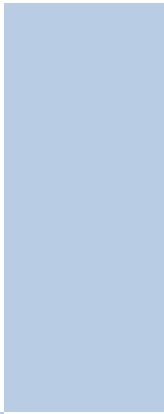


the  
mayor's  
education  
summit



FINAL  
REPORT  
of the  
ADVISORY  
GROUP



*November 2016*



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Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning

PO Box 94665

Seattle, WA 98124-6965

Phone: (206) 233-5118

Fax: 206-386-1900

[EducationOffice@Seattle.gov](mailto:EducationOffice@Seattle.gov)

<http://www.seattle.gov/education>



November 2016

Dear Friends:

For more than a century, public education has been viewed as opening doors to the American Dream. The idea that our public education system should offer opportunities for all children to learn skills and knowledge that will allow them to thrive and succeed in life remains a powerful vision, but one that is not experienced by many children today. Unfortunately, our public education system across the country is characterized more by racial and economic disparity than equity. For decades we have failed to change outcomes for too many students of color and low-income students.

In Seattle Public Schools, there is much good work underway. But as in many large urban public school systems, disparities in child outcomes have existed for far too long and still exist in Seattle today. The Education Summit's purpose was to identify ways the City of Seattle could improve outcomes for students of color in Seattle. We thank and commend Superintendent Larry Nyland and Board Chair Betty Patu for being tireless partners in each phase of the Education Summit.

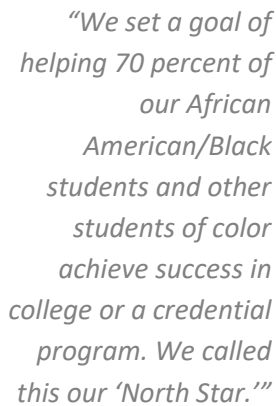
Data about educational outcomes for our children tell us a chilling story. In Seattle Public Schools, students of color meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading standards at a rate 31 percent lower than white students. Students of color are suspended or expelled at three times the rate of their white peers. Students of color graduate on time at a rate 24 percent lower than white students. A shocking 43 percent of African American and Latino students do not graduate on time or at all.

These disparities are unacceptable, and they explain why we agreed to accept our roles as the Co-Chairs of the Mayor's Education Summit. In education circles, the gap between outcomes for students of color and their white counterparts is referred to as the opportunity gap. Closing this gap is a big challenge, but one that members of the Education Summit Advisory Group embraced.

The Advisory Group was part of a nearly year-long process culminating in recommendations to the Mayor on ways the City of Seattle can ensure all of Seattle's children have an equal opportunity to succeed in school and in life. The first phase of our work involved listening to community members regarding their ideas and concerns about Seattle's opportunity gap. Many meetings were held across the city to solicit the ideas of our fellow residents. The next phase of our work focused on a day-long education summit, where we came together with

more than 500 individuals to hear from students, teachers, other cities tackling these issues, and talk to one another. Finally, we worked as an Advisory Group for seven months to identify actionable strategies that will have a measurable impact on eliminating the disparities in educational outcomes for our children.

One of the important conversations we had early in our work was about establishing the right focus for our recommendations. What is the goal we hope to achieve? After considerable discussion we agreed that a laser-like focus on closing the opportunity gap for



*“We set a goal of helping 70 percent of our African American/Black students and other students of color achieve success in college or a credential program. We called this our ‘North Star.’”*

African American/Black students and other underserved children of color is what is needed. The ideas and strategies included in this report focus on the needs of these children, who have been historically underserved by our public schools. We set a goal of helping 70 percent of our African American/Black students and other students of color achieve success in college or a credential program. We called this our “North Star.” This goal is important to us because research done by the Georgetown University Center on Education in the Workforce states that by 2018 fully 67 percent of jobs in Washington state will require some form of post-secondary credential. Without making major changes to the ways in which we support African American/Black students and other students of color, they will be left behind as the workforce for the next generation is created.

Throughout our work the Advisory Group members were vigilant stewards of the concerns and ideas raised by community members in the Community Conversations. Our members remained focused on these students and their families, identifying, examining and ultimately recommending policies and resources that could help children of color be more successful in school and live healthier lives. A summary of the comments we heard from communities across Seattle is included in this report. It was an integral part of shaping our thinking about the actions needed.

The Advisory Group process was a collaboration among representatives of Seattle Public Schools, the City of Seattle, and community, business and philanthropic leaders from across Seattle. Our conversations with one another were courageous, honest and respectful. We were committed to the task of confronting institutional racism and inequitable access to resources, and improving the quality of educational life for our students of color in Seattle Public Schools. We are hopeful that this collaborative approach can serve as a model for the work ahead.

The recommendations proposed by the Advisory Group to the Mayor are not a conclusion, but a launching point for the important work that lies ahead. Achieving success will require continued community engagement, a robust collaboration, an insistence from all stakeholders on the elimination of the opportunity gap in Seattle Public Schools, and

tirelessly exploring every available public and private resource to support the education of our children of color. Our community must do better. We are resolute that, together, we will do better.

All of us benefit when children succeed in school. In another generation, today's school children will be making the decisions that shape our community. Together with our Advisory Group colleagues, it has been an honor to consider the comments from community members, and identify strategies that will make a measurable difference for the children and youth who find themselves the furthest from opportunity.

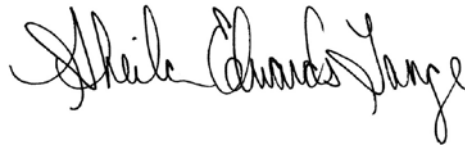
We look forward to continuing our support of these recommendations as Mayor Murray develops an implementation Action Plan. As Superintendent Nyland said to us in our first meeting, closing the opportunity gap "is the most important issue of our time."

Yours sincerely,

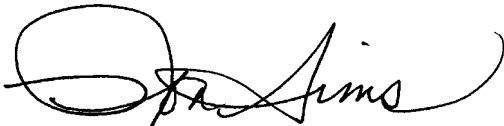
Advisory Group Co-Chairs



Kristin Bailey-Fogarty  
Vice Principal  
Thornton Creek Elementary



Dr. Sheila Edwards Lange  
President  
Seattle Central College



Ron Sims  
Former Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Dept. of Housing and  
Urban Development



Brad Tilden  
President & CEO  
Alaska Airlines

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## Executive Summary

### Purpose

The Mayor's Education Summit has been a community process focused on how the City can help to make Seattle a place where every child will graduate from school with hope and the ability to embrace his or her full potential. During an eight-month process, the Education Summit brought together families, youth, teachers, school district leadership, community partners and interested community members to address the disparities in educational opportunity and outcomes that disproportionately impact students of color and those from lower-income families.

