



# Race and Achievement in the Newton Public Schools

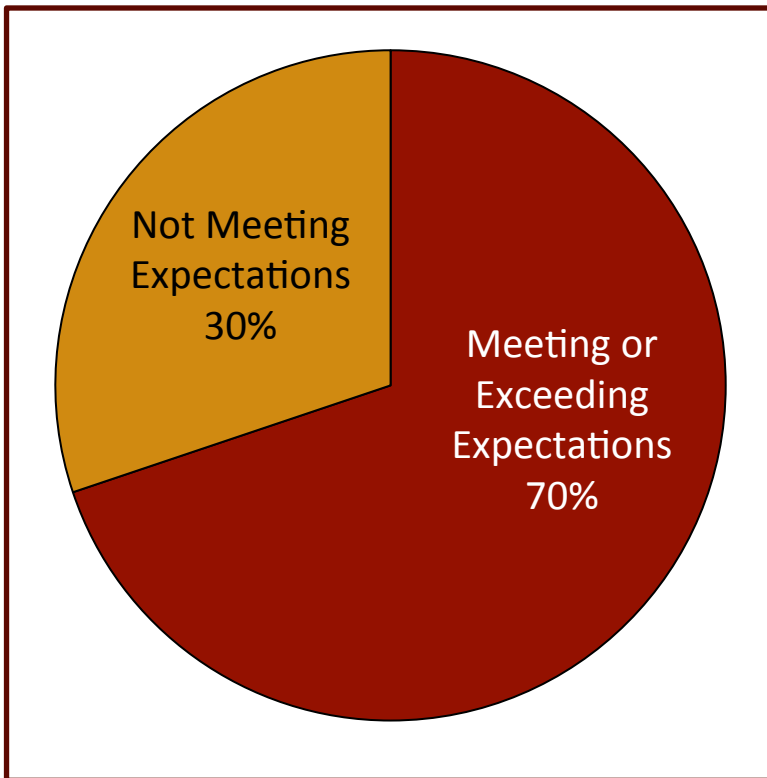
Maricel Sheets, Alan Ripp, Mary Eich, Toby Romer, Amy Behrens  
December 11, 2017



