

Public Input and Listening Session Report

PBIS AND RETHINKING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE WORKING GROUP
IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

JANUARY 2021

Rachel Maller, University of Iowa
Dr. Sarah Bruch, University of Delaware

EQUITY IMPLEMENTED PARTNERSHIP

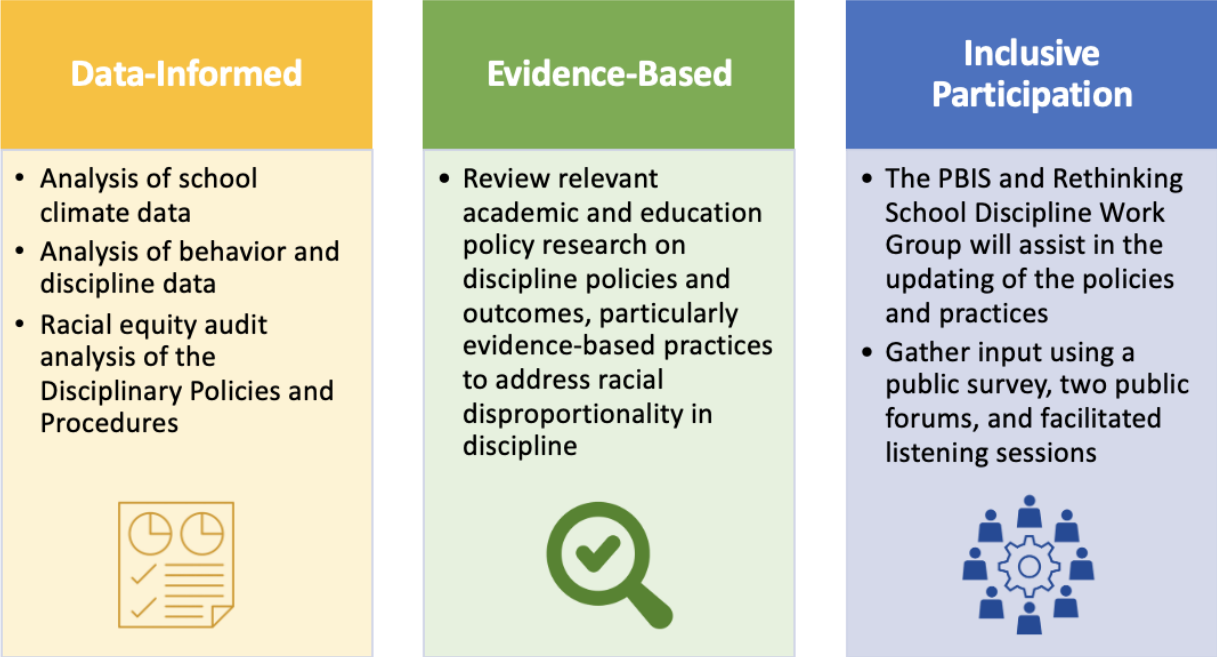
Aiming to create more equitable experiences and outcomes for all students using a data-informed, evidence-based, inclusive process of decision-making within school districts.

Public Input and Listening Session Report

Introduction

The Iowa City Community School District (ICCS) is engaging in a data-informed, evidence-based, and inclusive process to revise their student behavior and discipline policies and practices. The goal of this process is to update student behavior policies and practices (PBIS) and discipline policies and practices (DPP) to better address inequities in student experiences and outcome related to discipline. The District will develop and publish the revised policies and practices in spring 2021.

Process Model for Updating Student Behavior and Discipline Policies & Practices



The PBIS and Rethinking School Discipline Working Group was convened to assist in the updating of the policies and practices. The Working Group is made up 40 representatives from key stakeholder groups including the Board of Education, Cabinet, Department of Equity, ESC administration, elementary and secondary principals, teachers/ICEA, parents, students, the Equity Advisory Committee, and community members. The Work Group is meeting twice a month from November 2020 through March 2021 to complete the review, recommendations, and implementation plan for the policy and practice updates.

Sources of Public Input

As part of the inclusive process, the district conducted a public survey, two public forums, and listening sessions with the School Board, Cabinet, Admin Council, Cultural Proficiency Team

(CPT), and Equity Advisory Committee (EAC). These sources of feedback provide the Working Group input from students, teachers, parents, community members on what they see as the most important concerns related to the discipline and behavior and suggestions that they have for addressing the concerns.

Public Survey

The public survey was administered from November 24, 2020 to December 18, 2020. An email with the survey link and registration for the public forums was sent out to all District staff, students, families and posted on District social media pages and website. The survey was comprised of the following questions:

1. What role do you play in the District? (You may select all that apply)
2. What do you think are the most important or pressing concern(s) related to school discipline and student behavior facing the Iowa City Community School District?
3. How do you think the Iowa City Community School District should go about addressing the concern(s) you identified? Please make your recommendations as concrete as possible. Your recommendations can be improvements to existing ICCSD efforts, or recommendations for new programs or policies.

There was a total of 2,460 respondents, however after deleting “test” responses and responses with no information provided for either of the two questions, there was a total of 1,043 respondents that provided concerns and 734 respondents that provided ideas for addressing. Table 1 below displays the make-up of the respondents by District role. The majority of respondents were parents, (~50%) followed by teachers (~20%) and students (~19%).

Table 1. Public Survey Demographics by Role

District Role	Concerns	Ideas for Addressing
Parent	51% (534)	59% (36)
Teacher	20% (212)	22% (262)
Student	19% (198)	19% (138)
Support Staff Employee	8% (82)	8% (59)
Community Member	1% (12)	2% (12)
Administrator	0.5% (5)	0.5% (3)
Total	100% (1043)	100% (734)

Public Forums

Two virtual public forums were held on December 1st and December 3rd, 2020 from 5 to 6 pm. The first public forum had an attendance of about 40 people while the second public forum had attendance of about 20 people. During the public forums, attendees were asked to break into small groups to discuss and record their primary concerns related to student behavior and ideas for addressing.

Listening Sessions

There were five listening sessions held with key District stakeholder groups. There was also a listening session conducted with the Working Group throughout their first two meetings. Table 2 below displays the group, date, and approximate attendance for each listening session.

