

Case Study: How Racialized Lived Experiences and Culturally Responsive School Leadership Supported School District's Organizational Development in Equitable Practices

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Background

School districts and educational institutions are complex systems. The day-to-day experiences within bureaucratic structures like school districts produce experiences for minoritized people that are invisibilized by the exact nature of the bureaucratic rules, mandates, and policies that structure the organization (Collins, 2021). How do school districts begin to interrupt the culture and practices that perpetuate negative experiences for students, families, and staff from marginalized communities? A large school district in Salem, Oregon, acquired Equity Coaching rooted in organizational learning, healed racialized experiences, and culturally responsive leadership to build a foundation of equitable practices.

Theory of Improvement

By training staff in *Culturally Responsive School Leadership* (Khalifa, 2018), the school district would begin to develop anti-racist and anti-oppressive leaders to interrupt systems. By utilizing an Equity Consultant with lived experiences inside school districts, staff could discuss and solve issues with an additional racial conscious lens.

Goal of Work

Students' outcomes of safety, welcome, inclusion, empowerment, and academic success would improve.

Timeline:
2020-21 school year



Approach

Plan

Improve student outcomes

Do

Train all administrators in CRSL and work with an Equity Consultant

Study

Collect data on the needs. Analyze data for support and next steps.

Act

Collaborate with the Equity Consultant

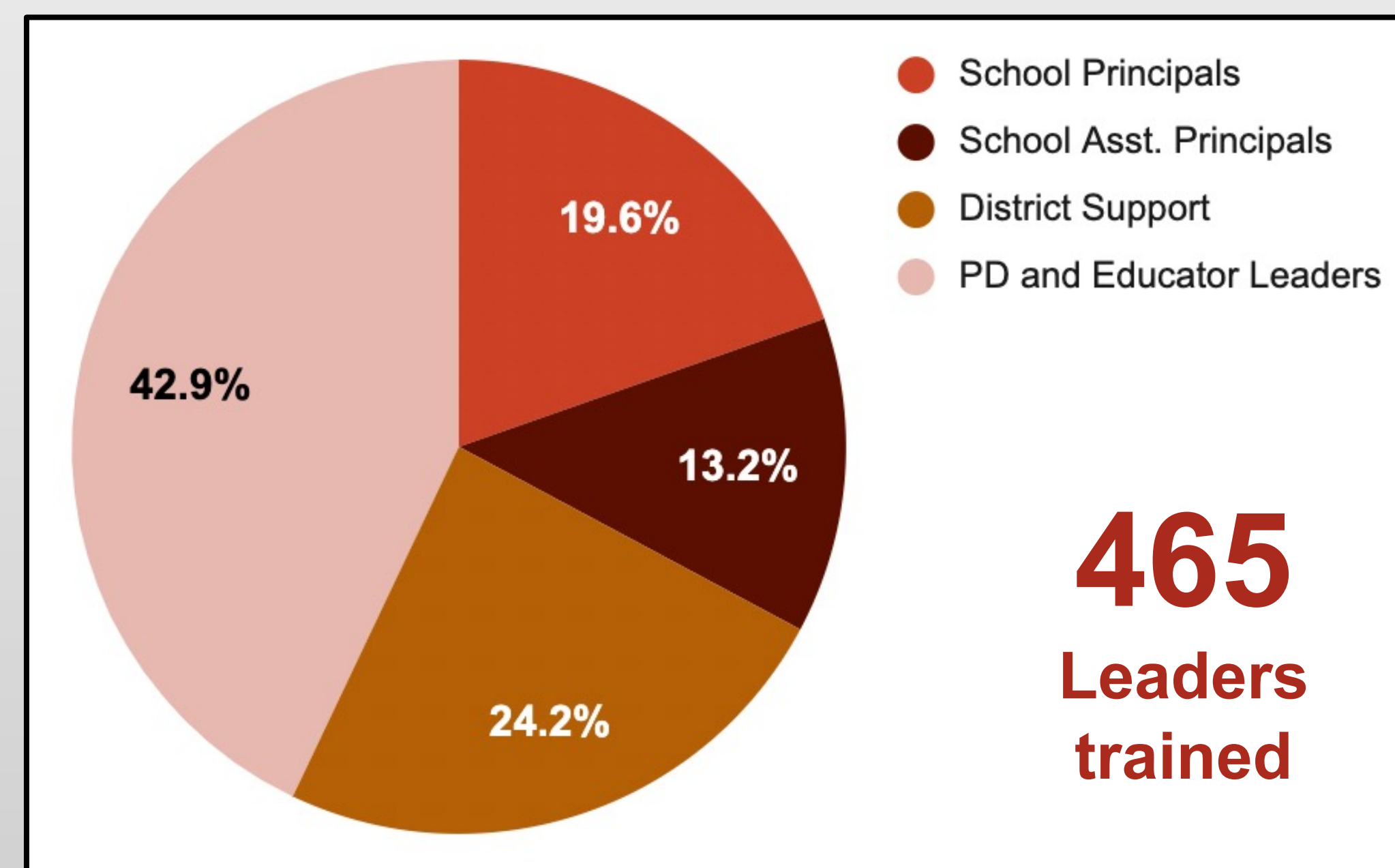
- Creating healing and learning spaces for affinity and advocate groups
- Solving problems of practice
- Collaborating on Professional Development monthly
- Providing one-on-one leadership coaching
- Facilitating restorative conversation
- Support Equity Audit research

Learnings and Findings

Leaders expressed growing awareness of the need for racial consciousness and made plans to remove barriers for students

Leadership Reflections	Number of Responses
What captured your attention? The importance of historical context "Neutrality is not an option" A need for continued personal learning/self-reflection	117 Responses
What can you use in your scope of work? The importance of including/seeking out community voice and the voice of minoritized students (ancestral knowledge) An urge to be a better listener and a more active school leader (neutrality is not an option) Understanding epistemologies and their role in the oppression of minoritized people/students	89 Responses
What is your biggest action as a leader? Ensuring that Cultural Responsiveness training/attitudes continue beyond this PD training Figuring out ways to include minoritized students and community members in policy changes, practices and new year plans The importance of critical self-reflection and how personal bias affects minoritized students	116 Responses
After today's training, I understand I need to... Have a plan (tangible items) moving forward to stay engaged in this work Reach out to communities/keep communities involved Find ways to bring CRSL to current policies and practices Challenge staff Find time to personally reflect	124 Responses
My biggest concern How to help other staff see the importance of this work/ are staff ready? That this won't create "actual" change/CRSL won't become a priority Addressing this work while doing distance learning	124 Responses
Name two takeaways about curriculum and instruction and your leadership We need to look a policies, curriculum, grading and practices to identify issues and make them more culturally responsive Integrate CRSL into the data process team Helping teachers be more culturally responsive Personal reflection and guiding teachers and staff to be more reflective	124 Responses

Data Display and Measurement



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