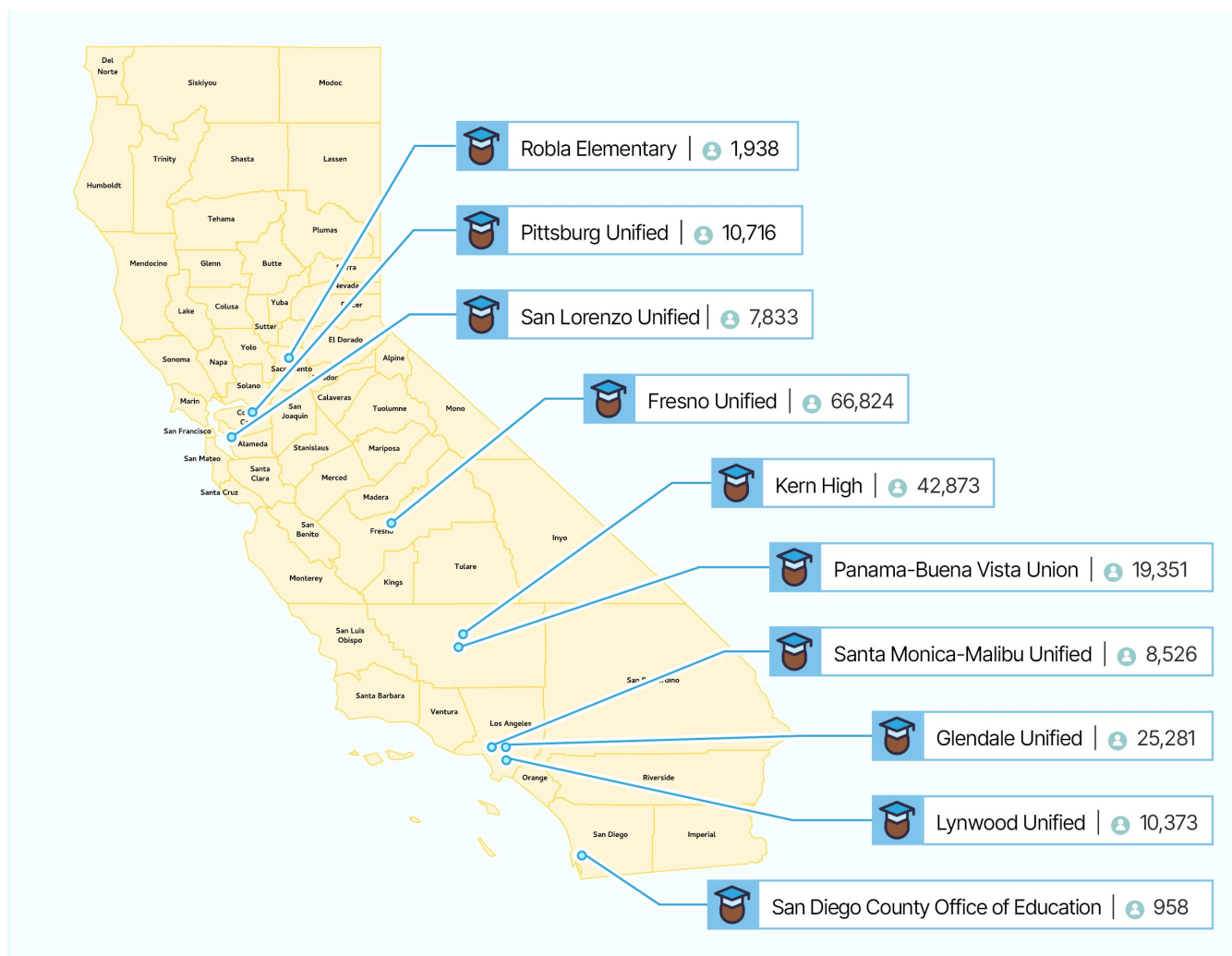


African American Student Success Network

Developed in partnership with the California Association of African American Superintendents and Administrators (CAAASA), the African American Student Success Network (AASSN) is a statewide professional learning network uniting district and county office leaders committed to improving educational outcomes for Black students. Through collaboration, shared learning, and data-driven strategies, the network addresses systemic barriers and advances equity in access, achievement, and belonging. Members focus on targeted areas such as increasing A–G completion rates, expanding CTE pathways, reducing chronic absenteeism, and eliminating disproportionality in special education identification. Grounded in trust and partnership, AASSN fosters innovation and leverages collective expertise to transform systems and support student success. The following pages highlight the individual Network participants' problems of practice and 2025-26 outcomes..





