



Tacoma Whole Child Initiative 2014-2015 Annual Report

The **Tacoma Whole Child Initiative** (TWCI) is a partnership between **Tacoma Public Schools (TPS)** and the **Center for Strong Schools (CSS)** at the **University of Washington Tacoma (UWT)**.



This partnership is embarking on year four of a **decade-long** mission to create sustainable change in Tacoma schools and the community so every child is a whole child - engaged, successful, resilient, and ready for life. TWCI was designed to support the social and emotional well-being of students in Tacoma through a district-wide, uniform multi-tiered system of supports not only in every school in the district, but extending to families and the surrounding community.

Thank you to our Tacoma Whole Child Initiative Investors!

The Bamford Foundation | Howard and Lynn Behar | City of Tacoma | Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation | Judy and Allan Trinkwald | Tacoma Public Schools | Totem Ocean Trailer Express | University of Washington Tacoma |

Tacoma Whole Child Initiative
2014-2015 Annual Report

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“This is the first time we have all the right people in all the right places and the buy-in at the schools, school board and community. It gives us a once in a lifetime opportunity to give our children a wonderful and fulfilling life.” -**Lyle Quasim, Chair, Tacoma Black Collective**



2015 Annual Tacoma Whole Child Initiative Evaluation Report
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Context & Input

What is the Tacoma Whole Child Initiative (TWCI)?

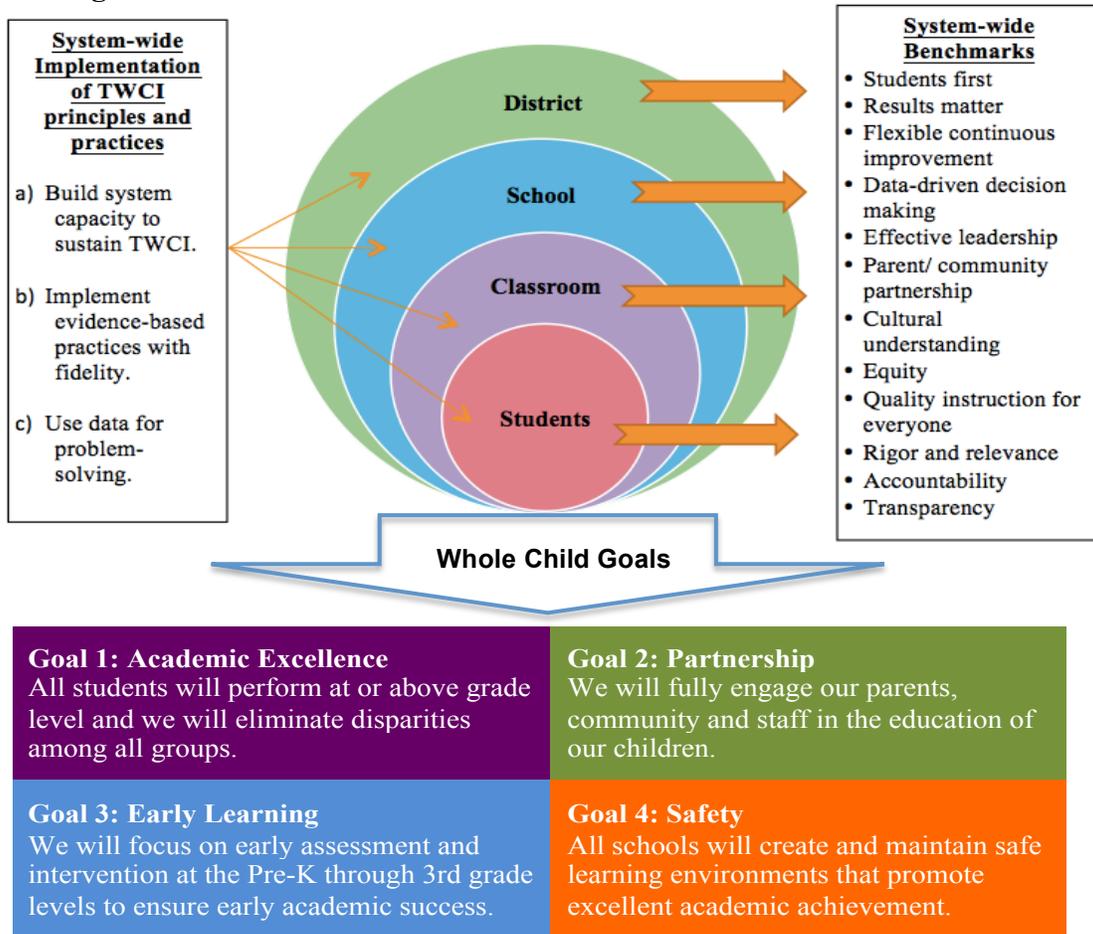
TWCI is a partnership between the University of Washington Tacoma’s Center for Strong Schools (CSS) and the Tacoma Public School District (TPS). TWCI employs an evidence-based approach to achieve organizational change within the district through readiness training, organizational integration, teacher instruction and metrics tracking.

The implementation of the TWCI plan follows a 10-year business plan encompassing capacity building at the district, building and classroom level. A district leadership team drives the plan while building leadership teams implement the prevention and intervention strategies in a systematic manner.

The goal is comprehensive academic, social emotional, career readiness and sustainable school and community transformation. Together, with the schools and the Tacoma community, TWCI creates unprecedented support for the whole child by addressing, connecting, and harmonizing academic, social and emotional stability. The program is uniquely built for sustainability and embraces implementation science. Long after the 10-year plan has concluded, schools will be able to maintain laser-like focus on the whole child. By braiding and organizing priorities, district, school leaders and teachers will consistently employ evidence-based strategies, guided by data, to maintain high engagement and academic achievement.

Figure 1. TWCI Theory of Change

Theory of Change



There are nearly 30,000 students in the Tacoma Public School District. In cohort 1 (see list below), there are about 7,000 students. Cohort 2 has near 6,500 and Cohort 3 services 6,800 Tacoma youth. The implementation of TWCI now includes over 20,000 or almost 70% of all students in TPS.

Figure 2. Cohorts 1-3

Cohort 1 Schools 2012 - 2013	Cohort 2 Schools 2013 - 2014	Cohort 3 Schools 2014 - 2015
Birney Elementary	Blix Elementary	Arlington Elementary
Boze Elementary	Browns Point Elementary	Bryant Elementary
Downing Elementary	Delong Elementary	Crescent Heights Elementary
Edison Elementary	Fawcett Elementary	Fern Hill Elementary
Franklin Elementary	Grant Elementary	Geiger Elementary
Larchmont Elementary	Gray Middle School	Giaudrone Middle School
Lister Elementary	Jason Lee Middle School	Jefferson Elementary
Mt. Tahoma High School	Lowell Elementary	Mason Middle School
Pt. Defiance Elementary	Lyon Elementary	McCarver Elementary
Roosevelt Elementary	Manitou Park Elementary	Meeker Middle School
Skyline Elementary	Mann Elementary	NE Tacoma Elementary
Truman Middle School	Reed Elementary	Sherman Elementary
Whitman Elementary	Sheridan Elementary	Stafford Elementary
	Whittier Elementary	Stanley Elementary
		Washington-Hoyt Elementary

Figure 3. Number of Schools Adopting TWCI

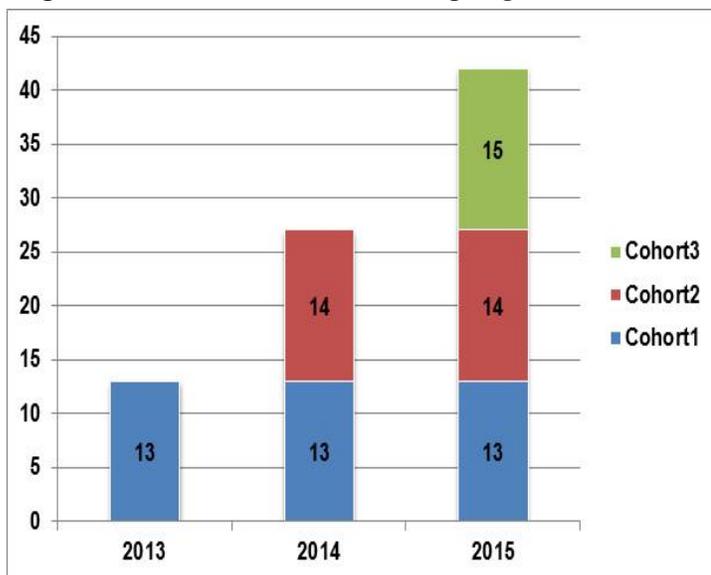
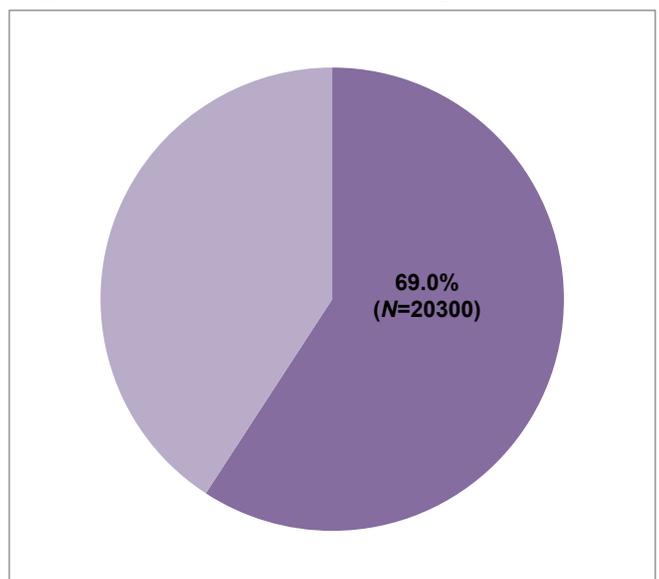