Overall, Seattle Public Schools' nearly 54,000 students have a good achievement record on state learning assessments and a good graduation rate. However, the picture is different when viewed by race/ethnicity and income, and for English Language Learner (ELL) students and foster children. In particular, the school district has identified the following five areas of disproportionality: school attendance, behavior and discipline, academics, on-time graduation, and achievement of post-secondary (2- and 4-year) degrees.

### Four Phases of the Mayor's Education Summit Process

#### Phases One and Two

**Community input.** The Education Summit began by seeking input from community members. Phase One, in March and April 2016, involved holding multiple community conversations across the city and conducting an online survey to gather ideas from Seattle's families, students, educators and community members on how to address the opportunity gaps and disparities. The conversations and survey set the stage for Phase Two, which was the Mayor's Education Summit event, held on April 30, 2016. More than 1,400 people participated in the conversations and survey, and 500 joined the April 30 Summit.

**Common threads and themes.** Running through all the community input were three common threads: cultural competency, support for home languages, and equity in school funding. Nine themes emerged from the comments from community members regarding possible solutions to the opportunity gap: (1) improving school climate; (2) improving in-school instruction and programming; (3) improving family/community engagement and partnerships; (4) supporting community and family needs; (5) strengthening post-secondary access and attainment; (6) school-city collaboration; (7) recruiting, supporting and retaining a diverse and high-quality educator workforce; (8) improving access to quality expanded K-12 opportunities; and (9) expanding access to quality early learning.

#### Phase Three

In Phase Three, a mayor-appointed, 30-member Education Summit Advisory Group reviewed the ideas gathered from the community, and developed strategies and recommendations to reduce the opportunity gap for students of color, low-income students and ELL students.

**The Advisory Group’s “North Star”:** Vision and goal. The Advisory Group articulated a vision of Seattle as “a city where children of all races and ethnicities thrive and succeed.” They also developed a goal: “Through targeted City, District, and other partnership investments across the education continuum, with specific emphasis on African-American/Black students and other students of color who have been historically underserved by the education system, post-secondary credential attainment for all Seattle Public Schools (SPS) graduates shall rise to 70 percent by 2030.”

**Development of recommendations.** The Advisory Group organized into four work groups to design recommendations and developed guiding questions for their work. The entire Advisory Group reviewed the suggested recommendations from all the work groups. They agreed to prioritize the recommendations for action based on the following criteria:

- Recommendations that are the most important in having an impact on the opportunity gap as it relates to the African American/Black students and other students of color
- Recommendations that are the most important to implement in the short term
- Recommendations on which the City can have the greatest impact.

### **Advisory Group Recommendations**

The Work Groups brought forward a total of 18 draft recommendations. The Advisory Group felt strongly that progress on each of the recommendations is needed to address the opportunity gap in a comprehensive manner. Advisory Group members were asked to identify priorities that they felt the Mayor should focus on initially. Advisory Group members identified six of the recommendations that members thought best met the three criteria above (marked with an \* in the list below). In addition, the Advisory Group members identified their top two priorities within each of the Work Group(s) in which they participated.

#### **Work Group #1: Improving Access to High-Quality Learning Opportunities and Programs**

- A. Expand the Innovation School Model to Additional Elementary and Middle Schools; Develop a Comprehensive Approach for High Schools \*
- B. Expand Summer Learning Program \*
- C. Establish and Expand School-Based Mentoring Programs
- D. Enhance Opportunities for Before- and After-School Programs \*
- E. Increase Support for Parents and Caregivers of Children, Prenatal – 3 Years

#### **Work Group #2: Creating Positive, Supportive and High-Quality Teaching and Learning Opportunities**

- A. Expand the Innovation School Model to Additional Elementary and Middle Schools; Develop a Comprehensive Approach for High Schools (Same as Work Group #1. A, above) \*
- B. Increase Diversity in the Educator Workforce \*
- C. Reduce Disproportionality in Discipline – Build and Sustain a Positive School Culture and Climate \*

### **Work Group #3: Providing Authentic Family and Community Support and Engagement**

- A. Expand School-Based Health Centers
- B. Increase Family Engagement and Partnership \*
- C. Enhance Family Support – Create Comprehensive, Robust System of Support for Families
- D. Improve Transportation – Provide Safe, Affordable Options to School and Extended Learning Programs
- E. Address the Needs of Homeless Students

### **Work Group #4: Strengthening Post-Secondary Access and Attainment**

- A. Enhance Workplace-Based Learning – Complement Career/College Prep in K-12
- B. Financing Post-Secondary Attainment – Remove Financial Barriers to Education and Training
- C. Career/College Planning – Increase Post-Secondary Access and Persistence by Raising Career and College Awareness Through Guiding Curriculum
- D. International Baccalaureate (IB) Pathway – Expand the Continuum through Elementary and Middle Schools
- E. Expand Seattle Public Schools International Schools/Dual Language Immersion Programs
- F. Support Open Doors Programs – Increase Capacity of School Re-entry Programs

### **Collaboration and Partnerships**

The work to accomplish these ambitious recommendations will require a new level of collaboration and partnership. This will be challenging work, but is essential to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed in school and in life. Partnerships among the City of Seattle, the Seattle School District, community-based organizations, parents, the business community and philanthropy will be needed to implement these recommendations.

### **Phase Four**

#### **The Mayor’s Action Plan and Implementation Process**

The Advisory Group recommendations will be presented to the Mayor in November. The Mayor will work with the School District and other key stakeholders to develop an action plan. The Advisory Group recommended several guidelines to use in developing this action plan, and in implementing the range of suggested solutions.

#### **Initial Investments**

As the Advisory Group was finishing its work, Mayor Murray presented his 2017 budget to the City Council. This budget included four actions the Advisory Group is recommending: expanding the My Brother’s Keeper mentoring program; expanding the Innovation Model to a high school; broadening summer learning programs; and investing in ways to encourage post-secondary enrollment.

