SC Education Oversight Full Committee Meeting

December 9, 2024

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

Approval of
Full Committee Minutes
October 14, 2024

April Allen, EOC Chair

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Special Presentation

Presentation from the 2024 Middle School Data Trailblazer Award Winner

Casey Calhoun, Lakeside Middle School Principal

Lakeside Middle School

2024 Data Trailblazer
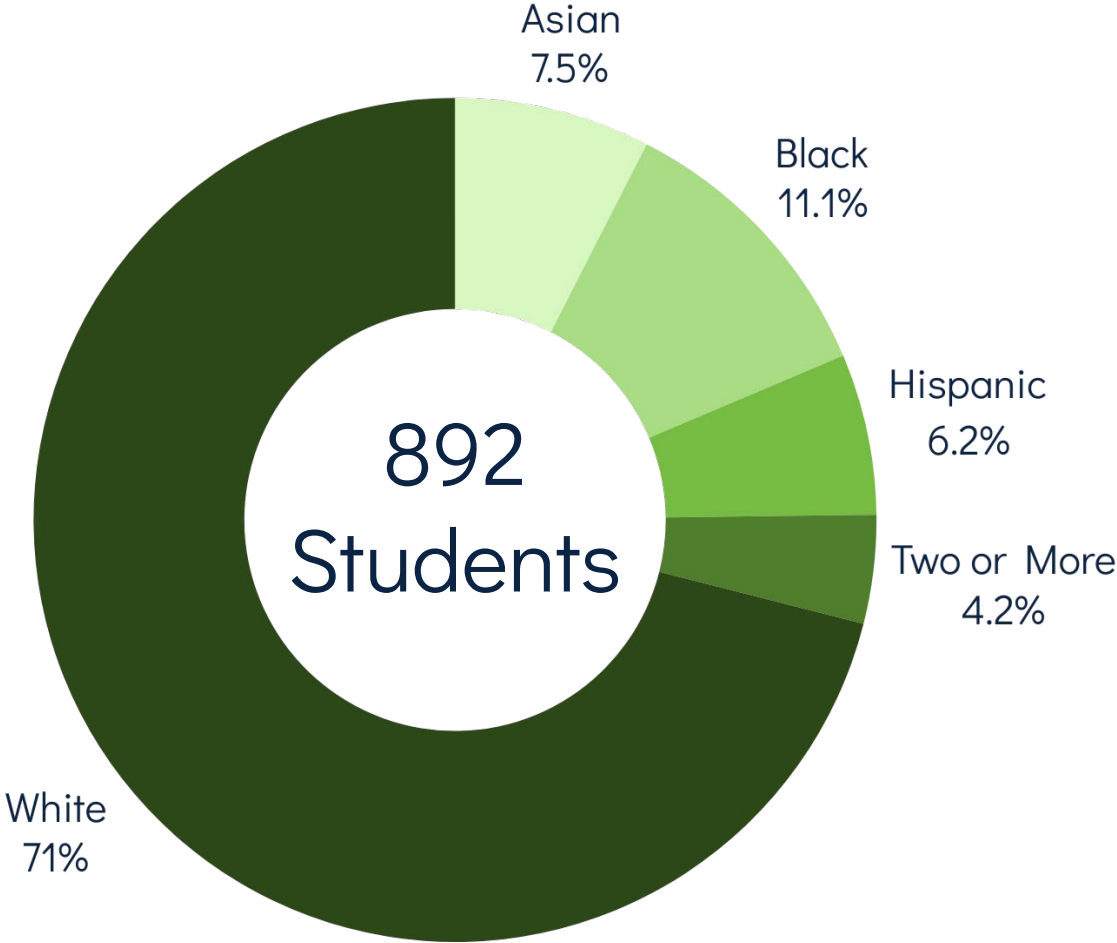
2023 - 2024 SC Ready Data

Legend: Does Not Meet · Approaches · Meets · Exceeds

Math: 19% · 32% · 24% · 25%

ELA: 13% · 21% · 28% · 37%
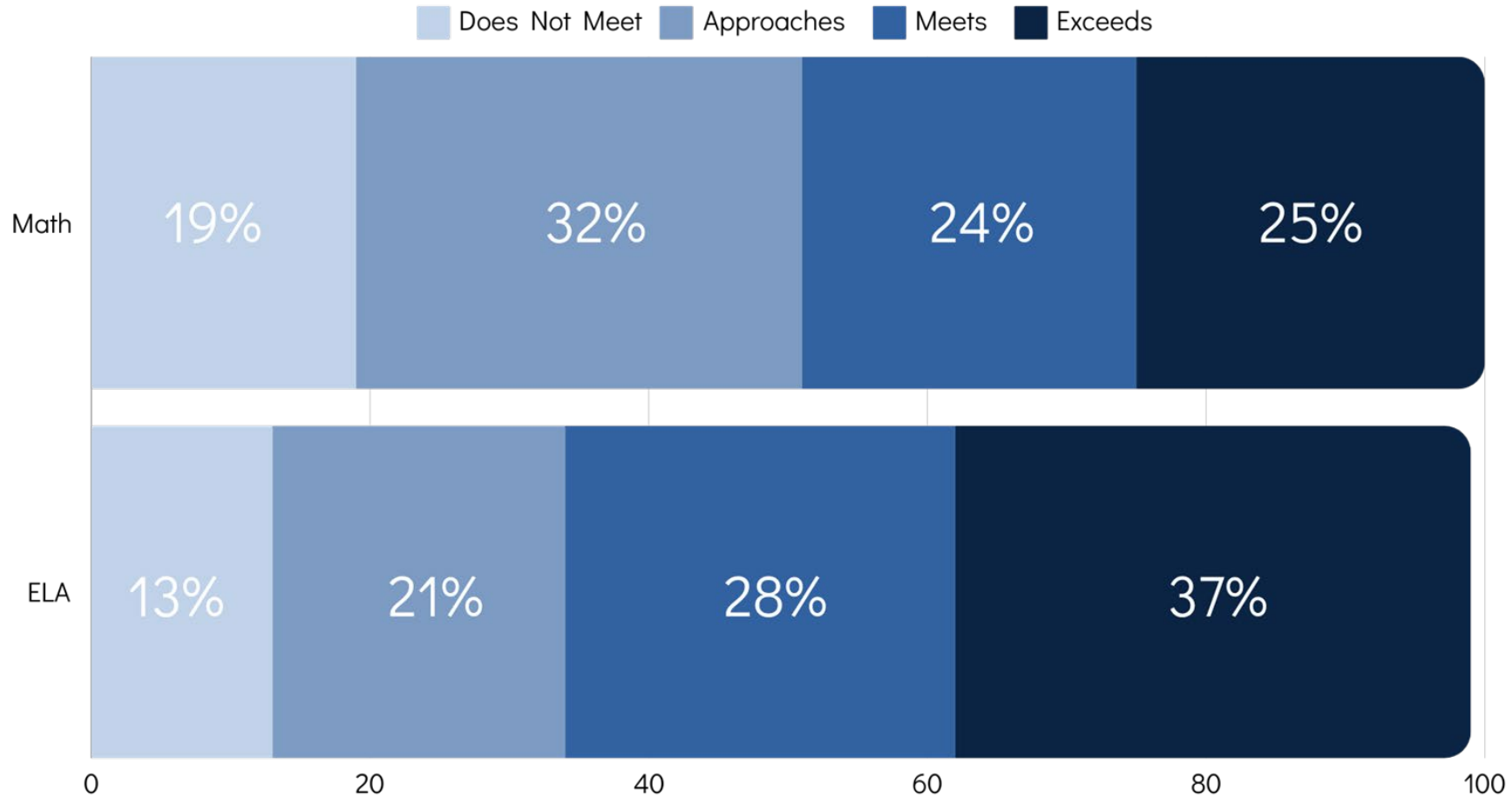
School Based Work Plan

Purpose: Focused priorities for the year, based upon school based data, that guide our learning and decision making.

Process: Developed over the summer by Lakeside's leadership team which includes administrators and teachers. Analyzes multiple data points to determine specific areas of growth.

Example: Schoolwide Learning Target: I can understand and implement powerful learning experiences, using high-leverage instructional strategies, to deepen student thinking and improve the quality of student work.

Work Plan Progress Monitoring: Inspect what you Expect

Leadership team meets formally three times during the school year.

1. Beginning of the Year
2. Mid-Year
3. End of Year

Data analyzed includes:

- Monthly classroom walkthrough data
- iReady data
- Attendance
- Student & Staff Survey
- Discipline
- Professional Learning
- Student focus groups

Work Plan Growth - Professional Learning

Structure: Weekly sessions led by instructional coaches and assistant principals to all teachers focused on specific learning targets driven by the work plan.

Example of PL Topics:

- Grappling
- Case Studies
- Math Workshop
- Checks for Understanding
- High-Leverage Instructional Practices

School-Wide Grapple

Imagine that we fully dunk a 4 x 4 x 4 cube in a blue bucket of paint.