Table 2. Listening Session Overview

District Group	Date	Attendance
Work Group	November 16 th & 30 th , 2020	40
Admin Council	December 15 th , 2020	30
Cabinet	December 8 th , 2020	15
Cultural Proficiency Team	December 16 th , 2020	25
Equity Advisory Committee	January 6 th , 2021	20
School Board	January 12 th , 2021	7

In the listening sessions with the Admin Council, Cabinet, Cultural Proficiency Team and Work Group, participants were asked to break into small groups to discuss and record their primary concerns related to student behavior and ideas for addressing. The Equity Advisory Committee and Board listening sessions were conducted later than the previous sessions, so their questions focused more on their thoughts on what had been shared this far in other sessions.

Analysis of Public Input Data

Responses from the two open-ended survey questions were analyzed qualitatively using Excel. Responses were categorized according to the emergent themes. Within these main themes, concerns and ideas were categorized based on the substantive content of comments. Most responses included content that was related to more than one concern or idea.

Responses from the public forums and listening sessions were documented during small-group discussions using Google docs. Responses were copied into an Excel file for qualitative analysis. Similar to the public survey, each response was categorized and then organized into a larger theme.

This report summarizes the concerns and ideas related to student behaviors and discipline from students, teachers, parents, administrators, staff, and community members.

Executive Summary

Theme	Concerns	Idea for Addressing
Social & Emotional Environment	There are concerns about student experiences of bullying, racism, sexism, and homophobia, issues with mental health and well-being, and a lack of social and emotional learning.	Implement bullying prevention and response measures, respond to racist and other exclusive behaviors in schools, provide social and emotional learning and mental health supports.
Student Behavior & Response	Concerns about disruptive and inappropriate student behaviors, how to respond appropriately and hold students accountable to standards and expectations.	Increase responsiveness, implement a behavioral intervention system, clear guidelines outlining common behavior concerns and appropriate responses, implement PBIS consistently and inclusively.
Behavioral & Disciplinary Approach	The current approach to behavior and discipline is too punitive and there is a desire to move away from punitive and zero-tolerance approaches. Concern about racial inequities and lack of cultural responsiveness.	Incorporate restorative justice and restorative practices and move towards a supportive and holistic approach to behavior and discipline.
Disciplinary Values	There is inconsistency in discipline and a lack of transparency and communication.	Greater communication about behavior and discipline, consistent discipline, increase transparency, ensure fair treatment.
Staff, Teacher, & Admin Role	Need for more professional development for teachers and staff, current lack of support for staff, and a need to address staff misbehavior.	Provide professional development to all staff, increase staff diversity, more support, and stronger accountability for behaviors and inequitable discipline practices.
Family Engagement	There is a lack of family involvement with the discipline process, poor communication, and not enough support provided to families to help students with behavior concerns.	Engage families in the discipline process, increase communication and support to families, and hire more SFAs.
Student Engagement	Students are not feeling heard or included in the discipline process. There is also a general need for student engagement in their learning.	Incorporate students' voices and collaborate with them in the discipline and education process.

Concerns Related to Student Behavior and Discipline

The public survey, public forums, and listening sessions prompted attendees and respondents to describe their primary concerns related to student behavior and discipline. There was a total of 1,564 concerns that covered broad themes. Overall, there are concerns about bullying and inclusiveness in schools, how to appropriately respond to student misbehavior, inequitable processes, practices, and policies resulting in racial disproportionality in discipline, a lack of teacher training and accountability, and a lack of student and family engagement. Table 3 below displays the number of comments from each source of feedback categorized into all applicable themes.

Table 3. Concern Themes by Feedback Source

Theme	Number of Concerns from Feedback Source						Total
	Public Survey	Public Forums	Admin Council	Cabinet	Cultural Proficiency Team	Working Group	
Social & Emotional Environment	339	2	4	3	5	6	359
Student Behavior and Response	332	7	3	0	0	0	342
Racial Equity	232	10	4	2	5	16	269
Behavioral and Disciplinary Approach	182	5	5	2	8	12	214
Disciplinary Values	70	6	4	0	0	6	86
Staff, Teacher, & Admin Role	74	4	1	3	0	4	86
Student Engagement	36	3	3	2	0	3	47
Family Engagement	36	0	0	0	1	0	37
Other	81	0	3	0	3	0	87
Total	1381	37	27	12	22	47	1564

Social and Emotional Environment

The greatest number of concerns related to the social and emotional environment in schools (N=359, 23% of total concerns). These concerns deal with the social experiences' students have in school, such as experiences with racism and bullying, as well as concerns over health and well-being.

Equity and Inclusion (N=81). There is concern about a lack of inclusion in the school environment, such as issues of microaggressions, students acting hateful or discriminatory, racism and equity, and racial conflict. For example, one student said, *“Micro aggression of racism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.”* Similarly, another student described, *“The most saddening concerns and conflicts that I have heard about in the ICCSD district revolve around racial inequality, homophobia, xenophobia, and more. These issues are very important to me and I feel have not been looked at enough. I am very grateful for the re-advising of the discipline policies because of this as well.”*

Bullying (N=69). Bullying and hurtful comments are a major concern in schools. People raised concern over the prevalence of bullying, a lack of responsiveness to bullying, and incidents of bias-based bullying. For some examples, people described, *“Bullying needs to be addressed,”* *“Sexual harassment and bullying,”* and, *“Some kids in my grade make fun of other kids who are LGBTQ+. They call people inappropriate names, and many kids consistently call others “gay”, intending it to be an insult.”*

General Safety & Well-Being (N=69). This concern relates to providing an overall safe and healthy environment for students and staff. People described, *“a safe environment for students and staff,”* *“General physical and mental health of students, especially keeping all safe and healthy from covid-19,”* and *“Providing a safe and welcoming environment for children to learn, Safety for the students and teachers/staff.”*

Mental and Behavioral Health Concerns (N=62). There is concern over the mental health needs of students, such as depression, stress, drug abuse, and the lack of supports and resources available to address this. For example, one student said, *“A pressing concern of mine is the lack of support from staff and school board for mental and emotional health, we do talk about it as a serious issue but I don’t feel like it’s truly there.”* Another student said, *“Address mental health needs”,* while another said, *“Stress and declining mental health due to stress over school.”*

Social and Emotional Learning (N=34). There is concern that students are not being taught enough conflict resolution skills, empathy and perspective-taking, emotional management, and social skills. For example, one person noted, *“Social/Emotional learning and strategies,”* and another said, *“how to go about proactively teaching and modeling inclusive/empathic behavior.”*

Violence and Weapons (N=16). There is concern over maintaining a school environment that is free from violence and appropriately addressing violent students and fights to reduce violence

in schools. Additional concerns about preventing weapons being on school property and destruction of property.

