

Building Teacher Capacity to Interrupt Racism in Schools: Studying the Work of the Center for Racial Justice in Education

A Report to the Center for Racial Justice in Education

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Overview

The country's educational system, not unlike other large institutions, is challenged by the systemic racism¹ that permeates our society. Sixty-five years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, schools remain largely segregated by race.² Predominantly White school districts receive far more funding compared with districts that serve mostly students of color.³ Black and Brown children are more likely to be suspended than their peers for the same infractions⁴, and research shows that non-Black teachers often have lower educational expectations for Black students than White students.⁵

The Center for Racial Justice in Education (CRJE, formerly Border Crossers) is one of a growing number of organizations working to combat racism in schools. Its mission—**to train and empower educators to dismantle patterns of racism and injustice in our schools and communities**—is executed primarily through intensive training and coaching with K-12 educators, nonprofit organizations, and parents. Their flagship training, *Talking About Race* (TAR), is a one-day workshop that aims to 1) deepen educators' knowledge about the history of race and racism in the US, 2) strengthen their understanding of how racial bias affects their lives, their teaching, and their student's lives, and 3) build anti-racist educational practice. CRJE has been providing this training since 2013, primarily in New York City.

In 2018, recognizing a need and appetite for more sustained coaching around the creation of racially equitable learning environments, CRJE launched a year-long program called Racial Justice in Schools (RJIS). RJIS is designed to provide opportunities for educators to examine how racism manifests in their schools and develop policies and practices that are grounded in racial justice. In the pilot year of RJIS (2018-2019), participating schools received the TAR training, a racial equity assessment, ongoing support from a CRJE coach, and individualized follow-up training. In addition, participating schools became part of a network of educators engaged in similar work.

The development of this new programming, coupled with recent changes to TAR's content, created an important window of opportunity to study CRJE's work with schools. To that end, CRJE partnered with the Research Alliance for New York City Schools prior to launching RJIS. The partnership focused on identifying promising program strategies and improving CRJE's core offerings and overall approach. In particular, our evaluation was designed to leverage the RJIS pilot

¹ Systemic racism (known also as structural or institutional racism) refers to the "systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in our society to the benefit of people who are white and the exclusion of people of color." (Feagin, 2006)

² See <https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/harming-our-common-future-americas-segregated-schools-65-years-after-brown/Brown-65-050919v4-final.pdf>

³ See <https://edbuild.org/content/23-billion>

⁴ See <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/Downloads/CRDC-School-Discipline-Snapshot.pdf>.

⁵ See Gershenson, Holt, & Papageorge (2016)

year to learn about implementation challenges and make recommendations to strengthen the program in the future. Our work together included the following elements:

1. **Evaluating the TAR and RJIS programs** by providing in-depth documentation of program activities, examining the quality of implementation, and assessing the programs' outcomes for participating educators and schools.
2. **Providing evidence-based recommendations** to inform the design, implementation, replication, and scale-up of CRJE's programs.
3. **Building internal evaluation capacity** by creating detailed logic models and theories of action for each program, expanding on existing evaluation tools, and creating tracking systems for CRJE staff to use internally.

We began our work by surveying the body of literature focused on racial disparities in schools and previous research on anti-racism training across various contexts (though the latter was limited). Based on this review, we helped CRJE develop a theory of change for both programs. We co-developed research questions related to TAR and RJIS. Our three-year mixed-method study was designed to assess the outcomes of participating in TAR and to examine the implementation and outcomes of the RJIS pilot.⁶ Through surveys and interviews with participants in both programs, as well as observations of program activities, we aimed to answer: 1) How do educators experience CRJE's core program offerings—TAR and RJIS? 2) How do TAR and RJIS influence educators' knowledge, beliefs, and practices around race in schools? 3) How can CRJE's programming be improved for future cohorts of educators? This report documents the evaluation activities conducted by the Research Alliance, describes our findings, and outlines related recommendations. Overall, our findings indicate that:

- **Most teachers rated TAR training highly.** More than 75 percent of participants said that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with a positive statement about the training (e.g., “overall, I felt the training was valuable,” and “the trainers were knowledgeable about the topic”). In addition to rating the trainers, content, and timing of the training favorably, most participants also believed the **training was valuable** and that the information presented was **useful for their work**. Moreover, 82 percent of participants said they would recommend this training to other educators.
- **TAR training shifted knowledge and understanding about race and education.** When asked how, if at all, the training had influenced their thinking in terms of race,

⁶ The study was supported by a grant to the [Center for Racial Justice in Education](#) from the [W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#).

racism, and education, teachers described having gained a shared terminology on race and racism, increased awareness about the history of racism, increased reflection about their own role in racism, increased knowledge of multiple forms of racism (i.e., institutional, interpersonal, intrapersonal), and increased willingness to act and address racism in their schools and classrooms. Some also reported feeling empowered to engage in conversations about race with students.

- **Training was met with small but vocal resistance.** Despite the positive responses by most teachers, a small but vocal minority of White teachers took issue with aspects of the TAR training. We characterize these voices as “resistance” to underscore their rejection of the training’s underlying premises. According to their colleagues, these teachers espoused colorblind ideology, dismissed the existence of racism in their schools, and centered their own individual challenges in ways that dismissed the impact of racial discrimination. These perspectives are consistent with past research on White resistance (DiAngelo 2010 & 2018; Matias, 2014; Matias & Mackey, 2016; Picower, 2009).
- **RJIS programming led to some changes in school practice.** Over the course of the pilot year, we examined the implementation of RJIS in two schools. We saw evidence that participation in the program led to changes in educator and administrator understandings of race and racism and allowed school staff to develop a needed common language for discussing racism and its manifestation in schools. At one site, these changes appear to be the foundation from which additional, more concrete changes in teacher behavior and school practices were able to occur (e.g., a curriculum audit, changes in disciplinary actions, equitable classroom observations). However, this did not appear to be the case at the other site.
- **Internal and external conditions shaped RJIS implementation and results.** The comparative nature of our case studies proved critical to understanding factors that may promote or impede the success of RJIS programming. One of the schools implemented a stronger version of RJIS, characterized by the commitment of its leadership, the level of engagement, and continued participation into a second year. The other school’s participation in RJIS was less robust—fewer staff were involved, more staff were resistant to the program, and fewer actions were taken throughout the year. Key factors that appeared to influence RJIS implementation and results were the commitment of school leadership, teacher buy-in and capacity, and the quality of the partnership between the school and CRJE.

By examining the outcomes of participating in CRJE programming—including the extent to which participants reported being able to disrupt racism at the school and classroom level—this study

contributes to a growing body of research on equity in education and addressing racial injustice in schools and classrooms. We expect these findings will also suggest valuable lessons and insights for other programs that focus on disrupting systemic injustice and racism in education. In NYC, in particular, this work may inform the district's \$23 million investment in bringing implicit bias training to teachers across the system, as well as its development of "equity teams" in a number of community school districts. Findings about the one-day TAR training, as well as the year-long RJIS pilot, may provide important insights into both the potential and the limitations of similar efforts.

"Talking About Race" Training: Ratings and Reflections from Participants

The purpose of this component of our research was to assess the experiences of educators who participated in CRJE's flagship training, *Talking About Race* (TAR). As noted above, the goal of the day-long TAR training is to deepen participants' knowledge and understanding about the history of race and the effects of racism, and to develop tools to create anti-racist schools and classrooms.

During the early stages of our partnership, we worked with CRJE staff to update their pre-existing TAR feedback survey. In addition to converting the paper survey to an online platform, our primary goal in revising it was to create stronger alignment between survey items and the specific goals of the TAR training. Ultimately, the feedback form was designed to evaluate the following:

- Participants' overall assessment of the training;
- Participants' knowledge of the definitions of race and racism;
- Participants' understanding of how race and racism manifest in classrooms, schools, educational settings, and the lived experiences of students; and
- Participants' awareness of strategies for creating racial equity in classrooms and schools.

