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TO: Omega Brown
FROM: Russell Brown
DATE: 08/30/2010
RE: Closing the Achievement Gap Evaluation

The attached document provides an evaluation of the first three cohorts of the Closing the Achievement Gap (CTAG) program in Cleveland Metropolitan Schools. The evaluation targets five broad target areas for the program including rates of: (1) promotion, (2) attendance, (3) suspension, (4) behaviors leading to expulsion, and (5) proficiency on the Ohio Graduation Tests in reading and mathematics.

Highlights of the evaluation are as follows:

- Students from the first two cohorts of the CTAG program were much more likely than their Cleveland peers to remain in school and advance to their expected grade level than their cohort counterparts who had not participated in the program.
- The first two cohorts of CTAG students had a slight gap in attendance in comparison to their Cleveland peers. The third cohort completed closed the attendance gap and eventually exceeded the attendance rate of all prior comparison groups.
- The CTAG program appeared to be very effective at reducing the disparity in suspension patterns. By the end of the third cohort year, the suspension patterns were significantly lower than those observed in prior years with a clear and consistent decline in the average length of suspension during the program years.
- Serious behaviors that led to expulsion also decreased steadily after the first year of the program. The last cohort (2009-2010) had the absolute lowest number of expulsions and the lowest number of days expelled in comparison to the baseline and prior program years.
- Gaps in achievement between students who participated in the CTAG program were cut in half at the end of the junior year of the program participants.

Metric #1: Promotion status of each of the Closing The Achievement Gap Cohorts

For purposes of a baseline comparison, data was included for the freshman class of 2006-2007. As you can see, nearly 25% of this cohort failed to return in the 2007-2008 academic year, and only 48.52% of this cohort was at or above the expected grade level (sophomore) in the 2007-2008 academic year.

		9th Grade Population	Did not Return	Grade Level 2007-2008				At or Above Expected Grade
				9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	
2006-2007	Whole Group	4151	1024	1113	1958	48	8	2014
			24.67%	26.81%	47.17%	1.16%	0.19%	48.52%

The first Closing The Achievement Gap cohort began in the 2007-2008 academic year. The freshman cohort for this year was comprised of 4280 male students. All subsequent comparisons are based only on the male population for each academic year, and cohort membership has been tracked forward into each subsequent academic year. End of year data has been used for all comparisons to ensure that the comparisons account for the complete academic year and are representative of the summative data provided to the State as part of the reporting of academic accountability. Modeling of promotion status requires a complete second year of data to model accurately; therefore, there is a one year lag in the modeling of the program impact. As such, it is only possible to make complete comparisons of the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 cohorts. A full representation of the impact of the 2009-2010 cohort can be made available at the conclusion of the 2010-2011 academic year.

The original cohort for the program had 1250 students who had been identified as being at risk of academic failure. The original criteria for selection included: (1) poor academic performance, (2) poor attendance, (3) behavior challenges/suspensions, and (4) being overage for the given grade level. The remaining male students (3030) from the 2007-2008 class acted as the comparison for the first cohort of the Closing The Achievement Gap (CTAG) program.

		9th Grade Population	Did not Return	Grade Level 2008-2009				At or Above Expected Grade	
				9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade		
2007-2008 Cohort	CTAG 1	1250	115	360	768	7		775	
			9.20%	28.80%	61.44%	0.56%	0.00%	62.00%	
	Non-CTAG	3030	1173	551	1230	72	4	1306	
			38.71%	18.18%	40.59%	2.38%	0.13%	43.10%	
			9th Grade Population	Did not Return	Grade Level 2009-2010				At or Above Expected Grade
					9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	
	CTAG 1	1250	346	93	279	518	14	811	
			27.68%	7.44%	22.32%	41.44%	1.12%	64.88%	
	Non-CTAG	3030	1633	146	330	806	115	1251	
			53.89%	4.82%	10.89%	26.60%	3.80%	41.29%	

As a whole, the freshman class of 2007-2008 advanced at a rate that was comparable to that of the 2006-2007 cohort. In 2007-2008, 48.52% of the 9th grade class of 2006-2007 was at or above sophomore status. In 2008-2009, 48.62% of the 2007-2008 cohort was at or above sophomore status. On the surface, it would appear that advancement remained quite stable and low across these years. Disaggregation of the data paints a substantially different picture of the outcome of the 2007-2008 academic year.

Students in the CTAG program were significantly more likely to be both enrolled and at or above the expected grade level in the 2008-2009 academic year. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the CTAG students had advanced one or more grade levels while only 43% of their counterparts had advanced.

