

The price of nice: How Niceness reinforces educational inequity

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"Americans are unique because they are nice and friendly"

(Bramen 2017, p.4)

"History is replete with injury and harm inflicted on others by nice people doing nice things"

(Baptiste, 2008, p.23)

Thank you for being so very

NiCE

Student E-mail:

I am a student in your upcoming course. As per your suggestion, I have printed the syllabus, read the books, and all of the required academic journal articles in preparation for the course. I have no desire to blow my doctoral degree out of the water before I even get started but I must say that the selected reading material has horrified me. I've been around the academic tassel a long time and I've been force fed a great deal of questionable information. However, I find this material more of the problem than it is a solution to the challenges American society faces on the issue of racism. Also, I do not appreciate being labeled a "White Supremacist Racist" by anyone. Where I come from that is the equivalent to accusing me of being a card-carrying member of the KKK. I have fought racism all my life. The material you have selected for this course is based on the notion that white people have never been marginalized or experienced prejudice and that my life as a white person has been some utopian existence. All of the authors also allude to the ideology that as a white person I have some sort of "privilege" or "power." While I will concede to some of that argument I will tell you that no one has given me a darn thing. I've had to fight for my place, especially in higher education, just as hard as anyone else...I have no clue how I am supposed to actively engage material that clearly states I am the source of problems of the ills of society because of the color of my skin. Any advice would be helpful.

SO WHAT??

CUSD names equity as a core value

CUSD is diverse

CUSD Students:

