

Data by Districts

OVERVIEW



Sunset on Mount Baker from Lummi Island by Sattva Photo

Over the course of the development process, participants engaged from every district within Whatcom County. Some neighbors took surveys or joined community events. Others became stakeholders in order to actively craft the recommendations coming forward to the County and City of Bellingham. Even more shared their wisdom and stories in the focus group process. Compiled in these data sheets are stories from the community as well as information about how many individuals engaged from each district.

During the Focus Group process, details about interactions with the local school systems and the experiences of students, parents, and caregivers were some of the most poignant stories shared.

"The most egregious stories I've ever heard about racism in this town in this county have come from kids I coached, and my own children telling me what happens in their classrooms, what things are said by teachers by parent educators by adults and by other children.

The children will tell you, they will tell whoever will listen."

Though there were devastating stories shared, participants also spoke to the future in terms of Whatcom's children and youth. When asked about how a successful racial equity commission would change the way Whatcom felt or looked like one parent shared ***"We would be diligent about the beautiful words that were said that children need to be celebrated for their diversity not stripped of it, not just children but [also] our neighbors..."***

Recognizing the significance of our children's and grandchildren's experiences related to race and equity to process participants in all districts, we've included enrollment and kindergarten readiness data (*compiled from the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2021-2022 report cards*) is also provided for the public schools within each County district. These data points allow us to consider who our students are and specifically the students entering the local public school system. There is a significantly higher proportion of students of color enrolled in schools compared to the proportion of Whatcom's total population. Why is the proportionality within schools important right now? The answer to that question comes from a Ferndale business leader:

"We are literally thinking about this planet that we are handing our babies."

Considering the formation of a Whatcom Racial Equity Commission is to engage in the generational work of fostering belonging in the county by creating a mechanism that centers that work. **Now is the time to reflect on not only the environments our children are raised in but in what ways are we tending those environments.**

Mapping Participation



Bellingham Bay Birds by Sattva Photo

"I think our local government can collaborate with those communities and hear maybe their concerns and their observations and experiences and identify solutions that those folks themselves are suggesting they need and having those conversations can be a good start."

Included in the image below are the locales across Whatcom County from which participants joined the development of recommendations. Additionally, we had participants from unincorporated areas across Whatcom County and some participants from outside of the area who had an interest in Whatcom (ex: working or attending school but technically residing in another county.)



Whatcom County



Nooksack River by Sattva Photo

STORY

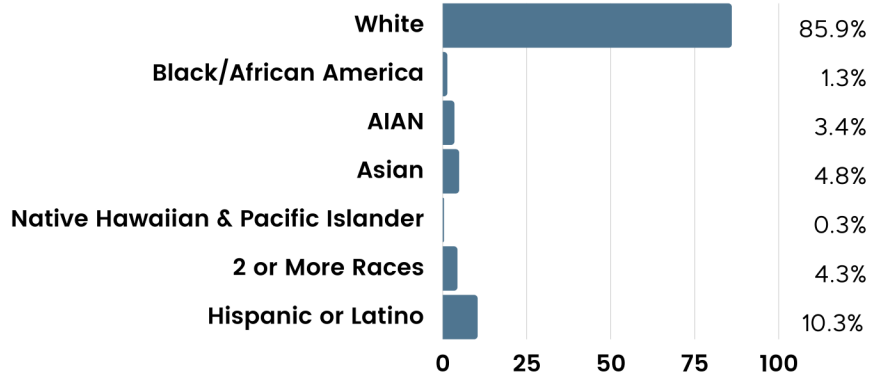
"...we have rich people who are losing their vacation homes.

We have poor people who won't be able to rebuild their homes."

CONSTITUENT QUOTE

"a point of success is one thing but continuing that change and creating longevity would be another"

POPULATION



Whatcom County population disaggregated by race. Data from 2021 US Census.

