

# Transformative Education:

Freshman Curriculum Conversation  
October 2 & 3, 2019



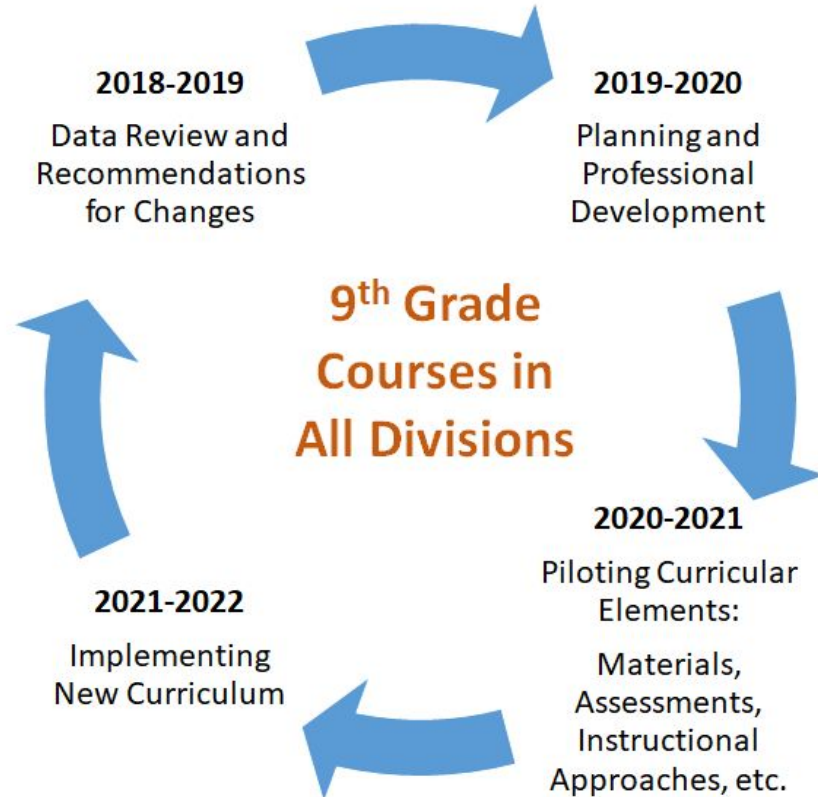
Oak Park and River Forest  
High School

# OPRF Mission and Vision

**Mission:** We will provide a dynamic, supportive learning environment that cultivates knowledge, skills, and character and strives for equity and excellence for ***all*** students.

**Vision:** We will become an ever-improving model of equity and excellence that will enable ***all*** students to achieve their full potential.

# Curriculum Evaluation Process



## Recommendations Included:

- **Implementing Writing Portfolios**
- **Standardizing Rubrics**
- **Adopting More Culturally Responsive Texts**
- **Researching and Implementing New Grading Practices**
- **...many others**

# Beyond Curriculum Evaluation

**There is a significant overlap** between the performance of College Prep and Honors students during freshman year.

In order to ensure **ALL students** have fair access to a curriculum that appropriately challenges them, we determined that **curricular changes to freshman year were not enough.**

Our **system of sorting students** needed to be examined and altered as well.

# Equity & Excellence thru Access

Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, freshmen will no longer be separated into class levels of college preparatory or honors.

Instead, ***all students*** will have the chance to earn honors credit through **one, high-level, rigorous curriculum.**