In addition, students in the CTAG program were much more likely to have continued in school. Only 9.1% of the first CTAG cohort did not return in the 2008-2009 year. On the other hand, nearly 4 in 10 of the non-CTAG students failed to return for the 2008-2009 academic year.

This pattern carried forward to the 2009-2010 year as well. At the end of the 2009-2010, 811 of the original 1250 (64.88%) first cohort CTAG students were at or above their expected grade level. On the other hand, only 41.29% of the remaining male students in this cohort were on track. Likewise, CTAG students were simply much more likely to still be in school with 72.3% continuing their enrollment in Cleveland Metropolitan Schools. Only 46.11% of the remaining male students from this cohort remained enrolled during the 2009-2010 academic year.

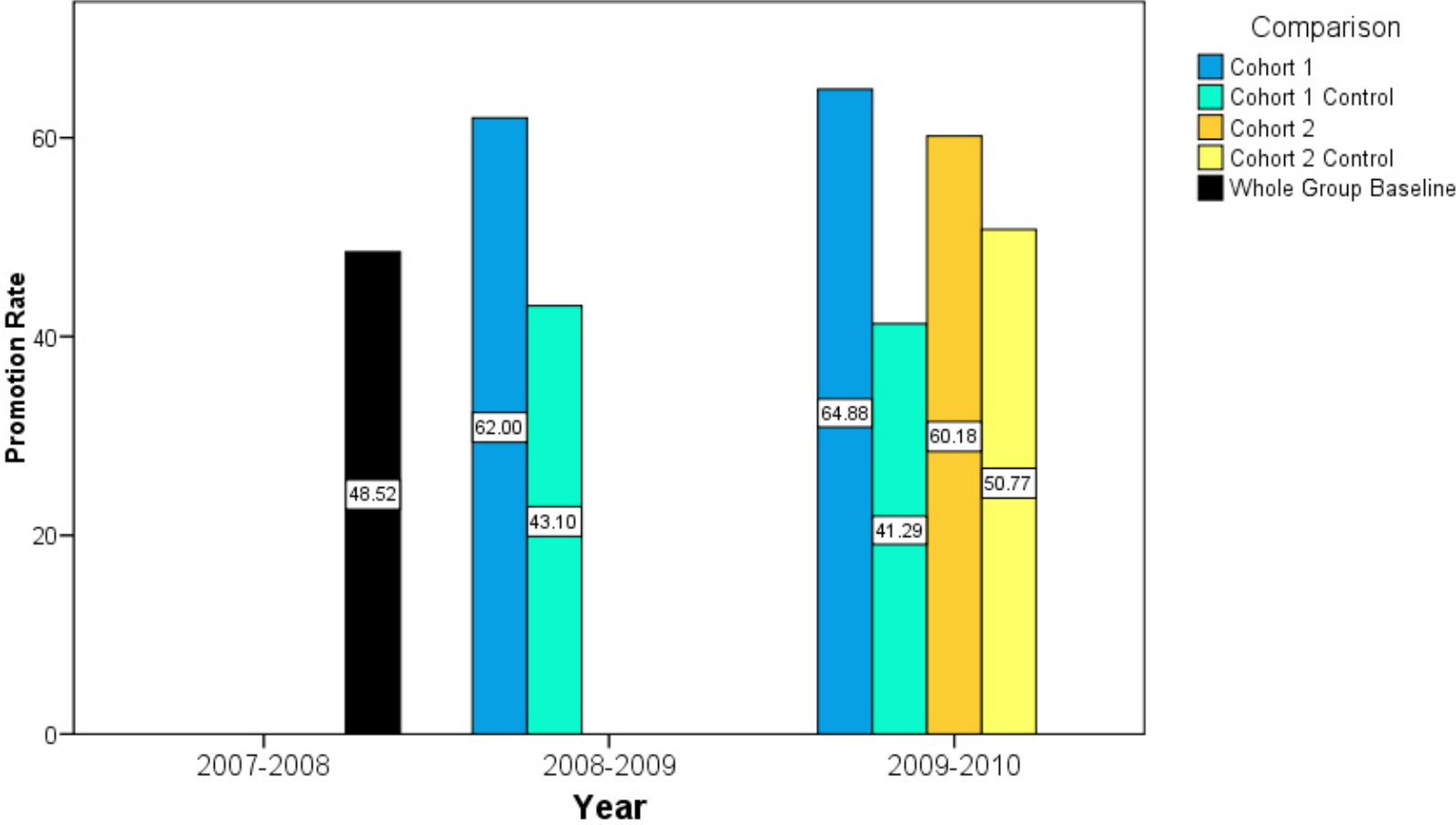
In the 2008-2009 academic year, the second cohort of Closing The Achievement Gap program entered 9th grade. As with the first cohort, these students were selected based on risk factors including: (1) poor academic performance, (2) poor attendance, (3) behavior challenges/suspensions, and (4) being overage for the given grade level. This freshman cohort was comprised of 3744 male students, and the CTAG group represented 1085 of these students. As with their predecessors, the second cohort of the CTAG program outperformed the remaining male students in their cohort.

