



AWC EXPANSION

Mary Driscoll, Principal Leader
Karla Estrada, Deputy Superintendent

Presentation to Opportunity and Achievement Gap Task Force
December 15, 2015

Context

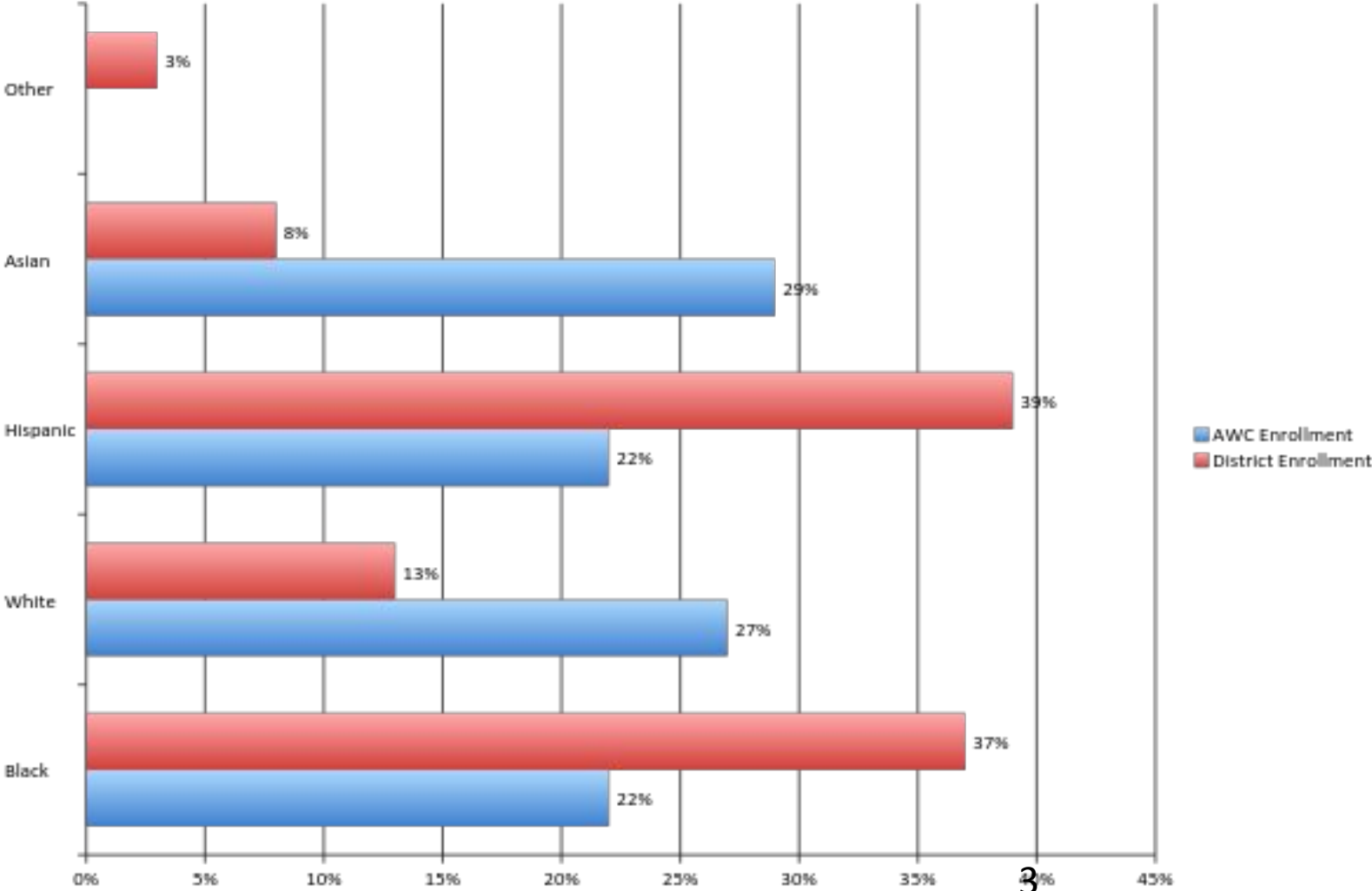
From the 100 Day Plan:

We will address opportunity and achievement gaps from the earliest stages of learning through graduation. Our students' futures depend on it.