## Which Divisions?

English, history,  
science, and world  
languages

## What about math?

Revising our curriculum  
to strengthen course  
offerings

## Which grades?

9th Grade

# Themes

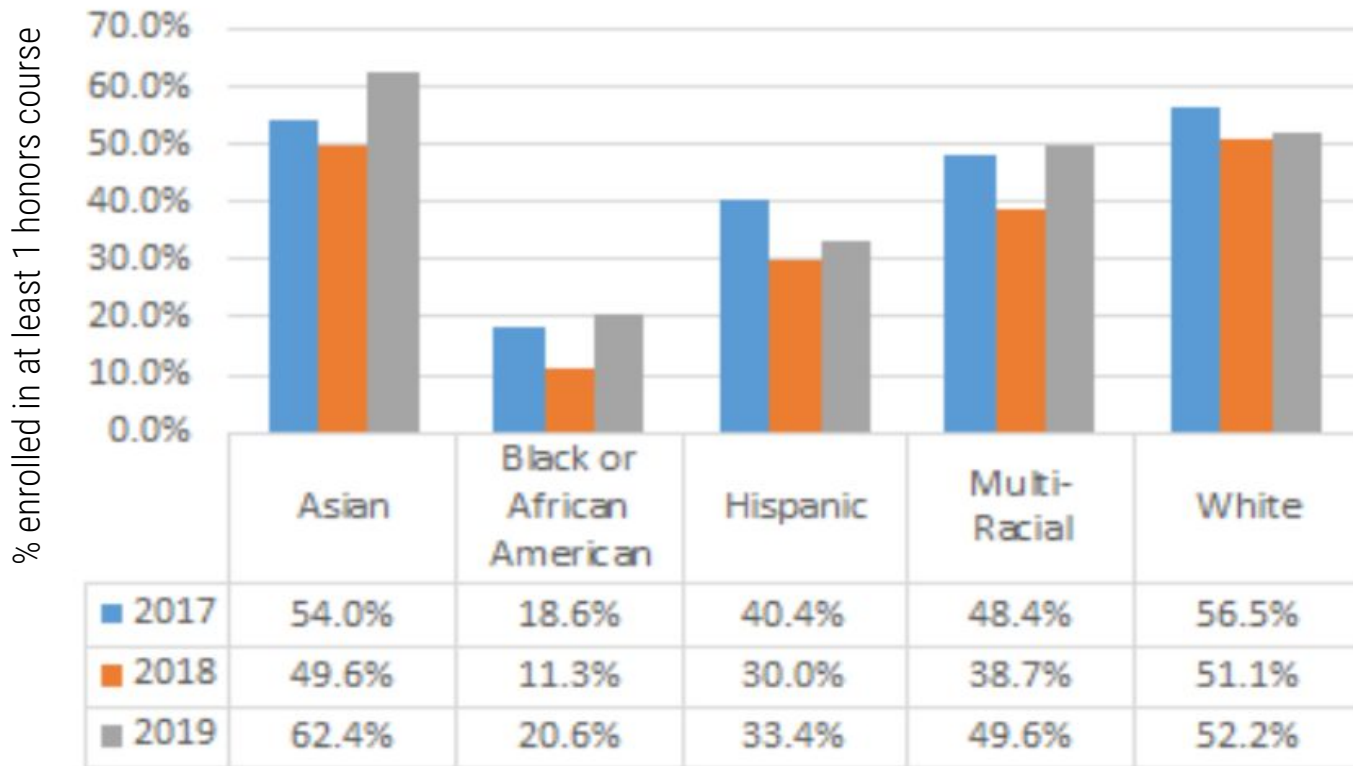
1. Does the Evidence Support the Work?
2. Does the Solution Fit the Challenge?
3. What Effect Will this Have on Our Students?

# What's the Basis for this Decision?

1. There is a significant opportunity gap between our White students and our Black and Brown students relative to Honors enrollment.

**Opportunity Gap: The fact that the circumstances in which we are born (race, ethnicity, zip code, socio-economic status, etc.) too often define the different opportunities that are available to people throughout their lifetimes.**

# 9th Grade Honors Enrollment within Racial/Ethnic Groups



*The gap between access to honors credits for our White students and our Black/African American students is 31.6% and 18.8% for Latinx students.*



# What's the Basis for this Decision?

1. There is a significant opportunity gap between our White students and our Black and Brown students relative to Honors enrollment.
  - For our Black/African American students the gap is 31.6%
  - For our Latinx students it is 18.8%
2. The gap is growing while students are with us.
  - Growth rates vary significantly as measured by PSAT performance
  - These differing rates of growth result in expanded gaps within each class (Board Presentation, 12.11.2018)

# SAT Suite of Assessments--Spring 2018

Expected  
Growth:  
23.07

**EBRW**

**Growth Points from PSAT 8/9 to PSAT 10**

Student Group	Growth in Points
Asian students	46.5
Black students	27.1
Multi-Racial students	31.8
Hispanic Students	32.5
White Students	33.5
Overall	32.9

