



APPENDIX MMM-5-3

November 29, 2010

To: Members of the Student Achievement and Performance Monitoring Committee
Members of the Board of Education

From: Daniel A. Nerad, Superintendent, Pam Nash, Assistant Superintendent, and
Susan Abplanalp, Deputy Superintendent

Re: Dual Pathways to Post-Secondary Success/High School Career and College Readiness

Date: October 28, 2010

Enclosed is an update report regarding the High School Career and College Readiness Plan. This plan is written as a complement to the first document entitled "Dual Pathways to Post-Secondary Success". The original document was intended to outline both a possible structure for organizing accelerated and preparatory courses for high school students. The original document was also intended to serve as an internal document outlining a planning process. Since, the dissemination of the "Dual Pathways to Post-Secondary Success" many questions and concerns have been expressed by a variety of stakeholders. Through feedback and questions brought forth by teachers, students, community members and the Board of Education it is understood that our original plan did not effectively communicate the rationale, scope, scale, and end outcomes as intended. The conversations that occurred as a result of the dissemination of the "Dual Pathways to Post-Secondary Success" have been at times difficult but they have also been the right conversations for us to have in order to move forward as a district. These conversations have highlighted the interconnectedness of all grade levels, calling on us to proceed with a k-12 district wide curricular alignment process in which high school is embedded. In order to more accurately capture the intent of our original work we have renamed the plan High School Career and College Readiness to accurately reflect the intended goal; for all MMSD graduates will become self-determined learners able to access a wide array of post-secondary options. For these reasons, we have not included the original "Dual Pathways to Post-Secondary Success" plan in this report. Rather we have created this document to serve as bridge that more clearly articulates the history, rationale, data, work to date and next steps that are outlined in the original plan. **Our Theory of Action, process and end goals have not changed, but how we articulate this work has become more explicit, transparent and responsive.** We are in process of creating a more comprehensive plan to be shared with a broad range of audiences. We will share that plan with the Board of Education when finalized. We will also share periodic updates with the Board of Education. In the meantime, the enclosed report serves to answer questions, concerns received to date and provide more detailed and accurate information. Attached is the original document, unchanged.

This document contains the following items:

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History and Rationale

The High School Career and Readiness Plan was developed from as a result of an ongoing high school continuous improvement process and informed by the MMSD strategic plan.

As a result of receiving the Smaller Learning Communities grant entitled Relationship, Engagement and Learning (REaL), the four comprehensive high schools have been engaged in conversations regarding improving instructional practice through collaboration, curricular alignment, and assessment. Years 1 and 2 of the grant focused, creating an effective continuous improvement process, fostering teacher collaboration and adopting the ACT Career and College Standards to align curriculum and assess student achievement.

The work over the past two years, has lead us to a point where we have identified the need to address the growing tension between improving student achievement for all students by providing the needed supports and bolstering the learning of our most struggling students and continuing to provide challenge and acceleration for our highest achieving students.

Therefore we established the following Theory of Action:

If we align all core curriculum to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards and Common Core Standards, and if we develop consistent core curriculum essential understanding across all four high school, and if we provide flexible opportunities to students for academic acceleration and challenge, and if we provide ongoing, collaborative, professional development in differentiation, curricular and instructional improvement then student achievement will increase for all students.

As we move into the next phase of our work by designing the strategy for addressing our theory of action, we have identified strategies and planning process outlined later in this report.

As the work of the REaL grant has progressed, it has also become clear that the notion of High School curricular alignment cannot exist in a bubble but must be a part of a larger K-12 curricular alignment conversation.

ACT Career and College Readiness Standards and the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) have been identified as a research based way to align curriculum and measure student improvement in both content knowledge and skills. The following recommendations have been made by research supporting the use of EPAS and ACT College and Career Readiness Standards as effective ways to close the achievement gap:

1. Close the gap between student aspirations and high school course plans by ensuring that all students take at least a core curriculum in high school.
2. Close the gap in alignment of high school courses with college and career readiness standards by focusing high school core courses on the essential standards for college and career readiness.
3. Close the gap in the quality of high school courses that cover the essential knowledge and skills needed for college and career readiness in sufficient depth and intensity.
 - Cited by the *Mind the Gaps* policy report (www.act.org/research/policymakers/reports/MindtheGaps.html)

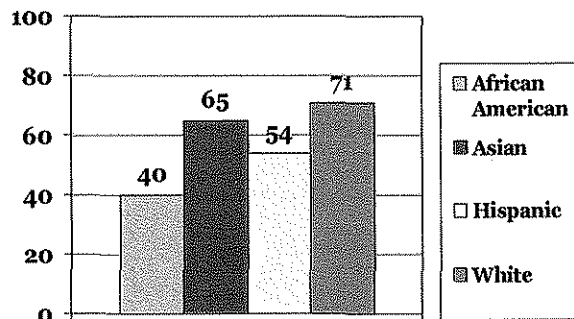
Additional research is identified as an addendum to this report.

Data

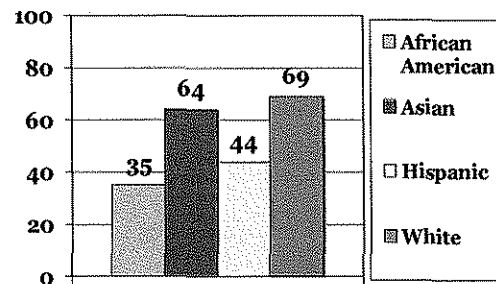
Below is some of the data that was used to inform the initial draft of the high school curricular plan. The complete set of data is attached. The data demonstrates where the gap between student aspiration and high school course plans may exist. The sample of data was chosen to represent of a cross section of current student experience within our four autonomous high schools.

The data listed below reflects percentage of student populations on a scale of 0-100%. The Y axis indicates total percentage of students per ethnic group enrolled at each school. The X axis indicates student achievement by ethnicity. One exception is the Graduation on Time data from 2009 the X axis also includes percentage of students dropping out, graduating late and graduating on time.

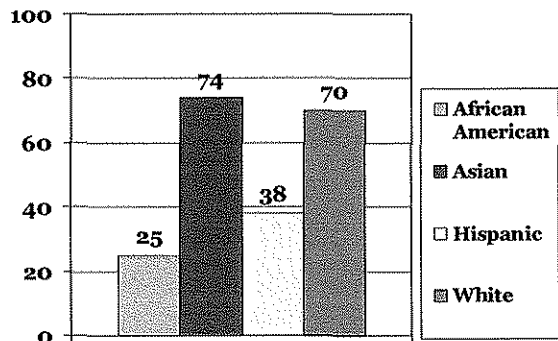
MMSD students, taking honors, advanced or AP during 2009-10



