

Summary of the Educational Services Analysis

***A Presentation to the
Red Wing Public Schools
School Board***

April 27, 2020

Your Presenters

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Presentation Overview

The primary purposes of this presentation to the Board are to:

- 1. Review the methodology of the study**
- 2. Present pertinent information for contextual purposes**
- 3. Provide key Findings**
- 4. Provide corresponding Areas of Opportunity**
- 5. Provide a forum for discussion**

Specific Areas of the Review

- (1) A Review of Programs and Services to Support Students with Disabilities**
- (2) Related Services**
- (3) Para-Professional Supports**
- (4) Organizational Structure and District Coordination of Programs and Services**
- (5) MTSS and Early Intervention Practices**
- (6) Professional Development**

Organization of the Presentation

The reports, and this corresponding presentation, are organized with respect to two main areas:

Organizational Considerations

Continuum of Supports

Each will be considered with respect to *Findings* and *Areas of Opportunity*

Methodology

Interviews

- **Fifty-six (56) confidential interviews with central office leadership, school-based administration, certified teachers, non-certified instructional staff, and related service providers.**
- **Questions were catered to the interviewees' particular areas of expertise and relevance to the areas under review.**

Non-evaluative Site Visits to all District Schools including Tower View Alternative Program and the Colvill Family Center.

Comparative Analyses to other County School Districts and Minnesota public schools regarding student outcome and financial data

Document Reviews



Programmatic Orientation

A Fluid Continuum of Supports

INTERVENTIONS

Tier 1 Supports ←————→ **Special Education**

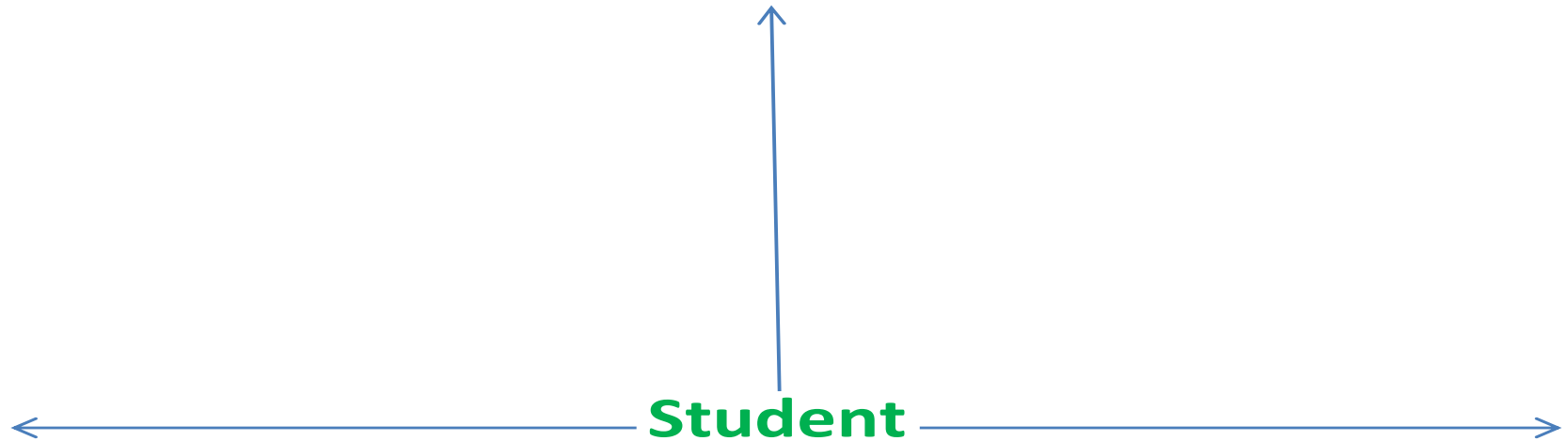
EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

General Education ←————→ **Out of District**



Programmatic Orientation (cont.)

Vertical Alignment: consistent, uniform, and robust programming across programs and schools



Horizontal Alignment: meaningful inclusion opportunities & achievement within grade-level

Programmatic Orientation (cont.)

ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

TIER 3 Intensive, Individual Interventions

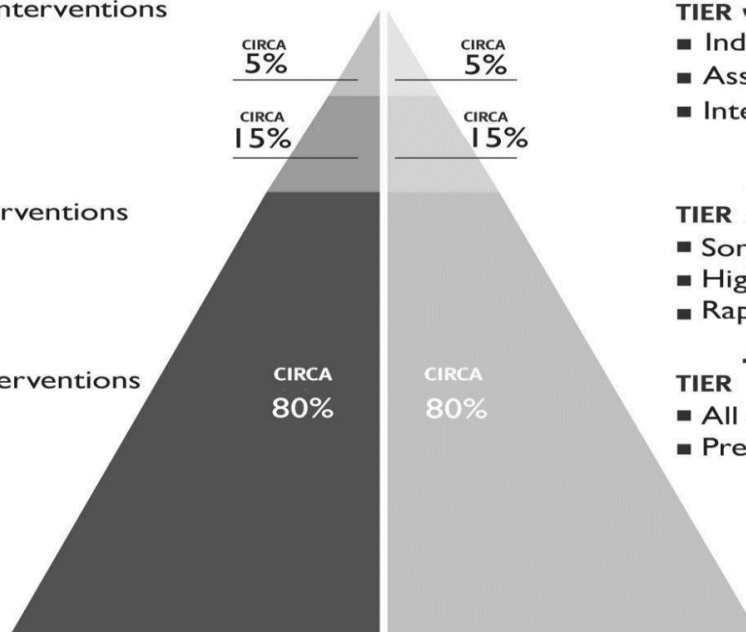
- Individual students
- Assessment-based
- High intensity
- Of longer duration