2025–26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

African American students' high chronic absenteeism and low English Language Arts/Math scores in elementary school- **Single school focus – Taylor Elementary.**

STRATEGIES



Academic Intervention

- Peer Observations
- Intentional targeted supports and improving Tier 1 Instruction (Marzano and GLAD instructional strategies)
- Data Learning



Parent Engagement

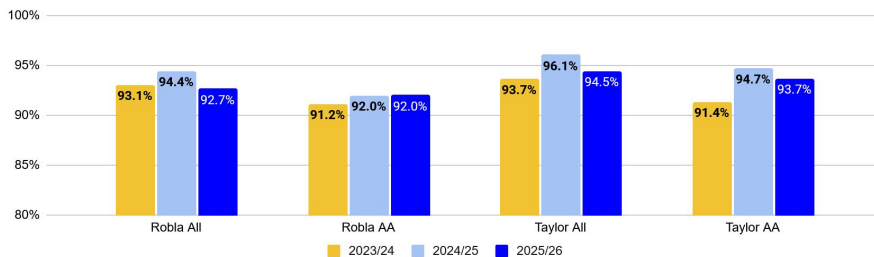
- Parent engagement and school-home bridge
- More Parent Events: Literacy Night, Student Musical Performances



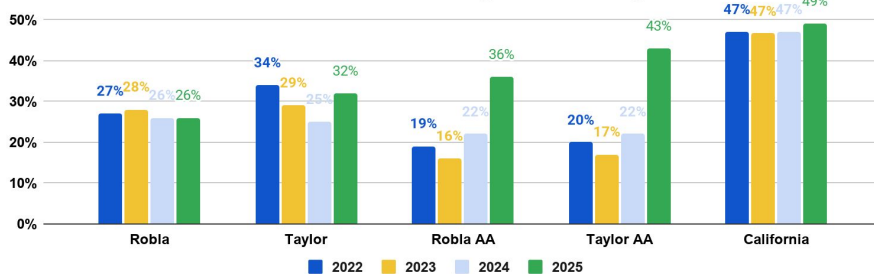
Community School Initiative

- Liaison: intentional connection to AA families/students
- Academic Parent Night

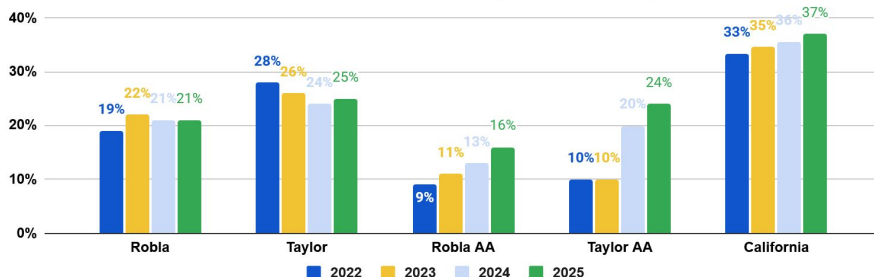
Attendance Rates



ELA CAASPP Students Meeting or Exceeding Standard



Math CAASPP Students Meeting or Exceeding Standard



EXPANDING IMPACT



How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

Sharing our work in cabinet has led to a decrease in chronic absenteeism for African American student throughout the district. Along with Taylor St., four additional sites saw improvement in CAASPP scores for a total of three sites improving in ELA and three sites improving in math.

SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

Though we lost our African American Outreach person at Taylor St., we gained an African American Community School Liaison at Taylor and one at Main Ave. Elementary (home to our 2nd highest AA student population). Personnel in this new role will cover many of the job responsibilities of the former AACOA position with increased outreach and participation in school wide events.



2025-26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

We aim to improve access, support, and successful completion of A-G coursework to increase the number of African American students who graduate college-ready.