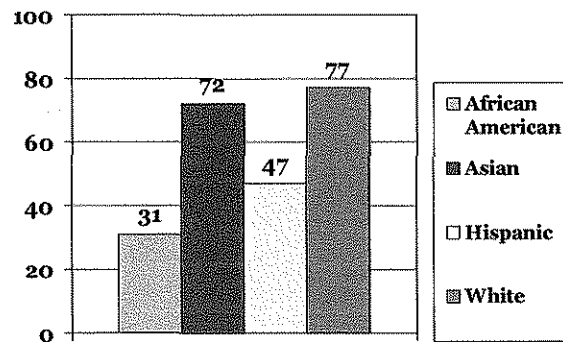
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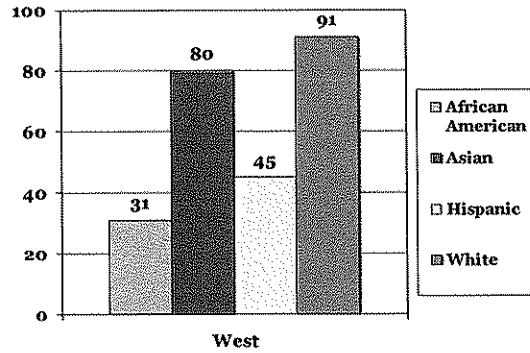
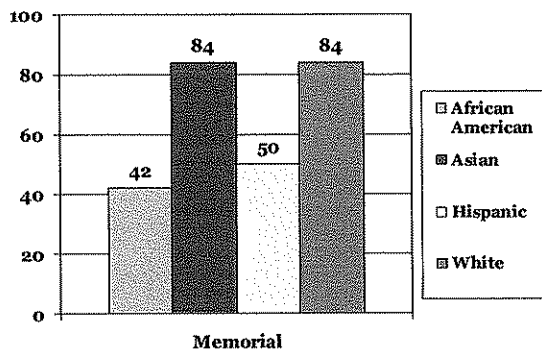
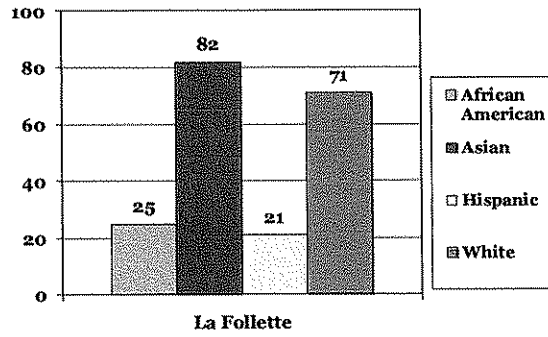
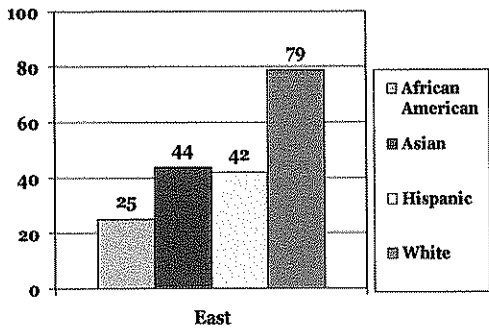


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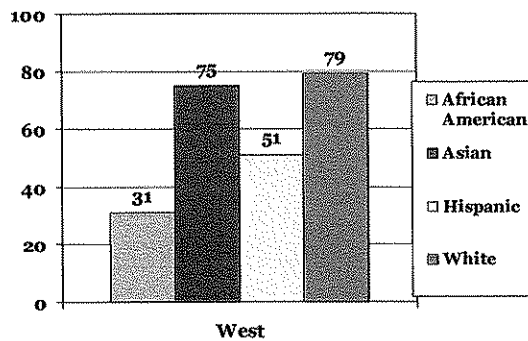
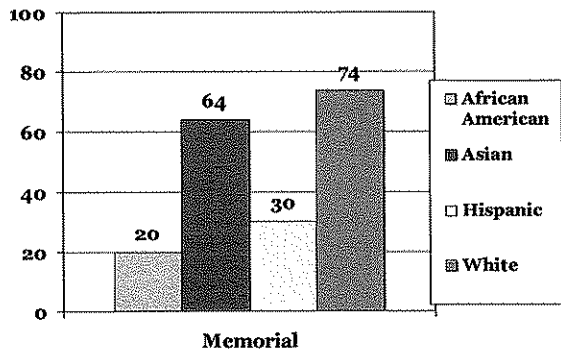
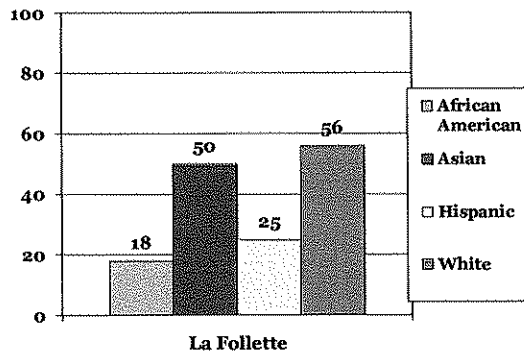
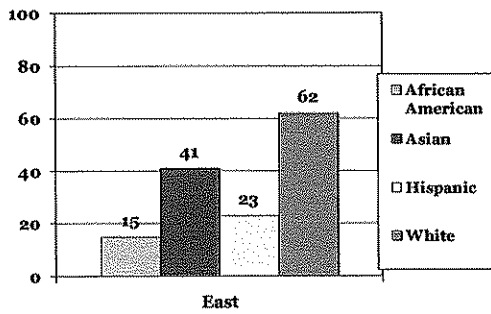


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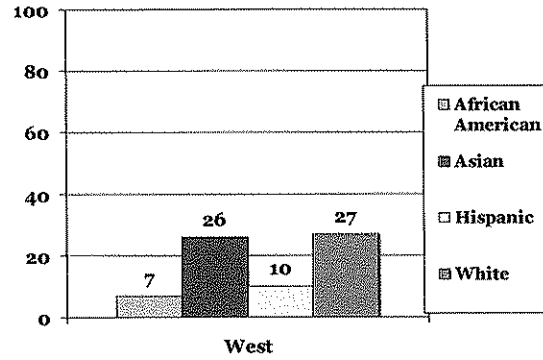
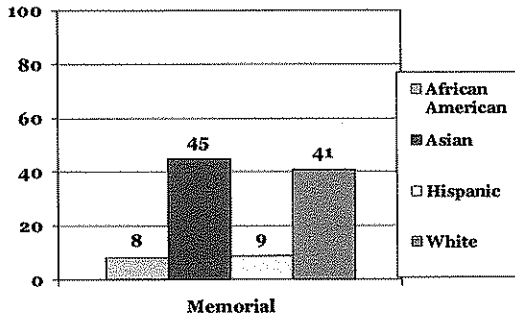
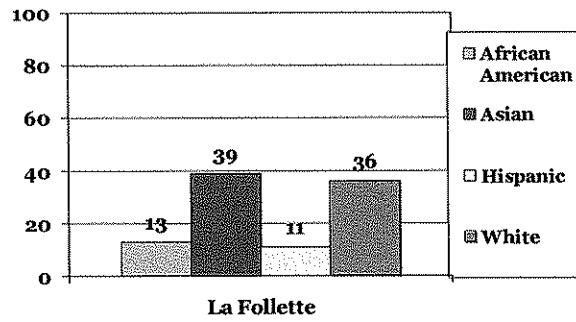
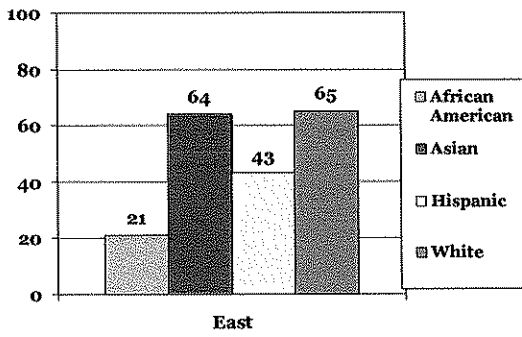
10th Grade WKCE Math Proficient plus Advanced 2009



