

# It all starts with Beliefs: Unpacking Beliefs Aligning Practices

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Culture Climate Conference Session 4

1-2:45pm

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- Maintain a strong sense of leadership
- Have courageous conversations about implicit bias, beliefs and the impact on student outcomes
- Learn about the Belief Survey and its role and function in MTSS implementation
- Make connections to the work on equity and access
- Connecting the dots between beliefs and practices

# Norms

- Be fully present
- Speak your truth as you know it now
- Remember the 24 hour rule
- Watch your air time: 2B4ME
- Accept & expect non-closure
- Experience discomfort
- Discretion (about our stories, but not our work)
- OUCH! OOPS!
- Gentle reminders



# The Risk for our Children

The risk for our children in school is not a risk associated with their intelligence. Our failures have nothing to do with IQ, nothing to do with poverty, nothing to do with race, nothing to do with language, nothing to do with style, nothing to do with the need to discover new pedagogy, nothing to do with the childrens' families. All of these are red herrings.

We have one and only one problem: Do we truly will to see each and every child in this nation develop to the peak of his or her capacities?

Dr. Asa Hilliard

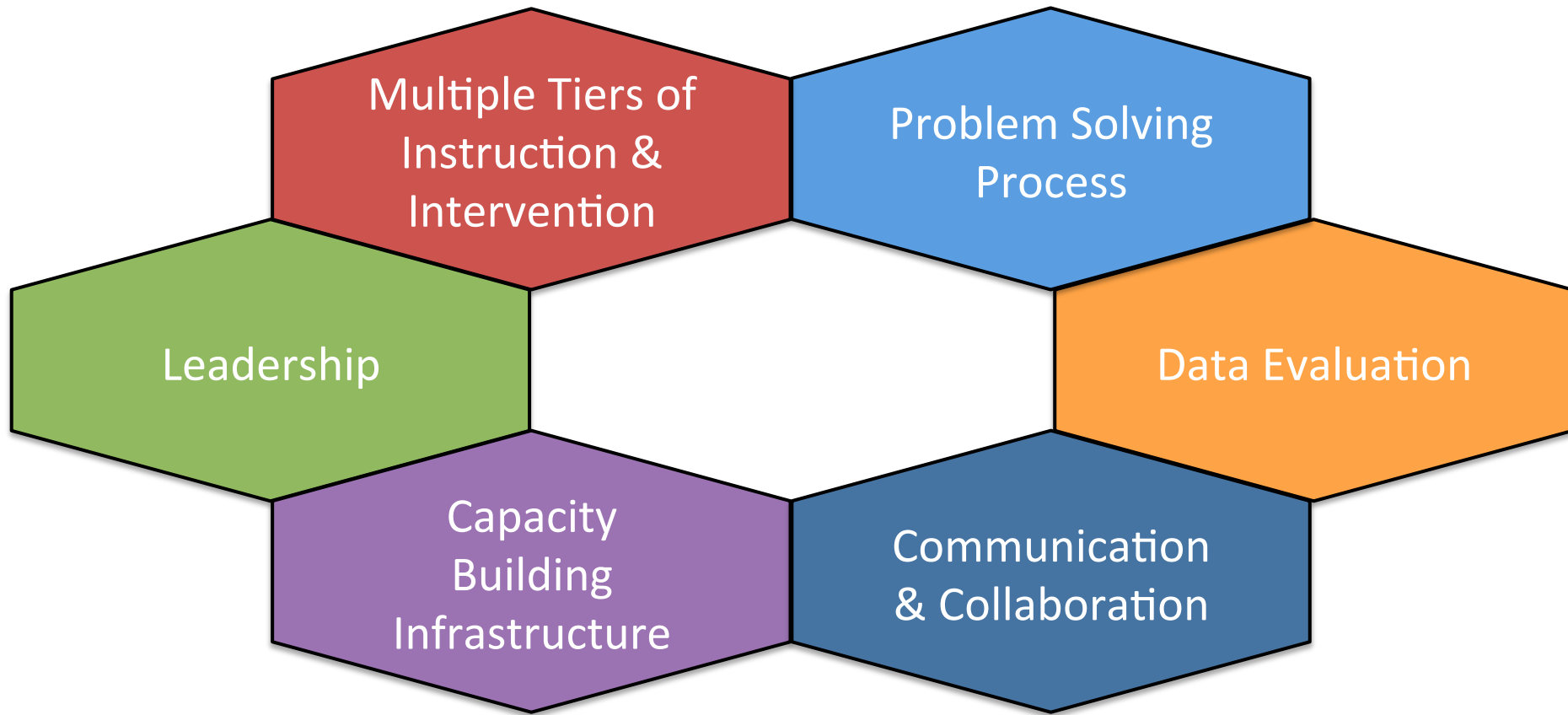


# Reflect and share

- Take a few minutes to individually **reflect** on *The Risk of Our Children* by Dr. Asa Hilliard.
- Reflect on what thoughts, impressions, and insights are elicited from the quote.
- How does this resonate with you? Your school? Office? Department?
- Find two colleagues and share your perspective and thoughts about the quote.

# **Ensuring a Common Language Common Understanding of MTSS**

# Critical Components of MTSS



*MTSS is a framework to ensure successful education outcomes for ALL students by using a data-based problem solving process to provide, and evaluate the effectiveness of multiple tiers of integrated academic, behavior, and social-emotional instruction/intervention supports matched to student need in alignment with educational standards.*



**MTSS**

**Academics**

**Behavior**

**Universal Design  
for Learning**

# Multi-Tiered System of Supports

- **Evidenced-based** model of schooling
  - uses **data-based problem-solving**
  - **integrates academic and behavioral instruction and intervention**
- **Integrated** instruction and intervention
  - delivered to students **in varying intensities (multiple tiers) based on student need**
- Decision-making is **“need-driven”**
  - seeks to ensure that district resources reach the appropriate students (schools) at the appropriate levels to **accelerate the performance of all students** to achieve and/or exceed proficiency