TIER 2 Targeted Group Interventions

- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response

TIER 1 Core Instructional Interventions

- All students
- Preventive, proactive



Students

BEHAVIORAL SYSTEMS

TIER 3 Intensive, Individual Interventions

- Individual students
- Assessment-based
- Intense, durable procedures

TIER 2 Targeted Group Interventions

- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response

TIER 1 Core Instructional Interventions

- All settings, all students
- Preventive, proactive

Student A

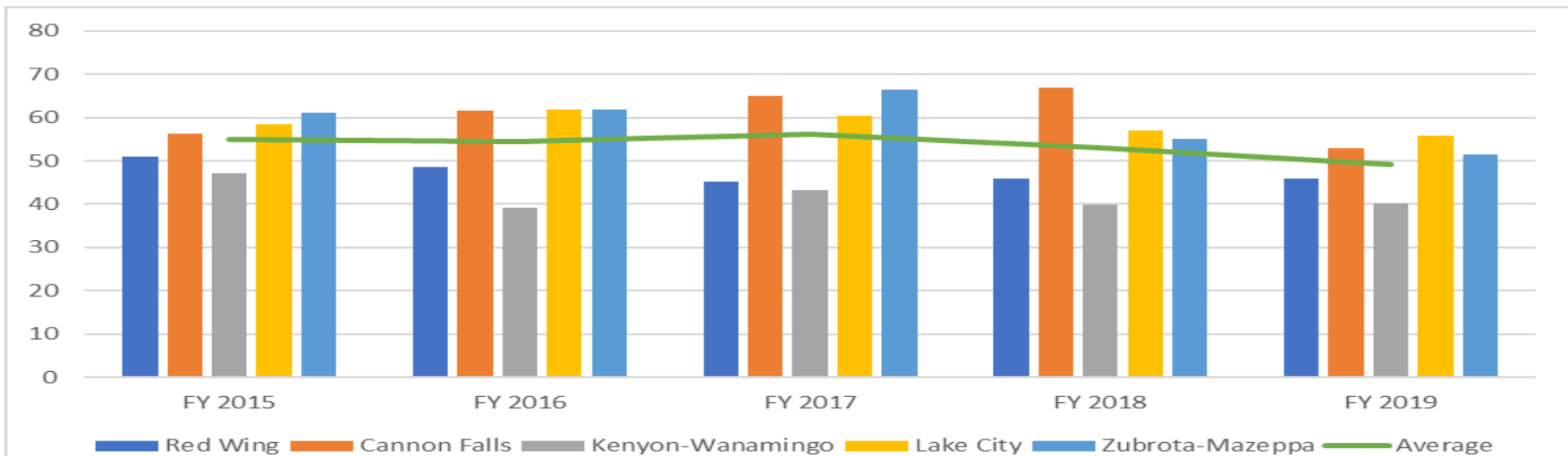
Student B

Glossary of Terms

- ARI:** *Availability Ratio Index*
- CSD:** *County School District*
- FAPE:** *Free Appropriate Public Education*
- FTE:** *Full-time equivalent*
- GCED:** *Goodhue County Education District (the Cooperative)*
- IEP:** *Individualized Education Program*
- LRE:** *Least Restrictive Environment*
- MDE:** *Minnesota Department of Education*
- OT:** *Occupational Therapist or occupational therapy services*
- PD:** *Professional development*
- PT:** *Physical Therapist or physical therapy services*
- MTSS:** *Multi-Tiered System of Supports*
- SDI:** *Specially Designed Instruction*
- SEL:** *Social-Emotional Learning*
- S-LP:** *Speech-Language Pathologist or speech-language pathology services*
- SWDs:** *Students with Disabilities*

Findings

- The perceptions of interviewees were that there is not yet a pervasive sense of “ownership” across the District. Where there was particular tension between general and special education staff, it was reported to be related to students with behavior issues. Although in their first year of PBIS, the focus has been on the “adult behaviors” and working on strategies to minimize behavioral issues in students.
- It was noted that there is minimal integrated co-teaching (ICT) at the elementary level and, where it does exist, it is often not being implemented in with fidelity to best practice and/or consistent with programmatic design.
- The data on Least Restrictive Environment reflect these systemic challenges.



Organizational Considerations

Findings (cont.)

- It was reported that the climate at IEP meetings involving reductions or discontinuations in service (e.g. declassifications), for reasons of student progress, was most often celebratory.
- Respondents were consistent in their perceptions that there was a need for enhancement of professional development opportunities on current and emerging best practices.
- Special education teachers reported frustration at being denied access to workshops/conferences that are targeted at helping teachers work with specific disabilities.
- Paraprofessionals expressed some dissatisfaction about unexplained transfers to different schools and programs. In several cases the paraprofessionals had new caseloads for which they received no training

Organizational Considerations

Findings (cont.)

- Because the Cooperative and the District each have responsibilities for different parts of the special education services, staff were often not clear regarding who is in charge of specific functions.
- In a related matter, it was also reported that staff have perceived a schism between the District Superintendent and the Executive Director. This tension, whether real or imagined, has led to the perception that leadership is not on the same page and providing an important unified message to school-based and community stakeholders.
- From a quantitative perspective, the administrative structure which comprises 1.64 FTEs (the .5 Executive Director, the 1 FTE Director, and the .14 FTE Early Childhood Coordinator) to oversee 515 SWDs, equates to a ratio of one administrator for every 315 SWDs, and compares to an expected range of 1:150-1:250 from the authors' work nationally and is leanly staffed compared to other CSDs, that average approximately 1:200.
- As delineated in the next page, the District ranges from leanly staffed to staffed within expectations.



Organizational Considerations

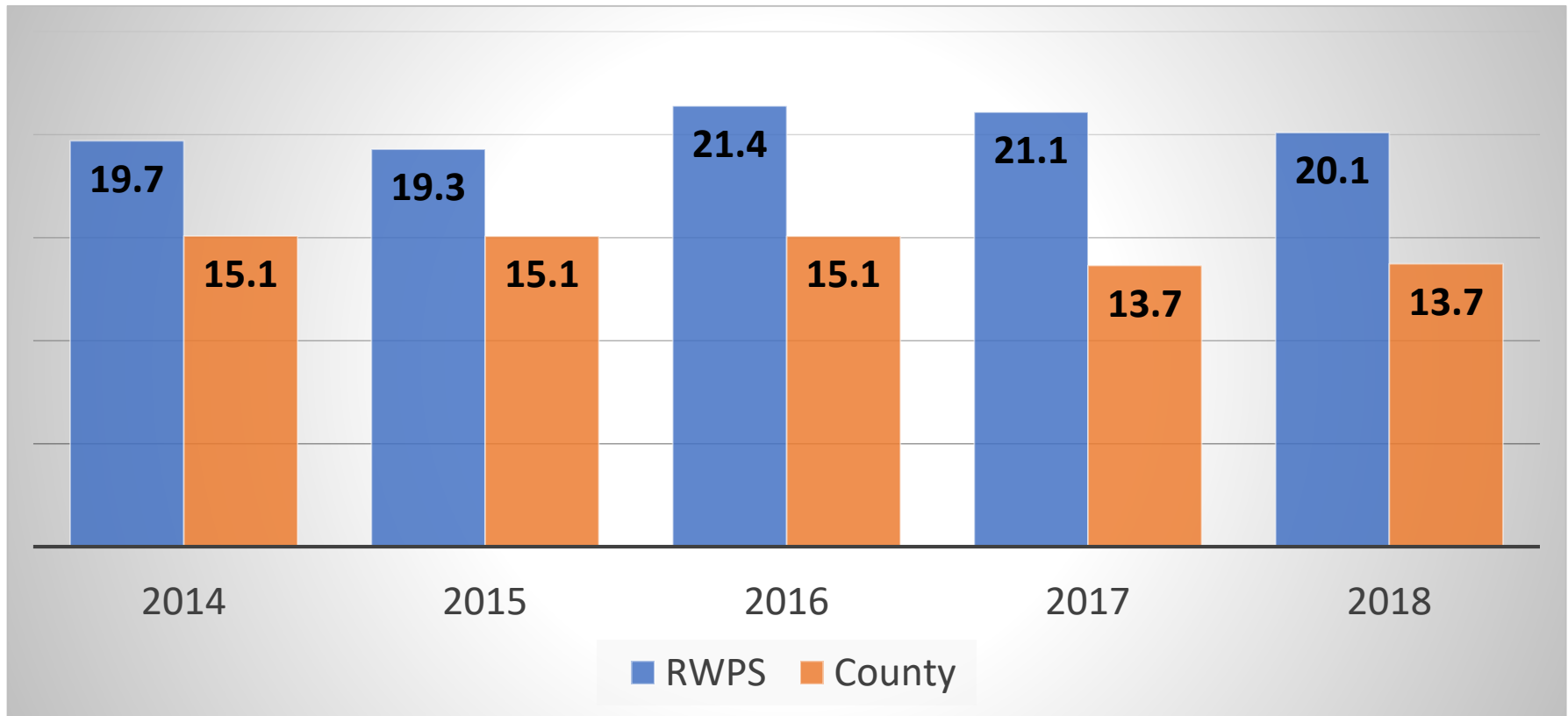
Findings (cont.)