K-READINESS

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington



1 in 2 Asian, Multiracial, and White students arrive ready to learn



1 in 4 AIAN and Hispanic/Latino students arrive to ready to learn



Survey & Events
641 participants



Stakeholder
35 participants



Focus Group
104 participants

Whatcom County

ADDITIONAL STORIES



**Crabpots on Lummi Island by Sattva Photo*

"I don't think that our legal system is just and fair. I think that for people that English isn't their first language, I don't think it's fair for them. I also think that in a community like ours, if you are to have a hearing, you're supposed to be judged by your peers. Are we really having the right peers on the jury for those people?"

"I feel like I did a lot of trying to fit in here rather than embracing my culture and my identity as a Nooksack matriarch in the making. I found myself trying to fit in with the non-native community and the standards of the non-native lifestyle. I think our young people still struggle with that. I do take pride in the kids that are now more involved with our dancing groups or drumming groups, canoe journey, canoe paddling, that being so involved in our culture helps them embrace that identity, rather than trying to fit in."

"[during the floods] My wife and I were driving to the houses that were by the flood knocking on people's doors and they had no idea they were supposed to leave. They're like, 'Oh, we didn't know'. There was Facebook posts out, but they don't speak English. There was information that was being passed along but wasn't getting passed on to them."

"Every single day is a fight. It's like we get up knowing that there's a fight coming. We're still in the fight and that aint gonna change ... look at my dad. He's a strong man. You know, he's 76 years old. And he asks me, 'how you doing, son' when we're hiking. But this is because he's been fighting every single day of his life...I mean, that's just who we are as people. We have to fight every single day, every single day."

**"OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO HAVE HUMILITY
IN ORDER TO OPEN THEMSELVES TO OTHER IDEAS, STRUCTURES,
EVEN WAYS OF GETTING THINGS DONE"**

District 1 & 2



Bellingham Cityscape by Sattva Photo

STORY

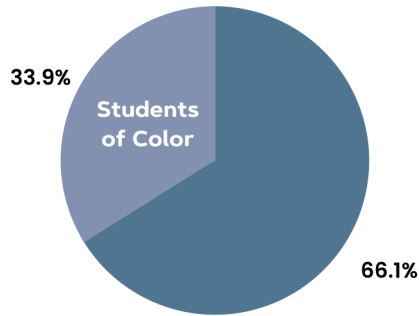
“I hear a lot of [racist stuff] at school, but I mean, I just don't say anything because the people who are saying it are white. And I guess they're the higher authority. And you know, they won't get in trouble for saying that stuff. So I just don't report it or anything”

CONSTITUENT QUOTE

“it would be very cool to see someone with my skin tone or color to be on City Council or Mayor. It would make me feel like I could do it myself”

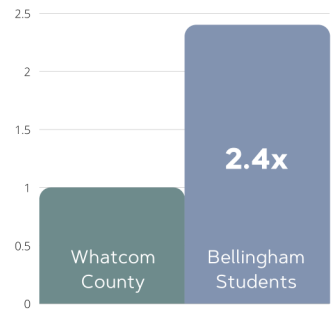
ENROLLMENT

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington



Bellingham School District

PROPORTIONALITY



There is a 2.4x higher proportion of Students of Color in the Bellingham School District than in the County at large

K-READINESS



Less than 1 in 2 Asian and Hispanic/Latino students arrive ready to learn



More than 1 in 2 (61-65%) Black, Multiracial & White students arrive to ready to learn

Survey & Events
383 participants

Stakeholder
20 participants

Focus Group
62 participants

District 3



Forest Bathing - Stimson Nature Preserve by Sattva Photo

STORY

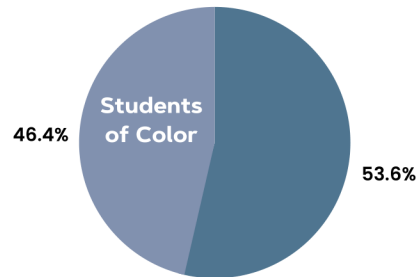
“it’s fear that we’re trying to eradicate – the fear that we can see in the people of color. And the fear that we don’t talk about that the white population has about them. And I think if these groups are emboldened to not be afraid, they come out, we mix, we mingle, we get to know each other and get to climb the ladder [together].”