# MTSS/RtI & the Problem-Solving Process

## Academic and Behavior Systems

### **Tier 3: Intensive, Individualized Interventions & Supports.**

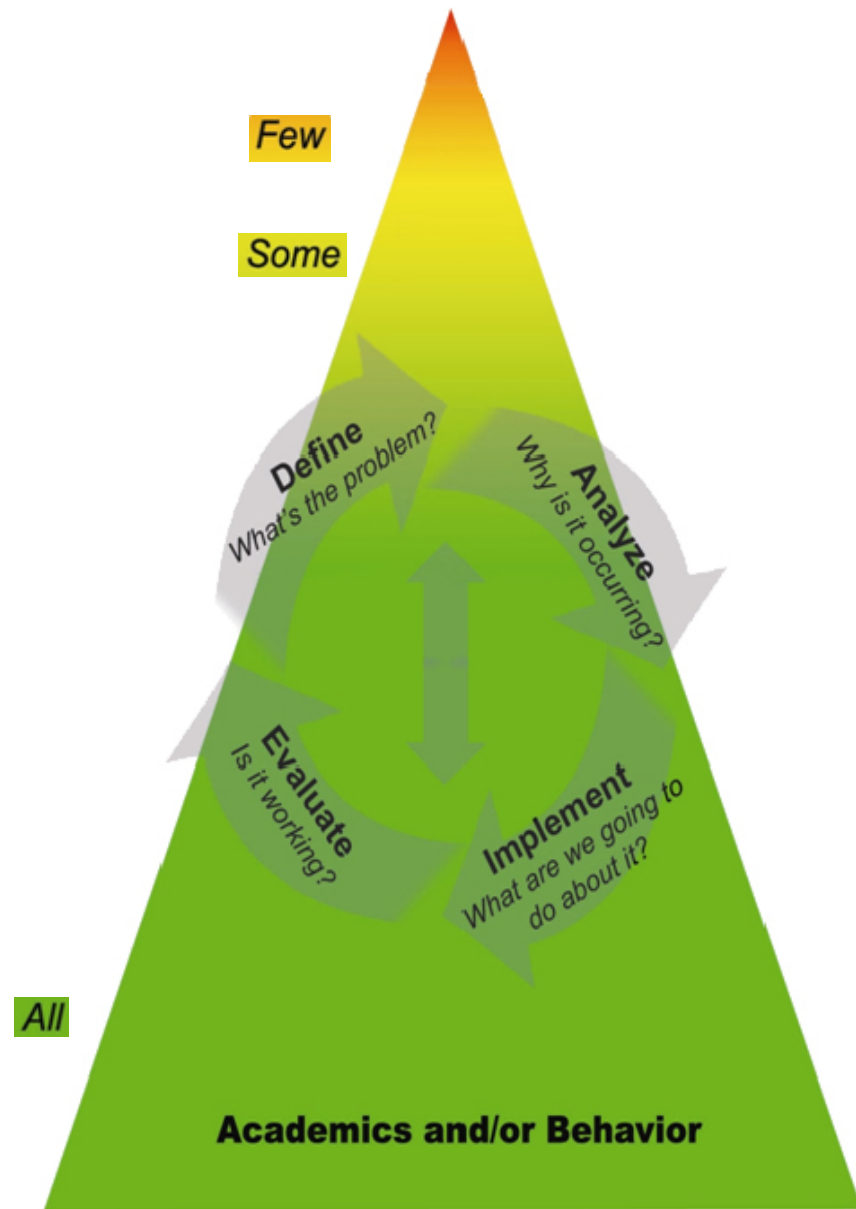
The most intense (increased time, narrowed focus, reduced group size) instruction and intervention based upon individual student need provided in addition to and aligned with Tier 1 & 2 academic and behavior instruction and supports.

### **Tier 2: Targeted, Supplemental Interventions & Supports.**

More targeted instruction/intervention and supplemental support in addition to and aligned with the core academic and behavior curriculum.

### **Tier 1: Core, Universal Instruction & Supports.**

General academic and behavior instruction and support provided to all students in all settings.



MTSS is *not* about another  
new “initiative”

MTSS *is* about integrating  
what we know works!

# **The Big Bang Theory of MTSS**

- 1. Decide what is important for students to know.**
- 2. Teach what is important for students to know.**
- 3. Keep track of how students are showing what they know.**
- 4. Make changes according to the data and results you collect!**



# Two basic critical questions...

- **Are you happy with your data?**
- **Is every classroom one you would put your own flesh and blood?**

If you want to change and improve the climate and outcomes of schooling – *both for students and teachers*, there are features of the school culture that have to be changed, and if they are not changed, your well intentioned efforts will be defeated.

Seymore Sarason, 1996

**This is not just about closing the  
achievement gap.**

**It is about ending the  
predictability.**

Evelyn Belton-Kocher, August 2012  
Dir. Research & Evaluation, SPPS

# The Cycle of Circular Thinking...

Purple haired kids can't learn



How do you know they can't learn?



