



# Turn it up

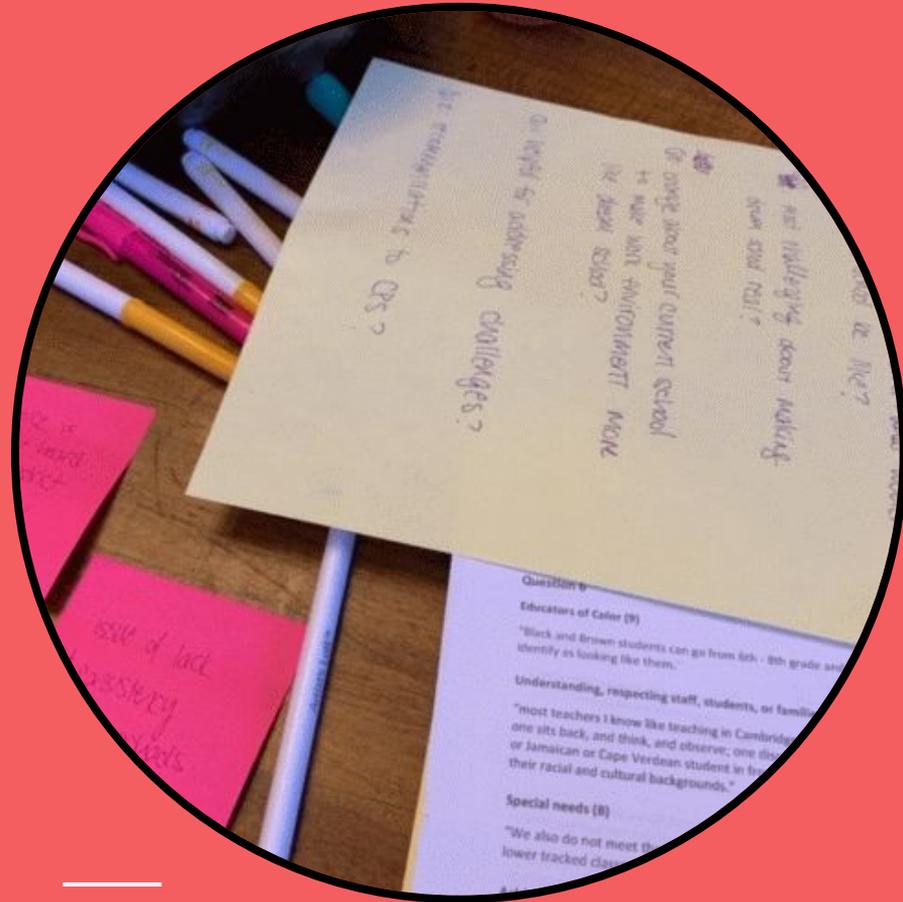
Are you ready to listen?

Teachers of color express how to make the dream school a reality...

Gisel Sallant

Christina Pressley

Nelhai



# Research Questions



How do educators of color describe their ideal school?

How do educators of color talk about the tools for change to transform their schools?

The target population for this study are self-identified educators of color teaching in CPSD (all grade levels). Educators include after school staff. Educators were recruited via personal networks and professional groups (ex. EOCC). Educators were sent emails and responded to the survey. We received 60 responses.

# Why do we care?

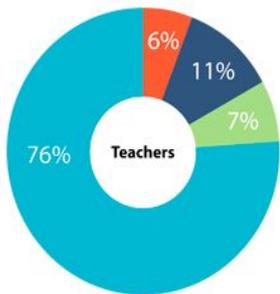


## Diversity Dashboard

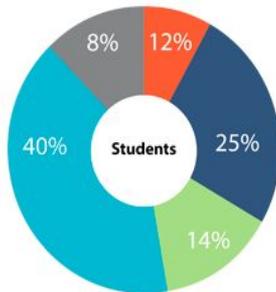
**Goal:** 30% Teachers of Color by Fall 2020

**Current Status:** 24% Teachers of Color as of October 2018.

The following charts provide a snapshot of the staff demographics within different positions in Cambridge Public Schools. Research indicates that students gain substantial academic, social, and other educational benefits when provided with diverse educators and role models. Therefore, the CPS District Plan aims to improve student outcomes by increasing the diversity of our teaching faculty to better reflect and respond to the experiences of our students.



**Male:** 21% **Female:** 79%



**Male:** 16% **Female:** 84%

“How do educators of color describe their ideal school?”

“How do educators of color talk about the tools for change to transform their schools?”

Cambridge public schools has a goal to increase the hiring of educators of color to 30% by 2020 from the current 24% .

Our research questions grew out of the concern that once that percentage is met, the initiative would be pushed to the side and the voices of educators of color marginalized.