STRATEGIES



Student Success Advisors

- Number of grades less than a "C" Qualitative Data - student surveys - sharing what they need help with (academic, SEL, behavior) Quantitative Data Q4 Attendance & GPA averages Student Success Advisors

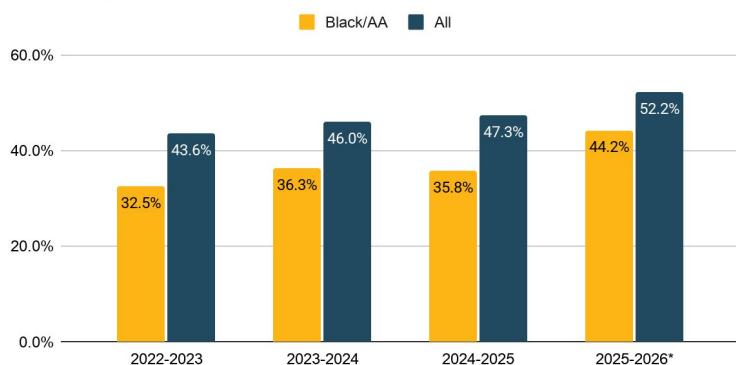


Data Monitoring/Collection

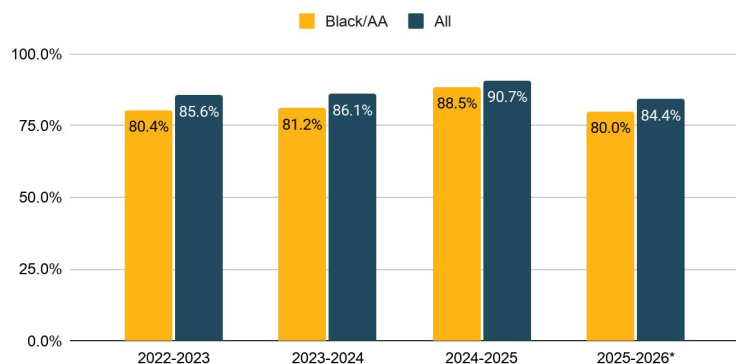
- Check-and-Connect - Student Success Advisors - check grades/attendance/ behavior grades/attendance/ behavior
- Capture the number of mentoring sessions (supporting students) per week
- Parsec Empathy Interview Data

DATA

A-G Requirements Met Rate



Graduation Rate



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

- Supporting and monitoring Black students in grades 9,10, and 11
- Target a few school sites and go deep - work with site team to identify supports
- Integrating findings into other district-wide initiatives
- Increasing Family Engagement opportunities
- Tracking graduates: highlighting successes



SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

Collaboration & Partnerships

- A4 Partnership with Breakthrough Success Community (BTSC)
- 2026-27 adopted district-wide Initiative
- Student testimonies ensuring more parents are aware and engaged with this strategy



2025-26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Reduce overidentification of AA students with disabilities that leads to the district's identification of significant disproportionality.

STRATEGIES



CASE REVIEWS FOR STUDENTS ON THEIR 2ND SST

Deepen and systematize the practice of convening school teams to conduct case reviews of students in the "pipeline" for formal assessment. Empower teams with ideas/strategies.



BUILD COMMUNITY WITH BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

Engage families in an authentic way through programming and opportunities to connect.



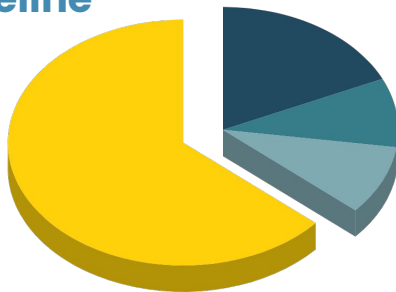
CELEBRATE SUCCESSES AND FOCUS ON ASSET-BUILDING

Leverage data from SEL Panorama Survey and national assessments. Bring together Black/African American seniors to network, listen and celebrate ahead of graduation.

DATA

58% Diverted from the SpEd Pipeline

As part of the SST Case Review process, 11 students were initially on track for IEP assessments. One student moved out of state. Another student reinstated their Speech-only IEP. Two others qualified for Special Education. The last seven completely avoided IEP/Special Education labels by assigning appropriate interventions.



75 Parent/Guardian Participation at our Network Meeting

Partnering with LACOE, GUSD formalized its first Black/African American Parent Network. Meeting attendance was robust.

x2 Doubled the Number of AP Exam Testers Over Five Years

Access to a college-going culture for Black/African American youth has expanded in AP, and the average exam score increased 43%.



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

- Disproportionality affects our Latino/Hispanic students as well. We have expanded the Case Study process to include ALL students now on their second SST.
- We are investing in a more comprehensive approach to intervention, including building more formal MTSS structures across all our sites.



SCALING THE WORK

How can we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

- Expanding our network and having honest conversations.