12 graders completing 2 or more years of Foreign Language 2009-10

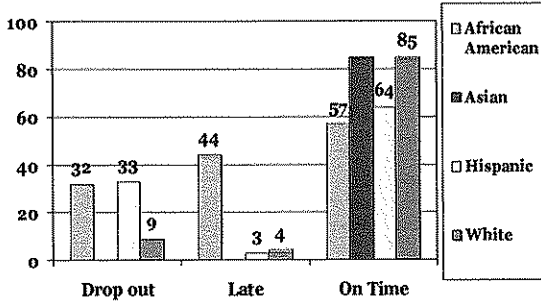


Advanced Literature Completion by 12th grade 2009-10

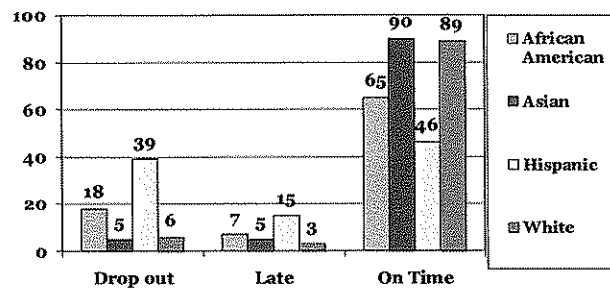


Graduation on Time-2009

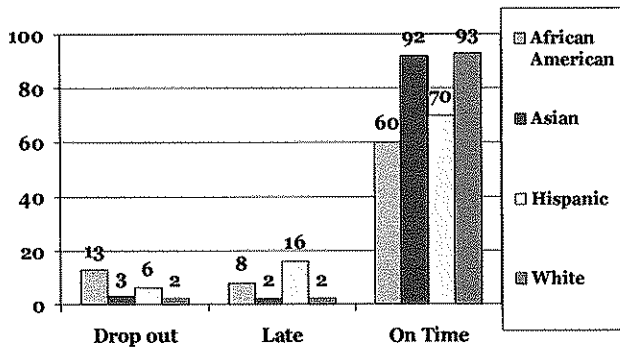
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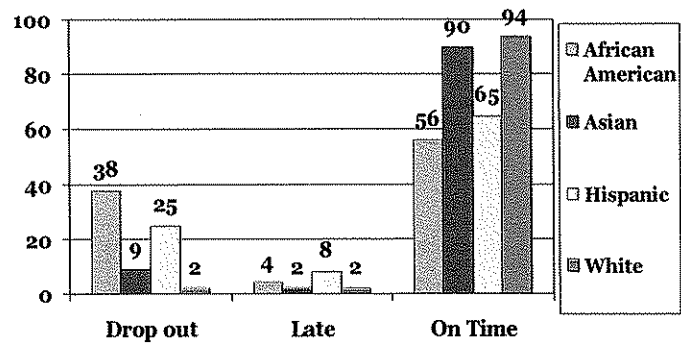
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While we recognize that there are many ways to interpret the attached data, below are summary statements indicating how this data was used to inform the development of the High School Career and College Readiness Plan.

As we review enrollment information regarding advanced level courses we see the consistent theme that African-American and Hispanic students lag behind their white counterparts. Additionally, enrollment in courses that can serve as gatekeepers for post-secondary education have lower enrollment of African-American and Hispanic students than white counterparts. Complete set of data, by school and ethnicity is attached as requested.

Graduation on Time data shows students who graduate on time, late or drop-out. Again the data suggests our graduation on time rates for African-Americans ranges from 56% – 65% while their white counterparts range from 89%-94%. Drop-out rates show African-American students dropping out at a significantly higher rate than their White counterparts.

Access to advanced level courses combined with lower graduation rates indicate that even when African-American students graduate from MMSD they are less prepared for post-secondary options. Additionally, as we review enrollment data for advanced level courses, questions were raised about how students access existing rigorous offerings. Thus, outlining the need for addressing course access through clearly identified scaffolds and supports. Lastly, the data reflects an urgent need to address the achievement gap, best practice and research suggest the need to align curriculum to consistent essential knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the 21st Century.

Process and Work to Date

In the spring of 2010 high schools again participated in a school action planning process identifying goals and priorities for the 2010-11 school year as well as identified action steps to accomplish goals. A district committee was then convened consisting of representatives of Curriculum and Assessment, Education Services, and Student Services. The district committee reviewed school action plans for commonalities to which central office supports would be aligned. As this process evolved, curricular alignment to ACT College and Career Readiness arose as a top area for support and direction to schools to help address concerns of the achievement gap. Simultaneously, in order to better serve the needs of our talented and gifted students it appeared a more robust plan to address high school curricular needs was warranted. A draft document outlining an internal plan for curricular alignment, acceleration and supports was created entitled “Dual Pathways to Post-Secondary Success”. This draft plan document was primarily synthesized from the work mentioned above by the Assistant Superintendent for Secondary, Pamela Nash. Members of her staff, the grant coordinators, and the high school principals were consulted along the way.

The “Dual Pathways to Post-Secondary Success” draft plan was shared with school based department chairs, principals, assistant principals, high school central office staff and school counselors on October 12, 2010 in the Mc Daniels auditorium. During the October 12, both Dr. Nerad and Dr. Nash gave a context for the document as well as an overview of content. The document was explained as a continuation of the work done over the past two years and that this was a process document and that feedback would be solicited in a variety of venues. Since October 12, 2010 feedback for the plan has been solicited in the following venues:

- Dr. Nash met with department chairs and held optional staff meetings at each comprehensive high school to solicit feedback and answer questions.
- Feedback and questions have been actively solicited from the High School District Innovation Team consisting of teachers from all four comprehensive high schools, REaL District-wide Committee consisting of school and central office representation, and literacy coaches.
- In addition, feedback and questions were generated from Student Senate during their fall retreat. Student Senate also held a forum, in McDaniels Auditorium to address the specific concerns and questions raised by West High School Students.

Additional work in progress includes:

- Developing and finalizing committee structure of k-12 curriculum alignment process.
- Researching accelerated options that can be available for 11-12 school year.
- Researching, developing and finalizing changes to existing course catalog timelines for the 11-12 school year.
- Developing and finalizing revisions to original timeline.

Identified Strategies in High School Career and College Readiness Plan

Identified strategies that are in development are as follows:

- Curriculum will be aligned in the core content areas k-12 including an alignment of how literacy is embedded across curriculum k-12.
- High school core curriculum will be aligned to ACT Career and College Readiness Standards.
- EPAS will be adopted as the comprehensive high school assessment system.
- Core curriculum will be consistent around essential understandings, knowledge and skills but teaching methods will vary.
- High schools will offer accelerated options open and supported for all students.
- High schools will also provide scaffolding and supports available to all students to ensure equitable access to the core curriculum.
- Middle schools will be intricately involved to ensure successful transition from 8th to 9th grade for all students.
- Resources will need to be allocated for professional development for all teachers to ensure successful implementation.

Next Steps

The district will lead a K-12 curricular alignment process to insure that all students have access to core curriculum, instruction and assessment that is standards based, centered on authentic intellectual challenge for all, and offers equitable access to high quality core curriculum and instruction. The work will be coordinated in the following way:

Step 1: District-wide k-12 Curricular Alignment Committee

Membership will include Doyle based teacher leaders in Curriculum & Assessment (C&A), ESL, Special Education, Talented and Gifted (TAG), Student Services, Professional Development, School and District Planners, REaL Grant, AVID, Assistant Superintendents, Director of C&A, Deputy Superintendent as well as school based staff representing the following positions: Instructional Resource Teacher, Learning Coordinator, Literacy Coach, One classroom teacher per grade level.

Focus: Develop and clarify k-12 scope and sequence for core content areas and articulate essential understandings, knowledge and skills for all students aligned to Common Core Standard and ACT Career and College Readiness Standards and address consistent options for acceleration, scaffolding and supports offered K-12, in each grade level per content area.

Format: Committee will work as large group, small groups by content area and small groups by grade levels (see below for high school specific process) during days away paid for by REaL grant and existing district funds.

Step 2: High School Core Content Committees

Membership will include Doyle based teacher leaders in C&A, ESL, Special Education, TAG, Student Services, Professional Development, School and District Planners, REaL Grant, AVID, Assistant Superintendents, Director of C&A, Deputy Superintendent as well as High School Department Chairpersons, Literacy Coaches and REaL Grant Coordinators.

Focus: Develop and clarify high school scope and sequence for core content area and articulate essential understandings, knowledge and skills for all students aligned to Common Core Standard and ACT Career and College Readiness Standards and address consistent options for acceleration, scaffolding and supports offered K-12, in each grade level per content area.

Format: Committee will work as large group and small groups by content area during days away paid for by REaL grant and existing district funds.

Step 3: School-based Core Content Committees

Membership will include teachers from core content area including each department chairperson, literacy coach, and REaL Coordinators with additional support from Doyle based teacher leaders in C&A, Special Education, TAG, Student Services, PD and School and District Planners, REaL Grant and AVID as needed.

Focus: Develop school specific pedagogical practices that fulfill the range of learners and meet the essential understanding, knowledge and skills established by the above district-wide committees.

Format: School based committee work to occur during days away, PCT and extended employment.

Each committee outlined above will address the following four essential questions regarding curriculum alignment:

- How will MMSD challenge all learners while simultaneously offering authentic, equitable access to high quality, rigorous, standards-based instruction? (Equitable access is defined as providing the supports or acceleration necessary, to successfully learn in the pathway of the student's choice)
- How will MMSD maintain the comprehensive nature and individual flavor of each of its schools while aligning the curriculum with the standards for consistency?
- How will MMSD prepare staff to meet the instructional needs of a wide variety of learners?
- How will MMSD design the curricular alignment process so that authentic instruction is not suppressed by teaching to the test?