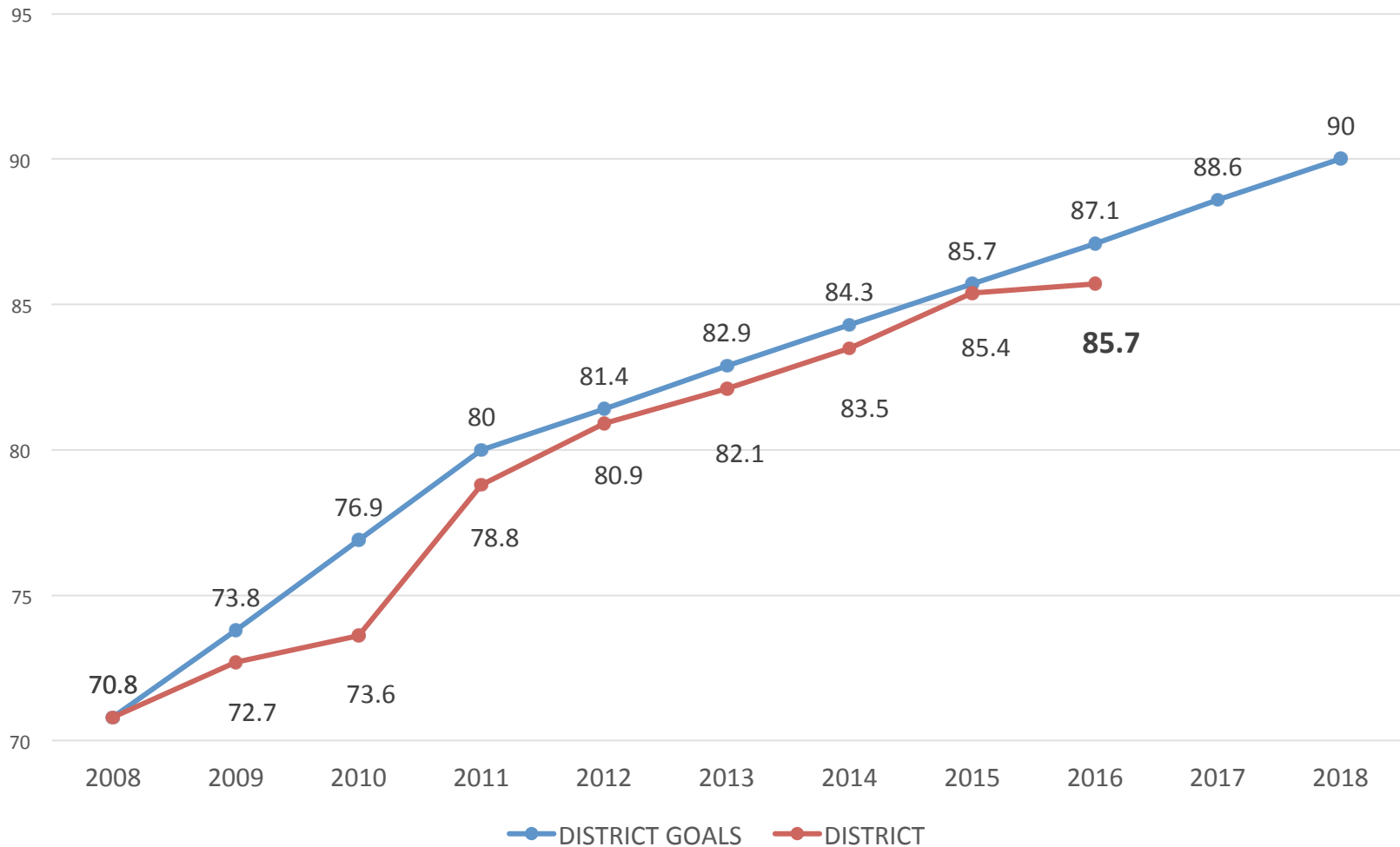
Because they aren't learning



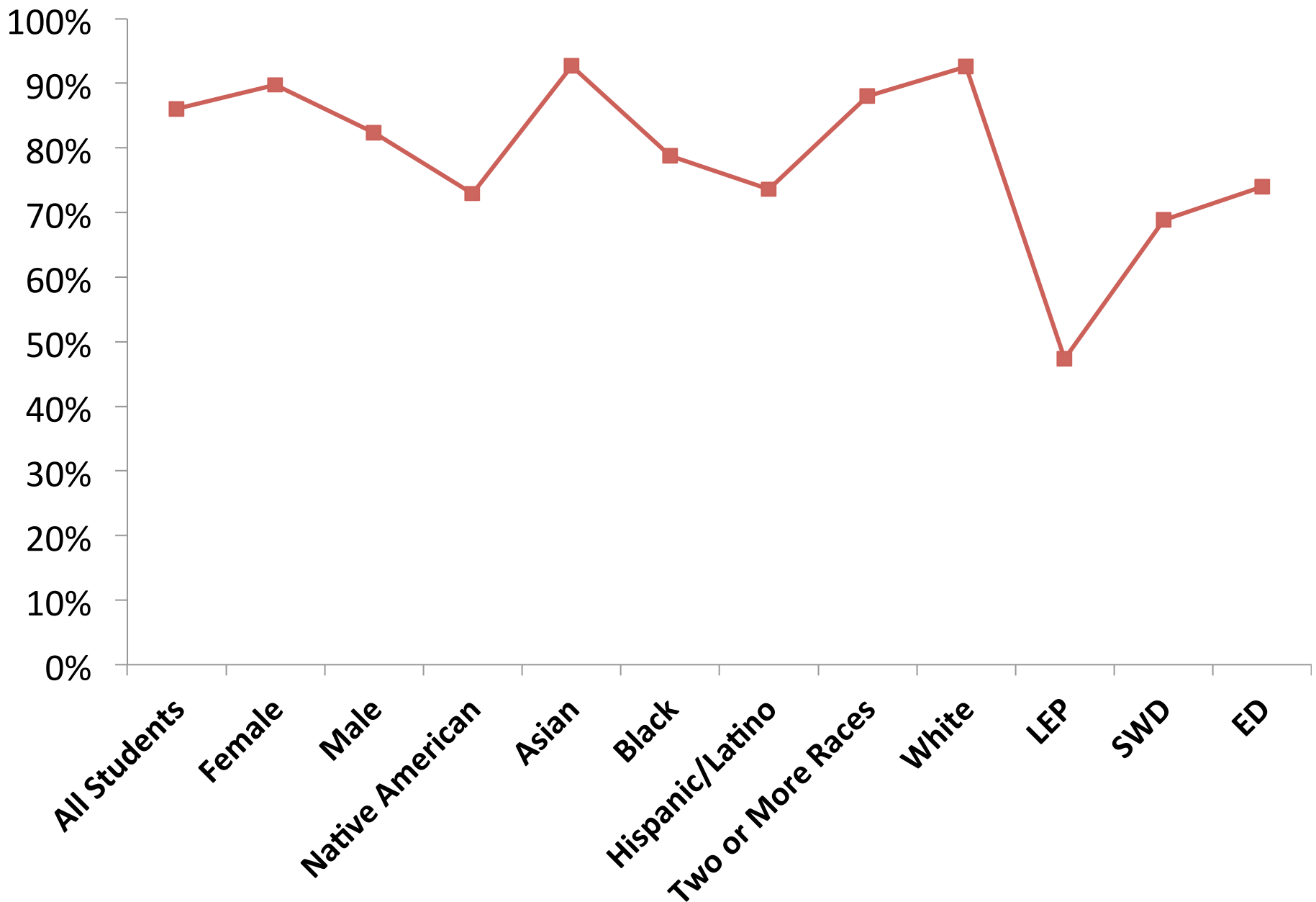
Why aren't they learning?