2025–26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Overrepresentation of African American male students among those receiving non-passing grades in core classes. Goal: Decrease Ds and Fs for Black male students.

STRATEGIES



Implement and Monitor Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) for African American Male Students: develop and review PLPs each semester for students in grades 9–12, using them to guide goal-setting, gauge progress, and celebrate growth.



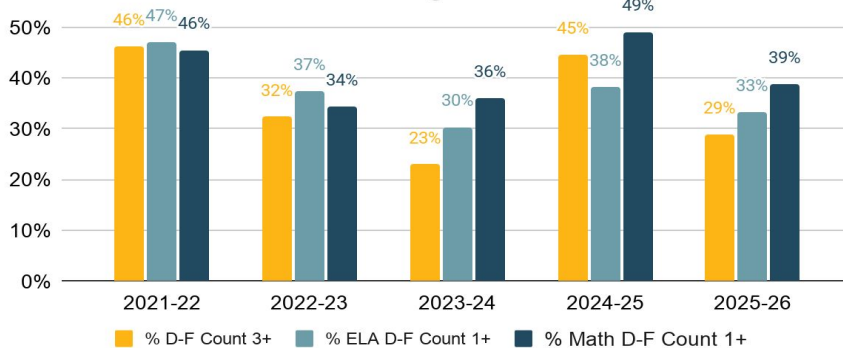
Strengthen Mentorship and Academic Support Systems: provide targeted mentoring through athletics and small group settings across grade levels, with additional academic support via push-in and virtual tutoring.



Foster Cultural Empowerment and College Readiness: integrate ethnic studies, equity training for faculty, and programs to deepen student engagement, while leveraging partnerships like the National College Resources Foundation to support postsecondary pathways.

DATA

AA Male Students D-F Percentages



School Year	AA Males w/ EOY Grades	D-F Count 3+	ELA D-F Count 1+	Math D-F Count 1+
2021-22	134	62	63	61
2022-23	99	32	37	34
2023-24	122	28	37	44
2024-25	110	49	42	54
2025-26	111	32	37	43



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

Both Male and Female African American students have been supported through the program and services.



SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

Equitable supports for African American students must continue and be fully funded. Lynwood has hosted learning networking and conference sessions to examine its POP and share learnings.



2025-26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Increase African American student achievement across multiple data points including engagement of scholars, a decrease in discipline data, and an increase in academic indicators.

STRATEGIES



Sharing the Equity walkthrough tool with teachers at the site. Unpacking the contents so that teachers can internalize what it means and looks like to be culturally responsive. Working with Instructional Leadership Team to take ownership of the tool, and take part in the transformation of instruction by working with members of the department.



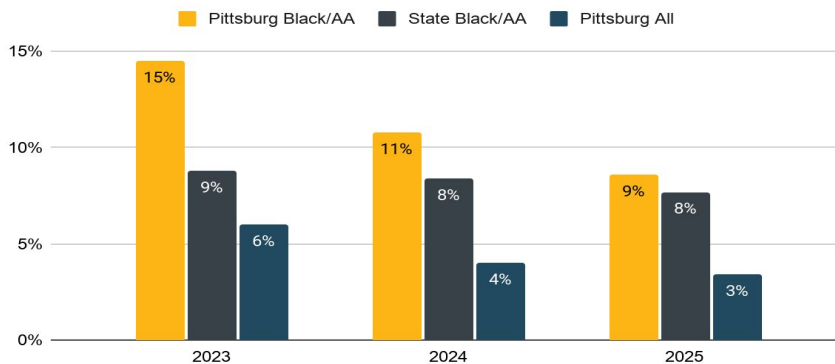
Using data to help develop staff ownership of the achievement of African-American students. Sharing trends and identifying areas of improvement.



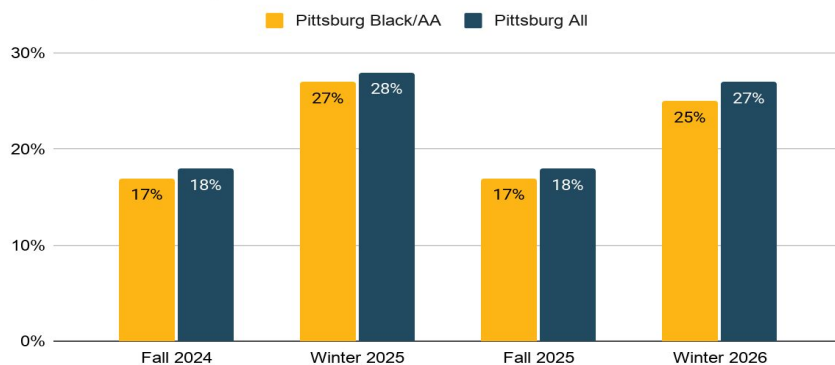
Using cycles of inquiry centering on the instructional practice of increasing academic discourse.

