin) not recognizing or aware of needs of minority communities.”* A member also shared, *“The current board is listening to the people that are speaking to them, but those speaking aren’t representing our whole population.”*

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, members suggested improving communication with parents and students by creating more points of contact and reaching out, developing communities of parents that support each other, and translating more school handouts. For example, a member suggested, *“Have administrators create more points of contact with parents and student organizations.”* Another member suggested, *“The board making more connections at our actual school buildings and having conversations with the students they represented.”* It was also suggested, *“All families need to be heard which might mean going to families and not expect them to come to you,”* and *“The voices of stakeholders need to be heard and they need to be communicated with about opportunities in the district. This is not only to improve equity directly, but also indirectly through providing more times, places, and ways for people to give diagnostics and opinion about equity in the district which would lead to more improvement and development.”* Members also suggested, *“Develop communities of parents that talk to each other/support each other,”* and *“Translate more school handouts.”*

“Have administrators create more points of contact with parents and student organizations.”

Students

Equity Considerations

The main concern for students was a lack of student voice. For example, a student shared, *“Students need to be able to express them self more. I am a student and have been in Iowa City for more than half my life and I think what Iowa needs is more expression. I have heard kids rapping to just the struggles of homework or kids painting out there feeling on a piece of paper.”* Another student shared, *“I know, myself, that some of my peers feel unheard,”* and another noted, *“Students must be able to feel like that when we go to an administrator, we are not the ones out of place or that we should face excess scrutiny because of our experiences. Students are rarely trying to “rock the boat” or “cause trouble” or “are lying” when they identify experiences in the classroom perpetrated by teachers or instances with other staff members where they felt sad, ashamed, and uncomfortable about their identity.”*

Ideas for Addressing

To address this concern, students suggested talking with, listening to, and engaging student voices. Students suggested, *Talk to students directly, because most often than not the principal or teachers around the school don't know what's going on and how students may be feeling,”* and, *“Give opportunities for students to share their experiences in a comfortable environment.”* They also suggested, *“Be more engaging,”* and, *“I would recommend not only surveys were the students give their feedback, but a council with the children there. Maybe a few from each school in different communities. So, not only are the teachers hearing our feedback, but also the people at the top, the people that matter can finally hear our side of the story.”* One student suggested, *“Administrative persons should not consider themselves as enemies of the young people under them. Us Students of Color, as Black students, aren't actively, purposefully trying to make your life miserable. Students, in general, are not trying to make your life miserable. Our lives are miserable, too. If a student approaches you with a suggestion, or asks for help, assume, please, that it is genuine. If it doesn't fit with your time,*

if you are unable to devote the energy to it, then calmly explain why you can't and/or simply say you can't do it and direct them to someone else.”

Parents

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for parents include lack of parent and community engagement and communication, lack of awareness and support for equity goals, and lack of support for basic needs and home life. One parent said, *“All parents in the district should know what their kids are being taught about equity at school so that we can use the same language at home.”* Another parent said there is a *“Lack of ICCSD focus on parental influences in outcomes”*.

Ideas for Addressing

Parents suggested improving communication with parents, students, and teachers, to create more points of contact, as well as developing communities of support. They also suggested improving potential language barriers with better translation systems. One parent suggested, *“Have informational meetings with parents, emails, pamphlets sent home,”* while another said, *“Help low income or minority families get supplies for schools and sports. Many kids from Wood and Twain want to play sports at SE but when they get there they often have little experience compared to families that have been having their kid’s rec or club sports in elementary. Help families get to conferences, access to computers, etc.”*