The next phase would involve extensive professional development for staff around instructional methodologies, assessment, literacy, culturally relevant pedagogy and meeting the needs of a wide range of learners. These processes may make the most sense in a linear timeline, but this is complex work and is best represented in a more fluid way. Many aspects of the process are interconnected and interrelated in that one informs the other and as such, this complex work is difficult to make sense of as discrete independent steps. Additionally, this work is being established as a system approach to curricular alignment and in knowing this, we will be establishing a system for continuous improvement as part of our conversations.

Additionally, as each committee provides updates and recommendations for approval all work will be vetted through the following councils and boards for additional perspectives to the plan:

- 1) Parent Council
- 2) Teacher Council
- 3) A specially created business and community council that will meet on a quarterly basis to provide feedback.
- 4) Leadership Council
- 5) Board of Education

All of the eventual elements of the High School Career and College Readiness Plan will include a cost analysis and recommended funding source for approval.

Timeline

In order to balance the need for a larger K-12 curricular alignment planning process maintain with maintaining the integrity of our original proposal we have revised our timeline. While the initial steps have been moved back to account for a more substantial planning time, the end goal for full implementation is still within the original parameters. The revised timeline is as follows:

2010-2011 Including Summer: Planning Year

District-wide K-12 curricular alignment process to occur with the following results:

- Established k-12 scope and sequence in all four core content areas.
- Essential Understandings, knowledge and skills established K-12.
- High School curricular alignment completed in all four core content areas with established course offerings, sequences and essential understandings, knowledge and skills.
- Establish initial offerings for consistent accelerated courses to be offered 2011-12.
- Establish scaffolds and supports to be provided district-wide.
- Plan for Professional Development implementation developed for implementation 2011-12.
- Implement the EPAS EXPLORE Assessment with all 8th and 9th grade students.

2011-12: Readiness for Implementation

Comprehensive budget aligned to the plan and recommended for approval, November 2011.

Comprehensive professional development plan implemented for staff across all four comprehensive high schools to fully implement recommendations set forth by district committees from 2010-11.

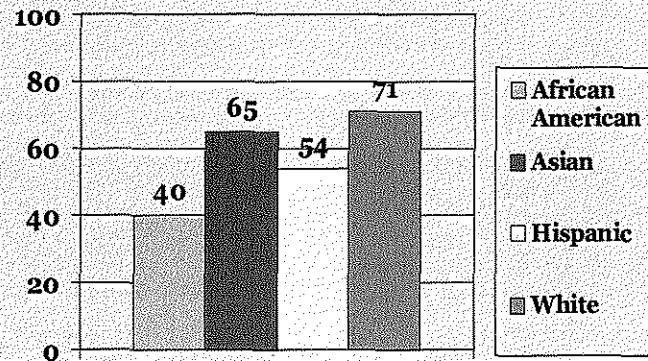
Implement initial accelerated offerings across all four comprehensive high schools.
Finalize course offerings and descriptions for including in 2012-13 course catalogs.

Implement the EPAS EXPLORE and PLAN Assessment with all 8th, 9th and 10th grade students.

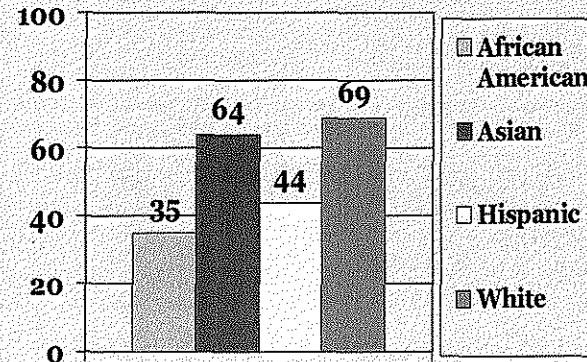
2012-13: Implementation

Implement consistent course offerings in all four core content areas with options for both acceleration and scaffolding and supports.

