



# Disparities in Educational Outcomes Task Force Community Forum II

Presenting Draft Recommendations  
April 28, 2016

# The Purpose

The Disparities in Educational Outcomes Task Force, a group of business, community and faith-based stakeholders, was convened to recommend strategies to address disproportions in academic achievement and discipline outcomes in the Knox County Schools that might be correlated with income, race, language, and/or disability.

# The Process

- ◆ DEO Task Force convened in November 2014 to review data
  - ❖ Including, but not limited to: school and district demographics; academic and discipline outcomes for all students; law enforcement reports; KCS employee demographics and recruitment efforts; and best practices from other districts
  
- ◆ What followed:
  - ❖ A number of forums to collect stakeholder perspectives; review of thousands of comments from students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members; and meetings with published agendas, notes, presentations, and stakeholder comments
  
- ◆ What is coming:
  - ❖ A report and set of recommendations to combat the issues

# What We Heard: Need for Training

“  
Training matters—  
affects how a  
teacher views the  
intention of a child.  
”

“  
Cultural  
competency  
training.  
”

“  
More classroom  
management  
training for  
teachers.  
”

“  
Dig into individual school data to  
detect patterns by grade level or  
teacher to determine if  
additional, specific training  
or intervention is needed.  
”

# What We Heard: Need for Support

“  
“  
Make PBIS an intentional course where we can teach expectations and enforce policy.”  
”

“  
“  
PBIS in every school!”  
”

“  
“  
Provide supports for struggling students—behavior liaisons, and partnerships with Helen Ross McNabb for social, emotional, and physical needs.”  
”

“  
“  
Need more community schools in this district and opportunities for tutoring, computer skills, classes for parents, etc.”  
”

“  
“  
Mentoring programs: programs that pair UT college students with KCS students.”  
”

# What We Heard: Personnel Needs

““ Counselors and social workers for students and families (community schools) to connect resources in Knox County with families. Mental illness support and coping strategies for families, too.””

““ We need to be able to attract, train, and support more teachers and administrators of various races... especially African-American and Hispanic-American.””

““ Direct support for mental health, language, and social skills.””

““ More social workers for emotional health. Students don't know how to handle emotions. We need to help them learn.””

““ More African-American male teachers and mentors in schools.””

# What We Heard: Need to Revise Discipline

“Suspending repeatedly does not work...need more options for punishment.”

“Inconsistent discipline practices (high school cell phone policies). Policies need to be specific, not vague.”

“Restorative justice (other kids to teach kids) —not expel (keep learning). Use natural consequences.”

“Take out ‘disorderly conduct’ and define it. Taking off a hat is not an expellable offense.”

# What We Heard: Law Enforcement Needs

“  
Stop arresting  
kids at school.  
”

“  
School to  
prison  
pipeline.  
”

“  
Police  
brutality  
problem.  
”

“  
Discipline, not arrest  
for minor offense; we  
should result to  
citations.  
”

“  
Less cops. Children  
should never be  
arrested at school.  
”

# What We Heard: Need to Connect

Every student needs a caring adult at home and school. Provide love, encouragement, support, coaching, and discipline. Set expectations.

Need culturally responsive teaching.

Relevancy of education to culture and heritage is important. Curriculum should be more relevant to students.

When voice messages are sent, everything is in English.

Students are taken out of arts (PE, Humanities) for ELA/Math intervention. Pulling students from what they love does not allow them to express. Art is a perfect place for multiculturalism.