Expected  
Growth:  
27.23

**Math**

**Growth Points from PSAT 8/9 to PSAT 10**

Student Group	Growth in Points
Asian students	21.6
Black students	22.4
Multi-Racial students	16.3
Hispanic Students	27.2
White Students	33.7
Overall	29.1

# What's the Basis for this Decision?

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2. The gap is growing while students are with us.
  - Growth rates vary significantly as measured by PSAT performance
  - These differing rates of growth result in expanded gaps within each class (Board Presentation, 12.11.2018)
3. **There is a significant overlap** between the performance of College Prep and Honors students during freshman year.

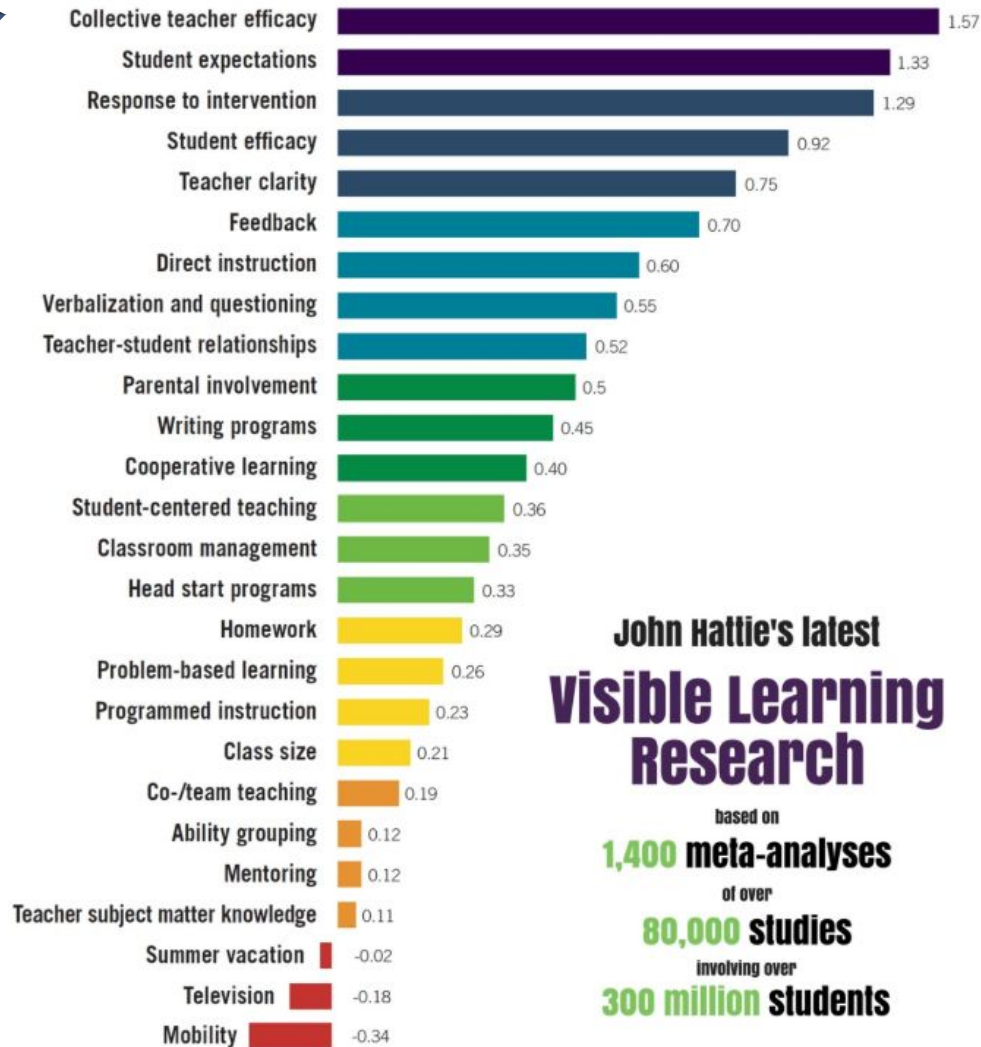
# What's the Basis for this Decision?