How many of the unit cubes have no paint on any face?
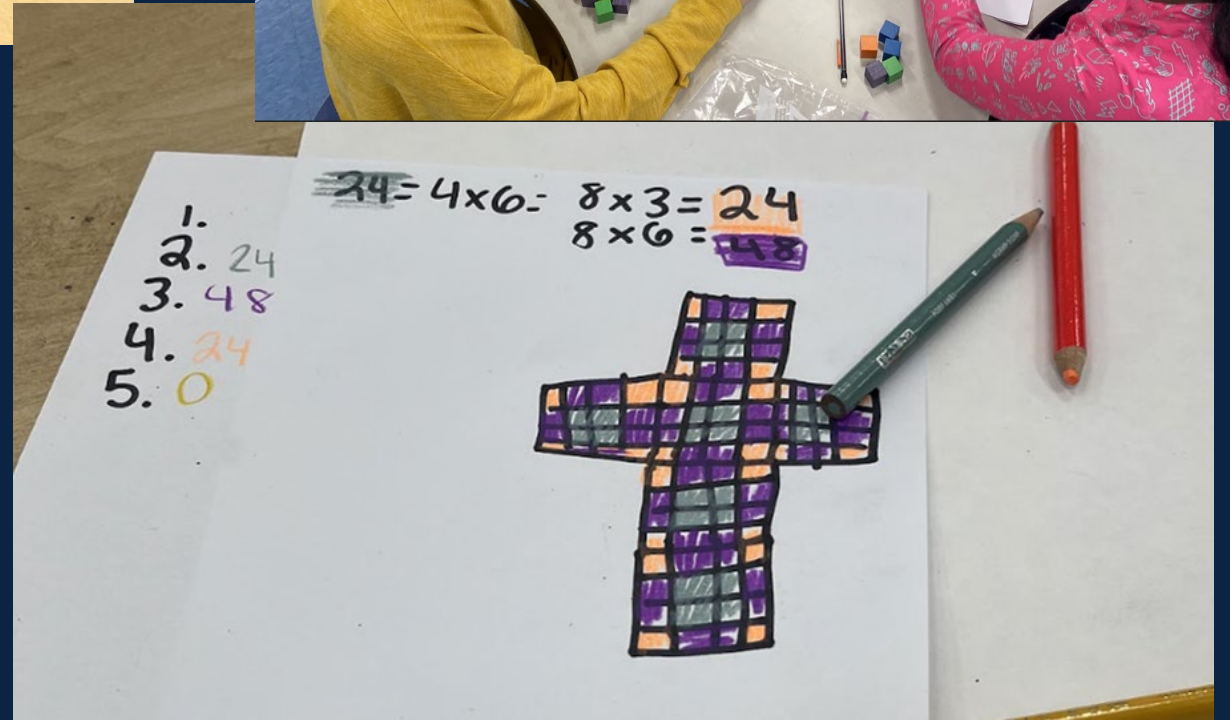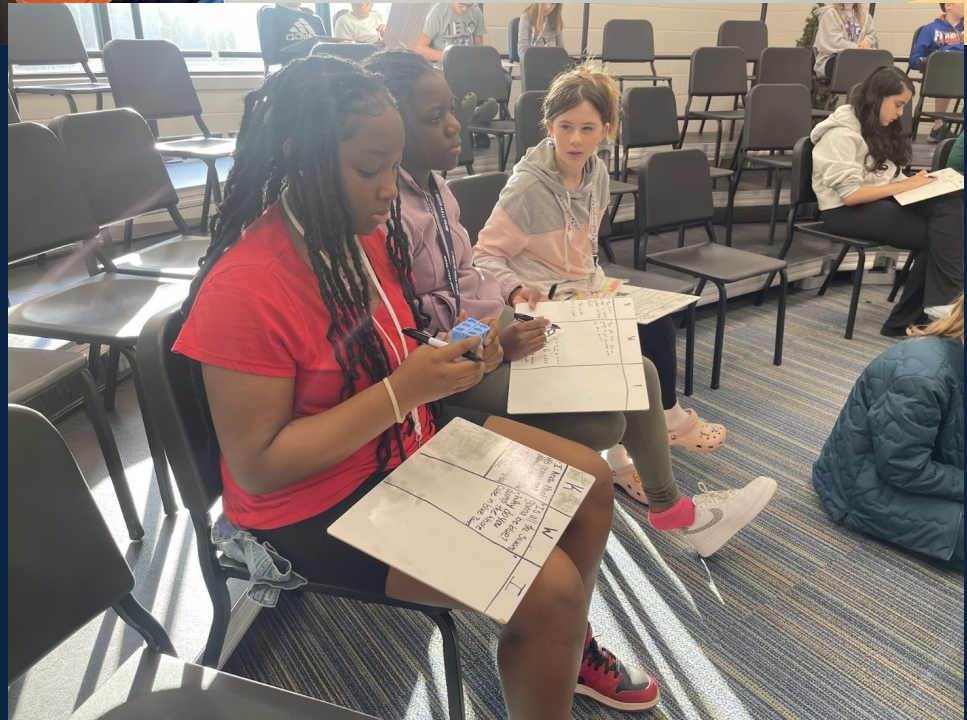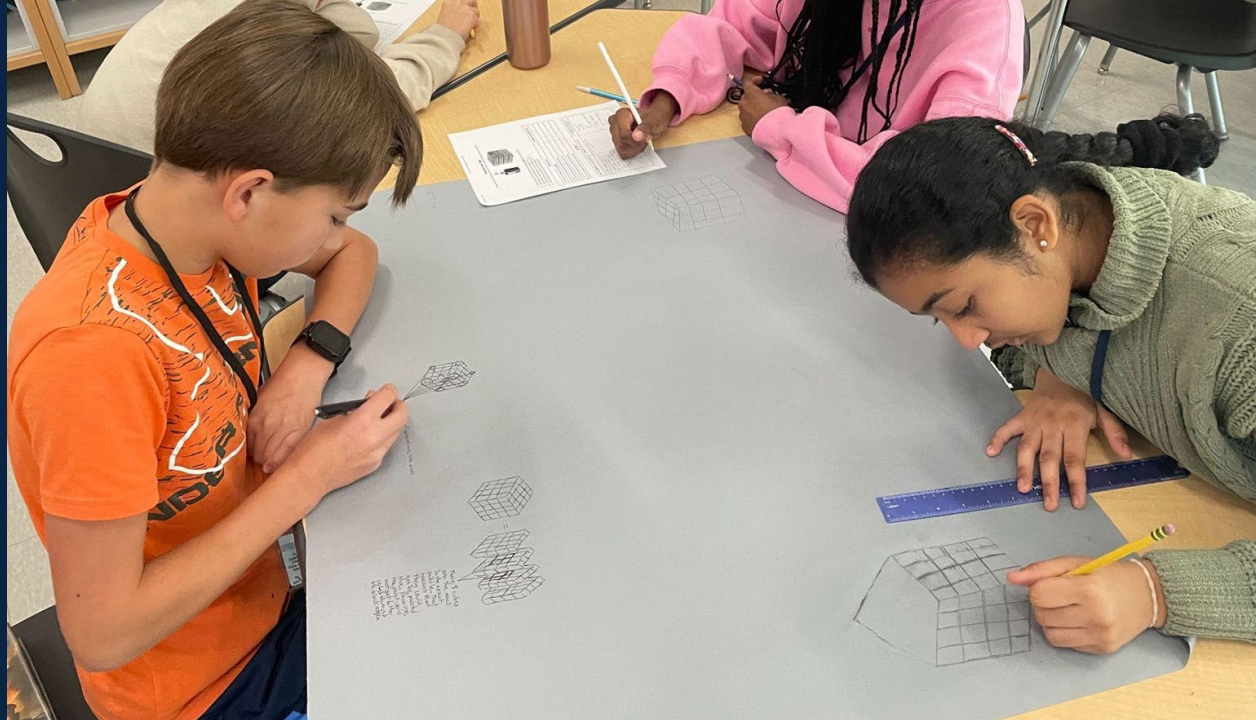How many have exactly 1 blue face?
How many have exactly 2 blue faces?
How many have exactly 3 blue faces?
How many have exactly 4 blue faces?

