

## Message from the Superintendent

*Kenneth N. Salim, Ed.D.*

Our pursuit of school and district improvement is the pursuit of equity. Economic, social and cultural forces create conditions where some students are positioned for success, while others will need to confront obstacle after obstacle. Despite the way the odds are stacked, Cambridge Public Schools remains committed to ensuring that *each student, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or socioeconomic status will have access to the opportunities, resources, and support they need to attain their full potential (CPS Definition of Equity).*

This 2018-19 Outcomes Report represents two years of equity-driven improvement efforts. Linked by the Strategic Objectives of the [CPS District Plan](#), many initiatives have been undertaken at the levels of teams, schools, academic departments, and district. Undergirding these efforts, we have shifted away from emphasizing *intentions* to emphasizing *impact*. We measure this impact through both *quantitative* and *qualitative* data.

Educators do not go into teaching in order to become statisticians, and yet we find that quantitative measures such as attendance rates, survey results, and academic assessments provide a reality check against our perceptions of how students are doing. Quantitatively, CPS has made great strides in the majority of our outcome target areas -- demonstrating what can happen when we commit ourselves to deep analysis of outcomes data. Surveys, attendance, enrollments and MCAS scores illuminate patterns and trends that are not obvious on first impression. Through close analysis, we have identified student groups in need of greater or different support and have uncovered gaps in our curriculum and teaching methods. These changes have made a measurable difference for students.

*Qualitative* information is really another way of describing a process of listening to the stories behind the numbers. Despite strong improvement, our numbers reflect continued disparities between the achievement of students of color, low-income students, immigrant students and students with disabilities; and their peers from other demographic groups. The question that must be asked is, **why?**

Many compelling answers can be found within the findings of the [Building Equity Bridges](#) project. A joint effort between the Cambridge Public Schools and the Cambridge Education Association, funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, *Building Equity Bridges* has amplified the voices of those most affected by educational inequity. Most urgently, the voices of our students, staff and families remind us of our responsibility to hold equity and racial equity at the center of all of our continued improvement efforts.

What we hear in the voices of students, families, and faculty of color is that much more must be done to create a learning community where all students can thrive. These perspectives offer compelling evidence that CPS must persist in our efforts to support culturally responsive teaching and curricula, to design academic programs that embody inclusion and access, to hire and retain representatively diverse faculty, and to promote family engagement that creatively welcomes every community.

There is a great deal to celebrate in this Outcomes Report, but these measures are not goals in themselves. The gains we see are more akin to mile markers along the way to our ultimate destination: rigorous, joyful, and culturally responsive learning plus the social-emotional and academic supports that ensure **every student** achieves their full potential.

# Outcomes Summary<sup>1</sup>

In examining our progress toward achieving our established 2020 targets, our data illuminate many bright spots, as well as areas for continued growth as we pursued the following strategic objectives:

- Provide Equity and Access to Increase Opportunity and Achievement
- Provide Engaging Learning for Staff and Struggling Students to Strengthen Instruction for all Types of Learners
- Support the Whole Child as an Individual
- Expand and Strengthen Family Partnerships and Community Partnerships
- Improve Implementation and Progress Monitoring

## Bright Spots in our Outcomes Data:

- Improvement in academics has swiftly exceeded the targets we set for 2020 and outpaced improvements at the state level. In 2019:
  - The percentage of students Meeting/Exceeding Expectations in literacy surpassed our 2020 targets overall and across all but one demographic group, as measured by the 3rd Grade ELA MCAS.
  - The percentage of students Meeting/Exceeding Expectations in Mathematics surpassed our 2020 targets overall and across most demographic groups, as measured by the 8th Grade Mathematics MCAS.
- Between 2017 and 2019, CPS improved on seven of its outcome indicators and remained stable on three indicators, while two indicators declined.
- CPS continues to hire and retain more teachers of color through effective and sustained strategies. The number of teachers of color in front of children has increased from 178 in September 2016 to 235 in September 2019.
- Cambridge Rindge and Latin School's (CRLS) chronic absenteeism rate declined 2.5 points in one year through the development, implementation and refinement of a new Multi-Tiered System of Support plan and weekly data-driven monitoring throughout the year.
- In 2019, an additional 71 students participated in Advanced Placement (AP) exams (outpacing enrollment increases) at CRLS and scores remained stable. This indicates that students who might not otherwise have taken AP courses in the past are now attempting this higher-level work, and they are experiencing the same rates of success as their peers.
- Response rates on our Family School Climate surveys continue to rise both in total numbers and in the diversity of respondents. Our response rates well exceed national norms for surveys of this type.

## Goals for Continued Improvement:

- School climate surveys for families, staff and students will be better aligned in 2019-20 to more strategically inform school and district planning and provide results while school is still in session to enable more immediate responses.
- Student survey data is not showing improvement in the areas of student-adult relationships and school climate. We have named *relationships* as a priority area for focused strategy in 2019-20.
- Although achievement gaps are narrowing, we continue to see opportunity gaps rooted in demographics across all of our data - academic and non-academic (social emotional, absenteeism). Our continued emphasis across all improvement efforts must address equity and racial equity and closing gaps at an accelerated rate.

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<sup>1</sup> Data sources, data notes, target setting rationale and our internal progress monitoring are all documented in the Technical Notes section at the end of this report.