Figure 4. Number of Students Impacted by TWCI



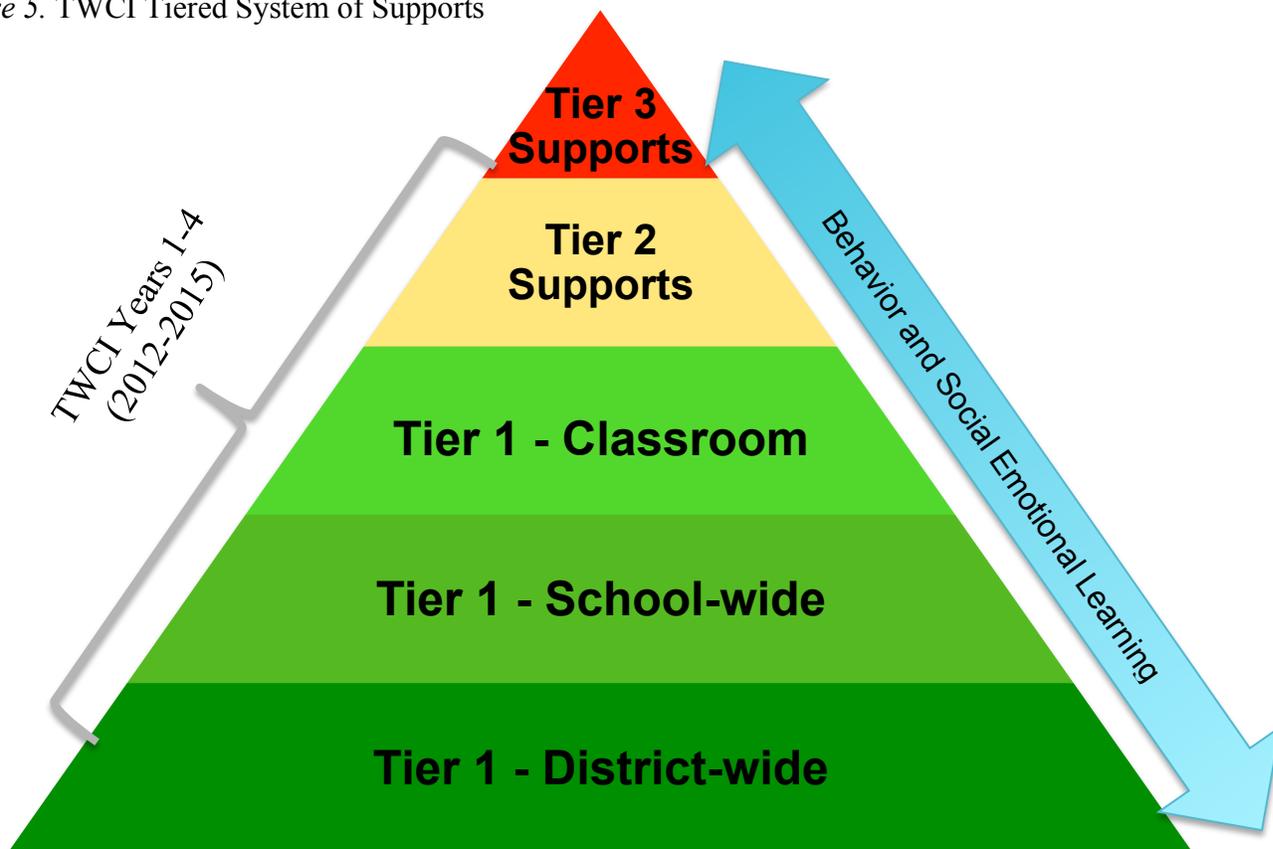
Intervention.

The year 1 (2011-2012) TWCI objective was to establish **readiness** for sustainable change. At the district level this involved creating a district leadership team, measuring readiness, measuring school systems and practices, funding, braiding initiatives and building staff awareness and buy-in. Building leadership team training began with cohort 1 schools in year two. Cohort 2 schools began the training in the 2014 – 2015 school year, and Cohort 3 schools started in June 2015. The remaining Cohort 4 schools will begin implementation at the end of the 2015 – 2016 school year.

The goals for years 2 and 3 were to begin **installing** TWCI by creating positive, engaging, and safe learning environments and begin teaching social emotional learning. This was accomplished by implementing and evaluating school wide (tier1) Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) systems, which included developing clear, consistent, explicitly taught behavior guidelines and expectations in non-classroom contexts, reinforcement of positive behavior, trauma-informed care, restorative practices, enhancing active supervision and social emotional learning (see figure below).

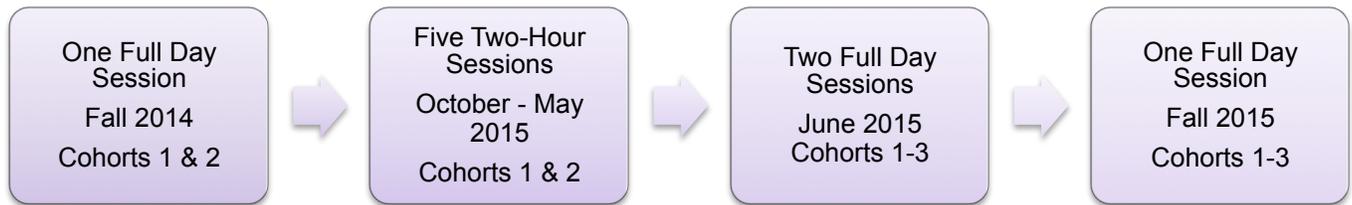
In addition, TPS began creating readiness for classroom implementation of TWCI, by building the capacity of professional learning communities. TWCI building teams and the district leadership teams began to hear about how they could go about identify students in need of more support and connecting them to tier 2 (targeted) and tier 3 (intensive supports) interventions.

Figure 5. TWCI Tiered System of Supports



A range of TWCI related professional learning opportunities or professional development (PD) was provided to 42 school teams during the 2014 -2015 school year. The distribution of training activities is illustrated in the figure below. As mentioned, these teams received an overview of TWCI including foundational PBIS and social emotional learning and 100% participated in continued professional development and coaching related to primary interventions and supports. Seventy-two percent of schools received professional development on tier 2 interventions—including the evidence-based tier 2 program, *The Behavior Program (BEP) or Check In/Check Out (CICO)*.

Team Training: An estimated **420** Tacoma Public School staff attended professional learning opportunities that ranged from full days to two-hour sessions after school this year. In between each learning session, teams met minimally monthly at their buildings to review and make progress on their action plans. At TWCI cohort schools, building leadership teams are comprised of 8-12 representative members of their staff. **Over 300** hours of technical assistance was provided at the building level in 2014-2015. Each school received an implementation coach from the University of Washington Tacoma’s Center for Strong Schools. Coaches attended team meetings and responded to requests for support. Each TWCI school received (on average) 2 hours a month of coach support.



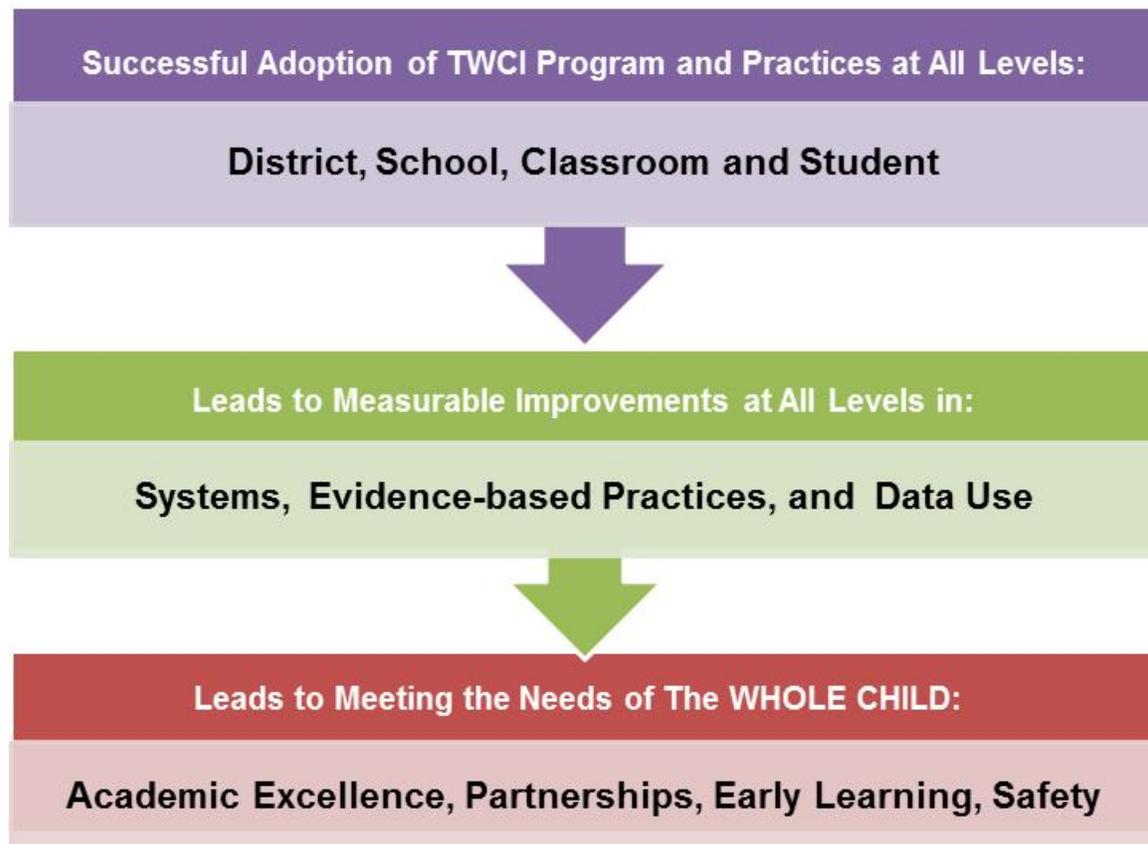
TWCI Training Topics

- TWCI Awareness
- Teaching and Reinforcing Expected Behaviors (tier 1 PBIS)
- Using Data to Drive Decision Making
- Fidelity Measures
- Evidence-based Interventions
- Social Emotional Learning in the Classroom
- Tier 2 PBIS including Check In/ Check Out
- Universal Screening
- Parent Support/Engagement in TWCI
- Conscious Discipline
- Trauma Informed Care
- Restorative Practices



Members of the TWCI team from Crescent Heights Elementary School work on their school matrix at their initial TWCI training in June 2015.

In order for change to sustain over time, there must be a comprehensive plan that encompasses data, systems and practices at each level of implementation (district, school, classroom, and student). As a result of strong leadership at the district level, schools were supported with resources, policies, and systems needed to accomplish implementation of TWCI in buildings, classrooms and non-classroom settings. The first year of this initiative (2012-2013) laid a strong foundation as the result of a year-long planning effort at the district level.



A clear alignment of systems, data, and practices (including policies and funding support) was accomplished between district, building, and grade-level or content area professional learning community leadership teams after three full years of the TWCI partnership. The continued success of this project is built upon the district's past three years of implementing social emotional learning, trauma-informed care, a foundational behavioral framework, resulting in connectedness, clear expectations, respectful behavior, and educator well being.



TWCI “In Action”

Building and Classroom Level

The district leadership team sets the stage for successful implementation of TWCI in the buildings and classrooms. School-wide and class-wide implementation of TWCI is the vehicle of change at the student level. Tacoma Public Schools have committed to an instructional approach to behavior and social emotional learning for all students. In other words, the teaching of behavior and social emotional skills occurs similarly to teaching academics. Each student is explicitly taught the expectations at school. Teachers use instructional materials and effective instructional practices to ensure students know how to behave in school.

Having clear expectations throughout the building and in the classrooms is a cornerstone of TWCI. **Downing Elementary** posts the expectations of being “safe”, “respectful” and “responsible” for the hallway and stairs. Teachers are continually re-teaching these expectations and reinforcing students who exhibit the appropriate behaviors. Teachers and staff report the consistent language is one of most helpful pieces of their Tier 1 plan.



This is an example of a teacher reviewing an expectation matrix in a classroom at **Larchmont Elementary**. Students are taught routines and procedures according to the expectations of being “safe”, “respectful” and “responsible.” Proactive teaching of these behaviors, adds instructional time to the class period due to the reduction of off task behaviors. Teachers report they have more time to teach once the students understand the behaviors expected of them in class. Teachers use the same method they use to teach academics to provide instruction for behavior.

The pillars or expectations become the values embraced by the school. They transform school culture and climate by establishing common language and creating a culture of welcome. At **Mary Lyon Elementary** a girl scout group livened up the “ball wall” by painting the expectations. These are a helpful reminder to students during recess and allows an opportunity for teachers to pre-teach or re-teach the playground expectations.



LARCHMONT CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

	BE SAFE	BE RESPECTFUL	BE RESPONSIBLE	BE SUCCESSFUL
C A F E T E R I A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk in a single line Hands to self Two hands to carry tray Sit with feet under table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voice level 1 Say please & thank you Chew with mouth closed Raise hand to move about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in line order Clean up area Eat own food Sit in assigned seats Stay seated until teacher arrives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do your best!