We also standardized the items on the survey that capture basic participant data, including their current role, their racial identity, the number of years they've been teaching, the grades they serve, and their students' racial/ethnic demographics. The original form listed these items as open-ended questions, but the revised version asks respondents to choose from a menu of possible options. This ensured that data collection was uniform and allowed us to parse the data in meaningful ways during analysis. In addition to the questions about participant information, the revised feedback form included 15 scaled items and five short-answer questions focused on the TAR training.

We recommended that CRJE continue to administer the survey right after the training, as that method can yield a high response rate. The additional benefits of this approach are that survey takers have a fresh memory of their workshop experience, and trainers are able to get feedback quickly. A limitation of this approach is that taking the survey cuts into already precious workshop time. Furthermore, some participants may need more time to process what they have learned from the workshop. However, we felt that the potential for a high response rate and the immediacy of feedback outweighed these drawbacks. We recommended that trainers reserve a minimum of 15 minutes at the end of TAR workshops, preferably prior to the closing activity, for the participants to complete the feedback form.

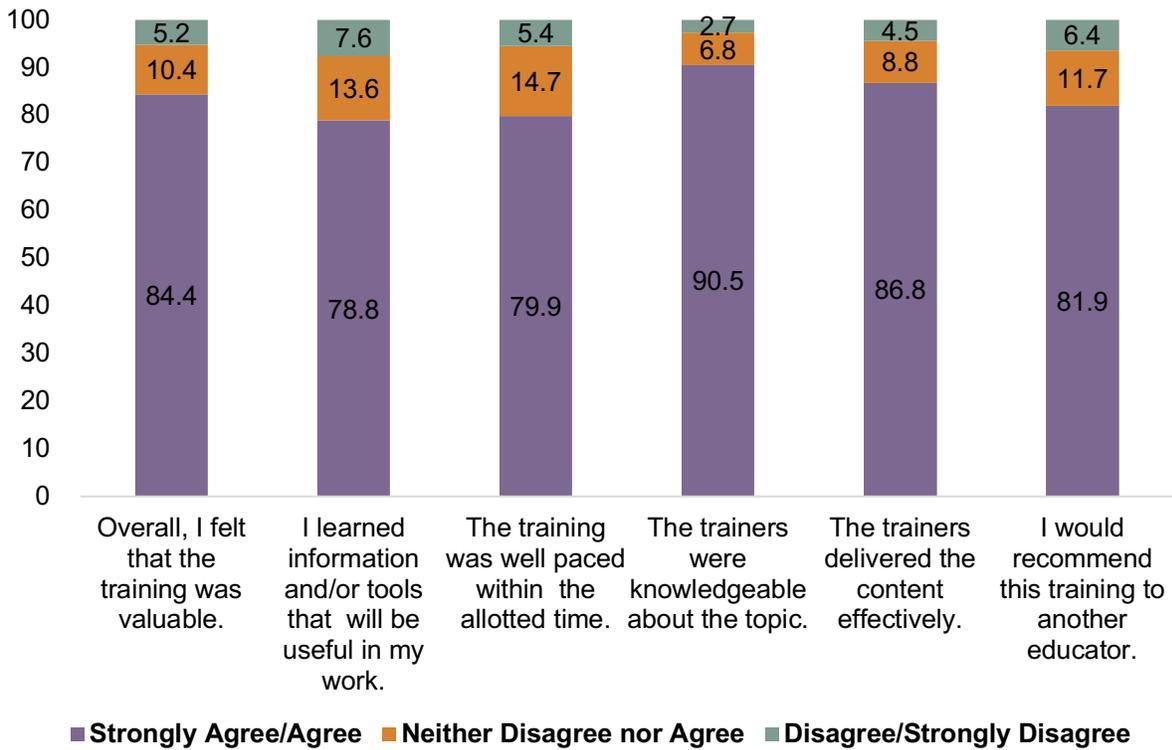
In the fall of 2018, in line with this suggestion, the CRJE team decided to administer the modified online feedback form (including the changes described above) at the end of each TAR training. The feedback form was administered to approximately 895 educators across 14 schools that received TAR training in the fall (including 6 schools participating in the RJIS program). We received 582 forms, for a response rate of 65 percent. We expected a higher response rate, since participants were encouraged to complete the survey immediately after the training. However, we learned that not all CRJE staff administered the survey as directed. While the lower-than-expected response rate may reflect some bias (i.e., those who filled it out may be more likely to have had positive experiences), it is hard to assess whether this is the case, given that some teachers simply were not provided the opportunity to fill out the survey. It is also important to note that this response rate is an estimate based on the number of participants who *registered* for the training. Thus, the response rate—as a percentage of actual participants—is most likely higher, since some people who registered did not end up attending the training. To get a more accurate response rate in the future, CRJE facilitators will track the number of people who *attended* the training.

Survey Results: General Impressions of the Training

Based on our interviews with trainers and prior research on anti-racist training, we had expected a mixed response on the feedback forms, reflecting the discomfort and resistance that past research has documented, particularly among White participants (DiAngelo 2010 & 2018; Matias, 2014; Picower, 2009). However, our analysis of the TAR feedback forms suggest that educators had a largely positive response to the training. For 13 of the 15 scaled items (e.g., “overall, I felt the training was valuable,” and “the trainers were knowledgeable about the topic”), more than 75 percent of participants said that they “agreed” or “strongly agree” with a positive statement about the training. As shown in Figure 1 on the next page, participants rated the trainers, content, and timing of the training favorably. They also believed the training was valuable and that the

information presented was useful for their work. Moreover, 82 percent of participants said they would recommend this training to other educators.

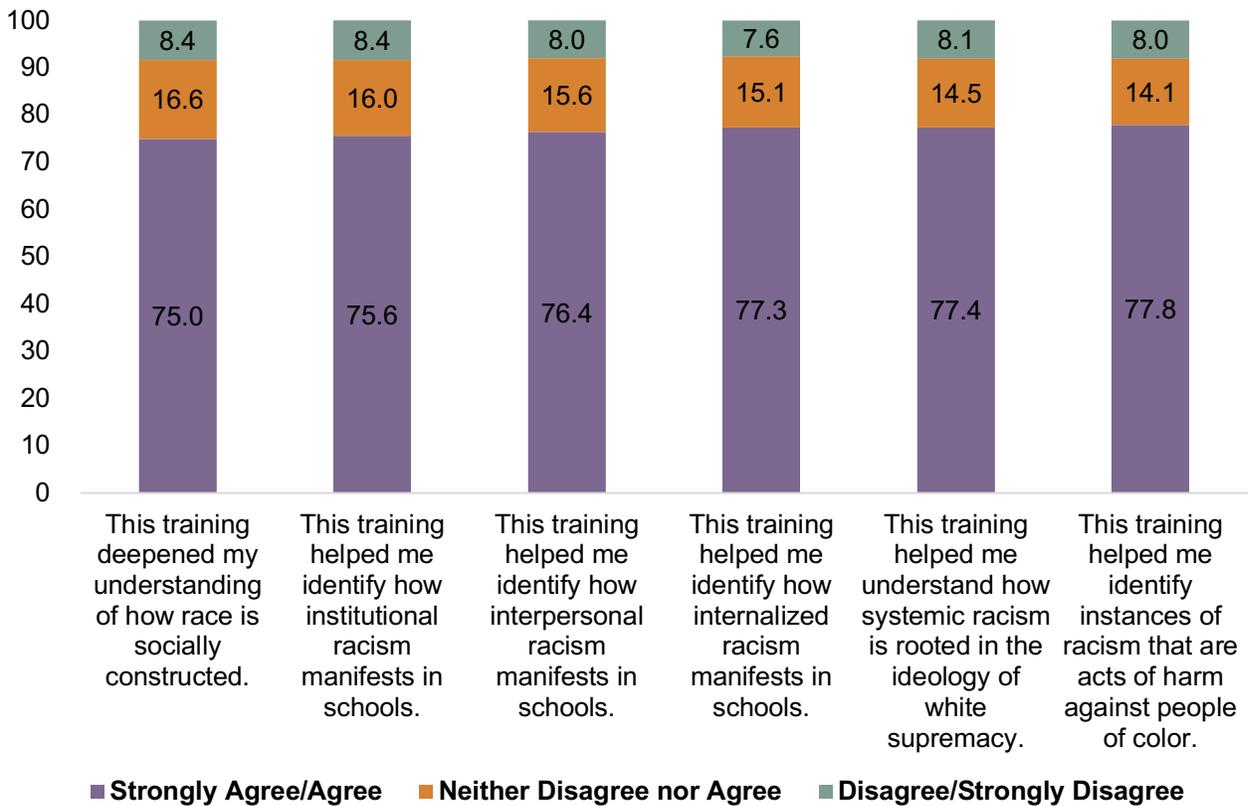
Figure 1: Did TAR Participants Find the Training Effective and Useful?