## OUTCOME 1: Grade 3 Literacy

*By fall 2020, increase the percentage of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on grade 3 ELA MCAS to 62% overall.*

### Related Strategic Initiatives

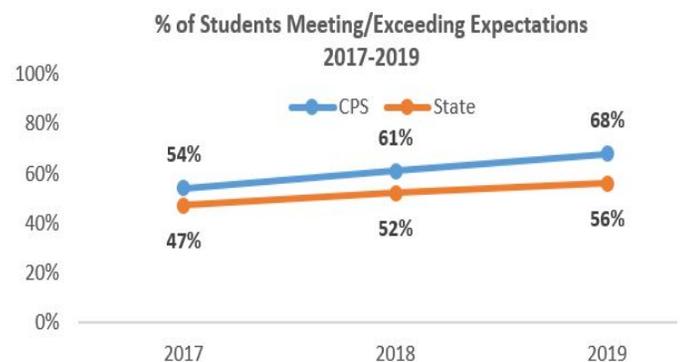
- **1.4.** Identify priority standards within the culturally relevant CPS curriculum that communicate what a student should know and be able to do by content and grade level
- **1.5.** Provide all students with access to challenging curriculum
- **2.2.** Expand [rigorous, joyful, culturally responsive learning experiences](#) across the district
- **2.3.** Establish student centered, collaborative, and transformative professional learning
- **3.2** Develop and expand effective inclusive practices in all classrooms through professional learning
- **3.4** Continue to develop multi-tiered systems of support for academic and social-emotional learning, such as Response to Intervention

### STRATEGIC EFFORTS & INVESTMENTS

- Implemented new professional learning in **culturally responsive teaching practices**
- Strengthened **systematic phonics instruction** in all schools
- Implemented **cohesive, challenging curriculum** in Grades 1 (2018-19) and 2 (2019-20)
- Increased focus on **priority standards** that include narrative, informational and opinion writing
- Offered **additional planning time** for teachers and coaches to analyze Common Interim Writing Assessments together
- Implemented targeted **Student-Centered Coaching cycles** in Grade 3
- Pioneered **new standards-aligned curriculum** in Grade 3 with 13 teachers at six schools (2019-20)

% Meeting/Exceeding Expectations on Grade 3 ELA MCAS	2017	2018	2019	2020 TARGET
<i>All Students: CPS</i>	<b>54%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>62%</b>
All Students: State	47%	52%	56%	n/a
African-American/Black Students	37%	40%	44%	47%
Asian Students	58%	73%	80%	65%
Hispanic/Latino Students	23%	49%	59%	36%
White Students	72%	72%	80%	77%
Students with Disabilities	18%	32%	39%	32%
English Language Learner (EL) Students	16%	28%	30%	30%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	32%	40%	48%	43%

Between 2017-2019, the percentage of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on the Grade 3 ELA MCAS **increased by 14 percentage points** to 68%, which is well above the state average of 56%. Moreover, all student demographic groups improved from 2017, with the performance of Hispanic/Latino students nearly tripling in this time period. We continue our emphasis on improving Tier 1 instruction by implementing a cohesive, systematic phonics program in all schools and providing all students access to a challenging, engaging literacy curriculum. Teachers and literacy coaches have collaborated to analyze student writing to plan for targeted instruction. Coaching cycles with third grade teachers are focused on goals for student learning and standards-based learning targets.



Culturally proficient and equitable teaching practices are designed to improve outcomes for *all* students. Our efforts have shifted practices in the following ways:

- Teachers are implementing impactful, culturally responsive teaching practices for all students
- We are in the final phase of implementing ELA curriculum changes in every elementary school
- Students are entering 3rd grade with a more consistent learning experience
- Writing standards have been fully incorporated in Tier 1 instruction, strengthening each student's ability to write across multiple genres
- Planning efforts reinforce the impact of looking at student work to provide specific and effective feedback to students
- Coaches and teachers are working together to improve student outcomes by setting student learning goals, planning for instruction and measuring student growth

## OUTCOME 2: Grade 8 Math

*By fall 2020, increase the percentage of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations to 52% overall and have high growth for certain student demographic groups*

### Related Strategic Initiatives

- **1.5.** Provide all students with access to challenging curriculum
- **2.2.** Expand [rigorous, joyful, culturally responsive learning experiences](#) across the district
- **2.3.** Establish student-centered, collaborative, and transformative professional learning that supports the CPS vision
- **3.2** Develop and expand effective inclusive practices in all classrooms through professional learning
- **3.4** Continue to develop multi-tiered systems of support for academic and social-emotional learning, such as Response to Intervention
- **4.4.** Pursue and expand partnerships with businesses, higher education, city, and community organizations that are aligned with school and student needs

### STRATEGIC EFFORTS & INVESTMENTS

- Focused on **Tier 1 Inclusive Instructional practices** including ambitious instructional routines
- **Revised upper school curriculum** and added new resources aligned to Massachusetts Math Frameworks
- **Prioritized Instructional Coaching** focused on equitable practices
- **Enhanced Summer Math Program/Vacation Camps**
- Established regular **Professional Learning for Interventionists K-8**
- Created **professional learning opportunities and observation tool focused on equity** and building capacity of all stakeholders to examine racism and injustice in the math classroom
- Established [Upper School Math Common Agreements](#)
- Continued **partnership with Lesley University** to expand professional learning opportunities for upper school math educators, specifically focused on the math content and practice standards, ensuring effective pedagogy using aligned resources
- Supported coaches and teachers in creating **effective number talks** by training, modeling, videotaping, and creating opportunities for lesson study groups and reciprocal educator feedback with consultants
- Initiated and **expanded use of online CPS testing platforms and software** for student competencies in technology