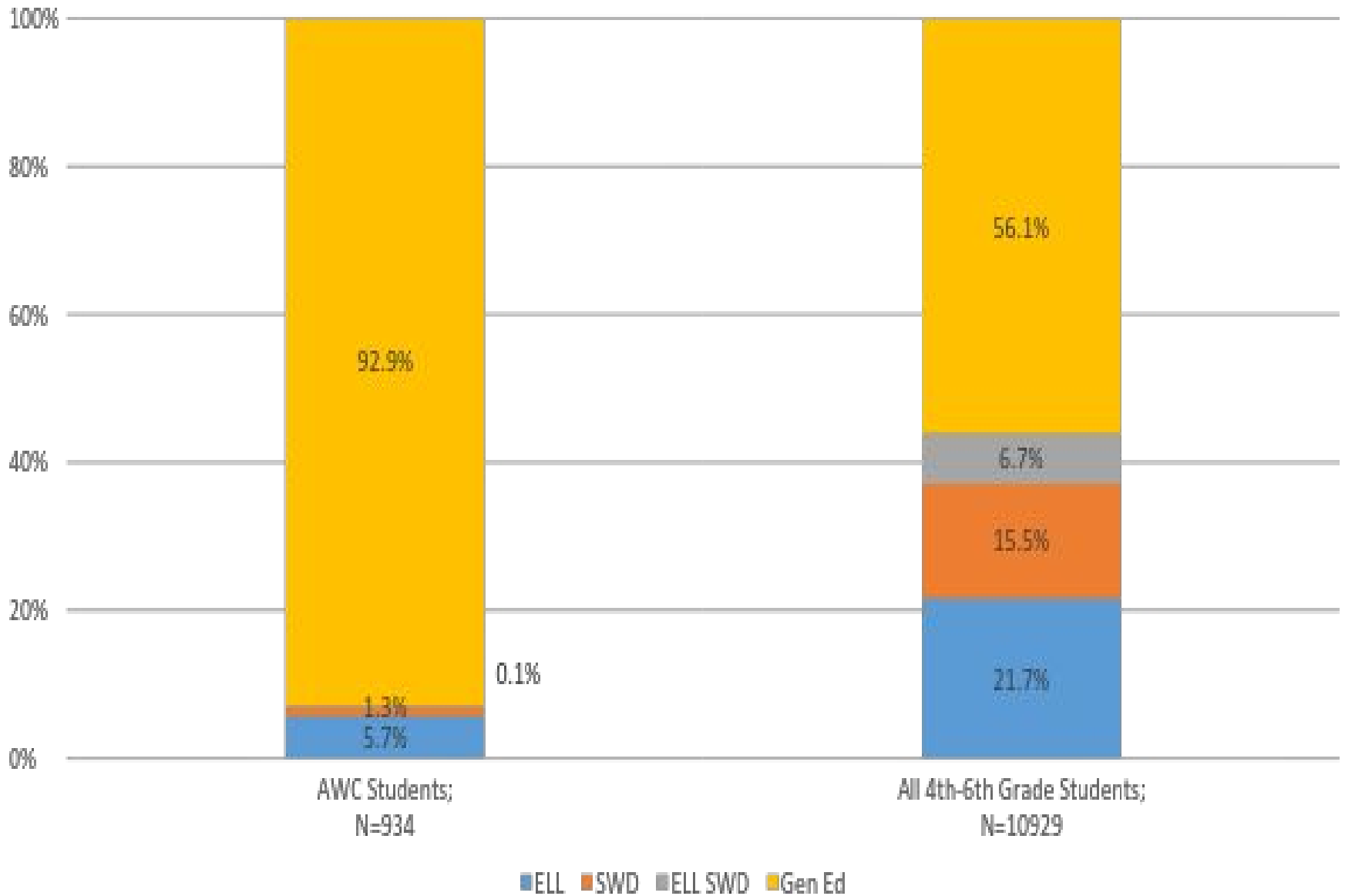
- **Project:** Create a plan to expand AWC to all students who wish to enroll and submit the preliminary plan to the Boston School Committee's newly created Opportunity and Achievement Gap Task Force for review.
- **Timeline:** Research began on October 13, 2015. Presentation to Opportunity and Achievement Gap Task Force- December 15, 2015.

