

Educational and Curricular Responses to Changes within Student Diversity

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to look at the changes in a local school's student ethnic and cultural changes in the past ten years and the school's response to this change. The research found that the student and community population has made a huge shift in the past ten years. The population has shifted from the White ethnicity being majority to the Hispanic ethnicity being majority. The school's staff ethnicities do not come close to reflecting the community and student population. The staff is over 85% White. A questionnaire was sent to teachers and administration in the building and this gave insight as to changes that have or have not been made in the school when it comes to culture. Also, the curriculum does not do a good job of embracing and implementing diverse cultures into it. There are plenty of strategies to help students speak English better, but the curriculum is not intentional about being multicultural.

Research Concern:

For students to learn effectively, they need to feel comfortable, safe, and respected. My ESL training has taught me that I should celebrate the diversity of my students and incorporate their cultures and experiences into my classroom. In an area that is swiftly changing in its student's demographics, it is key that the educational system recognizes and reflects this change in their curriculum and classrooms.

Research Questions:

- How has the ethnic community in the Turner Unified District surrounding Midland Trail Elementary School changed in the past 10 years?
- How have the instructional strategies changed at Midland Trail Elementary because of the changing demographics?
- Do the faculty/staff demographics reflect the changes in student demographics?

Research Procedure:

The research method that would be most beneficial and informative for this study of changes in student demographics is quantitative research. The purpose of quantitative research is to gather data on a sample population. I gathered information on Midland Trail Elementary School's community, students, staff, and curriculum.



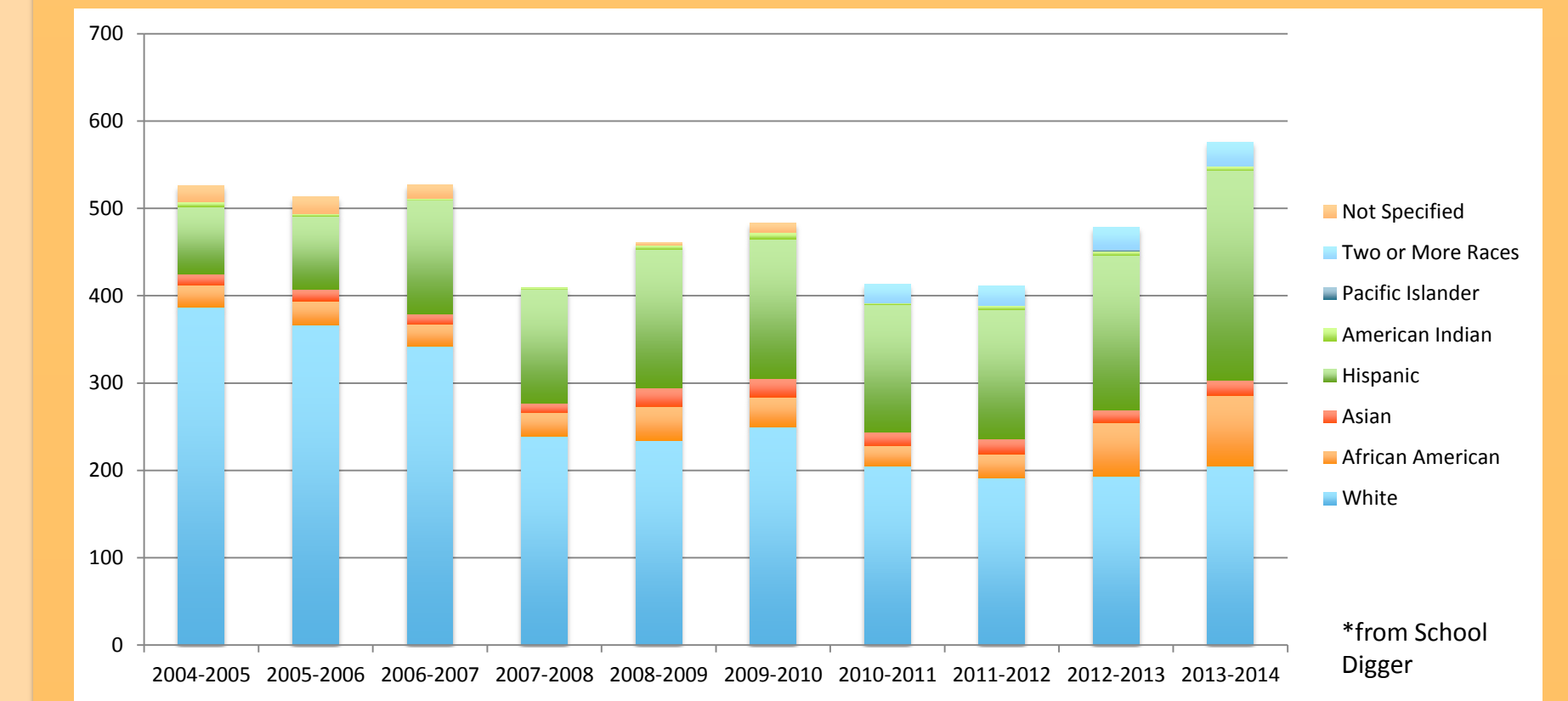
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Precedent Literature:

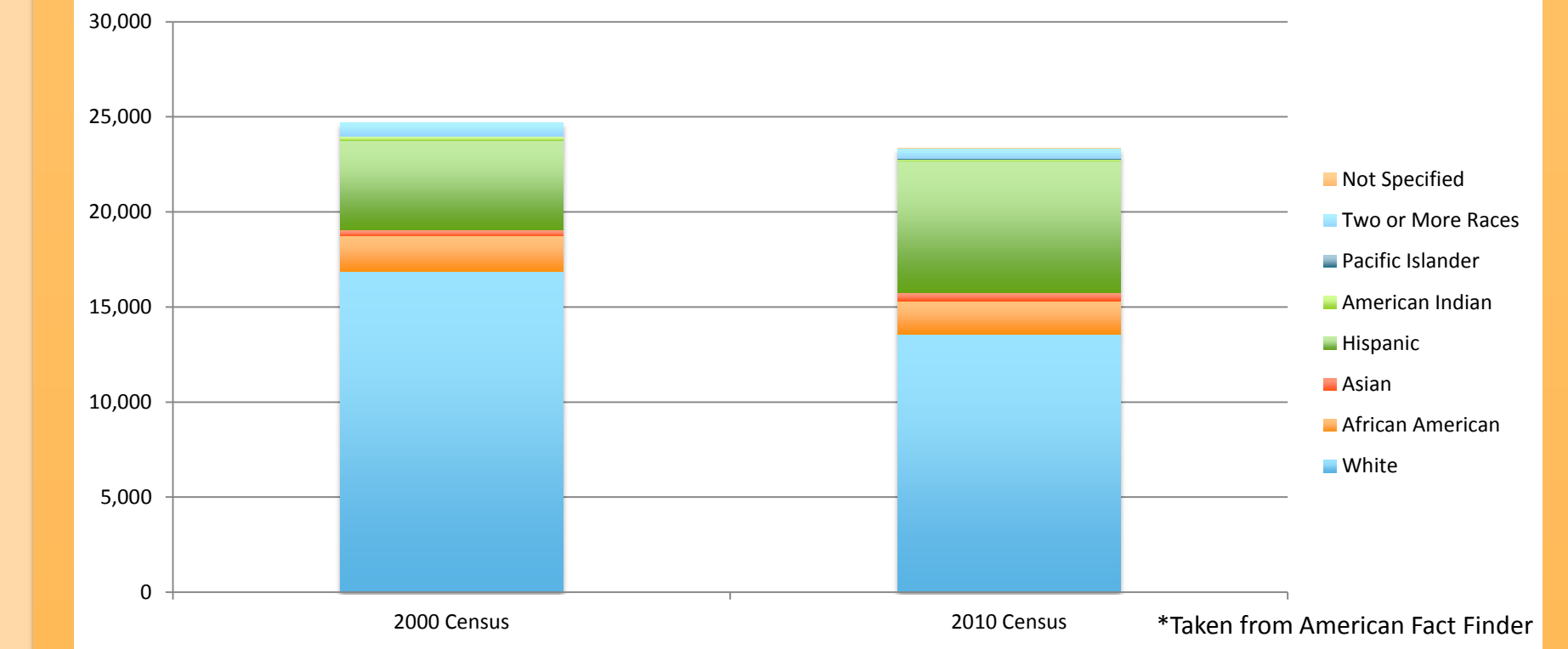
There is a lot of research and discussion out there about Multicultural Education and how it should be properly implemented. Some of the authors and resources out there on this area are: Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives, 7th Edition, edited by James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks, Cultural Diversity and Education: Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching (5th Edition) by James A. Banks, Curriculum & Schooling: Multiculturalism, Critical Multiculturalism and Critical Pedagogy, Building Blocks: The First Steps of Creating a Multicultural Classroom by Larri Fish, and a chapter from a book titled Multicultural Education. These resources outline what Multicultural Education is and how it is beneficial if implemented correctly in the classroom.