Grade 8 Math MCAS	% Meeting/Exceeding Expectations				MCAS Growth			
	2017	2018	2019	2020 TARGET	2017 Growth	2018 Growth	2019 Growth	2020 TARGET
<i>All Students: CPS</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>53%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Moderate</i>
All Students: State	48%	50%	46%	n/a	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	n/a
African-American/Black Students	10%	30%	29%	25%	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Asian Students	60%	74%	76%	67%	Moderate	Moderate	High	
Hispanic/Latino Students	29%	38%	38%	41%	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
White Students	70%	77%	72%	75%	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	
Students with Disabilities	15%	21%	18%	29%	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Economically Disadvantaged Students	16%	28%	30%	30%	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High

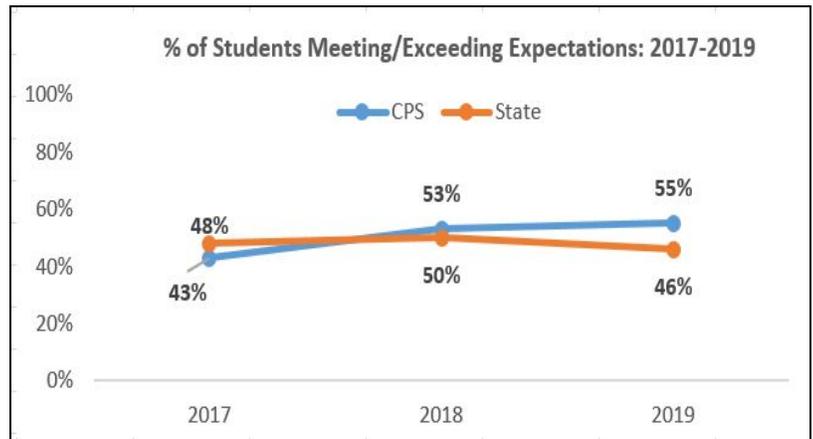
The percentage of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on Grade 8 Math MCAS **increased by 12 percentage points to 55% in 2019**; between 2017 and 2019, the state decreased by two percentage points. In 2019, all students and

all student groups experienced moderate or high growth, which was an improvement from the baseline year in which all students and some student groups experienced low growth.

To continue to build on this progress, the CPS Mathematics Department created a [CPS Mathematics Department Strategic Plan](#) in June 2019. This plan outlines the strategic objectives for the math department over the next 3-5 years.

The five strategic objectives include:

- Provide equity and access to increase opportunity and achievement in mathematics
- Provide rigorous, joyful, and culturally responsive learning for students & staff to strengthen instruction for all learners,
- Provide experiences to show teachers, families and children that they can enjoy and succeed in math ( for example: [You Cubed- Boaler](#) - Building a Mathematical Mindset Community)
- Engage family and community members in school & district math initiatives
- Monitor & advocate for implementation of the strategic plan.



The CPS Mathematics Department is using a multipronged approach to support student learning experiences by aligning curriculum and instruction to Massachusetts expectations and culturally responsive practices that provides all learners with equitable access. Learn more about these efforts in the document [Equity and Access in Math Education](#).

By restructuring the upper school program (creating heterogeneous learning environments), revising the curriculum maps, providing educators with rich learning opportunities, and focusing on equitable practices, we are starting to see positive student achievement results and positive growth patterns for all students and all student groups. Our continued partnership with the Office of Student Services and collaborative learning opportunities will continue to close the performance gap between all students and particularly students with disabilities.

## OUTCOME 3: Advanced Placement (AP) and Advanced Coursework Enrollment

*By fall 2020, increase the percentage of grade 10-12 students enrolled in at least one AP and/or honors course to 89%, increase the number of students taking AP exams to 513 students, and increase the percentage of students receiving a score of 3 or higher on AP exams to 87%.*

### Related Strategic Initiatives

- **1.1** Create a district-wide system for setting goals with students that support their postsecondary success and aspirations. Connect students to supports within and outside of school, and reflect on and monitor progress with students, teachers, families, and partners
- **1.5** Provide all students with access to challenging curriculum and technology, such as the Grade 9 Level Up and CRLS 1:1 programs
- **2.2.** Expand [rigorous, joyful, culturally responsive learning experiences](#) across the district
- **4.1** Engage families as partners
- **4.4.** Pursue and expand partnerships with businesses, higher education, city, and community organizations that are aligned with school and student needs

### STRATEGIC EFFORTS & INVESTMENTS

- Recruited students from **ALL** (not just Honors) US and World History classes by Deans of Curriculum
- Increased availability of **financial support**
- Offered caregiver/student **information meetings**
- Held guidance staff conversations at **youth centers**
- Provided **HN AP Move Up option**
- Introduced **Level Up** in Grade 9 and Grade 10
- Planned support opportunities: **Math Summer Preview, Year-long Before & After School, April School Vacation Week, May Days**
- Collaborated with partners: **Microsoft, Upward Bound, Work Force, CSV**

Percentage of Grade 10-12 Students Enrolled in at least 1 Honors and/or AP Course by Demographic Group	2017	2018	2019	2020 TARGET
<b>All Students: CPS</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>89%</b>
African-American/Black Students	59%	65%	67%	
Asian Students	91%	93%	94%	
Hispanic/Latino Students	66%	67%	68%	
White Students	88%	88%	91%	
Economically Disadvantaged Students	60%	62%	64%	
Students with Disabilities	33%	39%	42%	

Number of Students Taking AP Exams	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 TARGET
<b>All Students</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>513</b>
African-American/Black Students	31	38	48	46	40	
Asian Students	50	61	74	68	72	
Hispanic/Latino Students	23	24	32	23	36	
White Students	197	216	220	187	245	
Economically Disadvantaged Students	28	38	58	55	72	
Students with Disabilities	4	2	7	6	12	