## I. Purpose

The Mayor's Education Summit is a community process focused on how the City can help to make Seattle a place where every child will graduate from school with hope and the ability to embrace his or her full potential. The Education Summit brought together families, youth, teachers, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) leadership, community partners and interested

community members to address the disparities in educational opportunity and outcomes that disproportionately impact students of color and those from lower-income families—referred to as the opportunity gap.

The purpose of the Advisory Group was to listen to the ideas and concerns expressed by the community and advise the Mayor on recommendations that will help close the opportunity gap. Specifically, the Mayor asked the Advisory Group to explore: “What can city government do, on its own and in partnership with private and public partners, to ensure that all children have opportunity to succeed in school and in life?” The work included the development of a shared vision to ensure equity and excellence for every Seattle student.

*“We have failed to change the outcomes for too many poor students and students of color, depriving them of the opportunity to achieve excellence.”*

Mayor Ed Murray,  
Education Summit  
remarks

## Children and Youth in Seattle

A total of 98,826 children under age 18 live in Seattle. Of these, 64,815 are school aged (ages 5 – 17). Approximately 7,000 children are born in Seattle each year.<sup>1</sup>

A total of 1,976 children below kindergarten age were enrolled in City of Seattle or school-connected early childhood programs in 2015-16, as follows:

- Head Start: 789 children
- Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP): 512 children
- Seattle Preschool Program (SPP): 256 children
- Step Ahead (preschool): 344 children
- SPP Pathway (providers working to qualify for SPP): 75 children.<sup>2</sup>

A total of 53,872 students were enrolled in Seattle Public Schools in 2015-16, attending the district's 98 schools.<sup>3</sup> The students hailed from a total of 148 countries and included speakers of 128 different languages or dialects. Thirty-nine percent of the students qualified for the free and reduced price lunch program, which serves students from low-income families. More than 2,850 students were identified as being homeless. There were 6,430 students in the district's English Language Learner (ELL) program, another 335 eligible whose families waived the services, and 1,465 who had completed the ELL program but

<sup>1</sup> American Community Survey, 2014 five-year estimates, Population in Households, Table B9001 for Seattle city; 2010 Census Summary File 1, Age by Year, Table QT-PT2 for Seattle city.

<sup>2</sup> “Responses to Education Summit Advisory Group Questions,” May 11, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Data in this paragraph are from the presentation by Michael Tolley of Seattle Public Schools at the April 30, 2016, Education Summit, and from the Seattle Public Schools website.

whose progress the district monitors for two years. There were 6,718 students enrolled in the district’s special education program.

## Opportunity Gap

Overall, Seattle Public Schools students have a good achievement record on state learning assessments and a good graduation rate. However, the picture is different when viewed by race/ethnicity and income, and for ELL students, and homeless and foster children. The students with the greatest disparities are African American/Black students and other students of color, particularly Hispanic, Native American and Pacific Islander.

The school district has identified the following five areas of disproportionality. Table 1 below offers data by race and ethnicity from 2014-15. (See also Appendices 1 and 2.)

- **School attendance** – Chronic absenteeism (missing 10 percent or more of possible instructional days). When students miss school days, they miss out in learning and can fall behind academically.
- **Behavior and discipline** – Suspension from school.
- **Academics** – Results of state assessment tests.
- **On-time graduation rate** – Graduating from high school on time, that is, in four years.
- **Post-secondary (two- and four-year) degrees** – Getting a post-secondary credential is rapidly becoming essential to getting a good job and participating in the future economy.

*“When we talk about barriers, we are really talking about symptoms from historical racism.”*

Participant at community conversation hosted by Southeast Seattle Education Coalition and Vietnamese Friendship Association

**Table 1. Examples of Disproportionate Results in Key Measures (2014-15)**

	African American / Black	Asian	Hispanic/ Latino	Multi-Racial	Native American	Pacific Islander	White
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	26%	12%	23%	15%	39%	47%	12%
Suspension Rate	16%	3%	9%	6%	13%	10%	4%
3rd Grade English/ Language Arts Proficiency	33%	59%	43%	65%	39%	46%	76%
7th Grade Mathematics Proficiency	32%	75%	41%	58%	26%	48%	73%
On-Time (4-year) Graduation Rate	65%	83%	58%	73%	53%	75%	85%
College (2- and 4-year) Degree Attainment	27%	43%	29%		24%		51%

Sources: Education Summit presentation by Michael Tolley (SPS); Seattle Public Schools

## II. Phases One and Two: Community Input

The Education Summit's initial processes took place in March and April 2016. Phase One involved holding multiple community conversations across the city and conducting an online survey to gather ideas from Seattle's families, students, educators and community members on how to address the opportunity gaps and disparities. The Mayor met with numerous individuals and small groups to inform the design of the early stages of this work. The community conversations and survey set the stage for Phase Two, which was the Education Summit event, held on April 30, 2016.

### Community Conversations and Online Survey

#### Community Conversation Hosts

*"Establish community-based partnerships with a goal of addressing each community's needs related to student achievement. City of Seattle help is needed for space/facilities and capacity to provide those services."*

Summit participant

Spread throughout the city, the community conversations were held at community centers, neighborhood resource centers and several Seattle schools. The conversation hosts represented a wide range of stakeholders, including 23 community-based and nonprofit organizations and one Seattle City Councilmember. (For a list of the hosts, see the report in Appendix 5.) Many of the hosts also served on the Advisory Group (see Section III, below), further ensuring that community voices were heard throughout the process.

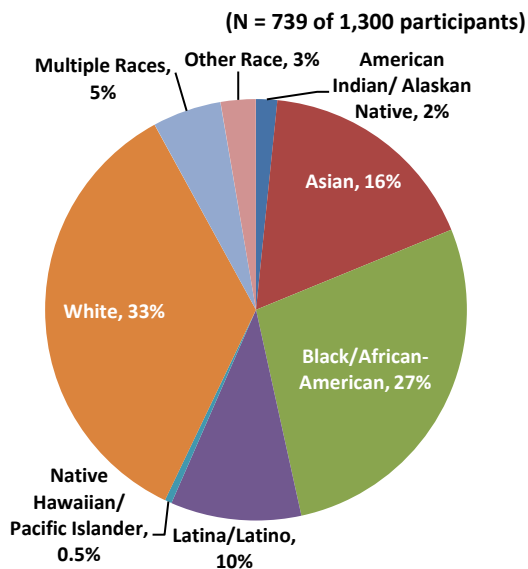
#### Participants

More than 1,400 people participated in Phase One, with more than 1,300 joining in the community conversations and 176 responding to the online survey. They included parents and grandparents, students, teachers, school administrators, business people, employers, community leaders, and interested residents from across the city.