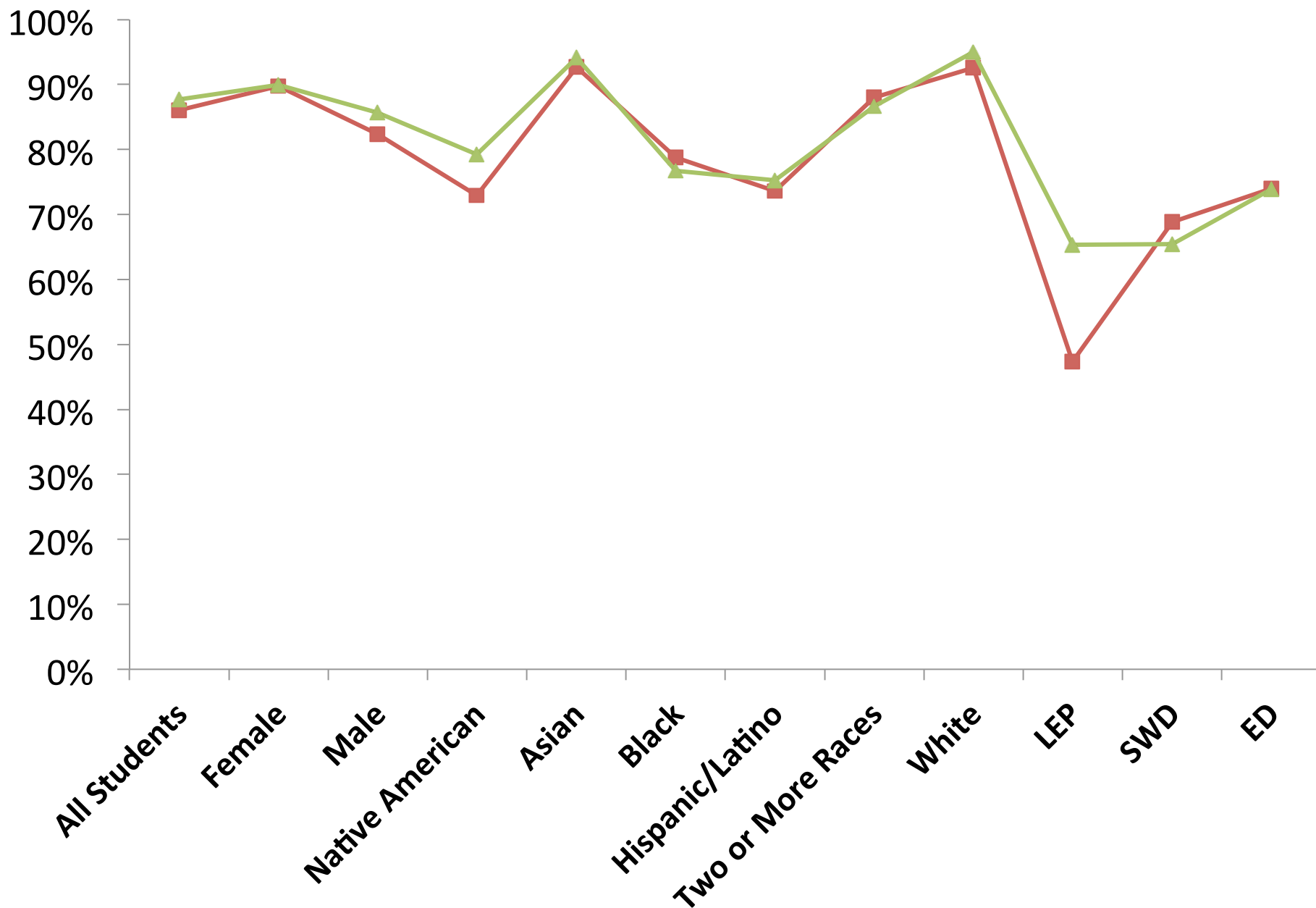
# 4 – YEAR COHORT GRADUATION RATE

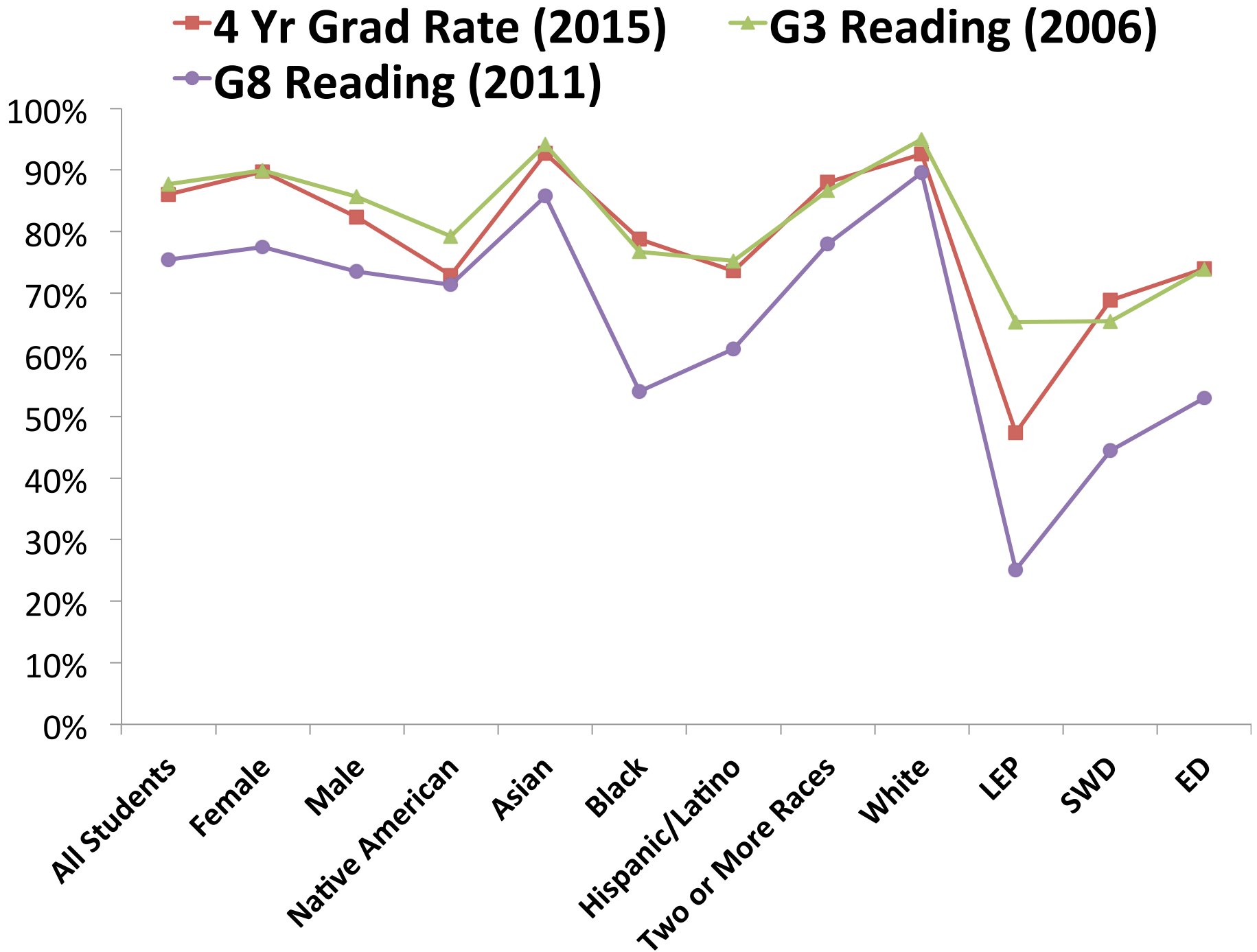


## 4 Yr Grad Rate (2015)

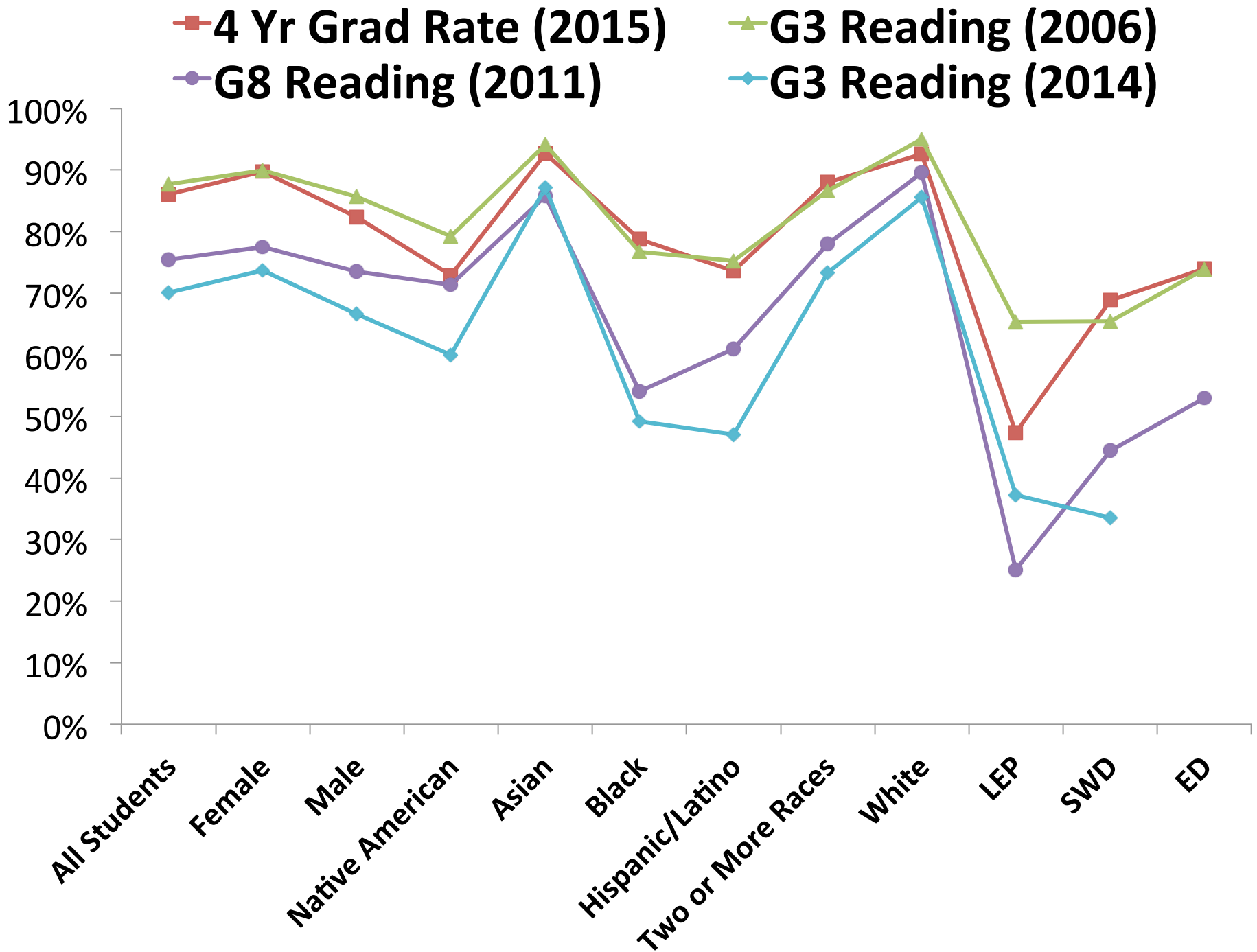


**■ 4 Yr Grad Rate (2015)**      **▲ G3 Reading (2006)**









# Table Talk

- What strikes you about these data?
- What makes you wonder?
- What are your hypotheses as to why data look this way?
- Where do you begin to unpack this work?

