

**State of the Schools**  
March 14, 2023

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# The Journey to Equity and Inclusion

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Building Knowledge, Skills, and Capacity with the  
Principals and Central Office Leaders of the  
Township of Union Public Schools

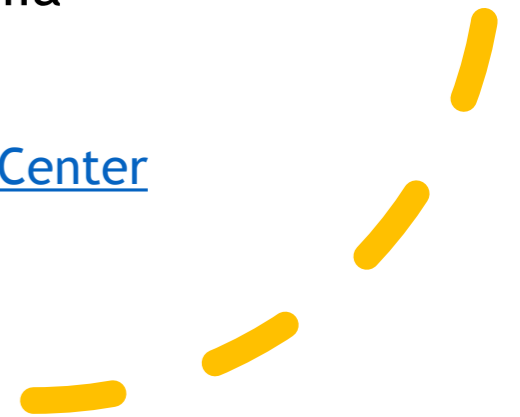
# Why does this work matter to TUPS?

[“Equity isn’t just a slogan. It should transform the way we educate kids.”](#)

**“School culture, like the soil in your garden, is the medium in which teaching and learning occurs. Unless school culture can be changed so that it is student centered, promotes collaboration among professional educators, and lifts their morale, it is unlikely that achievement outcomes will improve.”**

Dr. Pedro Noguera, Dean  
University of Southern California  
Rossier School of Education

INSIGHT, July 8, 2019, [The Holdsworth Center](#)

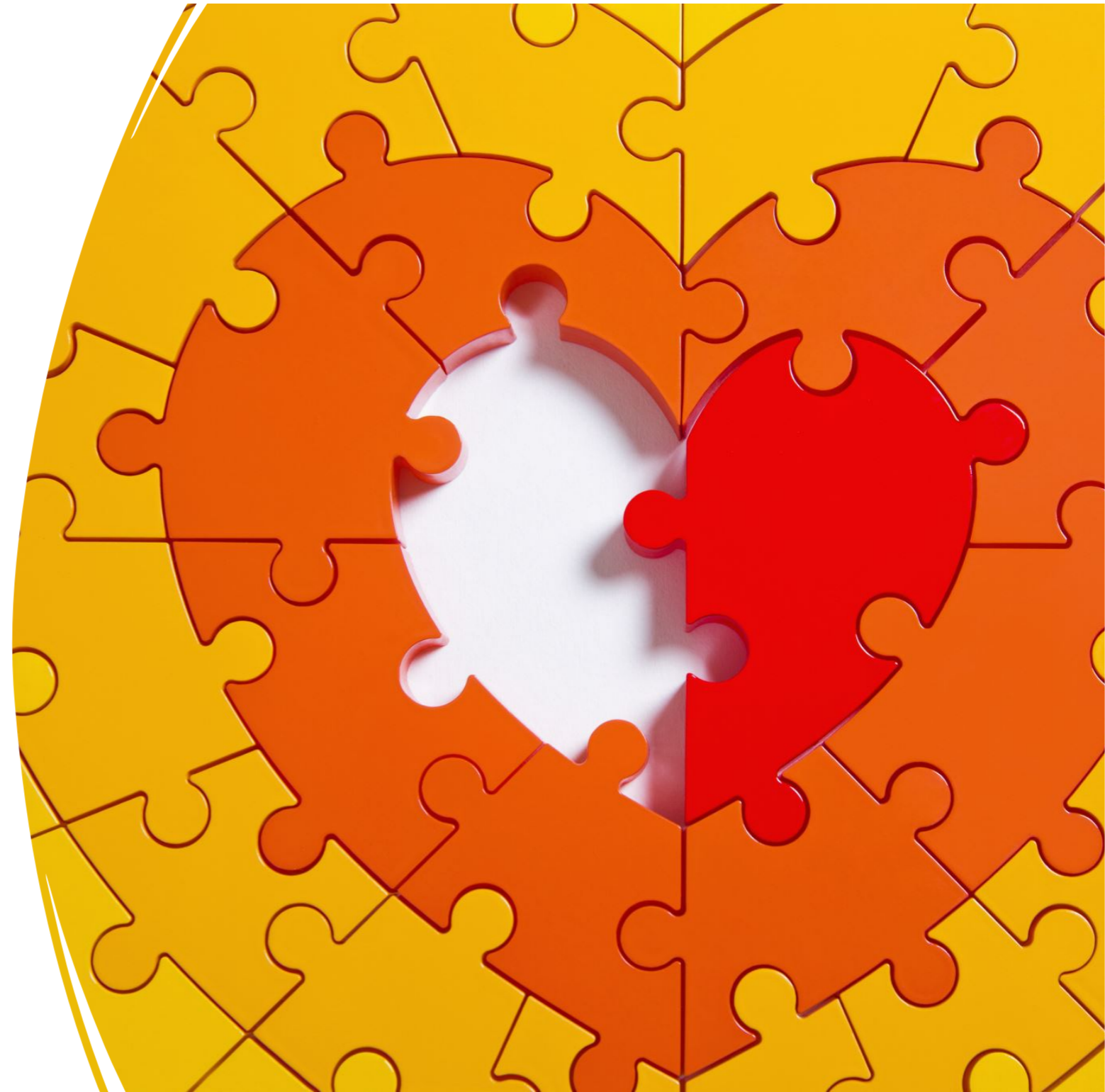


# START AT THE HEART: LEADERS

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**ENGAGE  
EDUCATE  
EMPOWER\***