Discipline	FTE	Ratio	Interpretation	Source
Certified Teachers	31	16	Staffed to Expectations	State
Para-professionals	61	8.4	To Be Discussed	—
S-LP	5.6	92	Leanly Staffed	ASHA National Data
OT Staff	2.7	191	Staffed to Expectations	National Data
PT	1.3	396	Staffed to Expectations	National Data
Psychology	3	953	Staffed to Expectations	NASP/National Data

Organizational Considerations

Findings (cont.)

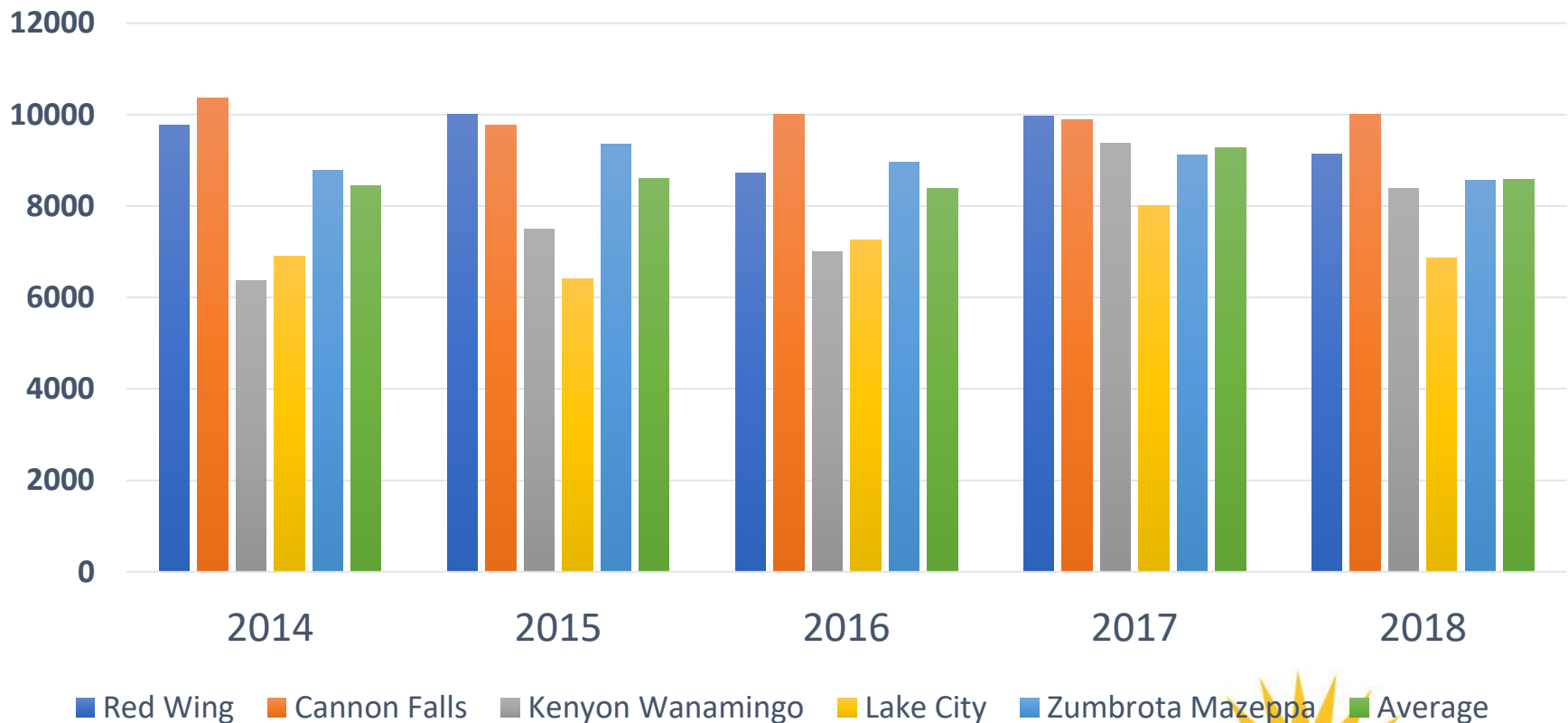
- The District's expenditures as a proportion of the operation budget is higher than the County School districts.



Organizational Considerations

Findings (cont.)