CONSTITUENT QUOTE

“belonging in this area is everybody being free to be themselves”

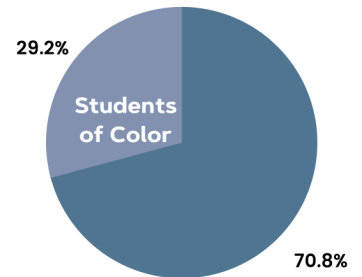
ENROLLMENT

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington



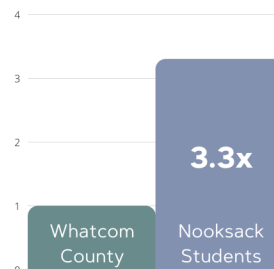
Nooksack School District

ENROLLMENT



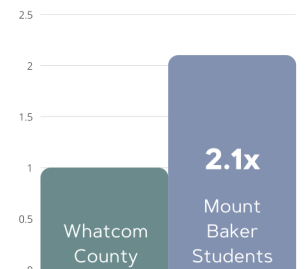
Mount Baker School District

PROPORTIONALITY



There is a 3.3x higher proportion of Students of Color in the Nooksack School District than in the County at large

PROPORTIONALITY



There is a 2.1x higher proportion of Students of Color in the Mount Baker School District than in the County at large

K-READINESS



Less than 1 in 4 Hispanic/Latino students arrive ready to learn



1 in 2 White students arrive ready to learn

K-READINESS



1 in 2 Hispanic/Latino student arrive ready to learn



3 in 4 White students arrive ready to learn

Survey & Events
95 participants

Stakeholder
7 participants

Focus Group
20 participants

District 4



Barred Owl by Sattva Photo

STORY

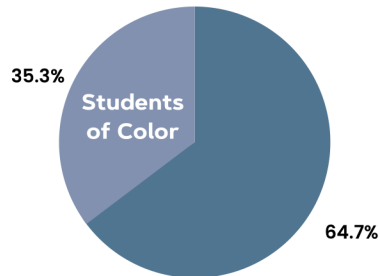
“To start is teaching everybody, not just the people of color, the proper education. There's a lot of kids like me, that had to go outside of school to learn the hard things. We are experiencing generations of trauma and pain, with no understanding. Why did this person just say this to me, with no grasp of why this would be occurring to me? ”

CONSTITUENT QUOTE

“We'd love you to belong because you're different.”

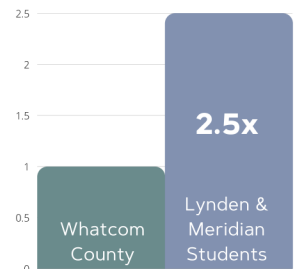
ENROLLMENT

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington



Lynden & Meridian School District's

PROPORTIONALITY



There is a 2.5x higher proportion of Students of Color in the Lynden & Meridian School District's than in the County at large