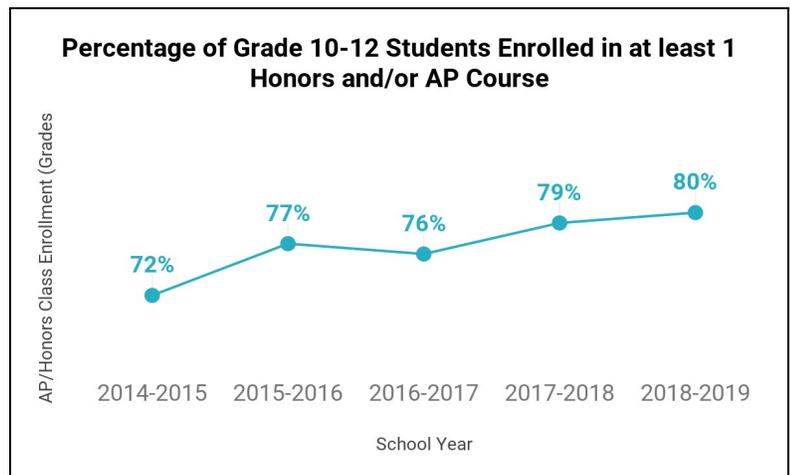
Percentage of AP Tests Taken with a Score of 3-5 <sup>2</sup>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 TARGET
<b>All Students: CPS</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>All Students: State</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>67%</b>	
African-American/Black Students	78%	54%	47%	45%	48%	
Asian Students	75%	74%	76%	80%	74%	
Hispanic/Latinx Students	87%	77%	82%	74%	72%	
White Students	91%	90%	90%	90%	89%	
Economically Disadvantaged Students	73%	57%	59%	63%	56%	
Students with Disabilities	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	90%	

Advanced coursework enrollment at CRLS is **steadily growing**, but AP test taking saw a significant one-year increase, from **362 students to 433 students** (though not all demographic groups experienced increases). With this significant participation increase overall, the percentage of students earning a 3-5 remained stable - yielding a net increase in the *number* of students earning a 3-5, if not percentage. This is a positive trend, given that expanding enrollment alone does not guarantee more students will be able to meet the requirements of AP. Other communities, outside of CPS, have seen their passing rates decline when they expanded enrollment.

Fundamental to this progress is that CRLS staff encourages students to enroll in challenging coursework. Students choose their own courses and are not restricted in terms of the number of AP courses they can take. Deans of Curriculum, teachers, and guidance counselors encourage students to participate in appropriate classes using data points such as GPA, MCAS scores, AP Potential, and observations of studentship skills. Once in the class, students are supported through the classroom teacher, online resources and test prep through myap.collegeboard.org, tutoring through Cambridge School Volunteers, teacher-run test prep sessions, and through external supports such as test prep at Harvard CHANCE. Some classes also offer preview programming over the summer.

**ELA:** Department members are currently developing a year-long ELA 11 to AP Language experience. Cohorts of students will work with the same ELA teachers to complete both courses. Teachers will actively recruit students to participate in these cohorts, based on AP Potential Scores and 10th Grade ELA teacher recommendations, by hosting open houses during their classes, organizing panel discussions with current students and offering a session for parents prior to the February Curriculum Night.

**History:** The year-long model of AP United States History (APUSH) has been changed from an identified cohort of historically underserved students taking Honors US History I in semester 1 and APUSH in semester 2 to a cohort of students taking a year-long Advanced Placement course. A new AP course was added: AP Human Geography. These additional courses coupled with increased student interest and confidence to take AP level courses contributed to the increase in the number of students taking an AP History class. In SY 2018-19, 265 students took an AP History course and SY 2019-2020 the number increased to 364 students taking an AP History course.



**Math:** The Math department has implemented an initiative called Math Move-Up. This enables teachers to identify students who demonstrate qualities that suggest they would do well in an Honors level class. These students are then moved into an Honors level class for second semester, increasing access for students who have not typically enrolled in these higher level classes. The goal is to introduce these students and get them comfortable with advanced math classes, creating a natural path for them to take AP classes, and hence AP exams.

<sup>2</sup> Data Source: Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

**Science:** CRLS Science is piloting three initiatives in AP Science, which are expected to further boost AP enrollment in 2020-21. First, AP Physics is now being offered as two separate courses, AP Physics 1 & 2, due to changes made by the College Board. Second, 9th graders who were enrolled in Algebra 2 or higher were invited to enroll in AP Physics 1 this school year. While not yet reflected in this report, we expect that opening AP Physics 1 to more students will result in higher enrollment in AP Physics 2 in subsequent years. Third, we're piloting a cohort model of 10th and 11th graders taking HN Biology in the fall followed by AP Environmental Science in the spring. Once again, it is expected that a positive experience within this cohort model will result in students feeling further supported to continue their AP endeavors in subsequent years.

There are 365 AP Science seats in 2019-20 compared to 292 last year. Although it is not expected that each of those 73 additional seats will translate into a new student taking an exam, the high number of seats will be filled by AP Science exam takers. There are only two AP Science courses currently performing below this goal. AP Physics 1 has been identified by the College Board as an exam with disproportionately low scores nationwide. The AP Physics 1 teachers have been equipped with resources from College Board to help boost scores at CRLS. AP Environmental Science has also been a historically low scoring exam for CRLS. One of the AP Environmental Science teachers has agreed to expand the tutoring program developed last spring to better prepare students for the May exam.

## OUTCOME 4: Percentage of Teachers of Color

By fall 2020, increase the percentage of teachers of color by 7 percentage points to 30%.

