

Synthesis Statements

Rounds 2 & 3

| Group # | Data Sources | Synthesis Statement | Refined Synthesis Statement |
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| A | OMS SIP iReady Grades 3-5 Staff Listening Session High School SIP STE MCAS | Based on our analysis of the OMS SIP, iReady Grades 3-5, Staff Listening Session, and STEM MCAS, our group identified the following themes/patterns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detail of subgroup impact • The importance of equity • More resources training and support needed (for teachers and students) | Our review of additional data sources, including Family Listening Sessions, Absence Rate analysis, and Discipline Data affirmed our initial synthesis. There is an overall need for resources in order to do the important work that is shown by the data. |
| B | (2) ELA MCAS (11) Entry Report Student focus group Grades 6-12 (25) Discipline Data (6) Grades 3-5 Student climate survey | Disparity in school experience and achievement for students in subgroups (i.e., African American students, students in special education, students of color). Student discipline cases rise in Ottoson and HS. Ideas and actions for students to be more outspoken and free to talk about ethnicity, racism and other socio-cultural aspects and tell them to respect differences. | <p>(7) Grade 6-12 student climate survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 52% of students grades 6-12 perceive their school climate is supportive compared to 65% of grades 3-5 (Gibbs is 1 year, Ottoson is 3 years, Elementary is 6 years) - 46% of students in grades 6-12 experience a sense of belonging compared to 69% of students in grades 3-5 <p>(9) Staff fall 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional development is terrible. Needs to improve. - Compared to other teachers nationally, teachers at APS are in the low percentile (20-39th percentile) in their sense of belonging at work, and their sense of well-being (stress at work). - Conclusion: if the teachers don't feel a strong sense of belonging and well-being, it's hard for schools to create a sense of belonging among students. If teachers are stressed out, students can have a negative experience with teachers. If 61% are <i>frequently</i> or <i>almost always</i> exhausted at work, they probably won't be at their best with their students. <p>(14) Staff listening session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination between academics and other activities required. - Administration work could be reduced and creative lesson planning space should be provided. - Start with foundational work and insertion of more |

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| | | | <p>technologies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers report: need for <i>METCO late bus, Another EL teacher at AHS, Flex blocks / intervention blocks, Access to the core curriculum for EL and low income, retain teachers of color, More restorative justice practices. Detention should not be a thing. Marginalization of English Learners, culture of power. Coaches for EL. EL caseloads 1-5. Losing EL teachers to Lexington. Less help is given to EL students in the area of reading get basic equity for our low-income students, Secretaries at the Ottoson don't have access to high school information. Getting Special Education information is always my challenge. IEPs have a student working with a different student. Students need to be placed in your caseload; confidentiality is a patchwork quilt. Not a lot of consistency.</i> - |
| C | Bishop SIP, Fall Families Survey 2021, HR Data, Discipline Data, Math MCAS | <p>Based on our analysis of Bishop, Families 2021 Survey, HR Data, Discipline Data and Math MCAS, our group identified the following themes/patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for teachers/school staff? - salary, in-class/curricular support, climate/bias mitigation • community values and makeup - how do we retain greener/recently educated teachers in an expensive area? How do parental/family expectations shape data in qualitative measures? • differential data/outcomes based on subgroup (e.g. race/ethnicity, economic status, disability status) • awareness/engagement of parents/families with schools and classrooms - do families feel aware of | <p>Absence Data Staff Listening Session Entry Report</p> <p>Our review of additional data sources, including absence data, staff listening session, and entry report, affirmed weaknesses with: teachers pay being low, the need for students to be engaged with talking about race, potential achievement gaps among students with IEPs, from historically marginalized groups, disadvantaged economic households and students with high needs. ELA scores are not consistent among different groups in comparison to Math, communication between the schools and families.</p> <p>Our review of the data also revealed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for students is coming from teachers, not necessarily from the level |

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| | | <p>what is happening at school? Do they feel that school is meeting their goals and values? (ex. conversations about race) Do they feel connected to the school community, social and intellectual?</p> | <p>of school or administration.</p> |
| D | <p>AHS School improvement plan, culture/climate, hiring and recruitment/diversity</p> | <p>Based on our analysis of the AHS improvement plan, staffing recruitment/diversity data, and 6-12 culture climate surveys, we identify the following patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are challenges with the data not being disaggregated or sliced multiple ways (e.g., sub-group disaggregation for culture/climate; more longitudinal info re: students in heterogenous groups; further specificity on staffing self-identified race/ethnicity • There is a commitment to equity and concerns about equity outcomes in terms of staffing, students' experiencing staff with varying race/ethnicity, belonging, and academic expectations • We wonder about the interrelations among staff diversity, well-being, pay, belonging, staff overwhelm/stress, excitement/passion for teaching • We need to determine what the most meaningful data is so that we can use appropriate measures/questions, etc. What are our priorities, and how do we create data sources aligned with that so we | <p>Our additional data sources included: MCAS ELA and math, science/tech; SEL curriculum analysis; and discipline data. We identify the following patterns or themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The priorities on equity is well-placed, and data reinforce the need for an equity focus in academics, discipline, and social-emotional learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Alarming disparities in math/science & tech MCAS rates for subgroups, in particular black students ◦ Disciplinary rates were disproportionately higher for students of color (need more data based on percentages) ◦ In every academic data source that is disaggregated there are disparities across subgroups. • APS has a wealth of SEL Resources, and approaches can be consolidated to better serve students, families and staff. We could look at the efficacy and impact of these offerings vis a vis students' SEL skills and culture/climate. |