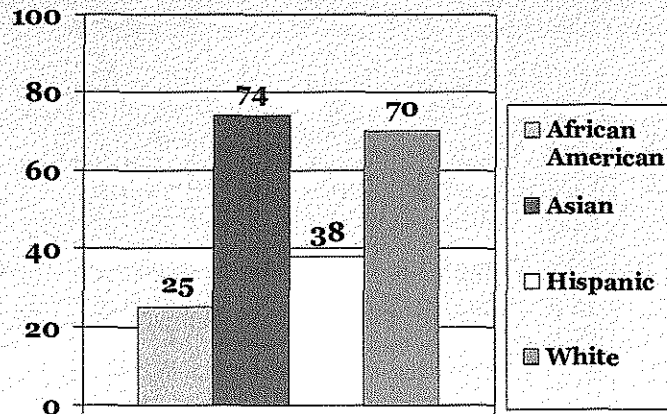
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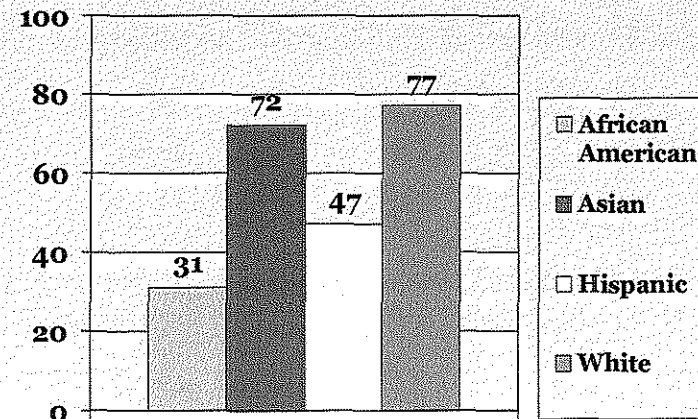
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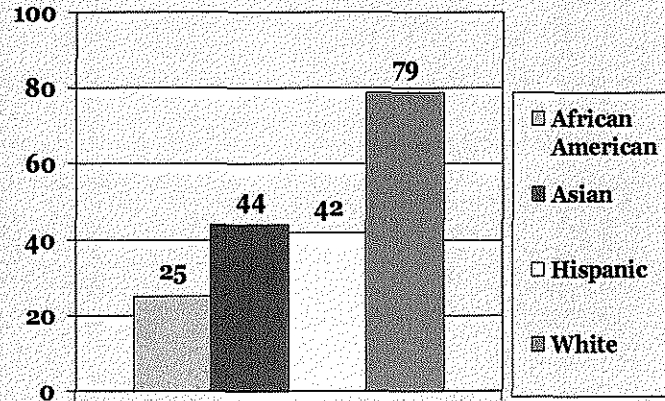
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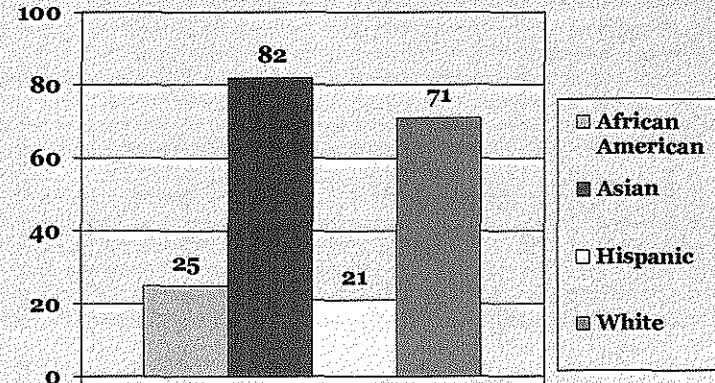
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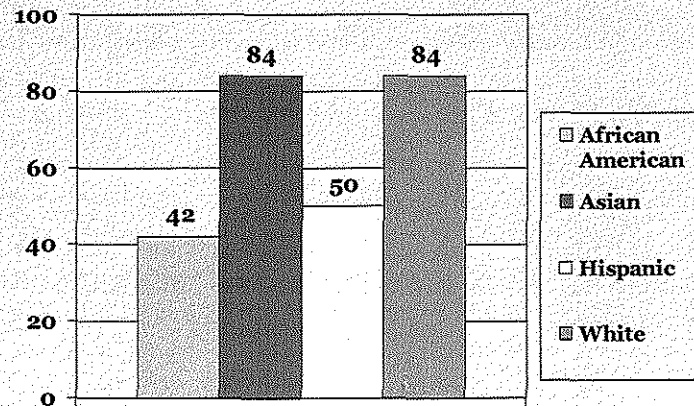
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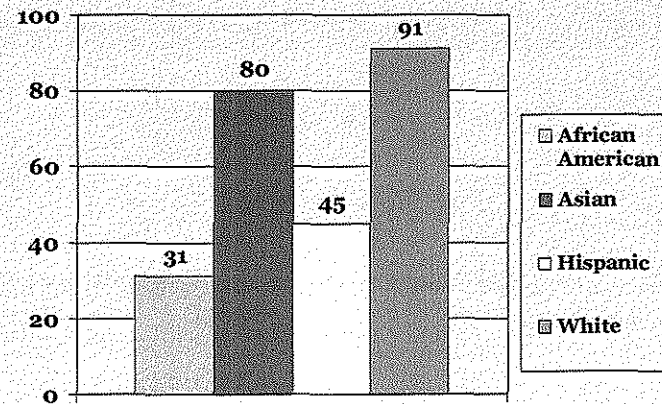
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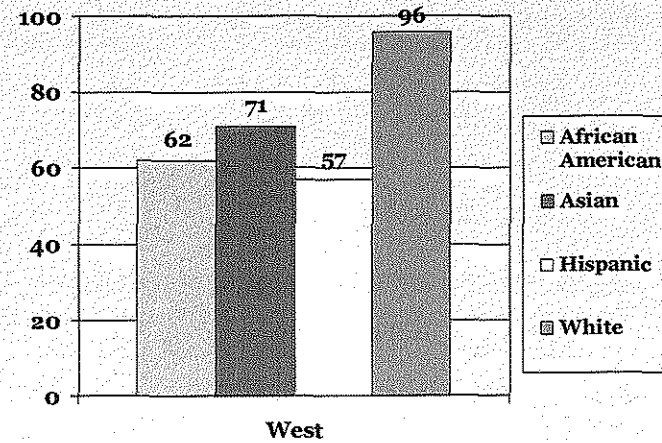
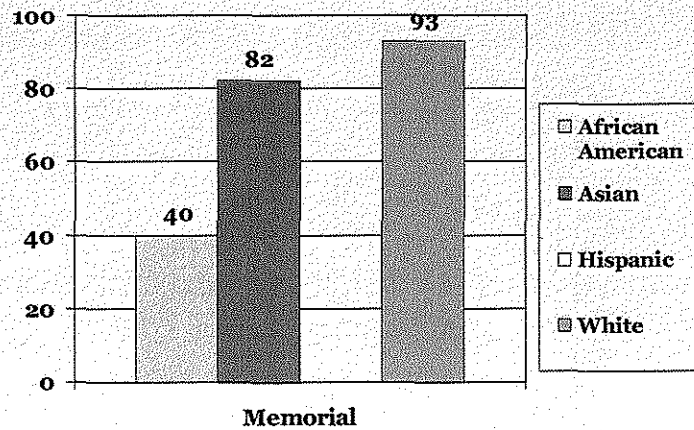
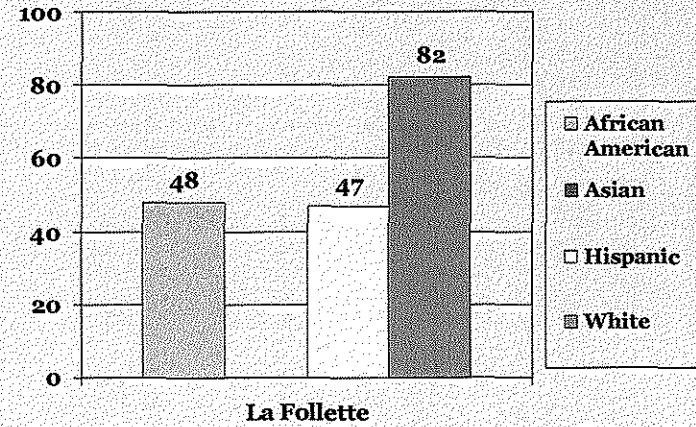
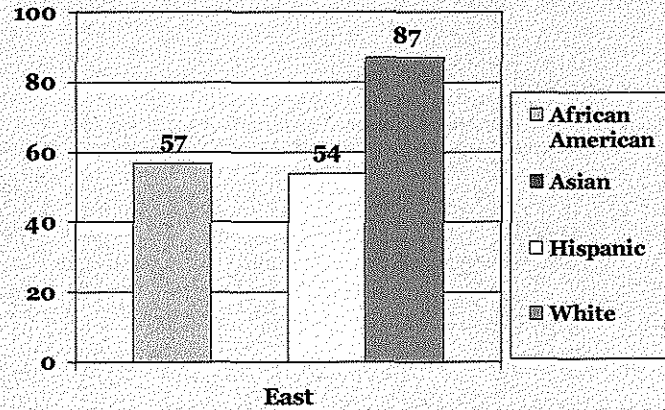
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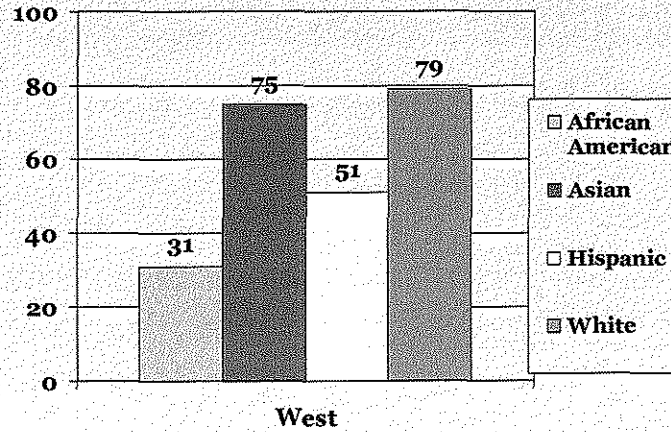
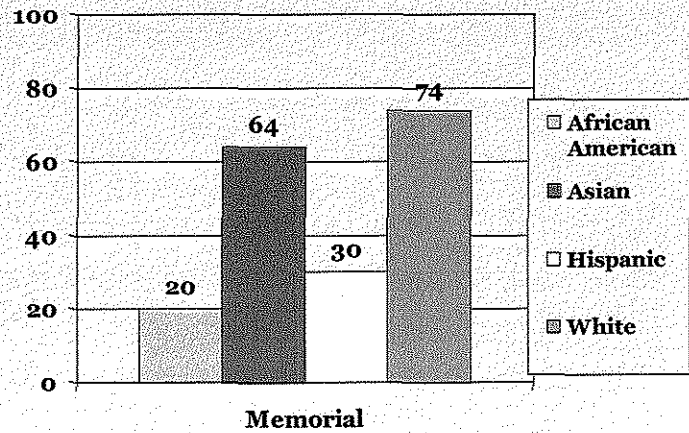
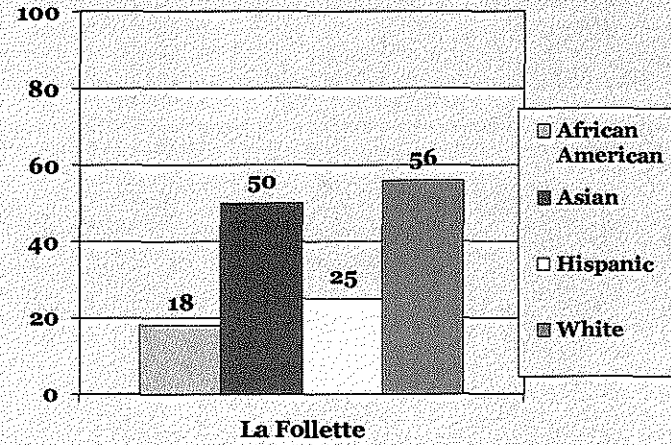
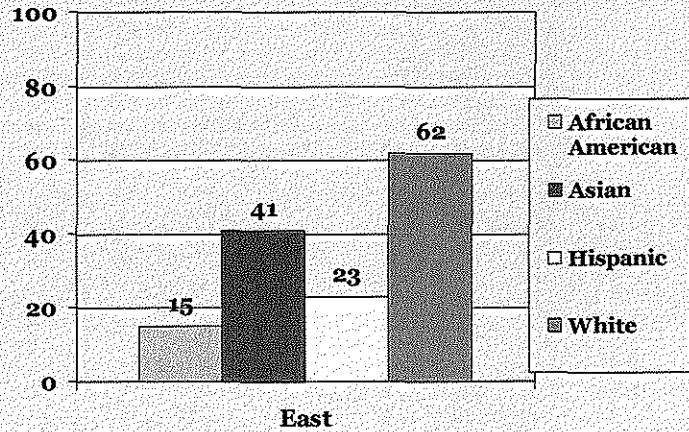
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10th Grade WKCE Reading Proficient plus Advanced