52% White

28% Latino

5% Black

9% Asian

1-2% Native

8% Biracial

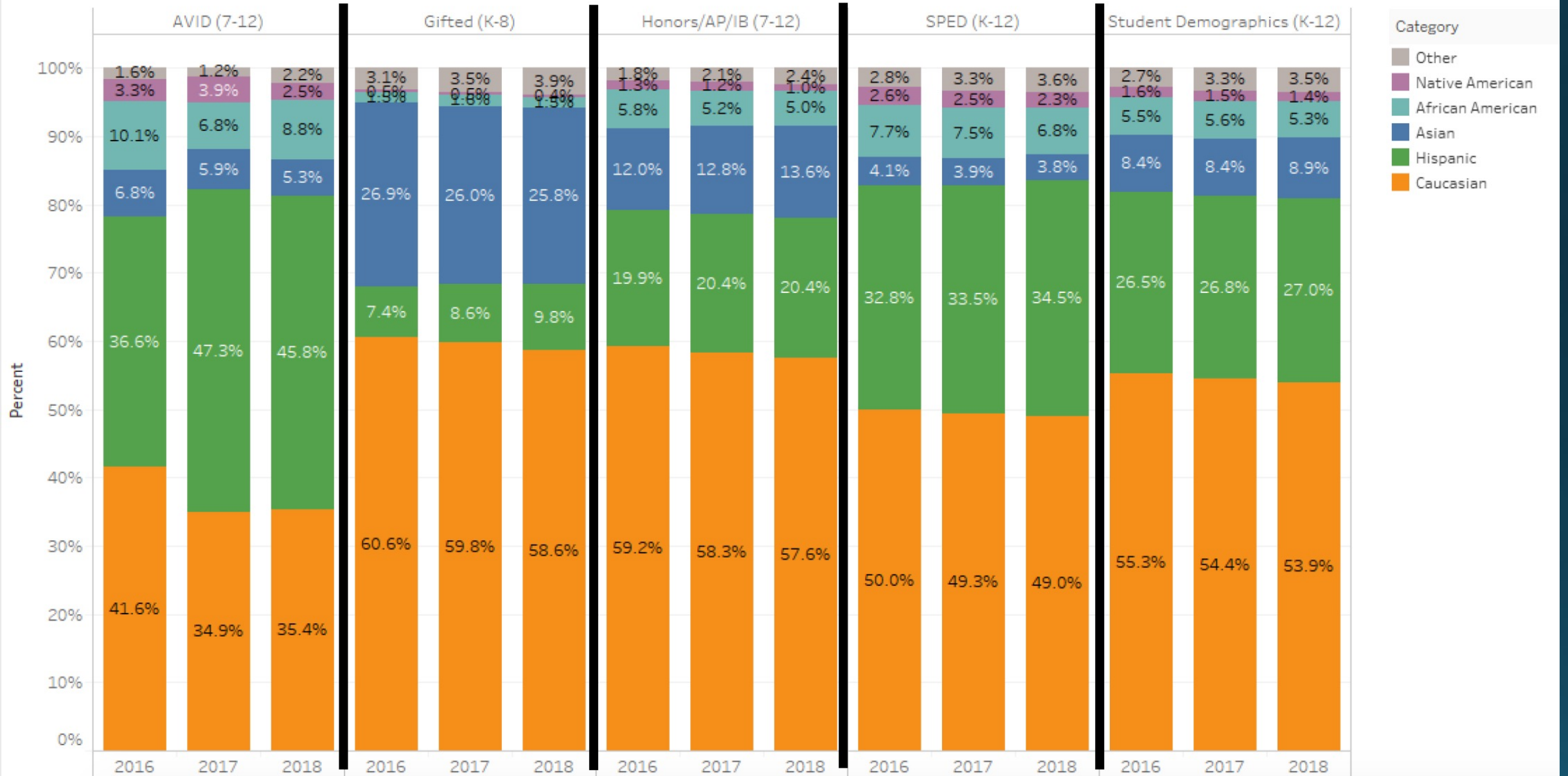
CUSD Teachers = 84% White

CUSD Administration = 95% White

Program Data by Ethnicity

SY 2016 – SY 2018

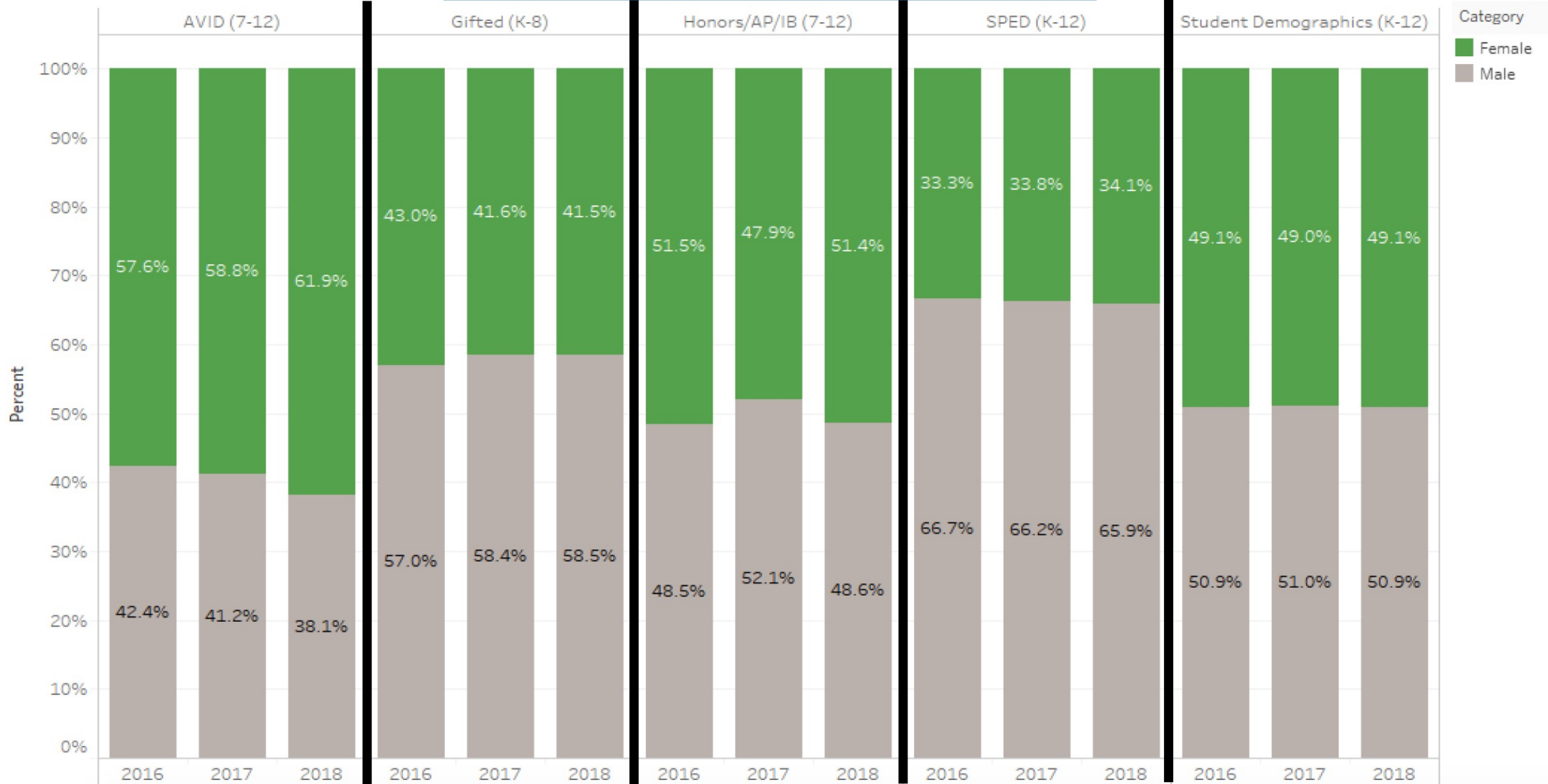
Selected Program Participation by Ethnicity