| | | have the most helpful data possible? | |
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| E | Brackett SIP, MCAS ELA 3-10, Family Listening Session, Staff Survey, HR Data | <p>Based on our analysis of Brackett SIP, ELA MCAS grades 3-5, Staff Survey Responses, Family Listening Notes, and HR Data, our group identified the following themes/patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achievement gaps exist and persist in all sub-groups, all grade levels (gap widens as kids move up the grades) ● Desire to reach students who fall through the cracks ● Desire to increase quality of communication ● Staff need to feel supported and valued and that their job is sustainable (pay, communication, job-embedded PD) ● Addressing diversity in staff, students, families to increase equity ● Ensuring we have appropriate special education staffing, programming, and resources to provide high quality services to all who need it | <p>Our review of additional data sources, including Discipline Data, Student Focus Group Responses, and SEL Curricula Review affirmed our initial synthesis. Our synthesis was deepened by showing the racial gap extended from academics to discipline, that communication is important in having set procedures, that diversity continues to be addressed better, and that student/teacher relationships are important.</p> <p>(Discipline Report for 2016-2020 would be more useful to see in percentages rather than raw numbers. At first glance, raw numbers demonstrate white children to be suspended more frequently)</p> <p>According to Discipline Report, African American and API students are disproportionately represented in the data.</p> <p>(Liberated: Curriculum Analysis of APS) Much is already included in our analysis, but it also mentions having a set of standards to use for updating behavioral policies, crisis response planning, and safety response planning, which we don't cover. Also talks about specifics of integrating diversity into other curricula which isn't covered.</p> <p>(Student Focus Group) Two different worlds of teacher experiences- those who make a connection lead to positive outcomes, those who don't are seen as less effective. High Expectations, Support, Connection, Engaging.</p> |

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| F | OMS SIP, Stratton SIP, Fall School Comparison Climate and culture surveys, 6-12 Climate Study, Absence Data | <p>Based on our analysis of the OMS SIP, Stratton SIP, Fall school comparison climate and culture, 6-12 Climate Study and Absence Data, our group identified the following themes/patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insufficient teacher support, e.g. shortage of professional learning ● Data collection/not enough disaggregated/prioritizing areas that are important to the Arlington community ● Mental health issues | <p>Our review of additional data sources, including HR Diversity report and ELA MCAS, affirmed our initial synthesis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mental health/SEL related data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having a more diverse staff may help to increase student belonging ○ Implementing SEL into the broader curriculum at Gibbs, OMS, and AHS may decrease student absences and increase student learning ● MCAS ELA data stated that students with IEP's performed significantly more poorly than their peers which aligns with the Stratton and Ottoson SIPs achievement and opportunity gap issues. |
| G | Comparative Climate Data MCAS Scores Climate Survey 3-5 Absences Gibbs SIP | <p>Based on our analysis of the Comparative Climate Data, MCAS Scores, Climate Survey 3-5, Absences, and Gibbs SIP, our group identified the following themes/patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Data raises more questions than they answer; need visibility to more disaggregated data/subgroups. ● Further studies (e.g. surveys) require a new approach that can be followed over time (e.g. what are the themes that the community really cares about?) to collect information that provides benchmarking of growth or change in the community. Start with the community's needs and voice (vs. consulting firm). ● Need common language in surveys (and beyond). | <p>Our review of additional data sources, including Discipline Data, Diversity Report, Climate Survey 6-8, Hiring Report, augmented to our initial synthesis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discipline Data appears to coincide with the MCAS data, indicating that traditionally less-represented students are more heavily represented in disciplinary data. ● Growth in the use of current event material among higher grades than elementary grades. ● Teaching staff is less diverse than that of the community (e.g. student racial diversity); and AEA is even less diverse. Hiring data indicates the same trend. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APS reproduces the marginalization of identities that are traditionally marginalized in American society (eg non:white, cis, het, christian, middleclass, etc). • SIPs – Lack of transparency and execution. Are they “living documents”? | |
| H | iReady Family Survey Brackett SIP School Culture/Climate Surveys AHS SIP Entry Plan | <p>Based on our analysis of the Climate School Comparisons, Brackett SIP, Panorama Family Survey, iReady Grades 2-5 Math and Reading, and the Entry Plan, our group identified the following themes/patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is difficult to extrapolate from the data when it does not have sub-groups (grade, socioeconomic level, race, level of need...) and does not compare with other data at the nationwide or statewide level or even at other schools - Students’ performance in math was troubling; it, in particular, was very impacted by the pandemic - Literacy is a problem across the board; there is a widening gap between white students and students of color - Employees need and want more professional learning, especially in cultural competency and math education - More education around cultural awareness is needed at the elementary school level - Students begin their school careers with high levels of belongingness, rigor, student-teacher relationships, and community, but this decreases as they | <p>Our view of the additional data sources Family Listening Sessions feedback, Discipline and ELA MCAS affirmed our initial synthesis. We found a need for a consistent approach to professional development, family communications, access to resources, and school policy implementation.</p> |