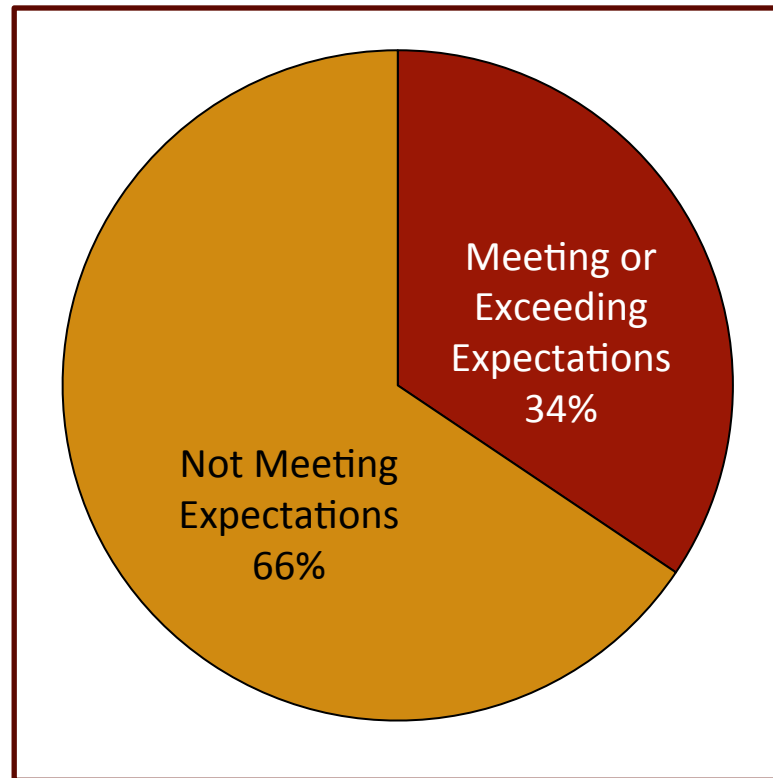
# Mathematics MCAS 2017



White Students Grades 3 - 8



Black Students Grades 3 - 8

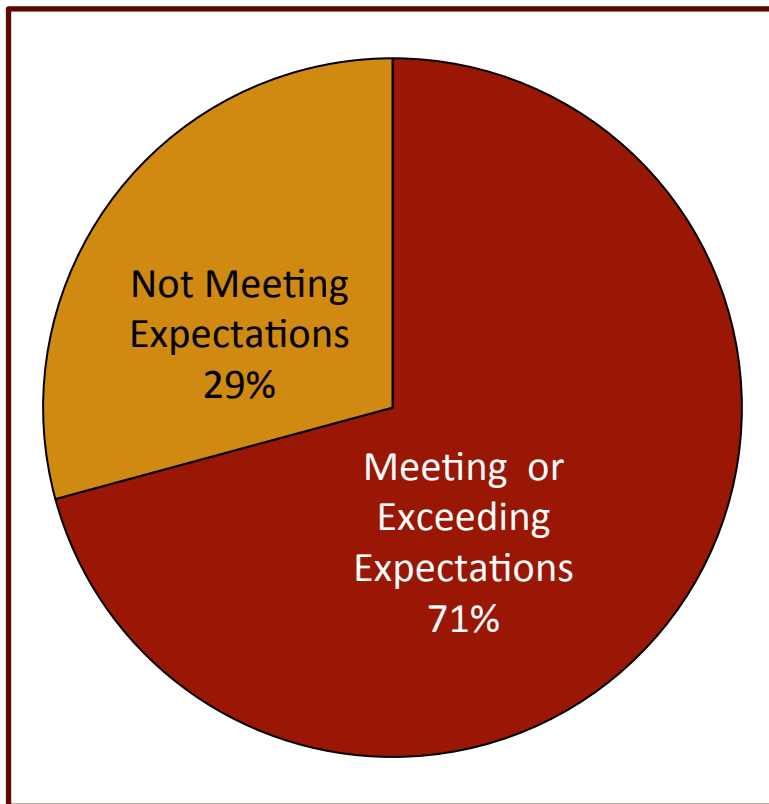




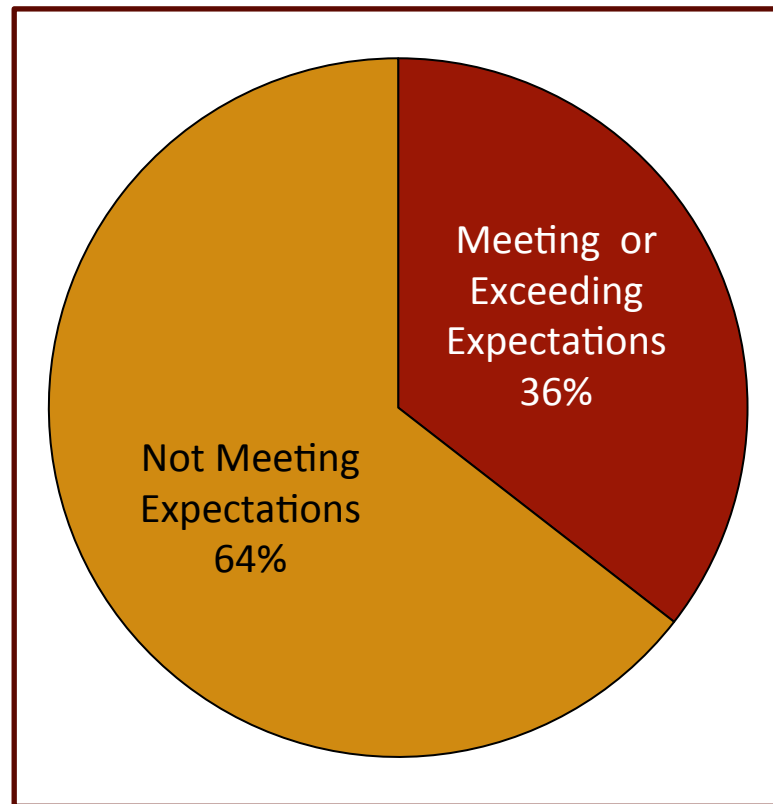