**There is a significant overlap** between the performance of College Prep and Honors students during freshman year.

- On Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (PSAT), 69% of our College Prep students perform within the range set by 95% of our Honors students (470-700)
  - ▶ **69% = 219 students**
  - ▶ 179 of them earned an A or B in English
  - ▶ 70 of these students are Black/African American or Latinx
- 84% of our College Prep students perform at the College Readiness Benchmark set by the College Board (410)
  - ▶ **84% = 317 students**
  - ▶ 244 of them earned an A or B in English
  - ▶ 111 of these students are Black/African American or Latinx

# What the Research Tells Us

- **Tracking is linked to lower overall performance** and achievement for students of color.  
*(Hanushek & Wößmann, 2005; Oakes, Wells, Jones, and Datnow, 1997)*
- **Benefits of providing access** to rigorous curriculum is evidenced in several studies.  
[\(See district resources\)](#)
- **Choice does not** lead to more equitable outcomes.  
*(Yonezawa, Wells, and Serna, 2002)*
- Other schools have found **no detrimental effects** on high achieving students.  
*(Bavis, 2016, Burris, 2008, Burris, Heubert, & Levin, 2006)*



Taken from John Hattie's *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*

John Hattie's latest  
**Visible Learning Research**

based on  
**1,400 meta-analyses**  
of over  
**80,000 studies**  
involving over  
**300 million students**

**>0.40 = student learning accelerates**

**0.40 = a year's worth of learning occurs within one school year**

**< 0.00 = student learning is negatively affected**

# What About Evanston?

- **Effect on Achievement Scores**

- ▶ % of students earning a 24 or higher on ACT improved significantly from 2011-2015
- ▶ Percent meeting/exceeding state standards improved during this same window

- **National Merit Semifinalists**

- ▶ 2011: 12
- ▶ 2012: 12
- ▶ 2013: 8
- ▶ 2014: 21
- ▶ 2015: 11
- ▶ 2016: 11
- ▶ 2017: 15
- ▶ 2018: 11
- ▶ 2019: 11

AP Data	
Cohort Year	% of Students Achieving 3+
2011	65%
2012	69%
2013	67%
2014	66.30%
2015	74.10%
2016	62.30%
2017	76.20%
2018	78.10%

# What About Evanston?

- **Effect on graduation rates?**
  - ▷ 2014-2018: 88% -- 92%
- **Effect on dropout rates?**
  - ▷ 2014-2018: 1%
- **Effect on enrollment?**
  - ▷ 2014: 3,122 students
  - ▷ 2018: 3,459 students
- **Effect on post-secondary enrollment?**
  - ▷ 2014: 69%
  - ▷ Since 2014:  $\geq$  73%



# Potential Pitfalls

- Failing to attend to the new culture of the classroom
- Teaching to the middle
- Reverting to old practices: “retracking”
- Failing to attend to teacher learning throughout the process
- Failing to develop adequate and responsive student support structures
- Moving too soon

*Taken in part from Rubin & Noguera, 2004*

# 9th Grade Pilot

Professional development involves learning that builds capacity...