		9th Grade Population	Did not Return	Grade Level 2009-2010				At or Above Expected Grade
				9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade	
2008-2009 Cohort	CTAG 2	1085	167	265	649	4	0	653
			15.39%	24.42%	59.82%	0.37%	0.00%	60.18%
	Non-CTAG	2659	848	461	1315	31	4	1350
			31.89%	17.34%	49.45%	1.17%	0.15%	50.77%

In 2009-2010, 53.5% of the 9th grade class of 2007-2008 was at or above sophomore status. Students in the CTAG program continued to be significantly more likely to be both enrolled and at or above the expected grade level. Sixty percent (actually 60.18%) of the CTAG students had advanced one or more grade levels while only 50.77% of their counterparts had advanced.

In addition, students in the CTAG program were much more likely to have continued in school. Only 15.39% of the second CTAG cohort did not return in the 2009-2010 year. While 31.89% of the non-CTAG students failed to return for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Promotion Rates by Cohort over Time



The stated goal of this program was, at minimum, to close the gap between this at risk population and the population as a whole. For the first 2 cohorts, the CTAG program has not only closed the promotion and retention gap but has, instead, substantially outperformed the comparison student cohorts as well as the baseline data from the 2006-2007 cohort. The CTAG students who had been identified, in part, due to poor patterns of promotion and retention were, at the conclusion of the 2009-2010, simply much more likely to be enrolled and at grade level than comparison male peers who had not had the opportunity to participate in CTAG.

Metric #2: Attendance patterns of each of the Closing The Achievement Gap Cohorts

The second metric was directly tied to one of the identifying characteristics of the students who were selected to participate in the CTAG program. Attendance patterns have consistently proven to be correlated to academic success in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. The CTAG students were identified based on poor patterns of attendance and were clearly at risk of continued attendance problems, non-achievement, and dropping out.

Attendance patterns for 9th grade males are problematic for the State as a whole. The State target for attendance is 93%. The State did not meet this benchmark in the baseline year prior to the CTAG program or in any subsequent year.

State Attendance Patterns for 9th Grade Males			
2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
91.40%	91.40%	91.70%	92.00%

In the 2006-2007 academic year, the attendance rate for all 9th grade male students who were enrolled in Cleveland Metropolitan Schools at any point during the academic year was 81.69%. In the following year, the attendance rate for 9th grade males was 79.49%. There was no practically significant difference in attendance between the first cohort of CTAG participants and their matched counterparts who did not receive program services. The first cohort of CTAG students had effectively closed the attendance gap with their peers.

Year	Comparison	Days Enrolled	Days Attended	Proportion of Days Attended
2006-2007	Baseline Data	543892	444316	81.69%
2007-2008	CTAG 1	202632	161002	79.46%
	Cohort 1 Comparison	324605	258102	79.51%

In the subsequent year, the sophomore CTAG students improved upon their attendance as did their comparison counterparts. At the conclusion of the year, the gap in attendance between CTAG students and their counterparts had grown by 2.41%.

Year	Comparison	Days Enrolled	Days Attended	Proportion of Days Attended
2008-2009	CTAG 1	123514	103679	83.94%
	Cohort 1 Comparison	183174	158163	86.35%
2009-2010	CTAG 1	72846	62249	85.45%
	Cohort 1 Comparison	110018	96696	87.89%