Data:

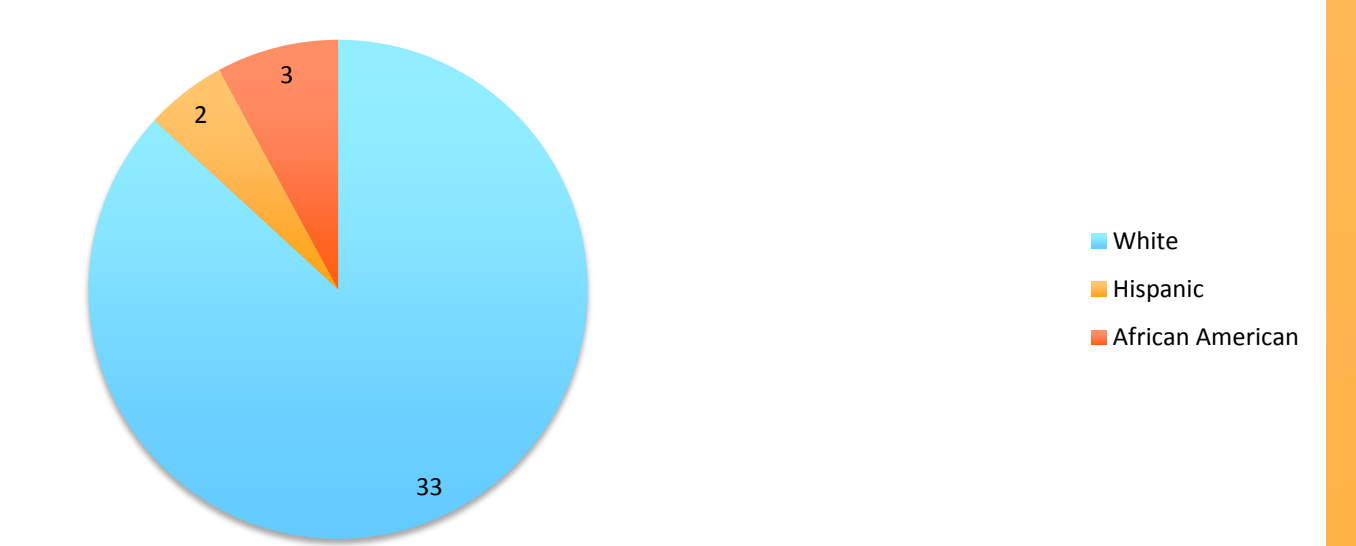
Student Population Ethnicities:



Community Population Ethnicities:



Teachers and Administration Ethnicities (2014-2015)



The interview portion concluded that teachers had seen the shift in student diversity but felt curriculum was not being changed much except to help ELL students.

Conclusions:

It is clear to see that the student population at Midland Trail Elementary is experiencing a huge shift in diversity. The teaching and administrative staff do not reflect this change. This combined with the fact that the curriculum shows little Multiculturalism, shows that the school is not doing everything it can to embrace and celebrate the diversity of its students. I hope to dive deeper into this issue in the future by looking at this same topic but in other schools in the country.

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