Lakeside Grapple Definition

Grappling is the process of persevering, thinking critically, analyzing data, and constructing an in-depth understanding when faced with a problem that does not have a clear path to a solution.

Work Plan Progress Monitoring - Walkthroughs

How do we use classroom walkthroughs to progress monitor our work plan goals?

- Using our specific indicators determined by our work plan goals, leadership conducts regular classroom walkthroughs to gather data
- Observation data is shared with teachers in a timely manner through a walkthrough letter that highlights areas of strength and areas of growth.

School Look-Fors:

1. Students grapple/struggle productively individually or collectively.
2. Teachers ask questions that promote critical thinking and inquiry.

Walkthrough Letter Example

March 14, 2024

Dear Lakeside Middle School Crew,

Thank you for opening your classrooms this week for our monthly instructional walkthrough.
As a reminder, we do this without judgment or expectations and continue to deepen our understanding of what Lakeside's goals look like in action:
- **Focus #1:** I can understand and implement powerful learning experiences, using high-leverage instructional practices, to deepen student thinking and improve the quality of student work.
- **Focus #2:** Increase students' sense of belonging and their ability to honor their similarities and differences with others.

The hard work you've put into planning and your deep commitment to students is clear! We saw a lot to celebrate. Here is a summary of our observations.

We observed some significant strengths:
- Teachers were asking questions that promote critical thinking. **An increase of 11%** from the February walkthrough data and **an increase of 28%** from the mid-year review walkthrough.
- Nearly **86%** of classrooms visited indicated at least some implementation of strategies that emphasize higher-level thinking skills.