# Beliefs & Actions

*We believe our decisions and actions are consistent with our conscious beliefs, when in fact, our unconscious is running the show*

# Implicit Bias



# The Role of Implicit Bias in Defining Student Narratives

- Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner
- Exposure to commonly held attitudes about social groups permeate our minds even without our active consent (i.e. hearsay, media exposure, passive observation, etc)
- Everyone is susceptible to implicit bias



# For School Improvement, Demographics Aren't Destiny

## Lessons from schools with "unexpected" successes

By Karin Chenoweth

July 18, 2017

Many teachers blamed the ensuing drop in academic achievement on the new students, while continuing their decades-long march through outdated textbooks and poorly thought-through worksheets. Their instruction—isolated, autonomous, and idiosyncratic—went unchallenged by the school's traditional structure. That is to say, the school had no systems to make sure teachers knew what state standards required students to know, no systems to identify students who had not mastered standards, and no systems to hone teachers' individual expertise and collaborate with other teachers to improve instruction. On average, students who didn't have the vocabulary, background knowledge, or organizational wherewithal to compensate for the weak school structures did not fare well. Conscientious teachers helped individual students, but could not by themselves change the school's academic trajectory.

In contrast, unexpected schools have system after system to marshal the power of schools—systems as prosaic as master schedules that permit uninterrupted instruction and teacher collaboration—to help teachers work together and focus on the best ways to teach what students need to know. Most important, they have systems of information that let the adults in the school know what is working and what isn't so they can continually adjust their practice.

[Follow Commentary here.](#)

For example, at Malverne Senior High School in Long Island, N.Y., 93 percent of the school's seniors graduated in 2016, and 54 percent earned advanced diplomas (reflecting a full college-preparatory study). These numbers would be unremarkable in white, upper-middle-class high schools in New York City, but are unusual in schools with Malverne's demographic makeup. Most of Malverne's students are students of color—58 percent African-American and 23 percent Hispanic—and 51 percent are considered economically disadvantaged.

The school has achieved its results by systematically building caring relationships and tackling problems together. "Failures are our problem," Principal Vincent Romano told me. Its leaders do not leave teachers to work in isolation, but make instruction—from lesson plans to assessments—a shared activity. Every year, seven full-period classroom observations by teachers, department heads, and administrators help teachers reflect on their practice and build a culture where they work together to better engage their students in challenging material. And by continually looking at grades, test scores, and attendance and discipline data, teachers and administrators monitor how students are doing so that they can adjust instruction accordingly.

Unexpected schools like Malverne demonstrate the power schools hold to overcome barriers of poverty and discrimination—something traditionally organized schools seem to find insuperable—by breaking down long-standing structures of autonomous practice.



# Beliefs Survey



# Purpose

The purpose of the Beliefs Survey is to:

- Identify **correlations** between educator **beliefs** and how they address **student needs and learning**.
- Identify commonly held beliefs among educators that will **facilitate or hinder efforts** for **school improvement**.
- Facilitate and maintain **honest dialogue** to implement core components of MTSS.

# Beliefs Survey

- Who:** School-based Leadership Team (SBLT) and school staff
- What:** A baseline measurement of beliefs about how students should be served
- Why:** To inform the work we need to do
- When:** SBLTs complete independently;  
School staff complete survey at a time TBD
- Then What:** Strategic and planned unpacking of the survey

# Beliefs

- What are your beliefs around student capacities for learning?
- What are the beliefs around effective instruction?
- What are the beliefs about interventions for students?

# Beliefs...

**Beliefs are not absolute values. They are about change.**

(Do they trend or shift in the 'right' direction?)

- Answers to the belief survey are a function of how people feel and may be influenced by targeted professional learning opportunities
- Differences, trends, and gaps in beliefs create equity issues
  - **For Example** -- If some grade levels, departments and schools perform well across some students groups, the difference between them creates equity issues.

# Belief Survey

Assesses beliefs across three broad domains

- Functions of Core and Supplemental Instruction
- Data-based Decision Making
- Academic Abilities and Performance of Students with Disabilities