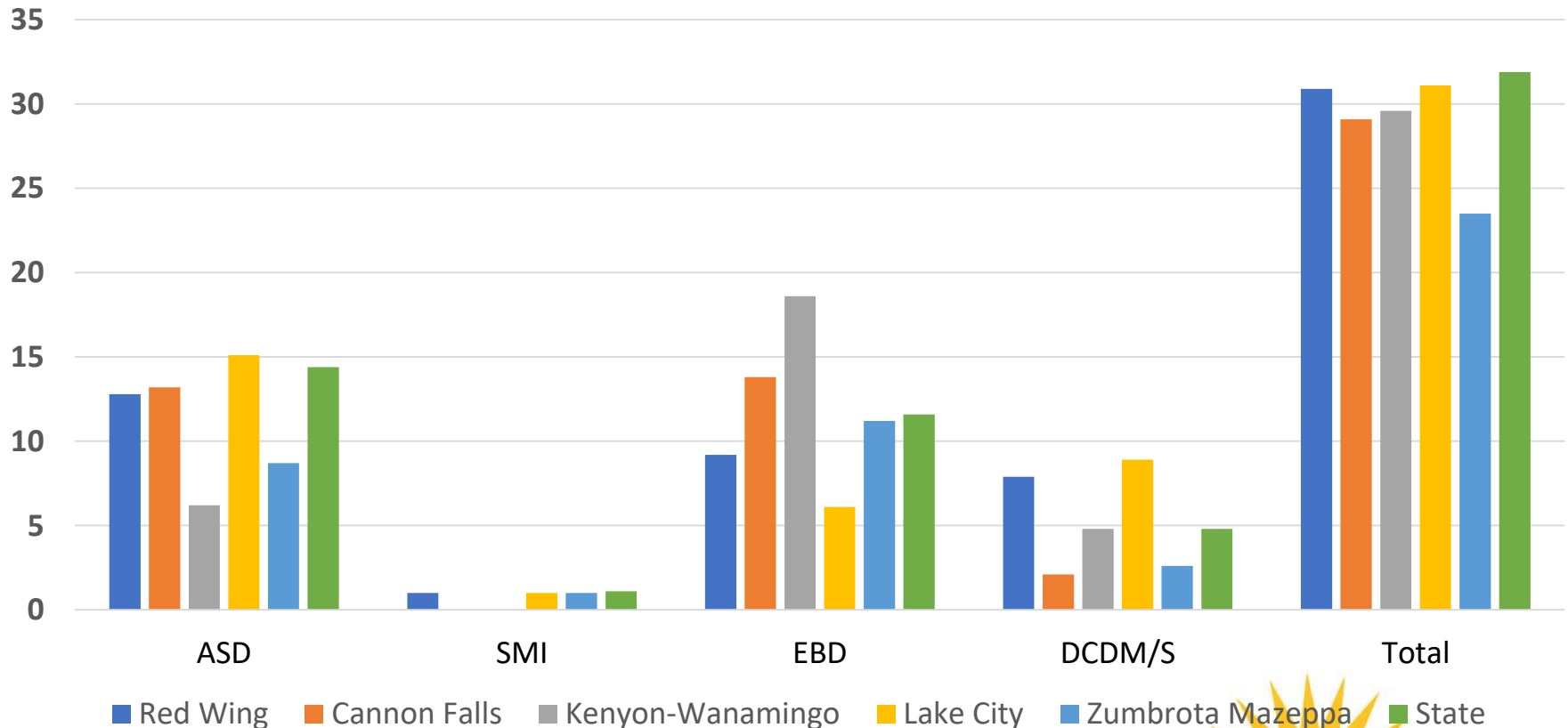
- Per pupil expenditures are relatively higher as well.



Organizational Considerations

Findings (cont.)

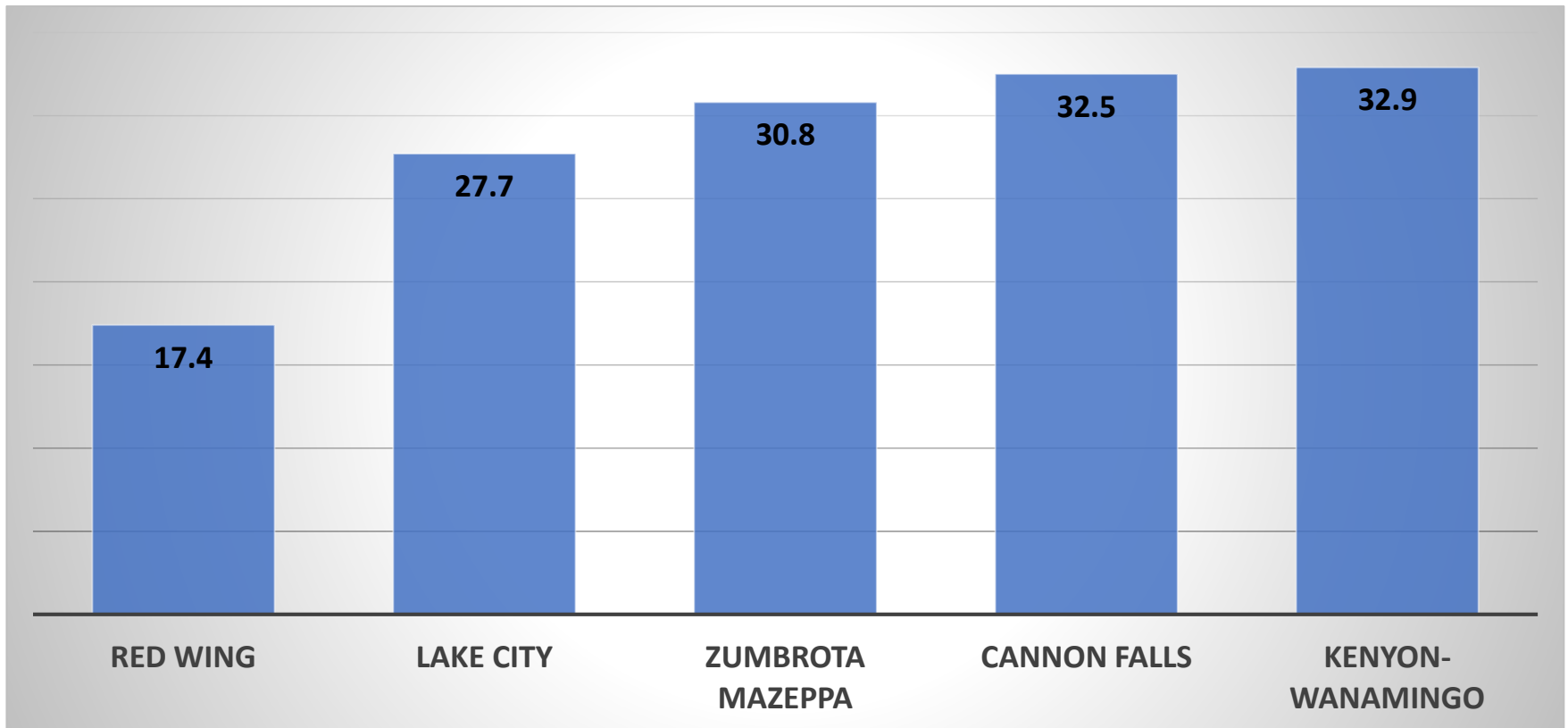
- However, the constellation of high needs disabilities must be considered.



Organizational Considerations

Findings (cont.)

- With respect to the District's allocations to GECD, the District's contribution as a percentage of its special education budget is the lowest among all the CSDs.



Organizational Considerations

Findings (cont.)

- In a related finding, GCED's tuition rates compare very favorably to other Cooperatives; in fact they are lowest in the comparison to other cooperatives.



Organizational Considerations

Areas of Opportunity

- Promote harmony, develop a unified vision, and enhance the working environment among general and special education departments across the District that will include unified PD.
- As part of leadership's continued plan to update processes and procedures, it may also be beneficial to re-visit the establishment of descriptions that further define the in-District continuum of programs.
- Create an algorithm for staff so they know who to go to for questions related to special education.
- Consider greater communication opportunities between the Superintendent and the Executive Director of GCED.
- Consider a re-organization of the Special Education Department. One potential model is presented on the next page.