Source: Data from the Center for Racial Justice in Education Talking About Race Feedback Survey (n=582).

Figure 2 on page 8 summarizes participants’ responses to questions about whether they had gained different types of knowledge through the TAR training. Between 75 and 80 percent of participants reported that the training deepened their understanding of race and various forms of racism in schools.

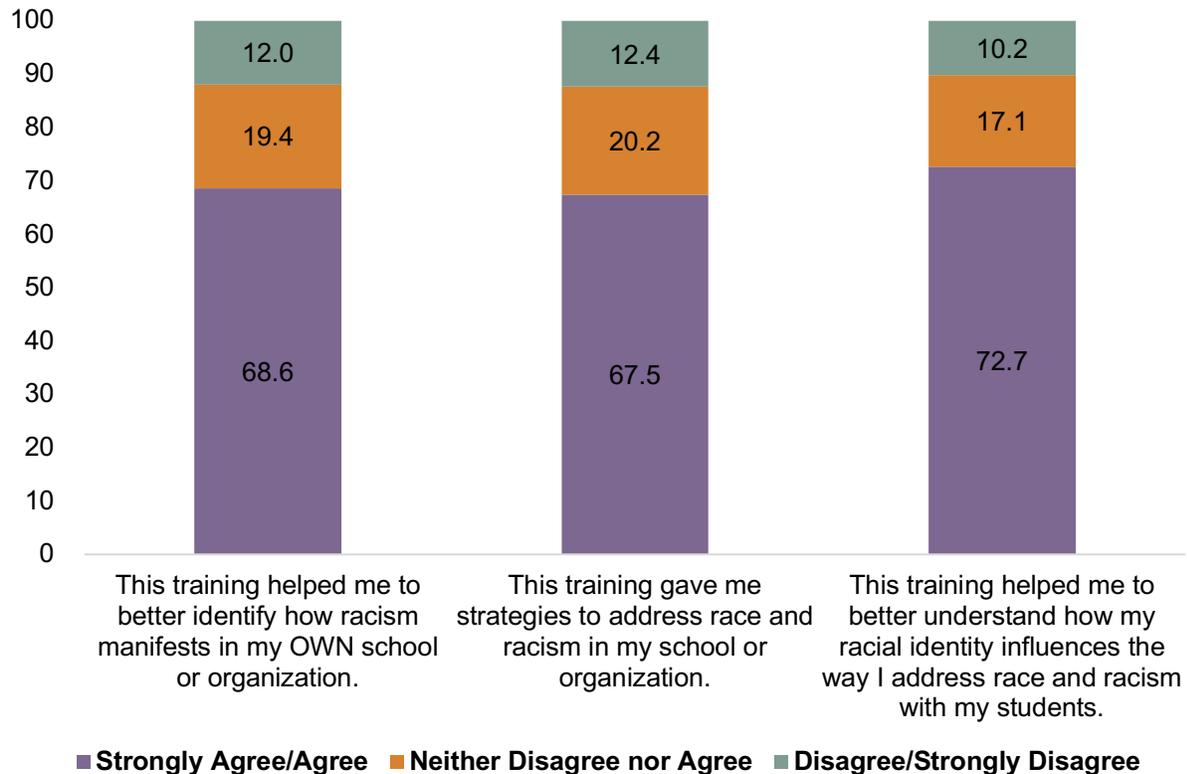
Figure 2: Did TAR Participants Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Race and Racism in Schools?



Source: Data from the Center for Racial Justice in Education Talking About Race Feedback Survey (n=582).

As shown in Figure 3 on page 9, a slightly smaller percentage of participants reported that the training helped them understand racism and how to confront it in their own schools. For example, about 68 percent agreed or strongly agreed that TAR “gave me strategies to address race and racism in my school or organization.”

Figure 3: Did TAR Help Participants Understand Racism in Their Own Schools?



Source: Data from the Center for Racial Justice in Education Talking About Race Feedback Survey (n=582).

Survey Results: Shifts in Thinking Around Race and Racism

Beyond examining participant ratings, we also analyzed participants’ responses to open-ended questions, to more fully understand perceived benefits of the training, as well as improvements that could be made. When asked, “*Did your thinking shift in terms of race, racism, and education during this training?*”, 72 percent of respondents answered yes. Those who answered in the affirmative were also asked to explain *how* the training had shifted their thinking. Below we describe five major themes that emerged and highlight quotes that were representative of these responses.

1. **Shared terminology on race and racism.** Participants reported having learned key definitions/terms related to race and racism. Some people of color reported that the training provided the opportunity to get comfortable using these terms in conversation with students and colleagues.

Analyzing school structures through a racial equity lens provides a more concrete way to discuss issues that I notice regularly.

- 2. Increased awareness about the history of racism.** Participants reported having learned about the history of race and how history shapes racism today. Respondents said they gained a deeper understanding of racism in terms of *power*, *white supremacy*, and *white privilege*.⁷ They reported learning that *reverse racism* and the notion that race is biologically based are both false.

While being aware of some of the historical facts, the notion of racism on more than just a personal level was eye opening.

- 3. Increased awareness and reflection about their own role in racism.** Participants reported being more *aware* and *mindful* in their interactions with others as related to race. Many White participants reported reflecting on their whiteness as an identity, naming their identity, and how that is expressed in interactions with others and their students. Some reported feeling responsible for ending racism in their interactions with others and in the broader society.

The 'I' lens will be a hugely helpful tool moving forward. I think that it will be challenging to look closely at my own practice as a white female educator in a community of color, but I think that being able to identify and name these behaviors in my own teaching will help me make these important changes in my classroom.

- 4. Increased knowledge of multiple forms of racism (i.e., institutional, interpersonal, internalized).** Participants reported learning about various forms of racism, including as an institutional feature of schools (their own and public education more broadly), via interpersonal relationships among students and teachers, as well as internalized racial oppression of people of color (thinking and/or acting as if aspects of one's own racial group are inferior, deficient, non-enough, not deserving and/or other).

It helped deepen my understanding about race and racism, as well as having the courage and brave space to talk about it with my students and colleagues.

- 5. Increased willingness to act and address racism in the moment.** Participants reported a willingness to interrupt racism in the classroom and proactively discuss race. Some also reported feeling empowered to engage in conversations about race with students

⁷ CRJE defines white privilege as “unearned advantages granted based on presumption of white racial identity” and white supremacy as “a historical and institutionally perpetuated system of ideas and beliefs that exploits continents and nations and oppresses People of Color. The purpose of white supremacy is to maintain and defend a racialized system of wealth, power, and privilege.” Adapted from Martinas & Ellinger (1992).

and their colleagues, thanks in part to the vocabulary they had acquired for naming incidents of racism.

There have been times when I have encountered racism towards our students and I have been silent. Moving forward I won't be.