**Youth voice included.** Approximately half of all participants provided demographic information. Of those who did, 9 percent of the community conversation participants and 3 percent of the online survey respondents were age 20 or below.

**Racial/ethnic diversity.** With the help of community partners, the City was able to convene a diverse group of participants, representing various races, ethnicities, and languages. See Figures 1 and 2 below.

**Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity of Community Conversation Participants**

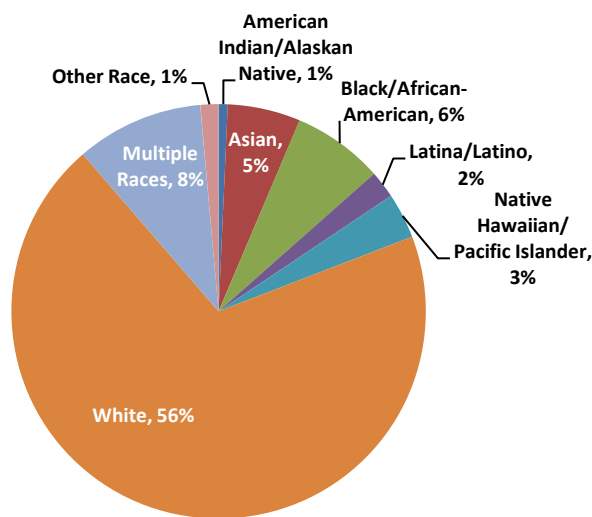


The community conversations were interpreted in the following languages:

- Amharic
- Bangla
- Cantonese
- English
- Farsi
- Filipino
- French
- Hmong
- Mandarin
- Oromo
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tigrinya
- Vietnamese

**Figure 2. Race/Ethnicity of Survey Participants**

(N = 141 of 176 participants)



**Language diversity.** The community conversations were conducted or interpreted in 15 languages. Participants who responded to this question also listed a total of 37 languages they speak (see sidebar).

### Generation of Ideas and Comments

Each community conversation began with a videotaped message from the Mayor and information about the education opportunity gap. (See Appendix 3 for a sample agenda of the community conversations. The Mayor’s video can be seen at

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkY2MxtqcYo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkY2MxtqcYo).) Participants gathered in small groups,

sometimes organized around a particular topic, with City staff and volunteers serving as note takers. In each group, people shared their ideas in response to two questions:

1. What barriers do Seattle students, in particular students of color, face?
2. What is the solution to overcome these barriers?

The online survey included an introduction to the summit purpose and provided the Mayor’s videotaped message. The survey asked three questions:

1. My idea for how we can create equity and excellence in our schools is regarding . . . [followed by a checklist of topic areas].
2. What barriers do Seattle students, in particular students of color, face? [followed by an open response box]
3. What is the solution to overcome these barriers? [followed by an open response box]

## April 30<sup>th</sup> Education Summit

Everyone who participated in the community conversations was encouraged to attend the April 30<sup>th</sup> Education Summit. Held at Garfield High School, the Summit was sponsored by the City of Seattle and Seattle Public Schools. A total of 500 people participated. Speakers

offered in-depth information about the opportunity gap and some solutions that have shown promise in other cities. (See Appendix 4 for the Summit program. The Summit presentations are available at [www.seattle.gov/educationsummit#summit](http://www.seattle.gov/educationsummit#summit).)

In the small group discussions, Summit participants discussed the following question: *What can the City do to help you, your community, or your organization make sure each child succeeds in school and in life?* Participants were also invited to fill out “action ideas” cards.

*“Family support workers are the lifeblood to schools. Lack of funding to these professionals is unacceptable. Please, City of Seattle, help our families with financial supports to keep family support workers in our schools.”*

Summit participant

## Comments from Community Members in Phases One and Two

### Common Threads

Overall, there were three common threads heard throughout the comments from community conversation discussions, online surveys, and Summit discussions and action idea cards. These subjects and examples of community members’ comments are as follows.

- **Cultural competency** — The importance of affirming and valuing students’ race and culture. Examples of comments from community members:
  - “Racism, a lot of racism.” Participant at community conversation hosted by El Centro de la Raza
  - “Our son is African American and Puerto Rican. He rarely had a teacher that looked like him, he was rarely ever asked about what he loved and how he



could see himself in the curriculum. . . . He is now a drop-out.” Survey respondent

- “There needs to be ongoing, consistent effort in equity training.” Participant at community conversation hosted by Seattle Education Association
- **Support for home languages** — The need for programs and supports for students and families in their home language. Examples of comments from community members:
  - “We want students of color and Latinos to have extra help in their own language.” Participant at community conversation hosted by El Centro de la Raza
  - “We used to live in Denmark, and there, Somali kids are taught in their own language.” Participant at community conversation hosted by OneAmerica
  - “Being bilingual is not being illiterate.” Participant at community conversation hosted by Neighborhood House
- **Equity in school funding** — The need for school funding in underserved areas to be adequate, fair and flexible. Examples of comments from community members:
  - “I chose to go here. Rainier Beach is a very transformative place. We’ll fight for our resources.” Participant at community conversation hosted by Rainier Beach High School
  - “By tying graduation and funding to test scores, a racist and classist system is perpetuated.” Survey respondent
  - Schools with more needs should get more resources.” Participant at community conversation hosted by Mockingbird Society, Treehouse, and YMCA of Greater Seattle

*“We cannot let our kids drop out. Build on their strengths.”*

Participant at community conversation hosted by One America

## Themes

Nine themes about solutions to the opportunity gap emerged from review of all the comments. These themes and a brief description of each are as follows:

1. **Improve school climate** – the quality of school life, values and expectations, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures that support or do not support students
2. **Improve in-school instruction and programming** – the quality of instruction and curriculum, use of multicultural and bilingual curricula and programs, and the quality of ELL, special education and other programs
3. **Improve family/community engagement and partnerships** – using culturally and language-appropriate ways to communicate and engage with parents, and creating partnerships with community-based organizations and businesses
4. **Support community and family needs** – ways to help families, especially lower income families and families of color, thrive and help their children be successful in school

5. **Strengthen post-secondary access and attainment** – helping students learn about careers, college, job and internship opportunities, and connect their classes and their future
6. **Increase school-city collaboration** – developing a shared vision and goals, and strengthening leadership
7. **Recruit, support and retain a diverse and high-quality educator workforce** – increasing diversity among educators and administrators to better reflect the student population, and actively recruiting and retaining teachers of color
8. **Improve access to quality expanded K-12 opportunities** – providing meaningful and culturally relevant before- and after-school and summer opportunities
9. **Expand access to quality early learning** – providing high-quality and affordable early learning, and expanding training opportunities for early learning teachers.