**\*Leaders have what  
they need to be  
successful and *feel*  
empowered.**



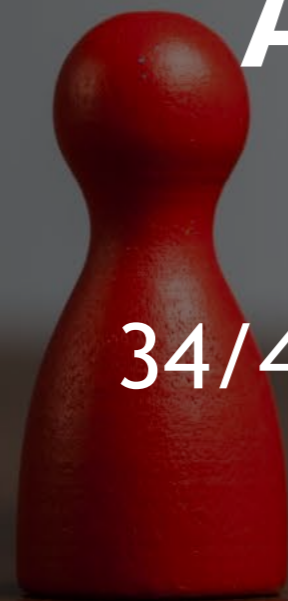
**GATHERING  
PERSPECTIVES  
TO INFORM  
OUR STRATEGY  
WITH TUPS  
LEADERS**

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THE TUPS LEADERSHIP  
TEAM DEI-AR ASSESSMENT  
October-November 2022



# THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT



34/45 possible respondents



## URGENCY AND VALUE

- TUPS leaders do not share a common perspective that issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism are urgent concerns for their school system or their mission as educational leaders.
- Some leaders feel that DEI-AR work is a distraction from more important matters; others feel DEI-AR work is performative and not taken seriously.
- Some leaders want to build more inclusive learning environments, but they are uncertain about whether there is sufficient buy-in to sustain this work.