TWCI teams, with input from colleagues and students, create expected behavior matrices for each setting in the building. Each of these is also taught frequently using lesson plans or “cool tools.” This is an example of an expectation matrix for cafeteria behavior at **Larchmont Elementary School**. Students are taught how to be “safe”, “respectful”, “responsible” and “successful” when they eat breakfast and lunch each day. To help support students, these lessons are re-taught before and after breaks from school.

CLASSROOM TEACHER

GRADE

NAME



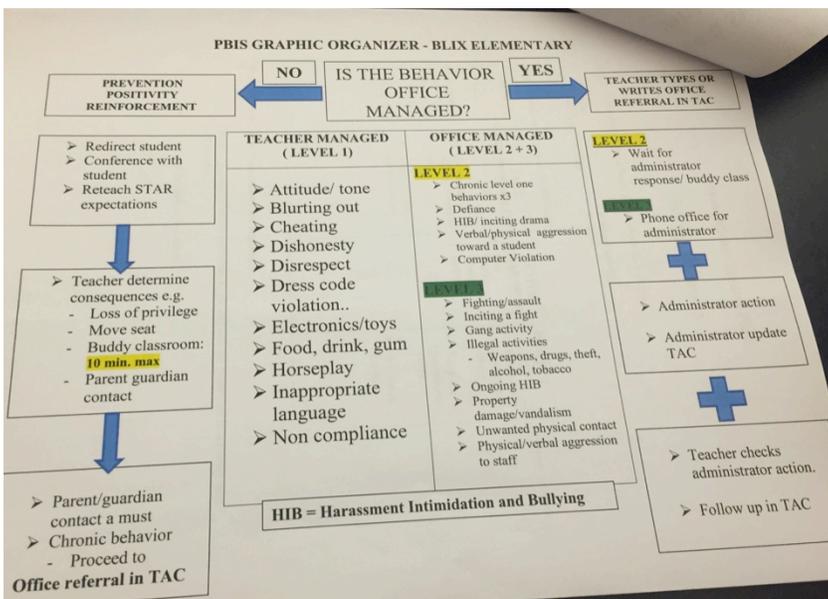
LARCHMONT LIONS
“Paws” itive Ticket

RESPONSIBLE ~ RESPECTFUL ~ SAFE

DATE _____ NAME _____

GIVEN BY _____

When students are caught doing the expected behavior a teacher pairs a ticket with behavior specific praise. Tickets are handled in a variety of ways at schools. Each school created an acknowledgement system so that teachers, staff, students and families know the procedure for the tickets and how they are exchanged for a reinforcing item or activity.



When problem behavior does occur, TWCI teams know how to respond. They create a reaction plan that serves as a quick reminder of what behaviors are managed in the classroom (minor behaviors) and which ones are handled in the office by an administrator (major behaviors). Here, you see an example of a reactive plan from **Blix Elementary**. Each teacher and staff member keeps a copy of this handy to ensure consistent responses to major and minor problem behaviors at school.

Evaluation

A strong evaluation system is critical for building and sustaining effective practices and programs and for tracking the progress and measuring the impact of the TWCI at the district, school, classroom, and individual student levels. The primary question is the extent to which the TWCI initiative is serving to actualize the following whole child benchmarks as stated in Tacoma Public Schools Strategic Plan:

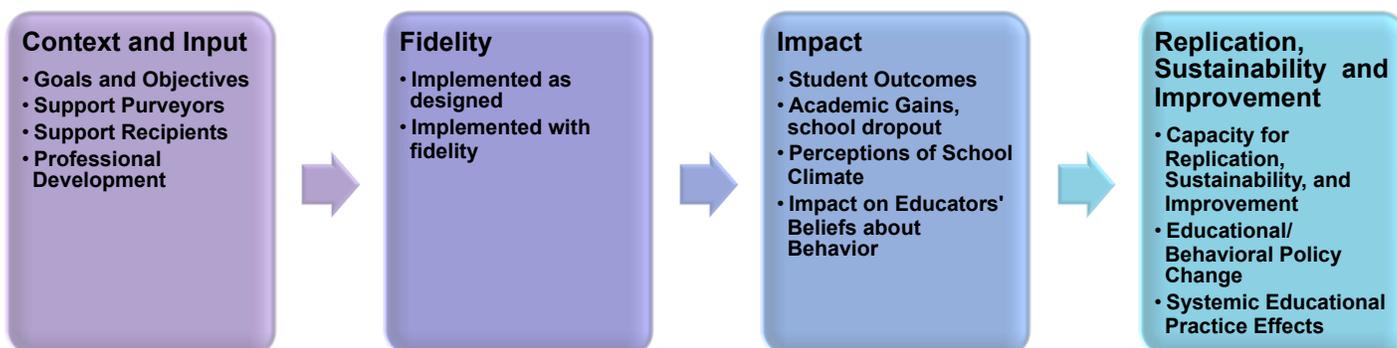
1. **Academic Excellence:** All students will perform at or above grade level, and we will eliminate disparities among all groups of students.
2. **Partnerships:** We will fully engage our parents, community and staff in the education of our children.
3. **Early Learning:** We will focus on early assessment and intervention at the Pre-K through third grade levels to ensure early academic success.
4. **Safety:** All schools will create and maintain safe learning environments that promote excellent academic achievement.

Validated instruments were used to measure how TWCI is meeting the goals at the district, cohort school, classroom, and student levels. Data from participating schools will be reported in this document based on the developmental stage of the initiative. To determine if TWCI is having the intended effect it is important to find out:

1. **How is the system capacity growing to sustain TWCI,**
2. **How are evidence-based practices being implemented with fidelity,**
3. **How data is used for problem solving, and**
4. **What impact is implementation having on the four TPS strategic goals.**

To adequately answer these questions we provide information within the features of context, input, fidelity, impact and replication, sustainability and improvement (see figure below).

Figure 6. TWCI Evaluation Framework



Methods

In order to evaluate the core implementation features (i.e., sustainable capacity, fidelity, and data-based decision making) and measure the impact of the TWCI at district, school, classroom, and student levels, we collected data from multiple sources. Because the three school cohorts enrolled in the TWCI voluntarily, the problem of selection bias was an issue that needed to be addressed before program impact could be explored from a causal perspective. Importantly, we wanted to understand the changes within cohorts and gathered detailed information to identify successful practices and areas of improvement, we decided to use descriptive case studies, pre and post mean comparison and for the impact questions we compared the cohort's key academic and behavioral indicators with the means of Tacoma Public Schools or Washington State. Although these analyses afford the capacity to say if a temporal relationship existed, these approaches cannot indicate that TWCI caused a given outcome.

Specifically, **a.** to evaluate the sustainable capacity at district level, we used District Capacity Assessment (DCA. Duda, Ingram-West, Tadesco, Putnam, Buenerostro, Chaparro, & Horner, 2012) to compare the changes from 2012 to 2015. At school level, we invited the TWCI cohort 1 & 2 school leadership teams to fill out the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI. Algozzine, Barrett, Eber, George, Horner, Lewis, Putnam, Swain-Bradway, McIntosh, & Sugai, 2014) and presented the results of tiered 1 support capacity. At the classroom level, we presented several capacity building cases and shared their successful insights. **b.** To measure the fidelity of tier one school wide positive behavior support, implementation coaches observed the cohort 1 and 2 schools at different time points from 2012 to 2014 with School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET. Horner, Lewis-Palmer, Sugai, & Todd, 2005) as the instrument. **c.** To learn how schools were using data for problem solving, we compared the related TFI constructs from 2013 to 2015 for cohort 1 and 2. **d.** Next, to measure the change of goal 1 academic excellence, we gathered and compared academic data and core learning engagement indicators (i.e., unexcused absence, tardy, and office discipline referral) of the middle and high schools in cohort 1 and 2 from 2012-2014.

To see how TWCI impacted goal 2 partnerships with teachers and parents, we compared the cohort 1 schools' climate survey data over the past three years, and invited cohort 1 and 2 teachers to participate a beliefs about behavior survey (Wright & Cook, 2012) before and right after the TWCI training and conducted independent samples t-test to compare the means. In terms of goal 3 early learning, we compared the means of academic data and core learning engagement indicators (i.e., unexcused absence) of the elementary schools in cohort 1 from 2012 to 2015 with TPS and or state means. Last but not least, to track changes for goal 4, school safety, we compared the perceptions of safety (constructs in the school climate survey) among cohort 1 teachers, parents, and students from 2012 to 2015. We also obtained suspension and expulsion data of cohort 1 schools and compared the differences from 2012 to 2015.

Capacity

Question 1: How did the system (district, school and classroom) capacity grow to sustain TWCI?

District Level

The TWCI District Leadership team meets twice a month to plan for systemic support to maintain and sustain the data, systems and practices at the building level. The following individuals are members of the District Leadership Team:

Tacoma Public School District Representatives

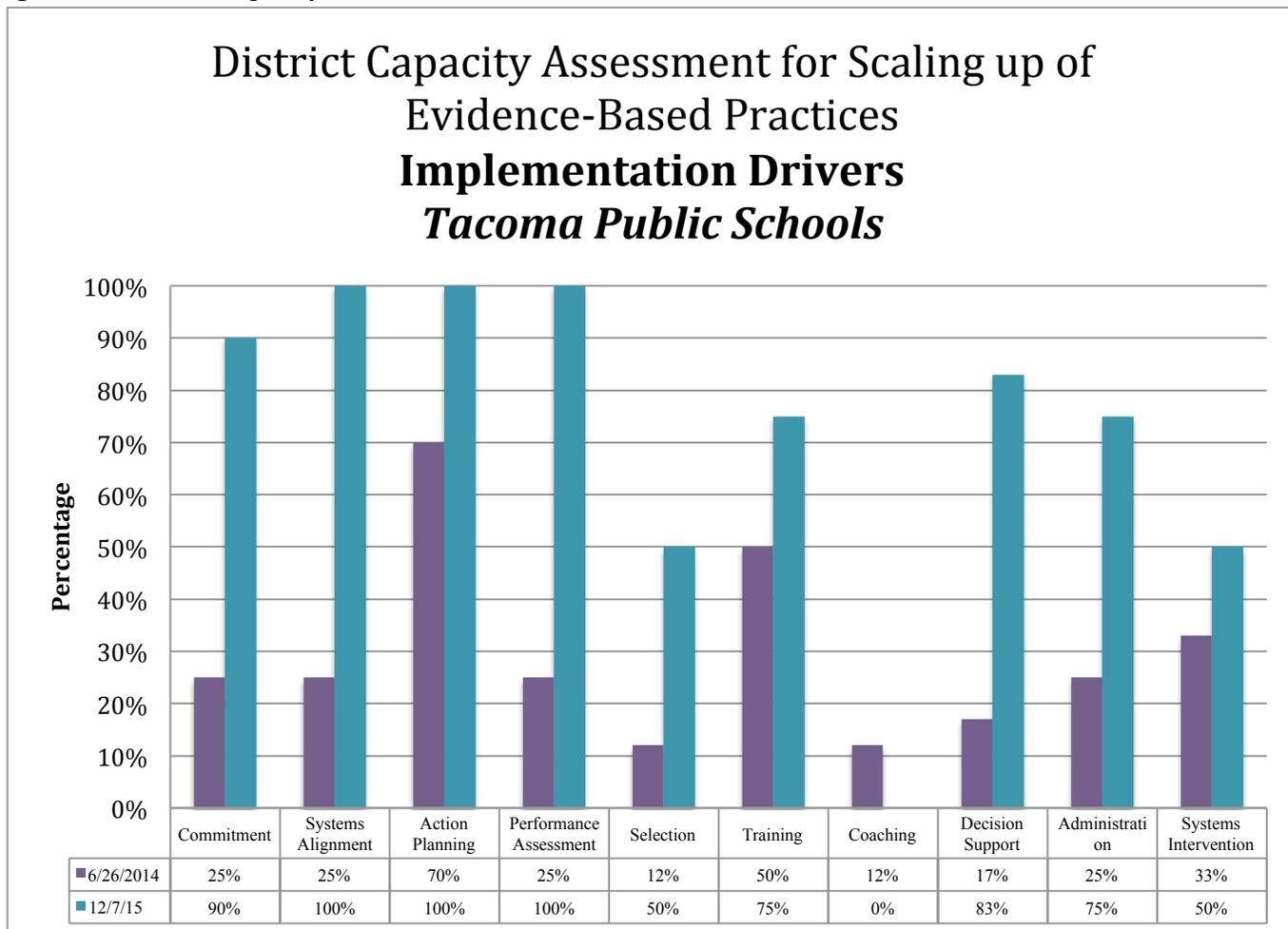
- Dr. Josh Garcia, Deputy Superintendent
- Dr. Jennifer Kubista, Director of Student Life
- Amanda Scott-Thomas, Director, Community Partnership, Academic Equity and Achievement
- Mary Kate Richardson, Grants Manager
- Erika Flattum, IT Business Analyst
- John Page, Director of Career and Technical Education
- Sandra Jacobson, Director, Student Information Services
- Rita Chauduhri, Director, Elementary Education
- Elizabeth Mills, Assistant Director of Student Services
- Trayce Ferguson, Director of Early Learning
- Jonathan Bell, Assistant Director of Student Services
- Brandon Ervin, Guidance and Counseling
- Erin Jones, Director of AVID