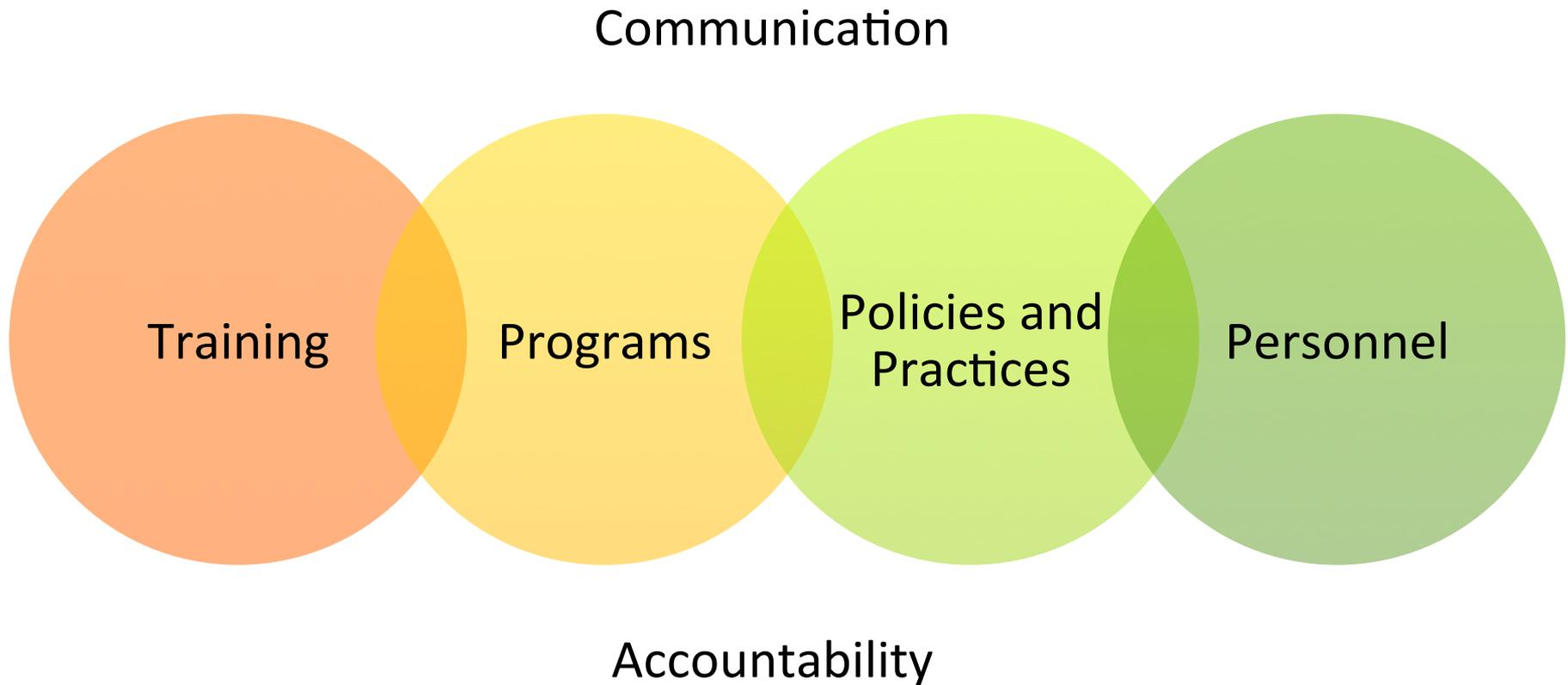
# What We Heard: Need to Engage

“  
Today’s student is more informed—need to get them to take ownership and have them be proactive rather than pushing things on them.”

“  
It is important to include parents and children in decisions about the policies.”

“  
Create a rights/responsibilities class constitution and involve students in the process.”

# Emerging Focus Areas



# Overarching Goals

## Redesign KCS discipline policies and practices to:

- Eliminate systemic disparities in discipline based on race, ethnicity, income, language, disability, zip code, or other categories for potential discrimination
- Include and emphasize Restorative Practices/alternatives to suspension and expulsion
- Incorporate Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) in every classroom/school
- Cultivate a positive environment of mutual responsibility and self-advocacy

Enhance capacity of educators to provide high quality instruction and respond to classroom behavioral challenges

Utilize the criminal justice system only when necessary (for criminal activity)

Ensure academic growth and achievement for all students, particularly those who are furthest behind

# Promising Strategies/Practices in Place Now



Community Schools Initiatives (12 schools and growing)

Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions

Academic interventions and supports

Minority Recruiting

Family engagement and community relations activities

# Strategic Task Force Recommendation: Training

- ✓ All Certified and Classified KCS personnel:
  - Ongoing Cultural Competency Training
- ✓ School-wide:
  - Training based on specific needs identified through school data
- ✓ Teachers:
  - Ongoing Classroom Management Training
  - Ongoing professional development to provide high-quality, differentiated core instruction
- ✓ School Resources Officers:
  - Training to effectively deal with the social, emotional, and mental health issues of students

# Strategic Task Force Recommendation: Programs

- ✓ All Schools:
  - Expand Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Practices to all KCS schools
  - Provide appropriate resources and responses for students experiencing/who have experienced personal trauma
  - Develop and implement student mentoring programs and Student Advisory Councils
  
- ✓ Community:
  - Expand behavioral and mental health supports

## Strategic Task Force Recommendation: Policies/Practices

- ✓ Review and recommend revisions to Board of Education discipline policies, practices, and procedures
- ✓ Track/report all discipline, arrest, and academic data individually by school
- ✓ Partner with local law enforcement to reduce juvenile arrests in schools
- ✓ Create a Stakeholder Bill of Rights inclusive of students, parents, teachers and administrators
- ✓ Ensure culturally responsive classroom instruction
- ✓ Match every secondary student with at least one caring adult
- ✓ Enhance family and community engagement