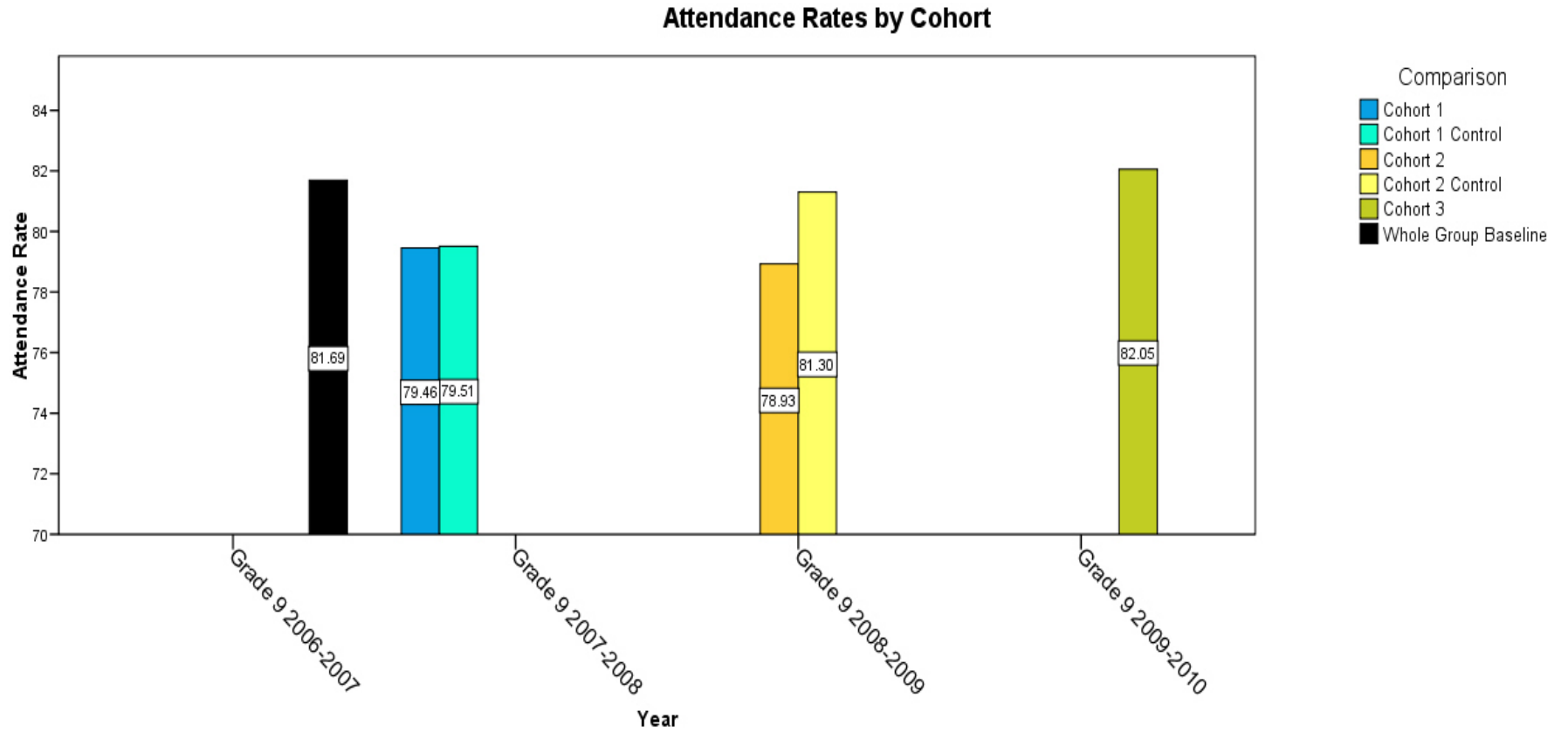
As juniors, the cohort continued to improve upon their attendance. The gap in attendance between first cohort of CTAG students and their comparison counterparts remained relatively stable through this academic year.

Year	Comparison	Days Enrolled	Days Attended	Proportion of Days Attended
2006-2007	Baseline Data	543892	444316	81.69%
2007-2008	Whole Group	527237	419104	79.49%
	CTAG 1	202632	161002	79.46%
2009-2010	CTAG 2	170466	134546	78.93%
	Cohort 2 Comparison	318058	258593	81.30%
2009-2010	CTAG 2	87012	73886	84.91%
	Cohort 2 Comparison	173223	151588	87.51%

The second cohort of CTAG students had a very similar pattern of attendance. As with the first cohort, the CTAG students of the second cohort largely closed the attendance gap with their peers and maintained this into their sophomore year. At the conclusion of the sophomore year, the CTAG students had a cumulative attendance rate that was 2.6% lower than their peers. This translates to approximately 5 days of additional non-attendance, on average, for each of the CTAG students in comparison to their peers who did not participate in the program.

While the first two cohorts of the CTAG program targeted at risk students, the third cohort targeted the entire male population of the incoming freshman class of 2009-2010. This cohort of students demonstrated the highest attendance rate for 9th grade male students from the baseline year to the present with 82.05% cumulative attendance for the 2009-2010 academic year. This cohort has closed

the gap between Cleveland Metropolitan School District and the State, as a whole, by nearly 1.3% in one year. This would translate to an average improvement of attendance of approximately 2 days per male student in 9th grade for Cleveland Metropolitan School District.