Student-Teacher Relationships (N=15). There is a need to develop positive relationships between students and teachers. One person said, *“thoughtful and intentional time spent building relationships between staff and students (especially at secondary level where kids have multiple teachers a day),”* and another said, *“Clear communication and fostering relationships with individual students.”*

There were additional concerns about over how **social media impacts student behavior (n=5), lack of exercise and/or recesses (n=4),** and **peer conflict (n=3).**

Student Behavior and Response

People described concerns about student’s behavior and the response to those behaviors. (N=342, 20% of total concerns). These concerns related to how to deal with students inappropriate and disruptive behaviors and holding students accountable to the behavioral standards and expectations.

Student Accountability (N=84). Many people shared concerns about a lack of student accountability for their behaviors. There is a desire for stronger accountability, consistent follow-through with responses, and adequate and appropriate discipline to occur for their actions. For example, one person said, *“Holding students accountable for their behavior is the most important item facing the District,”* while another said, *“Students need to be held accountable for their actions.”*

Student Misbehavior (N=82). There are concerns about the prevalence of and response to disruptive behaviors kids exhibit in the classroom. There is concern about student disruptions interfere with other students learning and teachers ineffectively addressing disruptive and destructive behaviors. One person shared, *“Disruptive behavior in the classroom that affects the learning of other students,”* while another said, *“There is a LOT of low level disruptive behavior, disrespectful behavior, and overly loud behavior that routinely disrupts classrooms and prevents teachers from teaching.”*

Responsiveness (N=45). There are concerns about the lack of responsiveness to behavioral concerns, suggesting a lack of effective and consistent monitoring or discipline. For example, one person said, *“Making sure that if continued issues happen, they are address swiftly and appropriately.”* Another said, *“The inability of teachers to effectively monitor students, especially at the elementary level, is a major impediment to learning.”* Another said, *“We cannot give real consequences. Kids keep getting sent back into the classroom, to the detriment of the majority of the class.”* The lack of responsiveness can be due to the lack of teachers’ power and ability to appropriately discipline students, not knowing what to do, being afraid of repercussions, or just missing or not addressing certain issues.

Lack of Respect (N=34). There is a lack of respect among students for one another, for teachers, and for ensuring a positive, inclusive learning environment. For example, one person said, *“Lack of respect towards teachers and school property,”* and another described, *“I think the most pressing concern related to school discipline and student behavior being respectful in class and being supportive of others in their class.”*

Attendance (N=23). Student attendance and how to address absences and lateness is an issue. People described, *“Attendance,” “Poor attendance is a huge identifier of student failures,”* and *“Adhering to a more aggressive policy for absences.”*

Standards and Expectations (N=21). There needs to be clear and consistent standards and expectations for student behavior. As one person described, *“lack of high expectations to the students by parents, community and school staff,”* and another said, *“Students should be held to high standards of behavior, including being respectful and not swearing. ALL Students should be held to the same standards.”*

Police Presence (N=24). There is concern related to over-involvement of the police in schools, as well as transparency and protocols related to police involvement. For example, *“Specific worries with [School] over-involvement of the police,” “Police presence in schools,”* and *“Document every time police are called to a school or are present at school.”* There is a desire for no police involvement in schools as well as concern about having school resource officers (SROs) in schools, for example, *“No cops in the schools,”* and, *“Continue not to station SRO’s in individual schools.”* While about fifteen comments were related to concerns about police involvement, five comments were about a lack of police and SRO officer presence and support in schools. One person shared, *“Involving police on campus and having direct communication with police dept for potential threats,”* while another said, *“Ensuring police support in all schools.”*

Seclusion Rooms (N=13). Attendees express concern with the appropriateness of restraint and seclusion, as well as transparency in implementation. For examples, *“The isolation rooms,” “Use of seclusion rooms - should be banned,”* and *“Inappropriate use of restrained and seclusion. Data is not disclosed.”*

Behavioral Disorders and Disability (N=11). There are concerns about appropriately supporting and disciplining students with students with disabilities, mental and behavioral health concerns, or receiving special education. For example, one person was concerned about, *“Correctly identifying and reacting to students with autism and ADHD.”* Another said, *“Ableism causing unnecessary or inappropriate discipline for students with disabilities, mental health concerns, or receiving special education,”* and another, *“How to work with students who have experienced trauma.”*

Other concerns relate to inconsistent access to referral forms as well as **inappropriate use of major referrals (n=2)**, ensuring a clear, equitable, and appropriate **dress code policy (n=2)**, and **more alternative placement options (n=1)**.

Racial Equity

A large number of concerns were related to racial inequities in discipline and a lack of cultural responsiveness (N=269, 17% of total concerns).

Inequitable Treatment (N=149). There was concern that not everyone is treated fairly, and that discipline is not being applied equally, particularly students of color. For some examples, people described, *“The unequal application of disciplinary against students of color,” “Being fair in how punishment/benefits are handed out,”* and, *“Equitable treatment for students.”*

Racial Disproportionality (N=79). A major overall concern is the fact that there are a disproportionate number of students of color being suspended and referred to the office. People described, *“Disproportionate amount of Black students facing suspension,” “The disproportionality of minority students being disciplined,”* and, *“Reducing disproportionality in suspensions and office referrals.”*

Cultural Responsiveness (N=41). There is a lack of cultural responsiveness from the teachers and in the behavioral/disciplinary rules and consequences. For example, *“Cultural Discrepancies in the DPP,” “That the things most students of color are getting in trouble for are subjective and fit into the defiance/disrespect category. And, that teachers are not culturally responsive enough to recognize when they are criminalizing students of color as they respond negatively to a culturally unresponsive (and sometimes damaging) curriculum,”* and, *“Implicit bias may lead staff (and other students) to make assumptions about student behavior that are counterproductive.”* Teachers need to engage in uncomfortable conversations, speak up when things are happening, and be held accountable for cultural proficiency. For example, *“Too much room for staff to be comfortably absent from the conversations that need to be had, and the realities at hand concerning injustices in our communities.”*

Behavioral and Disciplinary Approach

Another theme is related to District’s current underlying philosophy, framework, or approach to student behavior and discipline (N=214, 14% of total concerns).