We can keep growing, together:
- **Opportunities for students to struggle independently and/or collectively across all classrooms:** while awareness exists, there's always room to grow in consistency of implementing powerful learning experiences that require students to embrace the struggle and push forward either independently, with a group/partner, or collectively.
- Keeping our eye on the clock. **Debriefs**, even when short and small, when strategic and intentional, can make a difference. Debriefs have the power to help students synthesize the day's learning before they walk out the door or can serve as a quick check on student understanding as you think about tomorrow's plan. Debriefs are important!

We are here to support this work; let us know how we can help you visualize and implement best practices in your classroom.

Indicator	Scores
District Look-For #1: Create an inclusive and safe environment where students can take academic risks, interact with peers, reflect, and build the competencies of the Lexington One Graduate Profile.	**Evident** - 77.78% **Somewhat Evident** - 14.81% **Not Evident** - 7.41%
District Look-For #2: Integrate strategies that	**Evident** - 44.44%
emphasize higher-level thinking skills requiring students to communicate, question, justify and create.	**Somewhat Evident** - 40.74% **Not Evident** - 14.81%
School Look-For #1: Students grapple/struggle productively individually or collectively.	**Evident** - 22.22% **Somewhat Evident** - 25.93% **Not Evident** - 15.93% **Not Applicable** - 25.93%
School Look-For #2: Teachers ask questions that promote critical thinking and inquiry.	**Evident** - 34.62% **Somewhat Evident** - 38.46% **Not Evident** - 15.38% **Not Applicable** - 11.54%

Student Ownership of Data - SLCs

1. Student-Led Conferences (SLCs) - 6th - 8th Grades
2. A portfolio shared in a meeting with a student's parent/guardian that showcases student's learning, growth, and reflections
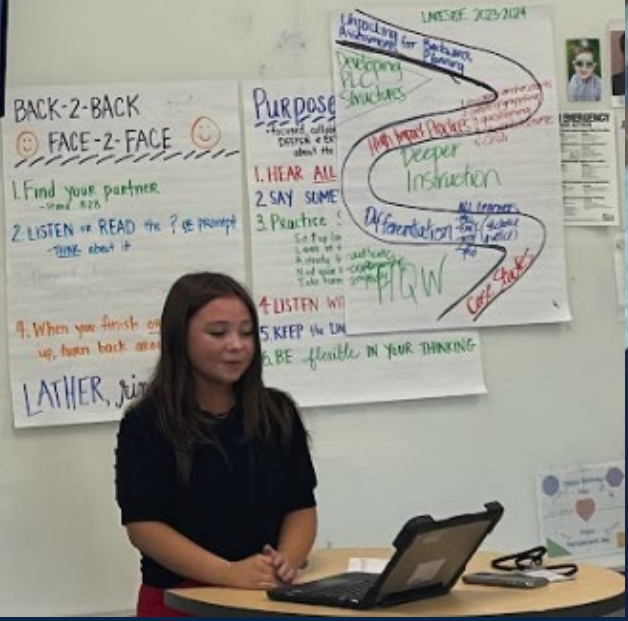
Student Ownership of Data - Passages

8th Grade Passage Presentations

- Passages are a presentation where students can show evidence of not only their academic growth, but also reflect on their growth of character through the four LMS Habits of Success: Advocate, Collaboration, Innovation, and Leadership.
- While ungraded, Passages are an opportunity for students to make their learning public, showcase and communicate evidence around their progress, high quality work samples, and emphasize their readiness for high school success.
- Presentations are given to a panel including family and community members

Objectives
- To develop pride in creating high-quality work
- Increase student accountability surrounding the development of character and Habits of Success
- To bring to action the Lakeside Middle School Motto; Stand up. Be Bold. Do the Work.
- To teach students how to use evidence to support their claims regarding personal and academic growth
- To provide students with an opportunity to hone verbal and written communication skills

Student Ownership of Data - Passages

Student Ownership of Data

- Structured Learning Time (SLT)
  - 30 minutes twice weekly - Dedicated time for students to get academic help from teachers and work on academic assignments
- Mastery-based learning and grading
  - 80% of final grade is based on summatives (Tests and Projects)
- Proficiency Grading in exploratory and immersion world language
  - Foreign language "grade" is based only on content mastery in areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing

Teacher Ownership of Data

Workplan

- Teachers involved in the creation of the work plan
- After monthly walkthroughs teachers receive a summary of progress

Teacher Collaboration

- Teachers meet regularly with content partners and grade levels teams to collaborate on supporting students and effective teaching strategies
- At the end of the year, teachers engaged in Teacher-Led Conferences where they shared specific artifacts representing their professional growth with other teachers

Parent Ownership of Data

- Communication of school goals
- Providing robust tools to monitor their student(s)' progress throughout the year, to include class grades, iReady benchmark data, and SC Ready performance:
    - Communication of data collection (i.e., upcoming assessments, projects, grapples, case studies) in weekly newsletter.
    - SC Ready and iReady data in Parent Portal
- Participating in student-led conferences and passage presentations
- Celebrations of learning
    - Parents invited into the school to view student work at the end of a unit of study

Intervention

Intervention Meetings

- Team of administrators, counselors, lead interventionist, school psychologist, social worker, and nurse meet weekly
- Discuss students that teachers or staff believe may need additional support

Schedule Structure

- Co taught classes to support students with additional academic needs
- Small pull-out classes for intense intervention

Questions?

