Leveraging Analytics And Assessment To Close Achievement Gaps
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Leveraging Analytics and Assessment to Close Achievement Gaps

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Related Series:
Beyond Bias: Countering Stereotypes in School
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RACE AND DISCIPLINE AT A RACIALLY MIXED HIGH SCHOOL: INTERRUPTING ORGANIZATIONAL Routines

John B. Diamond
Hoefs-Bascom Professor of Education
University of Wisconsin – Madison
April 4, 2016
What is “racial” about racial “achievement” gaps?

How do these gaps persist in a liberal, suburban school district where nearly everyone espouses the best intentions?

For Today: How do racial inequalities become embedded in organizational routines?
Racial disparities in school discipline, including suspension and expulsion, have been documented for decades.

Instead of suspension and expulsion, we focus on formal and informal rules and daily practices, that regulate movement through school buildings, allowable dress, etc.

Large differences in teachers’ referral rates for minor student offenses (Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba et al. 2002). These daily disciplinary moments communicate to all who is and is not a full member of the school community (Vavrus & Cole 2002).
THE RESEARCH

Case Study of “Riverview”
A Racially Diverse, Affluent Suburban High School
171 interviews with students, teachers, administrators, staff, and parents

Survey data from 25,000 7-11 grade students across 15 suburban school districts including Riverview

Community Social, Historical, and Economic Data
# Riverview High School Demographics

## Riverview, 2003 – 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,497</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>1,288</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3,118</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Limited English Proficient (of any race) | 50 | 1.6% | n/a | n/a |
| Low-income (of any race)                | 976 | 31.3% | n/a | n/a |
Organizational Routines

“an organizational routine is a repetitive, recognizable pattern of interdependent actions, involving multiple actors” (Feldman and Pentland 2003: 96).

Two Aspects of Organizational Routines
- Ostensive (the “ideal” of the routine)
- Performative (the routine in practice)
EXAMPLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL ROUTINES: HIRING PROCESS
HIRING PROCESS AS AN ORGANIZATIONAL ROUTINE: OSTENSIVE ASPECT

Attract Applicants
Screen Applicants
Hire Most Qualified Applicant(s)
Identical resumes sent to employers in Boston and Chicago
Applicants with “white sounding” names got 50% more callbacks
For white applicants with resumes with slightly better credentials got 27% more callbacks; for “black sounding” applicants no significant difference.

*Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination. AM Econ Rev.
http://www.nber.org/digest/sep03/w9873.html
RACE, STATUS, AND HIRING

Whites with criminal records were more likely to get callbacks and job offers than Blacks and Latinos with clean records.

In 2009 35% of Riverview students were Black but they represented 70 percent of those suspended in-school and more than 60 percent of those suspended out-of-school.
DISCIPLINE ROUTINE: THE OSTENSIVE ASPECT

Student Breaks a School Rule

Student Goes Though Discipline Process

Student Receives Punishment, Suspension, or Expulsion
“Conformity to rules is treated by school adults as the essential prior condition for any classroom learning to take place. …rules bear the weight of moral authority… [and] are spoken about as inherently neutral, impartially exercised, and impervious to individual feelings and personal responses” (Ferguson, 2001).
THE DISCIPLINE ROUTINE: THE OSTENSIVE ASPECT

The [discipline handbook]... This is our guide. It tells us the discipline rules. It tells us the consequences ... We don’t care if you’re white, black, Hispanic, Russian, Asian, Hebrew, Chinese. We’re going to follow that book. And that’s just where we are. I come into this building. When I come into this building, I don’t see colors, I see people. ... There are no favors.

(Mr. James, African American Riverview Security Guard)
I don’t think the have-nots are always treated the same. I think if your parents can afford lawyers and can talk very loudly, and are very educated … you might stand a great chance of getting away with something … The have-nots, they’re generally … seen as rude, disrespectful, impolite….And they don’t generally get away with it because for the most part, the have-nots’ parents are not going to come over here and deal with it.

(Mr. James, African American Riverview Security Guard)
THE DISCIPLINE ROUTINE: THE PERFORMATIVE ASPECT

- Students’ Social Status (Race/class) and Staff Responses Shape Selection
- Family Resources & Institutional Responses Shape Processing
- Differential Selection & Processing Lead to Biased Outcomes
Students who … leave the room during the period must get a valid pass from the teacher or supervisor…. Students without a valid pass … face school consequences.”
Differential Selection: The Hallway Pass

I think security guards, just like, I think they like point out African Americans a lot more than like White. ... Like I’ll walk down the hall without a pass, and they’ll just let you go. But then they’ll find someone else and say, ‘You have to have a Saturday detention.’ I think it’s really uncalled for that they don’t stop everyone.”