Proactive Behavior Supports (N=119). The current approach is not proactive, positive, and preventative. For example, *“Discipline should be about teaching and behavior modification, not shaming or punishing.”* The current approach lacks a deeper understanding of the root cause of student behavior, such as sociocultural factors, as well as appropriate ways to support students with behavioral concerns that get to the root cause. For example, *“The reason behind the behavior must be addressed,”* PBIS also needs greater consistency and inclusive of culture, abilities, etc., for example, *“Re-vamping the PBIS foundational values to better reflect the cultures in our community.”*

Punitive → Restorative (N=93). The current approach to behavior and discipline is too punitive and there is a desire to move away from punitive and zero-tolerance approaches and towards a restorative approach. For example, people said, *“We need to move away from punitive*

approaches,” and, “Suspensions as a go-to disciplinary practice for students with challenging behaviors which may actually increase or reinforce the behaviors depending on the function of the behavior,” and “Discipline Too Punitive”. People describe the need to incorporate restorative practices and processes into behavioral responses and being clear and consistent about how and when to implement restorative practices. For example, “Inclusion of restorative justice practices. Shifting the mindset away from traditional punitive discipline that does not typically work,” “We need to use more restorative practices and train staff to use a continuum of trauma-sensitive responses rather than jumping to referrals,” and “Restorative Justice and what part does it play in the district as a whole and how does it play out in each individual school.”

Disciplinary Values

A significant number of concerns were related key aspects of how discipline is conducted, such as how consistent and transparent the practices are (N=86, 5% of total concerns).

Consistency (N=52). There is a lack of consistency in enforcing disciplinary policies and rules within and between schools. For examples, someone shared, *“consistent responses to behavior across the district,”* while another said, *“There needs to be consistency. I understand that every situation is different, but students notice when things are inconsistent.”* This can be in part due to the subjective nature of some behaviors and inconsistent responses that come from that. For example, an Admin Council member said, *“A behavior from a student might yield a different reaction and response depending on which adult is supervising at any given moment.”*

Transparency (N=15). There is a lack of transparency and clarity of the rules and consequences for students, teachers, and families. There is concern about awareness and information about discipline policies and practices, describing a desire to inform students, teachers, parents, and community members about the DPP and make it publicly available. One person shared, *“Transparency with policy and procedures for all stakeholders (students and parents),”* and another said, *“Accurate and consistent data collection and transparent reporting of data collected.”*

Communication (N=13). People are concerned about the lack of communication about disciplinary practices. They note poor communication in general, parents being unclear about their role, and desire clear communication about when and what discipline will be implemented. There needs to be communication about the rules, consequences, and appropriate behaviors between staff, students, and families. For example, one person said, *“Communication! There has been a lack of communication between the staff and students which takes a toll on the parents who seem to come last.”* Another person shared, *“Clear language and a full understanding of an incident. Clear communication about when discipline is implemented and what discipline will be enacted for which actions.”*

Other concerns included accountability for implementing change (N=3), the importance of trust (N=1), and that the DPP is too strict (n=1).

Staff, Admin, and Teacher Role

These concerns related to the role teachers, support staff employees, and administrators play in the supporting and disciplining students (N=86, 5%). The majority of these concerns relate to suggesting more professional development and training for teachers and staff. People also described a lack of support for staff and how to address staff misbehavior.

Professional Development (N=37). People described the need for all staff to participate in professional development on various topics: behavior management and de-escalation, equity and cultural competency, social emotional and behavioral health, restorative justice, and PBIS. For example, one person shared, *“More training for teachers on how to effectively handle discipline, be proactive rather than reactive, and how to be culturally competent so biases are not impacting how they are reacting to behavior.”* Another said, *“Anti-bias and cultural training for teachers,”* while another said, *“training for teachers and implementation of trauma/ACES-informed practices and restorative justice practices.”*

Support (N=22). Teachers should feel supported in their disciplinary decisions, have appropriate resources and necessary authority, and be given resources and tools. One person shared, *“not enough support for teachers who are trying to deal with often multiple children with behavior issues at the same time,”* and another described, *“Staff feeling supported by administration.”*

Staffing (N=18). There are several concerns related to staffing: not enough staff to address all issues, particularly mental health care staff such as counselors, a lack of staff diversity, and the role of support staff in discipline. For example, one person said, *“shortage of staff and time to mediate all issues,”* and another said, *“put your funding where your mouth is and pay for social workers and therapist.”*

Misbehavior (N=7). There are concerns over misbehavior of teachers and staff, including discrimination, that often goes unaddressed. For example, one person noted, *“Not addressing problems with teachers that have long been part of the district and have made students feel unwelcome, unwanted, and or invalid in being themselves,”* and another said, *“I have witnessed more teacher and district employee behavior concerns than student behavior concerns.”*

Another concern was related to ensuring **effective leadership in schools and a responsive, trustworthy administration (n=2)**

Student Engagement

There were concerns about a lack of student voice and engagement (N=47, 3% of total concerns).

Student Engagement (N=28). There is concern about overall engagement of students and providing the necessary supports for effective engagement. This relates to the connection between discipline and engagement, suggesting greater engagement will reduce behavior

issues. In one example, someone said, *“Engaging students,”* and another said, *“My concern as a parent is that my child will lose interest in her education.”* An Admin Council member shared, *“We need to look at engagement overall - for all students - and the training that goes with that for our staff.”*

Student Voice (N=19). Students are not given a large enough voice in the discipline process, particularly low SES and students of color. There is concern is about a lack of student representation in the discipline process, particularly opportunities for feedback regarding perceived mistreatment. For some examples, people shared, *“Lack of student voice,”* *“that staff listens to the students concerns,”* *“Low SES students, immigrants, and students of color who have little to no voice (and their parents can't advocate due to language barrier or lack of knowing what to say) are ignored,”* and *“Lack of opportunities for student feedback regarding mistreatment and excessive discipline.”*

Family Engagement

These concerns related to a lack of family involvement, support, and communication about student behavior and discipline (N=37, 2% of total concerns).

Family Involvement (N=19). Involve families and parents more in the disciplinary process and in setting consistently high expectations between home and school. For example, one person noted, *“need for more parent involvement,”* and another said, *“Adequately engaging parents throughout the entirety of the disciplinary process (and prior to it to create parent buy-in).”*

Family Support (N=10). Support families and parents in teaching their kids positive behaviors. For example, *“Supporting parents in guiding and disciplining children,”* and *“More resources and supports for engaging families who need help getting students to attend school.”*

Family Communication (N=8). Ensure that student behavior and any discipline responses are communicated effectively and in multiple languages to parents. In one example, someone said, *“Another issue that we are always working on is communication with parents, having correct contact numbers and letting them know that we are here to help in educating their child,”* while another said, *“lack of notification/follow through/follow up to parents from the school about child's situations (especially when they have a 504).”*

Other Concerns

Other concerns relate to online learning issues, avoiding “reverse racism”, class sizes, and instructional practice (N=87, 6% of total concerns).