### Related Strategic Initiatives

- **1.2** Embed ongoing cultural proficiency professional learning for all CPS educators
- **1.3** Implement the [Dynamic Diversity program](#) to recruit, hire, and retain a CPS workforce that reflects the diversity of Cambridge

### STRATEGIC EFFORTS & INVESTMENTS

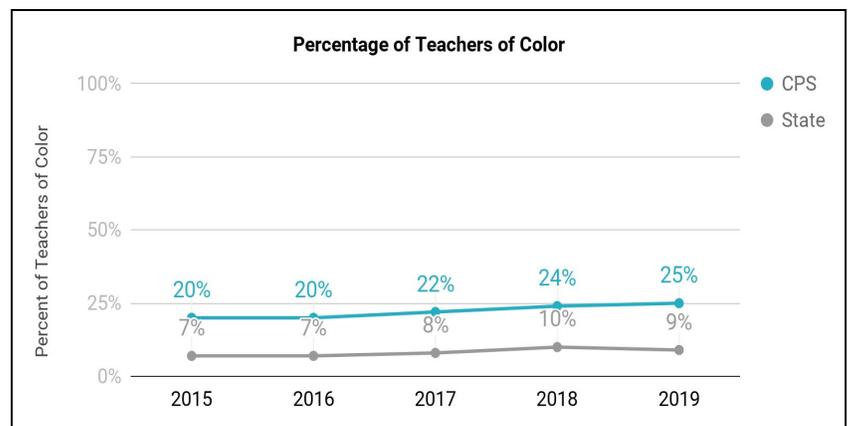
- Continued focus on **reducing the impact of implicit bias** on the interview and hiring process
- Created district-wide race-based **affinity spaces for educators**
- Created **Project Elevate**: paraprofessional-to-teacher pipeline program
- **Heightened visibility** for CPS's equity and diversity efforts on our website and in the media

Percentage of Teachers of Color	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 TARGET
<i>% Teachers of Color: CPS</i>	20%	20%	22%	24%	25%	30%
<i>% Teachers of Color: State</i>	7%	7%	8%	10%	9%	

In 2019, CPS **increased its percentage of teachers of color to one-quarter** of all teachers. This translates into 178 teachers of color in front of children in September 2016 to 235 in September 2019. With the exception of some charter schools, CPS has the second highest percentage of educators of color in the state after Boston Public Schools.

Under the leadership of the Director of Diversity Development, we continue to elevate the visibility of the Cambridge Public Schools as a compelling employer to a diverse array of candidates via recruitment fairs, networking events, social media presence, and participation in local and regional education networks.

Following an overhaul of our job descriptions in 2017-18, implicit bias training to district administrators, and refinements to our interview and selection processes to mitigate the presence of bias, we have welcomed **two consecutive cohorts of new teachers within which over 44% identify as people of color**. With Project Elevate now entering its second year of creating a pipeline from paraprofessional to teacher, CPS is actively investing in staff of color to pursue the educator licensure process and be positioned to be teachers in Cambridge.



## OUTCOME 5: School Climate

*By fall 2020, improve student, staff, family perceptions of engagement, instruction and community support.*

### Related Strategic Initiatives

- **1.2** Embed ongoing cultural proficiency professional learning for all CPS educators
- **3.1** Implement a PK-12 social, emotional, and behavioral learning framework and vision
- **3.2** Develop and expand effective inclusive practices in all classrooms through professional learning
- **4.1** Engage families as partners with a formal, ongoing feedback mechanism that creates differentiated opportunities for family voice and engagement

### STRATEGIC EFFORTS & INVESTMENTS

- Worked with family engagement partners on **outreach efforts** aimed at increasing response rates
- **Launched staff** school climate surveys
- Facilitated the use of school climate data in **School Improvement Planning**
- Prioritized professional development on supporting **non-binary and transgender students** based on prior year survey data
- **Launched CRLS/High School Extension Program (HSEP) School Climate Working Group/Advisory Team**

Perceptions of schools' social and learning climate	Family Survey			Upper School Student Survey			Staff Survey	
	2018	2019	2020 TARGET	2018	2019	2020 TARGET	2019	2020 TARGET
<b>Overall Favorable Rating of School Climate</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>55%</b>
African-American/Black Respondents	76%	70%		45%	42%		57%	
Asian Respondents	83%	81%		56%	54%		50%	
Hispanic/Latino Respondents	79%	74%		46%	47%		62%	
White Respondents	78%	77%		49%	45%		54%	
Students with Disabilities (or their Families)	74%	72%		50%	48%		N/A	
English Learner (EL) Respondents	90%	90%		69%	80%		N/A	

Family Survey Participation Rates	2018	2019	2020 TARGET
<b>Overall Survey Participation Rate</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>45%</b>

CPS has partnered with a national school climate survey provider Panorama Education to support our efforts to measure and improve climate in the district and across schools for students, families and staff. 2018-19 marked the second year of implementation of family and student surveys and the first year of staff surveys. Family perceptions of school climate have been stable over the two years of surveys, with approximately **three-quarters of responding families assessing school climate favorably**. Upper school students' assessment of school climate is less favorable and declined between 2018 and 2019. Since educators' perspectives on climate were gathered for the first time in 2019, we do not have any longitudinal data on which to measure progress.

Schools were supported through coaching to understand their results by demographic group and year-over-year for the family and student surveys to identify strengths and areas for improvement that could be addressed through their School Improvement Planning (SIP) process. At the district level, these surveys also identified areas of celebration and ongoing need, particularly around differing perceptions of school climate based on demographics, which point to the continued need for our equity and cultural proficiency professional learning happening at all levels across the system. These data also augmented and supported the qualitative data collected through the Building Equity Bridges project.