Program by Gender

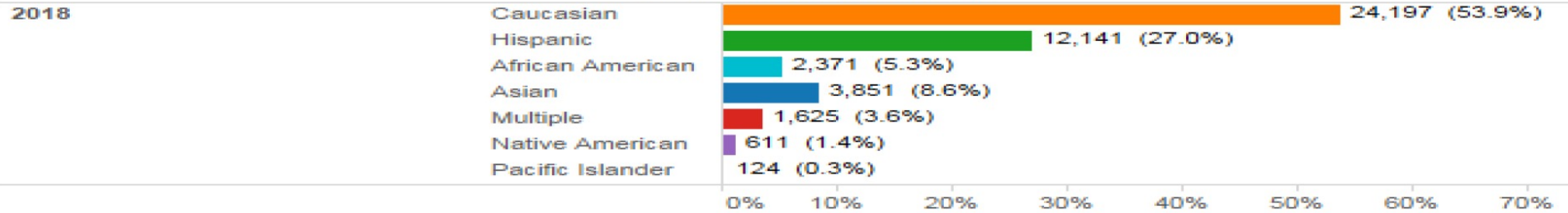
SY 2016 – SY 2018

Selected Program Participation by Gender

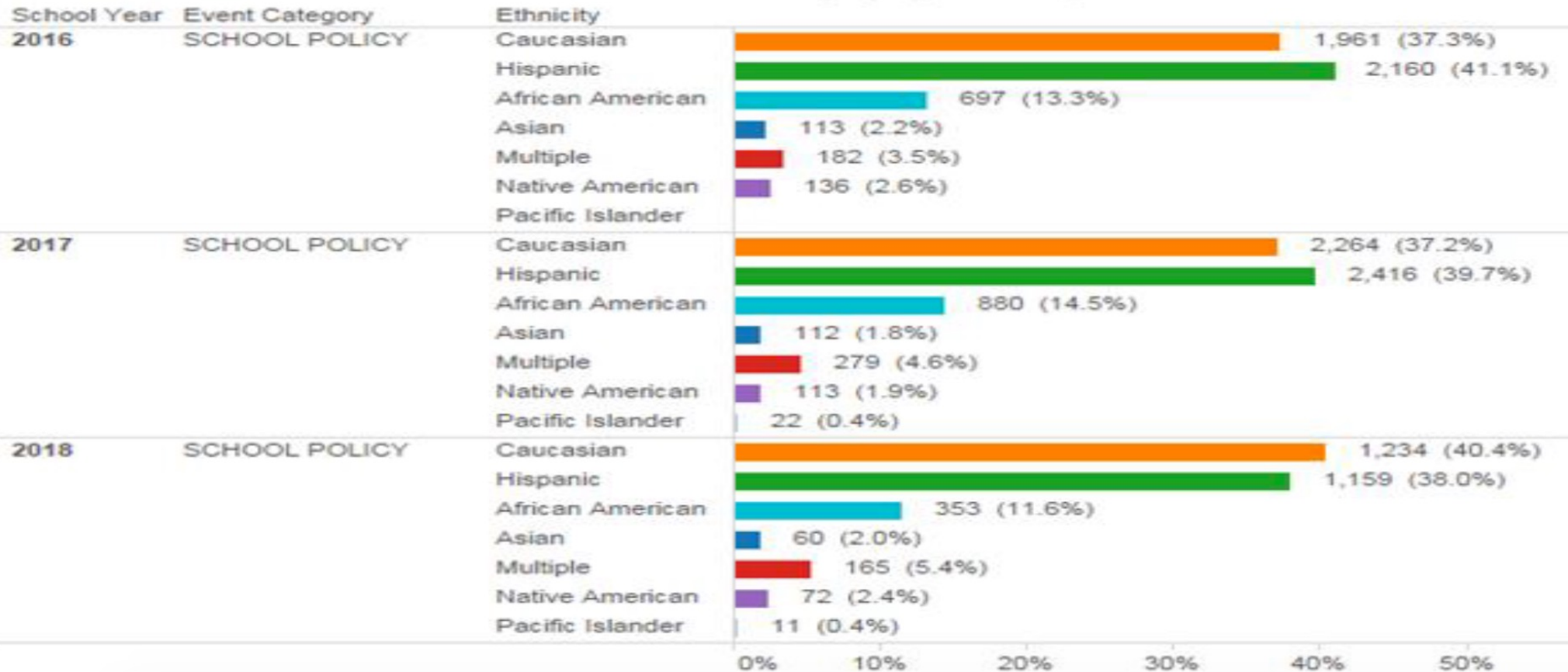


CUSD Discipline Data – School Policy Events by Ethnicity SY 2016 – SY 2018

2018 Enrollment by Ethnicity



K - 12 - Event Category by Ethnicity

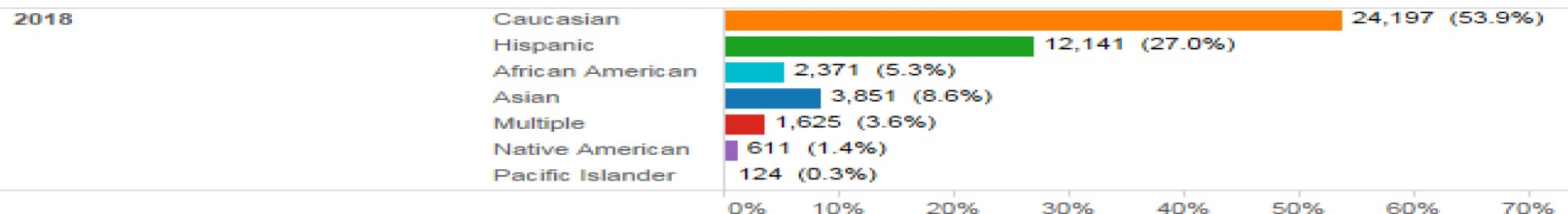


Ethnicity