Casey Calhoun

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Lexington One

803-821-1064

Alex Pinto, Lakeside Assistant Principal

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ASA Subcommittee Report

Dr. Patty Tate

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Information Item: Report on SC High School Students Focus Groups on Chronic Absenteeism

Tenell Felder, EOC Communications Manager

Chronic Absenteeism Focus Group Study

"South Carolina mirrored national trends showing a significant increase in chronic absenteeism rates after the COVID pandemic from 13% in 2019 to 25% during the 2022-23 school year."

❓ Why this study?

- Chronic Absenteeism rates have significantly increased
- Chronic Absenteeism negatively impacts student achievement
  - 2023-24 SC READY Math C.A. stats
  - 2023-24 SC READY ELA C.A. stats
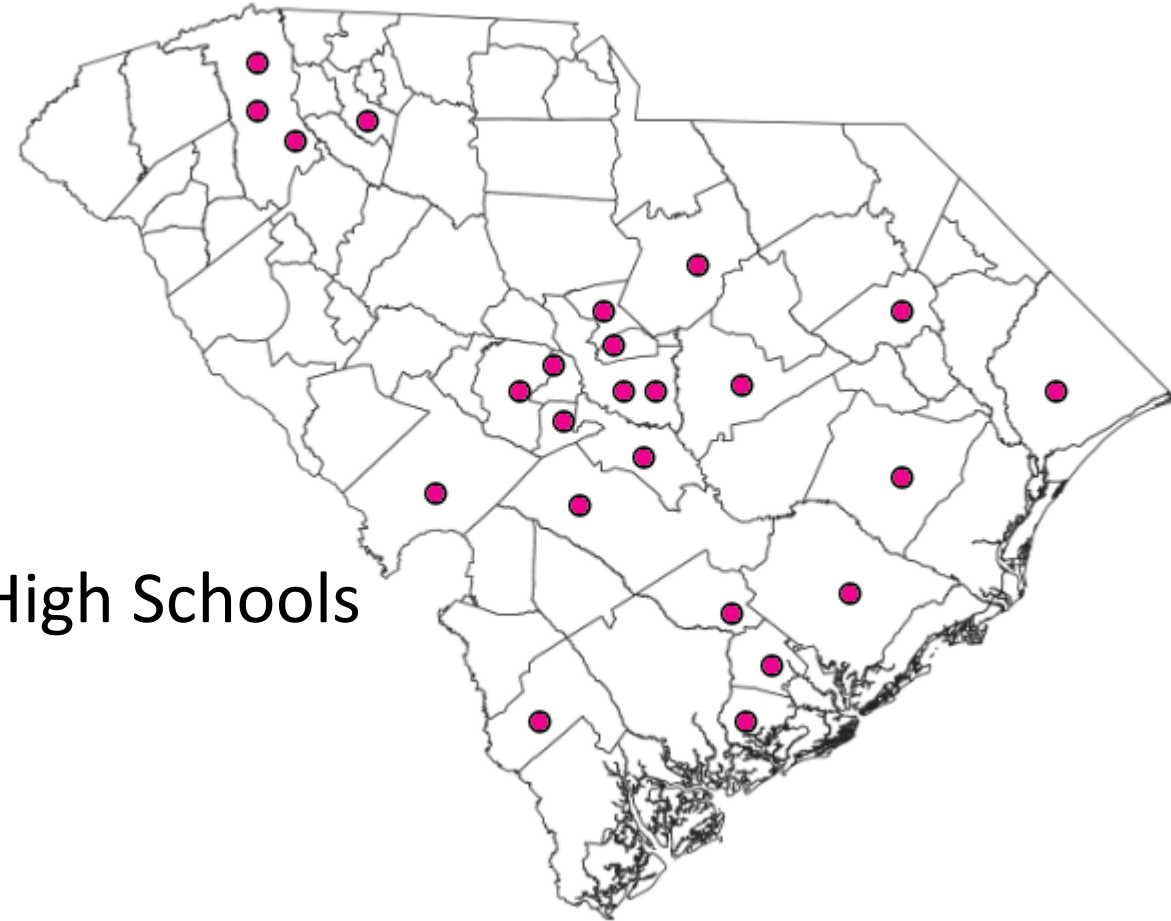
Timeline

- **April 19, 2024** – Melanie Barton convenes Chronic Absenteeism meeting at governor's office