Organizational Considerations

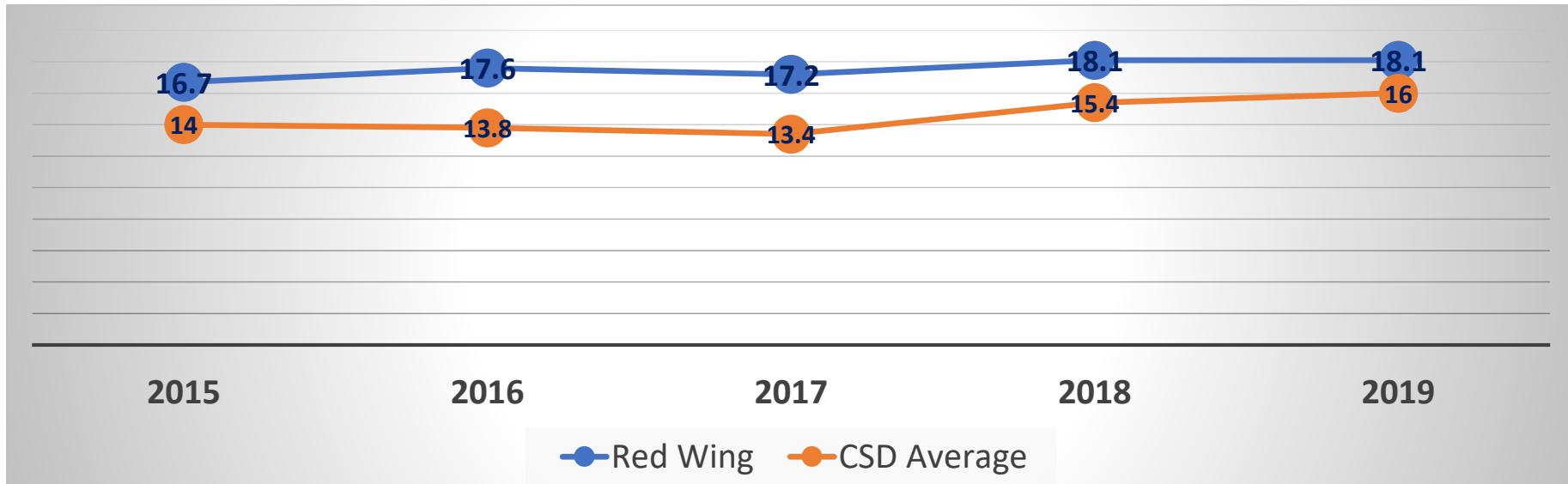
Areas of Opportunity (Cont.)



Continuum of Supports

Findings

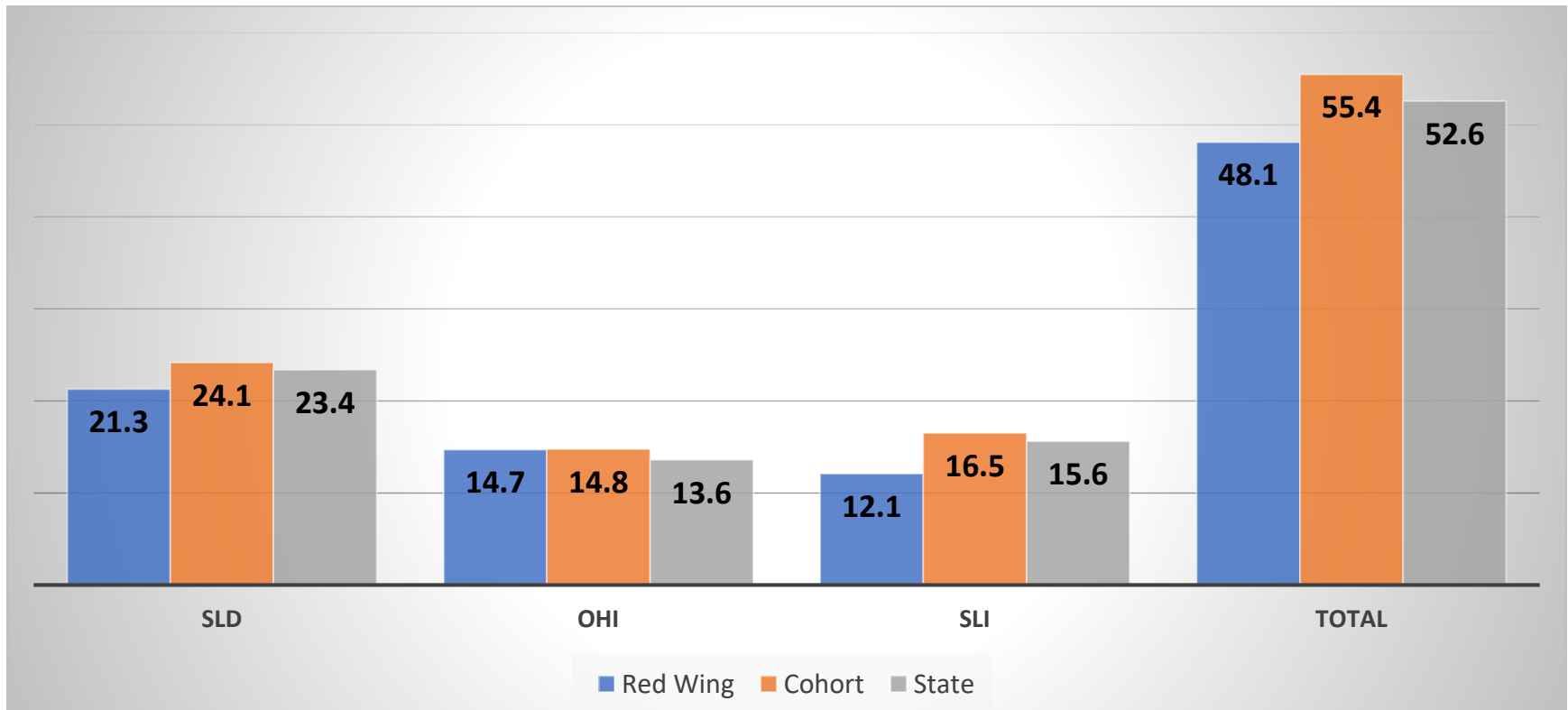
- Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) is reported to be a “work in progress” with several explanatory factors that include: MTSS was within the administrative areas of responsibility of the Cooperative Executive Director, an unawareness among several interviewees that procedures exist, a need for more PD in instituting tiered interventions, and practices that vary across schools.
- With respect to the relatively high number of identified students (i.e., 18%, as compare to the County averages below) respondents stated that although a more robust MTSS process may ameliorate this, the nature of the student demographics is also a significant factor in understanding this “outlying” data point.



Continuum of Supports

Findings (cont.)