Metric #3: Suspension patterns of each of the Closing The Achievement Gap Cohorts

The CTAG program began during the year of Success Tech High School Shooting. Following this event, there was a strong upward swing in suspensions across the District. In the 2006-2007 academic year, there were 1673 suspensions of 9th grade males students. This translates to 1.79 days of suspension per every 9th grade male student in the 2006-2007 academic year.

In 2007-2008, the proportion of days suspended per 9th grade male student increased to 2.99 with a total of 2995 suspensions on record. A large number of the CTAG students were suspended (1419) during this year with an average of 2.95 days of suspension for each student in the CTAG program. The length of a suspension is proportional to the infraction with more egregious infractions commanding longer periods of suspension. Students in the comparison group were suspended for significantly longer periods of time in the 2007-2008 academic year than their CTAG counterparts. As sophomores and juniors, the groups achieved parity in the length of the average suspension with the overall number of suspensions decreasing substantially for both the CTAG and comparison groups over time.

	Year	Comparison	Count	Days	Days per Suspension	Days per Student
Grade 9	2006-2007	Baseline Data	1673	7426	4.44	1.79
Grade 9	2007-2008	CTAG 1	1419	3682	2.59	2.95
	2007-2008	Cohort 1 Comparison	1576	6590	4.18	2.17
Grade 10	2008-2009	CTAG 1	647	2780	4.30	3.62
	2008-2009	Cohort 1 Comparison	625	2626	4.20	2.13
Grade 11	2009-2010	CTAG 1	201	820	4.08	1.58
	2009-2010	Cohort 1 Comparison	180	789	4.38	0.98

The second cohort of CTAG students had an initially higher rate of suspension than their peers in the first cohort. In 9th grade, the second cohort students were suspended for a total of 1603 days in comparison to 1419 days for their first year counterparts. While there was an increase in the rate of suspension, the average length of suspension was similar to the previous year and was similar to that observed in the comparison groups for both years.

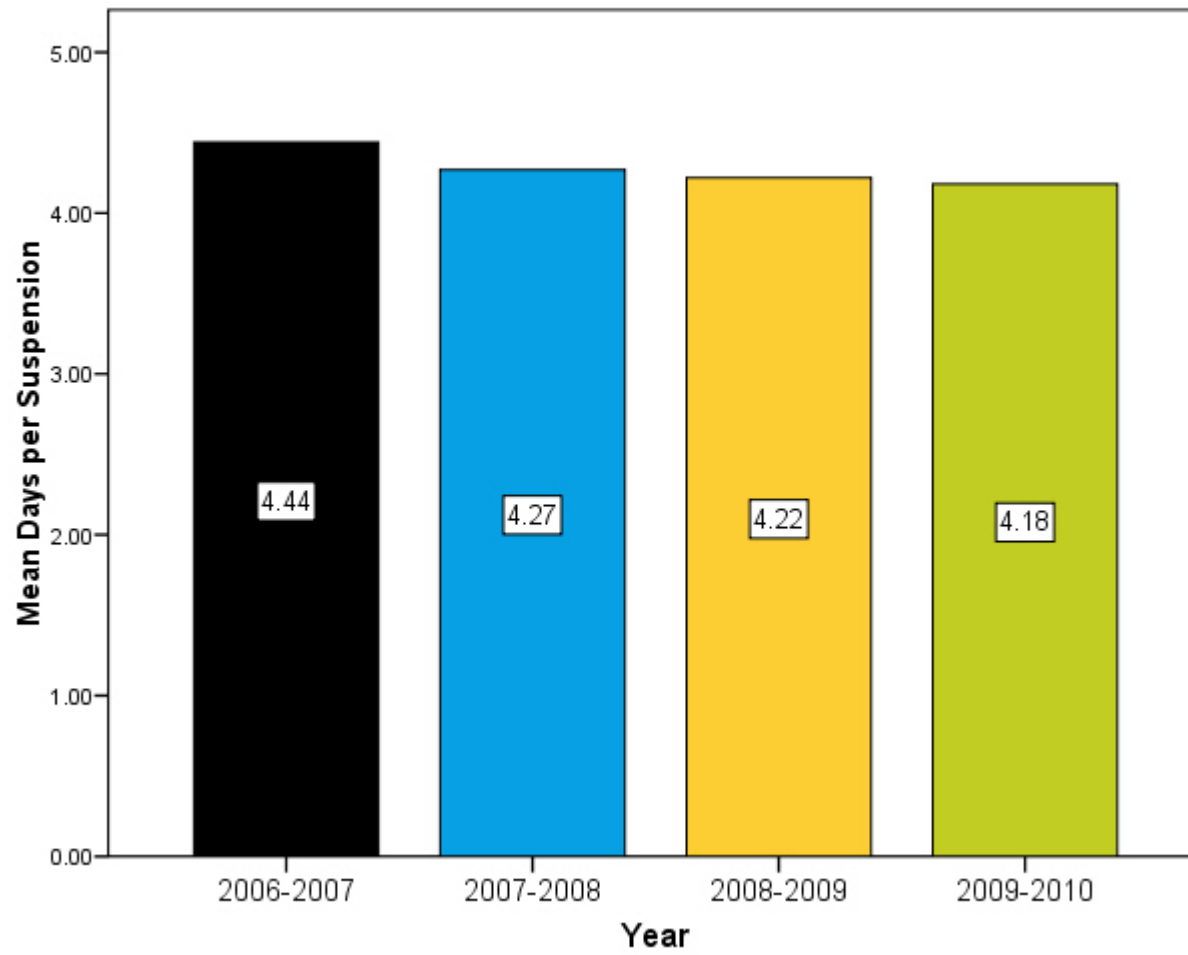
In their sophomore year, the second cohort students showed a substantial improvement in behavior having lower rates of suspension than either their comparison group or the original CTAG population as sophomores.