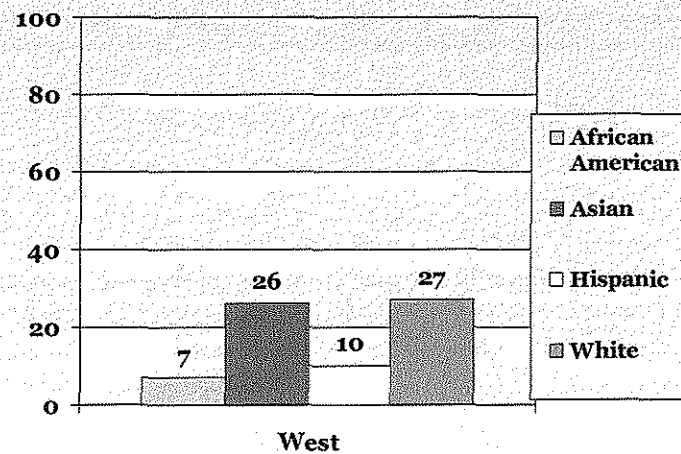
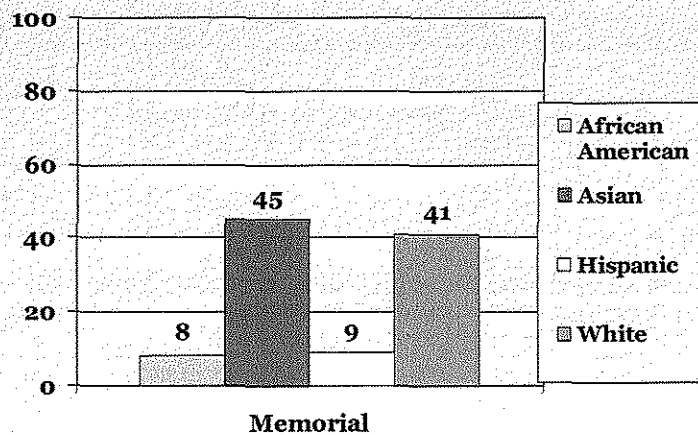
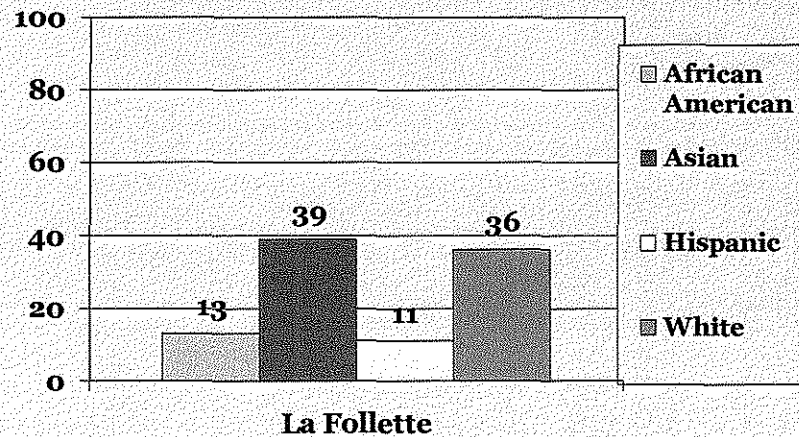
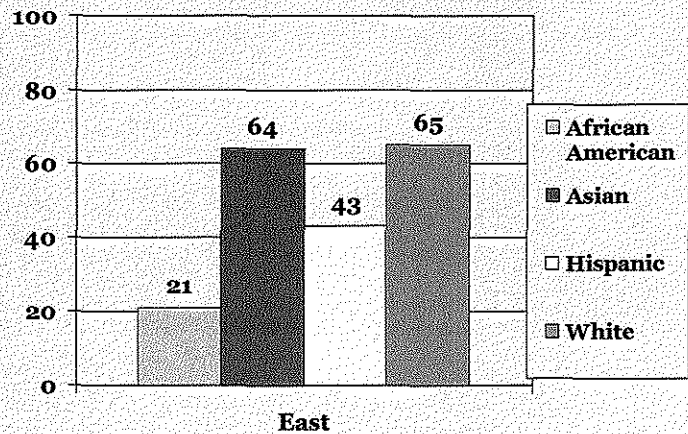
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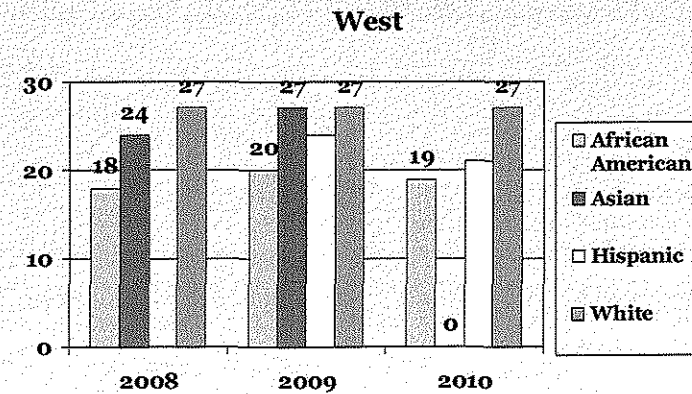
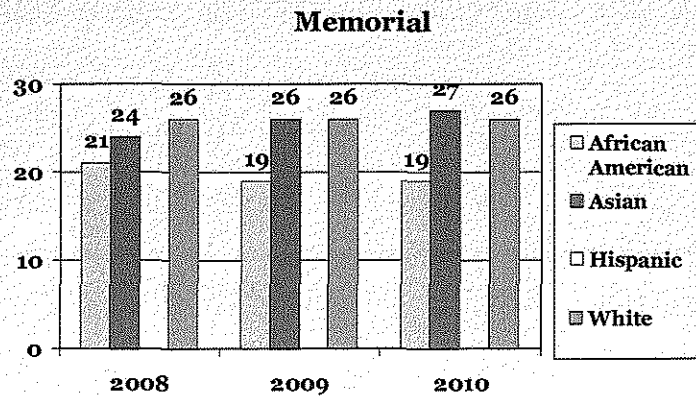
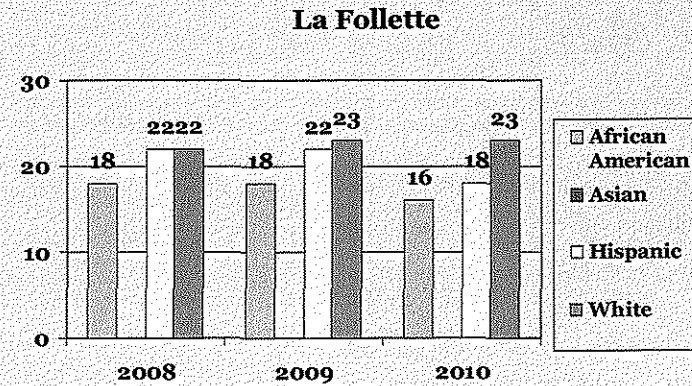
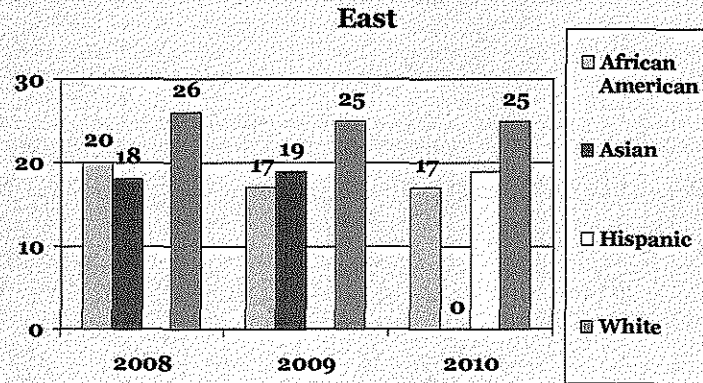
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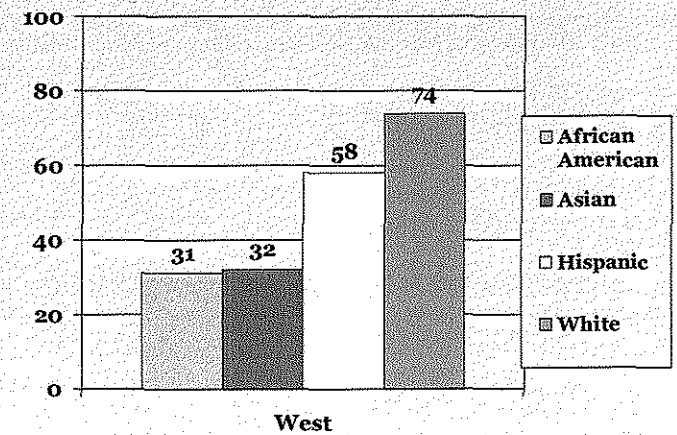
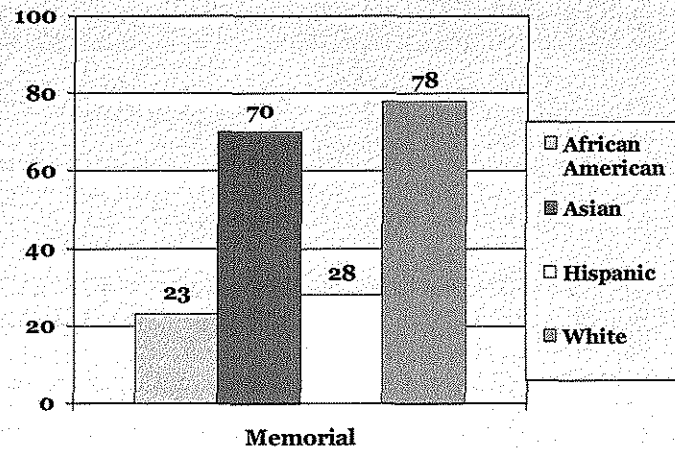
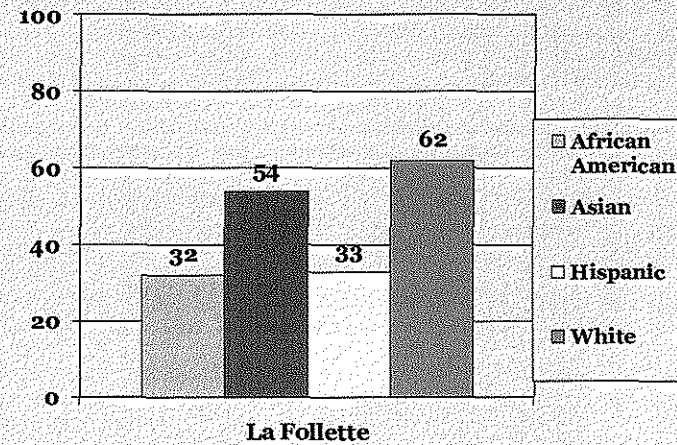
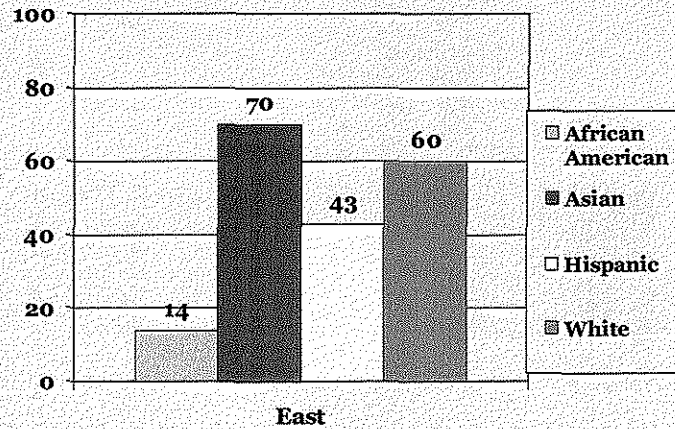
Advanced Literature Completion by 12th grade 2009-10



