

# Parent Participatory Evaluation: Community - Led Systems Change in a Public School District



MPS  
MINNEAPOLIS  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Association of  
Metropolitan School  
Districts

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# After today, you will...



- Have an understanding of **Parent Participatory Evaluation** (PPE) and how this research and evaluation approach resulted in parent-led engagement at Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS)
- **Hear from some of our parent evaluators**
- Gain insight into **what it takes** for this work to be **successful and facilitate change**

# Overview of PPE



**“Women or men cannot understand or explain the world we live in or the real choices we have as long as the sciences describe and explain the world primarily from the perspectives of the lives of the dominant groups.”** *Harding (1991)*

**By recognizing science as a set of local practices it becomes possible to “decentre” it and develop a framework within which all knowledge systems can be equitable compared.**

*Turnball (1997)*

# Program Overview



Minneapolis Public Schools promises an inspirational educational experience in a safe, welcoming environment for all diverse learners to acquire the tools and skills necessary to confidently engage in the global community. To honor this vision, the District has utilized **participatory evaluation**, which empowers the people who are closest to the issue to take the lead in the evaluation.

MPS has supported a Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE) program for five years, and launched the PPE program last year. By partnering with students and parents, **MPS engages key stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvement and partner on innovative solutions that best reflect the priorities of our community.**

- MPS serves a racially and ethnically diverse community of students and families
- MPS has experienced limited success engaging these diverse communities in research and evaluation
- In a recent survey, MPS collected data from over 3,000 family members, but only **16%** identified as a **person of color**, **11%** spoke a **language other than English** at home, and only **14%** reported living on the **North side** of the city.

## MPS Student Demographics

White: **36.4%**

Black or African American: **34%**

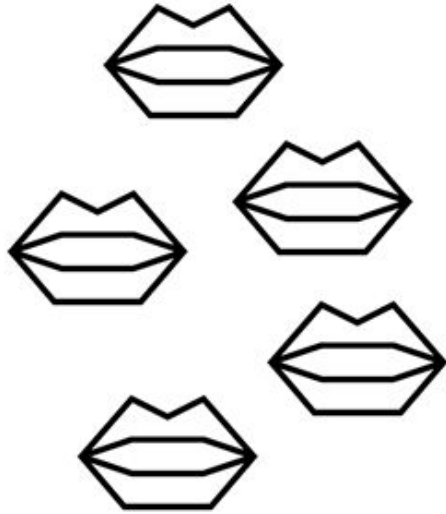
Latinx or Hispanic: **17.2%**

Two or More: **4.8%**

Asian: **4.7%**

American Indian: **2.7%**

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: **0.1%**



# PPE Model in MPS is Built on Partnership



Engagement  
& External  
Relations

- Authentic relationships
- Parent engagement
- Communication
- Language

Research,  
Evaluation, &  
Assessment

- Data collection methods
- Analysis
- Identifying Themes
- Reporting

Parent  
Evaluators

- Community connections (African American, American Indian, Hmong, Latinx, and Somali)
- Experience with MPS



## How can a school *value and respect* your child for who they are?



Surveys

+



Group  
Conversations

+



Participatory  
Activities

=

**2,272<sup>+</sup>**

**parents reached**

within the African American,  
American Indian, Hmong,  
Latino, and Somali  
communities in 2018-2019  
PPE program

# Themes Across Groups



*For families to feel **valued and respected** at MPS schools, parents need:*

1. Ongoing commitment that **staff will learn about and embed students' cultures and histories** into their instruction and schoolwide practices.
2. **Positive and accessible communication** that builds relationships between parents and teachers to partner in support of each child in MPS.
3. **Staff-especially teacher and school leaders-who look like and speak the languages** represented in our schools.
4. Programming and courses throughout the **academic experience that reflect and value the cultures and histories** of MPS students.
5. A **system of support that empowers parents to advocate** for and support their child's development, especially within special education.
6. A **safe** school experience.
7. Clear communication about schools' expectations for behavior and **equitable treatment in response to behavior**.

# How Have Findings Produced Change?



- Increased budget for **Interpretation and Translation** services
- Hired additional **Recruitment and Retention Coordinator** to increase staff of color
- Increased budget for Arts department for **more culturally-specific arts displays**
- Increased Special Education Cultural Liaisons working weeks to include projects that **improve relevancy and accessibility of parent communication**
- Added a **full time teacher for Hmong language** course at Henry High School
- Added a **full time teacher for Somali Studies** course at Heritage Academy

# Parent Evaluator Panel



- Allison Waukau
- Dulce de la Rosa
- Jerry Lee
- Mahamed Cali
- Sarah Washington

# Facilitating Systems Change: What does it take?



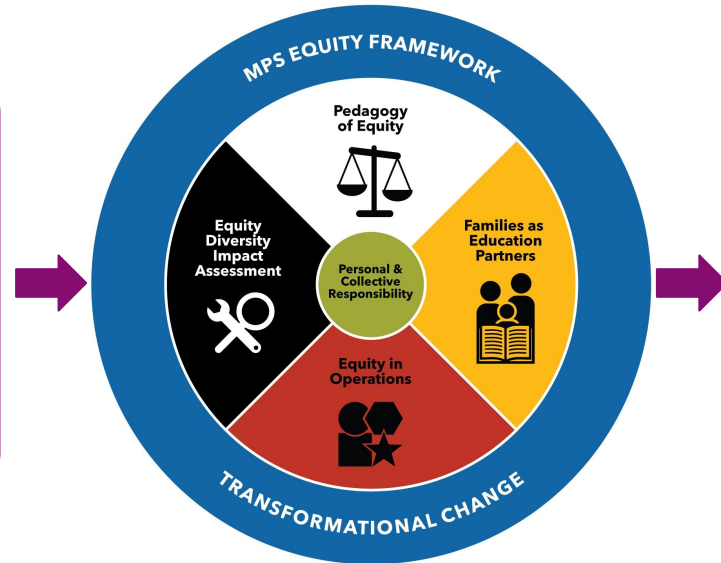
# Systems Change Framework



# Core Component of PPE: Facilitating Use & Action



Culturally-Specific  
Groups' Findings &  
Recommendations  
+  
Themes Across  
Groups



11 Memos with  
Specific  
Recommendation  
for MPS Owner



# Additional Core Components of PPE



## **Shared Power**

*Between district staff and parents*

## **Compensating Parents**

*Providing stipends for the work*

## **Aligned with District Decision-Making Process**

*Parents gain awareness of district wide processes*

## **Evaluation and Engagement Partnership**

*Cross-divisional work and equity-minded staff*

## **Time**

*Need to allot adequate time to the program (including interpretation and translation services) and process of progress monitoring*

## **Contract Model**

*Hired PPE graduates to collect parent voice for Equity and Diversity Impact Assessment on Student Placement Process.*

Utilizing parents' prior experience and expertise in collecting data.

Limited choice and parent leadership on design of data collection tools.

## **Site-Based Model**

*Two-year pilot, starting this year*

Model will run out of two MPS schools in North Minneapolis.

Initiative will explore the potential for site-based PPE to leverage more tangible change at the school level.

# Questions?

[https://rea.mpls.k12.mn.us/parent\\_participatory\\_evaluation](https://rea.mpls.k12.mn.us/parent_participatory_evaluation)