# English Language Arts MCAS 2017



White Students Grades 3 - 8



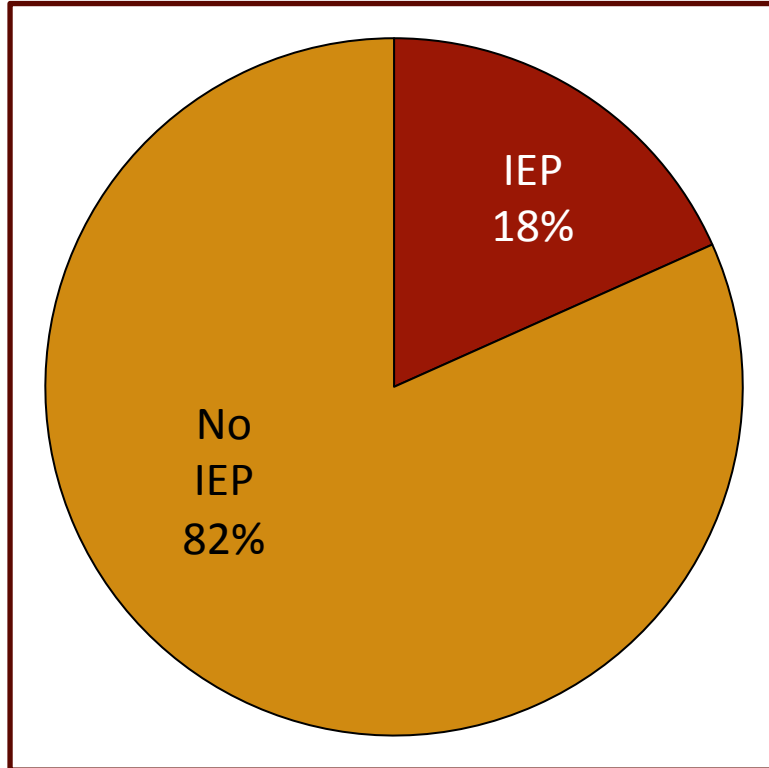
Black Students Grades 3 - 8



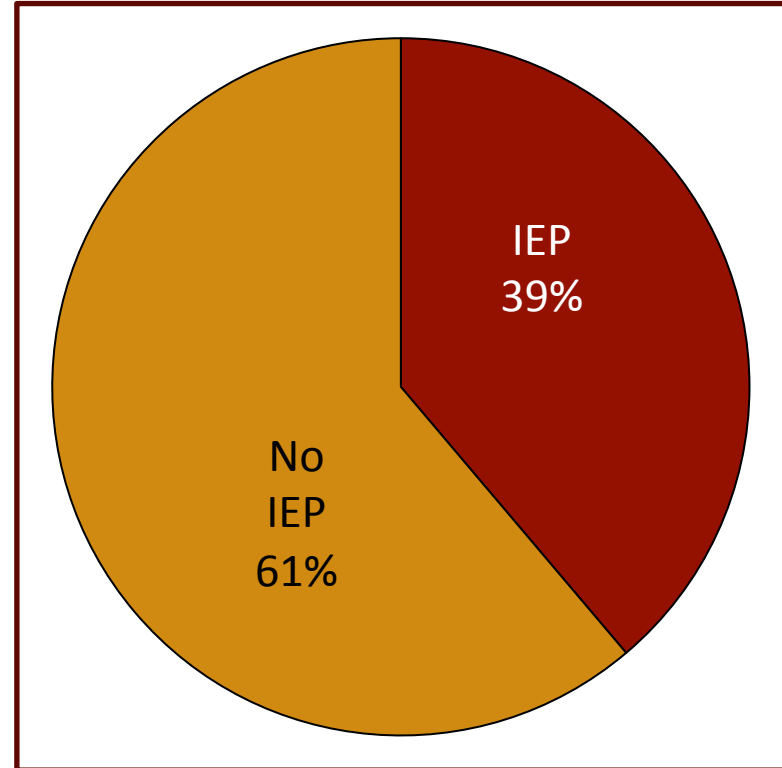
# + Individual Education Plans October 1, 2016