Additional External Team Members:

- Dr. Greg Benner, Executive Director, Center for Strong Schools
- Kelcey Schmitz, Director of Implementation and Innovation, Center for Strong Schools
- Rayann Silva, Implementation Coach, Center for Strong Schools
- Kim Zacher, Director of Children's Outpatient Programs, Comprehensive Life Resources
- Kim Dodds, City of Tacoma

The *District Capacity Assessment (DCA)* is a tool that is used to measure effective implementation and guide the work at the district level. Guided by the *District Capacity Assessment Action Plan*, this team works together to determine what needs to be done, how the work will be done and what contexts are needed to support outcomes. Criteria for successful implementation at the district level is accomplished by aligning and coordinating all district-wide initiatives, supporting schools through professional development and using data for decision-making.

Figure 7. District Capacity Assessment



Two fidelity measures are used to determine to what extent the Whole Child Initiative is delivered as planned. The following measures are used as part of the assessment of fidelity of the TWCI.

School-wide Evaluation Tool, Version 2.1 (SET; Todd, Lewis-Palmer, Horner, Sugai, Sampson, & Phillips, 2012). The SET is used to assess the overall school environment of the TWCI cohort schools. The SET consists of 28 items organized into seven areas that represent key features of the primary level of school-wide positive behavioral supports (SWPBS).

Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) (TFI; Algozzine, et al, 2014) “The purpose of the SWPBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) is to provide a valid, reliable, and efficient measure of the extent to which school personnel are applying the core features of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports. The Inventory is divided into three sections (Tier I: Universal SWPBIS Features; Tier II: Targeted SWPBIS Features; and, Tier III: Intensive SWPBIS Features) that can be used separately or in combination to assess the extent to which

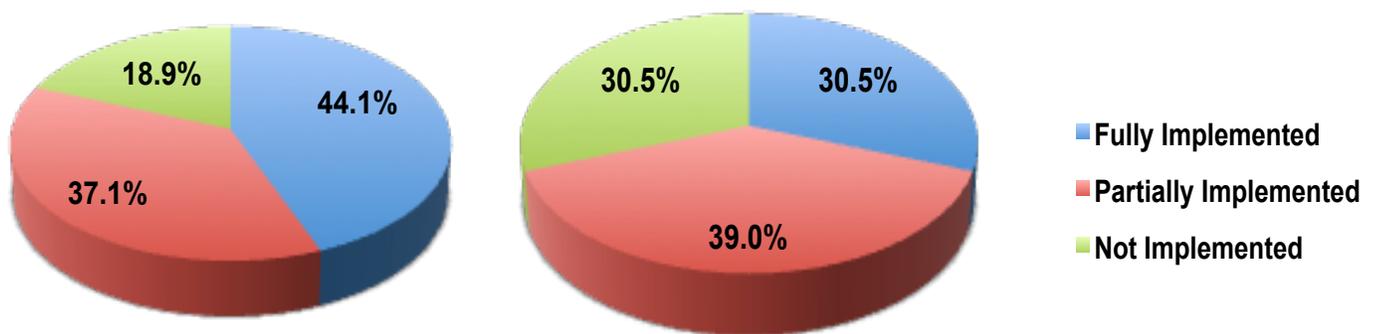
School level.

Results of the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) indicated that **both cohort 1 and cohort 2 schools are growing the capacity to sustain TWCI.**

Defining and teaching behavioral expectations are essential tier1 support indicators. Both cohorts had been working to develop and teaching these expectations.

Both cohort schools were making progress in installing other core components (e.g., establishing discipline policies, a formal system of behavior specific acknowledgment and feedback, and reviewing fidelity data) of tier 1 behavior support to sustain TWCI. Minimal training had been provided for tier 2 and tier 3 at the time of these measures took place so it made sense that both cohorts scored low on items relating to tier 3.

Figure 8. Percentage of Cohort 1 (Left) and Cohort 2 (Right) Implementing Core Components of Tiered Support System



Note. The pie chart is the aggregated mean score of the following constructs in Tiered Fidelity Inventory: team composition, team operating procedures, behavior expectations, teaching expectations, problem behaviors defined, discipline policies, feedback and acknowledgment, faculty involvement, fidelity data, and access to tier1 and tier 2 supports.



Fidelity

Question 2: Did TWCI cohort schools implement evidence-based practices with fidelity?

At the exploration and initial installation stages, the primary objective was to ensure school wide tier 1 support system was established. We adopted an inside-out approach to encourage buy-in and allowed the school teams to build up the system at their own pace. Therefore, the evaluation of the fidelity of implementation at the tier 1 level in TWCI schools was multi-faceted.

An onsite evaluation was completed by external personnel using the *School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET)* (Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, Todd, & Horner, 2005). The first figure below shows the results of cohort 1 SET scores. The second figure shows the results of cohort 1 SET scores. Both cohorts met the 80% fidelity criteria upon one year of implementation.

Figure 9. TWCI Cohort 1 Implementation Fidelity (2012 -2014)

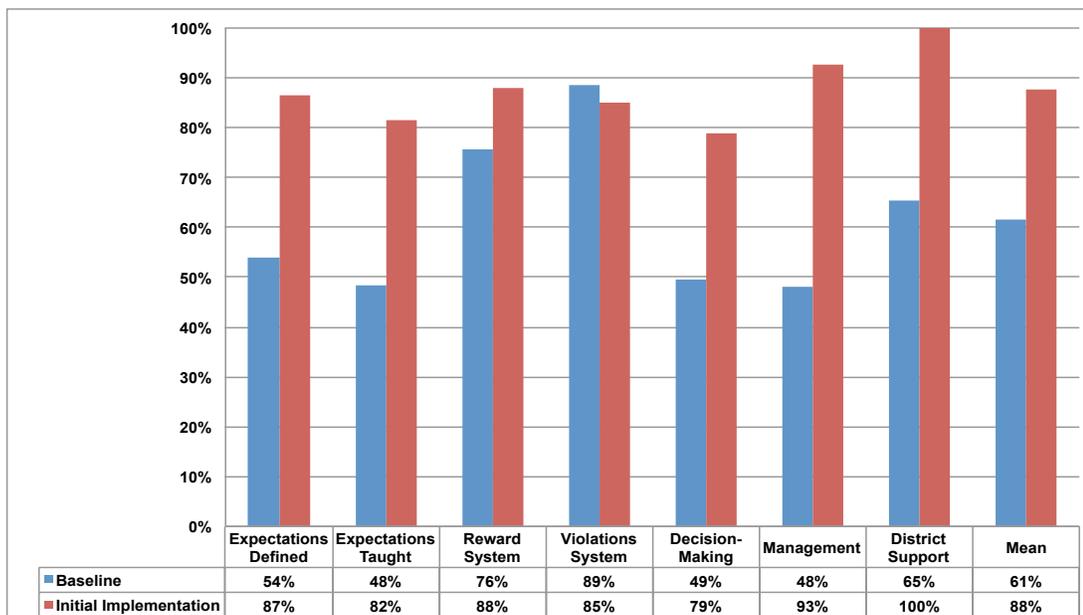
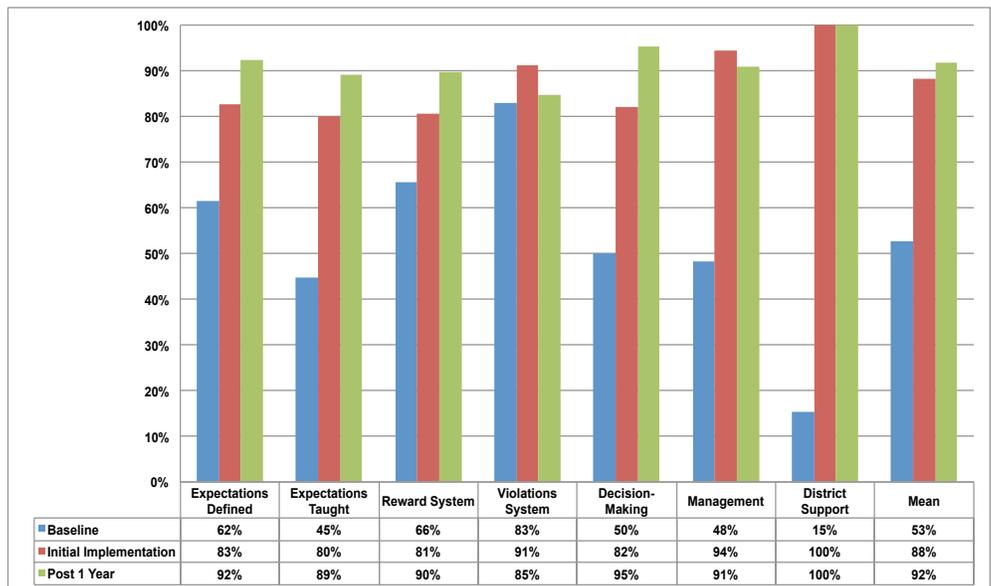


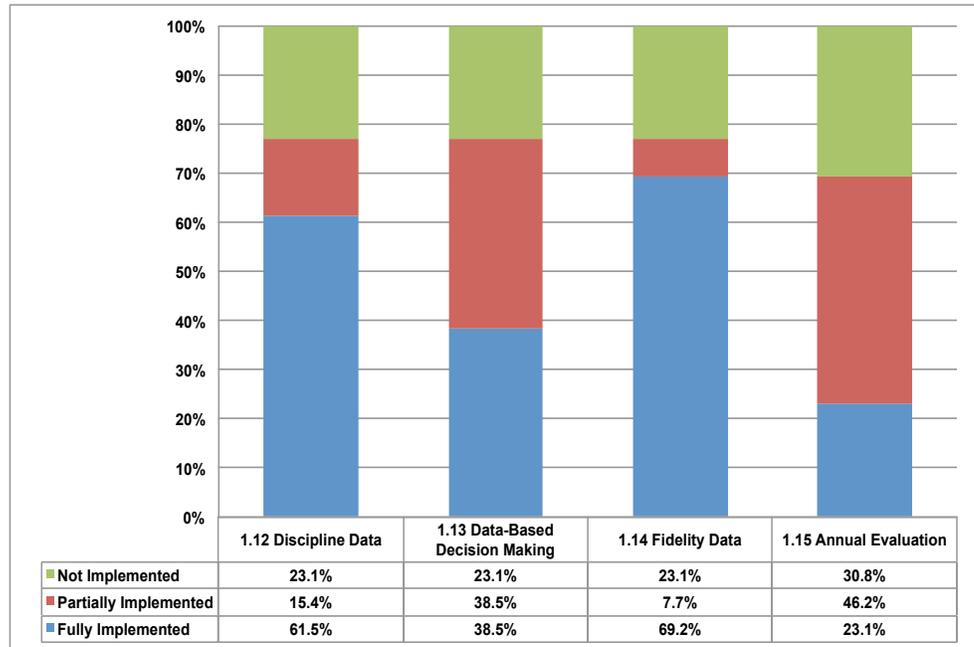
Figure 10. TWCI Cohort 2 Implementation Fidelity (2013 - 2014)

Data-based Decision Making

Question 3: Did TWCI cohort schools use data for decision-making?