- **June 2024** – EOC asked to do C.A. focus group

- **July/August 2024** – EOC sends out C.A. parent survey

- **September 2024** – EOC commissions Midlands Market Research

- **October 2024** – Communities in Schools SC helps to recruit students/ Focus groups carried out

Methodology

*"Three online focus groups were conducted ... on October 29 and 30, 2024. Among the 26 students who participated, **seven missed 18 or more days of school last year** (self identified) and an additional **four missed between 10 and 17 days** (self identified)"*
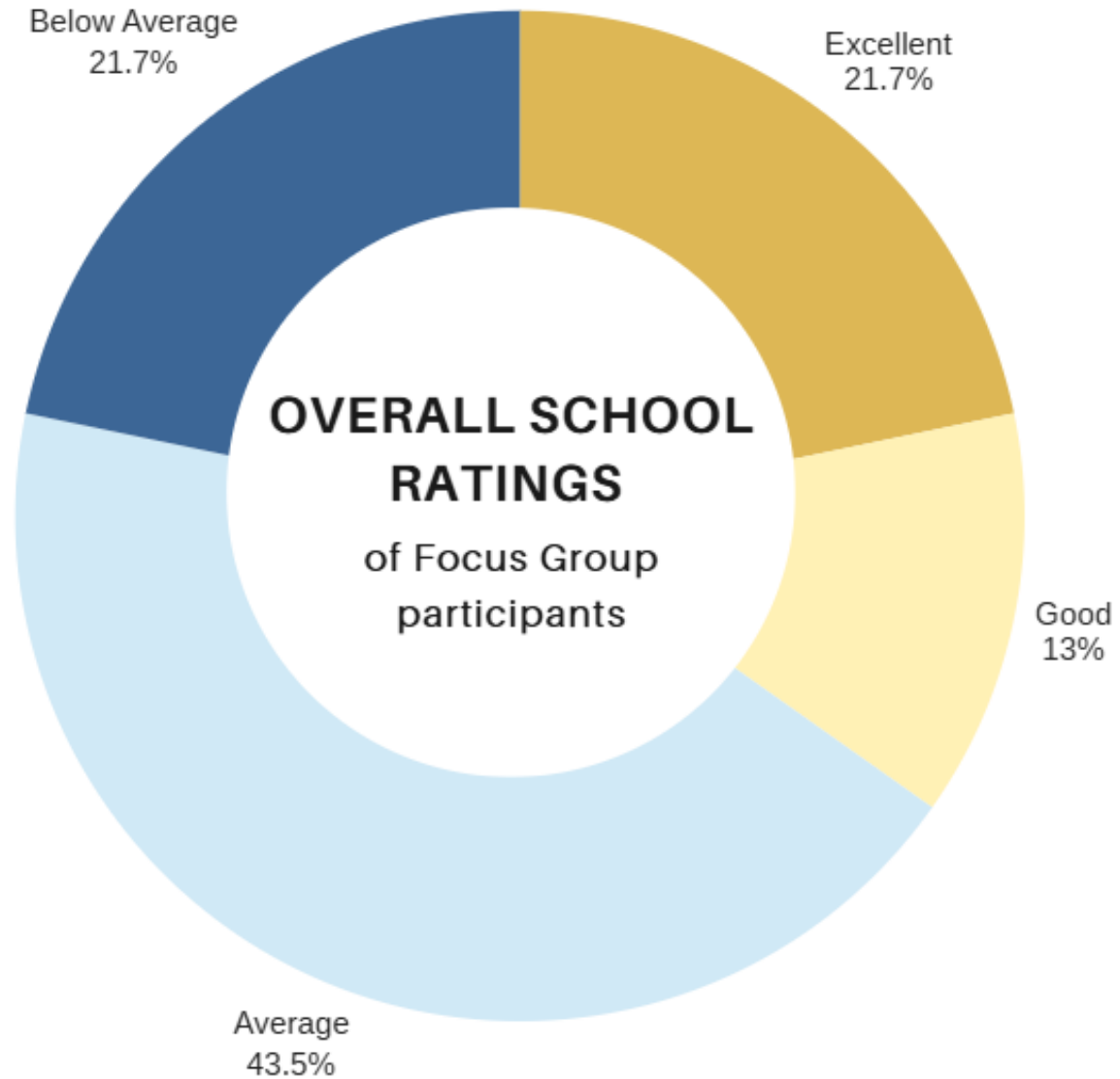
3 Focus Groups

- 26 Public High School Students (9th-12th)
  - 51% W, 47% B, 2% H

- 24 Public High Schools

Methodology

EXCELLENT

GOOD

AVERAGE

BELOW AVERAGE

UNSATISFACTORY

OVERALL SCHOOL RATINGS of Focus Group participants

Below Average 21.7%

Excellent 21.7%

Good 13%

Average 43.5%

Chronically absent: Any student in grade K-12 who misses 50 percent or more of the instructional day, for any reason, for 10 percent (or more) of the enrollment period. Includes Excused Absences, Unexcused Absences and Suspensions – SC Dept. of Education

🔍 Study Findings – preliminary questions

Sense of Community

Does your school have a sense of community?
Do you feel like a part of that community?