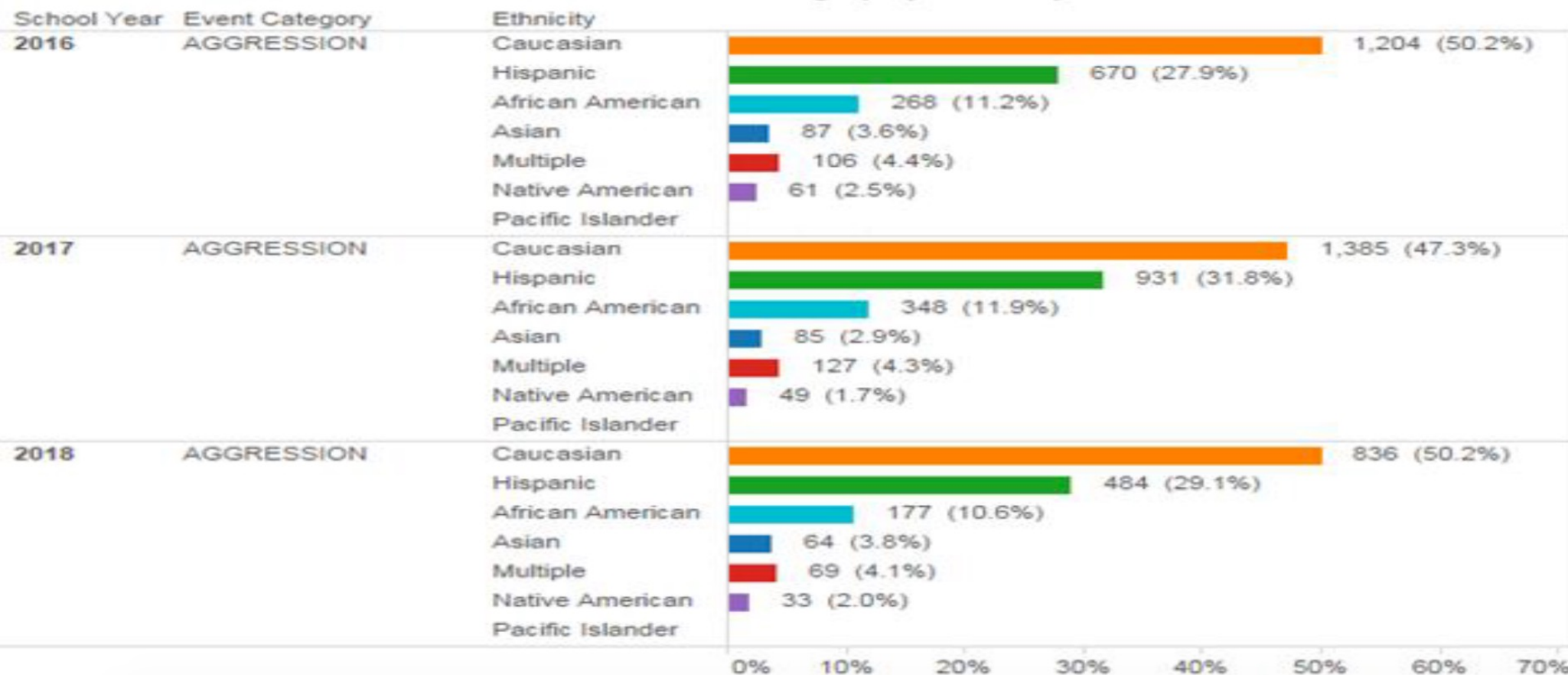


CUSD Discipline Data – Aggression Events by Ethnicity SY 2016 – SY 2018

2018 Enrollment by Ethnicity

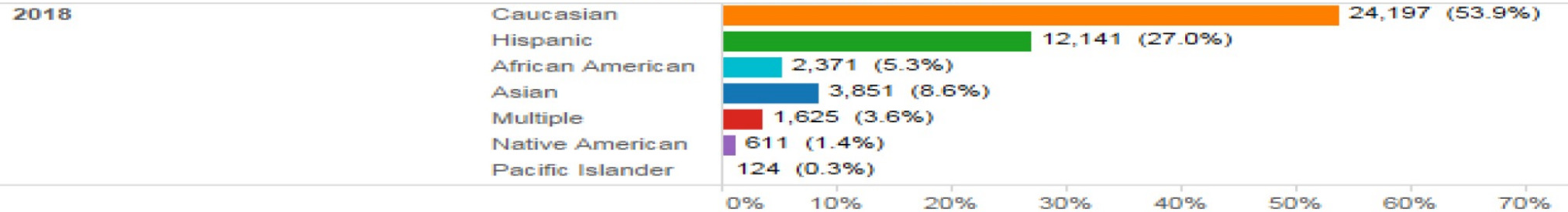


K - 12 - Event Category by Ethnicity

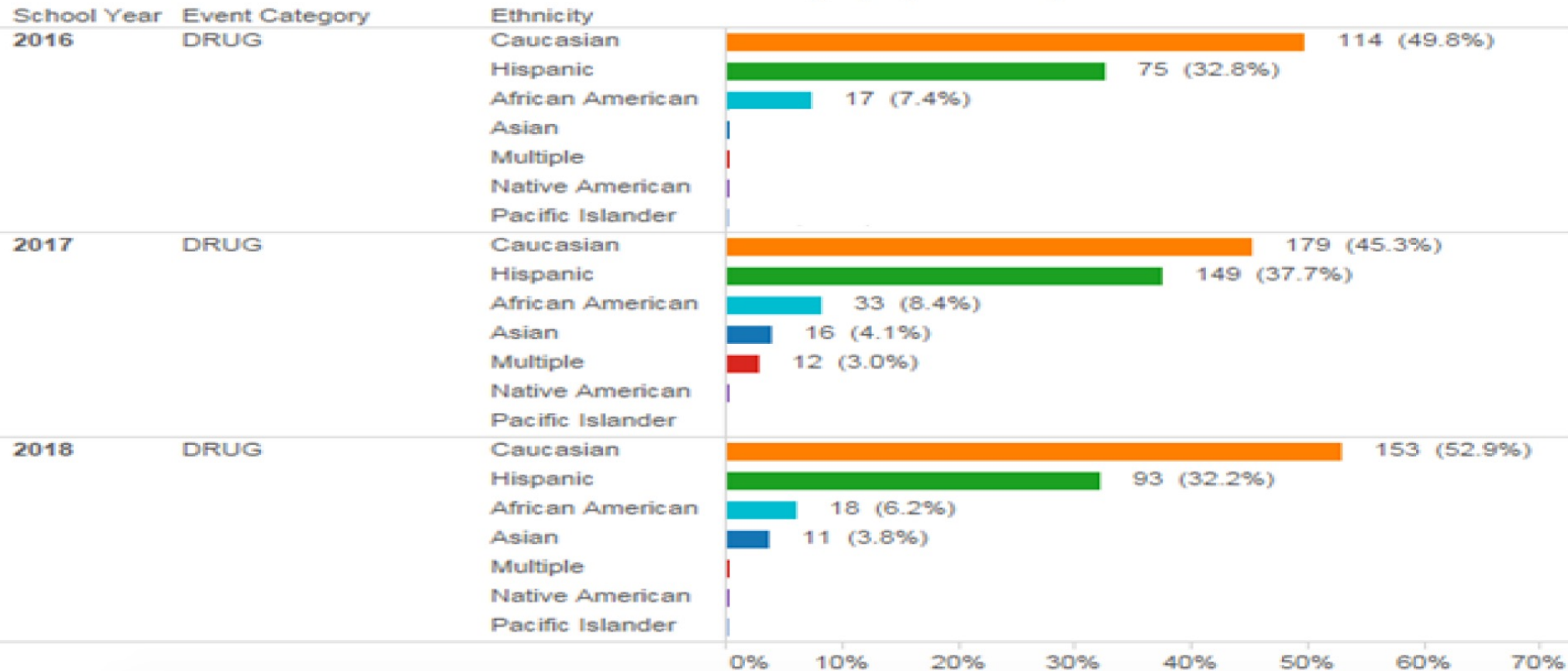


CUSD Discipline Data – Drug Events by Ethnicity SY 2016 – SY 2018

2018 Enrollment by Ethnicity