# Strategic Task Force Recommendation: Personnel

- ✓ Enhance minority recruiting efforts
- ✓ Develop activities to attract, support, and retain minority and male educators
- ✓ Establish minority professional mentoring and networking activities
- ✓ Explore opportunities to increase the number of school counselors, social workers, behavior liaisons, and other support personnel in schools
- ✓ Ensure that struggling students have access to highly effective teachers

# Implementation

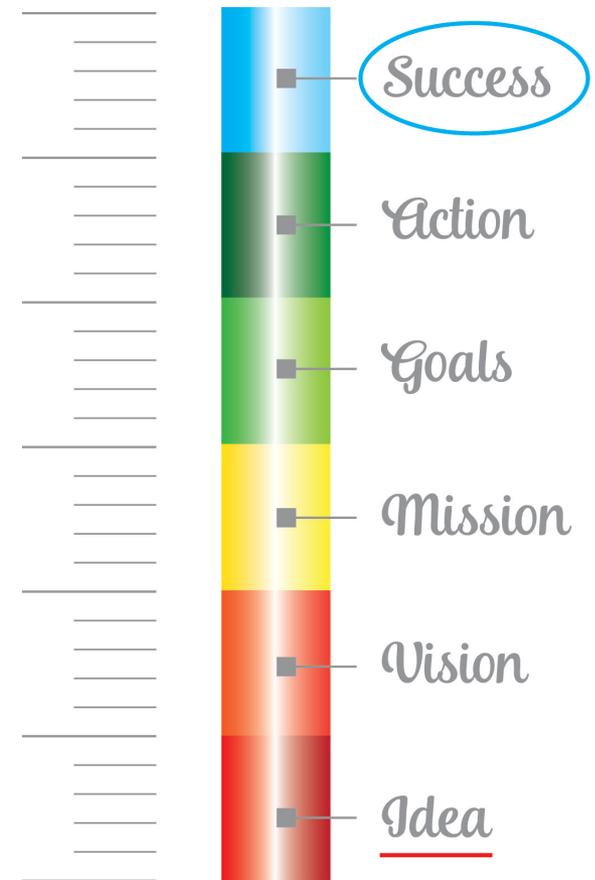
Develop a comprehensive communication plan to:

- ✓ Regularly report progress;
- ✓ Provide regular and ongoing opportunities for engaging community dialogue;
- ✓ Engage the community in various aspects of the work; and
- ✓ Expand non-English speaking parent/community access to school/district information



# Maintaining Accountability

- ✓ The DEO Task Force will transition a Steering and Oversight Committee to ensure effective implementation, communicate progress, refine efforts, and engage others.
- ✓ A clear and strategic implementation plan with detailed timelines, specific expected outcomes, and milestone reports will be developed; and
- ✓ An Ombudsman role will be created to:
  - ✓ Help KCS families navigate school and community organizations/systems;
  - ✓ Serve as a liaison in the implementation of the Task Force Recommendations;
  - ✓ Report directly to the Superintendent; and
  - ✓ Present quarterly to the Board of Education



# Feedback Needed

Are we on the right track?

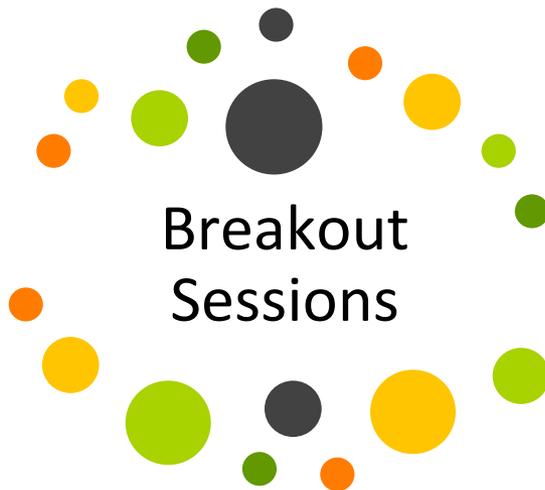
What do you like about the proposed recommendations?

What are we missing?

What changes are needed to the proposed recommendations?

What are you hopeful about?

# Breakout



\*Small groups organized by the number printed on your nametag

\* Discuss the five questions just presented regarding the draft recommendations

\*Share comments, critiques, and constructive criticism discussed in small group breakouts

\*Final remarks from Task Force members and meeting attendees

# Next Steps

DEO Task Force will consider your feedback in making revisions to the Final Report and Recommendations



DEO Task Force will present the Final Report and Recommendations to Dr. Jim McIntyre, Superintendent of the Knox County Schools



Superintendent will share the Final Report and Recommendations with the Board of Education at the mid-month meeting (May 25), and the June working and voting sessions (May 31 and June 1, respectively)



KCS will begin implementation upon approval