



Cahn

**DISTINGUISHED
PRINCIPALS FELLOWSHIP**

“Diversociety” - Common Ground

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the profound concept of being physically present yet emotionally disconnected within a community, characterized by feelings of invisibility, isolation, and a pervasive sense of unwelcome. The paper is grounded in the recognition of these experiences within our school community, which has ignited our commitment to cultivating an environment rooted in principles of equity, inclusivity, belonging, and acceptance.

Within the pages of this paper, we embark on a journey to understand the motivations and strategies that underpin our school's transformation. Our goal is to transition toward an educational ecosystem where our values take center stage. We aim to shed light on the pivotal role they play in fostering a more harmonious and supportive learning environment. As we navigate the complexities of this endeavor, we continue to uncover how a shared dedication to equity, inclusivity, belonging, and acceptance can reshape the very fabric of our school community.

We will explore how our values can serve as catalysts for change and inspire a collective commitment to dismantling barriers that breed emotional disconnection. Ultimately, this paper seeks to chart a course towards a more empathetic and united school community where every individual, regardless of their background or experiences, can thrive in an atmosphere of true belonging and support.

INTRODUCTION

Our Cahn project represents a pivotal juncture in our school's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, extending its reach to encompass our valued teachers, students, and parent community. Guided by a rich tapestry of both informal and formal data, these actions emerged as a culmination of a journey I embarked upon when I first assumed the role of principal. Over the years, we engaged in conversations surrounding issues of race, delved into the narratives underlying the civil unrest we experienced, and undertook initiatives with our staff. While these endeavors bore fruit, I recognized a pressing need for a clearer vision, purposeful direction, and a more robust strategy that ensures a lasting presence in our pursuit of an inclusive and equitable educational community.

Oscar Mayer Elementary School, nestled in the heart of Lincoln Park, is an educational institution spanning from Pre-4 to 8th grade. The confines of Mayer's attendance boundary, delineated by census tracts, boast the highest average median family income among all attendance areas in the Chicago Public Schools. Remarkably, the entirety of this attendance area bears the distinguished label of "Tier 4," signifying its place of affluence within the four-tiered socioeconomic framework frequently employed in the selection processes of magnet schools—a framework designed to promote socioeconomic diversity.

At Oscar Mayer, we take pride in serving a student body of 703 young minds. It is important to note that we accord preference to students who live within our attendance

boundary. Once these seats have been allocated, we extend enrollment to families residing across our city.

Our commitment to delivering an exceptional education is exemplified through our distinctive programming, tailored to suit various grade levels. Beginning with Pre-K4 through 3rd grade, our school embraces the Montessori approach—an educational philosophy championing experiential learning and self-directed exploration. As our students progress into 4th and 5th grades, they encounter our Intermediate curriculum, designed to equip them with the foundational knowledge and skills essential to their academic journey. The culmination of our academic offerings is our International Baccalaureate middle years program, offered to students in grades 6 through 8, which is celebrated for its emphasis on international-mindedness and holistic development.

Our student body encompasses a multitude of backgrounds, with 67% White, 10% Latinx, 8.2% as Black, 5.5% as Asian, and 9.3% categorized under other ethnic backgrounds. Additionally, 10.6% of the students we have the privilege of serving are identified as coming from low-income households, while 9.4% are classified as diverse learners who receive specialized support tailored to their unique needs. Furthermore, 1.5% of our student population are designated as limited language learners, further emphasizing our commitment to inclusive and equitable education.

Our dedication to student success extends beyond the classroom, encapsulating factors such as student mobility and truancy. With a modest mobility rate of 3.6%, we ensure stability and consistency in the learning experience. In addressing truancy concerns, we are actively engaged, working diligently to maintain a healthy learning environment with a truancy rate of 14.5%.

After the installation of the International Baccalaureate and Montessori Programs in 2008 (see Appendix A), the community of our students drastically changed. These two programs were essential in attracting neighborhood families to Mayer; consequently, these programs significantly changed the student demographics, as well as the culture of the school. Before the new programs in 2007, Mayer's student body totaled 520 students with 56% black, 24% Hispanic, 11% White, and 71% of students from low-income families (Illinois School Report Card, 2007). Within the changed demographic population, Mayer has reduced not only the numbers of non-White students, but negatively impacted the sense of belonging that non-White students feel at Mayer.