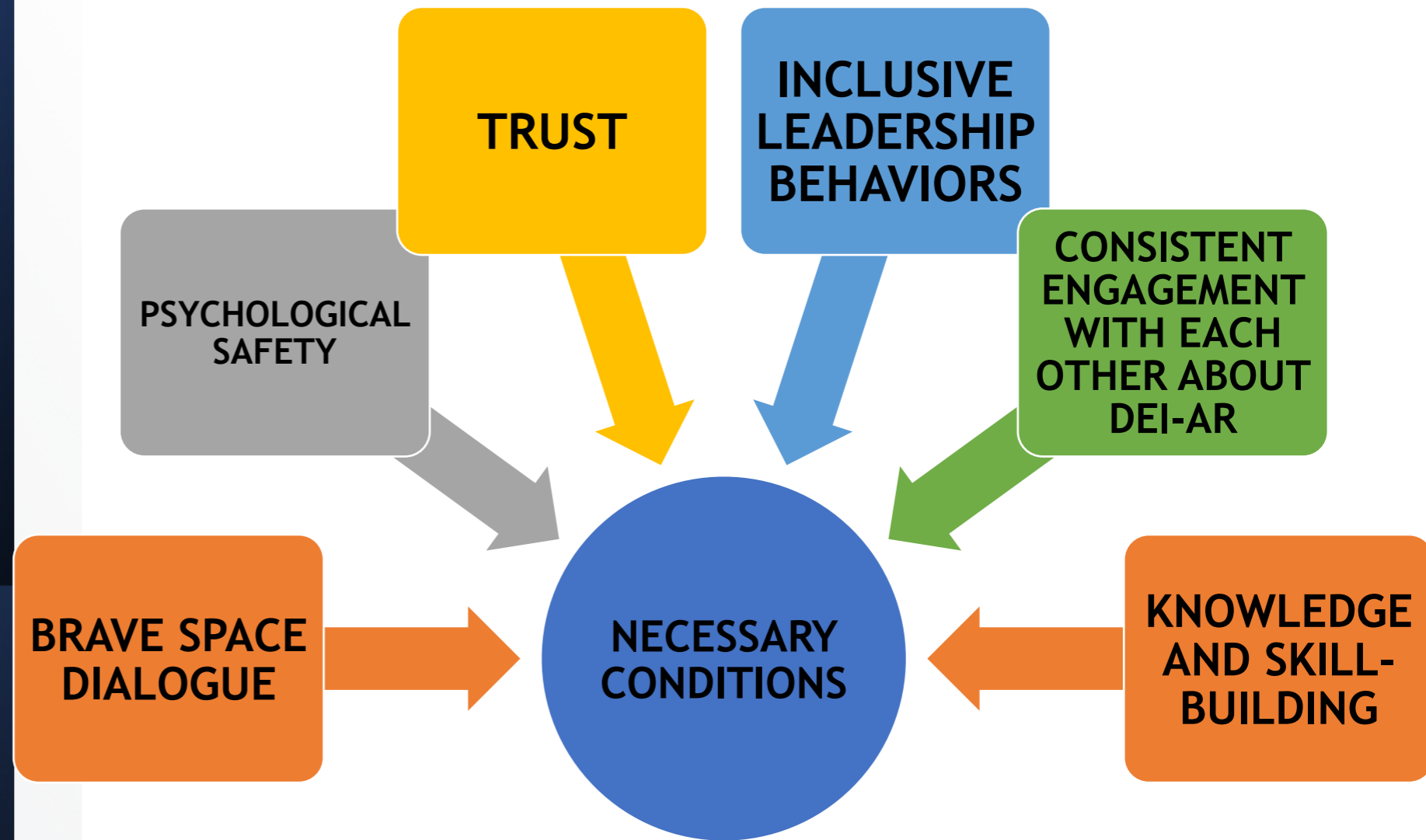
## ABSENCE OF TEAM ALIGNMENT

- TUPS leaders have unexamined and widely different perspectives on matters of diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism.
- TUPS leaders report that they rarely engage in intentional dialogue about DEI-AR but feel they need opportunities to develop deeper insights and empathy for each other.
- TUPS leaders do not share a common understanding of how DEI-AR issues show up for individuals, between groups of individuals, and within the structures of the school system.

## WILLINGNESS VS. OBLIGATION

- TUPS leaders need opportunities to examine and clarify their motivations and commitment to DEI-AR work.
- Some believe DEI-AR is central to the TUPS educational mission; others feel this work is obligatory and driven by the current zeitgeist, not by educational mission or needs.
- Some TUPS leaders are reluctant to discuss DEI-AR issues; some use their privilege to exhibit dismissive behaviors and attitudes when DEI-AR issues emerge. This practice compromises the effectiveness of the entire leadership team.

# SETTING THE CONDITIONS FOR TUPS LEADERSHIP CULTURE TRANSFORMATION





# OUR JOURNEY-TO-DATE WITH PRINCIPALS



December 2022-January 2023

**Individual and Team Coaching  
Chemistry Sessions**

January 19, 2023

**Team Coaching Session #1**

February 23, 2023

**Team Coaching Session #2**

**OUR JOURNEY-TO-DATE WITH  
CENTRAL OFFICE LEADERS**

# Mid-Course Reflections from TUPS Leaders



**100% of respondents indicate that their overall engagement experience with fellow leaders during these sessions has been valuable.**

**All respondents indicate that they are using brave space behaviors in their work.**

**What, if anything,  
have you learned that  
you are incorporating  
into your leadership  
practices as a  
principal?**

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Participants avoid making assumptions about others' perspectives and lived and learned experiences.

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Participants have increased active listening and empathy to better understand the need for equity and inclusion throughout the district and with each other.

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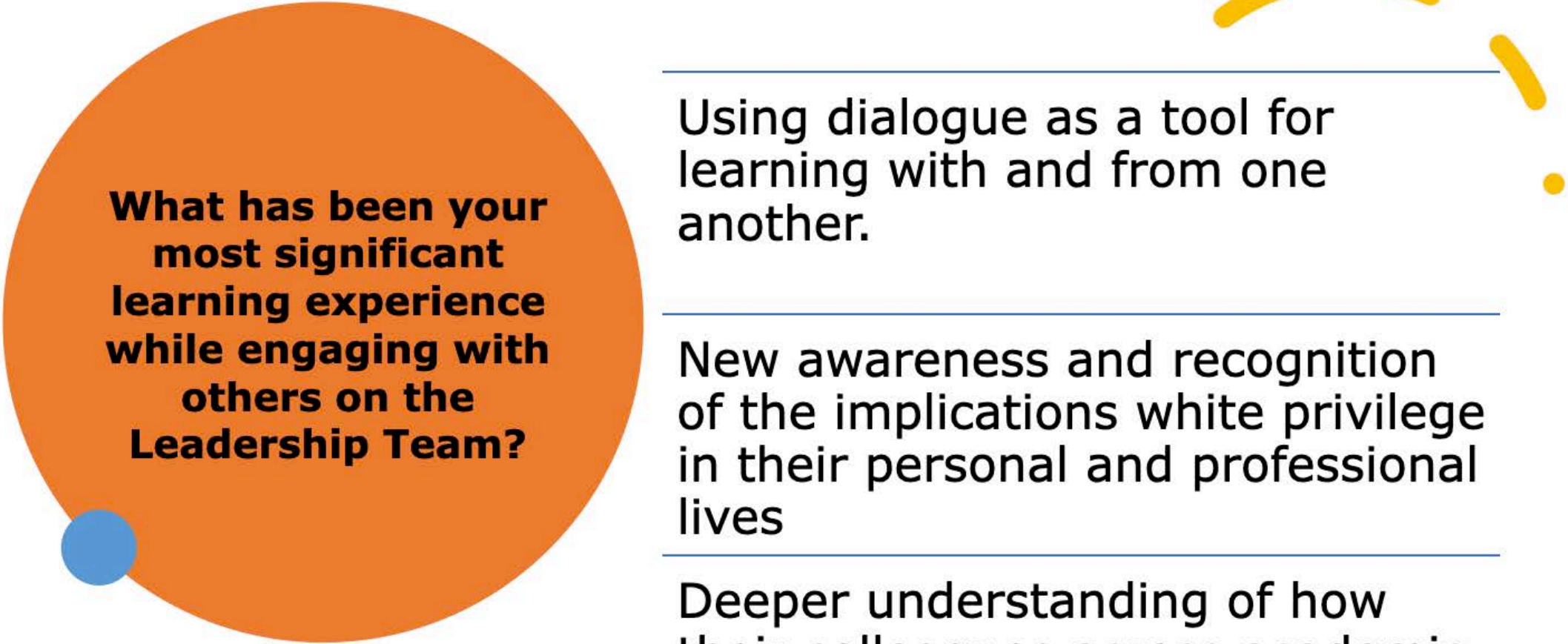
Participants have increased mindfulness of others' feelings, perspectives and perceptions of power.

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Participants are actively using "brave space behaviors" when working with colleagues for building trust and accountability

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Participants are increasing their awareness/consciousness and analysis of how colleagues and students are experiencing inequity and exclusion within the district.



**What has been your most significant learning experience while engaging with others on the Leadership Team?**

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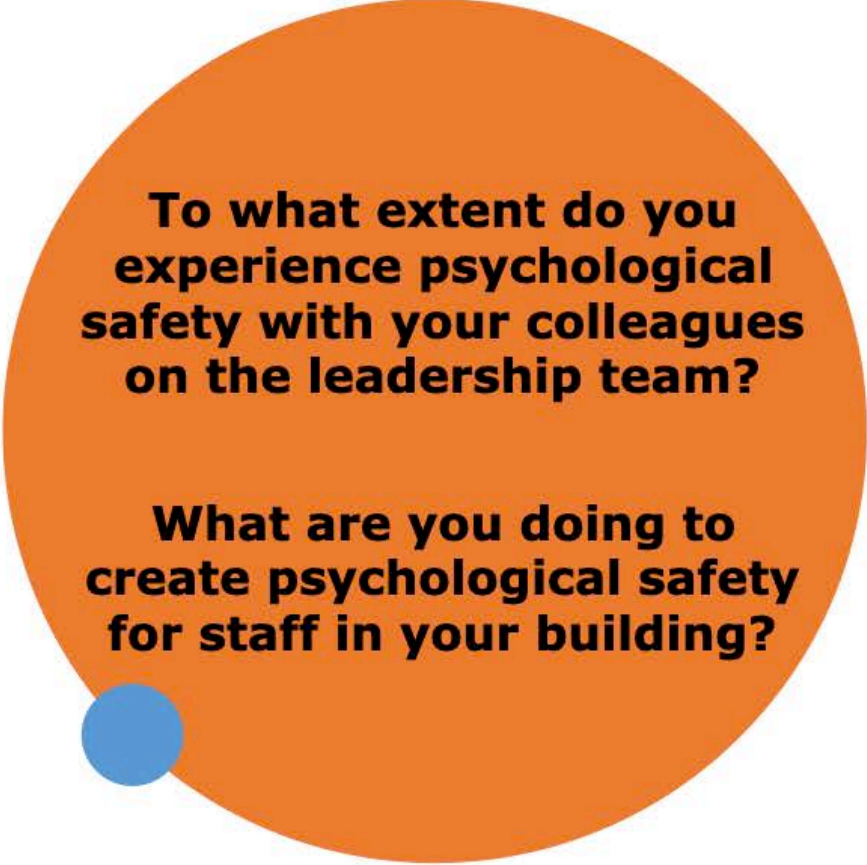
Using dialogue as a tool for learning with and from one another.

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New awareness and recognition of the implications white privilege in their personal and professional lives

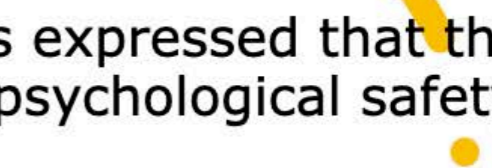
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Deeper understanding of how their colleagues across academic levels are encountering issues of DEI in their buildings



**To what extent do you experience psychological safety with your colleagues on the leadership team?**

**What are you doing to create psychological safety for staff in your building?**



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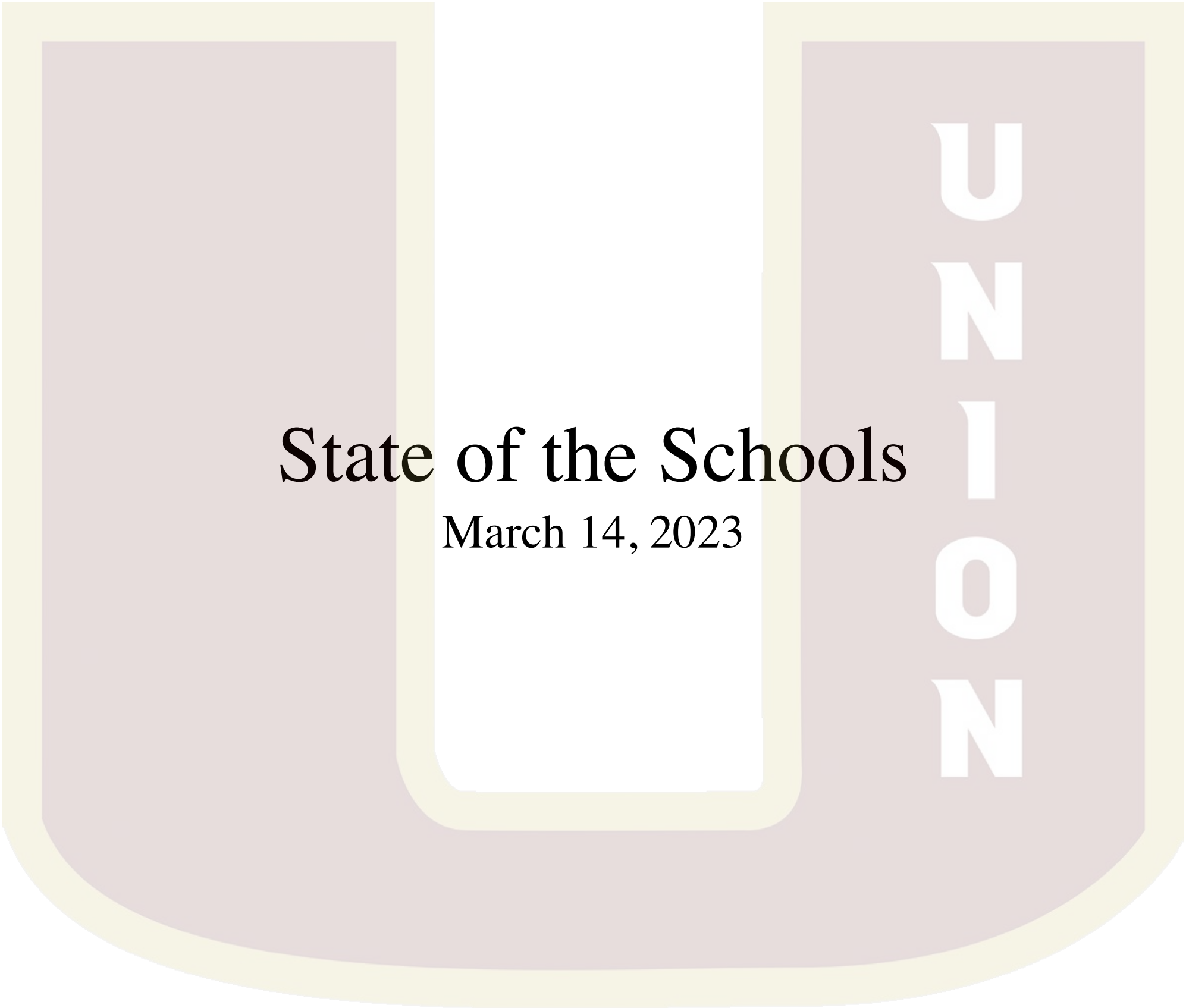
The majority of participants expressed that they feel a "moderate " level of psychological safety with each other.

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Intentional active listening and dialogue with staff to inform decision-making, amplify unheard voices, and recognize multiple viewpoints as well as possible solutions

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Deliberately establish psychological safety by creating a shared expectation that no one will be embarrassed, rejected, or punished for sharing ideas, taking risks, or giving feedback



**State of the Schools**  
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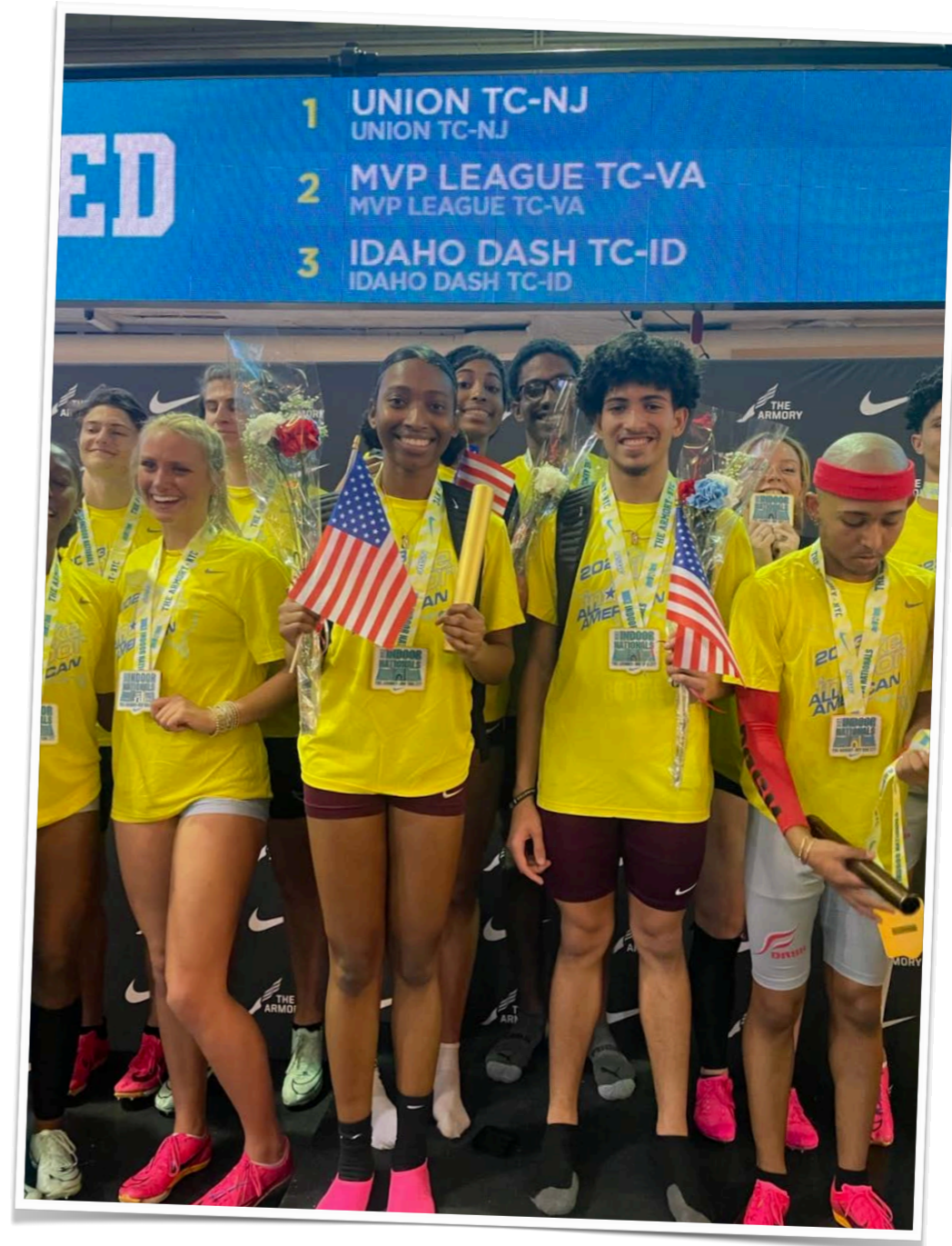
## **National Champions**

UHS Track Teams 4x400  
Mixed Relay

Senior Gabe Rodriguez,  
Sophomore Mikarla Portuondo,  
Senior Oko Lokko,  
Senior Sierra Latonnel.

Competed at the Nike Indoor  
Nationals at the NYC Armory

Finished with a time of 3:35.30





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*Township of Union Public Schools*



Kaitlin Laverity

2023 recipient of the Union  
County Daughters of Ireland  
Scholarship

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# *Township of Union Public Schools*

Nationals  
at Florida  
up next



JROTC takes 1st place for 24th year in a row at state drill competition took place at the high school

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# Fiscal Year 2024 Preliminary Budget

March 14, 2023

# Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Planning Process

Superintendent/business administrator meetings with each leader

December 5- December 19, 2022

Leadership team meetings

January 24- March 3, 2023

Board Fiscal and Planning Committee Meeting

March 7, 2023

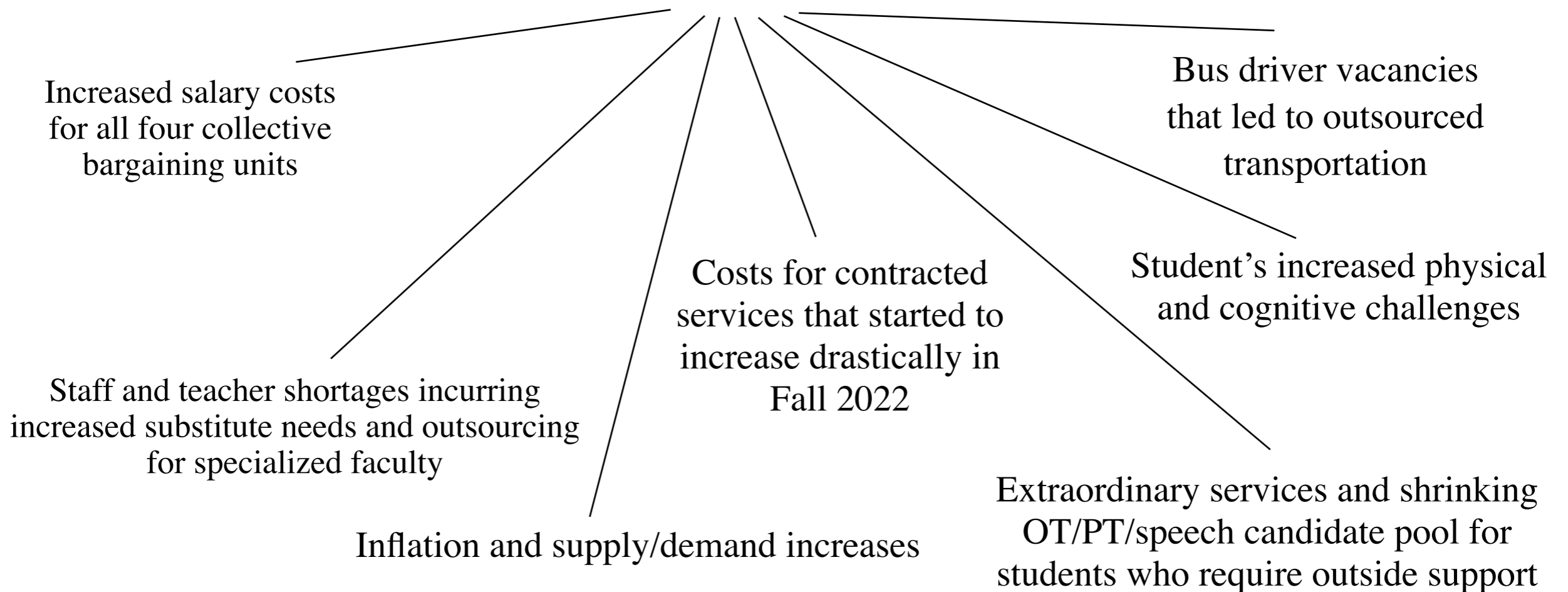
Board review

March 1, 7, and 14, 2023

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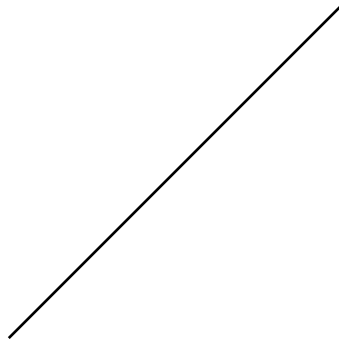
# Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Expenditure Challenges

Extremely difficult events happening at the same time



# Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Revenue Challenges

Districts cannot generate enough revenue to keep pace with costs



A 2% limit on local taxes is below the rate of extraordinary student support costs, transportation, insurance, salary, health benefit, and inflation increases.

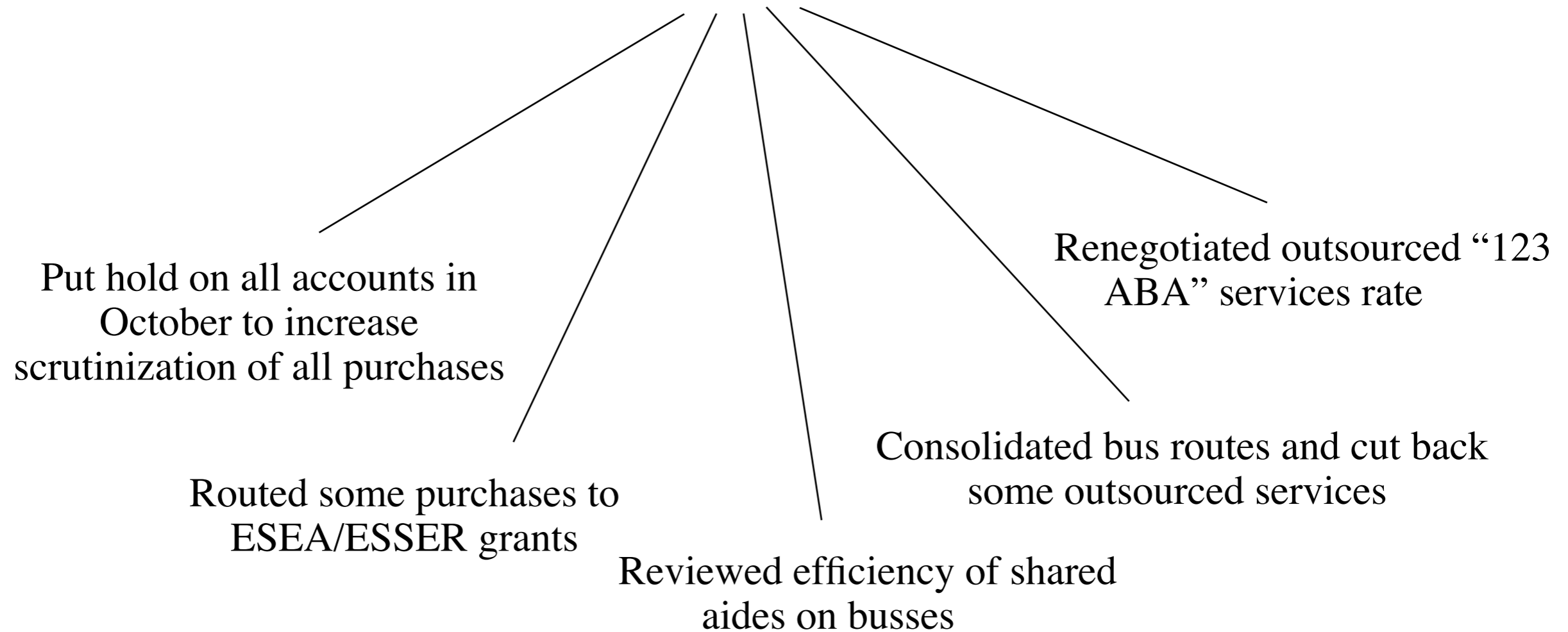


The state has underfunded New Jersey school districts for decades.

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# Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Early Plans


Plans taken to manage the 2023-2024 budget



# Addressing the Budget Shortfall

Reductions in various accounts

Middle school schedules  
(pending discussions)



\$279,000  
savings

14-minute earlier start and end time to cut  
transportation costs

Utilizing state/federal grants

Bringing back behavior technicians (BTs)  
(pending discussions)

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# Operating Expenditures Snapshot

	2023-2024 Originally Proposed	2023-2024 After Proposed Reductions	Budget 2022-2023	Percentage Change/ 2022-2023 and 2023-2024
Salaries (100 Series)	\$82,902,794	\$82,358,934	\$77,652,538	6.0%
Benefits (200 Series)	\$29,710,612	\$29,324,879	\$26,048,930	12.6%
Contracted services-substitute services, professional development, special education services, etc. (300 Series)	\$9,295,159	\$7,246,923	\$6,581,685	10.1%
Repairs and maintenance for schools- utilities, roofs, etc. (400 Series)	\$1,703,379	\$1,587,379	\$1,472,838	7.8%
Other purchased services- out-of-district special education tuition, UCES, MUJC, etc. (500 Series)	\$30,728,754	\$27,103,256	\$22,034,706	23.0%
Instructional and support supplies (600 Series)	\$6,602,250	\$4,884,050	\$5,117,193	-4.6%
Instructional and support equipment (700 Series)	\$1,463,242	\$343,918	502,247	-31.5%
Miscellaneous costs- legal, athletics, etc. (800 Series)	\$1,771,636	\$1,684,151	\$871,611	93.2%
Pre-K	\$1,106,271	\$875,180	\$1,000,000	-12.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$164,742,044</b>	<b>\$155,408,671</b>	<b>\$141,281,748</b>	<b>10.0%</b>

# Budget Summary

	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
Total Operating Expenditures	\$155,408,671	\$141,281,748
Total Operating Revenue	\$155,408,671	\$141,281,748

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# Operating Revenue Snapshot

	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
Total State Aid	\$45,949,949	\$38,465,618
Extraordinary Aid	\$3,500,000	\$1,700,000
Saved funds (fund balance)	\$4,000,000	\$3,645,708
Local Taxes	\$101,603,143	\$97,142,109

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# Financial Impact on Residents

	<b>2023-2024</b>
Total Expenditures General Fund	\$155,408,671
Tax Levy	\$101,603,143
Estimated Increase for Average Home	\$150.92

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# Long-Term Fiscal Health

Restructure middle school schedule for potential implementation 2023-2024  
and high school schedule for potential implementation 2024-2025

Continue scrutinizing every requested purchase

Intensify recruitment of paraprofessionals and faculty

Continue to create programs to keep  
special needs students in their community

Continue evaluating efficiency of personnel

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# HIB Report

March 14, 2023

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# HIB Report

## February 21- March 14

	<b>Founded</b>	<b>Unfounded</b>	<b>2021-2022 (Same Period)</b>
Battle Hill	0	0	0
Burnet Middle	1	0	3 founded
Connecticut	0	0	0
Franklin	0	0	0
Hannah Caldwell	0	0	0

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# HIB Report

## February 21- March 14

	<b>Founded</b>	<b>Unfounded</b>	<b>2021-2022 (Same Period)</b>
Jefferson	0	0	0
Kawameeh Middle	0	0	1 founded
Livingston	0	0	0
Washington	0	0	0
Union High	1	4	3 founded

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