K-READINESS

Lynden School District



2 in 3 AAPI, White & Multiracial students arrive ready to learn

1 in 3 Hispanic/Latino students arrive ready to learn

K-READINESS

Meridian School District



2 in 3 Multiracial & White students arrive ready to learn

1 in 2 AAPI students arrive ready to learn

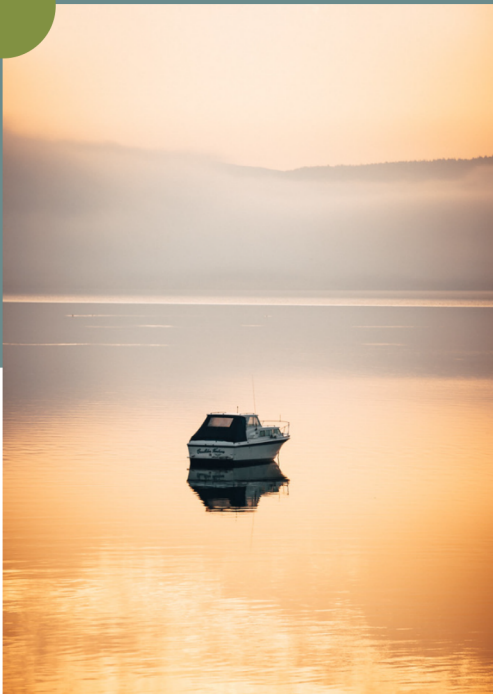
1 in 4 Hispanic/Latino students arrive ready to learn

Survey & Events
35 participants

Stakeholder
4 participants

Focus Group
7 participants

District 5



Lummi Island Sunrise by Sattva Photo

STORY

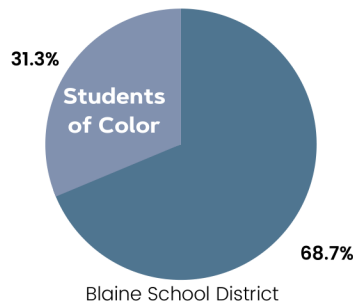
“I went through high school, public school education. Not one educator, had skin darker than mine. ... in that educational process, I was told almost every step of the way, that there were things I could do as a Lummi and there were things that I couldn't do as a Lummi.”

CONSTITUENT QUOTE

“...we have the power to continue to bring out things that are positive, not trying to put things down and people but let them blossom, let them speak their piece, that we do have a voice.”

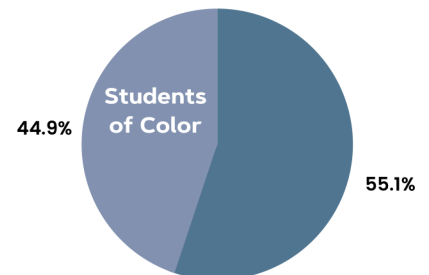
ENROLLMENT

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington



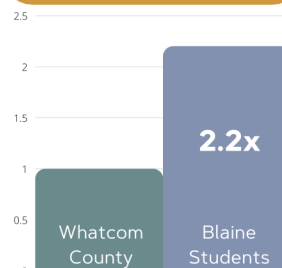
Blaine School District

ENROLLMENT



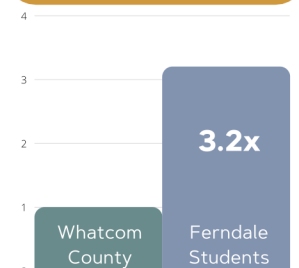
Ferndale School District

PROPORTIONALITY



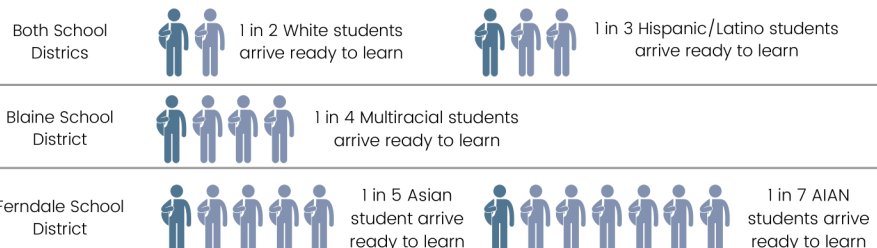
There is a 2.2x higher proportion of Students of Color in the Blaine School District than in the County at large

PROPORTIONALITY



There is a 3.2x higher proportion of Students of Color in the Ferndale School District than in the County at large

K-READINESS



Survey & Events
57 participants

Stakeholder
4 participants

Focus Group
15 participants