Results indicate that **TWCI cohort 1 schools are making progress in adopting data-based decision making and problem solving.**

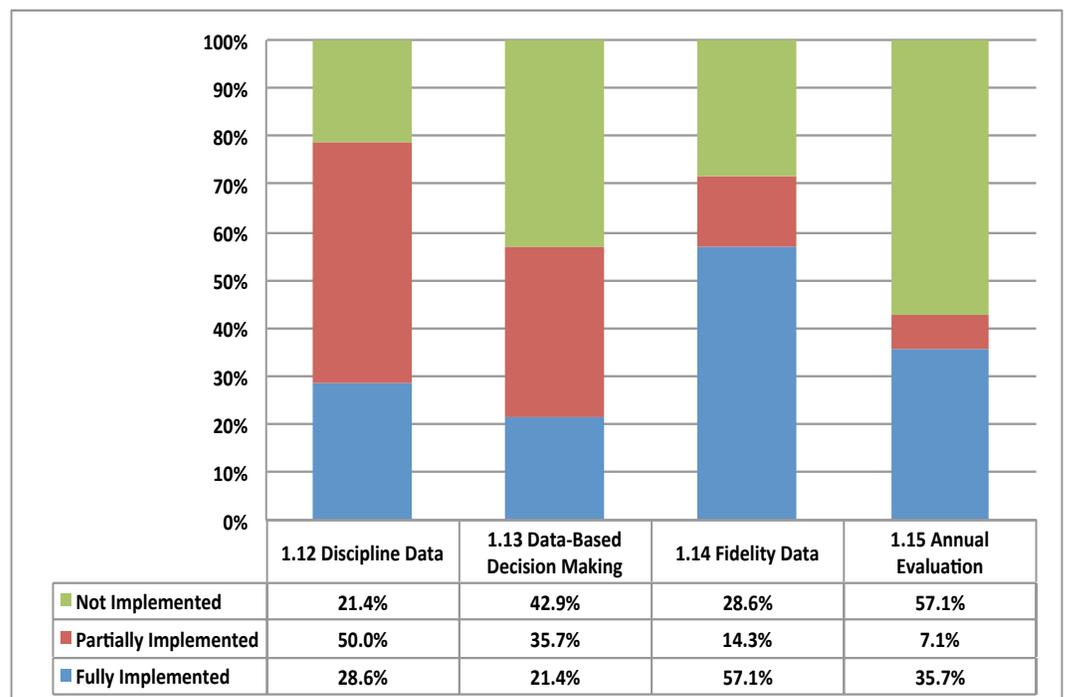
Figure 11. TWCI Cohort 1 Implementation of Data-based Decision Making System (2015)



Cohort 2 schools were also making progress towards a data-based problem solving system.

It was not surprising that only less than half of the schools were able to fully or partially implement this practice given their first year in participating this program.

Figure 12. TWCI Cohort 2 Implementation of Data-based Decision Making System (2015)



Impact

Question 4: What was TWCI cohort schools' progress in meeting the four strategic goals?

Goal #1 Academic excellence. In 2007, a national researcher labeled all Tacoma's comprehensive high schools as "drop-out factories" in an Associated Press story. In 2014, the graduation rates of Tacoma Public Schools (5-year cohort) hit a historical record of 77.4%, which increased 23% compared to 2011-2012. Meanwhile, the 4-year cohort's graduate rate also reached 78.3%, which is 16.6% higher than 2011-2012 school year (61.7%).

Importantly, **improvement was seen at every high school and in every ethnic group, with the biggest increase (28%) among multi racial students.** Hispanic and black students improved their graduation rate to 67.3% and 74.7% respectively, which was **9.9% and 7.3% higher compared to 2012-2013 school year.** Native American and Pacific Islander students improved saw their rate grow to 68.2% and 68.6%, which was 10.1% and 15% more than 2012-2013 school year; Asian students also saw an 11.5% increase and hit a record of 86.2%; And the graduation rate of white students increased to 82.2%, with 6.4% better than 2012-2013 school year (75.8%). Figure 16 indicated that the drop out rate decreased across ethnicity groups.

Figure 13. Adjusted 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (Class of 2011-2014)

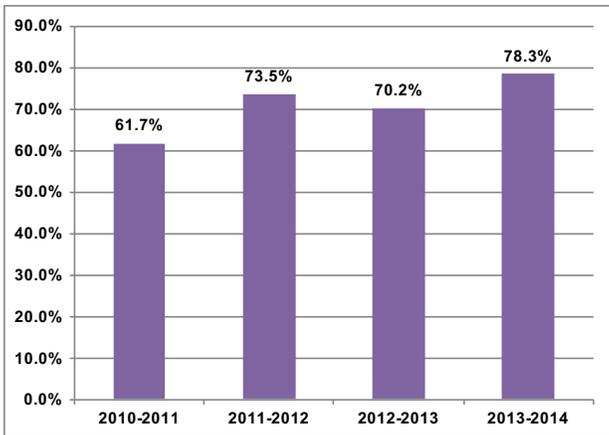


Figure 14. Adjusted 5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (Class of 2011-2014)

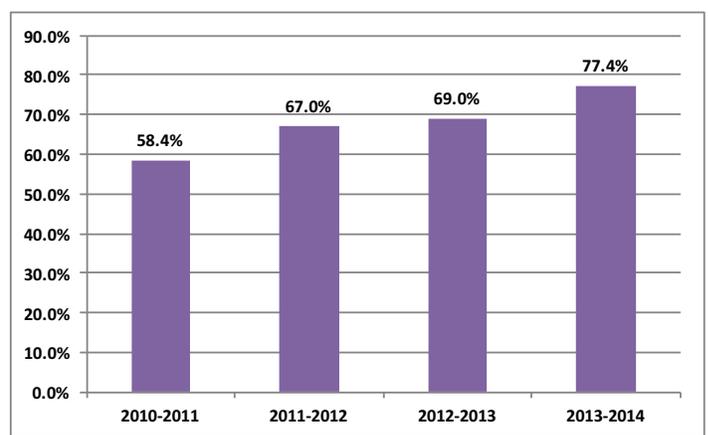


Figure 15. TPS Student Graduate Rate Increase Across Ethnicity (Class of 2013 – 2014)

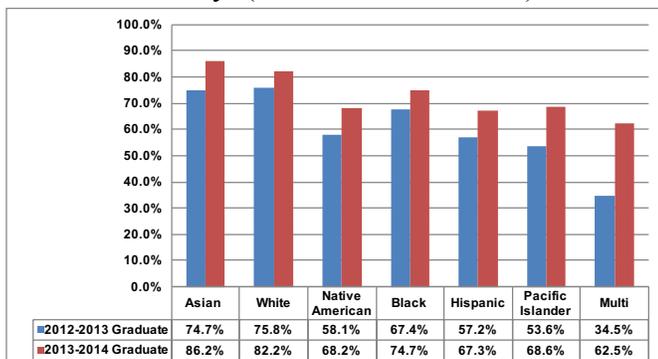
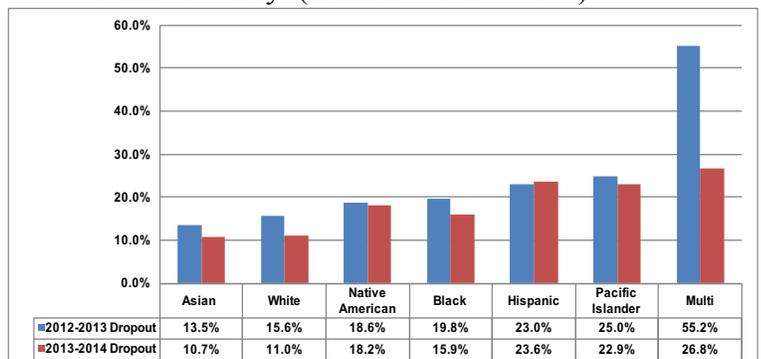


Figure 16. TPS Student Dropout Rate Decrease Across Ethnicity (Class of 2013 – 2014)



In the middle and high schools in TWCI cohort 1 and 2, we observed a **significant decrease in the unexcused absence rate while the passing rate in the four core academic subjects increased right after TWCI was introduced** (i.e., a temporal relationship). Take Mt. Tahoma High School for example, the unexcused absence count dropped from 7295 in 2012-2013 school year to 4081 in 2013-2014 school year, which was **44.1% less** than the past year. Meanwhile, the improvement in reading, math, writing and science were also very impressive. Specifically, the passing rate of reading jumped from 797 to 877. Writing increased from 805 to 898. For math, the passing rate was 586 in 2012-2013 and it improved to 634 in 2013-2014.

Only 404 students passed the state test in 2012-2013 but last year (2013-2014), the number increased by **50.5%** to 608! Below is a sampling of the positive learning and academic outcomes at the secondary level.

Mt. Tahoma High School



Year	Student	Engagement			Academic			
		Absences	Tardy	ODR	Reading	Math	Writing	Science
2011-2012	1587	NA	NA	NA	807	658	835	327
2012-2013	1610	7295	NA	NA	797	586	805	404
2013-2014	1618	4081	NA	172	877	634	898	608

Truman Middle School

Year	Student	Engagement			Academic			
		Absences	Tardy	ODR	Reading	Math	Writing	Science
2011-2012	838	NA	NA	NA	599	475	482	330
2012-2013	842	4436	7412	1702	640	528	499	399
2013-2014	867	2574	5476	1190	700	614	535	463



Jason Lee Middle School



Year	Student	Engagement			Academic			
		Absences	Tardy	ODR	Reading	Math	Writing	Science
2011-2012	578	NA	NA	126	320	266	256	154
2012-2013	613	9219	9968	194	406	337	293	263
2013-2014	772	7310	9575	399	548	477	361	364

Gray Middle School

Year	Student	Engagement			Academic			
		Absences	Tardy	ODR	Reading	Math	Writing	Science
2011-2012	729	NA	NA	351	445	287	296	166
2012-2013	710	6335	7879	280	490	346	289	244
2013-2014	695	4089	8424	2085	486	371	291	250



“I have been a Guidance Counselor for 15 years now and the nature of my work often puts me in contact with children and families in crisis. I frequently hear things from individuals that are deeply unsettling and these "shadows of humanity" experiences can take the wind out of my sails a bit from time to time, but I must say I feel professionally reborn in this Tacoma Whole Child Initiative work. I feel happier on the job since we started working with UWT. I love how my colleagues and I are learning to use data to put better practices and systems in place, so we improve outcomes for kids.” – Guidance Counselor, Tacoma Public Schools

Goal #2 Partnerships. Teachers' beliefs about behavior significantly changed in a more positive way due to TWCI training, as indicated in Figure 17, the mean scores increased by 18 points for cohort 1 and 20 points for cohort 2 teachers.