For the summary report of the community input, see Appendix 5.

### III. Phase Three: Advisory Group

Phase Three of the Mayor’s Education Summit involved convening an Education Summit Advisory Group to review the ideas from the community gathered in Phases One and Two, and to develop recommendations and actions to reduce the opportunity gap. The Mayor appointed a 30-member Advisory Group. (Note: Several members resigned during the deliberations due to changes in jobs and other factors.) See Appendix 6 for the list of members. The Advisory Group met a total of 13 times between February and October 2016. They established norms for their meetings and deliberation (see Appendix 7), and created a vision and goals for their work (see Table 2 below). The Advisory Group referred to the vision and goal statements as their “north star” for developing recommendations.

**Table 2. Advisory Group Vision and Goal**

<b>VISION</b>
A City-led and broad-based community effort will shape Seattle as a city where children of all races and ethnicities thrive and succeed.
Seattle’s children will enter school ready to learn; they will have equitable access to educational opportunity and will thrive in school; they will graduate from school prepared for post-secondary credential attainment from colleges, trade schools, apprenticeships or other certificated programs; and they will arrive at young adulthood prepared to reach their full potential and succeed in life.
By transforming our public education system, we change the course of Seattle children’s futures and our own.
<b>GOAL</b>
Through targeted City, District, and other partnership investments across the education continuum, with specific emphasis on African-American/Black students and other students of color who have been historically underserved by the education system, post-secondary credential attainment for all SPS graduates shall rise to 70 percent by 2030.

**Work groups.** After briefings on the data and issues (see meeting materials, available at [www.seattle.gov/educationsummit#group](http://www.seattle.gov/educationsummit#group)), and a review of key terms (see Appendix 8), the Advisory Group decided to organize their work into the following topics:

- #1 Improving Access to High-Quality Learning Opportunities and Programs
- #2 Creating Positive, Supportive, and High-Quality Teaching and Learning Opportunities
- #3 Providing Authentic Family and Community Support and Engagement
- #4 Strengthening Post-Secondary Access and Attainment
- #5 Improving Innovation, Collaboration and Partnerships Across the PreK-16 System.

They created work groups for topics #1 through #4, above, and discussed topic #5 as a full group. Each work group was staffed by one of the participating City and County agencies: Department of Education and Early Learning, Human Services Department, Mayor’s Office, Office of Economic Development, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Public Health – Seattle and King County.

**Guiding principles and questions.** To guide the work groups, the Advisory Group agreed on a set of guiding principles and questions, as shown in Tables 3 and 4 below. The Vision, Goal, Principles and Guiding Questions became the framework for the work groups’ discussions and development of recommendations.

**Table 3. Advisory Group Work Group Guiding Principles**

<b>Principles to Guide Advisory Group Work Groups</b>
1. Focus on the needs of our children, particularly those who have seen the greatest inequities in school outcomes. Help children achieve their hopes, dreams and aspirations.
2. Be intentional about creating equity in our school system by applying a race and social justice lens.
3. Focus on actions the City can take to address the opportunity gaps, including using its broad range of resources to support this initiative, and working in partnership with communities, families, business, philanthropy, educators, and the School District.
4. Be informed by data and focused on supporting the development of the whole child, including improving academic, social, and emotional outcomes for students.
5. Draw from best, promising, and emerging practices (regionally and nationally) that can have an impact on the opportunity gaps. Favor actions that demonstrate evidence of success, but recognize that to reach the student populations most in need will require support for new and emerging ideas.
6. Build on the success of existing programs, looking to have a larger impact on more students. This could include taking successful small scale or pilot programs to a larger scale.

(principles, cont.)

7. Create a range of solutions that will address the multiple and complex causes that have created the opportunity gaps. These solutions will not be limited by current available funding.
8. Reflect the common threads that emerged from the community conversations and summit:
  - a. Affirm and value students' race and culture
  - b. Be accessible to students and families speaking languages other than English
  - c. Adequate, equitable and flexible funding for school.

**Table 4. Guiding Questions for Selection of Recommendations**

1. What impact will this strategy/approach have on closing opportunity gaps?
2. Is this strategy targeted or universal? Who will it serve? Which schools/areas of the city/grades?
3. Is there anything already happening in this area?
4. Who will be responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating the success of this strategy/approach?
5. If policies or procedures need to change, who can change them and what is needed to make that change?
6. If resources are required, where does funding come from and how much is needed? (proposed solutions will not be limited by current available funding)
7. What is the City's role? Funding, convening, or advocating?
8. What is the time frame?

**Draft recommendations.** The work groups used a template to develop all their draft recommendations in a similar format. Each work group developed between three and six recommendations.

## IV. Recommendations

### Strategies from Work Groups

In its final four meetings, the Advisory Group reviewed and reached consensus on the strategies the work groups proposed. See Appendix 9 for a more complete description of each strategy.

## Work Group #1: Improving Access to High-Quality Learning Opportunities and Programs

1. **Expand the Innovation School Model to Additional Elementary and Middle Schools; Develop a Comprehensive Approach for High Schools.** Build on the success of programs at Aki Kurose, Mercer and Denny middle schools. Schools are required to have a tiered approach to intervention with students who are performing below grade level.
2. **Expand Summer Learning Program.** Summer learning provides struggling students with additional academic time to catch up with their peers, free and nutritious meals, and high-quality enrichment experiences. Expand the existing successful program.
3. **Establish and Expand School-Based Mentoring Programs.** The goal is to match a caring adult with every child who is struggling to keep up with school requirements. This can include expansion of existing programs (e.g., My Brother’s Keeper), and creation of new programs.
4. **Enhance Opportunities for Before- and After-School Programs.** These programs occur outside of regular school hours—before school, after school, or weekends.
5. **Increase Support for Parents and Caregivers of Children, Prenatal – 3 Years.** Work with the King County levy initiative Best Starts to develop an implementation plan that will provide support for parents, families and caregivers; screen children to prevent potential problems and allow for early intervention; cultivate caregiver knowledge; and support high-quality childcare.