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| | | <p>get older, reaching its lowest point at the high school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Even at schools that serve privileged communities, student performance is lacking, and support resources for students with special needs are lacking. - Students need more resiliency training. - This is a pretty affluent district, not many families struggle with food/housing - Students and parents tend to rate school safety very highly - More detail is needed in our school improvement plans, there is an abundance of high-level things but lack of clear, specific action items | |
| I | | <p>Based on our analysis of the Entry report, the Gibbs SIP, the Student Listening Sessions, ELA 3-8 MCAS Data, Staff Panorama Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data can obscure as much as it reveals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data collection can only illuminate what it measures - what is not being measured? ○ Aggregate data obscures the challenges for demographically smaller groups in our community • Strong relationships and networks are noticeably important drivers for engagement and wellness • Priviledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family engagement ○ assessment/acheivement ○ Student experience | <p>Our review of additional data sources including, (26) HR data, (26) Discipline data, Student panorama surveys for 3-5 (6) and 6-12 (7), and the climate school comparisons (10) enhanced our original synthesis. It confirmed our assessment that relationships are foundational to all aspects of success. It also enforced the feeling that data has its own biases.</p> |

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| J | <p>3-5 Student Climate Survey, 6-12 Student Climate Survey, Staff Listening Session, Bishop SIP, Thompson SIP, Entry Plan</p> | <p>Based on 3-5 Student Climate Survey, 6-12 Student Climate Survey, Staff Listening Session, Bishop SIP, Thompson SIP, Entry Plan our group identified the following themes/patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven student experience of fair, equitable, joyful, deep and meaningful education • If we want support the students, we have to support the teachers • Data should inform and drive the actions, not justify plans we already want to do • <p>Notes informing our summary: 3-5 student climate at a surface level, looks positive, but even when look at high numbers, still need to ask who are the 30% of other children perhaps the survey telling us its hard to talk about race.</p> <p>Entry plan outlined a positive growth mindset for A-town, saw place for critique to get more specific on what needed for the future; seems to be a need for more staff data; was some vagueness of the term - e.g., partnerships between parents and schools - need to first define it and then can get specific</p> <p>6 - 12 climate across the groups there's a majority with relatively positive experiences at school. But substantial 20- 40% who don't and that number is across the board. Data are unclear whether it's truly a split experience vs. kids have some good experiences and some bad; it's big enough</p> | <p>Our review of additional data sources, including _Family Listening Session_____, _____, and _____HR Diversity/Hiring Data_____, affirmed/elaborated our initial synthesis in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not just support staff/teachers, but recruit/support/retain a diverse body of staff/teachers. • Confirmed and deepened the sense that there are uneven experiences across the system - even grade to grade in same school • Emphasized need for more communication and understanding about bright spots (and why they are bright spots) to make them a consistent and aligned experience for all |
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| | | <p>that it crosses</p> <p>Bishop plan exceeded scores around them, but there were a gap between community students and those who were higher need. Need for some more collaboration between the teams, objectives to be met in June</p> <p>Staff survey 2021 in 3 areas were very low. Were very high in cultural awareness and action. Areas that were problematic were stress, exhaustion. Hard to know whether the comparison issues were before or during pandemic. Who's caring for the care-givers. Disconnect between PD and the alignment of the needs</p> <p>Staff Listening: Trust and the need for two-way communication between staff and administrators, the need for consistency across administrators and how they approach their relationships with staff, going beyond "evaluative" conversations, and more "listen & learn" conversations - and increasing trust. The process of the listening session itself was a way to start staff feeling heard and respected. There's a high commitment of staff to do right by the students. Not complaining, but focused on how to fix/address challenges (student-centric). Budget questions/equity - under-supported/funded ELL/PD, commitment/value to equity is not aligned or followed by resources/time.</p> <p>Thompson SIP: A gap for black/hispanic/multi-racial students,</p> | |
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| | | focused on MATH score gaps, data and action mismatched in the SIP, and yet another leap to PBIS (which may not address the challenges). [Reasons plan may look like it does: May be new to doing SIPs w/the community - look at the data, with a community was new...will do again next year and wasn't clear] | |
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