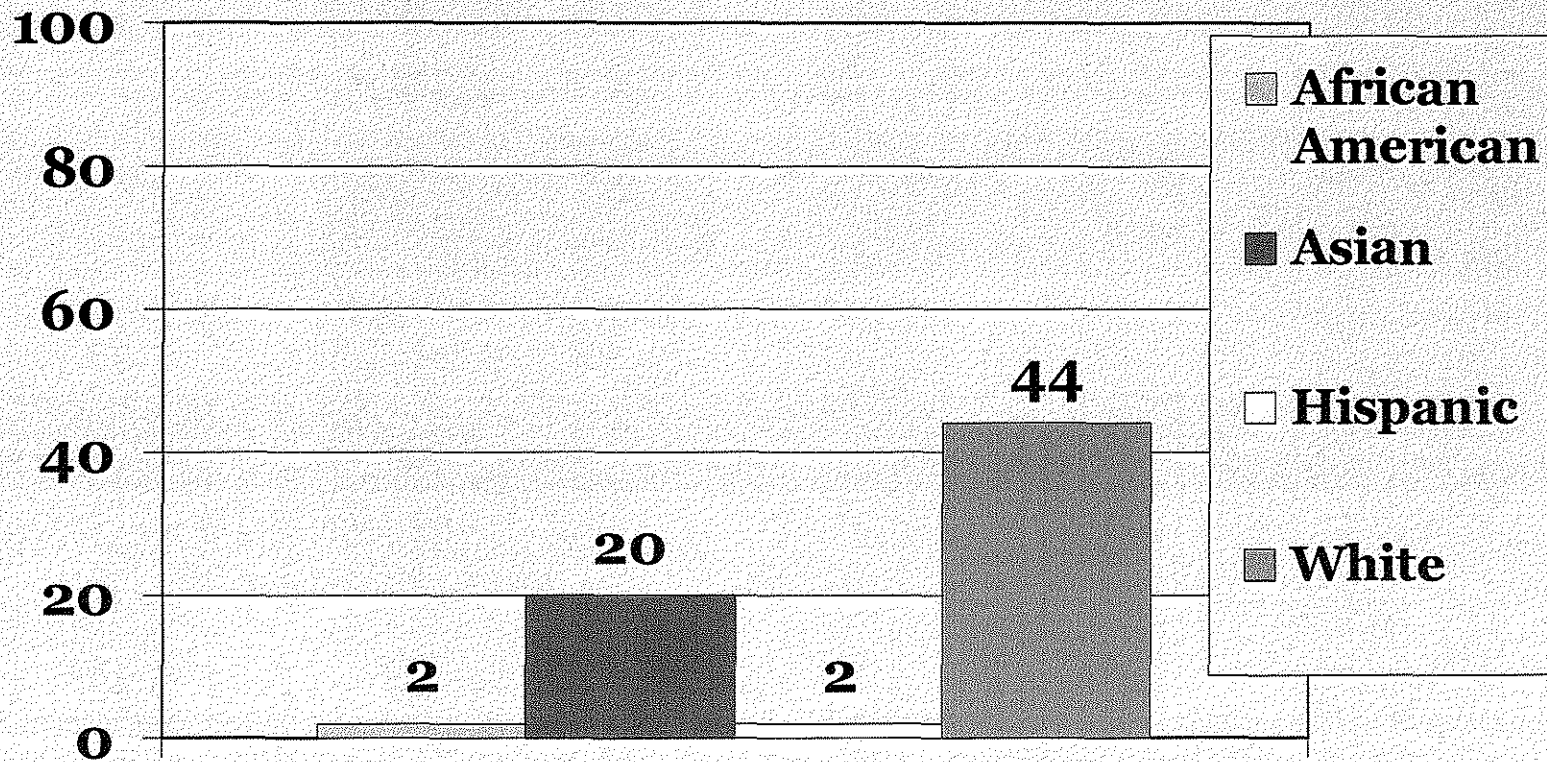
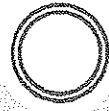
Composite ACT- 12th graders