Teacher beliefs changed in the following areas:

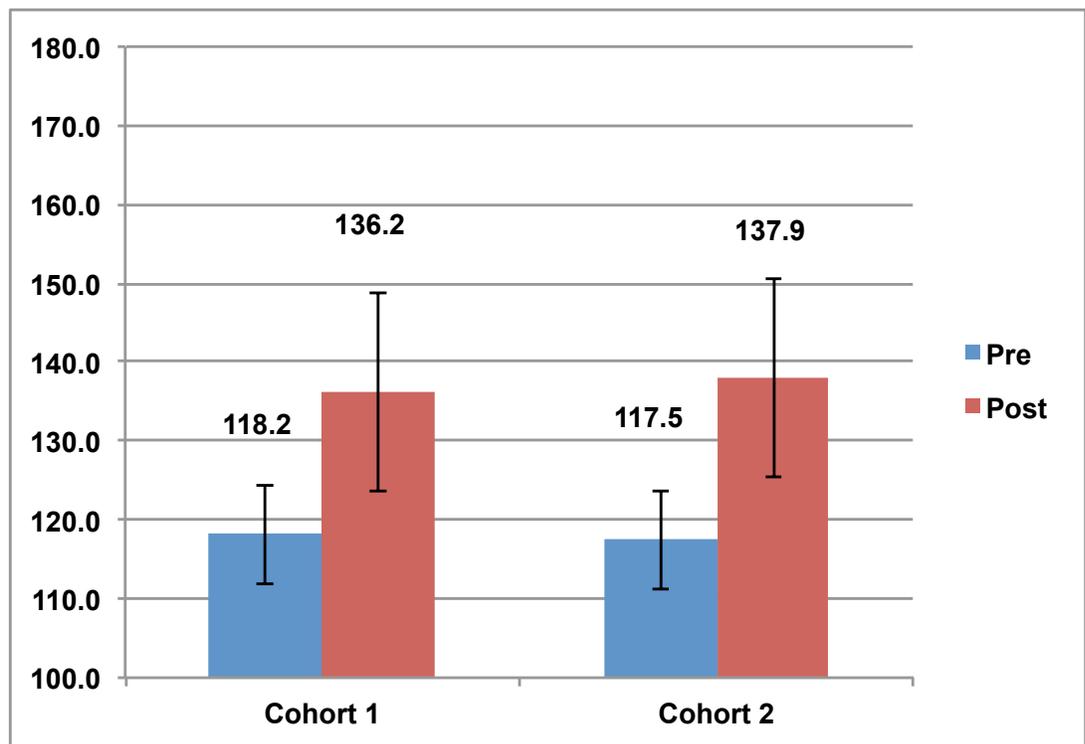
First, more teachers perceived their working relationships with students in a more positive way.

Second, teachers improved their knowledge about

School Wide Tiered Support and third (and this is important), **more teachers took up ownership of the instructional approach to behavior and perceived teaching positive learning behavior as part of their responsibility.**



Figure 17.
Cohort 1 and 2
Teachers' Beliefs
about Behavior
Changed
Significantly

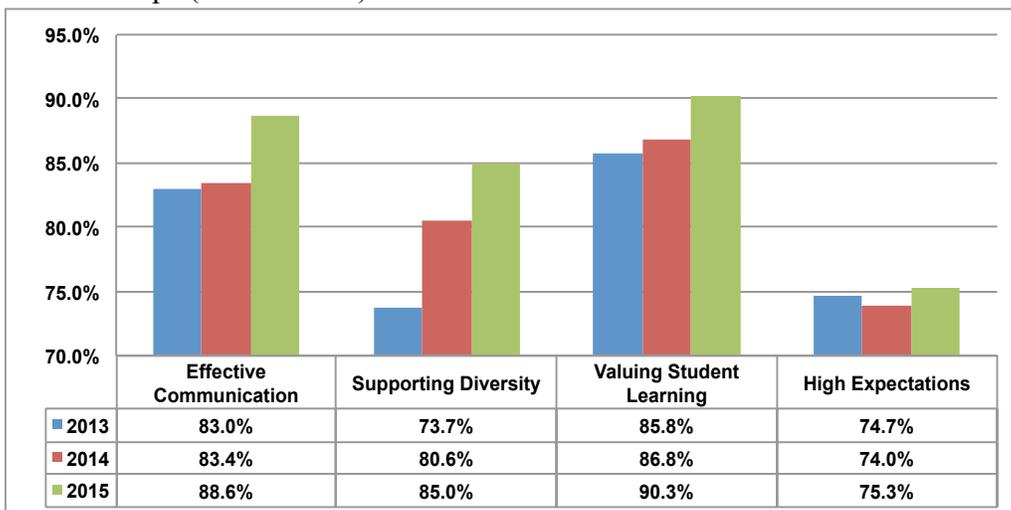


Beliefs and Innovations Staff Survey (BISS): This survey was designed to understand teacher's beliefs about behavior and discipline in relation to the adoption of PBIS supports in the school. This online survey is comprised of basic demographic questions and two validated questionnaires designed to assess: 1) Teacher and school staff attitudes about the causes of student behavior; and 2) Teacher and school staff concerns about new practice innovations. The survey consists of 35 statements to which teachers and staff indicate the extent of their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale.

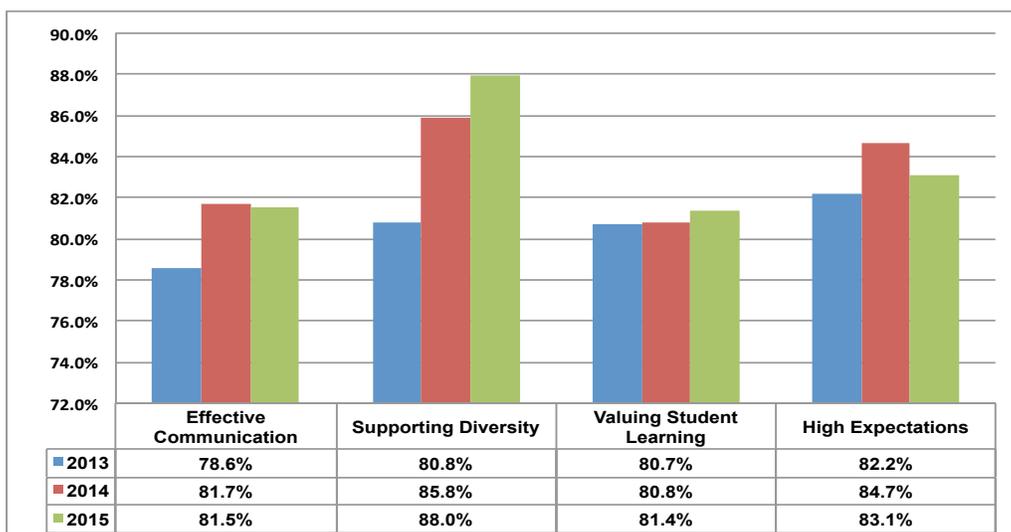
In addition to enhancing the partnership with teachers, we also wanted to know whether TWCI improved students', parents' and teachers' perceptions about school climate and parent-school partnerships. Positive climates are more conducive to learning. Overall, we observed **positive changes from students, parents, and teachers across the partnership features**.

Figure 18. Parents, Teachers', and Students' Perception about School Partnerships (2013 – 2015)

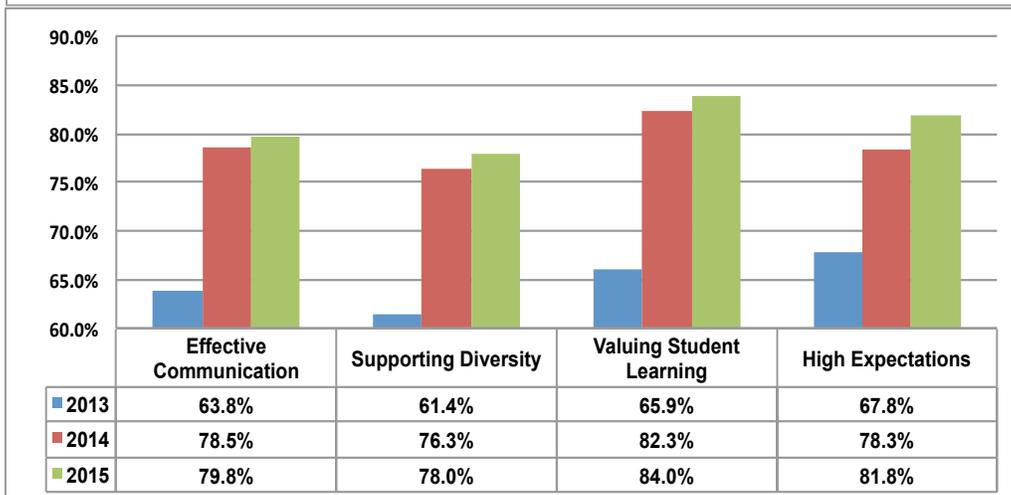
Parents



Teachers



Students





The Washington State Association selected cohort 1 schools from the Tacoma Whole Child Initiative as the 2015 Safe School Award winners for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).



Washington Governor Jay Inslee visited the University of Washington Tacoma campus on January 23, 2015 for a roundtable discussion entitled **“Collective Impact: Working Together for Strong Schools, Student Success and Great Communities.”** The governor convened a group of South Sound schools, civic and community organizations to explore how the community is coming together to ensure that every child is engaged, successful, resilient and ready for life. The focus of the discussion was the Tacoma Whole Child Initiative, a collaborative project of Tacoma Public Schools and UW Tacoma’s Center for Strong Schools.



Goal #3 Early Learning. Data from cohort 1 illuminated a "closing the achievement gap" story.

We compared the mean passing rate of reading, math and science of cohort 1 fifth grade with TPS and Washington state mean scores. It was clear from the figure below that the achievement gap among TWCI, TPS, and WA was much smaller after TWCI was introduced. Take reading, for example, the mean passing rate was only 58.9% in 2011-12 school year, which is 4.4% less than the mean of TPS (63.4%) and 12% worse than the mean of Washington state schools (71.0%). However, this difference decreased to 0.9% and 3.6% in the 2012-13 school year. And, in the 2013-2014 school year, TWCI cohort 1 schools rate (68.7%) was even higher than the mean of TPS (67.9%), and the difference with the state mean was 3.8%. The achievement gap was closed by **8.3%** compared to two years ago (12%).