Maria (Riverview White sophomore)
Brief and revealing clothing are not appropriate in school. Examples include tank or halter tops, garments with spaghetti straps or strapless garments; clothing that is “see-through,” cut low, or exposes one’s midriff; or skirts that are shorter than 3-inches above the knee (Riverview Discipline Code)
We had a policy that the girls couldn’t have their belly showing. All you saw walking in the hall [was] girls with their white bellies out. Black girls sent home. They [Black girls] were pissed off. [One black student] said, ‘well, why are you saying something to me. I’m sitting up in a room with 6 white girls with their stomach out and you pick me out of the group.’

(Riverview Teacher)
DIFFERENTIAL PROCESSING IN PRACTICE: THE IMPLICATIONS OF FAMILY RESOURCES (STATUS)
White kids get caught with pot all the time … The school can’t be dealing with these folks’ parents, because their parents are going to start suing the school …. When you get a black kid, and you suspend them for having pot, or you kick them out, what are the parents going to do? They don’t have the money, or they don’t know the resources. … That’s why I think it continuously happens.

Julius (Black Riverview Junior)
I have had parents come in to appeal white students’ disciplinary actions. And rarely will they say, ‘my son didn’t do that or would not do that or my daughter would not.’ Their issue is ‘how do we get it out of the record? Can we not call it that because we don’t want it to impact college admissions.’ … I’d say I hear it twenty times a year.

A student got caught in possession of some marijuana. The parent never said to me, ‘he didn’t have it, he didn’t do it.’ The parent argued that we call it possession and possession means you have it and you are…it’s yours to manipulate and to sell…‘It was never his. He was just looking at it. It was in his hands. So that possession is not real possession.’

(Riverview Administrator)
CONCLUSIONS

Taking race seriously means considering the multiple ways it is implicated in shaping students’ educational experiences.

Examining the performative aspect of organizational routines provides insights into how structural and symbolic inequality becomes embedded and reproduced in school organizations.

The functioning of routines can contribute to the reproduction of inequality but such processes can also be interrupted though redesigning routines.
Start With the Heart

A vision for engaging all stakeholders to improve student achievement in a school with a student population of 50% English Language Learners and 88% receiving free or reduced lunch

Ari Gerzon
Principal
Monaco Elementary School
Commerce City, CO

Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare.
- Japanese proverb
Monaco’s Vision

Monaco Elementary instills a passion for life and learning, inspiring all to achieve their personal best in a positive, empowering, collaborative community.

Monaco’s Mission

To engage, challenge and support every student through meaningful, student-centered instruction and a positive community. We believe that students’ love of learning coupled with a healthy mind, body, and spirit equips them with the skills to thrive in the future.
Background and Context

Commerce City, Colorado
Adams County School District 14
Monaco Elementary

- Mostly English language learners
- Low income
- High mobility
- Low academic achievement
- School lacked of direction, leadership and cohesion

- Students weren’t engaged in content-focused discussion with their teachers or peers.
- 10 principals in 17 years
- Difficult to attract experienced teachers
- Novice teachers need many supports and resources
Background and Context

Commerce City, Colorado
Adams County School District 14
Monaco Elementary

- Distrust throughout the district
- Office of Civil Rights found that former administration violated many rights of Hispanic community

- New administration is implementing values and priorities closely aligned to our community’s needs
- With the new administration came significant change
- Budget cuts greatly impact district and school resources
Decisions Based on Data

Parent sentiment:

- Lack of trust with parents
- Parents feared coming to the school

Response:

- Ongoing communication from the principal in English and Spanish
- Welcoming main office for all parents and visitors
- Follow-through on all issues
Decisions Based on Data

Student behavior:

- Lacked structures and systems for fair, consistent and clear discipline
- No visionary positive behavior systems in place

Academic achievement:

- Implemented system with multiple data points to analyze achievement gaps and disparities in student academic growth
- Diagnostic review team visited school and worked with educators to improve instruction
- Dug deep into growth percentiles and subgroups for differentiation

*It illustrated that we needed to focus on best first instruction for all subgroups and do so much more to genuinely engage our students as active participants in their learning.*
Decisions Based on Data

Academic achievement:
School growth percentiles among different subgroups as measured by Colorado’s state test, TCAP, in 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>% Growth</th>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>% Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Non-minority</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Non-IEP</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Non-ELL</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores showed that the growth gap between subgroups was small, and therefore we needed to focus on delivering best first instruction to all of our learners.

