

Equity: Getting to All

A Plan to Accelerate Student Achievement and
Eliminate Racial Disparities



Board Workshop
August 27, 2012

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Why a Plan?

**In Pittsburgh Public Schools while 57%
of students are African-American...**

- **Achievement on average is lower than for “other” students**
- **School discipline rates are higher**
- **Program identification - special education and gifted education - have racially predictable enrollment**

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History

- **1992 – Advocates for African-American students filed a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission**
- **2006 – Conciliation Agreement Signed and formation of an Equity Advisory Panel**
- **2012 – The District has made progress since 2006 ... but not enough**

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Challenge

Accelerating outcomes for our African-American students while improving the academic achievement of all of our students.

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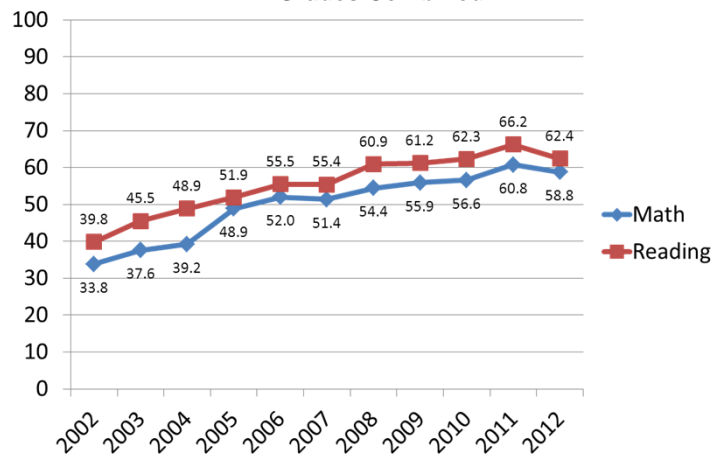
District Goals

- Accelerating Student Achievement
- Eliminating Racial Disparities
- Becoming a District of First Choice

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Consistent Improvement Despite One Year Decrease

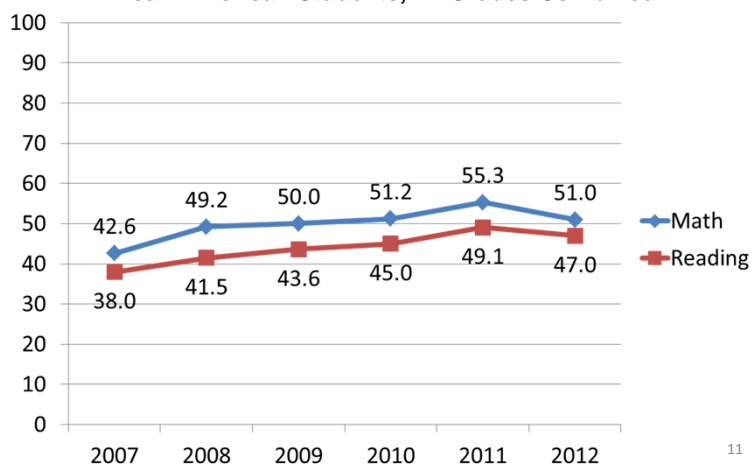
Percentage of Students Scoring Advanced or Proficient on PSSA Exams
All Grades Combined



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2012 Results for African-American Students Mirror One Year Decline

Percentage of Students Scoring Advanced or Proficient on PSSA Exams
African-American Students, All Grades Combined



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Dr. Pedro Noguera

- Ph.D. Sociology, UC Berkeley, B.A. Sociology, Brown University
- Former public school classroom teacher
- Published over 150 research articles, monographs and research reports
- Authored several books such as: *The Trouble With Black Boys and Other Reflections on Race, Equity and the Future of Public Education* and *Unfinished Business: Closing the Racial Achievement Gap in Our Schools*.



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Clear Coherent Plan

“The research shows that Pittsburgh has many of the right elements for improving student achievement and school performance. What's missing is a clear strategy for how to bring those elements together to improve student outcomes.”- Dr. Pedro Noguera

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Lessons Learned

- **Clear priorities, get better results**
- **When we work together, we work smarter and better**
- **Professional development and coaching must improve**
- **Get better at building and learning from our success**
- **Replicate best practices**

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What is Equity?

Equity is not about treating all children the same. It is about acknowledging and responding to their differences and their needs in order to achieve equal outcomes.

"We want to create schools where a child's race, socio-economic status does not predict their academic outcomes."- Dr. Pedro Noguera

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Five Strategies of Equity: Getting to ALL

- 1. Addressing the Culture**
- 2. Empowering Effective Teachers**
- 3. Enhancing Curriculum Relevance and Fidelity**
- 4. Improving Our Support to Schools**
- 5. Engaging Families and Communities**

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1. Addressing the Culture

- **Build Interpersonal Relationships**
- **Understanding Race and the Impact of Racism**
- **Culturally Responsive Teaching**
- **Creating a Culture of Support and Improvement among Adults**
- **Using Data to Inform Decision Making**
- **Building Cultures for Learning at Schools**

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2. Improving Teacher Effectiveness

“The most effective teachers produce gains in student achievement that, if accumulated over several years without decay, could erase achievement disparities between African-American and white students, or between Pittsburgh students and statewide averages.”