“Parent mentors in each class!”

Participant at community conversation hosted by OneAmerica

## Work Group #2: Creating Positive, Supportive and High-Quality Teaching and Learning Opportunities

1. **Expand the Innovation School Model to Additional Elementary and Middle Schools; Develop a Comprehensive Approach for High Schools.** (Described in Work Group #1, item 1, above.) In addition, this model helps reduce discipline disproportionality, improves attendance and school climate, encourages use of more rigorous curriculum, promotes the creation or adoption of more culturally relevant curricula, and improves college and career planning.
2. **Increase Diversity in the Educator Workforce.** Increase the diversity pipeline by creating opportunities for instructional assistants to earn their teaching certificates. Tuition assistance could be provided to increase the number of instructional assistants that participate in the program.
3. **Reducing Disproportionality in Discipline – Build and Sustain a Positive School Culture and Climate.** Expand into entire district feeder patterns at multiple levels strategies that build positive school culture and climate, and support student

social-emotional development. These include RULER, Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR), Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), Restorative Justice, and wrap-around services.

### **Work Group #3: Providing Authentic Family and Community Support and Engagement**

1. **Expand School-Based Health Centers.** Expand the provision of comprehensive medical and mental health care to students, including the hours, the number of schools served, and collaboration with public agencies (Public Health – Seattle & King County) and community-based organizations.
2. **Increase Family Engagement and Partnership.** Provide and expand systemic opportunities that: (a) increase parents’ ability to support their child’s learning at home and at the school-building, and advocate for them (e.g., navigating the system); and (b) increase educators’ ability to authentically engage parents in measurable ways and accelerate student learning.
3. **Enhance Family Support – Create Comprehensive, Robust System of Support for Families.** Collaborate with community-based organizations and SPS to expand family supports and services. Ideas include allowing schools to operate as hubs to connect families to services, expand collaborations with community organizations to provide services in schools, in-school case managers, and culturally and linguistically appropriate supports for families.

*“Develop partnerships with schools and workforce boards to support internships and job shadows that support and inform career planning and transitions.”*

Summit participant

4. **Improve Transportation – Provide Safe, Affordable Options to School and Extended Learning Programs.** Provide transportation and childcare to enable low-income families to attend school-sponsored events; fund Safe Passage program to enhance safe routes to/from school; and expand free Metro pass program for low-income students, including summer programs.

5. **Address the Needs of Homeless Students.** Provide personalized supports to students and families experiencing homelessness that will meet their academic and social needs. Also address the academic needs of foster care students.

### **Work Group #4: Strengthening Post-Secondary Access and Attainment**

1. **Workplace-Based Learning – Complement Career/College Prep in K-12.** Expand Mayor’s Youth Employment Initiative; increase access to job-shadow and workplace-based learning; coordinate employer site visits; expand employer classroom visits; include local hiring ordinance training programs as part of the learning system; and create industry-focused, hands-on learning at high schools.

2. ***Financing Post-Secondary Attainment – Remove Financial Barriers to Education and Training.*** Create programs and support advocacy to minimize the financial barriers to pursue school or career training, including: expand the 13<sup>th</sup> year program currently available at three Seattle high schools; create a new Seattle Promise program; and advocate for full funding of the state need grant and continued full funding for the college-bound scholarships.
3. ***Career/College Planning – Increase Post-Secondary Access and Persistence by Raising Career and College Awareness Through Guiding Curriculum.*** Expand program activity to help prepare students for college, training and careers. Create a “college-going” culture in all schools. It is also important to support students’ access to opportunities for post-secondary credential attainment. Create a career pathways class in all high schools that leads to every student working toward a living wage and a successful job; increase the number of career counselors; partner with higher education to change the culture for students who do not believe they have post-secondary educational opportunities; and create a “summer melt” program.
4. ***International Baccalaureate (IB) Pathway – Expand the Continuum through Elementary and Middle Schools.*** Expand the existing IB programs to one elementary school and one middle school.
5. ***Expand Seattle Public Schools International Schools/Dual Language Immersion Programs.*** Complete and strengthen current International Schools/Dual Language Immersion Program in southeast and southwest Seattle with options to expand the model in other regions of the city.
6. ***Support Open Doors Programs – Increase Capacity of School Re-entry Programs.*** Expand the capacity of Open Doors, a drop-out reengagement program that provides education and services to older youth, ages 16 to 21, who have dropped out of school, including those who are released due to “discipline,” or are not expected to graduate from high school by the age of 21.

## Relationship to Community Input

In developing these strategies, the Work Groups kept in mind the community input that was collected in the earlier phases of the Mayor’s Education Summit. The strategies they developed do address in different ways the nine themes that emerged from this community input. Table 5 below shows the strategies that address each of the community themes.

**Table 5.**  
**Community Input Themes and the Advisory Group Strategies Addressing Each**

Theme from Community Input	Advisory Group Strategies
<b>1. Improve School Climate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expand Innovation School Model</li> <li>✓ Increase Diversity in Educator Workforce</li> <li>✓ Reducing Disproportionality in Discipline – Build &amp; Sustain Positive School Culture &amp; Climate</li> <li>✓ Expand School-Based Health Centers</li> <li>✓ Address Needs of Homeless Students</li> <li>✓ International Baccalaureate Pathway – Expand the Continuum through Elementary and Middle Schools</li> <li>✓ Expand SPS International Schools &amp; Dual Language Immersion Program</li> <li>✓ Support Open Doors Programs – Increase Capacity of School Re-Entry Programs</li> </ul>
<b>2. Improve In-School Instruction &amp; Programming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expand Innovation School Model</li> <li>✓ International Baccalaureate Pathway – Expand the Continuum through Elementary and Middle Schools</li> <li>✓ Expand SPS International Schools &amp; Dual Language Immersion Program</li> </ul>
<b>3. Improve Family-Community Engagement &amp; Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expand School-Based Mentoring Programs</li> <li>✓ Increase Family Engagement &amp; Partnership</li> <li>✓ Family Support – Create Comprehensive, Robust System of Support for Families</li> </ul>
<b>4. Support Community &amp; Family Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increase Support for Parents &amp; Caregivers of Children Ages 0-3</li> <li>✓ Expand School-Based Health Centers</li> <li>✓ Increase Family Engagement &amp; Partnership</li> <li>✓ Improve Transportation – Provide Safe, Affordable Options to School &amp; Extended Learning Programs</li> <li>✓ Address Needs of Homeless Students</li> <li>✓ Financing Post-Secondary Attainment – Remove Financial Barriers to Education &amp; Training</li> </ul>
<b>5. Strengthen Post-Secondary Access &amp; Attainment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expand School-Based Mentoring Programs</li> <li>✓ Workplace-Based Learning – Complement Career/College Prep in K-12</li> <li>✓ Financing Post-Secondary Attainment – Remove Financial Barriers to Education &amp; Training</li> <li>✓ Career-College Planning – Increase Post-Secondary Access &amp; Persistence by Raising Career &amp; College Awareness through Guiding</li> </ul>