We’re also using STAR and district interim assessments.
Decisions Based on Data

Student behavior:

- Lack of clarity around behavior and engagement
- Many office referrals
- Teacher concerns

- Needed to rethink and establish clear, consistent incentives and consequence structures
- Spent considerable time coming up with 5 guiding character traits and more than a dozen new components to our positive behavior (PBIS) system.
Monaco
“Where Character Counts”

**Personal Best**
Do your best, even when no one is looking. Take pride in your work.

**Grit**
Be courageous. Work persistently to finish what you start.

**Care**
Treat others the way that you want to be treated, with kindness, compassion, and concern.

**Zest**
Approach life and learning with excitement and positive energy.

**Collaboration**
Contribute and communicate with others to reach a common goal.
Monaco
Donde El Carácter Cuenta

**Mejor Esfuerzo**
Haz lo mejor de ti aunque nadie este observando. Siente orgulloso de tu trabajo.

**Ganas**
Se decisivo. Trabaja persistentemente para terminar lo que empiezas.

**Cuidado**
Trata a los demás de la manera que quieras ser tratado, con amabilidad, compassion y cuidado.

**Ánimo**
Enfrenta la vida y el aprendizaje con emoción y energía positive.

**Colaboración**
Contribuye y comunícate con otros para alcanzar una meta en común.
Decisions Based on Data

- Representation from all grade levels
- Distributive leadership
- Designed structure for data-day work
- Highest elementary reading growth in district
- Second highest math growth in district
Additional Strides

Parent Engagement:

• Powerful impact of having bilingual principal
• Family and community partnerships
• All communication between home and school is in English and Spanish
Guacamole with Gerzon

- Growing interest in monthly meetings
- Talk about issues
- Learn more about Monaco
- Give input on timely topics
- Builds relationships between parents, principal and staff
- Sharing data builds confidence
Breakfast of Champions
Congratulations! You've just received a positive office referral.

Monaco Elementary
Positive Office Referral

Student Name: ___________________________ Date: ____________________

Teacher Referring: ___________________________ Grade Level: ____________________

- Personal Best
- Grit
- Care
- Zest
- Collaborate

Reason for Referral:
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

Administrator note: ___________________________
__________________________
Family Events
2 Million Minute Reading Challenge

Monaco in the News! clip
Additional Strides

- Student Goal-Setting
- Leveraged Leadership
- Equity
- Trust
Monaco Elementary School
Commerce City, CO
Why Compare Apples and Oranges?

Students are multi-dimensional:
- Demographics
- Enrollment & schedule
- Special needs
- Native language
- Attendance
- Discipline
- Grades
- Assessments & observations

A single dimension seldom tells the whole story.
Spot Changes in Risk Profiles

Number of Students: 3480
# Student Detail

## Early Warning Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Number</th>
<th>StudentName</th>
<th>SchoolYear</th>
<th>Marking Period</th>
<th>Ann_Abs_#</th>
<th>Ann_Abs_Pct</th>
<th>Term_Abs_#</th>
<th>Term_Abs_Pct</th>
<th>Term_Disc_#</th>
<th>Term_Disc_Pct</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Risk Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25669</td>
<td>Abelson, Jennifer</td>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>Marking Period 1</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>72.88%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.28</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>25569</td>
<td>Abelson, Jennifer</td>
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<td>Marking Period 1</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>72.88%</td>
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<td>2.28</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</table>

## Enrollment Student Details

- **School:** Abelson, Jennifer
- **Year:** 2013
- **Gender:** Female

## Student Schedule 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>ACCOUNTING</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Grades for 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
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Required Reading from *Education Week*:

**Spotlight on the Achievement Gap**
This Spotlight explores progress and setbacks on the achievement gap front and what schools are doing to improve learning results for all children.

**Crucial Conversations About America’s Schools**
This book provides examples of how to reframe conversations on the hot-button but important topics of low-achieving schools, teacher pay for performance, the achievement gap, charter schools, and the dropout problem. 142 pages.