DATA

Suspension Rates



iReady ELA at grade-level %



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

AA Student voice and how to transfer that from jr high to high school - building culture of belonging and care and the challenges we face



SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

By strengthening the work of the ILT and developing the capacity of teachers to lead the work in their grade level/department, reviewing data on student engagement becomes a focused way to strengthen instruction.



2025-26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Using this year to understand the state of the district data around engagement to create baseline data for next year to improve student and family survey processes to better assess school climate.

STRATEGIES



Disaggregate and analyze survey data by key demographics to establish a baseline understanding of student and family engagement and identify equity gaps in school climate.

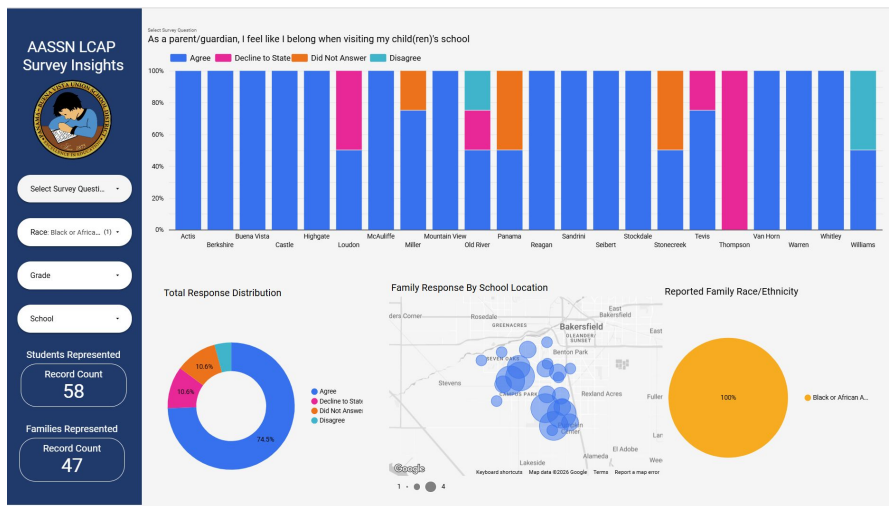


Develop an interactive data dashboard and distribution system (e.g., ThoughtExchange & DataStudio) to visualize results and improve access, transparency, and educational partner engagement with survey findings.

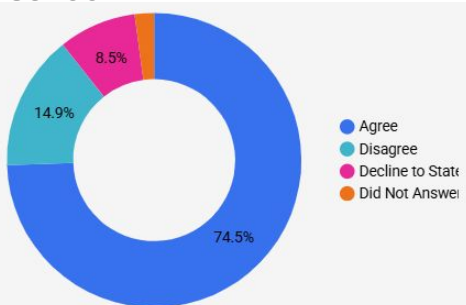


Benchmark survey design against other districts to refine question quality, ensure alignment with best practices, and strengthen the validity of school climate data collected.

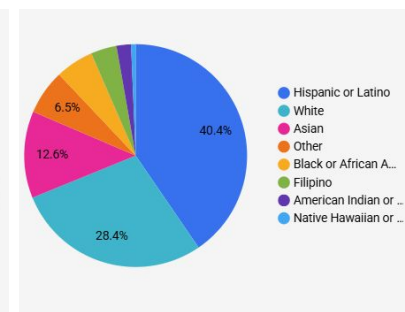
DATA - Click Dashboard to View



My child(ren) feel physically and emotionally safe at school



Reported Family Race/ Ethnicity



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

Strengthening community connections by gathering input and using student surveys and qualitative data to inform practices, while aligning across Kern High School District to better prepare students before high school.



SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

Use and apply insights gained through CAAASA professional development to share tools, insights, and build cross-district capacity.

Leverage CAAASA Cares to strengthen family engagement and sustain feedback systems.