*"We have our student council, so they usually try to emphasize high school schoolwide participation with things like Spirit Week and all that. But it's definitely like, if you participate in that, then I guess you would consider yourself a part of a community. But for a lot of people that either can't do stuff like that or don't really see the fun in stuff like that, it can feel a little off at times. And then there's all the sports and things, so there's different branches of community at our school, but it's like, **I wouldn't say there's an overarching community**."*

🔍 Study Findings – preliminary questions

Attendance Do you think you need to go to school every day during the week?

"No, because school is draining. You are there for almost 8 hours with people you don't like, then have to come home and do more work." – H.A. student

*"I don't think that we need to go to school five days a week because **we don't even have most of our teachers**" – H.A. student*

*"My sister and I are both given **opportunities to skip school**." H.A. student*

*"I can really stay at school, go home, do whatever, as long **as I'm getting my work turned in**."*

*"And I also take AP classes and honor classes like [name] mentioned and **I don't think I could do most of the stuff that I do at school at home right now**."*

*"Most of my teachers, they post copies of everything online and a lot of our work is online. So, I feel like since it's online, if you miss a day of school**, it's going to be easy for you to still redo all that work**."*

🔍 Study Findings – preliminary questions

Chronic Absenteeism

Do you know what Chronic Absenteeism means?

"I guess maybe past the **20 - 30 day mark** you're really considered a chronic absentee."

*"I know **10 days** in a row is truant, so I would guess probably **around that number or higher**."*

*"I think it's **15 days. Unexcused?**"*

Study Findings – Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism

Lack of Consequences

Safety/School Environment

Mental Health

Teachers

Transportation

Apathy

Physical Health Problems/ Family Health Problems

▶▶ Conclusion/Next Steps

- "Attendance Matters" Public Awareness Campaign
- Further investigation
  - Parent Interviews

Education Improvement Act (EIA) and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee Report

Dr. Bob Couch

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Information Item: 2025-26 Budget Recommendations

Dr. Rainey Knight

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Rural Recruitment Initiative Preview

Dr. Rainey Knight

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Incentives for Rural Recruitment Incentive Funds

- Program established in budget proviso in FY 2015-16.
- Purpose is to allocate revenues to recruit and retain teachers in SC school districts experiencing high teacher turnover
  - Currently districts with greater than 11 percent average teacher turnover (as reported on the 5 most recent district report cards)
  - Excludes districts who are one of the 15 wealthiest based on the index of taxpaying ability
- Administered by CERRA
- $7.5 million in EIA funds allocated in 2023-24
- Includes program to forgive undergraduate student loans up to $5,000 per year for up to 7 years.
- EOC required to evaluate the impact of incentives and report to General Assembly by December 15.

Questions to be addressed in 12/15 report

- How did school districts utlize RRI funds in 2023-24?
- How do RRI districts perceive the effectiveness of RRI funds?
- Is it possible to determine which incentives yield the most effective outcomes?

Recommendations for Future of Rural Recruitment Initiative Funds

Expand the Evaluation Effectiveness of Current Incentives:

In reviewing individual incentives, several should be further analyzed to see if they contribute to teacher recruitment and/or retention. These incentives include recruitment expenses and website updates. Districts stated in the survey results they utilized website upgrades as a general maintenance expenses, not necessarily targeting teacher recruitment. In analyzing available data, recruitment fair expenses often did not yield positive results for districts.

Facilitate Collaborative Analysis for Strategic Refinement:

EOC staff should continue to work with SC TEACHER to analyze data regarding the incentives as they relate to teacher recruitment and retention. SC TEACHER should have access to the 2023-24 data from the SCDE in the coming weeks; additional data will strengthen the data infrastructure and allow districts and policymakers to make recommendations and decisions using ROI data.

Recommendations for Future of Rural Recruitment Initiative Funds

Implement Data-Driven Decision Making on Strategy Implementation:

The EOC, SCDE, CERRA, and SC TEACHER should regularly meet to continue analysis of the available data in an effort to refine the recommendations. It is recommended that this report be revised at fiscal year 2026.

Develop Training Model for Districts:

A training model should be developed for districts that receive RRI funds to provide them with the strategies that would work best for each district using their individual data.

Empower Districts with Long-Term Planning Tools:

Districts should have their individual district data to develop individual long-term plans for the most effective use of incentives funds such as pairing strategies for maximum benefit. An example might be mentoring/induction and professional development.

Adjournment