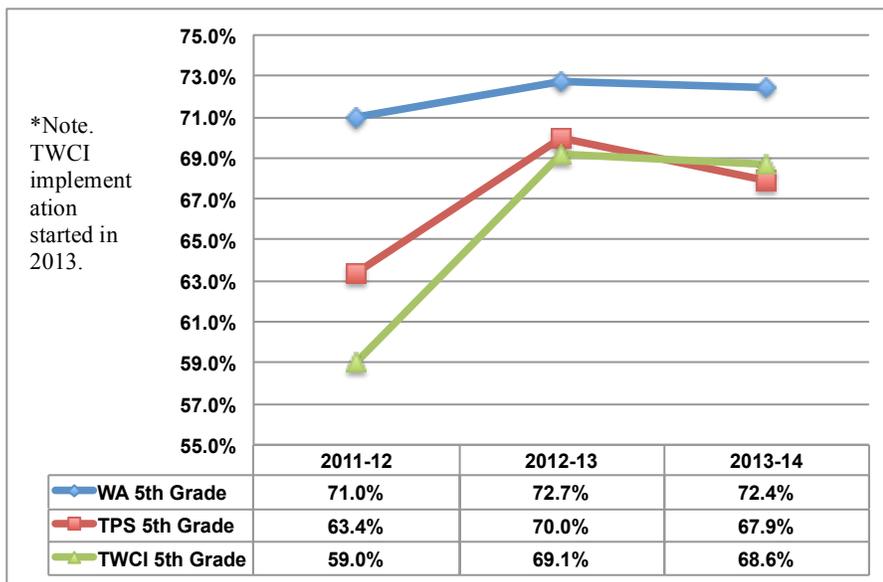


Figure 19. Comparison of The Mean Reading State Assessment Among Washington State, Tacoma Public Schools, And TWCI Cohort 1 Elementary Schools

We also observed a similar pattern in math. The mean passing rate was 56.4% in the 2011-12 school year, which is 1.9% less than the mean of TPS (58.3%) and 7.3% less than the mean of Washington state schools (63.7%). However, TWCI cohort 1 schools rate (58.6%) exceeded TPS (57.8%), and the difference with the state mean was only 4.0%, which increased **3.4%** compared to two years ago (7.3%). In 2013-2014 school year, the gap between TWC cohort 1 schools and TPS was closed (same 57%), and the difference with the state was 6.5%.

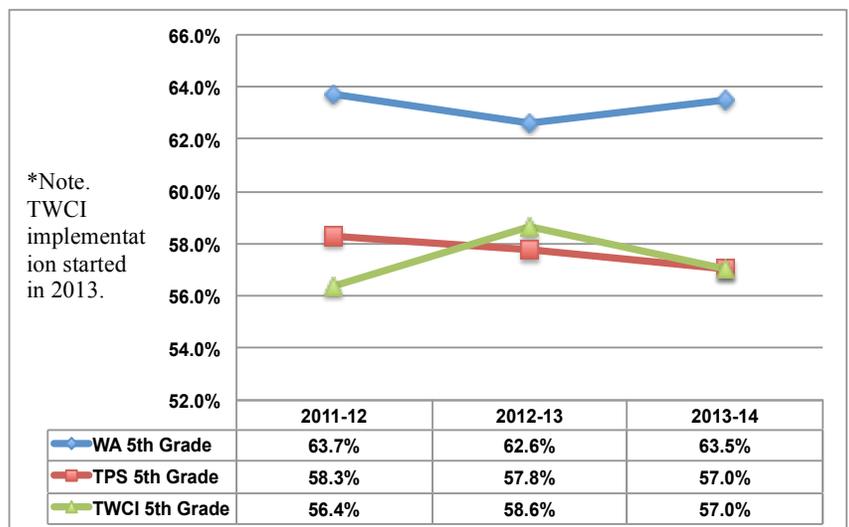
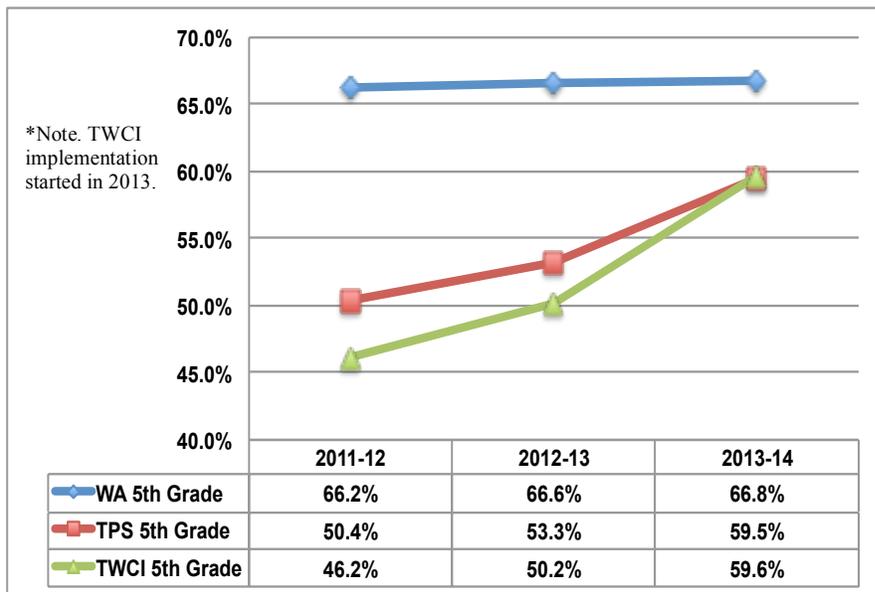


Figure 20. Comparison of The Mean Math State Assessment Among Washington State, Tacoma Public Schools, And TWCI Cohort 1 Elementary Schools (2011 – 2014)

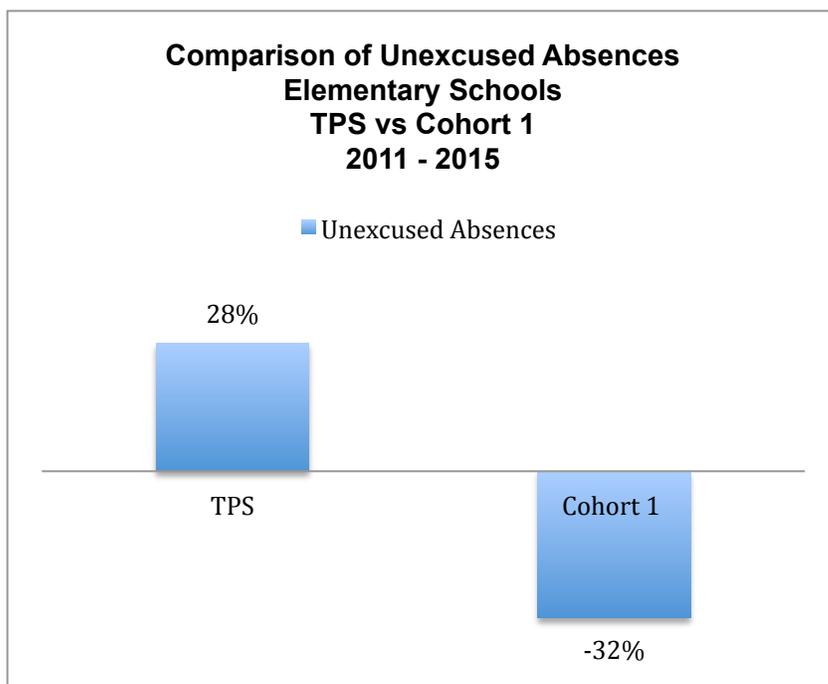
In terms of science, the mean passing rate of TWCI cohort 1 schools (46.2%) was 4.2% and 20% lower than TPS (50.4%) and the state one (66.2%) in 2011-12 school year. In the 2012-2013 school year, we observed that the gap with TPS was narrowed to 3.06% and 10.4%. In 2013-14, the mean passing rate of TWCI cohort 1 schools (59.7%) started to get higher than the TPS average passing rate (59.5%), and the achievement gap between TWCI cohort 1 and the state was narrowed to **7.2%**. This is significant when comparing the **20%** gap in the 2011-12 school year.

Figure 21. Comparison of The Mean Science State Assessment Among Washington State, Tacoma Public Schools, And TWCI Cohort 1 Elementary Schools



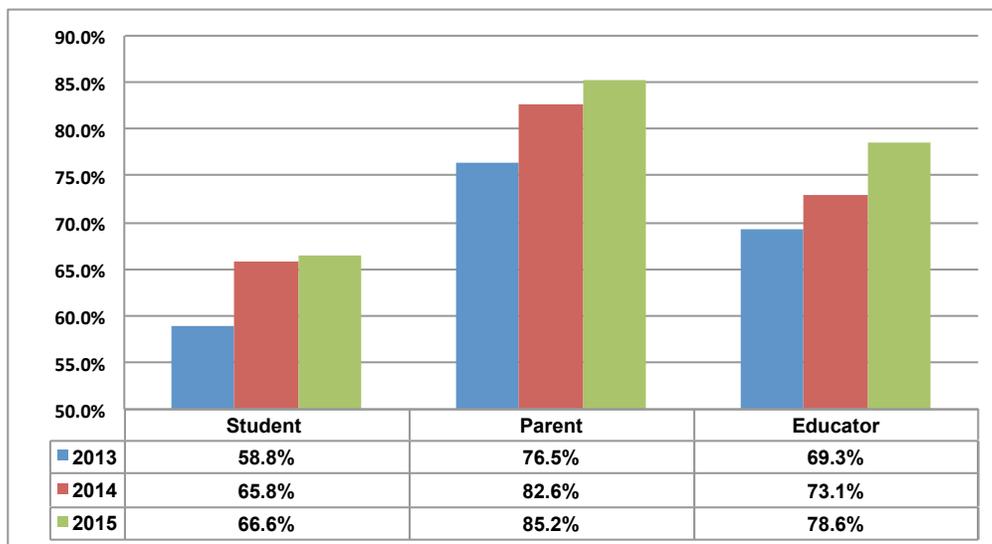
As stated above, TWCI goes beyond focusing on academic improvement to include positive learning and engagement. As demonstrated in Figure 22, while the TPS absence rate continue to increase from 2012 to 2015 **the sum of unexcused absences rate of TWCI cohort 1 decreased 32% since 2011.**

Figure 22. Comparison of The Unexcused Absences Rate Between Tacoma Public Schools And TWCI Cohort 1 Elementary Schools (2011 – 2015)



Goal # 4 Safety. Maintaining safe learning environments that promote excellent academic achievement is one of TWCI’s missions. As demonstrated in Figure 23, **the perceptions about school safety have been consistently improved across students, parents, and educators after TWCI was introduced.** Specifically, 66.6% of the cohort 1 students agreed or strongly agreed that the school environment was safe, which increased by about 8% compared to 2013 (58.9%). Meanwhile, parents also experienced a positive change as over 85% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with the school safety statement, which enlarged by almost 10% compared to 2013 (76.5%). For educators and teachers, the number changed from 69.3% to 78.6%.

Figure 23. Students’, Parents’, and Educators’ Perceptions About School Safety (2013-2015)



In addition to the school safety perception, we also analyzed suspension and expulsion rate of TWCI cohort 1 schools. Figure 24-25 indicated that **the middle school, the high school, and the elementary schools in the cohort all had improved after TWCI was introduced.** For example, the percentage of Truman Middle School 5th grade students with challenging behavior that result in suspension or expulsion was increasing from 29.1% in 2011 to 31.8% in 2013, but right after the intervention, it dropped by over 10% to 21.3% in 2014 and then continued to decrease to 17.8% in 2015. The 8th grades also had a similar trend in that it was increasing from 31.3% in 2011 to 36.7% in 2012. But then it dropped to 31.2% in 2013, 25.3% in 2014, and 23.7% in 2015.

