Engagement, Resilience and Thriving

Supporting all students in rural Colorado towards on-time high school graduation and post-secondary success

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Objectives

1. Review what is known about how schools can support student success
2. Consider three models of universal thriving:
    1. Student school engagement
    2. Positive youth development
    3. Developmental assets
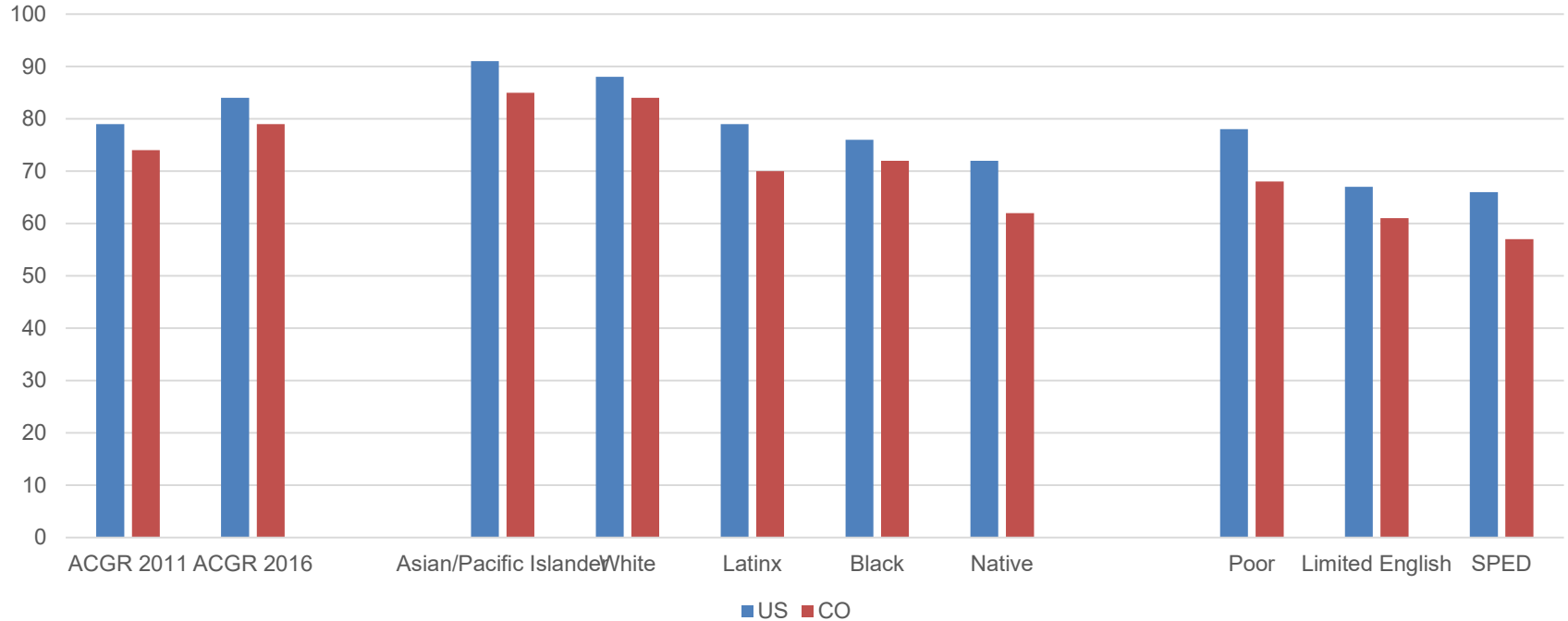3. Address Tier II and Tier III supports for students at risk of not graduating from high school on-time

School Success

On-Time High School Graduation

- Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR)
  - % of students who earn a regular diploma within 4 years of entering 9th grade
  - Average Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR)
- On-Time Graduation
  - correlated with increased employment and reduced use of welfare services and criminal activity
- Rural Graduation Rates
  - Greater racial/ethnic disproportionality: higher for White students and lower for students of color than national averages
- https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019117.pdf
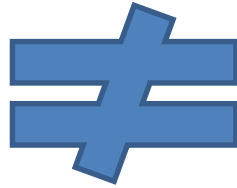
2016 US and CO ACGR %s