Online Learning Concerns (N=57). There are several issues with online learning: student engagement, lack of socialization, and how to manage misbehaviors over Zoom. For example, *“Children not having enough structure for online learning,”* *“Online learning discipline issues,”* and, *“People not paying attention in Zoom.”*

Avoid “Reverse Racism” (N=12). These comments are critical of the districts efforts to reduce disproportionality in discipline, suggesting focusing on race will negatively impact accountability for students’ behaviors. For example, someone shared, *“Abolishing racial quotas that are attempting to have more children that are white being given stiffer consequences and fewer children that are black having stiffer consequences,”* and another shared, *“Focusing on identities and making it the top priority is a thousand steps backwards. The data may show more works needs to be done, but the way in which you go about it matters. Placing identity at the forefront is the biggest mistake we could be making.”*

Class Size (N=8) Class size is a contributing factor to behavior issues, so people suggest reducing class sizes. For example, *“student to teacher ratio is too high in many classrooms. I believe a piece to improve school discipline and student behavior is to keep our class sizes down.”*

Instructional Practices (N=7). It is difficult to provide appropriate, challenging, and engaging instruction to all students. For example, *“students aren't given the appropriate academic challenge and instruction (few students are in a class that is just right for their current skills/abilities).”* Another person suggested, *“Improved teaching methods-more involved and active learning vs. Lecture format. Collaborative learning.”*

Other responses include looking into open campus (n=1), and how tracking students affects patterns of behaviors (n=1).

Ideas for Addressing Concerns Related to Student Behavior and Discipline

The public survey, public forums, and listening sessions prompted attendees and respondents to describe their ideas for addressing concerns related to student behavior and discipline. There was a total of 1,209 ideas spanning various themes. Overall, most ideas were related to how to appropriately and equitably address student misbehaviors through interventions and response measures, professional development and supporting all District staff, and providing a positive social and emotional environment. Respondents encouraged adopting a more holistic, restorative, and supportive approach to behavior and discipline, as well as incorporating greater student voice and family engagement.

Table 4 below displays the number of comments from each source of feedback categorized into all applicable themes. Responses from the Equity Advisory Committee and Board are not counted in this table, due to the more specific questions we asked of them related to implementing some of these ideas, but their comments are provided in the write-up.

Table 4. Idea Themes by Feedback Source

Theme	Number of Idea from Feedback Source						Total
	Public Survey	Public Forums	Admin Council	Cabinet	Cultural Proficiency Team	Working Group	
Student Behavior and Response	329	6	4	1	2	7	349
Staff, Teacher, & Admin Role	179	26	11	3	2	8	229
Social & Emotional Environment	196	3	2	0	6	0	207
Behavioral and Disciplinary Approach	56	9	5	4	5	12	91
Family Engagement	77	4	0	0	2	0	83
Disciplinary Values	61	8	0	0	0	6	75
Student Engagement	60	5	0	3	0	4	72
Collaboration	55	0	0	0	0	0	55
Other	47	0	0	0	1	0	48
Total	1056	65	22	8	18	37	1209

Student Behavior and Response

A large number of people expressed ideas about addressing student's behavior concerns (N=349, 34% of total ideas). These ideas relate to better responsiveness, behavioral intervention systems, clear rules, expectations, and consequences, and ideas for reactive response measures.

Responsiveness (N=51). Address concerning behavior immediately and implement consequences for student behavior. For example, one person shared, *"I believe that once the problem occurs, it should be dealt with immediately so everyone will know it will not be tolerated,"* and another shared, *"By enforcing consequences."*

Behavioral Intervention System (n=49). There needs to be a system in place that can regularly assess student well-being and behavior and provide the appropriate supports and interventions. Ideas include screening processes, check-ins, etc. The main idea is to have a greater understanding about student behavior and have intervention systems to prevent and respond to concerns. For some examples, *"I think each child with an identified pattern of behavior issues needs more comprehensive assessment of what is going on and what supports can be put in place,"* *"Establish a district wide academic and behavior/SEL assessment system, establish regular check in points with students,"* and, *"Consider a screener or self-selection process for students that may be helped by some preventative discipline or special groups that can foster leadership roles for these children."*

Clear Rules and Consequences (N=47). Create clear guidelines outlining common behavior concerns and appropriate responses. One person suggested, *"Have a set of guidelines with clear repercussions listed for each offense,"* another suggested, *"Create a flow chart or matrix of common behaviors and talking points admin should use when addressing said behaviors as well as options of potential consequences. Make this document public and ensure each administrator is using it consistently,"* and another suggested, *"May be necessary to have more specific definitions of the different behaviors such as disrespect."*

PBIS (N=45). Establish consistent, equitable, and effective implementation of PBIS. For example, one person described, *"I think PBIS is a powerful tool to use. All students and teachers know the ground rules. Behavior expectations are taught, positive behavior is reinforced,"* and another said, *"PBIS is not consistent in its execution across the board district wide. There needs to be a systematic change."* Other people mentioned, *"Really examining our PBIS and Tier systems to make them more equitable,"* and, *"Culturally Responsive PBIS."*

Student Removal (N=34). Find appropriate ways to remove students from the classroom if they are deemed too disruptive or violent to maintain a safe learning environment. For example, *"ICCSD should return to a practice of removing students from class when their behavior is disrupting the education of the rest of the class,"* and, *"Find ways to remove students from their classroom and find calm places for them to settle down but also allowing their peers to be safe and to continue with their learning."*

Accountability (N=17). Greater accountability for students. For example, *“Hold students accountable and do not allow behaviors to disrupt learning,”* and, *“More accountability for student behaviors and it affecting the class. Time outs/loss of privileges/detention.”*

Standards & Expectations (N=16). Maintain high and clear expectations and standards for students. Set out their rights, responsibilities, expectations for behavior. People described, *“High expectations for all students. Maintaining high standard,”*, *“Talk about Rights and Responsibilities- students should never accept bullying and feel truly free to report, be believed, and protected from retribution,”* and, *“Examination of schoolwide expectations and opportunity to adjust based upon the community of learners”*

Police Support (N=15). This idea is about supporting the police and school resource officer presence in schools. For example, *“Proactively involving local police to help identify safety matters. Allow them to work with students and staff to develop positive and long-lasting relationships,”* and, *“Have an active police officer or an SRO present in school district.”*