2025-26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

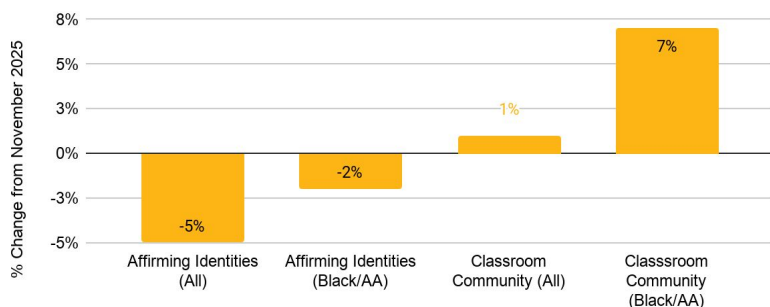
Increase student engagement by improving learning conditions based on data from the PERTS ELEVATE survey as evidenced by a decrease in the rate of chronic absenteeism and suspension for African American students.

STRATEGIES

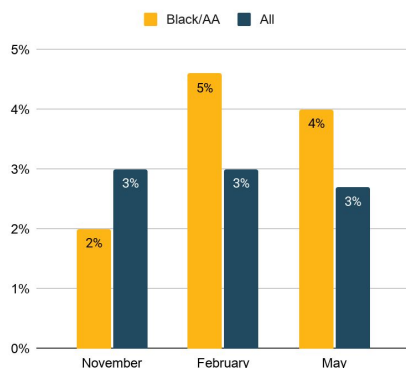
-  Systematically expand the administration of the PERTS Elevate Survey, system wide, assessing its impact on student engagement across all 24 school programs.
-  Monitor learning conditions (Affirming Identity and Classroom Culture) for all students and specifically for African American (Black) students 4 times per year.
-  Work with newer administrators to understand the importance and the opportunities available through this data received from students directly to their teachers.

DATA

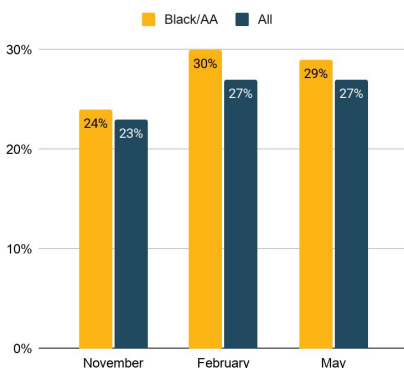
PERTS Elevate % Change from November 2025



Suspension Rate (2025-26)



Chronic Absenteeism Rates (2025-26)



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

We've intentionally worked to cultivate spaces, with feedback from the survey, where every student — especially our Black students — feels seen, valued, and empowered to thrive. Expanding our work in improving classroom community seems to have the greatest impact.



SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

We remain committed to working with our regions to use the strength of the survey results to improve engagement, especially among our Black students.



**KERN HIGH
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

2025-26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Increasing awareness and access for Black students to the CTE pathway (participation and completion) for CCI requirements.

STRATEGIES

-  **Intentional Counseling concerning pathway completion**
-  **Intentional recruitment from our Career Technical Education Center and ROC programs.**
-  **Targeted engagement and informational sessions with African-American families and mentor programs around CCI requirements**



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

Every student in the Kern High School District deserves equitable access to high level CTE pathway programs. Early education about pathway completion and it's benefits will increase pathway completion and CCI attainment.



SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

The sharing of best practices via professional development, like CAAASA, will help strengthen practices around improving CCI rates.

2025–26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Improving mathematical achievement rates for African American students from 6th grade through 9th grade (Math 1).

STRATEGIES

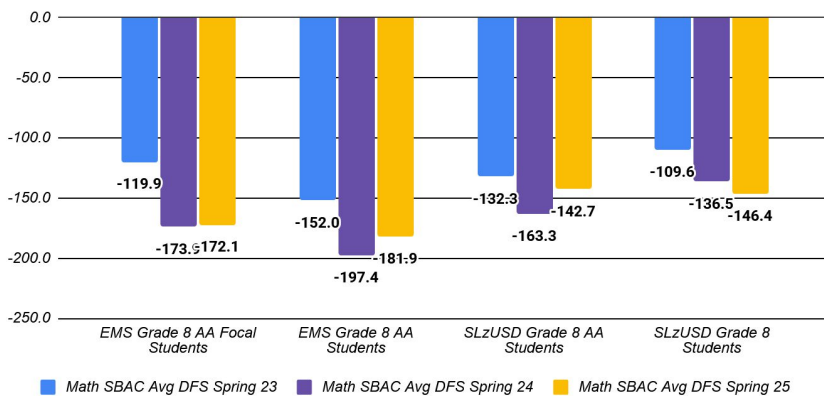
Interventions: Sylvan, iReady, Daily Foundational Math Facts Practice Towards Long-Term Working Memory Proficiency (Do Now-timed multiplication tests), Identifying Essential Standards, Identifying Key Vocabulary for the Language of Math, Academically Integrated SEL through Collaborative Learning (Listening and Speaking), Empathy Interviews (Street Data)