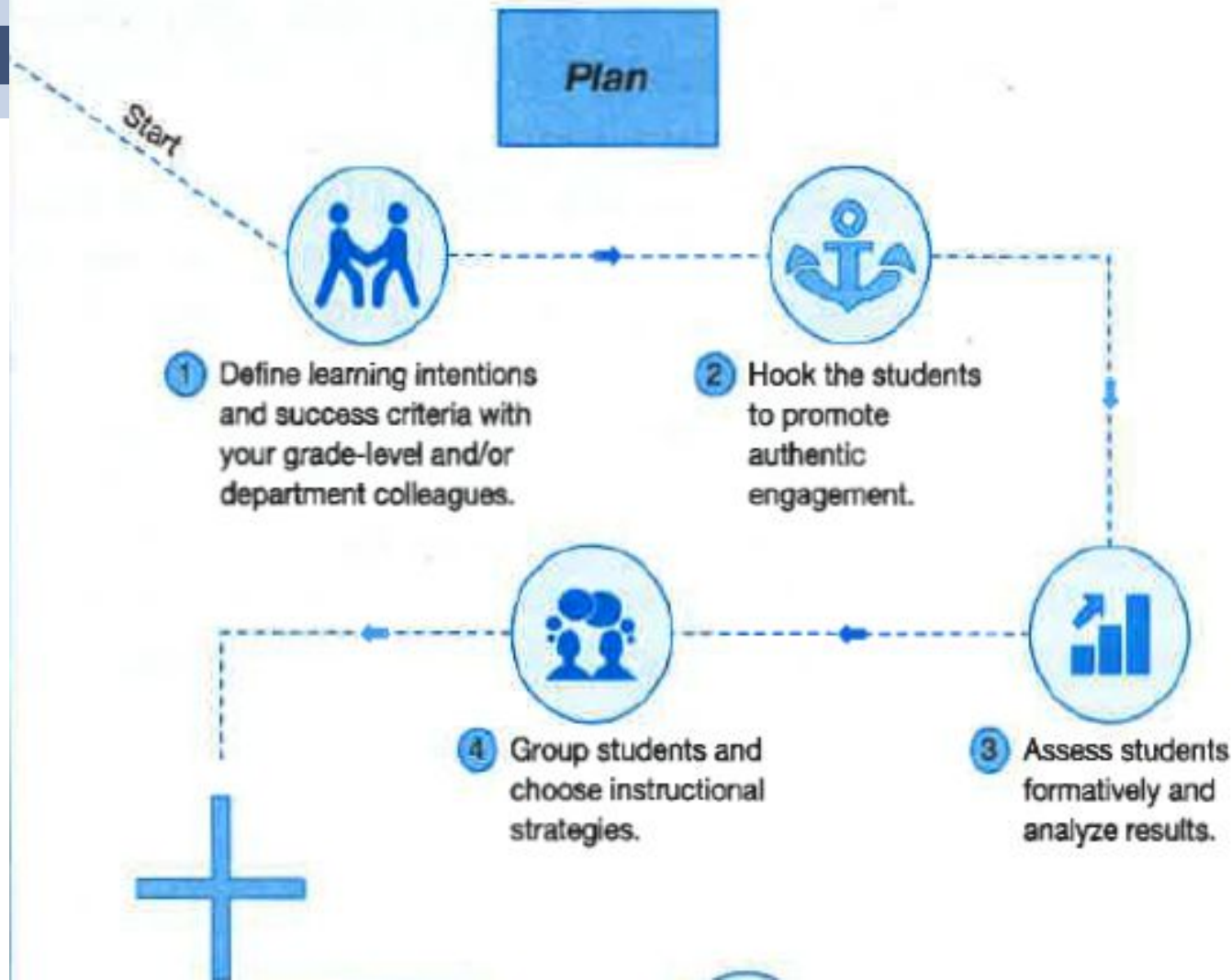
- expanding current knowledge
- fostering new learning
- giving space for personal learning/action research experiences

Pilot Parameters

- One Unit per course
- Common assessment
- All teachers on curriculum writing teams
- Focus on cultural relevance

# Key Topics of Learning

- Classroom Environment: Structures & Systems of Support
- Culturally Relevant Curriculum
- Content Specific Learning
- Evidence-Based Practices: Scaffolding
- Instructional Practices
  - Differentiation
  - Engagement
  - Assessment
- Personalized Learning



taken in part  
from Lisa  
Westman's  
Student-Driven  
Differentiation

# Student Voice



5 Set a goal with students.



6 Differentiate the content, process, product, and/or learning environment.



7 Monitor progress toward goal collaboratively.



8 Assess again to determine effectiveness.

Students aren't showing growth? Go back to step 6.

Students show growth!



# Evaluating our Work

- Plans will be formatively evaluated next year through action research
- Internal program evaluation will be conducted after first full year of implementation
- Research partnership will be used for external evaluation during 2022-2023 school year

# Future Community Conversations

- Julian Middle School: **Oct. 9, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m**
- Future conversations: TBD

FAQ, research links, etc., at  
***[bit.ly/AccessOPRF](https://bit.ly/AccessOPRF)***