Teachers

Equity Considerations

Key considerations for teachers were inequitable PTO fundraising between schools, inequitable parent communication, engagement, and advocacy, and a lack of student voice. For example, a teacher shared, *“Huge disparity in PTO funding between building with high vs. low FRL”*, and another teacher noted, *“Materials funded by PTOs not equitable (some schools get a lot of materials while others do not, because of parental income).”* Concerns were also raised about parent communication, engagement, and advocacy. In examples, teachers shared, *“Parent involvement,” “School materials/letters home not being able to be translated to multiple languages”*, and *“Giving parents of different cultures, ability levels, language backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses equal opportunities to advocate for their child...especially in the area of discipline.”* Teachers also were concerned about, *“Providing students with a voice in discussing equity concerns from their perspective.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Teachers suggested to educate parents on their role and ways to help, combine and equally divide PTO funds, more translation and interpretation to improve communication, listen to student, parent, and teacher concerns, and greater parent and community engagement. For example, teachers suggested, *“Teaching parents how to play a role at home- including how to be more hands on AND more hand off (for both extremes of parents),”* and, *“Making sure SFA's are at each building and equip to help with educating parents and providing resources. Counselors need to be part of this too. Have parent education classes/meetings/support.”* To address inequitable PTO fundraising, teachers

“Divide up PTO funds so that schools with affluent parents and schools with a lower economic level have similar resources.”

suggested, “Have a certain percentage of each building’s PTO income put into a special fund that is then divided equally among schools,” and, “Divide up PTO funds so that schools with affluent parents and schools with a lower economic level have similar resources.” To improve communication, teachers suggested, “Employing full time translators that are strategically assigned to specific

buildings that are at the staff’s disposal. This could be to help make phone calls home, to have parent meetings, translate a whole host of papers that are sent home, or simply to build a connection with students as students might feel more comfortable talking about concerns and issues with someone who can actually communicate with them!” Teachers recommended listening to student, parent, and teacher voices also. For example, a teacher suggested, “Continue listening to student concerns about equity! They know best,” and another teacher proposed, “ESC staff that take concerns from parents and teachers seriously. No more polite dismissive emails.” Finally, teachers discussed greater parent and community engagement, for example, a teacher suggested, “Push for more parent involvement and help especially providing opportunities for working parents to get involved,” and another suggested, “Ask community for donations for school supplies such as expo markers, colored pencils, glue sticks, etc. and distribute them to schools that show a high need for those supplies.”

Other Employees

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for other employees include inequitable parent communication, engagement, and advocacy, citing a need for “more parental involvement in schools” and that “information provided to parents not always provided in appropriate languages”.

Ideas for Addressing

To address this concern, employees suggest greater parent and community engagement and to “Bring parents into the school to observe and participate.”

Community Members

Equity Considerations

The main concerns for community members were disparities in parent advocacy, a lack of support for basic needs and home life, inequitable PTO fundraising between schools, and a lack of communication to immigrant parents. For example, a member shared, “Some elementary schools are often taken advantage of because they don’t have a large group of involved parents that are able to show up at board meetings and oppose unpopular decisions.” Members also noted, “Access to Basic needs (food, laundry),” and, “Wi-Fi at home for hw & communication with families.” In terms of PTO fundraising, members mentioned, “There is a huge disparity in the amount of money that elementary school’s PTO’s are able to raise. This leads to inequality in playgrounds, technology, field trip experiences and countless other things.” Lastly, a community member noted, “Communication to immigrant parents.”

Ideas for Addressing

Suggestions to address these concerns included listening to all parent, teacher and staff voices, combining and equally dividing PTO funds, programs that help students and families, and building communities of parents. For example, community members suggested, “Allow staff to provide feedback on administration each year,” and, “Don't silence people. Allow everyone's voice to be heard.” They also suggested, “PTO funds should be placed in a single pot that is divided among all the schools so it can benefit all children in the district,” and, “Elementary schools that aren't getting a lot of extra money from their PTO or outside community sources should be getting more from the district for playgrounds, field trips, library books, technology, and building improvements to make up the difference.” Having programs to benefit students and families was also suggested, for example, members proposed, “Nwjj is starting a pantry, that's a great idea. Access to washers/dryers in locker area,” and, “Have programs available to all students/families that need it.” It was also important to build communities of parents, for example, members suggested, “Parents must be included in community workshops that teach about their own student's multicultural communities. They have to be brought into the school, for friendship groups, morning coffees, trust building activities.”

“Parents must be included in community workshops that teach about their own student's multicultural communities. They have to be brought into the school, for friendship groups, morning coffees, trust building activities.”