To capitalize on the current attention, we wanted to conduct a research exercise that would ask educators of color to imagine their ideal schools and strategize about what tools might help create these schools.

The schools that educators of color imagine are reflections of their identities, experiences, and capacities

# Resistance to Change in CPS



*“No one else in America wants to see it become real. If money is still not a problem, then I suspect that support from the community and families would be dismal; social, economic, and political barriers will be put in place to ensure that the school is unsuccessful; kick-back and resistance from white peers would increase.”*

*“The parents who are the most vocal at my school are affluent, white families, who often don’t support programming solely for students of color.”*

# Survey Questions



Participants were asked these likert scale questions about their current school and then were asked a series of open-ended questions about their dream school,

LIKERT SCALE QUESTIONS: [strongly disagree / disagree / neutral / agree / disagree]

- My current school teaches students about their own histories.
- My current school values families.
- My current school values students' and teachers' identities.
- My current school staff members' identities match the identities of the student population.
- My current school has resources and support for students that have specific social needs.
- My current school provides out-of-school opportunities for all students.
- My current school supports me to build my capacity as a leader.

# An overview of themes found

Research participants:

- faced persistent barriers and challenges in their work with CPS;

# Persistent Barriers and Challenges

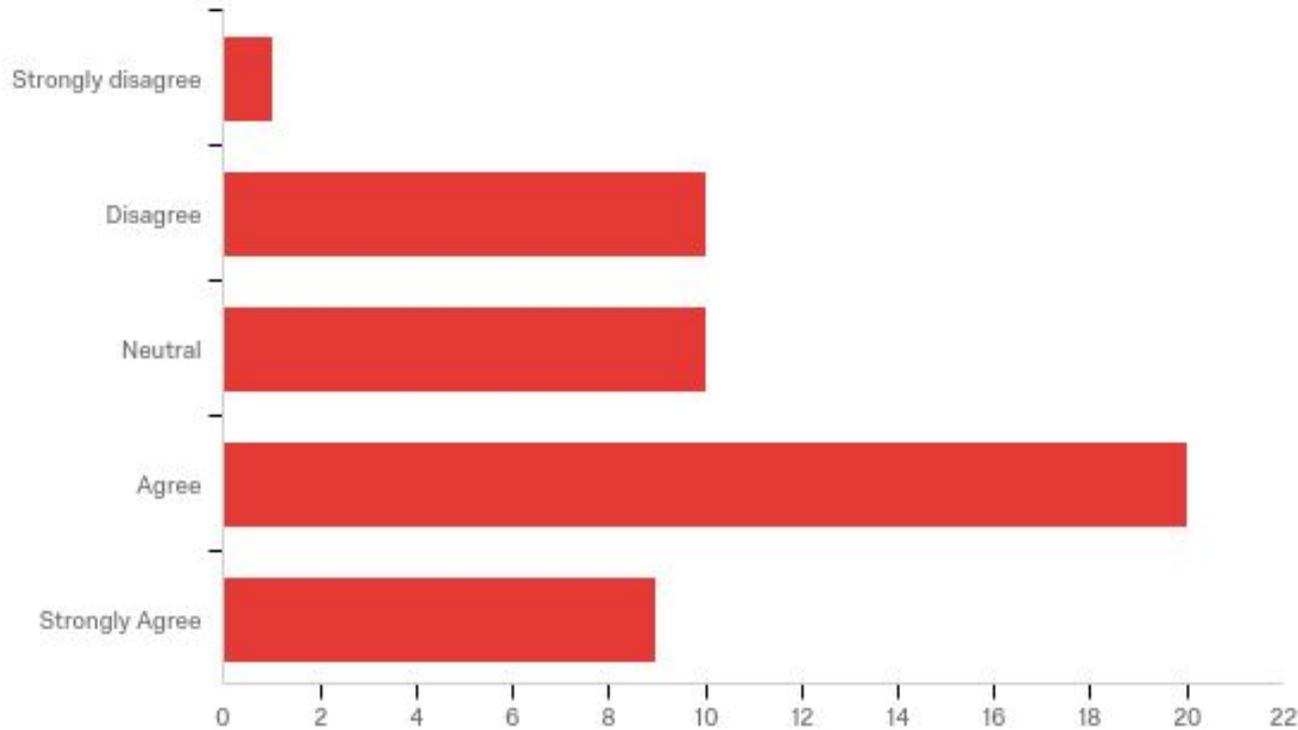


*“Black and Brown students can go from 6th - 8th grade and only have one teacher that they would identify as looking like them.”*

*“The families with money, time and opportunities have a stronger voice and influence in the school's decisions.”*

**Only 4% of educators who took this survey responded “strongly agree” to the statement, “My current school staff members’ identities match the identities of the student population.”**

“My current school values students’ and teachers’ identities.”