- Mathematica Policy Research

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2. Improving Teacher Effectiveness

- **Effective Teachers Grow All Students**
- **Teacher Evaluation**
- **Instructional Teacher Leaders (ITL2)**
- **Creating Environments that are Conducive to Learning**
- **Highly Effective Teachers in High Need Schools**
- **Prescriptive Professional Development**

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3. Enhancing Curriculum Relevance and Fidelity

Alignment to Common Core State Standards

- **Cultural Relevance**
- **Personal Connections**
- **World Connections**
- **Subject Matter Connections**
- **Prior Knowledge, Competencies, and Understanding**

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4. Improving Our Support to Schools

- **Not “visits”- onsite support**
- **Partnership Model**
- **Joint Problem Solving**
- **Central Administrative Support - a structure focused on assisting schools**

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5. Engaging Families and Communities

- **Communicate regularly in a variety of ways.**
- **Make families feel welcomed at school.**
- **Provide opportunities for families to be involved.**
- **Avoid acronyms and educational jargon.**
- **Give students regular homework.**
- **Make sure that when parents/guardians ask about what happened at school – “Nothing” is not the right answer.**
- ***Commit ourselves to educating all of our students***

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Five Strategies of Equity: Getting to ALL + Support

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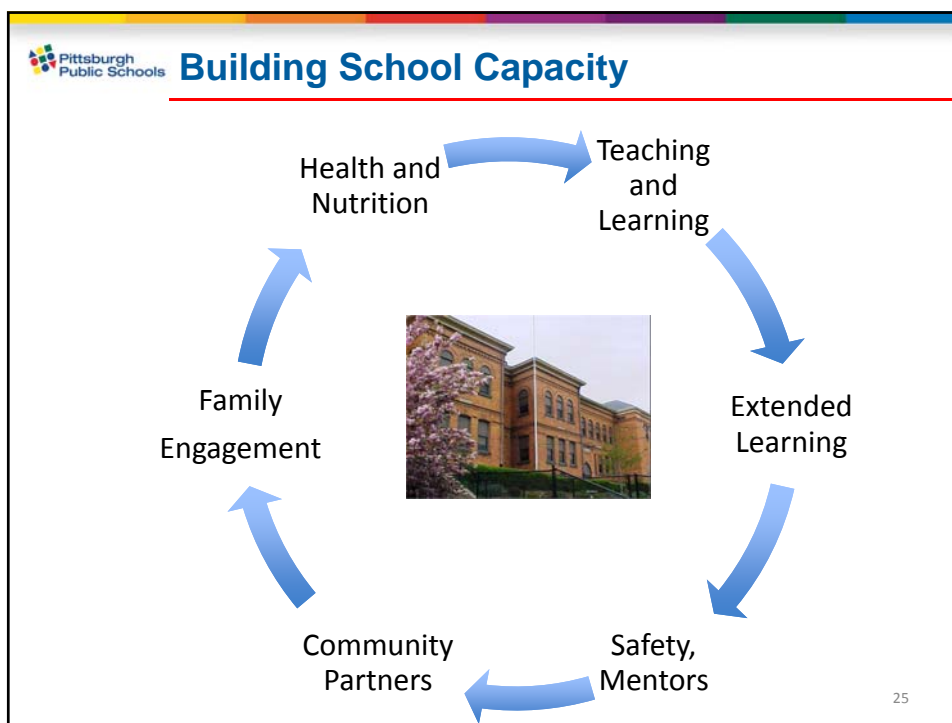
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To Support this Plan - Equitable Allocation of Resources

- Educational Delivery Model**
- Support for Staffing**
- Supplemental Funds**
- Building Allocation Formula**

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 **What's Different**

- **We have a plan**
- **The plan has goals and milestones attached to it**
- **Monitored and adjusted on a schedule**
- **Public Reporting Structure – February Education Committee Meeting**
- **Committed to learn as we go and make needed changes.**

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Case Studies

Pittsburgh Westinghouse

Pittsburgh Perry

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We are spending time in Pittsburgh
Westinghouse and Pittsburgh Perry

1st Phase

- **Working with teachers to analyze classroom culture**
- **Observing classrooms to develop specific needs**

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Implementation for Pittsburgh Westinghouse and Pittsburgh Perry

2nd Phase

- **Tailored Professional Development for Teachers**
 - **Working with Central Office**
- **Working with Site Leadership to develop school culture**
- **Working with Community Partners**

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