White Students All Schools



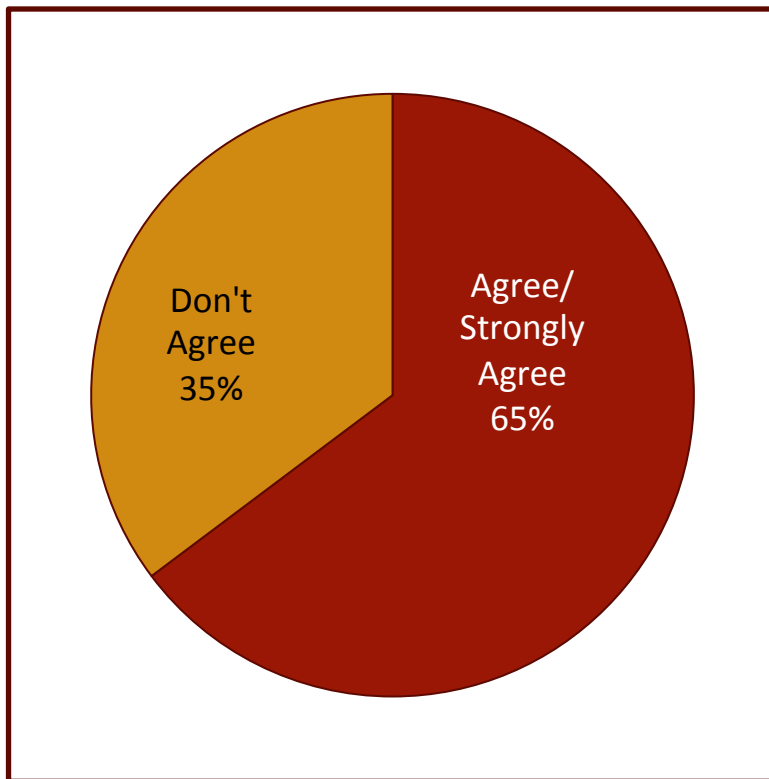
Black Students All Schools



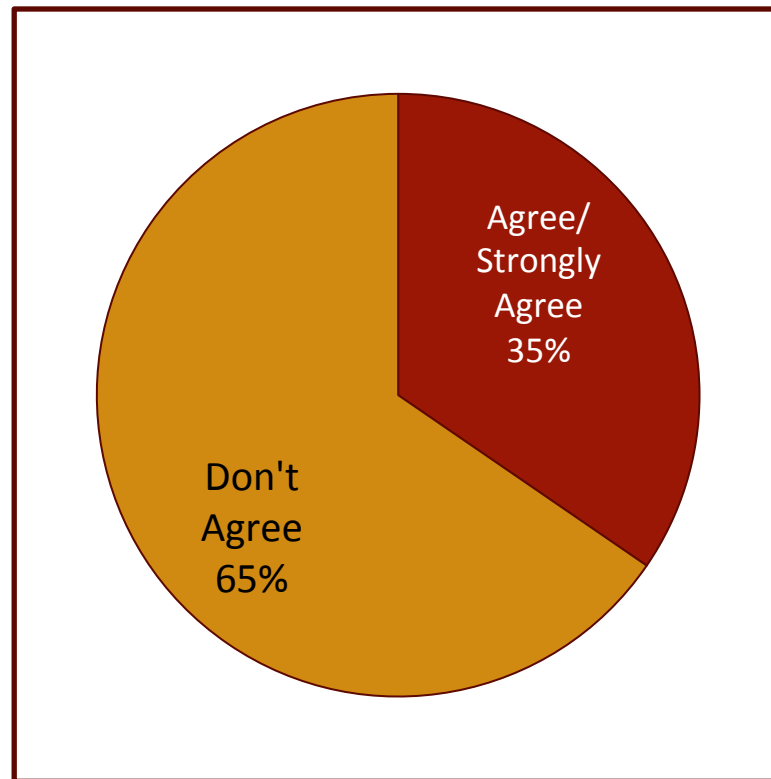
# + Connectedness to School YRBS Fall 2016

Responses to the prompt: "I feel like I'm a part of this school."