	Year	Comparison	Count	Days	Days per Suspension	Days per Student
Grade 9	2006-2007	Baseline Data	1673	7426	4.44	1.79
Grade 9	2007-2008	CTAG 1	1419	3682	2.59	2.95
Grade 9	2008-2009	CTAG 2	1603	6604	4.12	6.09
	2008-2009	Cohort 2 Comparison	2127	9149	4.30	3.44
Grade 10	2009-2010	CTAG 2	382	1799	4.71	2.77
	2009-2010	Cohort 2 Comparison	423	1910	4.52	1.45

The third cohort of the CTAG program encompassed the entire male 9th grade population in the 2009-2010 year. Despite reaching a larger group, the rates of suspension actually decreased substantially in the 2009-2010 academic year. The overall number of suspensions (1641) was lower than any of the previous years in the comparison and, perhaps more importantly, average days of suspension per student enrolled was significantly lower than each of the prior cohort years and approached parity with the baseline year of 2006-2007. Over the period of the CTAG program, there was a steady decrease in the average length of a suspension which would suggest that the egregiousness of the offenses also declined over time.

	Year	Comparison	Count	Days	Days per Suspension	Days per Student
Grade 9	2006-2007	Baseline Data	1673	7426	4.44	1.79
Grade 9	2007-2008	Whole Group	2995	12791	4.27	2.99
Grade 9	2008-2009	Whole Group	3730	15753	4.22	4.21
Grade 9	2009-2010	Whole Group	1641	6864	4.18	2.02

Average Length of Suspension for 9th Grade Students by Cohort



Metric #4: Behavior patterns (serious behavior incidents leading to expulsion) of each of the Closing The Achievement Gap Cohorts

Again, it is worth noting that the CTAG program began during the year of Success Tech High School Shooting. In the 2007-2008 academic year, the number of expulsions in the District nearly doubled from the prior year going from 66 to 111 expulsions. Despite the risk factors that were used for the selection of the first cohort of the CTAG program, the first cohort of CTAG students were not over-represented among the students suspended. Instead, there was virtual parity between the CTAG students and their matched cohort in the proportional number of serious behavior incidents leading to expulsions in the 2007-2008 academic year. In their sophomore year, the CTAG cohort actually had a lower rate of expulsion in comparison to their peers who had not participated in the program. As juniors, the first cohort of the CTAG program continued to near parity with their first cohort peers who had not participated in the program. For both groups, the rates of expulsion steadily dropped as the students moved forward academically.