Taking ACT 2009-10

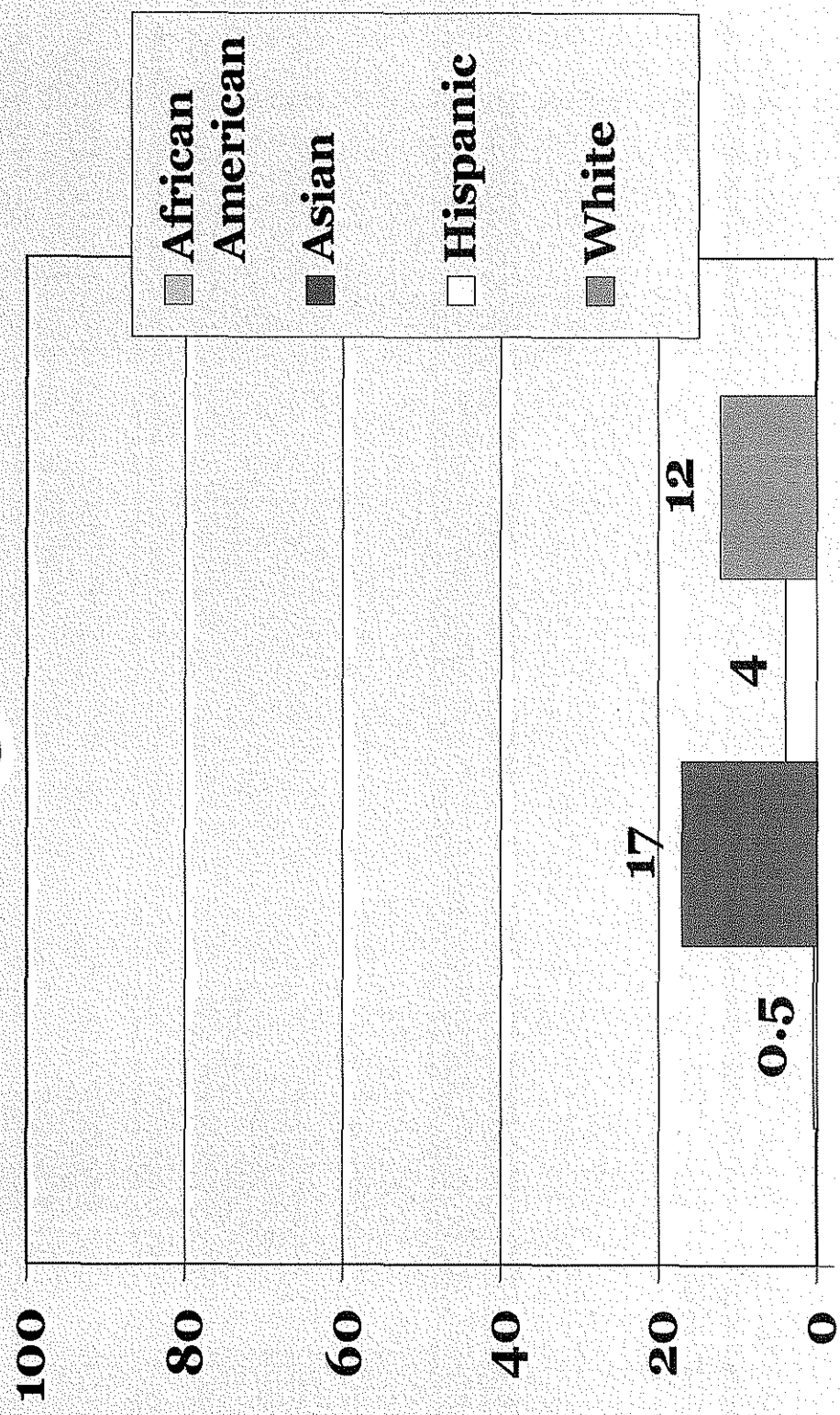


MMSD 10th grade students taking AP classes in 2009-10



Raw Number Across All District Students

MMSD students taking AP exams in 2008-09

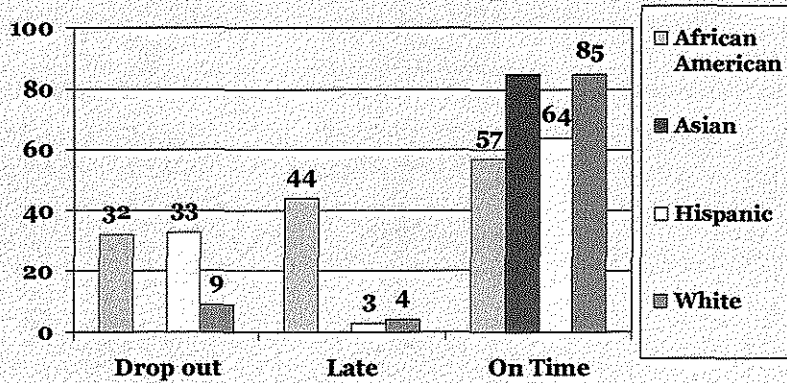


% ALL MMSD STUDENTS

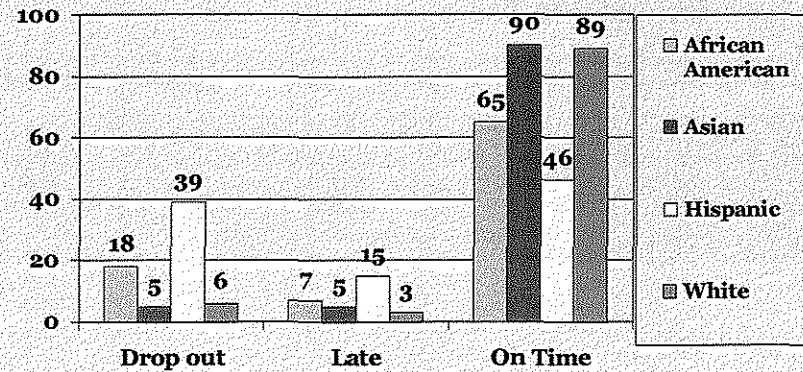
Graduation on Time-2009



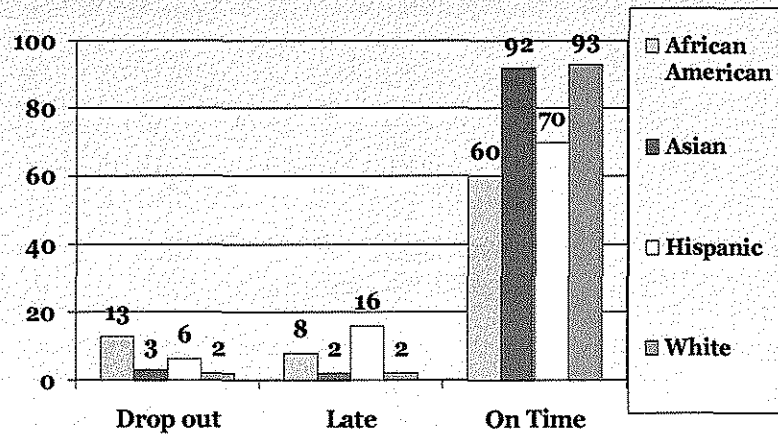
East



La Follette



Memorial



West