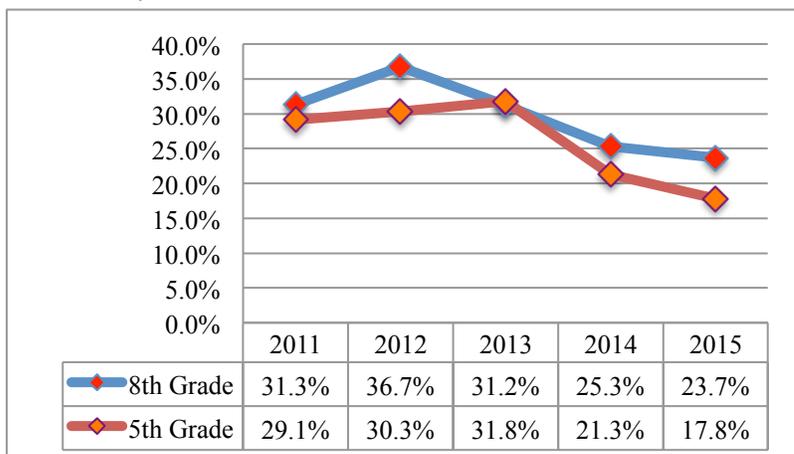


Figure 24. Percentage of students with office referrals for problem behavior at Truman Middle School that resulted in suspension or expulsion (2011 – 2015)

The overall suspension or expulsion rate of Mt Tahoma High School also decreased: the 9th grades dropped by 11.9% from 27.8% in 2011 to 15.9% in 2015 and the 12 grades went from 11.8% in 2011 to 11.2% in 2015.

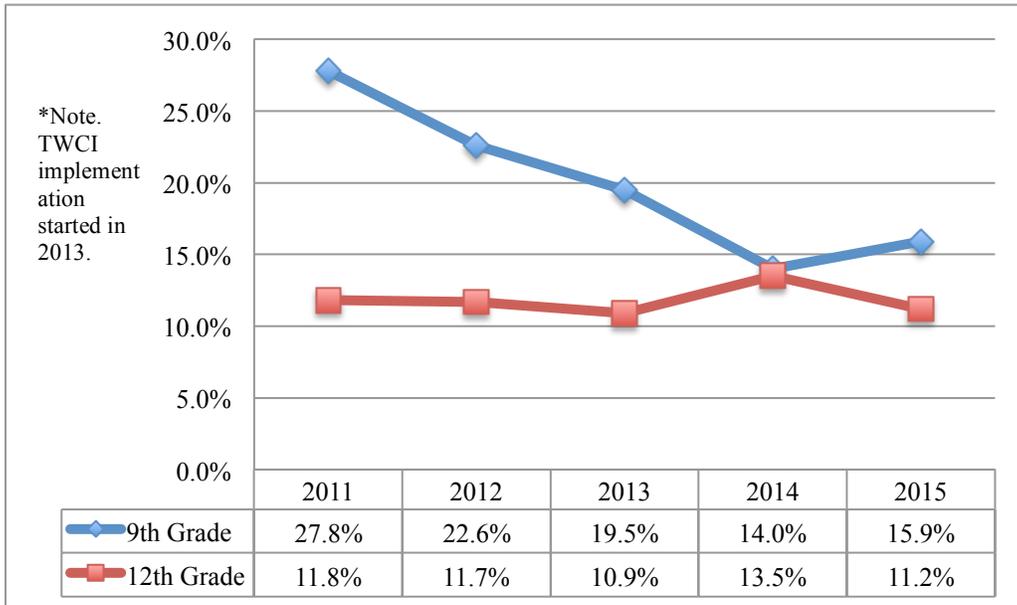
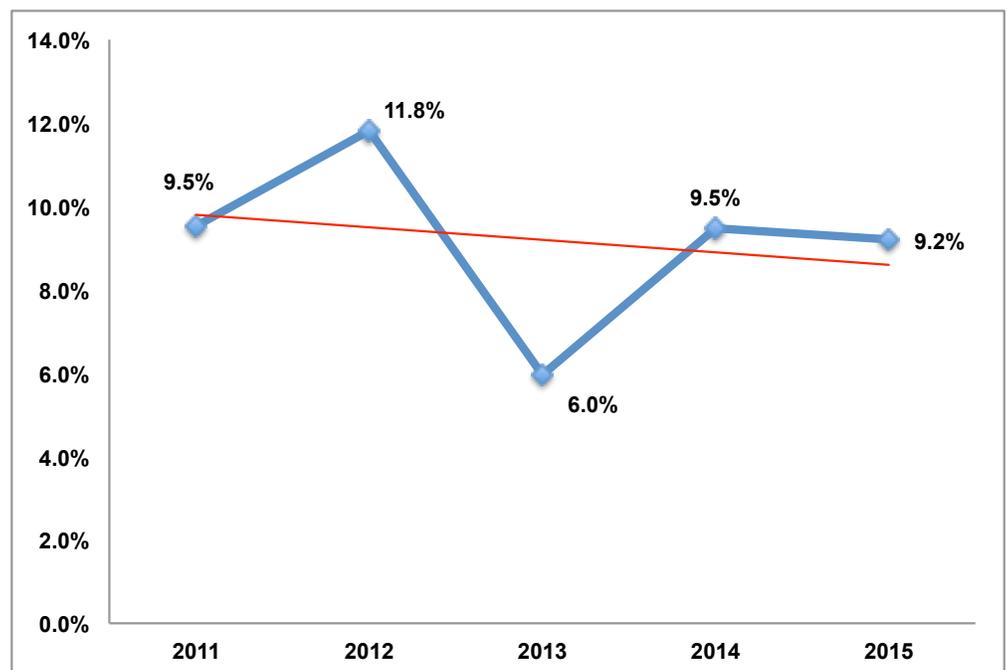


Figure 25. Percentage of Mt. Tahoma High School students with challenging behavior that result in suspension or expulsion.

TWCI cohort 1 elementary school students with challenging behavior that resulted in suspension or expulsion, increased from 9.6% in 2011 to 11.8% in 2012, and then it dropped to 5.96% right after TWCI was in place in 2013. The number did go up to 9.5% in 2014 and 9.2% in 2015. Given the diversity and different implementation stage of the elementary schools, more data is needed to track the long-term outcome as we move to tier 2 and 3 behavior support.

Figure 26. Percentage of TWCI Cohort 1 Elementary School Students with Challenging Behavior That Result in Suspension or Expulsion.



Summary

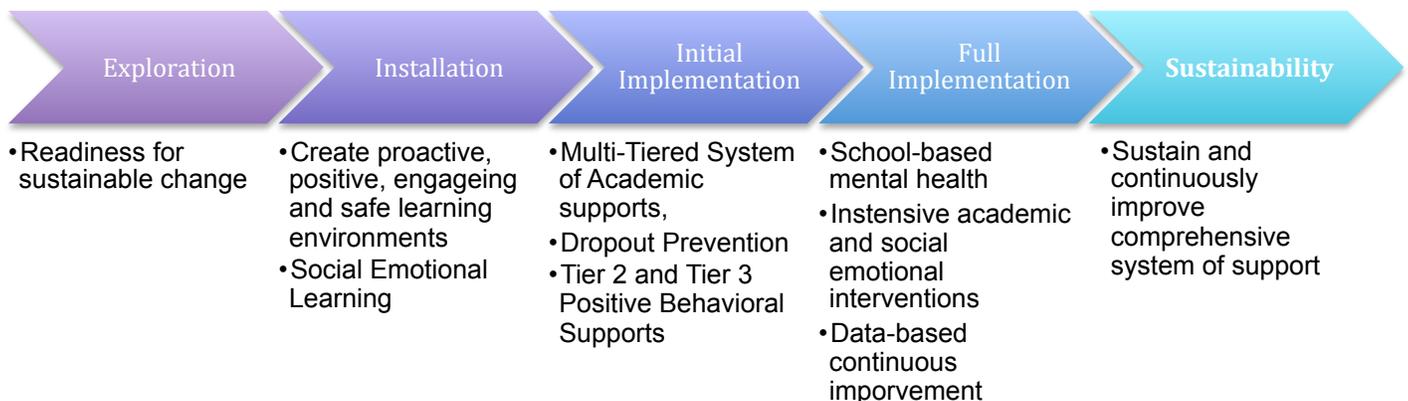
Replication, Sustainability, and Improvement

In terms of improving capacity for the district to replicate, sustain, and improve practices that enhance social and academic outcomes for students, TWCI is helping the district with one consistent vision to coordinate all initiatives around. In addition to adding more schools each year, TWCI, through professional development and technical assistance is increasing each building's fidelity of implementation to improve student outcomes. TPS has a 10-year commitment to embed a whole child approach in the every day routines of each building and at the district level. This includes ensuring that schools show more than just good test scores. Through the four whole child goals, TPS emphasizes "constructive changes" to move schools forward, not respond in a punitive manner. Data for each goal can be found on Tacoma's website. As a result of taking a whole child approach, changes were made to educational/behavioral policies, programs and practices at TPS. All initiatives are being aligned to the whole child effort. These changes are happening in a relentless fashion to keep removing barriers for students and staff at TPS and allowing best practices to be implemented within enabling contexts.

Moving Forward

The anticipated next steps include bringing the rest of the schools in the district on board and to continuing to progress through the implementation schedule (see below). Implementation will continue to be measured using most effective tools available to TPS and researchers at UWT. To truly have long lasting impacts on students in our community and building upon the "partnership" goal this effort will be reaching out to other areas in Tacoma that serve district students.

Figure 27. TWCI Implementation Schedule



Dissemination: Presentations, News Stories, and Social Media



State and National Conference Presentations:

2015

Midwest Symposium on Leadership in Behavior Disorders, **Kansas City, MO**
Association for Positive Behavior Support, **Boston, MA**
OSPI School Social Workers Conference, **Olympia, WA**
Washington's Educator Conference, **Bellevue, WA**
NorthWest PBIS Network Fall Conference, **Seattle, WA**
Teacher Educator for Children with Behavior Disorders (Invited), **Tempe, AZ**
Pave the Way, **Tacoma, WA**

2014

Midwest Symposium on Leadership in Behavior Disorders, **Kansas City, MO**
National PBIS Leadership Forum, **Chicago, IL**
NorthWest PBIS Network Fall Conference, **Seattle, WA**
Teacher Educator for Children with Behavior Disorders (Invited), **Tempe, AZ**

A Sample of News Stories

Whole Child Initiative helps stem discipline problems, keeps students in school

<http://www.tacomaschools.org/Pages/default.aspx>

Tacoma's Deputy Chief helps pioneer expansive Measures of School Success

<http://leaders.edweek.org/profile/josh-garcia-whole-child-accountability-tacoma-washington/>

Districts of Distinction: Tacoma Public Schools

<http://www.districtadministration.com/dod/awards/measuring-whole-child>

Focusing on the Whole Child

<http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/news/article/focusing-whole-child>

Social Media

We have a robust presence online through social media. This presence helps to share resources, highlight the work of TWCI and connect and network with TWCI schools, educators and families.

- 900+ Followers on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/UWStrongSchools>
- 750 Followers on Twitter <https://twitter.com/UWStrongSchool>
- 500+ Connections on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/uwstrongschools>





“It takes a village to raise a child, but it takes a whole child to build a sustainable schools and community. We are beginning to see these transformational approaches in supporting the development of the whole child effective every student, every day in Tacoma Public Schools.” – Dr. Jennifer Kubista, Director of Student Services



Our Mission

Sustainable change in schools and communities so every child is a whole child – engaged, successful, resilient, and ready for life.



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