Theme from Community Input	Advisory Group Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum</li> <li>✓ International Baccalaureate Pathway – Expand the Continuum through Elementary and Middle Schools</li> <li>✓ Expand SPS International Schools &amp; Dual Language Immersion Program</li> <li>✓ Support Open Doors Programs – Increase Capacity of School Re-Entry Programs</li> </ul>
<b>6. Increase School-City Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expand Innovation School Model</li> <li>✓ Expand School-Based Mentoring Programs</li> <li>✓ Expand Before- &amp; After-School Opportunities</li> <li>✓ Increase Family Engagement &amp; Partnership</li> <li>✓ Family Support – Create Comprehensive, Robust System of Support for Families</li> <li>✓ Improve Transportation – Provide Safe, Affordable Options to School &amp; Extended Learning Programs</li> <li>✓ Address Needs of Homeless Students</li> <li>✓ Workplace-Based Learning – Complement Career/College Prep in K-12</li> <li>✓ Career/College Planning – Increase Post-Secondary Access &amp; Persistence by Raising Career &amp; College Awareness through Guiding Curriculum</li> <li>✓ International Baccalaureate Pathway – Expand the Continuum through Elementary and Middle Schools</li> <li>✓ Expand SPS International Schools &amp; Dual Language Immersion Program</li> <li>✓ Support Open Doors Programs – Increase Capacity of School Re-Entry Programs</li> </ul>
<b>7. Recruit, Support, Retain Diverse, High-Quality Educator Workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increase Diversity in Educator Workforce</li> </ul>
<b>8. Improve Access to Quality Expanded K-12 Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expand Summer Learning Program</li> <li>✓ Enhance Before- &amp; After-School Opportunities</li> <li>✓ Improve Transportation – Provide Safe, Affordable Options to School &amp; Extended Learning Programs</li> </ul>
<b>9. Expand Access to Quality Early Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increase Support for Parents &amp; Caregivers of Children Ages 0-3</li> </ul>

## Prioritization from Advisory Group

The Advisory Group agreed that all 18 recommendations from the Work Groups are important to pursue. To address the opportunity gap will require a comprehensive set of strategies that are described in this report. However, the members recognized that, given the urgency to begin work immediately, and the limitations of budgets and other resources, it would be helpful to identify some priorities to recommend to the Mayor. To create these priorities, the Advisory Group reflected on the following criteria:

- Which recommendations are most important in having an impact on the opportunity gap as it relates to the African American/Black students and other students of color?
- Which recommendations should be prioritized to implement in the short term?
- Which recommendations can the City have the greatest impact on?

## Priorities for Initial Work

The Advisory Group discussed which of the strategies should be considered priorities for an initial phase of work. The members suggested the following six recommendations as those they thought best met the criteria above:

*“More opportunities that target particular under-represented groups. Let them tell us what will work for them, not top down.”*

Summit participant

- Reduce disproportionality in discipline – Build and sustain a positive school culture and climate
- Expand summer learning program
- Expand the innovation school model to additional elementary and middle schools; develop a comprehensive approach for high schools
- Enhance opportunities for before- and after school programs
- Increase family engagement and partnership
- Increase diversity in the educator workforce.

## Priorities by Work Group

In addition, the Advisory Group members identified priorities in each work group in which they had participated. Their top two priorities by work group were as follows:

Work Group #1: Improving Access to High-Quality Learning Opportunities and Programs:

- Expand summer learning program
- Expand the innovation school model to additional elementary and middle schools; develop a comprehensive approach for high schools.

Work Group #2: Creating Positive, Supportive and High-Quality Teaching and Learning Opportunities:

- Reduce disproportionality in discipline – Build and sustain a positive school culture and climate
- Increase diversity in the educator workforce.

Work Group #3: Providing Authentic Family and Community Support and Engagement:

- Enhance family support – Create a comprehensive, robust system of support for families
- Increase family engagement and partnership.

Work Group #4: Strengthening Post-Secondary Access and Attainment:

- Workplace-based learning – Complement career/college prep in K-12
- Financing post-secondary attainment – Remove financial barriers to education and training.

## Collaboration and Partnerships

The work to accomplish these ambitious recommendations will require a new level of collaboration and partnership. This will be challenging work, but is essential to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed in school and in life. Partnerships among the City of Seattle, the Seattle School District, community-based organizations, parents, the business community and philanthropy will be needed to implement these recommendations.

### Elements of Collaboration

The Advisory Group was asked to identify the qualities of collaboration among the various stakeholders to implement the strategies. The following provides the key elements of collaboration that will be needed to achieve success in closing the opportunity gap:

- **A broad-based, “all hands on deck” approach.** Collaboration should include a broad cross-section in interests, including the city, school district, families, community-based organizations (including community-based organizations [CBOs] with leadership of color), higher education, business and philanthropy, along with county, state and federal agencies. There should be respect for the jurisdictional rights and responsibilities of the partners in the collaboration.
- **Strong and sustained involvement from leadership** at both the City and School District, including continued engagement by the Mayor, Superintendent, and leaders from the City Council and School Board.
- **A focus on an outcomes-based framework**, guided by data reporting and assessment. The data should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity and gender (as data are available)

*“Establish community-based partnerships with a goal of addressing each community’s needs related to student achievement.”*

Summit discussion group

so leadership can understand how actions, or non-actions, are affecting African American/Black students and other students of color, both boys and girls.