# Review/Peruse the Belief Survey

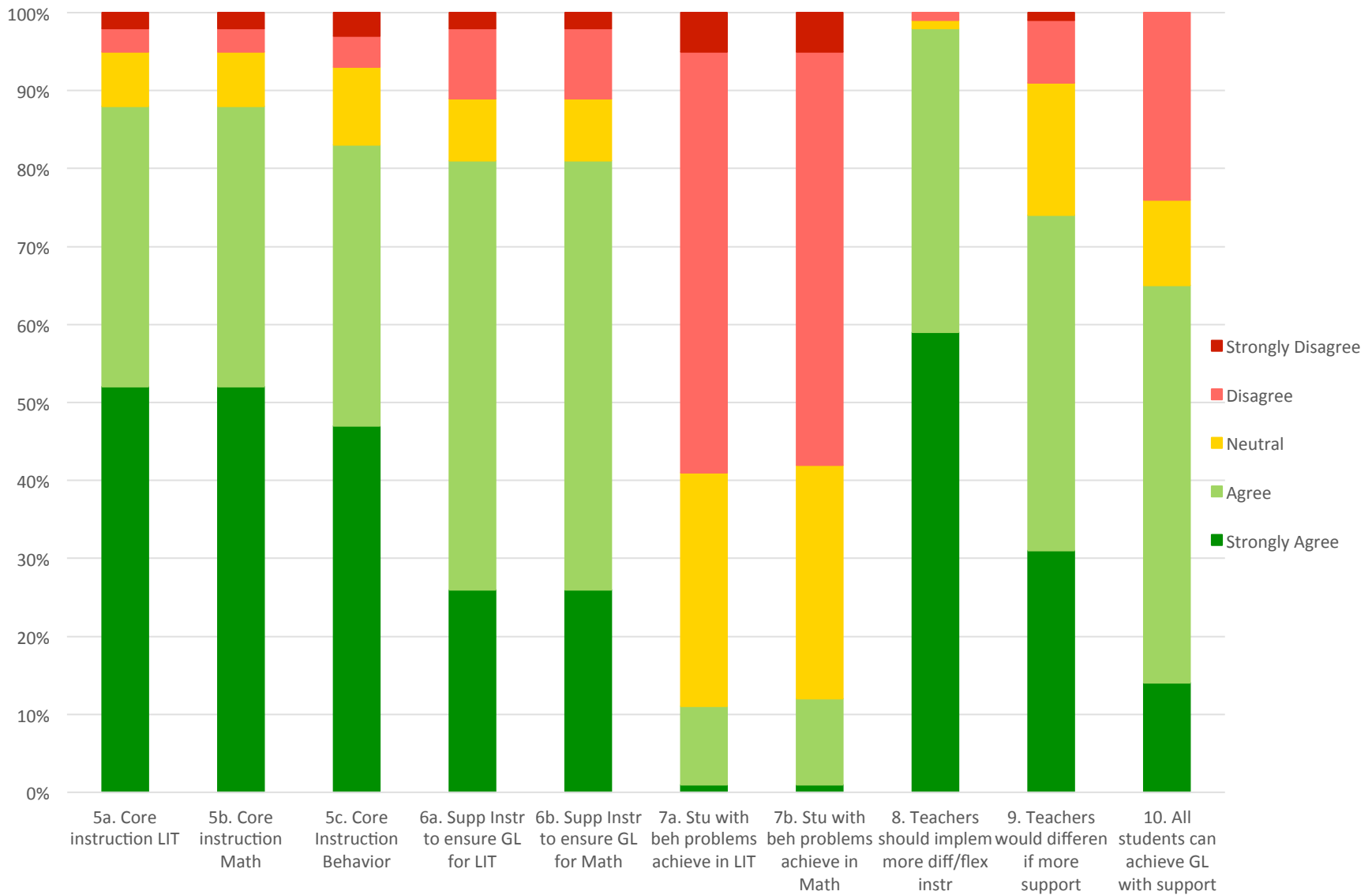
- Take a look at the belief survey items
- Mark your initial response...