Survey Results: Feedback and Recommendations

On the feedback form, training participants were asked what they wanted to explore further following the training. In addition, we interviewed 19 RJIS participants about their experience with the TAR training. Our analysis of data from these two sources suggests several recommendations for improving TAR:

1. **Include all teaching and non-teaching staff.** Many schools hold the training for their teaching staff, but some thought it might be valuable to invite non-teaching staff who also interact with students, including paraprofessionals, security guards, and other administrators.
2. **Include more concrete examples of disrupting racism in schools.** One part of the training includes school-based scenarios where participants get to role-play different responses to students. Many educators found these especially helpful, but wanted additional examples of how educators could apply the information from the training in their classrooms and schools (e.g., in curriculum, discipline policies, school culture).
3. **Address relationships among adults.** Much of the training is focused on the relationships between teachers and students, but the educators found that participating in TAR exposed tensions and fractions between the teachers themselves. Since racial equity work in schools requires staff buy-in and collaboration, efforts to address racial harm and repair relationships among adults in the building have an important role to play.
4. **Tailor the content of the training to address differences in ethnicity, language, and age.** While the explicit focus of the training is around race, educators were interested in the possibilities of speaking to the issues and needs of their particular school communities. This included questions about how to apply this work to children of different ages.
5. **Communicate expectations to staff prior to training.** Despite the overall positive feedback, participants shared that a vocal minority of White staff at each school had made a number of negative statements during and after the training and disagreed with some of the content. Those who had embraced the training argued that the resistance might be mitigated by being explicit about the challenging nature of the training and the difficulty of addressing some of these topics with one's colleagues. This could be in the form of a letter from the principal or embedded in a description of the training to schools from CRJE itself. Others

believed that the resistance might also be lessened if the trainers allowed a little more space for people to process their discomfort. As one participant told us:

Those trainings also don't really allow time for people or space for people. It's basically like, they shove stuff down your throat. That training, while it does provide a lot of good information, it doesn't really allow for a lot of discussion or pushback or—they're very centered on their mission, and they want to drive it home. Instead of listening to someone and then kind of explaining it to them, hearing them out and talking, engaging in a dialogue with them, they're very like, 'Race is uncomfortable. Deal with it,' and just plow on through. Then people just don't want to partake in [the work].

Finding TAR an important starting point, but recognizing the limitations of a one-day training, as well as the negative reactions it sometimes provoked, a majority of the respondents were interested in follow-up training. This was especially true for those who confronted resistance to this work when they tried to apply it in their schools. To some extent, the year-long RJIS program, described below, was designed to fill this gap.

Racial Justice in Schools Program: Case Study Findings

CRJE launched the RJIS pilot program in the 2018-2019 school year. RJIS was designed as a year-long partnership with schools aimed at helping those schools develop “strategies and resources to build culture, practice, and policies grounded in racial justice and equity.” RJIS was implemented in six schools during its pilot year. CRJE selected schools via an application process that was open to all NYC public elementary schools meeting the following eligibility criteria: 1) willingness to establish a school Racial Equity Committee (REC),⁸ 2) willingness to attend mandatory professional development, and 3) demonstrated commitment to racial equity work.⁹

RJIS was provided at no cost to schools during this pilot year. It was designed to be open-ended and responsive to schools' needs. The program was rolled-out in three stages: 1) training, 2) assessment, and 3) action. The training phase included the full-day TAR training for all staff. The assessment phase included the implementation of a racial equity assessment, conducted by CRJE staff, which drew on focus groups and interviews with educators and administrators, TAR feedback forms, an RJIS community survey (administered to school staff and parents/family members), and input from the CRJE team lead assigned to the participating school. The action phase focused on the development of a school action plan by the school's REC, with guidance from their CRJE team

⁸ CRJE specified that RECs should include 4-6 school and community members (including at least one classroom teacher, one administrator, and one non-teaching staff member). School RECs served as a main point of contact between the school and CRJE and oversaw RJIS work at their school site.

⁹ Commitment to equity work was demonstrated through prior steps taken by the school to advance racial equity as well as a clear sense of purpose for the school's racial equity work moving forward.

lead. Action plans were rooted in the racial equity assessment and were designed to function as a road map for advancing racial equity at each RJIS school.

Evaluating RJIS

Our exploratory evaluation of the RJIS program focused on developing an understanding of the ways in which participating schools address racial bias and the approaches that schools take in an effort to dismantle institutional structures that perpetuate racial inequity. We utilized a case study method, focusing on two of the schools participating in the RJIS pilot. We selected this method because it was particularly well-suited to answering the “how” questions at the heart of the study:

1. How is the RJIS model being implemented in schools? What types of training, supports, and resources are provided to schools? What types of activities are participating schools engaged in as part of the RJIS model?
2. How do educators participating in RJIS experience the RJIS-related training and coaching? What challenges or barriers do educators face in their implementation of the RJIS model?
3. How does the RJIS model influence educators’ mindsets and beliefs, educators’ individual practices, and school-wide practices and policies?

Case studies were conducted over the course of the 2018-2019 school year and incorporated three primary methods of data collection: 14 interviews and focus groups with 19 respondents, 7 observations, and a review of relevant documents and school materials across the two schools.

While most data collection activities were common across the case study sites, our research design was flexible in order to respond to the unique action plans developed by each school (see below for more information about these plans).

Of the six schools participating in RJIS, we selected two case study sites in consultation with CRJE. Our goal was to select sites in a way that would 1) maximize variation with respect to student demographics and geographic location (see Table 1), and 2) ensure that selected schools would be engaged participants in our case study research. We initially intended to use schools’ action plans as selection criteria, so we could include schools utilizing different approaches to advancing racial equity, but action plans were finalized too late in the school year to be used for this purpose.

Table 1: Characteristics of Case Study Schools

	Borough	Grades	Size	Asian	Latino	Black	White
Spring Gardens Elementary¹⁰	Queens	PK-3	476	86.0%	8.0%	2.0%	3.0%
Westbridge Elementary	Brooklyn	PK-5	469	16.0%	77.0%	0.5%	6.0%

Because a central focus of the RJIS evaluation was learning about how the RJIS model influences educator’s mindsets and beliefs, as well as practices, interviews and focus groups were an essential component of data collection. In each school, we conducted semi-structured interviews and focus groups with principals, the REC, and a group of three to five teachers (not on the REC). Interviews and focus groups gathered information about schools’ initial interest in RJIS; impressions of CRJE’s training; schools’ assessment of their areas of improvement with respect to racial equity; action plans that schools developed with support from CRJE; and the successes and challenges that schools faced in the implementation of their action plans. We also conducted interviews with the CRJE team lead assigned to each school. These interviews focused on team leads’ assessments of their school’s weaknesses and strengths with respect to racial equity, their approach to working with the school and the REC, and their impressions of the effectiveness of the school’s implementation of its action plan.

Researchers conducted observations of activities related to the implementation of RJIS in both case study schools. In each school, researchers observed the TAR training with the REC and the TAR training with the full school staff, which took place in the summer and fall of 2018 respectively. Researchers also observed REC meetings, presentations of the racial equity assessment results, and additional activities that were related to case study schools’ action plans. Researchers recorded a running chronology of the observed activities, as well as a description of the setting and participants, in field notes. Finally, the research team conducted a document review of materials related to the implementation of the RJIS program, including schools’ applications to RJIS; training schedules, agendas, and PowerPoint presentations; and school action plans.

Data analysis began with an initial read-through of the data, to identify key themes related to the study’s research questions. We then developed memos describing these key themes, which were used to generate a codebook. After several rounds of coding the same documents, in order to refine

¹⁰ This report uses pseudonyms for all schools, school staff, and CRJE staff.

the codebook and assess inter-rater reliability, researchers then coded the entire data set using coding software. This process allowed us to identify critical patterns and themes across data sources. Finally, researchers developed cohesive memos that connected the research questions to the patterns and evidence present in the data. These memos were used to draft the final analyses presented in this report.