- **Clear and mutually agreed-upon vision and goals**, with clear definition of partnership roles, and clear expectations regarding what supports will be provided. Commitment to an agreed-upon plan of action, with expectations for holding one another accountable for results. Accountability should be shared between city leaders, school leaders, and other key stakeholders.
- **Visibility to the public**, sharing information and decisions in a transparent manner, including regular reports to the public. The community outreach and involvement should include efforts to engage communities that often do not have a voice in civic matters.
- **Involvement of all city departments** to take actions supporting the final recommendations. This will require an examination of the ways in which all departments intersect with the range of recommended strategies.
- **Sustainable over an extended period of time**. This work will take time to achieve the recommended vision and goal.
- **Recognition that the work is dynamic**. Direction should be guided by changes in circumstances and evaluation of actions that result in continuous improvement. Any collaboration and partnership structures must also allow for these dynamic changes.
- **Informed by national best practices, promising practices**, and successful collaborative partnerships and structures in other large urban areas.

## V. Phase Four: Mayor’s Action Plan and Implementation Process

The Advisory Group recommendations will be presented to the Mayor in November. The Mayor will work with the School District and other key stakeholders to develop an action plan. The Advisory Group identified several guidelines they recommend that the Mayor use in developing his action plan, and in implementing the range of suggested solutions.

### Implementation Guidelines

To reach the goal of eliminating achievement and opportunity gaps, and improving educational and life outcomes for Seattle’s African American/Black youth and underserved

youth of color (particularly Native American, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and immigrant and refugee youth), the implementation of Education Summit Advisory Group recommendations must be intentional and strategic. The following guidelines will guide implementation of the recommendations by addressing education from birth through post-secondary education.

*“We must ask our youth what  
THEY need to overcome these  
barriers.”*

Survey respondent

1. **Any strategies and funding must be directly tied to eliminating educational disparities for African American/Black youth and other children of color. The impacts and changes for these communities of color must be tracked and monitored.** The City must utilize a racial equity policy and/or impact screen such as the City’s Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) toolkit, and continue to refine disaggregated student data to ensure African American/Black communities and other communities of color are prioritized during the design and implementation of the recommendations. Data analysis should be available and transparent to the public. Strategies should inspire hope and high expectations for success in youth.
2. **Ensure ongoing and authentic community, family and student engagement.** Seattle’s student population is rich in cultural and linguistic diversity. Policies and practices must address this diversity and engage communities of color to uplift their voices. The City of Seattle must provide transparency in implementing the recommendations, and ensure accountability to and engagement with those most impacted by education inequities.
3. **Continue a whole-child approach to the City’s support for Seattle’s children and families.** Educational challenges are related to both classroom instruction and to situations students experience at home and in their communities. The City’s role in supporting Seattle’s children should continue to support the diverse array of educational, health, community and cultural needs, with a focus on supporting students to achieve academic success. There are no easy solutions to closing opportunity gaps; effective solutions vary by the unique needs of each student. A whole-child approach includes supporting the lifespan of a child, from prenatal to college/career, and tailoring solutions to different stages of development.
4. **Engage community-based and cultural/language-based organizations to achieve outcomes for Seattle’s students.** Collaboration among the City, School District and community partners is required to meet the diverse range of needs of Seattle students. Meeting the needs of Seattle students is a responsibility shared by us all. A community-wide approach is necessary to close achievement gaps; this approach has proven effective in Seattle schools demonstrating the most progress. It is essential that community based organizations, particularly organizations centered in communities of color with deep cultural and language knowledge, are engaged as partners in planning and implementing these strategies and are fairly compensated for doing so.
5. **Focus on systemic change through implementation of the recommendation strategies.** While programs and supports are central to improving education, addressing the root causes of education disparities, such as racism (individual, institutional and structural), biases and economic inequality, requires bold moves around systems change, accountability and shifts in power. This includes building leadership in communities of color to drive change in dismantling existing inequitable structures. Systems change

*“I don’t have a solution, but I have a start. Make us feel like we matter, like we aren’t the only ones in this battle.”*

Summit participant

must be integral in each and every strategy, prioritizing strategies that address institutional racism.

## Initial Investments

As the Advisory Group was finishing its work, Mayor Murray presented his 2017 budget to the City Council. This budget included four actions the Advisory Group is recommending that address the needs of African American/Black and other historically underserved students of color in Seattle. These initial investments are:

- ***My Brother's Keeper*** — Expand to five additional middle schools this mentoring program for African-American/Black male students, which has been successful at Aki Kurose Middle School.
- ***Innovation model*** – Expand on a pilot basis to a high school this City-funded model, which has been successful in three middle schools, to create a City-school partnership to close disparities around attendance, behavior and curricula.
- ***Summer Learning Program*** – Broaden this City program by an additional 200 slots, with a new focus on programs offering culturally specific curriculum.
- ***Post-secondary*** – Make investments in “summer melt” programs to ensure that students who graduate from high school remain engaged during the summer, and do not fall through the cracks and fail to enroll in college.

## VI. Conclusion

There is no more important issue influencing the future of our city than ensuring that all of our children have equitable access to high-quality education in our public school system. It is time for our community to come together and break a cycle of educational disparities that has existed for decades for our students, particularly our African American/Black students and other students of color.

At the close of the Summit panel, one student urged the adults to “get your act together,” to come together to solve a problem that students see is hurting their peers.

The recommendations developed by the Advisory Group provide a road map for charting a new course. These recommendations are based on practices that we know can make a difference in the education of our African American/Black students and other students of color. The recommendations also include ideas that will help the families that nurture and support these children. The recommendations to the Mayor address a wide range of ages through a variety of programs because solving the opportunity gap will require a concerted effort, from early learning programs through high school and beyond.

These recommendations can be successful only if there is a community-wide shared vision for ending the opportunity gap, and a new spirit and level of collaboration and accountability on behalf of our children. At the day-long Education Summit in April, a panel

of students stole the show. The youth described how they experience the opportunity gap, and provided some ideas about how to create more equal opportunities for all of their classmates. At the close of the panel, one student urged the adults to “get your act together,” to come together to solve a problem that students see is hurting their peers. The Advisory Group agrees with the wisdom of our student panelists. It is time for a new, strong collaborative partnership to address the opportunity gap in a real, targeted and sustained way.