Teacher Collaboration: Teacher Led PLC Collaboration, Identifying Essential Standards, Nodal Learning Targets, Lesson Design with Collaborative Group Work, Common Formative Assessments, Identifying Key Vocabulary for the Language of Math, Adoption of a new Math Curriculum, Math identity and Math Success, Connecting Math to Students' Experiences, Procedural vs. Conceptual Understanding, Stereotype Threat (race and gender)

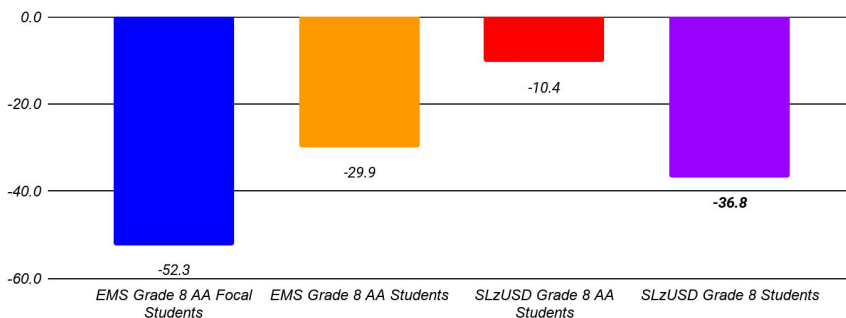
Learnings: 6 of 11 initial focal students did not complete 8th grade at EMS (transience); Attendance, Family Outreach and Engagement, Importance of Centering Math Instruction on the Experiences of Students (teaching math in culturally, racially, and socially responsive ways), Street, and Formative Data is more actionable than Satellite Data

DATA

Math SBAC Average DFS comparison Spring 23-Spring 25



Math SBAC Average DFS Change Spring 23-Spring 25



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

Middle school mathematical proficiency is a gatekeeper to future success in high school, college, career and life. The learnings are applicable to all subjects, not just Math, just as building academic identity across disciplines is necessary.



SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

4th through 10th grade math proficiency (as measured by formative/summative assessments, grades, and identity) has universal implications: scale this work through vertical articulation so proficiency, culturally responsive lesson design and essential standards and skills are aligned, coherent, targeted and assessed collaboratively.

2025-26 PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Improve African American student attendance by increasing sense of belonging and improving systems.

STRATEGIES

Student Voice

All sites participated in training on Street Data collection based on the book by Dugan and Safir. Staff were encouraged to incorporate student voice with quantitative data analysis. Empathy Interviews were conducted with African American students to gather student perspective on their experiences to guide action steps.

Equity-Focused

The theme “disrupting the system” was the districtwide focus for the year; experiences and professional growth was provided to all staff at Convocation. The district formed an Equity Diversity Inclusion Leadership Team for allies to engage in dialogue and to form an action plan to address absenteeism.

Data-Driven Decision Making

The District Leadership Team, Principals Collaborative, and Site Leadership Teams engaged in scaffolded trainings that created systemwide coherence. Sites developed School Improvement Plans grounded in equity and data. Teams engaged in Learning Walks to gather data to guide strategies.

DATA



Empathy Interviews at Santa Monica High revealed an overall positive school experience, the importance of peer relationships, the positive impact of connections to staff, academic support is crucial, family and future plans are motivating, staff representation matters, and the need to proactively address oppressive language.



EXPANDING IMPACT

How is the impact of your work extending beyond the students at the center of this effort?

A districtwide 3 year Professional Development Plan provides training to all staff in the transformative approaches of Project-Based Learning, Social-Emotional Learning, and Restorative Practices. These approaches will increase all students' sense of belonging, curiosity, and empowerment, which is intended to benefit student engagement, attendance, and achievement.

SCALING THE WORK

How we spread and sustain this work beyond the network?

Learning from CCEE and this inquiry around attendance will be shared with district and site leadership teams to expand impact.