Outcomes Attributed to RJIS

At both case study schools, we saw evidence that participation in RJIS led to changes in educator and administrator understandings of race and racism and allowed school staff to develop a needed common language for discussing racism and its manifestation in schools. At Spring Gardens Elementary, these changes appear to be the foundation from which additional, more concrete changes in teacher behavior and school practices were able to occur. For reasons that we discuss later in the report, this does not appear to be the case at Westbridge Elementary.

Changes in Educator Mindsets and Understanding of Racism

In both schools, we saw evidence that staff members had deepened their knowledge and understanding of race and racism. This was apparent in interview and focus group participant references to the “Four I’s Model” of racism¹¹ (a key concept of the TAR training), as well as the way in which staff members’ explanations of racism clearly drew upon the definition provided by CRJE during training. For example, a teacher from Spring Gardens explained, “Minorities, by definition, can’t be racist. There has to be a power component to it.” This understanding of racism reflects the definition shared by CRJE in the TAR training, which explicitly describes racism as the combination of racial prejudice and power. Teachers and administrators also discussed the ubiquity of White supremacy culture, the harmful impacts of colorblindness, and the need for curriculum to reflect student identities.

At both schools, educators reported that participating in RJIS had provided a common language that allowed their staff to have difficult conversations about race and racism. The principal at Westbridge explained,

Giving common language to a group of educators within the school, going back to that common framework. Hopefully, most of us can talk about what institutional racism is now, or interpersonal racism. We have language around that that’s common. I’m going to be able to say that to somebody else—and we’re all going to be able to talk about it. I think creating that common language is really important.

¹¹ The four I’s model of racism outlines four different types of racism: internalized racism, interpersonal racism, institutional racism, and ideological racism.

Having a common language is important because it helps educators identify harmful actions and discuss it with colleagues in a way that others can understand. This common understanding is essential for any change in action to take place. A teacher at Spring Gardens reflected:

There were some things that were happening. I didn't know how to—I felt upset about certain things that were going on in the school, but that PD gave me a racial lens to things. Then it's like, oh, maybe this is why I'm feeling this certain way. It helped me put things into perspective and give me the vocabulary I needed to voice my concerns and my frustrations of what was going on...It was like having access to words that, for me, I didn't know before. Then, now that there is concrete words, a concrete definition that I'm able to use and express, that made me feel more powerful.

Changes in Educator Practice

CRJE expects that as educators and administrators gain knowledge and a shared understanding of racism and how it operates in schools, they will alter their behavior in ways that promote racial equity in their school. We saw minimal evidence of this at Westbridge, though some educators reported that they altered particular classroom lessons or changed their approach to interacting with students. As an educator from Westbridge described,

I've thought about...which students am I praising more, which students am I reprimanding more often. What does that say about me and my biases in the classroom, and it's changed the way I'm speaking—or at least I'm trying to think more consciously [about] like, who am I favoring right now, and who am I not? I think that's actually done wonders for kids who I didn't have as good a relationship with. It has actually changed a lot for some of them.

Changes in teacher and administrator behavior were much more evident in the data we collected from Spring Gardens. Interestingly, many of the teachers and administrators who we spoke with at Spring Gardens shared that one of the outcomes they experienced as a result of participating in RJIS was an increased confidence with respect to naming and interrupting incidents of racism. As this Spring Gardens teacher shared,

I think for me, personally, I just feel a little bit braver to try and tackle some of these issues or topics that arise. I think that previously I would always try to shy away from them or really didn't know how to talk about it. I think that now, I know that as a school, we're trying. I feel a little bit more open, that if I got stuck, I can go to a colleague and say, "What should I do? How can I talk about this?" It doesn't seem as uncomfortable for other people to talk to me about it too. It's also helped me become more thoughtful on how I want to teach different lessons and the book choices that I choose, the partnerships that I make with my students.

Addressing issues of race and racism in schools is a process that requires not only knowledge, but also a willingness to be vulnerable and take risks. It appears that participating in RJIS gave Spring Gardens staff the confidence that they needed to do that difficult work. One of the most powerful

examples was an instance in which a teacher advocated on behalf of a student who was being referred for special education services. The teacher felt that the referral was not appropriate for the student and would ultimately hinder his educational trajectory. The teacher described her discomfort with the situation and how she encouraged the principal to rethink the school's approach to working with the student:

There's a black boy who has, I think, some emotional issues where he cries and has trouble expressing himself, but we, I think, up to this point, have... kept ED [emotional disability], the label in special ed, as being students who really... are a danger to themselves or others. There was... a meeting between the principal and the guidance counselor to push the family [to get him evaluated], and... I came downstairs, and I said, 'This is what we're working on? This is a little black boy who is not showing any area of concern. We haven't talked about him in terms of being violent, being a danger to himself. He actually hasn't come through the RTI [response to intervention] process, so we haven't even dealt with it internally the way we typically deal with students who we're concerned about. I think that we're doing him a disservice. It's a mistake to push his parents into it. As a white, male principal, you trying to talk his mom into doing something is using your power over her. I think that that's a mistake.'"

Not only did this teacher advocate on the student's behalf, but the principal reconsidered the student's referral due to the perspective she had shared. The teacher attributed both the principal's response and her increased ability to advocate on behalf of the student to her school's participation in RJIS.

He thought about it overnight, and he came the next day, and he said you're right. He said we're going to try... [a] different way. That was huge growth for him. Still uncomfortable for me. Not comfortable for me to confront my boss, but I wouldn't have done this 6 weeks ago, last year, 10 years ago.... [RJIS] definitely empowered me and [has] given me the language.

In the end, this student was not assigned a special education designation, a result that both the teacher and the principal felt would ultimately be more beneficial for the student. There were other examples in our data of educators reporting increased confidence to confront racism in their school. For instance, another Spring Gardens teacher shared that after the TAR training, he was willing to take a risk by telling his assistant principal that one of the school's instructional coaches (provided by an external vendor) had made racist remarks. Again, the teacher framed his ability to bring this up with leadership as something that he'd gained the confidence to do because of CRJE.

Changes in School-Wide Policies and Practices

Because RJIS was developed as a year-long partnership with schools focused on a racial equity action plan, CRJE was hopeful that the program would result not only in knowledge and behavioral changes among individual educators, but also concrete, school-level changes aimed at addressing

racial inequities. Our data analysis suggests that these types of institutional changes were beginning to take place in Spring Gardens, though not at Westbridge. (We discuss some of the conditions that may have facilitated the implementation of RJIS at Spring Gardens and hindered the implementation of RJIS at Westbridge in the following section.)

One school-level change that staff at Spring Gardens discussed was the revision of their mission and vision statements to include racial equity language. Consider the school's original mission statement and its revised statement below:

(Original) The mission of [our school], a PK-3 school, is to foster academic excellence in a safe and caring learning environment, through a partnership of family, staff, and community. TALES strives to meet children's academic, physical, and social needs with the belief that educating the whole child allows for learning at optimal levels. With our rigorous academic curriculum, emphasis on social development, and a focus on health and nutrition, students will receive the foundations necessary to excel academically as well as lead healthy, productive lives.

*(Revised) The mission of [our school], a PK-3 school, is to foster academic excellence in a safe and caring learning environment. Through a partnership of family, staff, and community, TALES strives to educate the whole child by meeting their academic, health and wellness, and social-emotional needs. **We utilize a race-equity lens to empower students to break up patterns of racism and become leaders in our world.***

The revised statement removes the phrases “learning at optimal levels,” “rigorous academic curriculum,” and “excel academically,” and places “academic” needs on the same footing as “health and wellness” and “social-emotional needs.” Of course, the most substantial change is the addition of the concluding sentence, which not only explicitly names the school’s “racial-equity lens,” but also lays out the goal that their students will be empowered to be leaders and disrupt racism.

In line with this emphasis, staff at Spring Gardens reported the use of an equitable classroom observation checklist for principals and teachers to use during classroom visits, which allowed them to assess their progress toward becoming a racially equitable school. Additionally, Spring Gardens staff dedicated professional development time to the introduction of a Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard, which staff used to assess and guide revisions to their ELA curriculum. As one of the Spring Gardens teachers explained,

We've been trying to read a lot more books and thinking about the authors and the characters and making sure everyone's represented in the stories and then having a... deeper discussion... We want books to be like mirrors rather than windows, like mirrors to reflect on students that are reading them, rather than windows looking into the main, dominant culture that most books are reflecting.

As a result of the scorecard, the school has generated a racial justice book list for children, which teachers are contributing to as a team. Lastly, the staff at Spring Gardens reported that they were

thinking about how to use what they had learned in RJIS to inform their interactions with students' caregivers. The school had recently offered a TAR training for parents and family members, which was attended by about 40 people. Taken together, these actions represent important institutional changes designed to improve racial equity at this school.

Challenges and Resistance

While RJIS resulted in promising shifts in educator mindsets and practices, our interviews also revealed a number of important challenges to implementing the program. One of these was the relatively short timeline of RJIS. Members of the REC at Spring Gardens reported that one school year was not sufficient to train staff, conduct a racial equity assessment, develop an action plan, and implement the main components of that plan. As a result of this realization, Spring Gardens is continuing its work with CRJE for a second year, with a focus on continuing to work toward the goals outlined in their racial equity plan. Westbridge, on the other hand, has elected not to continue this work—a decision we explore further in the next section.

Another challenge for RJIS revolved around a small but vocal minority of White teachers at both schools who took issue with aspects of the original TAR training. Because the RJIS program began with TAR, resistance to the training resulted in resistance to the RJIS program overall. We characterize these voices as “resistance” to underscore their rejection of the training’s underlying premises. According to their colleagues, these educators espoused colorblind ideology, rejected the existence of racism in their schools, and centered their own individual challenges in ways that dismissed the impact of racial discrimination. These perspectives reflect patterns White resistance that have been documented in prior research (Matias, 2014; Matias & Mackey, 2016; Picower, 2009).

During TAR trainings, some White teachers said they felt like they were attacked for being White. In particular, these teachers were defensive about the language and definitions used by CRJE. For example, teachers struggled with the term *white supremacy* and CRJE’s definition of racism, which asserts that racism is the combination of racial prejudice and power—meaning that only White people can be racist, because of the access to power afforded by white privilege. Even the principal, who was one of the most ardent supporters of RJIS at Spring Gardens, explained that it was not until he attended his second TAR training (he attended both the training for the REC and the full staff training) that he was able to understand and accept CRJE’s definition of racism.

The term white supremacy was very hard for me in August, because I came into it with an understanding of the term in a different way. It was shocking in that moment to hear the term. But then I needed some time to digest it in a new way. When we came back around to it [later]... I was able to look at the work a little differently and have that time to reflect on it.

In some cases, White teachers distanced themselves from being White, arguing that they wanted to be seen as an individual, not as a part of a racist system. They expressed frustration that they felt other aspects of their identity were not being recognized in the training. As one Westbridge teacher explained,

There were a few very vocal staff members who... on a census would identify as White and present as White, and would say "Oh, I don't think I have white privilege because I had a lot of friends who were Dominican growing up," or, "I don't think I have white privilege because I didn't grow up in a wealthy area," or this kind of thing, saying, "Well, white privilege doesn't exist for me." I think that's one of those things until everyone is ready to fully believe racism exists. It's real. If you're walking in this mindset of, "Oh, it didn't really exist for me," I think it's harder to make change.

Our findings suggest that White teachers' resistance to the training sometimes played out beyond the training day itself, affecting staff morale and negatively impacting the work of CRJE. For example, educators at both schools reported that the voices of White resisters took up a disproportionate amount of space at racial affinity group¹² discussions, which temporarily derailed the discussion group's objectives. Staff at both Spring Gardens and Westbridge also expressed concerns that White resistance disrupted formerly collegial relationships amongst school staff and unearthed tensions that left teachers feeling uncomfortable and nervous about being engaged with RJIS. REC members and CRJE team leads reported that even though White resisters did not represent the majority of the staff, addressing their concerns was time-intensive and took an emotional toll on those most invested in the school's racial equity work. After the TAR training in the fall, the principal at Spring Gardens said, "There are already friendships that have had strain. There are people that are feeling like another person is not talking to them as much maybe after the training, or how do I have the same conversations with a person when it didn't seem like they were invested on that day? There's strain on relationships."

RECs and teams leads employed a number of strategies aimed at healing the tensions that arose amongst staff and moving forward with RJIS work. These strategies were more robust at Spring Gardens than at Westbridge, though at both schools CRJE team leads provided resources (e.g., *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo), which emphasized that White resistance to racial equity work is not only normal, but predictable, and that the energy expended to address the resistance should be seen as "part of the work" of advancing racial equity, not an impediment to the work. At Spring Gardens, the CRJE team lead also spent considerable time working with the resisters apart from

¹² Racial affinity groups were those in which teachers grouped themselves into either a people of color group or a white group to discuss their reactions to TAR, how they could use the training in their work, and other relevant resources or readings provided by CRJE.

the rest of the staff, in order to provide a space for them to vent their frustrations. Here is how the CRJE team lead at Spring Gardens, described that process:

I've had four meetings. I heard them out. The meetings are like one period long, and the metaphor I'm using, which I got from someone in European Descent [another racial equity organization], is—I have this truth to offer, this clear water. I want to fill up their glass with this clear water of truth. Well, if their glass is full of muddy water, they need an opportunity to pour it out first, so better they should pour it out on me. I'm not their everyday colleague. That's what's been happening, and so I hear them out, and I offer them some alternative ways of looking at things, and just accept and expect a lack of closure.

In the case of Spring Gardens, the CRJE team lead was especially important in identifying and understanding the nature of White resistance and well skilled in addressing some of their concerns. As a White person who had spent years coming to terms with his own racial identity and confronting and publicly sharing his own biases, this team lead was able to draw on his own experience to reach other White individuals effectively. He described that when the REC members at Spring Gardens were discouraged by some of the comments made by their colleagues about TAR, he showed them the back cover of *White Fragility*. He said,

The members of the REC were astonished at how closely those quotes tracked with what their colleagues were writing. The principal decided to purchase White Fragility for each member of the REC, and they've devoted at least one of their cross-racial optional lunches to viewing and discussing a Robin DiAngelo video. There is a clear idea on the REC of what white fragility is and how it can manifest (including among us white REC members), and a growing understanding among the staff as a whole. I believe this helps move policy conversations about dismantling racism at the school level forward, since resistance stemming from white fragility can be recognized for what it is and addressed as such.

In addition to the team lead's contribution, a few other factors proved critical in ensuring the success of RJIS.

Important Conditions for the Success of RJIS

To answer our third research question, we coded our data to identify conditions or contexts that may either promote or impede the success of RJIS schools. The comparative nature of our case studies proved critical to understanding some of these factors. Spring Gardens implemented a stronger version of RJIS, characterized by the commitment of its leadership, the level of engagement, and continued participation into a second year. Implementation at Westbridge was less robust—fewer staff were involved, more staff were resistant to the program, and fewer actions were taken throughout the year. Below, we discuss three dimensions of the schools and their partnership with CRJE that help explain the differences in how RJIS was implemented. These

learnings are important considerations for the CRJE team as they recruit and support additional schools to participate in RJIS.

Committed and Distributed Leadership

Aligned with a vast body of research on the importance of school leadership, we found that the leader's commitment to RJIS and his or her clear communication about the program to staff was essential to its success. The principal and assistant principal at Spring Gardens held resolute in their commitment to RJIS in the face of individual struggles, resistance within the school, and external pressures. After the initial TAR training, the principal (a white male) admitted to having felt uncomfortable with some of the language, including "white supremacy." Despite his feelings of discomfort and guided along by the assistant principal (a woman of color with prior training in anti-bias practice), the principal stayed focused on the broader goals of the program. The principal's willingness to be vulnerable and his trust in his assistant principal made it possible to move the school's work with RJIS forward in spite of his own doubts and concerns. While not relinquishing responsibility, he entrusted other staff (especially people of color) to take prominent leadership roles in the work.

At Westbridge, the principal was perhaps even more enthusiastic and less hesitant about RJIS than Spring Garden's principal at the outset. However, she was less successful in sharing leadership of the program with others. As a result, when the principal left the school unexpectedly, there was a notable gap in the progress of RJIS. The assistant principal, who became the interim principal, admitted she had known very little about the program and that, without having been part of the planning, she felt ill equipped to lead the work or take a hard stance.

I feel like I walked into the meetings mid-year, and it felt like we were in a very, very preliminary stage, where people didn't feel ready to roll out these conversations with staff. They didn't feel ready—[and] it felt late. It felt like, okay, now we're at the starting point, but the year's over.

In contrast, at Spring Gardens, the principal communicated explicitly with his staff about the importance of RJIS, its goals, and his expectations for the staff's engagement. In response to staff resistance, he and his assistant principal made it clear that while they had heard the concerns of some staff members, the commitment to being an anti-racist school would not be derailed. As Ms. Calvin, the Assistant Principal at Spring Gardens, explained:

But what we need to just be really clear to say [is], "We're doing this. We heard everything. We're moving forward, completely." We keep saying that. We're moving forward in this work. It's this train. That could be one of the mantras. This train is leaving. At some point, you need to get on board this train. Like [a CRJE trainer] said to [a White resister] "You are a teacher of children of color, and if you're not engaging in this work, you're not servicing their needs, and you cannot choose to be here."

Finally, our findings highlighted the fact that school leaders sometimes face external pressures that make this work more challenging. Early on, the principal at Spring Gardens said that he would need to show “results” and “data” to his superintendent in order to justify continuing it. Over time, though, his language seemed to shift. Later in the year, he explained, for example, that he would need to share with his superintendent the importance of the work, versus just convincing him it was “working.” School leaders often have to negotiate pressures from all sides—from the district, their staff, and families. Our findings suggest that leaders who are resolute in their commitment to racial justice work and outspoken about that commitment, regardless of resistance, are more likely to be able to sustain a program like RJIS over time.

Staff Capacity and Buy-in

In addition to the leader’s role in implementing RJIS successfully, the staff’s capacity to begin and execute new initiatives and to create strong internal teams also proved essential. While being a high-performing school was not an explicit criteria for participating in RJIS, the CRJE team acknowledged during recruitment that it would be difficult to bring this already challenging work into a school that was struggling with other organizational issues, facing high turnover, or exhibiting very low performance (and the external scrutiny that comes along with it).

By many measures, Spring Gardens is a high-functioning school. Even beyond their high academic performance (89 percent and 86 percent of students are proficient in ELA and Math, respectively), staff turnover is low, the principal and AP have been there for almost a decade, and the school has successfully implemented other innovative programming. These qualities were evident in the way the school engaged with RJIS—by creating a strong REC team and preserving time for them to meet regularly, by ensuring that all staff were having conversations about RJIS via affinity groups, and by providing parents with TAR training. The CRJE coach, who often referred to the school as “muscular,” noted how well the staff were able to create new plans and actually execute them within the school year, while attending to many other priorities. He said:

They seem to be juggling a lot. I know more from my interactions with the members of the racial equity committee, because when they’re coming into a meeting, before we ever start, there’s all this talk about that IEP meeting we have to schedule and a school safety meeting and this and that. Everyone has got their laptop up and their spreadsheets and their calendars and so, yeah. They got a lot going on and... my sense is that they pride themselves as staying on top of it all.

At Westbridge, the situation was different, reflected in part in lower academic performance. On average, 31 percent and 36 percent of students are proficient on ELA and Math state tests (slightly lower than a comparison group of schools that serve demographically similar students). Moreover, the loss of the principal in the middle of the year set things back considerably, especially since she seemed to be the one most invested in this work. On the ground, it seemed as though various

aspects of RJIS implementation were falling through the cracks. The REC team didn't have a meeting from November to February. When they did meet, only some staff were in attendance. The interim principal didn't feel empowered to mandate affinity groups for the staff, and considerable time was spent on anticipating resistance among staff members. When the school held affinity group meetings, a few individuals were vocally opposed to the groups, and as a result, the REC's plans for those conversations were somewhat derailed. The REC did come together in May to plan for racial equity work at the last professional development session of the year, scheduled for June. Again, the resistance proved difficult to address during that session. While the interim principal and the REC were interested in developing a racial justice plan with staff, they were not able to do so with the same level of engagement that we witnessed at Spring Garden. As we describe below, this appeared to be due not only to differences in leadership and staff capacity, but also to the dynamic between the school and the CRJE coach.

Partnership Between Schools and CRJE

Again, the contrast between the two schools provides a useful lens for understanding factors that may have shaped RJIS's implementation. As described above, CRJE provided each school with a coach who has extensive experience as a trainer and facilitator. While both of these coaches are skilled and similarly committed to this work and their roles, one proved to have a stronger relationship with his partner school. It is important to note that the other coach had a successful relationship with another school that was not part of our case study research, suggesting that the partnership itself—versus the individual alone—is an important factor to consider when launching RJIS in schools.

In the case of Spring Gardens, the CRJE coach played a consistent role in RJIS planning throughout school year. In addition to speaking with the school leaders, he attended all of the REC meetings and helped facilitate their White affinity groups. His involvement proved critical as he was able to address some of the resistance to affinity groups in real time. (Recall that this was a major source of tension at Westbridge, which seemed to derail RJIS for the rest of the year.) Because he spent so much time in the school, Spring Gardens' coach had several occasions to address difficult questions that emerged in meetings with staff. He was also able to model a level of vulnerability when he made mistakes. For example, when he visited a classroom one day, he mixed up the names of two Brown boys in the class. Later, with the REC, he reflected on this experience:

...only afterwards did I reflect that that was a racial microaggression, and I talked about it on the REC [...] We talked about how I would address the kids and address the harm I'd done, and I think enough time passed that it didn't feel constructive for me, but I had the conversation about racial microaggressions, and another white member of the REC said, "Oh my God. I've done that 1,000 times." It's like yeah.

The coach at Westbridge had a more distant relationship with the school and its staff, with the exception of the principal. He and the principal spoke frequently one-on-one, before she left. She found his support crucial in her own development and carried out his suggestions, such as reading specific books and articles, using “equitable talk” strategies she learned from the CRJE coach to facilitate meetings, and making REC meetings accessible for parents. But after the principal’s departure—and because she had not invited other staff into their conversations—that relationship failed to carry over to the interim principal or other members of the REC. One of the REC members was particularly frustrated. She explained,

It was dumped on the REC without real help... There was no follow-up PD. It was something we wanted to do, like have the [CRJE] people come, so that the staff, they could continue. Because even people who are on the REC had feelings about this that they wanted to be able to talk about, and that never happened. Never did. Just the amount of work that—there were a lot of good ideas that we talked about, but it’s like, without the guidance and support... we can only do so much.

She reported feeling alone during both the affinity groups and the end-of-year training and later ostracized from some of her staff for trying to push the racial equity work along. She believed that with more help from an external partner, it would have been easier to face the resistance. The coach’s reasoning for being a little more hands-off was grounded in a belief that schools needed to ultimately take ownership of this work. Acknowledging that his role was limited and short-term, he felt that staff would need to make a clear stand and articulate their commitment to the work, in order for it to be sustainable.

It is also worth noting that the race of the coach may have played a role in these dynamics. Some literature suggests that in racial justice work, White people are more likely to accept the feedback and guidance of other White people (even when people of color may be saying the same thing). Quoting his CRJE coach, the principal at Spring Gardens once said, “Unfortunately the work [of anti-racism] often progresses at the speed of White people.” Perhaps without being able to deal with the barriers put up by White resisters, progress will be limited despite the best intentions of the school staff and coach.

Recommendations for RJIS

In addition to asking staff at Spring Gardens and Westbridge Elementary about their experiences with TAR and the RJIS program thus far, we also asked specifically about what changes they would like to see made to the programs in the future. Several consistent recommendations emerged from both sites—a few of which were implemented in Year 2 of RJIS (the 2019-2020 school year).

1. **Start early.** In Year 1 of RJIS, the REC participated in TAR in August, while the rest of the staff received the training in November (partially to leverage the City’s professional

development day on November 4th). Educators reported that this felt relatively late for trying to launch a new initiative, especially since the post-training resistance was time-consuming to address. In addition, November and December tend to be particularly hectic periods in a school building; even teachers engaged in the work may not have a lot of space and time to follow up on the training during those months. Holding the initial training earlier in the fall (even if it must be broken up into two or three days) would allow time for some initial planning as a staff and the momentum to carry it through, while also building in time to deal with staff resistance.

2. **Be more explicit about expectations and establish a timeline.** In an effort to cede authority to the schools and acknowledge that staff know their communities best, CRJE avoided being prescriptive about what schools should specifically accomplish by when. In retrospect, however, educators may have benefitted from additional structure and guidance. For example, a timeline with a number of benchmarks established for the year (e.g., meet as an REC, create a racial equity plan) and a list of specific activities to choose from (e.g., affinity groups, parent trainings) may help schools organize the work, especially in settings that have less capacity to institute school-wide changes.
3. **Create a network of school leaders engaged in this work.** While the City's Department of Education is offering implicit bias training across the system, far fewer schools are engaged in long-term racial justice work. To combat feeling isolated or turning only to their own staff, educators reported wanting more opportunities to share about their experiences and learn from others engaged in similar efforts. The school leaders especially wanted to hear from other administrators about how they were addressing internal and external resistance from staff and parents. We should note that RJIS in Year 2 did include school intervisitation and community gatherings for RJIS schools.
4. **Provide additional training for school leaders and REC.** Participating in TAR left many educators feeling like they needed additional training, though they were less clear on what specific concepts or content that kind of training might entail. In Year 2 of RJIS, CRJE did provide additional training on facilitation for REC members. This seems like a strategic choice that has the potential to build the capacity of educators to lead this work in their buildings after their partnership with CRJE has come to an end. Beyond this facilitation training, we propose that additional training for staff may be developed in future years depending on which specific skills (e.g., talking to children about race) or themes (e.g., reducing disproportionality) emerge as critical in the development of schools' racial justice plans.

5. **Reconsider the individual team lead model.** The work of both RJIS schools in our case study was deeply influenced by their relationship with their CRJE team lead or coach. Because this dynamic is so important and because the needs of schools are so diverse, it may be beneficial to distribute a small team of CRJE facilitators in such a way that they can be available to coach multiple schools. It may still be important to preserve one individual as the point person for each school, for efficiency and to foster an adequately deep connection to each school. But in cases when the school needs additional support, the team lead is unavailable, or the dynamic between the coach and school just isn't optimal, it would be helpful for the staff to know there are other CRJE facilitators they can reach out to.

Evaluation Recommendations

1. **Track TAR participation.** To capture its reach among schools and educators and document any changes over time, the CRJE team should use their online platform (i.e., Salesforce) to record their trainings and relevant information about the schools and educators they serve. This may include neighborhood, size, grades served, years of operation, and type of school (e.g., public, charter). Information about educators obtained through a registration form may include race and ethnicity, years teaching, years in that schools, subject, and grade. We also recommend that CRJE record not only how many teachers have registered for a particular training, but also how many have attended. An online form where teachers are checked in upon arriving at the training would be efficient and more accurate than sign-in sheets. These data would allow the team to not only present how many schools and teachers they are serving (and any changes over time), but also important demographic information about schools and participants, to highlight the diversity of CRJE's reach. These descriptive analyses can be reported three times a year following different periods of training (e.g., December for fall trainings, June for spring trainings, and September for summer trainings). Alternatively, or in addition, the team could generate a yearly report.
2. **Document program activity.** For the RJIS program, CRJE staff and coaches should invest the time to document what actions are being implemented in school sites. These may include meetings, phone conversations, resources provided, as well as formal and informal coaching. This documentation should not only capture the frequency of support, but more importantly the qualitative nature of these interactions. This information will allow CRJE to better understand which types of support are gaining the most traction in schools and can inform decision making about how to shape RJIS for future cohorts. In the pilot year, our team devised an online coaching log to support this documentation, but one of the coaches

found it cumbersome. We believe using a streamlined version of this form, while also providing time for coaches to complete it on a weekly basis, is essential.

- 3. Utilize feedback forms and disaggregate analysis.** In the 2018-2019 school year, CRJE launched a revised feedback form that included demographic questions. Moving forward, these data could be used to analyze teacher responses by race, ethnicity, and other salient teacher characteristics. This would allow the CRJE team to answer questions, such as: Do teachers of a particular race or ethnicity find the training more valuable than others? Do teachers who have been in their school longer have a more or less favorable view of the training? How do responses differ between teachers who sign up for the training voluntarily versus those whose principal provides the training to all staff? If the feedback form also includes the training facilitators' name (which would be easy for teachers to select from a drop-down menu of names), then the team can also identify any patterns related to the facilitators. We recommend conducting a descriptive analysis of these trends three times a year (mentioned above) and utilizing the data in meetings with trainers and staff members. A more time-consuming component of this analysis would include examining the qualitative data on the feedback forms. For one training alone, we estimate this effort to take approximately two days. Rather than conducting this analysis for every school that participates in a training, the CRJE team could analyze data from four different trainings in any given season, ensuring variation across the trainings to optimize learning.
- 4. Administer pre/post surveys with new RJIS schools and a few TAR schools.** The instrument that will perhaps best capture the impact of CRJE programming on the mindsets and beliefs of educators is the pre/post educator survey. Based on the difficulty we had getting a high enough response rate on these surveys during the pilot year, we suggest communicating the importance of these data to school leaders of RJIS schools and making it an explicit expectation of joining the program. Schools should be encouraged to obtain an 85 to 100 percent response rate on these surveys by setting aside a structured time before the school year begins (e.g., during the professional planning period in August and June) and three months after the school participates in TAR (e.g., a staff meeting in December). We believe working closely with the school leader or other member of the REC to ensure these are administered should be a priority of CRJE's RJIS coordinator. In addition, during the fall, the pre/post survey should be administered in three to five schools participating in only TAR. Administering the pre/post survey in the TAR-only schools will allow the CRJE team to explore changes that occur after the TAR training and begin to capture differences between taking TAR and participating in RJIS. Administration in the TAR schools will take more effort than doing so in the RJIS schools, where the relationships

and interactions with staff will be deeper and more sustained. The CRJE research coordinator will likely require more assistance from part-time staff or an intern dedicated to this task. Analyzing the results of the pre/post survey (including the open-ended questions) can take place over the course of the spring and summer.

CRJE serves a unique role in the arena of anti-racist education. Rather than focusing solely on the single training model, CRJE has taken what they have learned over the last several years of working with schools to not only improve their trainings, but to develop a rich, embedded year-long model that empowers educators to advance racial justice in their own schools. Based on what we've observed so far, this work is challenging and time consuming even in the best conditions, and in places where support for the work is lacking, the program will likely have limited effect. Still, findings have pointed toward the potential of this model to influence teacher mindsets and beliefs, change school policies and practices, and create communities of educators engaged in racial justice work. Investing in further development of the training and strategies to address staff resistance, and building school capacity to integrate this work into their day-to-day operations will put CRJE in a strong position, as it continues the important work of fostering learning environments where *all* students can thrive.

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