

DIG DEEPER

Suspensions and Expulsions Dropping

It takes a moment to back into this thinking: We track the rate of ninth graders who are not suspended or expelled. This measure is a good way to assess and make informed changes to the way student discipline impacts attendance, performance, and likelihood to graduate.

Over the past five years, as TPS has tracked the data and modified its disciplinary practices, we have seen nearly a ten-point decrease in the number of ninth graders who are being suspended and expelled.

Instead of traditional disciplinary measures such as expulsion and suspension, TPS now uses “restorative practices” to correct many (not all) behavioral issues. Students stay in school and are less likely to fall behind, drop out, and/or not graduate.

This new approach has been a strong catalyst for decreasing the gap that existed between White students and their Black and Multi-racial counterparts, which has decreased ten points and 18 points, respectively. Students living in poverty have seen the gap narrow by five points.

↑ NOT SUSPENDED/EXPELLED-9TH GRADERS



BASELINE
2011-12



CURRENT
2015-16

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

AIMING HIGHER GOAL: Increase in positive behavior and student engagement and decrease in behavioral challenges.

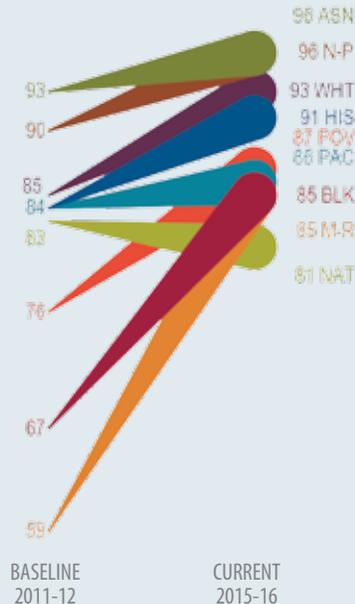
KEY FINDINGS

Tacoma’s Motivated about SEL

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.¹

Inspired by Tacoma’s Whole Child Initiative (TWCI), University of Washington Tacoma, TPS, School’s Out Washington, the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, and Graduate Tacoma are developing an SEL plan for Tacoma. Starting with a common vision and shared goal (*below*), and with the help of the Wallace Foundation, we hope to find a metric for SEL that will help us track our progress in this area.

NOT SUSPENDED/EXPELLED-9TH GRADERS POVERTY, RACE, & ETHNICITY



Tacoma’s SEL Vision: Tacoma students will experience connected SEL environments throughout the day to support the whole child.

Tacoma’s SEL Goal: By 2020, Tacoma will have piloted a district/out-of-school time SEL system in five elementary schools, learn what works, and be ready to sustain and scale.

Tacoma’s Core Competencies:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Responsible Decision Making
- Relationship Skills

¹CASEL.org
Source: Tacoma Public School District

SAFE & HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

AIMING HIGHER GOAL: Increase safe, healthy, and nurturing environments for students in the community.

KEY FINDINGS

Positive Early Experiences Build Healthy Brains

This indicator is one for which we don’t currently have a measure, but we continue to work as a movement to identify one (or more). In the meantime, one area on which many of our community partners – especially First5FUNdamentals and the Project Child Success movement – continue to focus is ACES: Adverse Childhood Experiences. The degree to which ACES affect the well-being and capacity for children to flourish and succeed as children and adults is profound.

Resources, work, and programming are being generated throughout the district in line with early childhood research that shows that the first five years of life are critically important to children’s futures. Their brains, at this stage, form hundreds of new neural connections per second and positive early experiences with adults create the foundation for lifelong learning.