Our data was collected primarily from student surveys that included kindergarten to eighth grade students. One survey was initiated by the Climate and Culture team in the 2022 school year that involved kindergarten through eighth grade. The next survey was the Student Perspectives survey which was conducted by our Behavior Health Team in the 2023 school year and also included kindergarten through eighth grade. Additionally, Chicago Public Schools uses two surveys from the University of Chicago. One is the 5Essentials Survey which is administered

once a year to fifth through eighth grade, and measures five important organizational conditions (Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Ambitious Instruction, Supportive Environment, Involved Families) to determine areas that need to be addressed to improve student outcomes. In the past year, we have also added the Cultivate Survey from the University of Chicago. This survey is administered to fifth through eighth grade students twice a year. The survey asks students to reflect on their mindset and strategies, as well as their classroom learning environments across nine Learning Conditions (Affirming Identities, Classroom Community, Feedback for Growth, Learning Goals, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Supportive Teaching, Teacher Caring, Well-Organized Classroom). All of these surveys gave us a baseline from which we could springboard our work.

The Climate and Culture Survey in 2022 (see Appendix B) asked the students questions around their voice, feeling understood, having a trusted adult, feeling safe in learning, and a sense of belonging. In all areas, Black and Latinx students predominantly reported a lack in all of the listed areas. In 2023, the Behavior Health team conducted a similar survey asking students if they liked to come to school (see Appendices C, D, E), if they had a voice, do they see students bullied for different reasons such as race or being part of other marginalized populations. According to this data, our Black student population, and our Latinx population reported the highest levels of discomfort, and not feeling heard. Additionally, the reasons for being bullied were predominantly around race, mental disability or identifying as part of the LGBTQ community.

The Cultivate Survey of 2023 (see Appendices F, G, H) asked the students questions around seeing themselves in the things they learn, as well as teachers using examples from different races, cultures and communities to teach subjects. In both of these areas of questions, 20-28% of students answered that they did not feel this way at all, they felt this was a little true or somewhat. Then, when asked if they felt that classes were comfortable places for them to share their thoughts and opinions, 28-35% of the students again said not at all, a little, or somewhat true.

The survey data revealed significant disparities in students' experiences based on their racial and ethnic backgrounds. Black and Latinx students reported feeling lacking in voice, understanding, trust in adults, safety in learning, and a sense of belonging. Additionally, there were reports of bullying, primarily targeting students based on their race, mental disability, or LGBTQ+ identity. Furthermore, the Cultivate Survey indicated that a substantial percentage of students did not feel adequately represented in their learning materials and felt uncomfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions in class.

In summary, the introduction of specialized programs at Mayer School in 2008 led to demographic changes and significant disparities in students' experiences, particularly for non-White students. The survey data highlighted areas where improvements are needed to create a more inclusive and supportive school environment.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

I have been the principal at Oscar Mayer for 8 years. In my first year as the principal, we received an Inspector General report. To provide additional context about our problem of practice, on April 17, 2018, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a performance review of Oscar Mayer Magnet Elementary School's PreKindergarten (pre-K) admissions process and issued Report Number: 08- 0326-EX5. Based on the performance review, the report makes several key findings and recommendations regarding Mayer's school-type and admissions process.

- As a magnet school with an attendance area, Mayer is the only elementary school to give attendance-area children priority in receiving two years of free, full-day Montessori Pre-K.
- Mayer draws from the most affluent attendance area in the city.
- The Pre-K program at Mayer provides families with free Montessori education equivalent to a \$30,000 per student tuition based program in the private sector, and costs taxpayers more than \$700,000 per year.
- Despite this investment, some Oscar Mayer Pre-K students later leave CPS for private schooling and/or relocating to suburban districts.
- Because of the high demand from attendance area students, students residing outside of Mayer's attendance boundary have very little chance of being offered a seat in the Montessori Pre-K program at Mayer.
- The 2007 CPS application for a federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) grant indicated that Mayer would be a citywide magnet school.
- Despite the MSAP grant application, Board report 08-0326-EX5 converted Mayer into a magnet school with an attendance boundary instead of a citywide magnet school.
- At the request of former Board President Rufus Williams, additional language was added to Board Report 08-0326-EX5, for CPS to conduct and file an annual demographics assessment of Mayer with the Board Secretary annually before September 1st.
- In the 10 years since the magnet school conversion with an attendance boundary, no annual demographics assessment has ever been filled with the Board Secretary.
- In the 10 years since Mayer has been converted into a magnet school with an attendance boundary, its racial and socioeconomic composition has become much less diverse. Mayer's student population has shifted from predominantly African-American to a predominantly white student population from the highest socioeconomic tier.