**Only 18% of educators who took this survey responded “strongly agree” to the statement, “My current school values students’ and teachers’ identities.”**

# Persistent Barriers and Challenges



*"It is hard to step up and say, I see a*

**Only 4% of educators who took this survey responded “strongly agree” to the statement, “My current school staff members’ identities match the identities of the student population.”**

# Connection to Families and Communities



*“Many people say that they value all children and families but still make comments that mean the opposite. Many still hold and act on ideas that posit the dominant, white privileged way of school as what insight rather than finding out about the values of the families in our communities and honoring them.”*

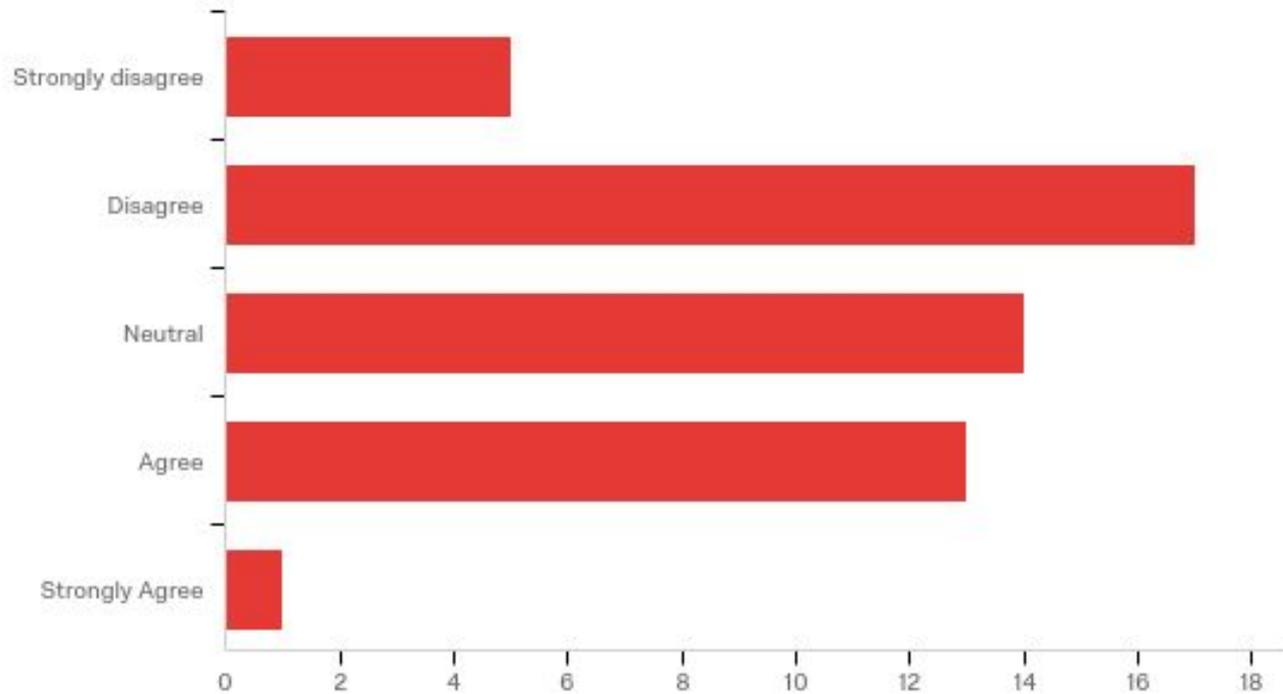
**Only 20% of educators who took this survey responded “strongly agree” to the statement, “My current school values families.”**

# Connection to Families and Communities



*"My school has us reading culturally*

“My current school teaches students about their own histories.”