In 2019-20, we will be administering surveys earlier to better align with the SIP process to enable these streams of data to better inform goal setting and progress monitoring. 2019-20 will also include the expansion of a CRLS/HSEP School Climate Working Group launched in the spring of 2019. CRLS/HSEP educators, students, administrators, and caregivers will be encouraged to add their voices and perspectives to the expanded Working Group/Advisory Team and will be charged with two tasks: (1) review data (including personal experiences) to identify patterns & trends related to current school and climate; and (2) determine, recommend, help implement, monitor and assess short & long term norms, support, and interventions designed to promote, enhance, and sustain a positive school climate for all members of the CRLS/HSEP school communities.

## OUTCOME 6: Students' Meaningful Connections with Adults

*By fall 2020, increase students' meaningful connections with adults by six percentage points as measured by the Teen and Middle School Health Surveys.*

### Related Strategic Initiatives

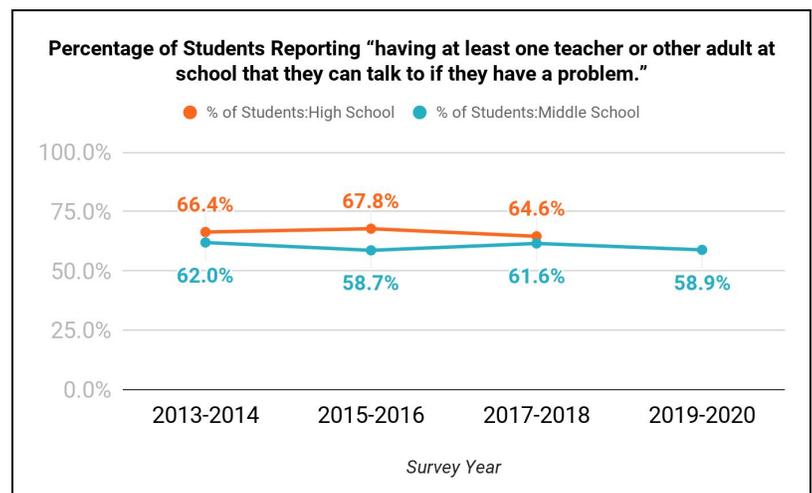
- **3.1** Implement a PK-12 social, emotional, and behavioral learning framework and vision
- **3.3** Improve student engagement by strengthening student experiences in all classrooms, improving existing programs, exploring mentorship programs, and providing relationship building professional learning

### STRATEGIC EFFORTS & INVESTMENTS

- Identified as a **district priority** for 2019-20
- **Featured** Colloquium speaker who kicked off the year asking educators to think deeply about relationships
- Formed a cross-district team to **develop a strategy** for this outcome
- Leveraged learning from **Building Equity Bridges** project
- Improved **Advisory** for upper schools and CRLS
- Introduced **Girls' and Boys' Groups**
- Shifted upper grade **health curriculum and pedagogy** to emphasize skill building

	High School				Upper Schools <i>*2019 data embargoed for public release until 12/4</i>			
	2014	2016	2018	2020 TARGET	2015	2017	2019*	2019 TARGET
Percentage of Students Reporting "having at least one teacher or other adult at school that they can talk to if they have a problem."								
<b>% of All Students</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>67.8%</b>	<b>64.6%</b>	<b>73.8%</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>61.6%</b>	<b>58.9%</b>	<b>67.6%</b>
Male Students	64.4%	66.6%	62.0%		61.4%	63.2%	58.7%	
Female Students	68.7%	69.3%	67.6%		56.5%	60.7%	58.9%	
African-American/Black students	61.0%	61.9%	60.8%		58.5%	55.0%	52.3%	
White Students	73.4%	75.3%	69.5%		55.9%	66.9%	61.7%	
Hispanic/Latino Students	65.2%	68.2%	61.3%		72.1%	66.0%	62.7%	
Asian/Pacific Islander Students	61.0%	62.2%	65.3%		46.4%	64.0%	55.1%	
Bi-Racial, Mixed or Multi-Racial Students	64.6%	68.2%	66.4%		63.2%	60.1%	59.8%	

In spring 2019, upper school students participated in the Middle Grade Health Survey and **approximately six out of ten respondents indicated they have at least one teacher or other adult at school that they can talk to** if they have a problem, down from 61.5% in 2017. Moreover, all student groups saw a decline from 2017. In response to this decline, Upper School Health teachers are in the process of developing lessons for 6th, 7th and 8th grade health classes that will walk students through identifying the characteristics of what they believe a "meaningful adult" to be and the reasons one might need a



“meaningful adult” as a resource, both in and out of school.

Given the importance of relationships, CPS has established “Foster trust and relationships that support a positive student-centered culture” as a district priority in 2019-20. Our keynote speaker at this year’s Colloquium, Dr. Dena Simmons, kicked off our year asking all educators to think deeply about how they build relationships with students and a cross-district team has been working this year to develop a strategy for this outcome, utilizing the recommendations from the [Building Bridges Equity Project](#) as a launching point.

All Upper Schools and CRLS are using data to design interventions to increase students’ connectedness to adults. Upper School use of Advisory time is improving, and professional learning focused on skilled facilitation of advisory programs continues to be offered. CRLS is starting boys’ and girls’ groups to increase both psycho-education regarding wellness and mental health, and to build a sense of mutuality and connectedness.