Student Climate Survey

Equity Considerations

The key consideration for students was a lack of student voice. Students described feeling like they were not heard and lacking a sense of autonomy. For example, one student shared, “I never feel like my voice is heard,” and another noted, “I feel as if students are too restricted. We aren't allowed to talk to each other as friends or about anything happening outside of class so it is difficult to feel comfortable in school. There are little to no times for real conversations or phone usage without getting yelled at. Yes, we should learn at school that is the true purpose, but, it almost feels like the expectations are robotic. We have jobs and other classes to balance.”

Ideas for Addressing

To address this, students suggesting listening to student voices. For example, a student shared, “I think you should try to get teachers to give students a chance of what goes on in the classrooms, the students get 0% say in what happens no exceptions, I haven't even heard of a teacher who has given

“I think you should try to get teachers to give students a chance of what goes on in the classrooms.”

their student a say in anything. Period.” Another student suggested, “I think that students should be able to use their voice more and get more respect from teachers,” while another suggested, “Listen to the kids who aren't straight A, rich, loud, athletes, with no mental illness. Instead of just the people who have similar traits to the ones above.”

District Policies and Practices

Public Forum #1

Equity Considerations

Major considerations for forum members included an unaccountable administration and abuses or power, disparities in resource and funding allocations, a lack of support and capacity for equity goals, and unclear criteria for Cultural Proficiency Team selection. For example, one member shared, *“Highly unaccountable administration - The power structure is dangerous for those who stand up for the vulnerable when the administration is the one committing the violation.”* Other members noted, *“Abuse of power.”* Members also raised concern about, *“Resource allocation. Cuts always begin with vulnerable students because they have less advocacy, less complaints, and less power.”* Another member noted, *“Equity in resources to high FRL buildings.”* Members also described, *“Support and capacity for district-wide equity goals.”* There was also concern about the Cultural Proficiency Team, for example, members discussed, *“Cultural proficiency program – very unclear at criteria for teacher selection; ineffective.”*

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address these considerations, forum members suggested holding administrators accountable by doing 360 degree reviews, presenting impact statements to the board when disparate resource allocations are being made, increasing awareness of equity across the district, prioritizing and leading the work, and establishing, defining, and clarifying criteria for coach selection. One member suggested, *“Administrative accountability. 360 degree reviews so the admin isn’t reviewed by the hierarchy, but also give voice to the community (parents, staff, students and ESC) so they can have voice.”* Another suggestion was to address resource allocation was an, *“Impact statement presented to ICCSD, school board, and admin related to cut. So when they cut they can speak to the admin or board so they can have a statement about the impact it will have on their students. So they understand the pain the students would feel.”* Members also discussed the need to prioritize and lead this work, for example, one member noted, *“Make it a priority - financially and all other ways necessary.”* Another member shared, *“It starts at the top! District leaders must embrace and model the behaviors and actions that under grid the Comprehensive Equity Plan at ICCSD.”* Members also discussed increasing awareness, suggesting, *“Knowledge of what equity is and why equity is important and how equity looks across the district, ESC, building level, classrooms, school culture/climate.”* For the last suggestion to improve Cultural Proficiency Teams, members recommended, *“Establish, define, and clarify criteria for coach selection, communicate with all applicants. Report end of year progress in programs/accomplishments. Set district and building goals.”*

“Administrative accountability. 360 degree reviews so the admin isn’t reviewed by the hierarchy, but also give voice to the community (parents, staff, students and ESC) so they can have voice.”