	Year	Comparison	Count	Days	Enrollment	Proportion of Students Expelled
Grade 9	2006-2007	Baseline Data	66	5105	4151	1.59%
Grade 9	2007-2008	CTAG 1	34	3682	1250	2.72%
	2007-2008	Cohort 1 Comparison	77	6590	3030	2.54%
Grade 10	2008-2009	CTAG 1	3	91	768	0.39%
	2008-2009	Cohort 1 Comparison	19	1532	1230	1.54%
Grade 11	2009-2010	CTAG 1	6	440	518	1.16%
	2009-2010	Cohort 1 Comparison	8	430	806	0.99%

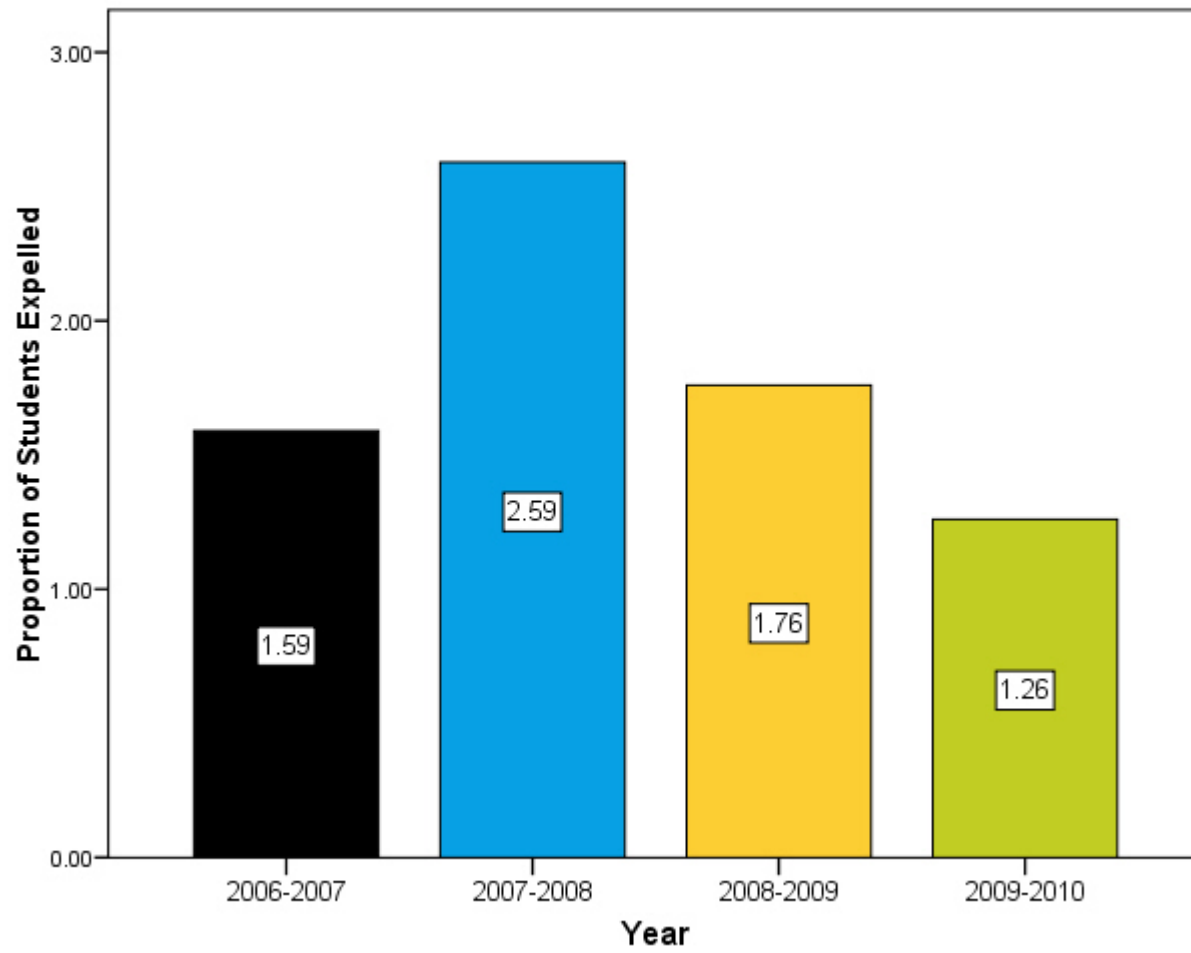
The second cohort of CTAG students began with a lower rate of behaviors that led to expulsion in comparison to the first cohort of the CTAG program. As freshman, only 2% of the students in the CTAG program were expelled. As with the previous cohort, serious behaviors that led to expulsion decreased as the second cohort of CTAG students moved from 9th to 10th grade. As sophomores, the second cohort CTAG students actually had an overall lower rate of expulsion than their peers. Expulsion rates were also lower for their matched peers.