In response to the report, district leaders initiated a series of community engagements. Initially, the primary aim was to disseminate information about the report, particularly in light of its media coverage. Subsequently, a dedicated parent committee was established to collaborate closely with the district in pursuit of solutions. The smaller committee convened multiple times and subsequently organized a large community meeting to deliberate on the course of action. As one might anticipate, these developments stirred significant unrest within our community, leading to discernible divisions among parents.

Within the parent community, opposing viewpoints emerged prominently. Some parents expressed a strong desire for our school to function primarily as a neighborhood school. They articulated that they had chosen to reside in this area with the intention of providing their children access to a high-quality neighborhood school. Conversely, others advocated for our school to retain its magnet status, serving students from across the city. These discussions were marked by intense emotions, exacerbated by the racial undertones inherent in some of the perspectives expressed.

Fast-forwarding to the present year, while progress has been made in resolving issues pertaining to the Early Childhood program, challenges surrounding magnet enrollment practices remain unaddressed. This lack of resolution has left a lingering sense of unease and concern within our community, with many individuals revisiting and reevaluating the conversations and tensions of the past.

Moreover, over the past few years, we have observed a rise in middle school behaviors that include incidents of student bullying, inappropriate comments related to race and LGBTQ issues, and a general deficit of empathy and kindness among our students. These actions have prompted us to conduct a thorough examination of our middle school culture, with a focus on enhancing our approach to addressing these concerns through our social and emotional learning curriculum, the implementation of restorative practices, and, notably, the introduction of advisories this year. The latter serves as a deliberate and strategic effort to cultivate relational trust and foster positive connections among our students.

Lastly, in addition to the factors mentioned earlier, my leadership journey at Mayer has been marked by unique challenges, particularly related to what I perceive as a problem of practice. I often grapple with the role of being the visible representative of our school's initiatives and the potential implications this may have on my leadership. Notably, prior to my tenure, our school had been under the leadership of two white principals. I am honored to be the first Black principal to assume a contract at our school. However, regrettably, I have found that considerations of race permeate every decision and leadership action I undertake. I consistently weigh the impact of my choices and how they are perceived and received by our parent community.

Our project seeks to answer the question, “ How can we establish and nurture an environment in which every student feels embraced, valued, and honored within our school community? What resources and support are required to foster a profound sense of connection among our students?” Addressing this problem presents an opportunity to grow as a leader by honing skills in empathy, conflict resolution, and fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. It also offers a chance to build capacity within the school community by promoting a culture of open dialogue, emotional intelligence, and collaboration, which can lead to improved overall well-being and a more productive learning environment.

To track progress toward the goal of improving emotional safety and well-being, we will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures, including:

- Surveys and feedback from students, staff, and parents to gauge their perceptions of emotional safety and well-being within the school.
- Regular assessments of disciplinary incidents and bullying reports to measure changes in behavior and conflict resolution.
- Observations and assessments of classroom and school-wide practices related to emotional safety and inclusion.
- Review of academic performance data to determine if emotional well-being improvements correlate with academic success.
- Documentation of specific initiatives, programs, or workshops implemented to enhance emotional safety and their impact on the school community.
- Monitoring attendance and participation rates in events or activities focused on well-being and inclusion.

These measures will provide a comprehensive view of our progress, allowing us to adapt and refine strategies as needed to achieve our goal of a more emotionally safe and supportive school environment.

METHODS

My journey to tackle this problem of practice commenced after the conclusion of our community meetings. Following the outcomes of these meetings in June 2019 and the extensive engagement from our stakeholders, a parent who had attended these sessions reached out via email to introduce me to the National SEED project. The National SEED project collaborates with communities to facilitate self-reflection, structured conversations, and relationship-building aimed at effecting systemic change through a comprehensive analysis. Intrigued by the potential impact of this initiative, I decided to send my former assistant principal for SEED training.