White Students Secondary Schools



Black Students Secondary Schools





# Summer 2015 Principals' Institute

*Building capacity to address the under achievement of Black and African American male students: Hopes and Fears*



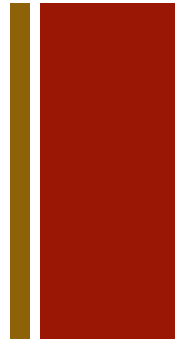
## HOPES

- Confident students who are connected to adults and experience greater success.
- New generation of African-American leaders.
- Increase teacher capacity to improve outcomes and effectively educate African-American male students.
- Schools have the capacity to critically analyze and respond to issues of bias.
- Develop a culture of achievement.
- Student and families feel supported.
- Male students continue education through college and beyond achieve and compete educationally and financially.
- Connect all professional development to this work

## FEARS

- Sustaining the work for the long-term by allocating appropriate resources, support and funding.
- Threatening the status quo
- Buy-in from faculty, families and community
- Failing African-American students AGAIN

# + Administrative Council



Courageous Conversations About Race  
2015-2016



Racial Identity Development  
2016-2017



Cultural Responsiveness  
2017-2018



Institute: Summer 2018

# + Group 1 Schools

Bowen, Brown, Burr, Countryside, Oak Hill, Peirce, Williams, Zervas

Train the Trainer: Courageous Conversations About Race for School-based Leadership Teams

2016-2017

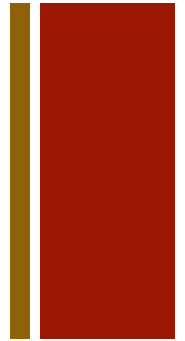
School Leadership Teams: Courageous Conversations About Race to School Faculty and Staff

2017-2018

Training for School Leadership Teams: Racial Identity Development

Spring 2018

Institute: Summer 2018





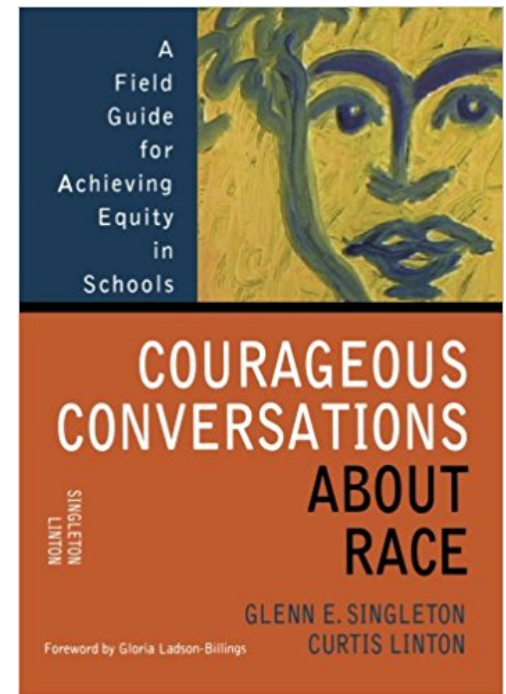


# Courageous Conversations About Race

District Goal 2016-2017:

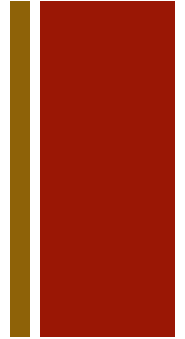
Identify and support (3-5) school-based teams to build capacity to lead conversations and create greater understanding about the impact of race and racial identity on student school experience.