Enrollment in AWC is not representative of BPS Demographics

District vs. AWC Enrollment SY 14/15

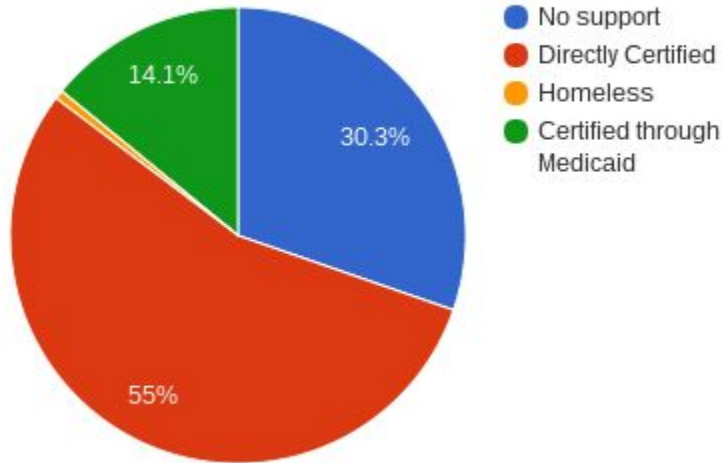


SY15-16 Subgroup Enrollment in AWC vs. Subgroup Enrollment in BPS 4th-6th Grades

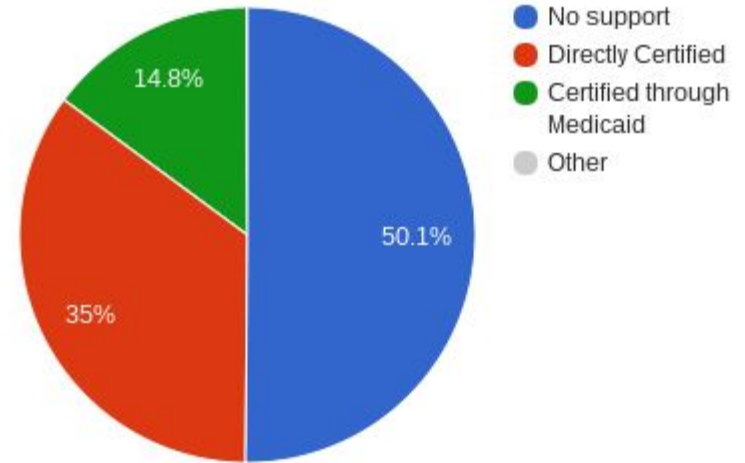


Low SES students are under-represented in AWC

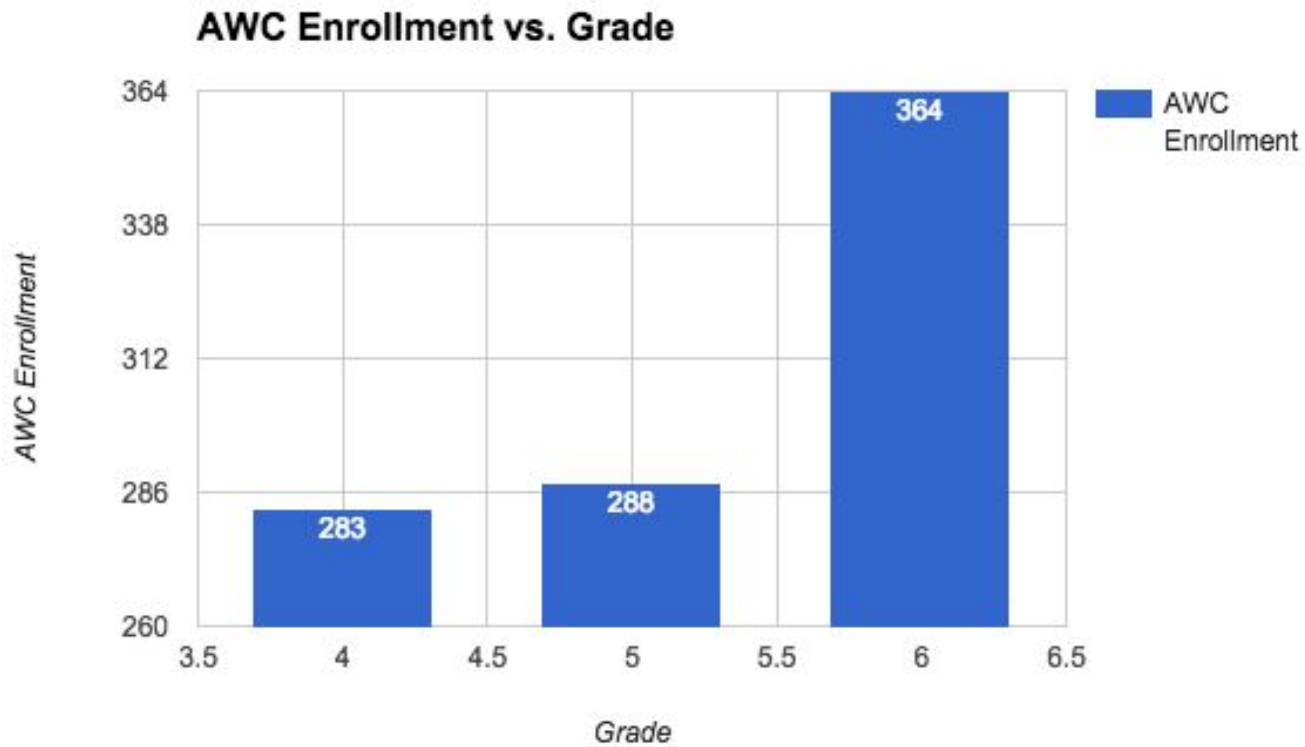
Percentage of BPS Students Receiving State or Federal Benefits



Percentage of AWC Students Receiving State or Federal Benefits



AWC Enrollment Represents less than 9% of all students in grades 4, 5 and 6



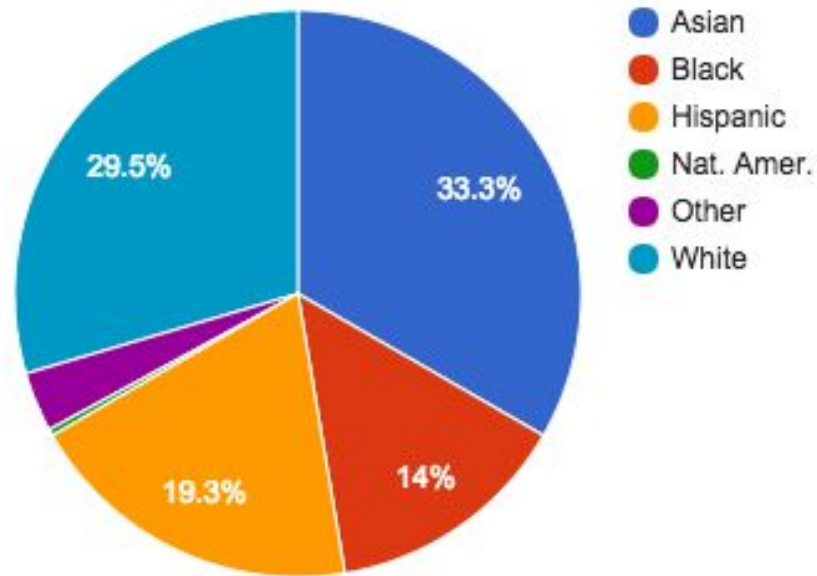
Exam School Enrollment Analysis

There are 813 students in the 7th grade at exam schools in 2015-2016

- 57% came from BPS classrooms
 - 25% came from AWC classrooms
 - 32% came from non-AWC classrooms in BPS
- 43% came from outside the district

Exam School Enrollment Analysis

AWC students entering Exam Schools at 7th Grade Fall 2015



Patterns and Themes from Listening Sessions

The AWC Project reviewed the data from Superintendent's Listen and Learn Tour and heard directly from AWC parents, teachers and principals. Some key themes that emerged include:

- AWC **provides** a level of **differentiation and challenge** for high achieving students.
- AWC emphasizes **extension and enrichment** over acceleration.
- AWC classes provide a **close-knit community** of learners.
- The AWC experience provides the **organizational** and **study skills** and the **stamina** necessary to be successful at BPS exam schools.
- The current AWC selection system leads to classrooms that are more **segregated by race and class** than typical BPS classrooms.
- The current practice of grouping high achieving students in separate classrooms is **inconsistent with** the district's commitment to expansion of **inclusive practices**.

Myths and Facts about AWC

Myth: The AWC curriculum is different than the general education curriculum

Fact: Since the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, the general education curriculum and the current district AWC curriculum have become nearly identical.

Myth: There are not enough AWC seats available for all the students who are invited to enroll

Fact: There are under-enrolled AWC classrooms, some with almost half the seats unfilled.

Myth: AWC is the only path to a seat in an exam school.

Fact: In the fall of 2015 **467 BPS students** entered exam schools as 7th graders. **210** came from AWC classrooms, **257** came from non-AWC classrooms .

Recommendation: Establish a “Name Here” Pilot Cohort of 5 - 10 schools

- *Professional Development* for Principals, Teachers, Paraprofessionals, and Parent/Students that will build capacity to lead with rigor while understanding the diverse learning and social emotional needs of the classroom.
- *Personalized learning* that allows all students to access the Common Core Standards at their level of readiness.
- *Social Emotional Learning* that assesses and teaches grit, executive functioning skills and growth mindset.
- *Enrichment Opportunities (In and out of school time)* for students possibly including foreign language instruction, robotics, arts, advanced math, coding and programming etc.

Additional Recommendations

- review the effectiveness of the pilot cohort in closing the achievement gap after one year with an eye towards the next phase of expansion
- continue offering students the opportunity to enroll in the current AWC model while the pilot is developed
- review the current process for enrolling students in existing AWC classrooms and moving wait lists
- review the curriculum in existing AWC classrooms including social emotional and executive functioning skills

Additional Recommendations

- reinvigorate the Exam School Initiative targeting students of color in under-represented schools for preparation to take the ISEE
- increase opportunities for **all** teachers in grades 4-6 to build skills in providing rigorous Common Core instruction
- launch a district initiative aimed at reading and writing by grade 2 for all students
- continue the public conversation about the equity issues connected to this topic

Team

Executive sponsor:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karla Estrada
Project lead(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Driscoll • Kelly Hung
Team members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erik Berg • Rayna Briceno • Craig Lankhorst • Kim Rice • Al Taylor • Richard Weir
Others involved:	<p>Focus Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julia Bott, Principal of Mendall • Jeremy Nesso, Parent • Roseanne Tung, Researcher for Annenberg • Lauren Clark-Mason, AWC Teacher <p>Community Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City-Wide Parent Council • SPED- PAC • BSAC • Greater Boston Latino Network • Engagement Office • AWC teachers and parents

Highlights from the Journey

Bright spots

- Multiple Opportunities for diverse Community feedback (in concert with Mass Core Project)
- External Partners ready to help with Funding for professional development
- Enthusiasm and optimism for expansion
- This has brought attention to rigor and conversations about rigor
- We have nontraditional AWC programs achieving success (Taylor and Mildred)
- Non-AWC classrooms and schools (Manning, Elliott, Mendell, Kilmer, Lyndon, Hale, and Roosevelt to name a few) holding on to families.

Risks

- Some families may feel that they are losing in this expansion.
- Moving too fast and not creating a high quality product or
- Being too cautious and perpetuating the achievement/opportunity gap.
- As a district we do not have a common understanding of rigor
- Concerns over being able to effectively differentiate all the needs in the classroom as we are raising rigor
- Limited resources might undermine our success