In upper grade health classes, CPS is undergoing a shift in curriculum and pedagogy to bring greater focus on skill building in the following areas: decision making, effective communication, analyzing influences, accessing valid and reliable resources, and advocacy. This shift reflects National Health Education Standards and indicators. Second Step, an evidenced-based Social Emotional Learning curriculum is heavily relied upon as a tool for guided instruction in the upper grades. By providing direct instruction and authentic opportunities to practice these skills in a classroom, there is a greater likelihood students will employ them in all aspects of their life.

Professional learning opportunities for staff and administrators play a key role in strengthening student experiences in classrooms. For example:

- Professional Learning provided by Developmental Designs (DD) has been offered in the district since 2007, and a total of 400 teachers and administrators within the district have participated. This summer the DD institute will be offered again and will address all three grade spans.
- Mindfulness 1 and 2 courses are being offered in the fall and spring, to support educators’ capacity to bring mindfulness approaches to their teaching.

Some elementary and upper schools and most recently CRLS have brought PBIS, *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports* into their school community. PBIS provides a structure, a myriad of tools and training which supports the “alignment of systems, practices, and data to work together to promote positive and predictable school environments” (PBIS). When students, teachers and families have clearly defined and consistently applied behavioral and academic expectations along with a common language for communication, the educational environment for all students improves.

## OUTCOME 7: Chronic Absenteeism

By fall 2020, decrease chronic absenteeism by 3.2 percentage points to 14.0%.

### Related Strategic Initiatives

- **2.4.** Support student, educator, school and district innovation through the Design Lab, in order to improve student success
- **3.1** Implement a PK-12 social, emotional, and behavioral learning framework and vision
- **3.3** Improve student engagement by strengthening student experiences in all classrooms, improving existing programs, exploring mentorship programs, and providing relationship building professional learning
- **3.4.** Continue to develop multi-tiered systems of support for academic and social-emotional learning, such as Response to Intervention
- **4.1** Engage families as partners with a formal, ongoing feedback mechanism that creates differentiated opportunities for family voice and engagement

### STRATEGIC ACTIONS & INVESTMENTS

- Formed a CRLS team to meet weekly to analyze and **review data**, collect **feedback from students** via design sessions and surveys, contact local districts/programs to learn **best practices**, and create a **landscape of resources** to identify gaps in support. All of this informed the development of the **CRLS Multi-Tier Action Plan**. Some additional steps taken were:
  - Updated **procedures** to ensure accuracy of attendance data
  - Created a plan to **support teachers**
  - **Communicated earlier and daily** with families
  - Created a **Data Dashboard** of students who were chronically absent as a learning tool
  - Developed **Personalized Learning Plans at the High School Extension Program (HSEP)**
  - Created **plans for specific seniors** and individuals in demographic groups
  - Created a **revised Attendance Violation (AV) policy**
- **Created and sent weekly data to all district schools** on their daily attendance rate and chronic absenteeism rate with historical data
- **Created and sent monthly lists of students who were chronically absent** and chronically tardy to district schools to inform the ongoing work of Student Support Teams

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent (10% or more of days missed)	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 TARGET
<b>% of Students Chronically Absent: CPS</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>17.2%</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	<b>14.0%</b>
<b>% of Students Chronically Absent: State</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	
African-American/Black Students	16.2%	16.2%	19.9%	21.1%	19.2%	
Asian Students	15.6%	15.5%	18.1%	18.8%	17.5%	
Hispanic/Latino Students	20.8%	23.3%	23.5%	24.1%	24.9%	
White Students	13.9%	14.2%	14.4%	13.6%	13.8%	
Economically Disadvantaged Students				25.9%	25.3%	
Students with IEPs				24.8%	24.9%	
EL Students				18.2%	16.3%	

In 2018-19, the district saw a **slight decrease** in the percentage of chronically absent students, from 18.0% to 17.6%. During the 2018-19 school year, a design team met weekly at CRLS, given the school's relatively high chronic absenteeism rate in 2017-18. This team included high school administration, deans of students, and other district staff. The design team also incorporated ideas from design sessions with clerks, safety staff, and students. The main focus of this team was to dive into the following design challenge: How might we decrease chronic absenteeism through

improved procedures and increased community engagement? In the end, the team developed a multi-tiered approach to tackling chronic absenteeism and saw a decline in the percentage of students who were chronically absent in 2018-19, **decreasing its rate from 30.6% to 28.1%.**

## TECHNICAL NOTES

All data can also be found on our online [data dashboard](#). The technical notes that follow are intended to provide information on how targets were initially established with School Committee through a series of retreats and meetings facilitated by the District Management Group. This section also provides insights into how we routinely monitor these data internally both throughout the year and over the course of this three-year period within the district and within each school.

### OUTCOME 1: Grade 3 Literacy

**Target Setting Rationale:** Spring 2017 was the new baseline for MCAS given the shift to Next Generation, which means that we did not have historical data on which to base our targets. We therefore relied on the state's ESSA plan (Every Student Succeeds Act) to inform our thinking about MCAS target setting. The state's ESSA plan sets out to reduce proficiency gaps by one-third over six years, so the district's target was based on this methodology.

**Outcome Monitoring:** In addition to the ongoing formative assessments in which teachers are engaged, FastBridge reading screeners are used to monitor students' reading profile and progress on discrete reading skills throughout the year. At the end of the year, the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) reading assessment is used to assess overall reading proficiency, including independent reading levels and whether students are reading on grade level. Writing assessments are also administered to students in the fall and winter to assess students' skills overall and in specific areas of writing. All of these data are used in the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process to plan for interventions and enrichment at the individual, small group and whole class levels.