*Courageous Conversations About Race*, by Glenn Singleton and Curtis Linton





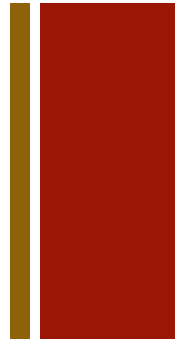
## What is a Courageous Conversation?



- *Engages* those who don't talk.
- *Sustains* the conversation when it gets uncomfortable or diverted.
- *Deepens* the conversation to the point where authentic understanding and meaningful actions occur.



# Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations



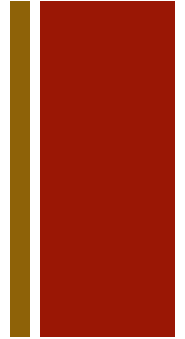
- Stay Engaged
- Speak Your Truth
- Expect to Experience Discomfort
- Expect and Accept Non-Closure

*“Recognizing that these agreements exist as a foundation for the conversation enables those who would normally feel unsafe in such a conversation to feel safer, even while experiencing discomfort.”*

*Singleton and Linton. Courageous Conversation About Race, pg. 18. 2006*



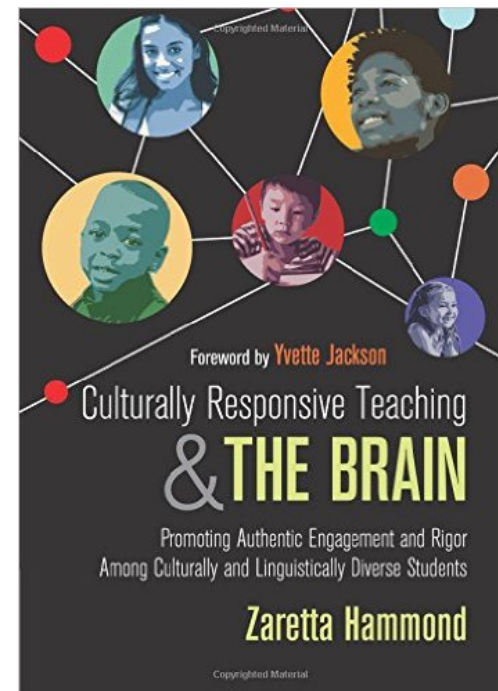
# Racial Identity Development



- To become an effective educator for all our students, we must understand racial identity development – including our own.
- This requires people to think deeply about their own racial identity as a white person or a person of color.
- The purpose is not to judge people
- The purpose is to help understand thoughts and behaviors related to race.
- Racial identity development is not linear, not static, and an individual never fits into one stage. Within a given day a person's thoughts and behaviors can reflect a number of different stages.

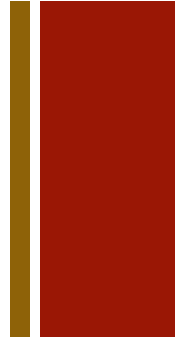
# + Cultural Responsiveness

- “If we are going to build social and emotional competency, we cannot do it without building cultural competency as well.” (MA DESE)
- SEL and Race and Achievement are not separate, but complimentary to supporting the district goal improving the academic and social emotional achievement of Black and/or African American students.
- *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*, by Zaretta Hammond





# Work with Students



## High Schools

- Shifting anti-bullying efforts to focus more directly on anti-bias
- Focus on peer-led student learning experiences that are aligned with our work with adults

## Middle Schools

- ADL Peer Leadership Program in all schools—designed to address issues of bias
- Micro-aggression training for all 8<sup>th</sup> graders



# Work with Families and Community



- Newton Family Conferences
  - Spring 2016 – Equity and Excellence
  - Spring 2017 – How to Support Black and Latino Students in Predominately White Schools.
  - Spring 2018 – Courageous Conversations about Race
- New work with families led by Amy Behrens



## Goals of Work with Families

- Continue to educate families about issues of race, culture, and identity
- Share information about district initiatives and programs
- Connect interested families at the school level to facilitate events and activities
- Engage additional families to create a broader understanding of challenges related to race, culture, and identity in our schools