Upon her completion of the training in August, 2019, our aim was to involve staff and parents on a voluntary basis in monthly SEED sessions during the 2019-2020 school year. However, initial participation was limited, prompting us to explore avenues for expanding our reach. At the end of the school year, we decided to further our discussions. We decided to initiate a community book study during our summer break, delving into the book "Between the World and Me" by Ta-Nehisi Coates. As we prepared for another year of sessions, my assistant principal transitioned to a principalship. In response, I collaborated with three parents who had previously participated in SEED sessions. Together, we utilized SEED resources to sustain our sessions for SY 2020-2021, even though parent engagement remained modest.

Regrettably, due to limited staff capacity and the unforeseen impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff-led sessions had to be discontinued due to the school closure. We encountered the transition from in person discussions to an online format, which was hard on participation. The numbers stayed the same, despite hopes for increased family participation.

Our work with parent SEED leaders persisted in 2021 and 2022. We adapted the format to provide a safe space for families to process the civil unrest gripping our country. Additionally, our learning was anchored in the New York Times series titled "Nice White Parents." At the conclusion of our meetings in May & June of 2022, I recognized an opportunity to foster a more robust community presence by establishing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee through our Local School Council. In August, 2022, the formation of this committee took place and we utilized the past year as a planning phase to chart our initiatives for the future. Throughout my tenure, my commitment to addressing the issues within our school community has remained unwavering.

RESULTS

The results of our collective work outlined above are as follows:

1. Introduction of SEED Program: The introduction of the National SEED project and subsequent SEED training for staff members and parents marked a proactive step toward fostering self-reflection, structured conversations, and relationship-building within the school community.
2. Initiation of SEED Sessions: Despite initial challenges with limited participation, SEED sessions were successfully initiated, providing a platform for dialogue and self-exploration among participants.
3. Community Book Study: The introduction of the "Between the World and Me" book study allowed for a deeper exploration of issues related to race and identity, contributing to a more informed and empathetic community.
4. Formation of DEI Committee: The creation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee through the Local School Council demonstrates a commitment to sustaining efforts aimed at addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns within the school.
5. Formation of a student advisory group: The creation of a student advisory group allowed me the opportunity to partner with middle school students to review and analyze data from surveys, to engage in conversations with students around student interactions and learn more about student experiences to determine what student-led initiatives could be implemented.
6. Planning for Future Initiatives: The planning phase undertaken by the DEI committee sets the stage for future initiatives and strategies aimed at further enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within the school.

The outcomes of the actions taken on my part as a leader have had both personal and community-wide impacts:

Personal Outcomes:

- Leadership Growth: My involvement in addressing the identified issues within the school community has led to personal growth as a leader. I have developed skills in empathy, conflict resolution, and fostering an inclusive environment.
- Commitment to Equity: My commitment to addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns has become a central aspect of my leadership identity, emphasizing the importance of these values within our school.

Community-Wide Outcomes:

- Increased Awareness: The introduction of SEED sessions, book studies, and the formation of the DEI committee have contributed to increased awareness and understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues within the school community.
- Community Engagement: While there have been challenges, these initiatives have engaged a portion of the parent community in meaningful discussions about these critical issues.
- Adaptation and Responsiveness: The ability to adapt initiatives in response to current events, such as civil unrest, demonstrates a commitment to addressing the evolving needs of the school community.

Impact on School, Teachers, and Students:

- Teachers: The actions have influenced teachers by encouraging a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion within their teaching practices. This, in turn, has the potential to create a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment.
- Students: While the impact on students may not be immediately measurable, the school's commitment to addressing these issues can contribute to a more empathetic and inclusive school culture over time.
- School Community: These initiatives have sparked conversations and self-reflection, which are essential steps toward fostering a more inclusive and empathetic school community.

Expected Outcomes vs. Actual Outcomes:

The expected outcomes of these initiatives were to raise awareness, foster open dialogue, and lay the groundwork for a more inclusive and empathetic school community. While progress has been made in these areas, it is acknowledged that there have been challenges, such as limited participation and disruptions due to the pandemic. The expected outcomes were to initiate the process of change, and the actual outcomes reflect a beginning rather than a final destination.

Evidence of Impact: To document and demonstrate the impact of these initiatives, evidence can be gathered through:

- Surveys and Feedback: Collecting feedback from participants in SEED sessions, book studies, and DEI committee meetings to gauge changes in awareness and attitudes.
- Disciplinary Data: Analyzing disciplinary data to assess any changes in behavior or incidents related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Academic Performance: Tracking academic performance data to determine if the focus on these issues correlates with improvements in student outcomes.
- Observations and Documentation: Keeping records of classroom practices and school-wide initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Participation Rates: Monitoring participation rates in SEED sessions, book studies, and DEI committee meetings over time.
- Qualitative Accounts: Gathering qualitative accounts from staff, students, and parents regarding their experiences and perceptions related to these initiatives.

While the impact may not always be immediately quantifiable, a combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence can provide a comprehensive picture of the progress made and the ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive and empathetic school community.

Fellow Reflections and Future Plans

My participation in the Cahn's Distinguished Principals Fellowship arrived at a pivotal point in my leadership journey, significantly influencing not only my leadership style but also leaving a profound impact on me personally. The insights I've gained about myself, the underlying motivations for my decisions, and the ways in which my leadership actions affect others have been transformative. Through the assessments and class sessions, each facet has revealed a deeper understanding of my inner workings, illuminating my strengths and charting a clear path toward addressing areas for personal and professional growth.

A year later, I find myself occasionally reflecting about the lessons I learned in our first Cahn session, the trip to Gettysburg. In this session, I learned how important it is for a leader to have a clear and concise vision, be an effective communicator, the need to be more decisive in some situations, and finally the importance of inspiring my team. This session prompted deep reflection and revealed key areas of leadership growth that I continue to challenge myself on a year later.

Our third Cahn's weekend stands out to me as I found the topics particularly those related to systems thinking and the theory of action, equipped my ally and I with invaluable tools, resources, and gave us dedicated time to delve deeply into our complex problem of practice, which possesses numerous layers. This session offered a structured framework that facilitated problem definition and the formulation of next steps. The groundwork laid in this session served as a navigational guide that allowed my ally and I to engage in meaningful conversations and continued to help refine our focus.

The collaborative working sessions, such as the one with Carolyn and Jeff, gave my ally

and me the opportunity to not only absorb new content but also witness practical examples and, crucially, apply our learning. In many instances, time, space, and opportunities for such practical work are limited, making these sessions, even in a virtual format, immensely valuable.

The sessions with Dr. Perkins were profoundly impactful, with a particular highlight being the one focused on culture and climate. During this session, we were tasked with creating visual representations, using pictures, images, or symbols, that encapsulated the essence of our school's culture and climate. It was during this activity that I had an eye-opening realization about how my personal biases or perspectives might inadvertently hinder our school's growth. This visual representation provided a framework for understanding the powerful influence of our collective perceptions and biases on our school's trajectory. It underscored the importance of fostering a more inclusive and objective understanding of our school's culture and climate as a vital step toward improvement and progress.

The fellowship has been instrumental in developing and honing several leadership competencies that have had a significant impact on my school's performance and transformed my leadership approach:

1. **Strategic Planning:** Through the program, I've developed a deeper understanding of strategic planning, particularly in identifying areas of improvement within our school. This competency has allowed me to set clear goals, chart a course of action, and allocate resources effectively.
2. **Inclusive Leadership:** The program's emphasis on diversity and inclusion has enhanced my ability to lead inclusively. I've learned to foster an environment where diverse perspectives are valued, resulting in a more inclusive and equitable school culture.
3. **Effective Communication:** Improved communication skills have been a direct outcome of the program, particularly in terms of articulating a clear vision, providing guidance, and facilitating open and constructive dialogue within the school community.
4. **Adaptive Leadership:** I've become more adaptable as a leader, capable of adjusting strategies and approaches to meet evolving challenges, thanks to the insights gained from Cahn Fellowship experiences.
5. **Collaboration and Relationship Building:** My ability to collaborate and build strong relationships within the school community has been strengthened through interactions with mentors, allies, and peers. These connections have been instrumental in driving change within the school.
6. **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** The program's focus on data analysis and evidence-based decision-making has empowered me to make more informed choices regarding school initiatives and strategies.

As a result of the project undertaken during my fellowship, our school's performance has seen tangible improvements. Notably, there has been enhanced clarity of vision and direction, leading to increased staff and student engagement. The emphasis on diversity and inclusion has contributed to a more harmonious and productive learning environment, benefiting both students and teachers.

My leadership approach has undergone significant transformation. I've become even more reflective, self-aware, and receptive to feedback. The fellowship has taught me to lead with empathy, recognizing the diverse needs of our school community. My interactions with mentors, allies, and peers have provided valuable insights and fresh perspectives, shaping a more inclusive and collaborative leadership style. The hands-on experience with the project has bolstered my confidence in implementing change and has made me a more effective leader in fostering a positive and dynamic school culture.

Throughout this year, I've had the privilege of witnessing remarkable growth in my Ally's leadership capabilities. Our partnership was characterized by a shared dedication to professional development and the enrichment of leadership skills.

Over the course of the year, I consistently provided my Ally with valuable mentorship, offering guidance, insights, and a secure platform for open and candid dialogue. This mentorship experience not only contributed to her growth as a leader but also strengthened our partnership, fundamentally changing how we collaborate.

I also made a deliberate effort to empower my Ally by actively involving her in decision-making processes related to our project and school initiatives. This hands-on involvement enabled her to make well-informed choices and provided continuous opportunities for her leadership skills to flourish.

Throughout our journey, we remained committed to fostering a culture of ongoing feedback and reflection. We engaged in regular discussions about our successes and areas where improvement was needed. This feedback loop not only promoted self-awareness and growth for my Ally but also contributed to my own personal and professional development.

Together, these collaborative efforts have led to significant progress in my Ally's leadership journey and have enriched our partnership, ultimately benefiting our project and our school community.

Ally Reflections and Future Plans

Participation in the Cahn Fellowship has impacted my understanding of how my biases and the strengths/areas of growth that I bring to the work have and continue to impact my relationships with others, as well as the complexities of adult development for inquiry cycles.

One of the most impactful sessions for me was the time spent with Dr. Hacking about NBI and understanding my thinking preferences. Despite having done similar analysis with different tools, this time I could not only talk with my principal, but talk with similar thinking leaders about how their thinking preference has impacted their work. Additionally my principal and I were able to talk about the different thinking styles that we had, and brainstorm how we as opposite sides of the four square impact our administrative team and its level of functioning. We have since reflected on each others' needs, as well as potential needs of the team members' thinking perspective after giving them the same survey.

Dr. Riehl's session on Systems Thinking and Equity pushed my principal and I to sit down and take time to analyze how our systems are caught or stuck by our own biases, or deficit thinking. We were able to draw a picture and color code our views of why things haven't changed, and dig through how changing systems at Mayer that hold students back have been stilted. We were able to see more clearly the obstacles that have prevented us from taking action, and consider this for our future work.

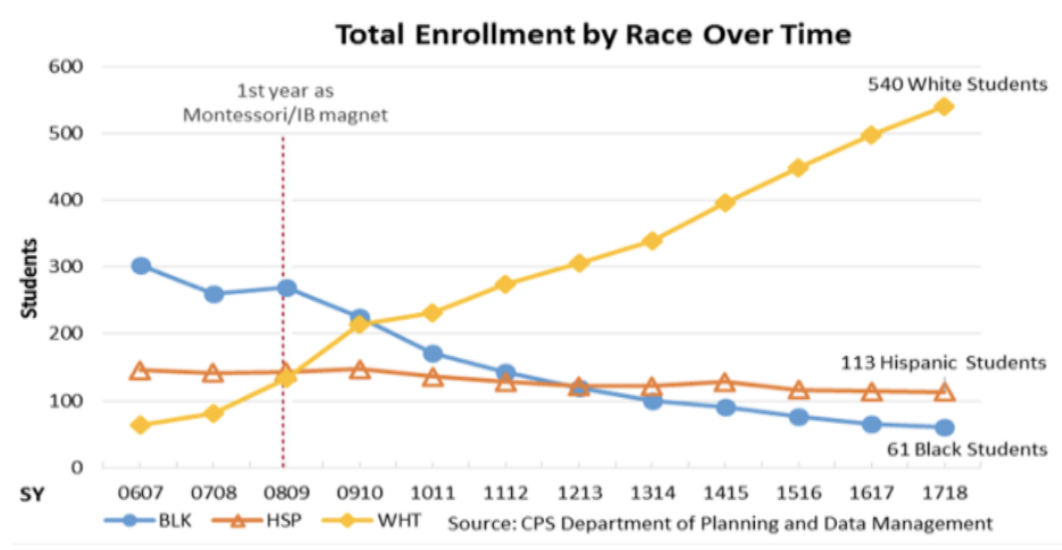
Another impactful part of my learning during our Cahn sessions was with Dr. Drago-Severson and the readings around developmentally approaching teaming and engagement in difficult conversations. The framework she provided allowed my principal and I to reflect on the different teams within our building and their readiness for accomplishing aspects of the work that we need to do in order to create the learning community that we envision. We could think about how our work could move forward by considering the current capacity of teams, and what we would need to push them to their next edge of growth. For me, part of that is listening. For me, the session on Feedback was instrumental in considering how I can use my learning in listening to inform the way that I provide feedback to my team members. The ways of knowing that Dr. Drago-Severson shared gave me a sense of how different individuals function in their view of the feedback process.

The impact that Cahn has had on the school's performance can be seen in the action steps that we are taking to prioritize the necessary windows and mirrors, culturally responsive teaching approaches and focus on community building that has taken place over the past year and a half. The Cahn Fellows experience has given my principal and I the opportunity to look into ourselves, each other and cultivate a stronger understanding of who we are as leaders, as well as take the time to dig deep into our value systems so that we can move the needle on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work that is desperately needed at our school. We have prioritized a Culture and Climate Team at our school through our strategic plan, while also establishing routines and norms that push our staff to think about identity, as well as celebrate differences in actions such as assemblies and celebrations across the school.

In summary, the CAHN Fellowship has not only expanded my leadership skills but has also facilitated a transformative journey of self-awareness, bias recognition, and equity-driven action within our school community.

Appendix

Appendix A



Appendix B

Student Culture and Climate Survey SY2022 3rd Quarter

Race	% of students who Strongly disagree/disagree that they have voice	% of students who don't feel they have people at school who understand them as a person	% of students who don't feel they have an adult to count on	% of students who do not feel safe learning in person at school	% of students who do not feel they belong at school
Asian	30%	9.52%	14%	5%	10%
Black	42.86%	39.29%	25%	11%	1%
Latinx	12.50%	22.50%	20%	12%	33%
White	20.43%	17.11%	14%	10%	15%

Prefer not to share	41.38%	37.93%	28%	28%	37%
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Appendix C

Student Perspectives Data SY23

Do you like to come to school?

	Strongly dislike/dislike	Like/Strongly Like
Black	45%	55%
Latinx	34%	66%
Asian	24%	76%
Multi-race	14%	86%
White	23%	77%

Appendix D

Student Perspective Data SY23

Do you feel your voice is heard?

	No	Yes
Black	35%	64%
Latinx	25%	75%
Asian	20%	80%
Multi-race	20%	80%
White	20%	80%

Appendix E

Student Perspective Data SY23

Do you see students bullied for...?

	Cultural Background, race, religion, ethnicity	Mental disability	LGBTQ
Black	21%	15%	14%
Latinx	9%	17%	19%
Asian	12%	12.5%	8%
Multi-race	0%	5%	0%
White	58%	52%	58%

Appendix F

Cultivate Data SY23

I see positive examples of people like me in the things we learn:

		Answered previous questions in ways that demonstrate need to develop stronger mindset	Answered previous questions in ways that demonstrate a strong mindset	
20% do not most of the time	Not at all	3	8	26% do not most of the time
	A Little True	5	7	
	Somewhat True	12	11	
	Mostly True	28	26	
	Completely True	51	47	

Appendix G
Cultivate Data

Teacher uses examples from different races, cultures and communities to teach this subject:

		Answered previous questions in ways that demonstrate need to develop stronger mindset	Answered previous questions in ways that demonstrate a strong mindset	
24% do not most of the time	Not at all	8	7	28% do not most of the time
	A Little True	6	6	
	Somewhat True	10	15	
	Mostly True	23	25	
	Completely True	52	47	

Appendix H
Cultivate

Classes are comfortable places for me to share my thoughts and opinions:

		Answered previous questions in ways that demonstrate need to develop stronger mindset	Answered previous questions in ways that demonstrate a strong mindset	
28% do not most of the time	Not at all	6	11	35% do not most of the time
	A Little True	7	11	
	Somewhat True	15	12	
	Mostly True	35	29	

	Completely True	37	36	
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Acknowledgements

I wanted to acknowledge and thank my advisors. Their guidance has been instrumental in shaping and reshaping my perspective, both regarding myself and the problem of practice. They served as an invaluable thought partner, offering an outsider's viewpoint that often reveals unexplored ideas or perspectives that demand reflection. Also, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my Cahn cohort, Tenacious 20, for their unwavering support, encouragement, and the professional motivation they provided throughout this journey.