Barriers to Reducing the Opportunity Gap

The Mayor's Education Summit Advisory Group met in three small groups on May 11, 2016. This list is a collection of answers to "What are the main barriers/challenges that must be addressed to eliminate the opportunity gap?" Potential Solutions to addressing the opportunity gap are presented below.

* represents barriers that were discussed by multiple groups

- Access to expanded/summer learning
- Community ownership of issues (along w/other key players/systems
- Lack of inclusion of people of color in PTA
- Teacher knowledge historical context- undoing institutional racism
- Educator Bias*
- Recruiting/retaining high quality/effective teachers
- Modernizing curricula- critical thinking
- HQ Professional Development
- Ownership of cultural competency/authentic relationships
    - Teachers need district training and support, resources/supports (ex. Discipline)
- Poverty
- Students need significant change year over year -> how to ensure teachers and school are changing accordingly to meet all needs
- Time in day to connect with students
- Achievement gap prior to school entry
    - language gap <5 years based on socio-economic status
- Equitable/Adequate money (books, etc)
- Who makes decisions at all levels?
    - School board
- No accountability
- Lack of collaboration across systems*
- Lack of common goal
- Not using schools for multi-use purposes
- Buy-in at school board level for
    - Equity work
    - Professional development -> soft skills
- No system to support all kids
    - E.g Coming to school
- Homelessness and displacement of students in King County
- Continuity of services beyond the city
- Undocumented students aren't included in invisibility discussion
- District/schools -> people with louder voice are those with more power and are heard
- Student curriculum
    - Not culturally competent
    - Does not include native tribes
    - Anti-colonialism

- Low expectations for kids in poverty*
- Lack positive affirmations
- CBO's getting squeezed out of schools
- Invisibility- statistical insignificance with Native American populations
- Education system disenfranchised
- Kids not seeing how they fit into life after school (career/job readiness)
- Violence
  - Kids mistrust of authority
  - Suicide
  - Trauma
- Good teaching practice in classroom
- Drug use is high
- Racism (structural)
- Lack quality programs for students of color
- Redefine what gifted programs look like.

Potential Solutions for Addressing the Opportunity Gap

The Mayor's Education Summit Advisory Group met in three small groups on May 11, 2016. This list is a collection of answers to "What ideas did you hear at the summit or community conversations that you found intriguing for how the city can help address the opportunity gap?"

* represents ideas that were discussed by multiple groups

- Design principles for meaningful work (e.g. social identity)*
- Professional Development for teachers in the system
  - Could collaborate with Universities
  - SE skills
  - Differentiate academically
  - Adult/student interaction
  - Relationship building
- Training for pre-service teachers
- Create ways to use community assets*
  - Current college students advise high school students
- Create opportunities for students to connect with other adults
- Make higher expectations the norm
  - Allow choice for students
- Two generation strategy*
  - Basic needs
  - Parents
- FSW resource- dedicated school-based staff connect to families students-$ being cut
- Promote more diverse educational staff

- Immediate Act: Get current teachers to be more effective- support teachers struggling now
- Culturally relevant community navigators *
  - (Example) Chicago trains community members to work with students in the classroom, staff receive stipend and ongoing training
- City Database- link students to mentors- guidance/job training
- Enhance para-educator role
- Pay HS student through YEP mentor, academic support
- Opportunity for youth expose teacher pathway- creative ways to expose children to teaching?
- Change structure of classroom- certification/qualifications for teachers*
  - Of staff- How can we adjust to get a more representative population
- Smaller class size
- Leadership- encouraging/supporting teachers
- How can city help families re: child care w/new bell schedules- CLCs
  - Sync with district access to services'
  - See Seatac/Highline partnership before/after care models
  - Safety considerations
- All actors (including affected communities) need to collaboratively chart path forward, set goals, identify roles, accept ownership, be held accountable**
- Apprenticeship programs- teaching, pair w/positive role model, create pipeline to more representative teaching pool
- Coordinate impactful small CBOs (city facilitate collaboration) leverage effective programs
  - Provide resources
  - Focus on specific groups -> AA
- Include families and students in decision making- Level power dynamics in communities*
- Focus on quality of services
- Share/maximize resources (e.g. space)
- Use extended learning and summer learning opportunities
- Internships/ Youth employment*
  - Job exploration- Continue 100K Jobs initiative
- Address healing before restorative justice
- Early learning expansion for communities of color
- Programs for children 0-3 age
- Invest in best practices in communities of color*
- Environmental/experimental education
- Restorative Justice practices
- Understand the impact of trauma
- Advanced learning as an equity driver
  - Every kid has an opportunity to access best programs
- Asset-based model
  - Increase dual language
  - Training on refugee/immigrant and kids of color assets
- Family engagement- connect resources in the community*
- Improve digital access for families

- Alternative ways to communicate with families (text, phone, etc)
- Academic and mental health counseling*
- Technology to engage students and families
- Engaging native students in arts and sciences
- Community organizing for students of color
- Access to translation and interpretation