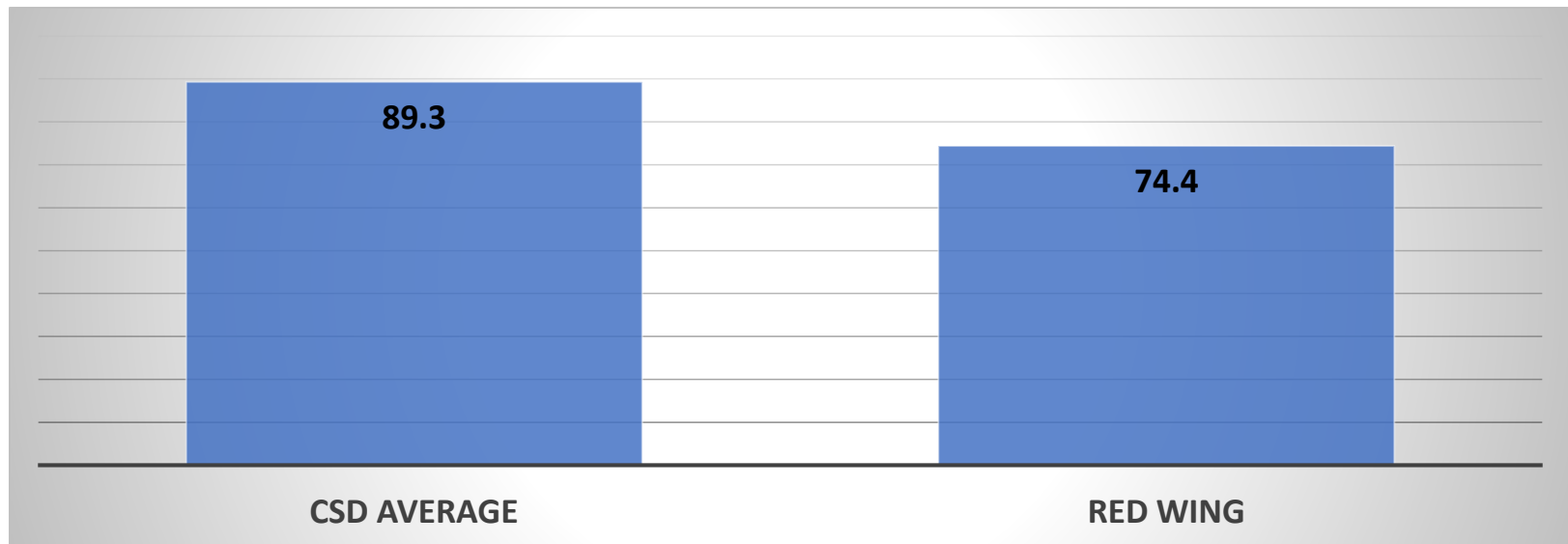
- There is not a disproportionate number of SWDs classified with the three primary areas of high-incidence, low needs disabilities in comparison with the CSDs or the State; in fact, they are lower.



Continuum of Supports

Findings (cont.)

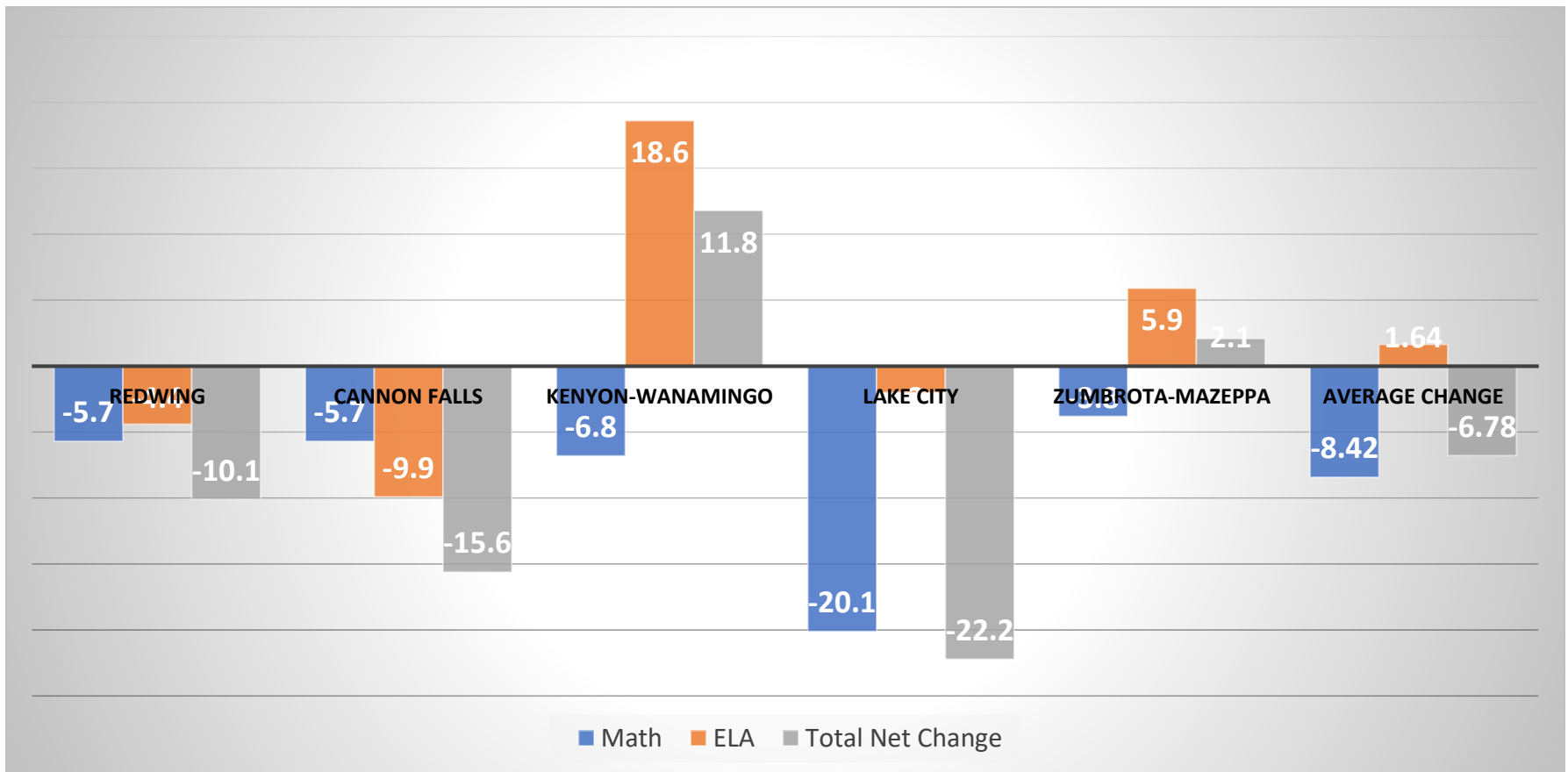
- In meeting its responsibility to provide all students with a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment, the District has developed an appropriate range of special education programs and services. However, it should be noted that co-teaching is poorly developed and vertical articulation is a challenge given the number of transition points.
- Graduation rates for the SWD population have been low.