**Data Source:** Massachusetts Department of Secondary & Elementary Education (DESE)

**Data Notes:** *Economically Disadvantaged* changed from Low Income in 2015. The current methodology is calculated based on a student's participation in one or more of the following state-administered programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); the Transitional Assistance for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC); the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) foster care program; and MassHealth (Medicaid).

### OUTCOME 2: Grade 8 Math

**Target Setting Rationale:** Spring 2017 was the new baseline for MCAS given the shift to Next Generation, which means that we did not have historical data on which to base our targets. We therefore relied on the state's ESSA plan (Every Student Succeeds Act) to inform our thinking about MCAS target setting. The state's ESSA plan sets out to reduce proficiency gaps by one-third over six years, so the district's target was based on this methodology.

DESE has stated that SGP differences of 10 points or more are likely educationally meaningful; because of this, DESE emphasizes the use of SGP performance bands: very low growth (1-19), low growth (20-39), moderate/expected growth (40-59), high growth (60-79), and very high growth (80-99). Therefore, we focused target setting for growth on growth bands rather than absolute numbers.

**Outcome Monitoring:** In addition to the ongoing formative assessments in which teachers are engaged, students are assessed on classroom-level standards-based end-of-unit assessments, as well as two standards-based common interim assessments in the early winter and early spring. All of this data are used to plan for interventions and enrichment at the individual, small group and whole class levels.

**Data Source:** Massachusetts Department of Secondary & Elementary Education

**Data Notes:** In 2018, the state shifted calculating and reporting SGPs from medians to means.

English Learner (EL) students do not appear as a demographic group for grade 8 math because their numbers are too small for reporting.

### OUTCOME 3: Advanced Placement (AP) and Advanced Coursework Enrollment

**Target Setting Rationale:** The target set for the number of students taking AP exams was established based on historical patterns. To achieve these targets, special attention is being paid to the AP/Honors pathways and preparation of traditionally under-represented subgroups.

**Outcome Monitoring:** Disaggregated course enrollment is tracked and shared throughout the year to ensure CPS is meeting this goal.

**Data Source:** Advanced coursework data is collected through scheduling data in our Student Information System, Aspen. AP data is collected by the College Board and publicly reported by the Massachusetts Department of Secondary & Elementary Education.

### OUTCOME 4: Percentage Teachers of Color

**Target Setting Rationale:** This target was previously set by the School Committee.

**Outcome Monitoring:** CPS staff collect and monitor disaggregated hiring and retention data and review this data regularly.

**Data Source:** These data are collected in CPS's internal HR data system and DESE also reports on these data publicly once a year (which is where we get state comparisons).

**Data Notes:** N/A

### OUTCOME 5: School Climate

**Target Setting Rationale:** These targets were set in consultation with our survey provider, Panorama Education. Since we did not have a baseline on which to set targets, we needed to have a year of data in order to set a target.

**Outcome Monitoring:** Many schools have internal measures for monitoring climate data. At the district level, we do not have a means by which to monitor how these data are moving throughout the year, aside from process-oriented measures and more qualitative feedback loops.

**Data Source:** Panorama Education

**Data Notes:** The demographic categories on our family survey changed between 2018 and 2019 to make the selections more reflective of families identities, so these data are not entirely comparable between the two years.

The staff survey climate measure only has a two-year target given that 2019 was the first year of the survey.

A large percentage of teachers opted out of identifying their race/ethnicity, so demographic breakdowns are not fully representative of groups' perceptions.

### OUTCOME 6: Students' Meaningful Connections with Adults

**Target Setting Rationale:** According to our survey partner, Social Science Research & Evaluation, Inc. (SSRE), natural variation in the data averages about 1-3 percentage points. Deliberate strategies intended to target this outcome should yield a change in the order of four percentage points or more over time. In looking at our historical trends and national norms, the established targets were recommended by SSRE. In consultation with School Committee, these targets were increased to reflect a six percentage point gain over the time periods above. These data are collected every other year in middle schools and in CRLS, so different target dates exist for each data point.

**Outcome Monitoring:** The annual school climate survey has questions related to this measure that we track annually.

**Data Source:** [Cambridge Teen & Middle Grades Health Survey](#)

**Data Notes:** The survey committee changed the way this question was asked in the 2018 survey. The question changed from a choose one type question to a choose all that apply type question. Following the Center for Disease Control's guidance on how to calculate a single race/ethnicity variable from the multiple items, the race/ethnicity cross tabulations may be more prone to fluctuation in 2018 and 2019.

The Middle Grade survey is not administered in 2020, so 2019 is being used as the target year since this is when the survey will be administered.

## OUTCOME 7: Chronic Absenteeism

**Target Setting Rationale:** DESE's Planning for Success resource guide on "Selecting Outcome Measures and Setting Targets" indicates that typical change for chronic absenteeism over three years is a 1.0 percentage point decrease. Given the district's attention on this outcome and strategies related to it, we would expect to see a decrease that is double that of typical districts. In consultation with School Committee, this target was further increased to be reduced by 3.2 percentage points over three years to 14.0% in 2020.

**Outcome Monitoring:** The district generates a weekly report to analyze overall attendance rates. In fall 2017 chronically absent rates were added to this report. On a monthly basis, schools are provided with student-level spreadsheets flagging students who are chronically absent. Schools are also able to generate chronic absenteeism reports from the district's Student Information System (SIS), Aspen.

**Data Source:** Internal attendance data is collected via Aspen, but publicly reported annually by the Massachusetts Department of Secondary & Elementary Education.

**Data Notes:** CPS uses the state definition of chronic absenteeism, which is students missing 10% or more of days.