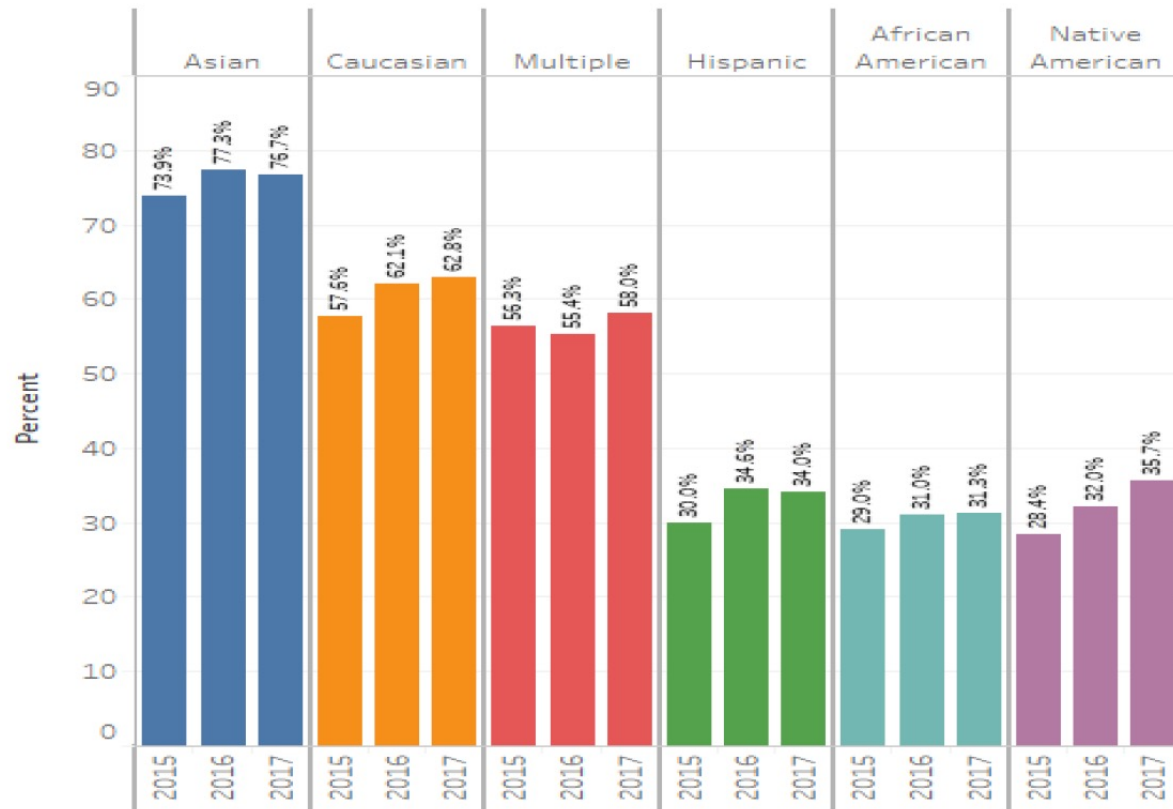


K - 12 - Event Category by Ethnicity

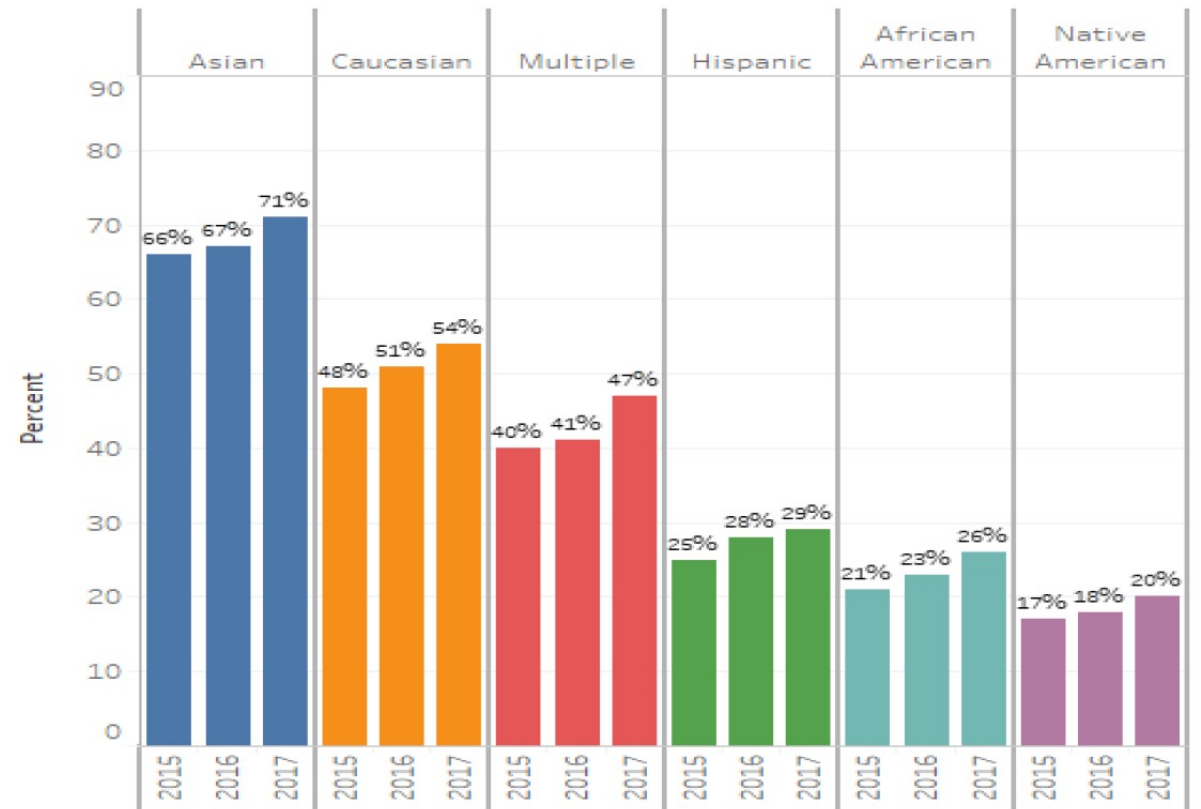


AzMERIT Mathematics - Achievement Gaps - SY 2015 – SY 2017

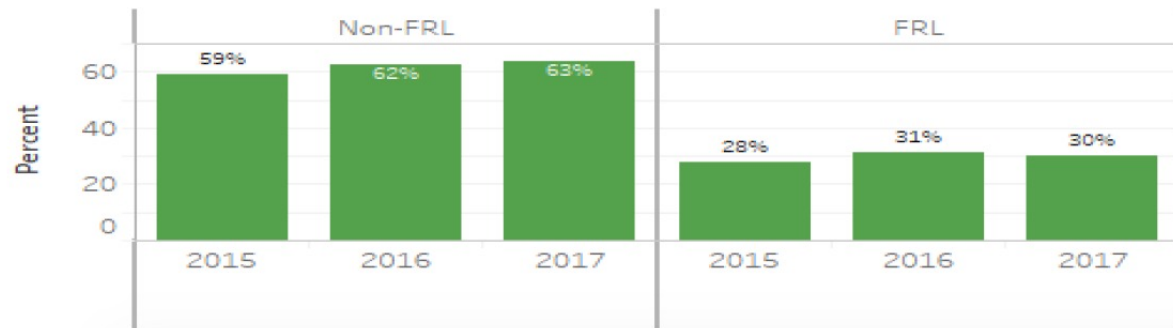
CUSD AZ MERIT MATH Percent Proficient



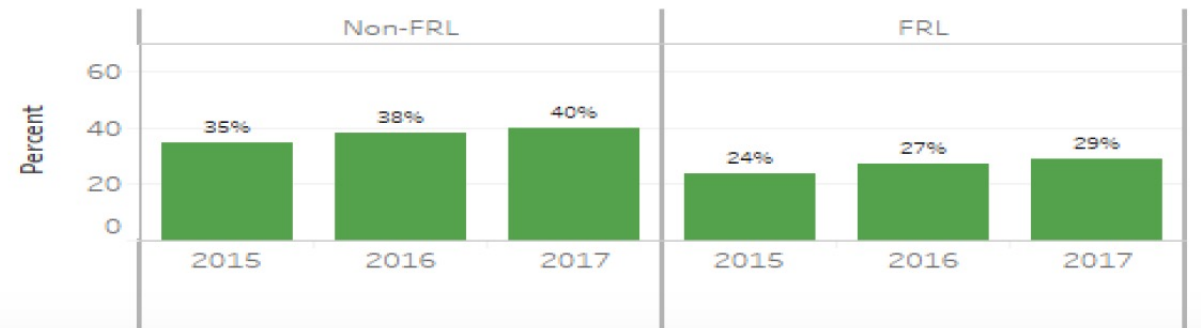
ARIZONA AZ MERIT Math Percent Proficient