Continuum of Supports

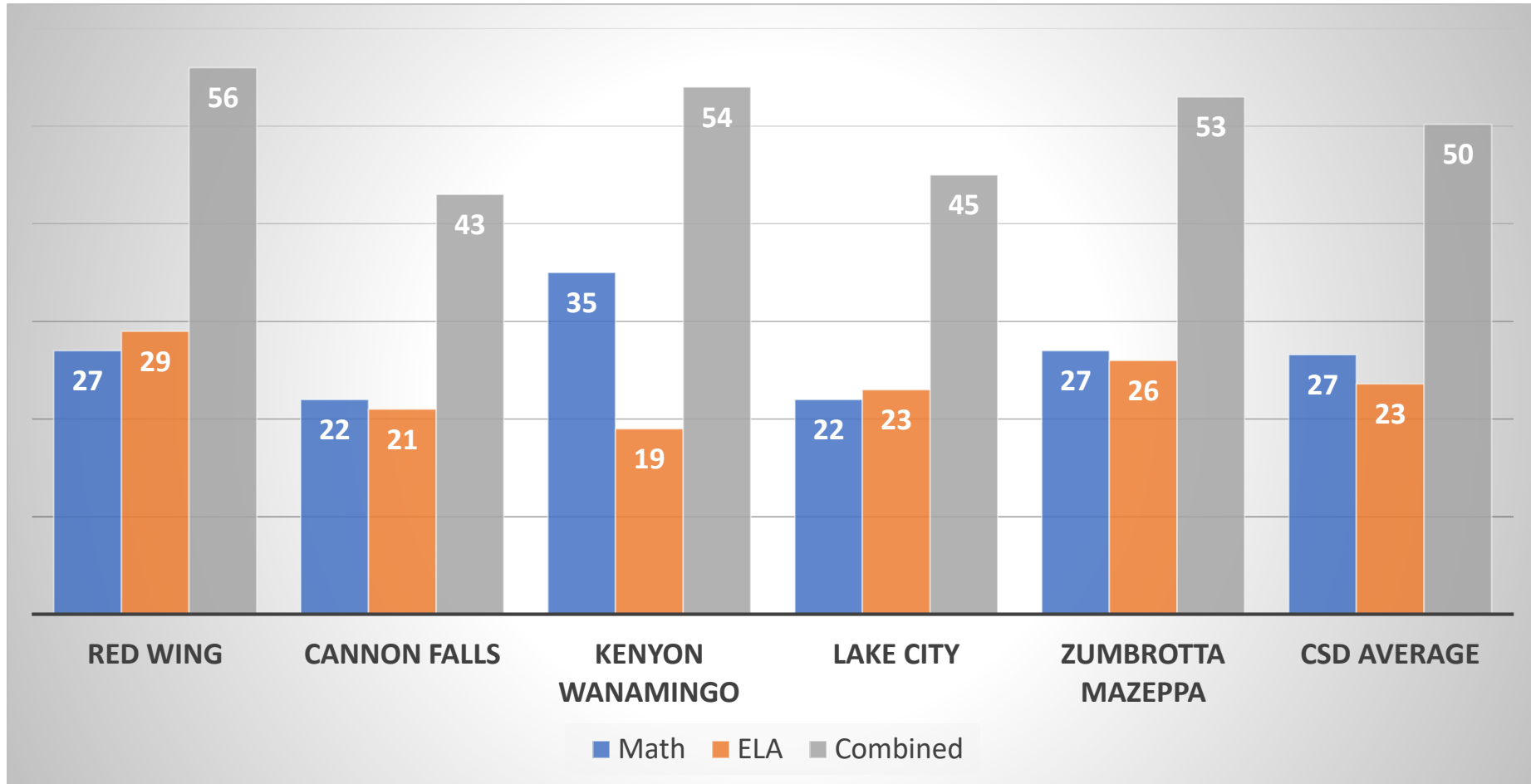
Findings (cont.)

- However, the Achievement Gap and Proficiency Rate data (next page) have been encouraging for SWDs.



Continuum of Supports

Findings (cont.)



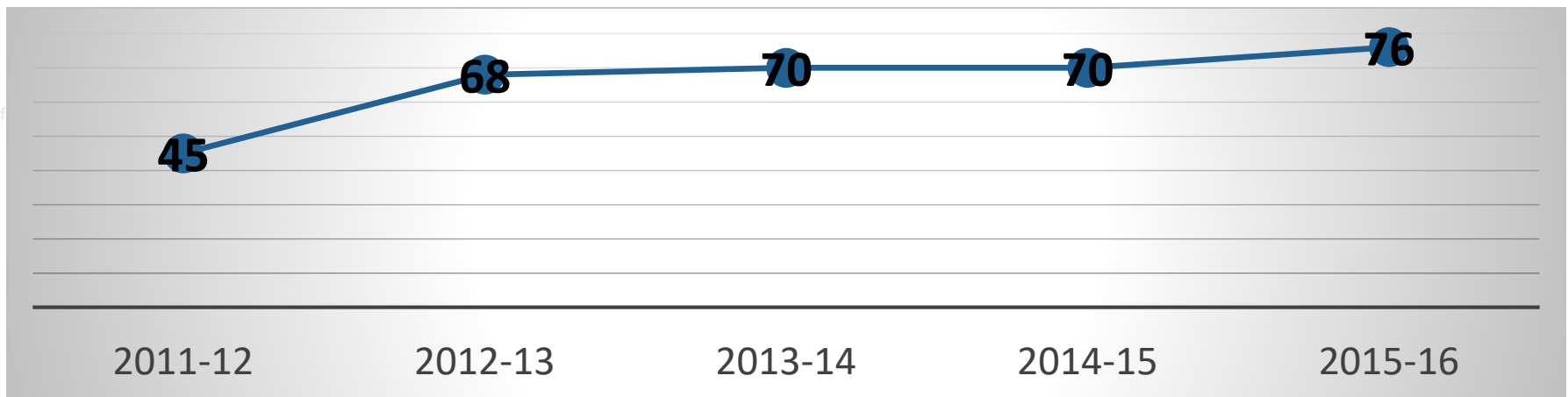
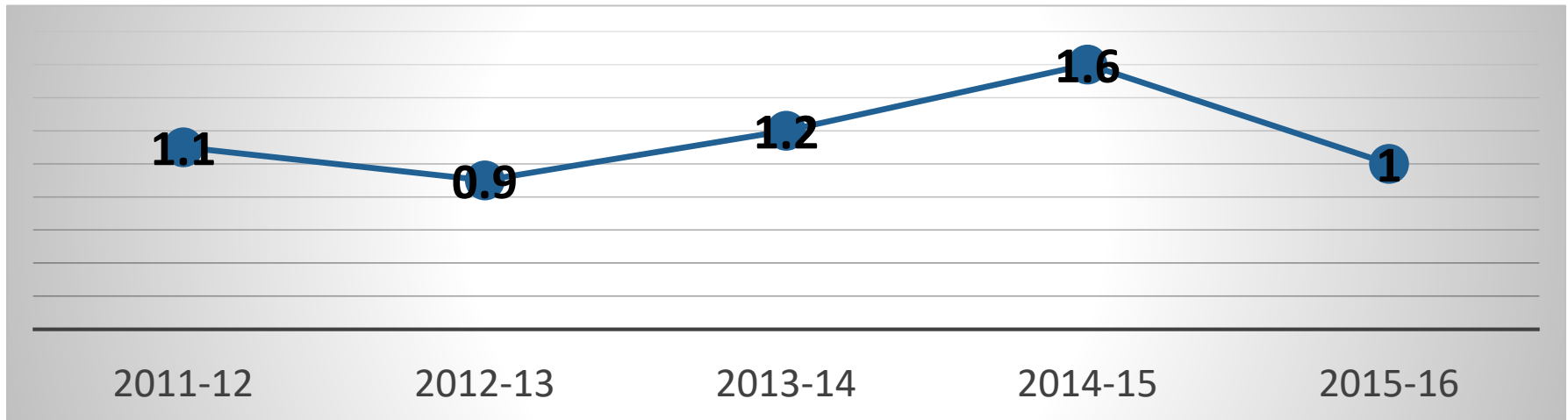
Continuum of Supports