Colorado Graduation Rates

- Most recent numbers (2018): https://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/newsrelease-jan162019graduationdropout

- Interactive Map by State, Districts, and Schools: http://www.cde.state.co.us/code/graduationrate

Promoting School Success

knowing who is at risk of dropping out

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knowing how to support students in being successful

Practices that Push Students Out:

- Tracking
- Grade retention
- Suspensions (in- and out-of-school)
- Zero tolerance discipline practices
- Discipline disproportionality

School Completion

- Trajectory often established in EC

- Dual-Factor Model
    - Address barriers to success
    - Promote needed skills and attributes

- ABCs:
    - Attendance: better than 90%
    - Behavior: few or no office referrals; no suspensions; no grade retentions
    - Curriculum/Courses/Credits: reading at grade level in 3rd grade, passing English and math at 8th grade, starting 10th grade on track to graduate (geography), passing algebra is best indicator of college success

School Protective Factors

- Strong relationships with caring adults
- High expectations
- Opportunities for meaningful participation and decision-making

Schools that Beat the Odds Have:

Three protective factors just listed! And:

1) A guiding mission that directs daily activities
2) Consistent progress monitoring of students
3) Programming that is responsive to struggling students
4) A safe school climate
5) Meaningful connections between families and school
6) Leadership that is strong in both guidance and management
7) Relevant, engaging, culturally-responsive curriculum
8) Restorative and positive discipline practices
9) Support for transitions

Models of Thriving

Student School Engagement

- Biopsychosocial phenomenon, occurring in and responding to environmental contexts within a developmental trajectory
  - Students will vary in their levels of engagement
  - Schools will engender greater (or lesser) engagement overall
- Multi-dimensional meta-construct representing a student's internally and externally mediated affiliation with and investment in schooling
  - Aspirations: interest and investment in education
  - Belonging: commitment to school norms and sense of being a part of the school community
  - Productivity: ability to monitor and maximize learning
- Student School Engagement Measure
  - English and Spanish, middle and high school

Positive Youth Development

- Every student has the potential and capacity for positive development when provided appropriate, differentiated supports and meaningful choices

- Six strengths

- Has been used primarily by out-of-school-time organizations

- CO 9 to 25:
    - https://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/pvdminiguide

- Assessment for ages 10 and up:
    - https://cyfar.org/sites/default/files/InstrumentFiles/Positive%20Youth%20Development%20Student%20Questionnaire_0.pdf
    - https://4-h.org/about/research/#!positive-youth-development

PYD Strengths

- Competence
  - Ability to be successful academically, socially, emotionally, and vocationally

- Confidence
  - Belief in ability to be successful now and in future in valued tasks

- Connection
  - Positive bi-directional relationships with peers and adults

- Character
  - Adoption of a personal moral code

- Caring/Compassion
  - Sympathy and empathy for others

- Contribution
  - Ability to and belief that it is important to make a meaningful difference in enviroment

Developmental Assets

- Search Institute: 40 Developmental Assets

  - https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/development-assets/developmental-assets-framework/

- External Assets

  - Support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time

- Internal Assets

  - Commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity

- Assessment in English and Spanish: 3-5, 5-9, 8-12, 12-18 years

  - http://page.search-institute.org/dev-assets-download_1212-17

Tier II and Tier III Considerations

Targeted Interventions

- Address both academic and behavioral needs

- Increase students' engagement with school: aspirations, productivity, and belonging

- Develop or strengthen supportive relationships with school adults

- Provide continuous monitoring of students' engagement and ABCs, and intervene quickly and more intensively as needed

- When students are successful, reduce targeted supports but continue to monitor progress (gradual release)

Promising practices: reading interventions, tutoring, block scheduling, mentoring, AVID, Check and Connect, Restorative Discipline

Intensive Interventions

- Wraparound services: housing, food, childcare, and medical supports

- Alternative programming: smaller classes, reduced day, flexible scheduling/online options, credit recovery and accelerated credit accrual, competency-based credits, vocational prep, GED, dual enrollment

- Open invitation to come back, if they have stopped attending: specific, non-punitive steps they can take; outreach to students

- CO students are entitled to public education until the age of 21!

Most traditional schools are unable to meet the needs of students at this level!

Thank you!

Discussion