CUSD AZ MERIT MATH Percent Proficient

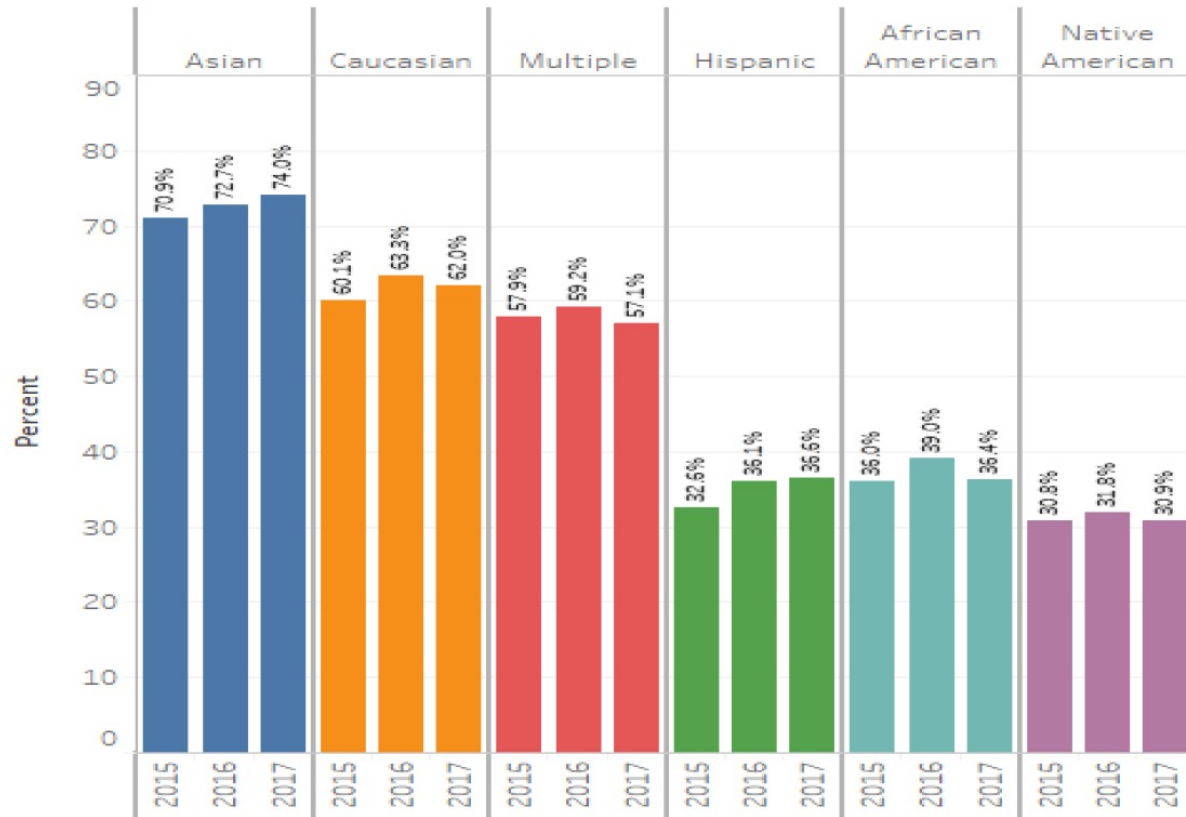


ARIZONA AZ MERIT Math Percent Proficient

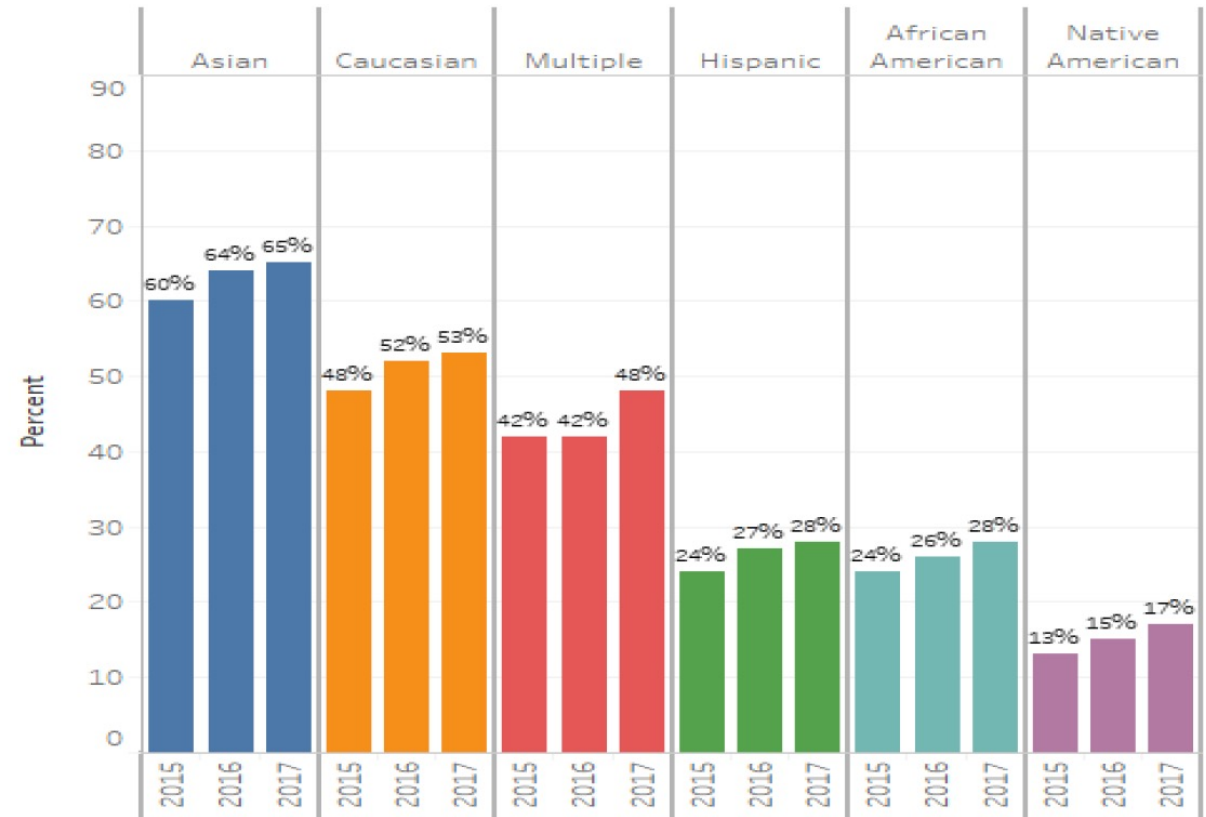


AzMERIT English Language Arts (ELA) - Achievement Gaps - SY 2015 – SY 2017

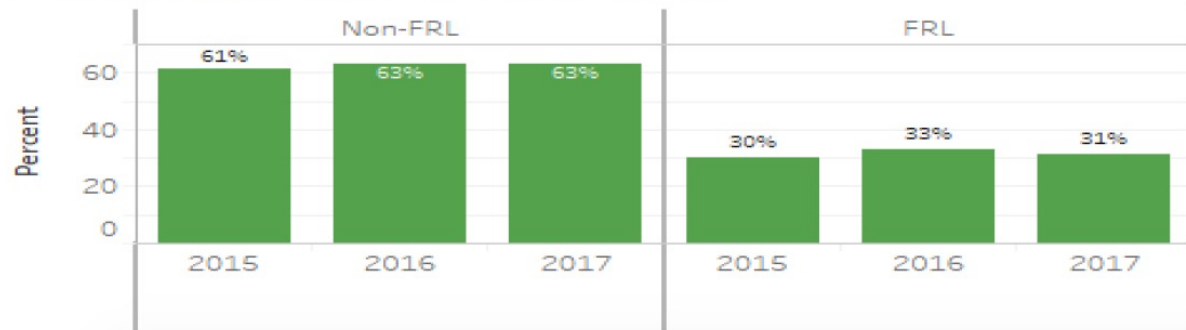
CUSD AZ MERIT ELA Percent Proficient



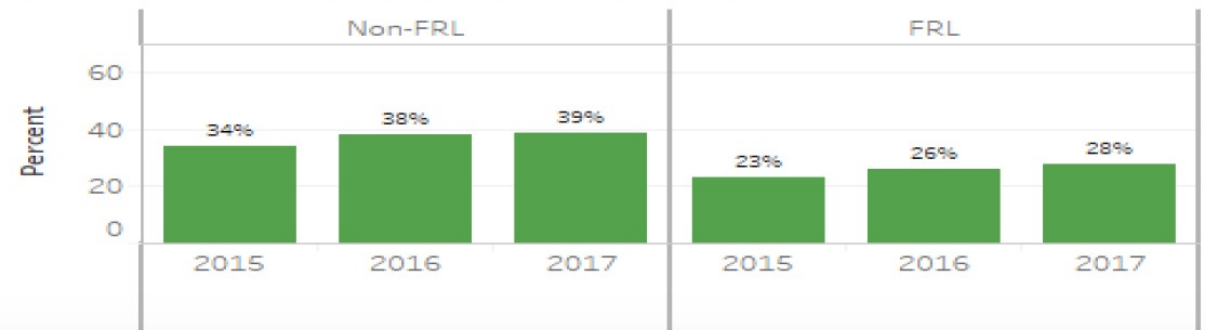
ARIZONA AZ MERIT ELA Percent Proficient



CUSD AZ MERIT ELA Percent Proficient



ARIZONA AZ MERIT ELA Percent Proficient



What are the causes & ongoing facilitators of educational inequities?



How do educators with good intentions so regularly produce and perpetuate educational inequities?

How can schools offer both an unrestricted road to opportunity and the track through which society's varied needs, roles, and hierarchies are filled?

NICENESS

What is Niceness?

Dictionary.com definitions

nice

[nahys]

Spell Syllables


CITE





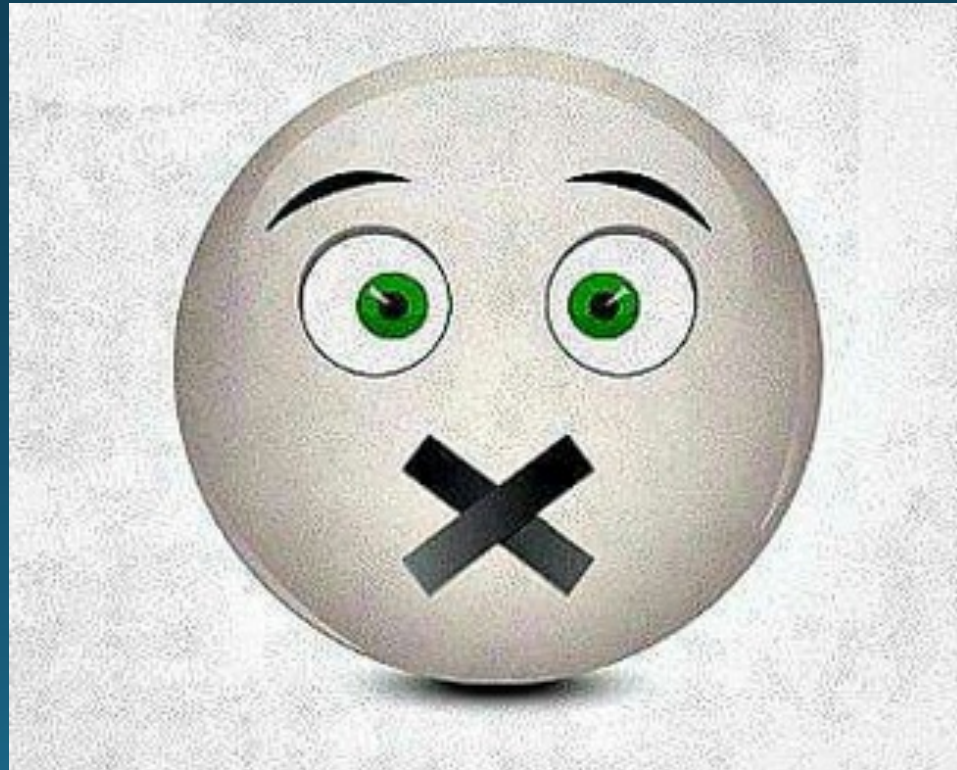
[Synonyms](#) [Examples](#) [Word Origin](#)
[See more synonyms on Thesaurus.com](#)

adjective, nicer, nicest.

1. pleasing; agreeable; delightful:
a nice visit.
2. amiably pleasant; kind:
They are always nice to strangers.
3. characterized by, showing, or requiring great accuracy, precision, skill, tact, care, or delicacy:
nice workmanship; a nice shot; a nice handling of a crisis.

[Explore Dictionary.com](#)

“I feel like I see it [racism] more now, but I still can’t bring it up with my colleagues because I have a need to create harmony.”



Title: Great leaders

By Tarek Kheir Amer

A Great leader is ~~NOT~~ ^{Accepting} ~~racist~~, caring. Think ABOUT ^{of all} others. Respectful.

Accepting of all
~~NOT~~ ~~racist~~
a leader is ~~not~~
~~racist~~, Accepting
of all

caring
A God leader
is caring.

Think about
others a God
leader thinks
about others.

~~Respectful~~
~~to all~~ * A God
leader is Respectful
~~to all.~~

If I was looking
for a God leader ~~IT~~ ^{IT} would
be ~~not be~~ ^{not be} racist, ~~thinking~~ ^{thinking} and
about others. ~~Respectful~~

A great leader is ~~not~~ racist accepting of all.