Public Forum #2

Equity Considerations

The concerns for this forum were racial or socioeconomic status concentration and a lack of accountability structure for equity goals. For example, a member noted, *“Geography of populations.”* Another member shared, *“You see things in our district being top down, the principals that want a diverse staff are getting a diverse staff.”* Another member stated, *“I think it’s okay to expect more from admin they are so important in our lives, especially with discipline.”*

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, members suggested distributing diversity more equally throughout the schools and setting goals and systems of accountability. For example, one member suggested, *“Distribute diversity more equally throughout the schools (attendance zones, etc.)”* Another member suggested, *“Means of reporting incidents related in inequity,”* and another suggested, *“Set goals and systems of accountability in order to further and inclusive environment for our diverse school district.”*

Students

Equity Considerations

Students raised concerns about transportation issues, segregation between Liberty and West, and voiced disapproval of school assignment policies. For example, students shared, *“The decision of specific bussing to ensure diversity at schools,”* and, *“Transportation issues may prevent student participation in extracurricular activities.”* Other concerns included, *“Segregation at a primarily white*

“Segregation at a primarily white west high school and a primarily black Liberty high school.”

west high school and a primarily black Liberty high school,” and, *“Placing all the “troubled” kids in liberty to protect West high schools good rep.”* Finally, they were concerned about boundaries, with students who noted, *“Borderlines ruining friendships and no alternate forms of transportation to schools for low income households,”* and another who noted, *“Forcing diversity due to borderlines.”*

Ideas for Addressing

Students suggested reducing segregation between Liberty and West, providing transportation assistance to extra-curricular activities, and having a more inclusive busing program. For example, a student proposed, *“If you’re trying to ensure diversity, make sure there is a mix of ethnicities and not a clear division between the two, as seen at West which is primarily white. There’s also the concern of Liberty being labeled as a bad school while west is the best, places stereotypes and prejudices.”* Another student suggested, *“I transferred to west my last two trimesters of sophomore year, upon arriving many students seemed frantic of what Liberty was like and that it was a literal war zone. They even said that fighting became less at west once the “troubled” kids went to liberty. Children should not be afraid to go to school and this only deepens the stereotype that blacks are violent and need to be separated from the white kids for their safety. Having a few minority’ kids in each class at west isn’t diversity when*

seventy percent is white. It's wrong and there needs to be a change." Students also discussed transportation, with one student who suggested, "Provide transportation assistance (busing, volunteers with cars, carpooling) to extracurricular activities," and another suggested, "More inclusive busing program."

Parents

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for parents include disparities in resource and funding allocations, attendance zones, racial or socioeconomic status concentration, and a lack of accountability structure for equity goals. One parent expressed a concern for "Limiting educational opportunities for some groups in order to correct assumed or perceived wrongs committed against other groups." Another parent said there is an, "inability of low-income students to participate in after school or other enrichment activities because of barriers like cost and transportation"

Ideas for Addressing

Parents suggested setting goals and systems of accountability, reducing class size, improving transportation, and reducing racial and socioeconomic status through changing boundaries. One parent said, "Stop redistricting students and redistribute finances instead. It is a burden to low income parents to try to get to activities at schools that are not within walking distance. Build a neighborhood school with a community." Another parent said there should be "More training, better recognition of the root cause of the behavior, more targeted responses based on the root of the issues, trying recommendations from outside professionals".

Teachers

Equity Considerations

Teachers were mainly concerned with disparities in resource and funding allocations, attendance zones, large class sizes, and racial or socioeconomic status concentration. For example, teachers shared, "Expenditure of funds across the district," "equal resources allocated for sports and staffing across buildings," and, "Buildings in "poor neighborhoods" being outdated/not even close in comparison to other buildings in "rich" neighborhoods." Other concerns included, "Redistricting," and, "Boundaries and Attendance Zones." Teachers were also concerned about, "Large class sizes," and, "Lack of socioeconomic diversity in some schools."

Ideas for Addressing

Teachers suggested several ideas to address these concerns, including equitable distribution of funding and resources, smaller class sizes, reduce racial and socioeconomic status concentration, and reduce hiring administrators and hire more teachers. For example, teachers suggested, "Give schools the support (staff, resources, funding) that they need in order for all students to have equitable experiences," and another suggested, "Looking at the needs for all buildings and starting with the neediest and working across the district so that all buildings have similar resources or capabilities." They also suggested, "Hire enough teachers to keep class sizes smaller," and, "Keep class size down,

especially in K-2 classrooms and in buildings with greater social/emotional/academic needs.” Reducing concentration in schools was another idea, for example, teachers suggested, “Continue working to adjust boundaries or consider ideas such as sister schools as a way to balance FRL between schools,” and, “Create more equitable district school lines for ALL schools, not just some.” The last ideas are in regard to staffing concerns. Teachers suggested, “Restructure or eliminate roles at the ESC to provide more in-building support and hire more teachers to make smaller class sizes so we can best serve students,” and, “There should not be such a discrepancy between what people at the ESC make and what teachers, paras, and custodial/grounds staff make... Put the money towards something the schools could use. Not another equity director/ assistant/ coach. Give it to the people who are already working hard to make the schools better and provide more materials and resources for the students instead of the ESC.”

Other Employees

Equity Considerations

The main equity considerations for other employees include disparities in resource and funding allocations and racial or socioeconomic status concentration, citing a “lack of representation at schools” and a “lack of resources to address racism in Iowa City schools.” They also said there needs to be “Transportation after clubs/sports!! So many kids rely on the bus and cannot participate in activities simply because they will not have a way to get home. Esp. the kids who are bused far (Forestview to SE, for instance).”

Ideas for Addressing

To address these concerns, employees suggest setting goals and systems of accountability, setting equitable distribution of funding and resources, and reducing racial and socioeconomic status concentration through changing boundaries. They suggest, “Making schools more balanced in racial diversity might help. Smaller classroom sizes and better training for teachers. Different approaches to behavior across the district such as restorative justice” and to “Enforce the district mission and vision requiring that all are treated equally.”

Community Members

Equity Considerations

Community members raised concerns about disparities in resource and funding allocations, racial or socioeconomic concentration, and inadequate staffing at high-needs schools. For example, members shared, “Schools in some neighborhoods have different resources than other schools,” and, “Access to different materials, programs, and funding.” Other concerns included, “Some elementary schools have very high FRL rates while some have very low FRL rates,” and, “Not having schools that are balanced economically and racially.” Community members were also concerned about staffing, with members who noted, “Inadequate staffing at high-needs schools,” and another who noted, “Not providing sufficient staff and resources to school with higher FRL rates.”

Ideas for Addressing

Suggestions from community members were reviewing attendance boundaries to balance schools socioeconomically and racially, equitable distribution of funding and resources, and reduce hiring administrators and hire more teachers. In an example, a member suggested, “Pair schools or offer magnets. Change boundaries,” and another suggested, “Maintain current school assignments and only adjust boundaries in a sensible manner.” Members also suggested, “Use a ratio or formula to determine the number of iPads, computers, etc. Example, 1 iPad for every 5 students. This way, there aren't schools that are short-changed. It is easy to tell which schools are the "rich" schools and which aren't,” and, “All schools have individual needs. If they need more money at a certain school they should have it. If the schools need more teachers they should have them.” Members also described reducing administrators to hire teachers, for example, a member suggested, “Decrease the number of Administrators, use their salaries to hire more teachers.”

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Student Climate Survey

Equity Considerations

The major consideration for students was issues with transportation, including buses being habitually late and a lack of behavior management on the buses. For example, one student shared, “I think that busses are very late all the time. My bus has never been on time. Today the bus picked my friend up over 20 minutes late. I would love if you would be able to fix this it would be very nice that my bus would be able to get me to school when the doors open,” which was echoed by another student who shared, “I think there are some problems with bus transportation, such as arrival time, what time the buses leave from school, etc.” The other issue with transportation is the behavior of students, for example, one student shared, “Bus rides are shit, the bus ride is always hectic and crazy with kids screaming out swear words, throwing things, trying to fight, walking around while the bus is moving, and standing up and playing around while the bus is moving!” Another student shared, “Every other sentence you hear on the bus or when teachers aren't around is students calling each other gay and making unfunny and offensive rape jokes. The word "f*ggot" is thrown around like confetti, as well as "r*tard." This is most common on the buses, and as far as I've been informed, nothing's been done about it.”

Ideas for Addressing

In order to address this consideration, students suggested better behavior management on buses and to provide public bus passes. For example, a student noted, “yes WE NEED BUS PASSES they stopped giving them out and I struggle to get back and forth to school.” Another student shared, “The school bus is grossly under managed.”