	Year	Comparison	Count	Days	Enrollment	Proportion of the Students Expelled
Grade 9	2006-2007	Baseline Data	66	5105	4151	1.59%
Grade 9	2007-2008	Whole Group	111	10272	4280	2.59%
Grade 9	2008-2009	CTAG 2	22	1440	1085	2.03%
	2008-2009	Cohort 2 Comparison	44	4392	2659	1.65%
Grade 10	2009-2010	CTAG 2	9	650	649	1.39%
	2009-2010	Cohort 2 Comparison	25	1780	1315	1.90%

There was a steady pattern in the decline of the rate of serious incidents that led to expulsion following the 2007-2008 academic year. In the third year of the CTAG program, the final cohort demonstrated the absolute lowest rate of serious incidents leading to expulsion both in number of incidents and number of incidents per student enrolled.

	Year	Comparison	Count	Days	Enrollment	Proportion of the Students Expelled
Grade 9	2006-2007	Baseline Data	66	5105	4151	1.59%
Grade 9	2007-2008	Whole Group	111	10272	4280	2.59%
Grade 9	2008-2009	Whole Group	66	5832	3744	1.76%
Grade 9	2009-2010	Whole Group	43	2797	3405	1.26%

Expulsion Rates by Whole Cohort over Time



Metric #5: Academic success as measured by performance on the Ohio Graduation Tests for Closing the Achievement Gap program participants.

The Ohio Graduation Tests are administered to students at the end of their sophomore year. As one of the components necessary for graduation, passage of these tests is a core indicator of progress toward graduation. The first cohort of the CTAG program sat for the Ohio Graduation tests in the spring of the 2008-2009 academic year. Again, it is worth noting that the students for this program were selected, in part, to poor historical academic performance. The following provides a trend of the proficiency rates of this cohort as they moved forward into their junior year. A similar comparison will be made as each cohort progresses through their academic career. The Ohio Graduation Test results are returned in five performance levels which are listed below in descending order of achievement:

1. Advanced
2. Accelerated
3. Proficient
4. Basic
5. Limited

Students in the top three performance levels are considered to be proficient in the subject area measured and have thereby met the testing requirements for graduation in that subject area.

		Reading Proficiency Levels for Sophomores in 2008-2009											
		Advanced		Accelerated		Proficient		Basic		Limited		Untested	
Proficiency Rate		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
CTAG 1	53.87%	12	1.75	91	13.28	266	38.83	144	21.02	159	23.21	13	1.90
Matched Cohort	64.02%	74	7.52	175	17.78	381	38.72	153	15.55	187	19.00	14	1.42
Total	59.86%	86	5.15	266	15.94	647	38.77	297	17.80	346	20.73	27	1.62

As can be seen above, the CTAG students began with an achievement gap in reading at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year relative to their male peers who had not participated in the program.

		Mathematics Proficiency Levels for Sophomores in 2008-2009											
		Advanced		Accelerated		Proficient		Basic		Limited		Untested	
Proficiency Rate		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
CTAG 1	51.09%	55	8.03	101	14.74	194	28.32	121	17.66	202	29.49	12	1.75
Matched Cohort	59.15%	158	16.06	188	19.11	236	23.98	145	14.74	246	25.00	11	1.12
Total	55.84%	213	12.76	289	17.32	430	25.76	266	15.94	448	26.84	23	1.38

A similar pattern emerged with mathematics as well. An achievement gap was observed in mathematics at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year between the CTAG cohort and their matched peers.

As can be seen below, the gaps between the CTAG cohort and their matched peers in the District closed substantially as the students moved forward into their junior year of high school. This was true for both reading and mathematics. In both subject areas, the CTAG students cut the achievement gap in half as they moved ahead academically.

		Reading Proficiency Levels for Juniors in 2009-2010											
		Advanced		Accelerated		Proficient		Basic		Limited		Untested	
Proficiency Rate		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
CTAG 1	65.80%	13	1.88	91	13.13	352	50.79	120	17.32	108	15.58	9	1.30
Matched Cohort	71.47%	75	7.40	181	17.87	468	46.20	125	12.34	146	14.41	18	1.78
Total	69.17%	88	5.16	272	15.94	820	48.07	245	14.36	254	14.89	27	1.58

		Mathematics Proficiency Levels for Juniors in 2009-2010											
		Advanced		Accelerated		Proficient		Basic		Limited		Untested	
Proficiency Rate		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
CTAG 1	60.17%	55	7.94	108	15.58	254	36.65	112	16.16	155	22.37	9	1.30
Matched Cohort	64.26%	161	15.89	192	18.95	298	29.42	145	14.31	206	20.34	11	1.09
Total	62.60%	216	12.66	300	17.58	552	32.36	257	15.06	361	21.16	20	1.17