**Factor 1**

**Academic Ability and  
Performance of Students with  
Disabilities**



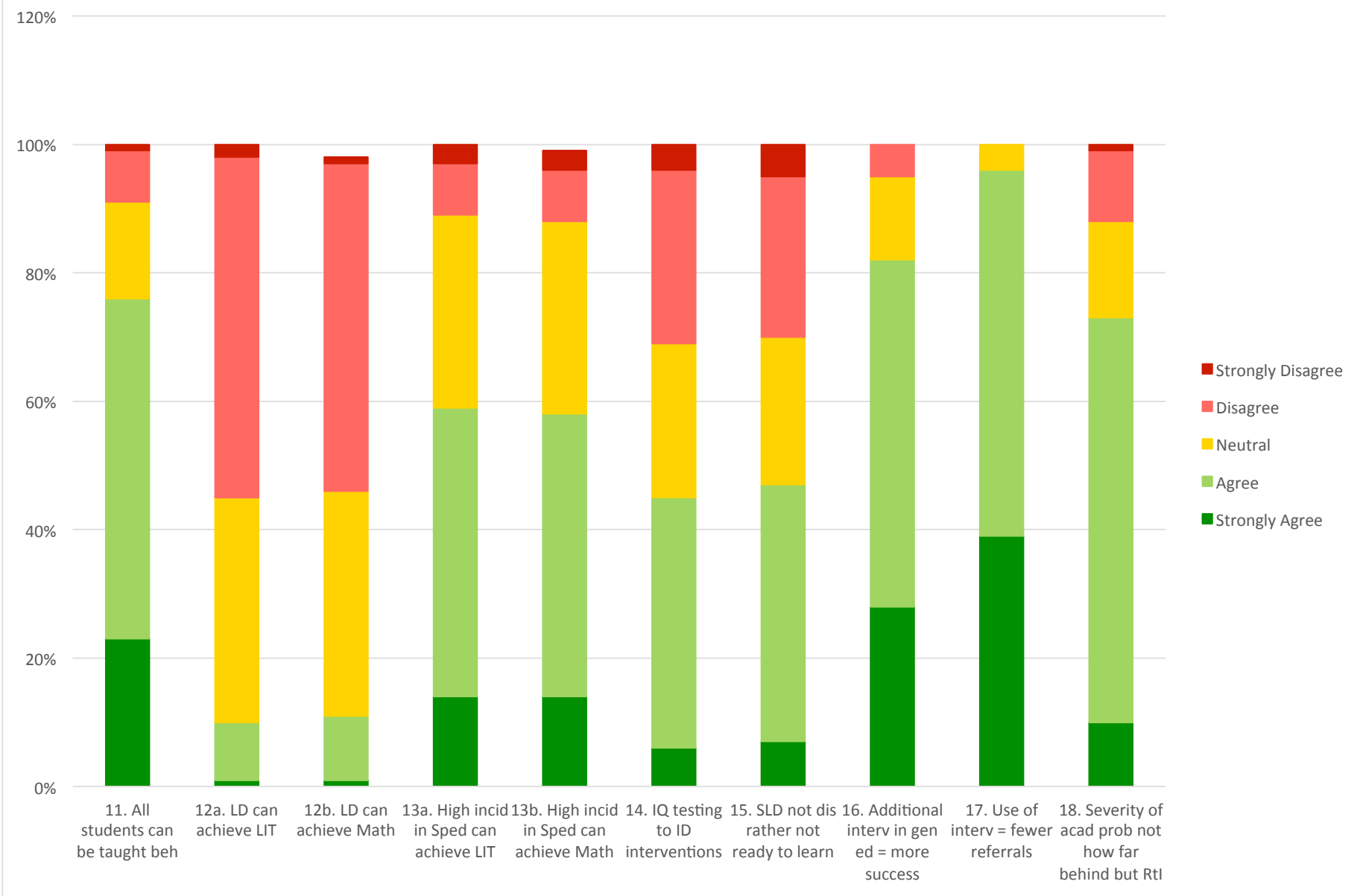
## Beliefs Survey: Items 5a. - 10



## **Factor 2**

# **Data-based Decision Making**

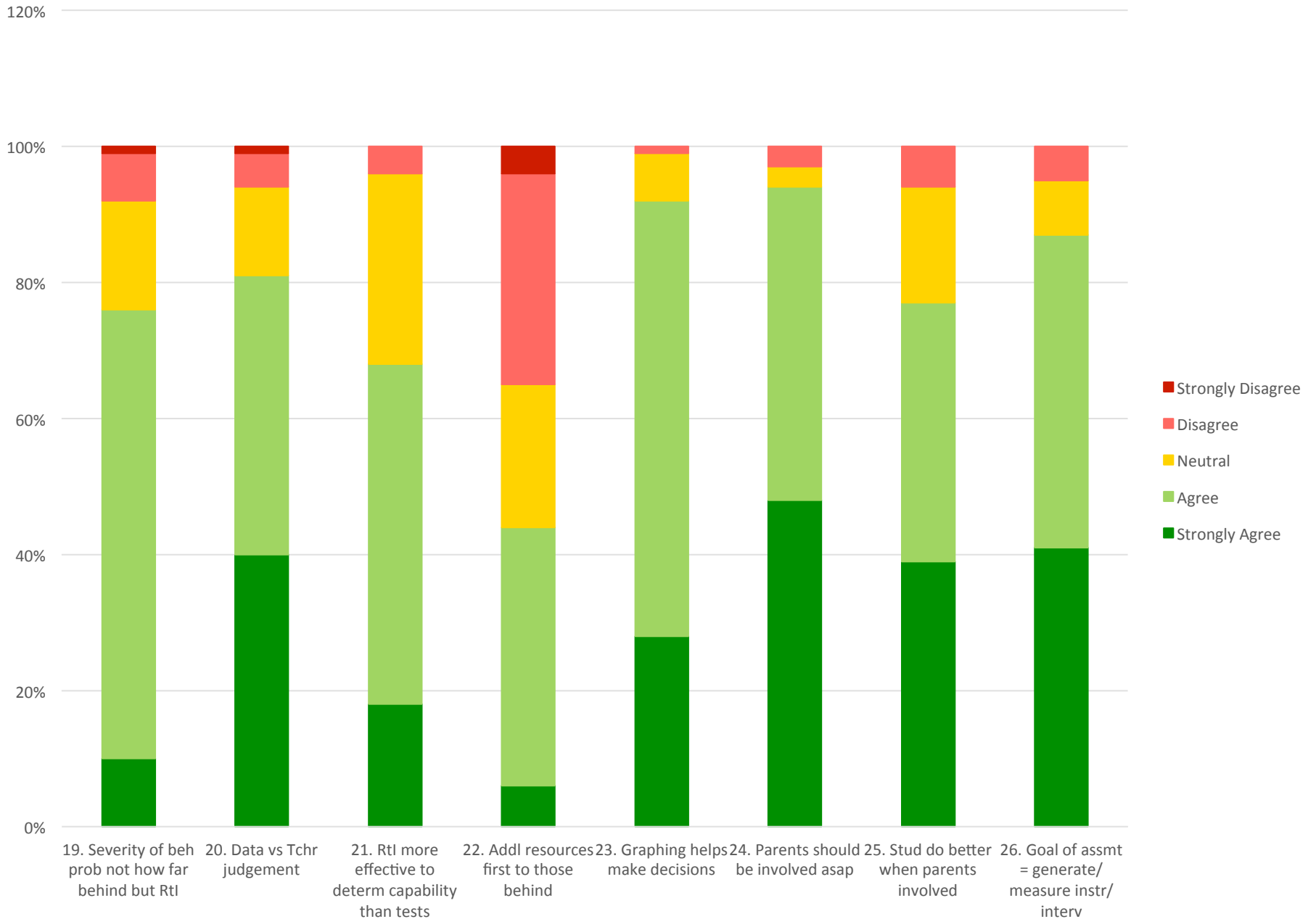
Beliefs Survey: Items 11 - 18



## **Factor 3**

# **Functions of Core and Supplemental Instruction**

## Beliefs Survey: Items 19 - 26



# Working Toward Equity

## Aligning Beliefs with Practices

Using the worksheet, with your group work **left to right**

Step 1 - What is your Current State?

Step 2 - What is your Desired State?

Step 3 - What needs to happen to align Beliefs  
and Practice

**Taking it back home...**

# MTSS: Aligning Beliefs and Practices to Ensure Equity for All

**Sense of Urgency:** Realize your Desired State and Beliefs and their impact on current practices on all Tiers.

We have to constantly challenge our assumptions and biases we bring to our work.



## + **Next steps back home...**

- Develop and align intentional conversations and professional learning to impact the shift of beliefs and realization of your desired state.
- Review your school improvement plan, your grade level and content team plans for teaching and learning.
- What needs to be done to align your work around skills, practices & beliefs to implementation equitable MTSS?
- How does your desired state align with your practices and your SIP?

# Four Building Blocks that Support MTSS Implementation



**Skills**

- Professional Learning impacts **Skills**
- **Skills** impact **Practice**

**Practices**

- Improved **Practice** improves **Implementation**

**Implementation**

- Improved **Implementation** impacts student outcomes

**Beliefs**

- Better student outcomes shift **Beliefs**
- And, shifts in **Beliefs** impacts **Implementation** of MTSS