Niceness as embodied by those in more powerful/privileged positions

Niceness as the demand to act nice among those challenging power/privilege

Niceness shields and protects educators from the hard work of addressing inequities

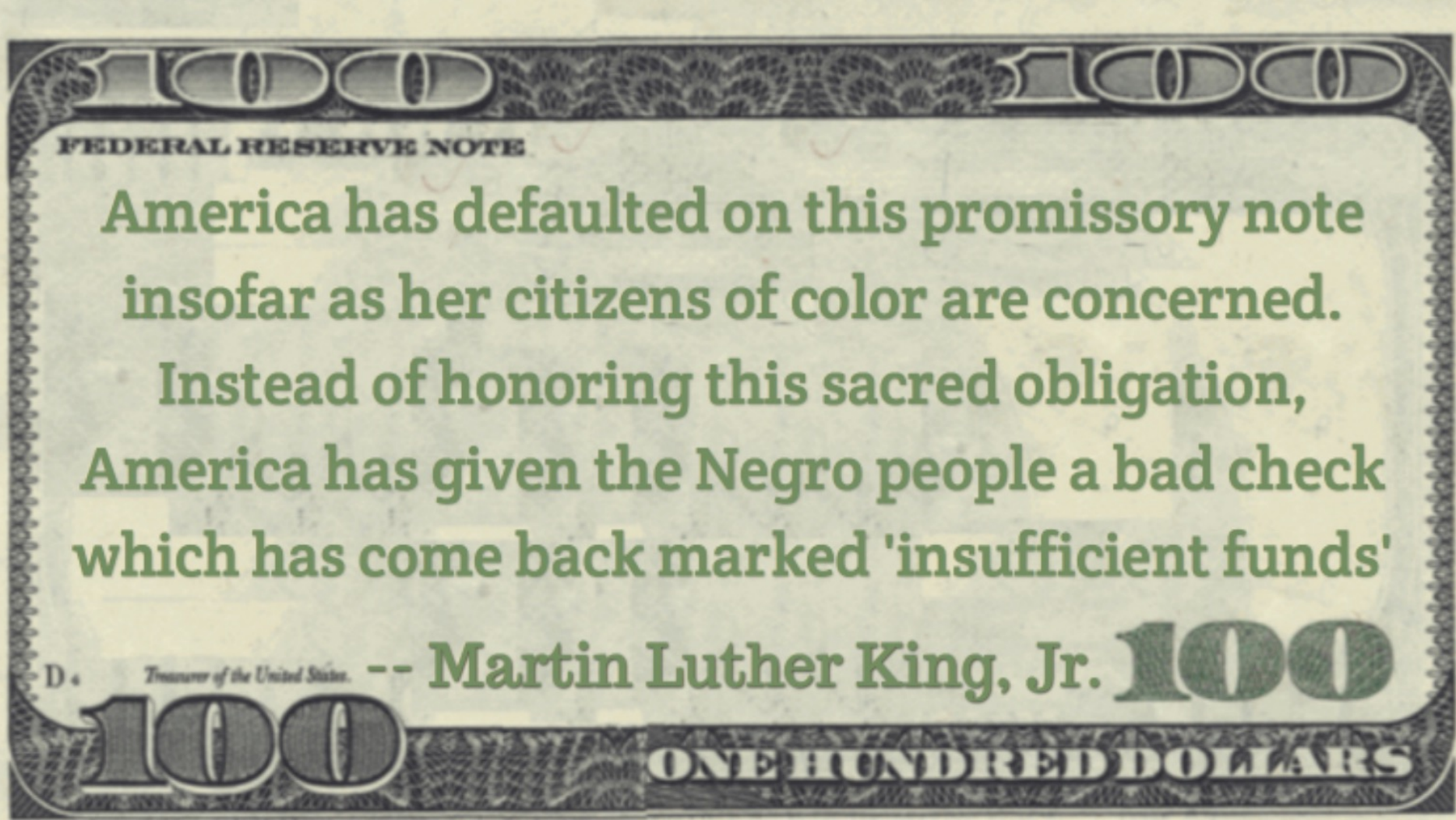
Niceness disciplines those who attempt to address or disrupt inequities


**“ I HAVE
A DREAM...”**





**“ I HAVE
A DREAM...”**





**“THE ULTIMATE TRAGEDY IS NOT THE
OPPRESSION AND CRUELTY BY THE BAD PEOPLE
BUT THE SILENCE OVER THAT BY THE GOOD
PEOPLE.”**

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

© Lifehack Quotes

Colorblindness

The diagram consists of three circular nodes arranged in a vertical line, connected by curved arrows pointing downwards. The top node is a light blue circle containing the text 'Colorblindness'. The middle node is a darker blue circle containing the text '"I see students; I don't see color"'. The bottom node is a light blue circle containing the text '"Since I don't see color, I'm not racist"'. The arrows connect the top node to the middle node, the middle node to the bottom node, and the bottom node back to the top node, forming a continuous loop.

"I see
students; I
don't see
color"

"Since I don't
see color, I'm
not racist"

**Inequity thrives
on our complicity with Niceness**



“Educational Niceness...is not a humanizing imperative. Rather, it is a deluding phantom—a salacious seduction which might make educators popular with students, and leave them feeling good about themselves, but, which, in the end, might turn out to be the unwitting handmaiden of oppressive hegemony. Until educators rid themselves of their yearning to be nice, until they embrace wholeheartedly their obligation to impose, their educational impact—especially in addressing social inequality—will be severely curtailed.”

(Baptiste, 2008, p. 28).

What about culturally responsive/relevant/sustaining pedagogies?

- Niceness “allows [preservice teachers] to offer ‘nice’...insights without truly engaging in the complex, arduous, self-reflection processes culturally responsive teaching requires” (Bissonnette, 2016, p.10).
- “The opposite of Niceness isn’t a culture of shaming; rather, its dichotomy is open, critical, and provocative instruction, conversation, and reflexivity” (p.19).

Niceness reinforces educational inequity



Schools sort & select students

Myth of Meritocracy

White Savior Complex

Deficit frameworks about students, families, communities

Individualism minus any systems analysis

DR. CAMILLE CASTEEL

On behalf of the Governing Board, I want to welcome you to the Chandler Unified School District inaugural Equity Symposium. Equity is a long-standing core value of the Chandler Unified School District. Equity in education is not, however, unique to CUSD nor is it a recent change. A fair and inclusive system that makes the advantages of education available to all is one of the most powerful levers to preserve our liberty and democracy.

- ❖ Will CUSD be a district that others look to to figure out how to do the hard work of ensuring educational equity?
- ❖ How might Niceness be reinforcing educational inequities within your own classroom, school, and district community?

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