Areas of Opportunity

- **Bolster the MTSS process with respect to:**
 - ✓ **As led by school principals, continue to emphasize “ownership” of the process as one singularly within the purview of general education.**
 - ✓ **Continue to have expectations for MTSS that should be reviewed annually and supported through easily accessible and understood protocols.**
 - ✓ **Continue the focus on PD with respect to literacy, numeracy, and social language.**
 - ✓ **Focus on the quantification of the MTSS data to allow for greater reflection of student outcomes.**

Continuum of Services Areas of Opportunity (cont.)

Referral Rate (Top); Classification Rate Once Referred (Bottom)





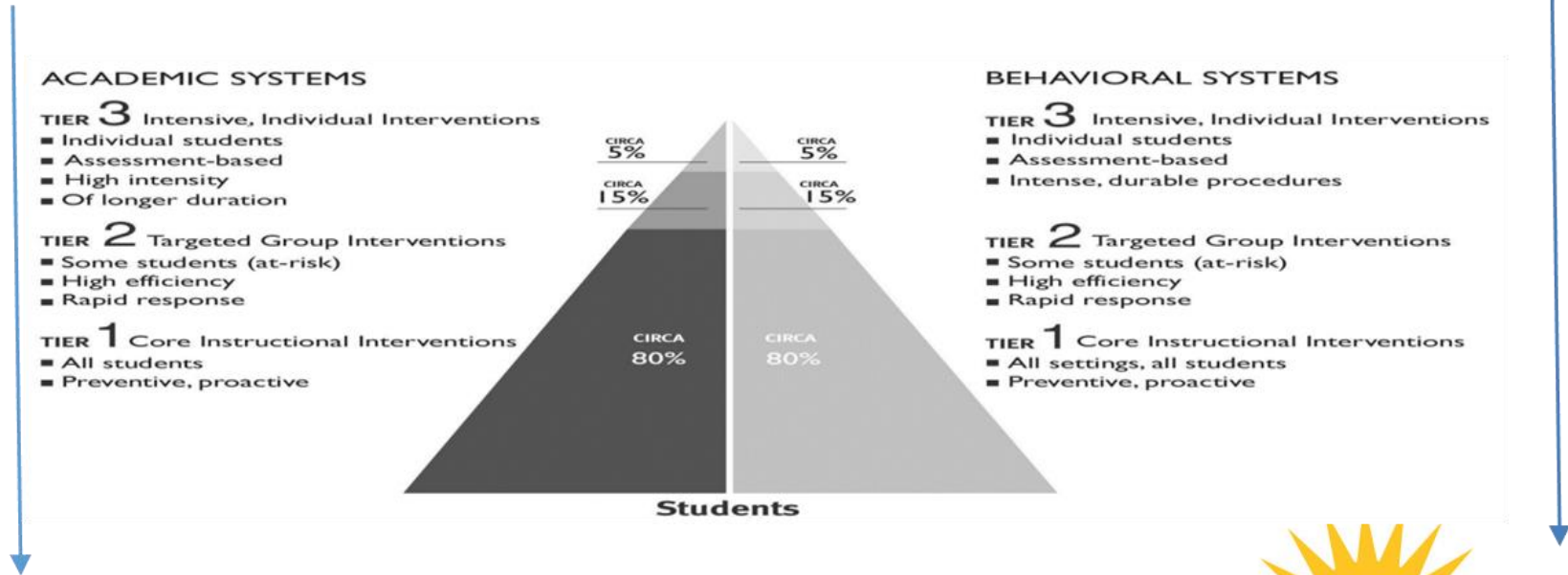
Continuum of Supports

Areas of Opportunity (cont.)

Once more systematic and operational, employ MTSS methodologies as a “step down” from an IEP.

Student A

Student B



Continuum of Supports

Areas of Opportunity (cont.)

- **Re-visit the co-teaching to ensure it remains a viable element in the District's continuum of services. Referring to the leadership capacity, it will be essential for special education leadership and the principals to collaborate on: (1) requisite professional development for the co-teaching dyads; (2) effective scheduling of students; and (3) on-going problem solving.**
- **To supplement the successes currently occurring at the high school with respect to the integration of general and special education students in extra-curricular activities, the District may wish to establish a credit-bearing peer mentorship program.**

Continuum of Supports

Areas of Opportunity (cont.)

- **Institute “Vertical Articulation” teams for the upper grade of the sending schools and the lowest grade of the receiving schools with an overall agenda to ensure the continuum of services continues to meet the needs of all students.**
- **Continue to engage SWDs at the high school level with practical supports (e.g., Career Technical Education) to promote graduation outcomes.**

In Summary

As excerpted from the report:

The overall results suggest that there is a high-level of dedication and commitment of administrators, teachers, specialists, and support personnel who are working diligently to meet the needs of students. Although there are many recommendations contained throughout this report, the following are priority areas for District leadership to consider as part of its strategic planning, and to enhance the programs.

Organizational Considerations

- 1. Ensure that the expectation of student ownership is understood by all current and future hires as part of an operational hiring guide.**
- 2. Provide more professional development training for teacher assistants, teachers and administrators in specific topics of immediate relevance. (ICT, Behavior, Autism, Early Interventions, etc.).**
- 3. Develop and disseminate written program descriptions for greater staff and community access.**
- 4. Promote enhanced communication between, and from, the Superintendent and the Executive Director.**
- 5. Given the myriad of duties within the purview of the Director, consider “off-loading” some duties to other building-based personnel. This will help ensure long-term success of the current Director and create school-based capacity.**

Continuum of Supports

- 1. Promote consistent access to evidence-based practices within the MTSS structure across the tiers of intervention, consistent implementation of data collection over time, enhanced staff training in research-based interventions for literacy, mathematics, and social-emotional learning.**
- 2. Explore and adopt a District-wide academic curriculum. Consideration should be given to organizational practices and procedures that promote alignment of special education and general education instruction as well as related services and academic and other IEP goals.**
- 3. Consider establishing “Vertical Articulation Teams” for the highest grade of the sending schools and the lowest grade of the receiving schools to minimize any gap in services.**
- 4. Re-visit enhancing co-teaching as part of the District’s continuum of services with an emphasis on maintaining co-teaching dyads, principal training (e.g., the 5-minute walk through), and creative scheduling.**
- 5. Strengthen the CTE and other avenues to optimize graduation rates.**

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION