

# Achievement Gap Ten Year Attack Plan

Wissahickon Public Schools

School Board Meeting Presentation - September 12, 2016

# District Academic Goals

- ▶ As a district we have academic, extracurricular and character education goals
- ▶ Tonight's emphasis is on the academic
- ▶ Our three ultimate academic goals:
  - ▶ *Each and Every Student* will Strive for Excellence
  - ▶ *Each and Every Student* will Experience Academic Success
  - ▶ *Each and Every Student* will Succeed in Life after High School

# How to achieve our Academic Goals

QUESTION: How do we plan on meeting the needs of *each and every student*?

1. Differentiated Instruction...every day, every classroom, every student
2. Post-Graduation “Mission Uptick”—my challenge to WHS
  1. College Placement Excellence Plan--“Best Fit” is the key!
  2. Promote and celebrate other non-college options if that is the best fit
  3. Data gathering will be a challenge...and very important
3. Achievement Gap Ten Year Attack Plan

# The Achievement Gap

- ▶ For our purposes, the “Achievement Gap” is taken to mean:  
“Students from certain demographic groups are more likely to achieve at lower levels than other students.”
- ▶ There is nothing to be gained from finger pointing or assigning blame for what may or may not have happened in the past.
- ▶ We are moving forward, positive and committed.

# The Attack Plan Philosophy

- ▶ We are setting out to attack this achievement gap based on the following philosophy:
  - ▶ Research shows us there is no one, single, overnight, meta-solution. As Christopher Jencks puts it:
    - ▶ “If we want to reduce poverty, joblessness, illiteracy, violence, or despair, we will surely need to change our institutions and attitudes in hundreds of small ways, not in one big way.” (*Rethinking Social Policy*, P. 203)
  - ▶ We are just one school district, focused on ~ 4,500 students every year. We aren’t equipped to address all of society’s needs, but we are prepared to address the needs of *each and every student* in Wissahickon.

# The Attack Plan Philosophy (continued)

- ▶ We are going to attack the problem from multiple angles
- ▶ We are embarking on a ten year, focused commitment
- ▶ We are creating a flexible document and plan, subject to regular re-evaluation, assessment and adjustment as necessary
- ▶ We will communicate every step of the way
  - ▶ Community meetings
  - ▶ Superintendent's community advisory group (Attack Plan Advisory Council-"APAC")
  - ▶ School Data Team meetings
  - ▶ Regular updates at public board meetings

# Achievement Gap History in Wissahickon

- ▶ **Prior to 2015-16 School Year:** Many sincere, formal and informal and (some) successful efforts to close the gap were undertaken. Not enough of these efforts were sustained.
- ▶ **2015-16 School Year:** Observe, talk, listen, research, analyze and plan
- ▶ **2016-17 School Year:** Launch the Achievement Gap Ten Year Attack Plan

# Data - The Demographic Picture

What do we have in front of us now, in 2016?

Ethnicity	# Students	Percent
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4	0.09 %
Asian	593	13.63%
Black/African American	431	9.90%
Hispanic	273	6.27%
Multi-Racial	242	5.56%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	0.07%
White	2806	64.48%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>4352</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Program	# Students	Percent
ESL	118	2.71%
Free/Reduced Lunch	893	20.52%
Spec. Ed.	796	18.29%
“Gifted”	417	9.58%



# Data - The Demographic Picture

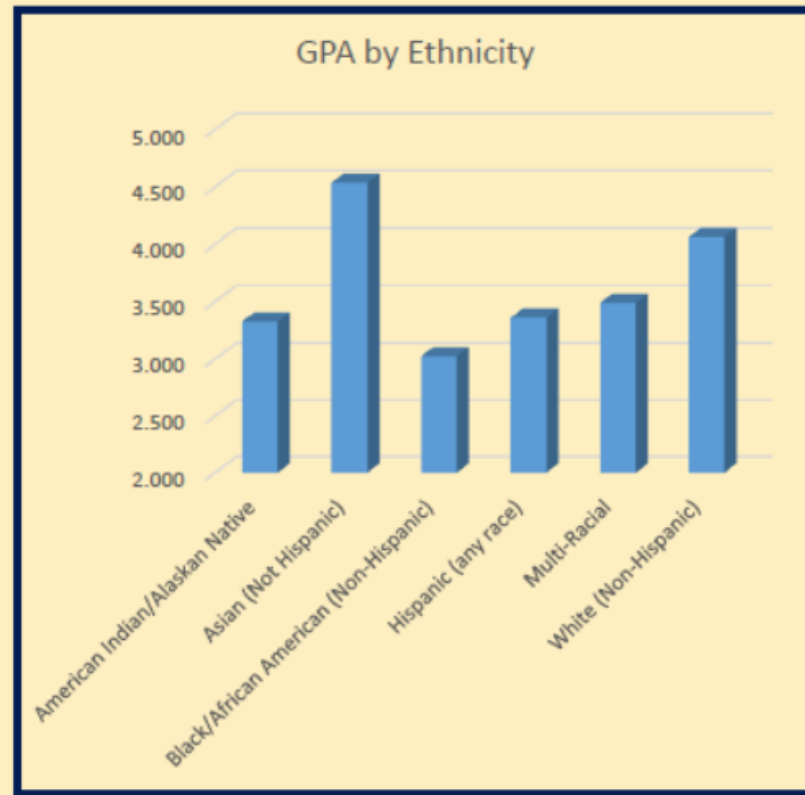
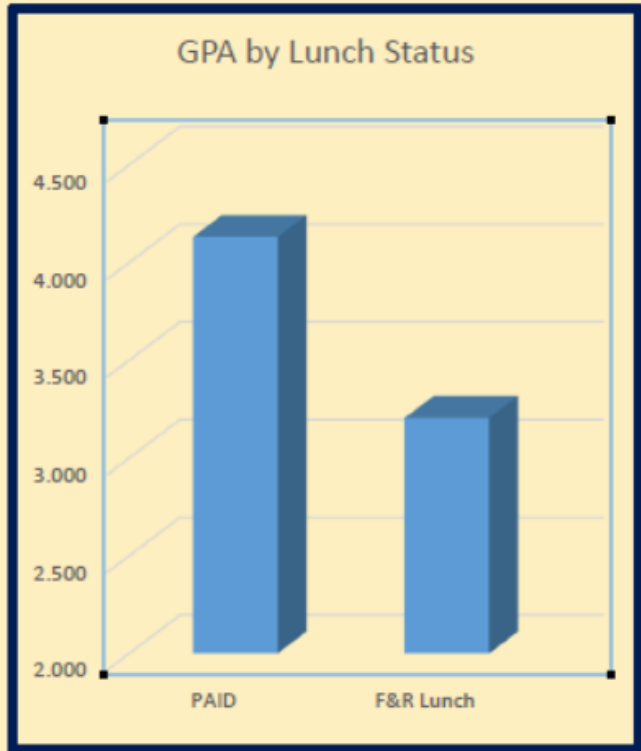
- ▶ Some important takeaways from the Demographic Picture
  - ▶ This diversity makes us strong and a great place to work and live!
  - ▶ The data has limits (e.g., F&R lunch is only a proxy for income)
  - ▶ There are important crossovers to keep in mind (e.g., 50% of our Black students and 60% of our Hispanic students are in the F&R lunch program)

# Data - How do we know we have a gap?

- ▶ The data we analyze are broken down into three categories:
  - ▶ Classroom Achievement Disparities
  - ▶ Standardized Test Disparities
  - ▶ Program Placement Disparities
- ▶ For illustration purposes, one example of each category will be provided.

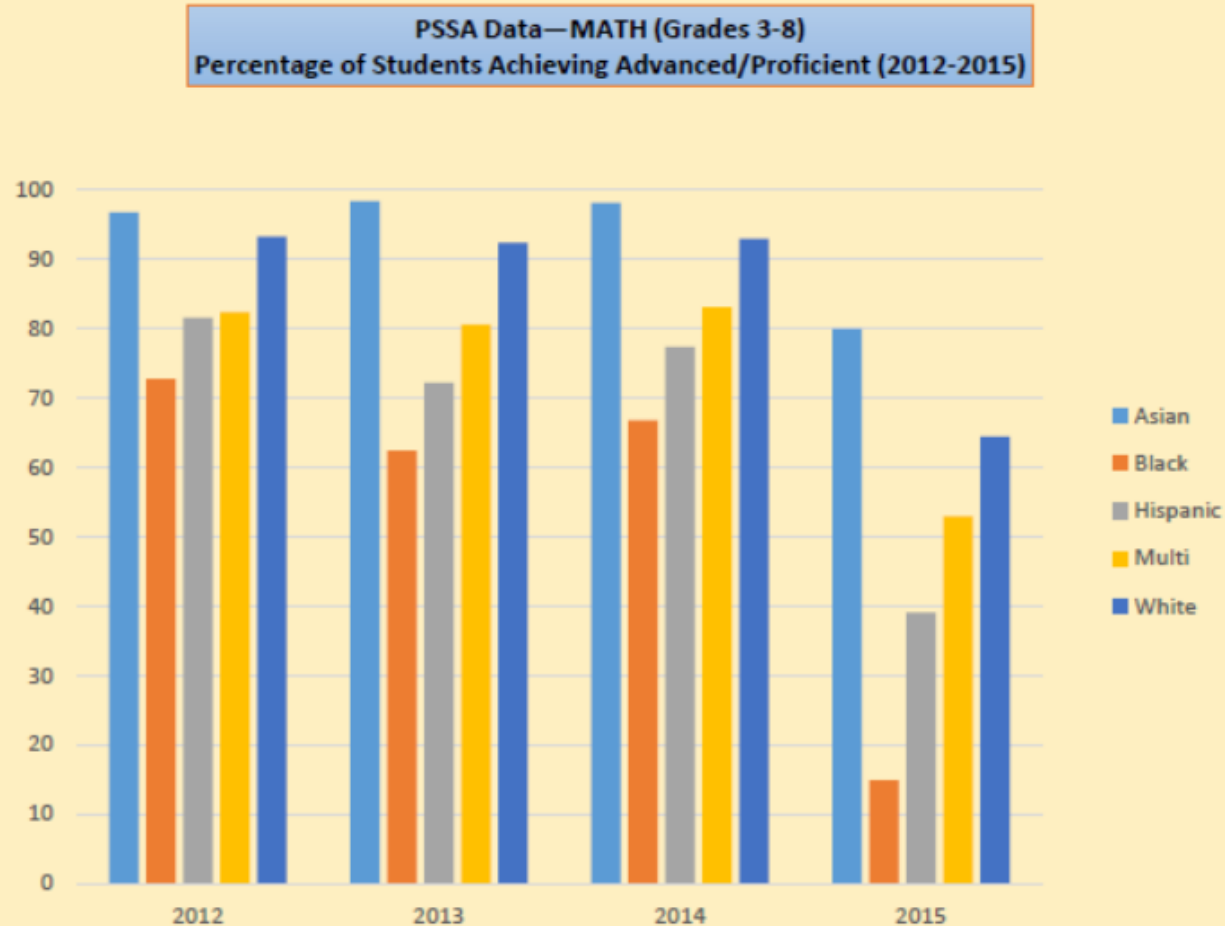
# Data - Classroom Achievement Disparities

Example: GPA Data from WHS, 2013-16



# Data - Standardized Test Disparities

Example: PSSA (Math) Data from 2012-2015 (Grades 3-8 combined)



# Data - Program Placement Disparities

Example: “Gifted” and Special Education (SE) enrollments (mid-2015-16)

<u>"GIFTED" TOTAL DISTRICT (K-12)</u>				
			Total # of Students	% of Total
<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Total # in K-12</u>	<u>% of Total K-12 Students</u>	<u>in "Gifted" Program</u>	<u>"Gifted" Students</u>
Asian	605	13.64%	98	26.49%
Black	444	10.01%	7	1.89%
Hispanic	277	6.25%	6	1.62%
Multi-Racial	247	5.57%	24	6.49%
White	2861	64.52%	235	63.51%
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>4434</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<u>SE TOTAL DISTRICT (K-12)</u>				
			Total # of Students	% of Total
<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Total # in K-12</u>	<u>% of Total K-12 Students</u>	<u>in SE Program</u>	<u>SE Students</u>
Asian	605	13.64%	36	4.72%
Black	444	10.01%	135	17.72%
Hispanic	277	6.25%	79	10.37%
Multi-Racial	247	5.57%	48	6.30%
White	2861	64.52%	464	60.89%
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>4434</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

# Achievement Gap Research

- ▶ Common research themes that have informed our Attack Plan:
  - ▶ The dominant demographic variable is income level (other variables can be correlated, which also informs the plan, and in any case none will be ignored)
  - ▶ A growth mindset is key—believe in the potential of *each and every student*
  - ▶ Relationships are key—know something about *each and every student*

# Ten Year Achievement Gap Attack Plan

*[click the below link for the Attack Plan online presentation]*

▶ <https://prezi.com/uepbntvrvafr/achievement-gap-attack-plan/>

# The Why

- ▶ **Why are we committing to a TEN YEAR effort?**
  - ▶ <https://animoto.com/play/7HPH4ET0YESb9YK4oJPUDQ>
  - ▶ The “why” is actually plain and simple:

Because it's the right thing to do.



# Next Steps

- ▶ **Next steps in the journey:**
  - ▶ Execute the Plan
  - ▶ Monitor, assess, brainstorm, think, re-think, report and adapt
  - ▶ Repeat

**QUESTIONS?**