Police Limitations (N=14). There is a desire for limited to no police presence. For example, *“Police should be not involved in any encounter unless legally required to be involved,”* and, *“avoidance of police type figures in the schools. social workers would be better.”* There are also suggestions about including specific definitions of when police should be called and collecting data about interactions with police on campus. For example, *“Define when police should be called in DPP,”* and, *“The district needs to be aware of how many times a police officer steps onto campus. Information on why an officer would need to be on campus in the first place, what situations would call for that.”*

Supervision (N=12). Greater supervision in the hallways, lunch, recess, etc. For example, *“A teacher/staff in the hallways on rotation between classes until all students are in their next classroom,”* and, *“Have more hall monitors in the halls between classes or have the teachers stand out in the halls between classes.”*

Attendance (N=11). There needs to be a solution to improve student attendance, ideas include intervention programs, enforce policies, and implement consequences such as referrals or grade reduction. For example, *“Specific guidelines (rewards and discipline) for attendance that are clearly communicated to students. Attendance policy should place emphasis on student responsibility. A specific intervention program needs to be put in place that puts responsibility, extra work, and slight disruption on the student for repeat attendance issues,”* and, *“Our schools have attendance policies in place, but they are not followed. Either get rid of them or follow them.”*

Referrals (N=11). Change the referral forms so that staff must document the interventions and strategies used prior to a referral, to have some time pass before writing the referral, and to make sure the person who makes the referrals is the same person processing it. Have clear guidance on when a referral should be made and use appropriate language when writing up

incidents. Some also suggest removing referrals for disrespect and defiance, for example, *“Do away with referrals for defiance, insubordination, and disruption,”* and, *“Remove disrespect/insubordination as punishable offenses.”*

Alternative school (N=9). Utilize alternative schooling method for students who need that support. For example, *“Maybe have an alternative middle school that functions like Tate does for high school?”* and, *“Utilize Tate high school for students who are not succeeding but also need more structured one on one help.”*

Isolation (N=7). Some comments suggested removing isolation rooms and some described ensuring they are used with proper procedure. For example, *“Isolation rooms should be banned from use; should be removed from classrooms,”* and, *“Continue to refer to Iowa law regarding installing safe rooms that are up to code, training staff in the use of safe restraint if needed and the use of safe rooms.”*

Other ideas for addressing concerns are to have a **clear understanding of dress code and ensure it is anti-sexist and anti-racist (n=5)**, develop a **cell-phone policy to reduce use in schools (n=4)**, using the **Student Advisory Center (n=1)**, providing adequate **academic support during long-term suspensions (n=1)**, and ensuring the **Care Assessment Team consists of social workers & mental health professionals (n=1)**.

Staff, Admin, and Teacher Role

These ideas related to providing professional development, support, and accountability to teachers, support staff employees, and administrators (N=229, 19% of total ideas).

Professional Development (N=143). Provide staff with professional development on cultural competency/bias/equity, behavior management/de-escalation, restorative justice, social and emotional learning, and PBIS. For example, *“More training for the staff, including de-escalation techniques,”* *“Racial bias training for all staff,”* and, *“Train all staff in culturally-responsive restorative practices and social-emotional learning.”*

Staff Diversity (N=28). Attendees suggest focusing on the recruitment, retention, and advancement of staff of color. For example, *“Increase number of teachers of color,”* and, *“Place a genuine interest in recruiting and retaining staff/educators of color.”*

Accountability (N=24). Teachers and administrators need to be held accountable for their concerning behavior and for their disciplinary practices. This can be through teacher-admin discussions, evaluations, oversight, etc. For example, *“There needs to be more accountability for teachers' and district employees' behavior concerns,”* *“Hold teaches accountable (annual review, periodic checks) for embracing and putting into practice the tools of cultural competence provided through professional development,”* and, *“Providing 360 Degree review of Administrators, including teachers, staff, parents and students.”*

Support (N=16). Ensure proper support for staff to deal with student behaviors and discipline, if necessary. For example, *“Provide teachers with administrative back-up so that teachers and staff feel in control of a situation and support from administration,”* and, *“Teacher support - mental health support for the teachers. We are asking them to do too much.”*

ESC Changes (N=9). Attendees describes changes that can be made on the district administration side, such as having a feedback structure for teachers to express concern, as well as changing the structure of the equity office to be lateral to the administration and have a greater role in oversight. Additionally, review the organization of ESC to ensure alignment between departments and strengthen the equity department. For example, *“The organizational chart and job responsibilities at the ESC need to be reviewed. How do departments work together---Student Services, Learning Supports and Equity? Is there a shared vision with a work plan of who will do what?”*

Other ideas included changing **teachers’ mindset (n=4)**, **hiring more teachers and support staff (n=3)**, and **involving paraprofessionals in 2x10s and not giving them responsibility to write referrals (n=2)**.

Social and Emotional Environment

Many ideas were about addressing bullying and racism in schools, providing social and emotional learning, and supporting mental, behavioral, and emotional health (N=207, 17% of total ideas).

Bullying Prevention and Response (N=36). Improve bullying prevention and responsiveness efforts. Enforce a clear no bullying policy with consequences for the bully and support for the victim. For example, *“Most of the problems I see are students getting away with verbal bullying, and I feel the punishments for things said are too light,”* *“Ensure there is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying and violence with a set of steps to be taken in any event,”* and, *“They should put up posters, encourage students to speak up when they or someone else is getting bullied.”*

Social and Emotional Learning (N=32). Implement a social and emotional learning curriculum in schools. Teach students about mental health, well- being, and social skills dealing with racism, sexism, etc. For example, *“Mental health and well-being practices and management taught in every grade level,”* *“Engage in a comprehensive and equity-focused SEL programming and ensure it is consistently implemented across the district,”* and, *“Discuss what racism is. Discuss what homophobia is. Discuss what sexism is. Discuss what bigotry is. In very clear, direct terms and methods. These topics make people feel uncomfortable and I feel there is not enough transparency with these topics.”*

Equity and Inclusion (N=30). Improve response to racist, sexist, homophobic behavior in schools. Make it clear what will not be tolerated and take claims seriously and act on it. For example, *“have more rules against racism because there are kids being racist and they don’t even get in trouble like that. and they are forced to write an email that most of us know that*

they don't mean and they'll likely do it again," and, "I feel like there should be set consequences for students who have been reported for being racist. There is not much being done other than words. There needs to be set guidelines and consequences that can and will be acted upon."