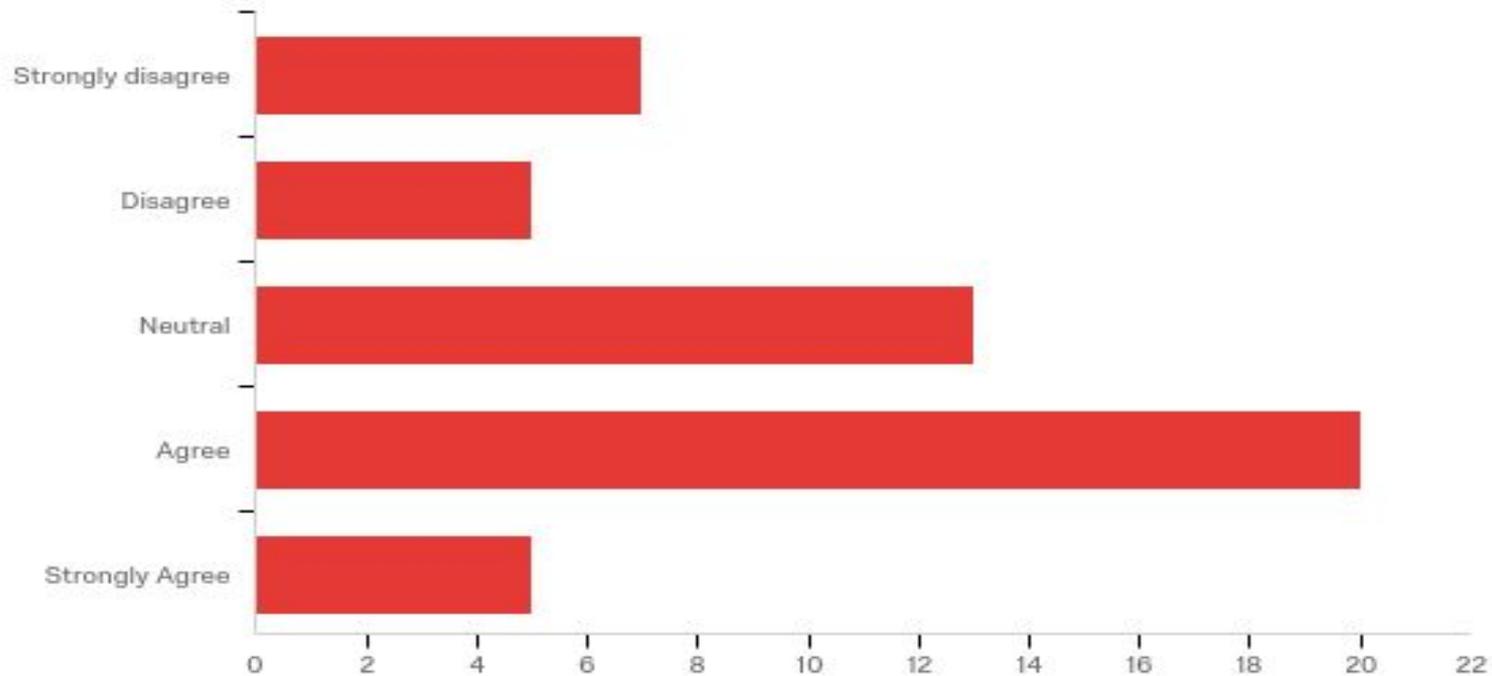
# Structure, Curriculum and Instruction



*“Listen to the classroom teachers and integrate them more directly in the decisions being made; open scheduling and opportunities to talk about these opportunities to in-school times and not relegating them to purely after school time meetings and opportunities”*

**Only 6% of educators who took this survey responded “strongly agree” to the statement, “My current school has resources and support for students that have specific social needs.”**

“My current school supports me to build my capacity as a leader.”



**14% of educators who took this survey responded “strongly disagree” to the statement, “My current school supports me to build my capacity as a leader.”**

# Resistance to Change in CPS



*“No one else in America wants to see it become real. If money is still not a problem, then I suspect that support from the community and families would be dismal; social, economic, and political barriers will be put in place to ensure that the school is unsuccessful; kick-back and resistance from white peers would increase.”*

*“The parents who are the most vocal at my school are affluent, white families, who often don’t support programming solely for students of color.”*

# What does your dream school look like?



- 1. It would include a staff that looks like me.*
- 2. It would include built in time for students to engage in small group social emotional learning*
- 3. It would include free meals for students and teachers (teachers struggle too!)*
- 4. It would include a daycare for staff with young children*
- 5. It would include more than one staff bathroom that is not located in the teacher's lounge*
- 6. It would include opportunities for parents to volunteer during the school day*
- 7. It would include a curriculum that intentionally and beautifully highlights black history, past and present*
- 8. It would include true co-teaching models in all classrooms, even special area classes*

# Conclusions



Educators of color in Cambridge Public Schools have ideas and strategies to execute their ideal school. However, their voice and ideas are routinely overlooked, due in large part to the following root causes of inequity in CPS:

- Superficial equity practices in schools and district. This relates to the reality that the curriculum that is taught does not reflect the histories of the communities we teach.
- The amplification of affluent white families in decision-making within the schools, and the how that impacts the educational attainment of students of color.
- Hiring and retaining educators of color while building the capacity of all educators in the system.



# Thank you

Jessica Fei

Gretchen Brion-Meisels

Matthew Dunkel

Ashley Barnes-Cocke

Cambridge Public School teachers, paraprofessionals, and after-school staff who dedicated time to take our survey honestly in hopes of bringing about change.