More Behavioral Staffing (N=30). Hire more behavioral staff in schools, such as counselors, therapists, social workers, etc. For example, *"Hire more nurses, counselors and outreach staff,"* and, *"I believe we need more social workers in schools that are easily accessible my students."*

Mental and Behavioral Health Support (N=25). Improve mental health services, support, and resources in school. For example, *"More mental health services provided for students,"* *"increase funding and availability of mental health counseling,"* and, *"We get serious about an MTSS for mental health."* Also, focus on smoking and drug prevention and develop appropriate, supportive responses when students engage in these behaviors. For example, *"Smoking and drug prevention conferences, open discussions, inclusion in the curriculum. Discipline followed by recovery program,"* and, *"Enforce current Drug rules and laws- have consequences for them."*

Conflict Resolution Skills (N=17). Develop conflict resolution skills in student and empower them to resolve their own conflicts with peers. For example, *"Age-appropriate conflict resolution training,"* and, *"Encourage the development of listening and conflict resolution skills in all students. Have staff actively model this."*

Role Models, Mentorship, and Relationships (N=17). This idea highlights the importance of relationships in education and encourages greater relationship-building, role-modeling, and mentoring for students. For example, *"More mentors: programs like tutoring that [School] and [School] have had are wonderful places for students to build supports as well as more Big Brothers/Big Sisters,"* *"Have more of a role model for young and under privileged families,"* and, *"Relationship building activities between all staff and all students at a school."*

Safety (N=8). Have a safe learning environment. For example, *"Prioritize safety,"* and, *"We need to strive to create an environment where students who are motivated to learn feel safe and protected from students who are unsafe or disruptive."*

Social Activities (N=8). Encourage student participation in social activities, such as clubs, extra-curriculars, and continue community- building in schools. For example, *"Encourage students to interact across racial boundaries. Consider having staff, teachers, and perhaps student leaders invite students to participate in clubs and extracurriculars where they are less represented. Consider starting new clubs that appeal to students from a variety of backgrounds, based on student ideas and initiatives. We all spend too much time in our silos."*

Other ideas including providing time for **physical activity in school (n=3)** and providing students with **healthy snacks (n=1)**.

Board and EAC Feedback. The Board is fully supportive of having more attention and resources devoted to mental, emotional, and behavioral health supports. The challenges that come along

with this include encouraging students to talk about their mental health, time and money, and the need for mental health supports for teachers and staff as well. The EAC encouraged looking at what other schools are doing, such as [School] in terms of social and emotional learning, the need to communicate the supports that are already there to everyone, hiring more behavioral staff, supporting the mental health of employees, a holistic approach and universal screener for mental health, and ensuring students have a “go to person” in the building.

Behavioral and Disciplinary Approach

Another group of ideas suggested rethinking the approach the District takes to discipline to be more restorative, supportive, and culturally responsive (N=91, 9% of total ideas).

Restorative Justice (N=51). Implement restorative justice and integrate restorative practices into the behavior and discipline system. For example, *“Integrate restorative practices and identify strategies that can be implemented. Identify how restorative practices are implemented, when and by whom,” “Equip administrators with Restorative Practices as a first step for every conflict and disciplinary proceedings,” “Restorative Practices - System Wide,” and “Need a column in the DDP that clearly articulate restorative and supportive measures.”*

Supportive and Educational Approach (N=20). Create a system that will focus on support and education rather than punishment and discipline. Reduce using punitive practices such as suspension and consider alternative responses to behavioral issues. For example, *“Shift the thinking around the need for punitive punishment,” “Establishing baseline culture and values. Must focus on preventative as opposed to relying on reactive measures,” “Provide our students with support and tools rather than punishment. Can the adults respond to challenging behaviors with empathy and curiosity rather than judgment and punishment?” and, “Create/amend policy to make clear that the overriding goal of student discipline/behavior policies is to promote educational progress for the majority of students.”*

Culturally Responsive (N=18). Create a behavior and discipline system that is anti-racist and culturally responsive. For example, *“Evaluate all procedures through an anti-racist lens,” “Culturally responsive SEL and culturally responsive restorative practices are essential”, and “Have specific policies in place that define behavior subject to discipline and specifically exclude behaviors that are common to neurodiverse students (e.g., stimming, looking away, being distracted, speaking out of turn). Ensure disciplinary choices are specifically reviewed by a diverse team including people of color and neurodiverse individuals. Never discipline for cultural differences (e.g., language, fashion, attitude).”*

Board and EAC Feedback. Board members are unanimously supportive of moving towards a restorative and culturally responsive approach to behavior and discipline. When asked about the challenges that might come with this, they described challenges with changing the mindset of teachers, staff, students, and parents, resistance to anti-racist work, needing a willingness to reflect and change ways of thinking, and how to actually implement using restorative practices in the classroom as a response to behavior concerns. The EAC notes the need to implement

restorative justice practices, that policies and procedures should be made by culturally responsive people, and that PBIS needs greater alignment with restorative and culturally responsive practices.

The Board was also asked about moving towards a holistic, integrated approach to student behavior and discipline. They described that there are lots of things the District is doing but it is challenging for them to talk to each other. It can often look different based on your level in the organization. Overall, the Board is supportive of greater alignment, but there are challenges on how to do this and how to create a shared understanding.

Family Engagement

These ideas encourage greater family involvement, communication, and support (N=83, 8% of total ideas).

Family Involvement (N=41). Greater family involvement when behavior concerns arise, working with the parents to develop a plan forward. Greater overall engagement with parents in the educational process. For example, *“Involve parents,”* and *“When a student is not achieving to their potential we need to have a meeting with parents to develop a plan as a team.”* Also, increase the participation of parents of color, community members, and students in school decision-making processes, for example, *“Increase participations of parents of color: social media, PTO.”*

Parent Communication (N=23). Greater communication with parents about their student’s behavior. For example, *“Parents must be aware of their children's behavior in all cases. According to me the main goal should be communication with parents,”* *“Parent communication (newsletters),”* and *“COMMUNICATION. Emails. Texts.”*

Parent Support (N=13). Provide greater support for parents to promote positive behavior for their kids, give them the appropriate resources and education. For example, *“Educate parents on how to teach their children about proper behavior both at home and outside the home,”* and *“Parents of those students need to be more involved and required to go through home support training and given materials to educate the parents on positive reinforcement. Streamline access to support programs for parents with trained professionals.”*

More SFAs (N=6). Hire more SFAs or create liaison-type positions to support family engagement and advocacy. For example, *“more SFAs in our schools,”* and *“create more liaison/SFA-like positions to support engagement of parents/caregivers, follow-up with students and their needs, and help advocate for students and bridge a relationship between them and administration.”*

Disciplinary Values

Many people suggested greater disciplinary communication, consistency, transparency, and equitable treatment (N=75, 6% of total ideas).

Communication (N=24). Greater communication of the rules and consequences to all students and staff. For examples, *“Communicate expectations in an inclusive, results- oriented manner to students, parents/guardians, caregivers, role models, etc.”*, *“Clear language and a full understanding of an incident. Clear communication about when discipline is implemented and what discipline will be enacted for which actions,”* and, *“spend time instructing teachers on specific procedures and provide guidelines.”*

Consistency (N=21). Be consistent in the rules and consequences that students are accountable For examples, *“Make sure that all students are given the same consequences when regarding discipline,”* *“Standardized procedures to behavior,”* and, *“Ensure consistency in office referral process: How to make an office referral - what are the guide rails, how to keep it consistent within a school as well as across the district.”*

Equitable Treatment (N=19). Ensure equal treatment for all students related to rules and consequences. For example, *“treat everyone equal. No favoritism,”* *“Make sure discipline and consequences are enforced in a more similar manner for Black and White kids,”* and, *“Not discriminating any race by applying the same rules to all.”*

Transparency (N=11). Ensure transparency with the discipline policies and practices for students, staff, and the public. For examples, *“Transparency about what the process is to students and parents. Release the DPP s that it is accessible to all,”* *“Be honest with students about the policies and expectations,”* and, *“Orientation for students on what discipline actions will be taken for which actions. Mandatory for all students so they will know that they are being treated fairly and what actions will lead to punishment and to what extent.”*

Board and EAC Feedback. The Board emphasized the importance of establishing trust to be able to communicate effectively. They also suggested stronger articulation and transparency of the District’s core values. These core values should be reflected in action consistently throughout the whole District. The EAC suggested publishing all district policies and procedures and student handbooks that include rights and responsibilities and ensuring teachers know how to find the information.

Student Engagement

These ideas related to greater involvement of students in the disciplinary and educational processes (N=72, 7% of total ideas).

Student Voice (N=26). Greater incorporation of student voice, listening and acting on their concerns, and ensuring students have representation during and after disciplinary proceedings. For examples, *“Listen to students' thoughts and/or concerns and act on them,”* *“The approach to discipline could be more collaborative with the student instead of just punitive,”* *“Require involvement of an SFA or third party to advocate for student’s rights in disciplinary proceedings.”*

Similar to the Ombudsperson, have this ally be available to represent students when disciplinary action is taken against them."

Student Engagement (N=19). Ensure students are engaged in school. For example, *"encourage students to get more active in class,"* and, *"I think teacher should take the time and focus on making sure each student is where they need to be. I know some teachers do that but even if they did that they only give us a small amount of time to really catch up."*

Culturally Inclusive Curriculum (N=13). Ensure curriculum is culturally inclusive and bias-free. For examples, *"Curriculum is a good start--show concrete examples of culturally inclusive lessons in ALL content areas,"* *"Review of all classroom materials and lesson plans to evaluate for bias as well as intentional incorporation of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all subjects. This may not always include teaching about racism and can include ensuring that students of all backgrounds and identities feel safe engaging in lessons."*

Other ideas include **decreasing workload (n=8)**, **revising grading system (n=4)**, and ensuring high quality **instructional practices (n=2)**

EAC Feedback. The EAC suggested providing all students facing disciplinary action with an advocate to inform them and walk with them through the process and moving forward include student voice in review and decision making. They also suggested having student panels or student review boards.

Collaboration

There were ideas about greater collaborative practices by using data to inform decisions, incorporating feedback mechanisms, and creating partnerships with community organizations to meet the needs of students (N=55, 5% of total ideas)

Data Review (N=19). Regularly collect and review discipline data and use this to inform changes. For examples, *"In-depth, intentional analysis of both discipline referrals across demographics of the district/school,"* *"Look at the data in buildings and make a plan from there,"* *"Good data on discipline so we know who's getting punished, why and when."*

Feedback (N=16). Allow for student, family, and community feedback on behavioral and disciplinary matters. For example, *"All policies and disciplinary procedures should be reviewed by multiple groups that include stakeholders and experts on anti-racist policies,"* *"Routine and constant assessment and review of discipline practices specifically those practices that include suspensions or expulsions. Also including an appeals process for any of those discipline practices. Community Stakeholders oversight committee that is responsible for the review and on-going assessment of those forms of discipline practices."*

Partnerships (N=11). Partner with community organizations to provide social and emotional support to students. For example, *"Partner with outside community agencies to*

provide wrap-around services to students and families in need,” and, “Partner with area agencies to help address the underlying social issues facing school behavior issues and inequities.”

Evidence-Based (N=9). Look at research, other models, and evidence-based practices to make changes. For example, *“Evidence based practices,” “make sure the district is reviewing all research to ensure disciplinary practices being used are effective in ensuring the safety of all students,”* and, *“Look at what other schools have done that have been successful.”*

Other Ideas

Other ideas related to addressing online issues, the school structure, and safety measures for Covid-19 (N=48, 5% of total ideas).

Online Issues (N=26). Develop policy for cameras, security measures, and ensure students are learning adequately from online. For example, *“Have clear policies with teachers and cameras. I’ve spoken with teacher friends that are sure students are playing video games, on their phones, and totally distracted during video calls,” “Well for one, I think all teachers should have their students get their Zoom accounts authenticated, and implement a waiting room,” “Random online class evaluations and observations to ensure that educators are not wasting students time,”* and, *“Online instruction could have more guided teamwork and student social time with students engaging with each other.”*

School Structure (N=13). Smaller class sizes and de-tracking. For example, *“Smaller class sizes,”* and, *“One of the most segregating and discriminating practices is academic tracking/ability-grouping that we know starts in kindergarten.”*

Covid-19 (N=9). Ensure health and safety from COVID-19 by social distancing and mask-wearing. For example, *“strict distancing and mask up,” “In school social distance & sanitizing,”* and, *“Maybe we should have everyone sign an agreement that they will wear masks?”*

Conclusion

Gathering input from students, teachers, staff, administrators, and community members helps to have a community-informed, inclusive process for deliberating the changes the District is interested making to student behavior and discipline policies and practices. The findings from this report will be used by the Work Group to inform their work moving forward and are made publicly available. Thank you to everyone who participated and shared information.