

# **What Does Diversity Look Like?**

**An in-depth look at the EEU**

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LEND Presentation  
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# Why is this important?

- Increasing a child's contact with people from different racial backgrounds can reduce interracial biases  
(Rutland, Cameron, Bennett, & Ferrell, 2005)
- In preschool and first grade classrooms, discussions of diversity are initiated by students and are rarely used as a method of exclusion  
(Aukrust & Rydland, 2009)

# Why is this important?

- Incorporating a parent's ethnic identity into the classroom can improve the functioning of a child  
(Calzada, Brotman, Huang, Bat-Chava & Kingston, 2009)
- Difficult to find studies that explicitly and in-depth address: sexual orientation, gender, differences in ability, and socioeconomic diversity into early childhood education  
(Lakey, 1997; Winsler, Tran, Hartman, Madigan, Manfra, & Bleiker, 2008; Ramsey, 2008)

# EEU: Mission Statement

“The goal of the classroom programs at the Experimental Education Unit is to provide a positive educational experience to children with diverse abilities in a setting that enhances the strengths and supports the needs of all the children in our program; and provides children with opportunities to build memberships, establish relationships, and develop functional skills.”

(“Experimental Education Unit - EEU”)

# What's Missing?

- Diversity is more than just abilities
- Diversity is EVERYWHERE at the EEU
  - ◆ You see it
  - ◆ You hear it
  - ◆ You experience it
- Given the EEU Mission Statement, what does it mean to enroll ALL STUDENTS in the classroom?

# Specific Components

- Restricted to student records/forms
- Look at the EEU both as a whole and differentiated by program
- Incorporate the opinions of the teachers/head teachers for additional depth

# The Process

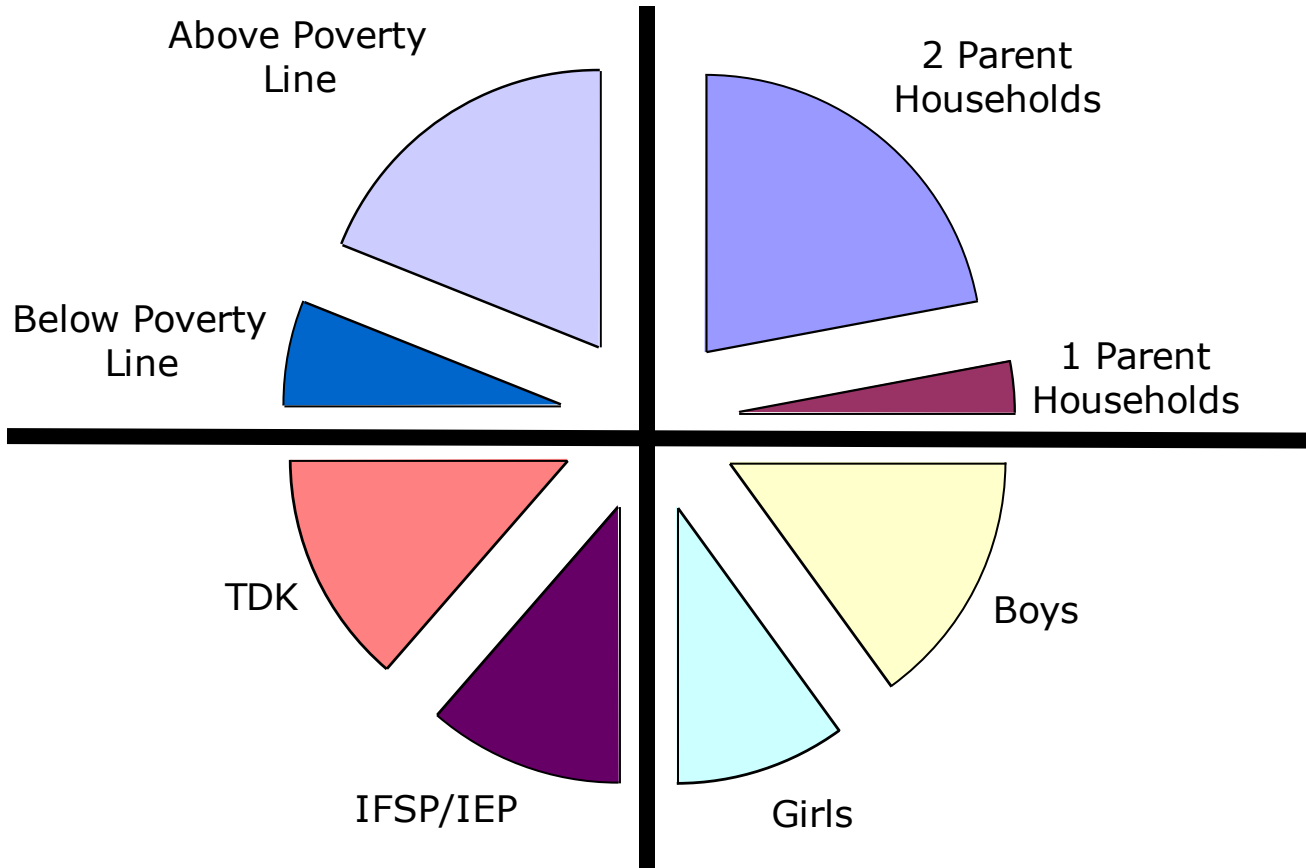
- Accessed 238 school records for student characteristics:
  - ◆ Gender
  - ◆ Race/Ethnicity
  - ◆ Primary language spoken at home
  - ◆ IFSP/IEP/TDK
  - ◆ Relation to the poverty line (definition used)
  - ◆ Number of parents in the home

# The Process

- Gave 30 surveys to teachers and head teachers, with short answer and multiple choice questions (19 or 63% returned)
- Questions included:
  - ◆ Descriptions of current classrooms
  - ◆ Descriptions of ideal classrooms
  - ◆ Definition of diversity
  - ◆ Importance of diversity
  - ◆ Rating of diversity at the EEU

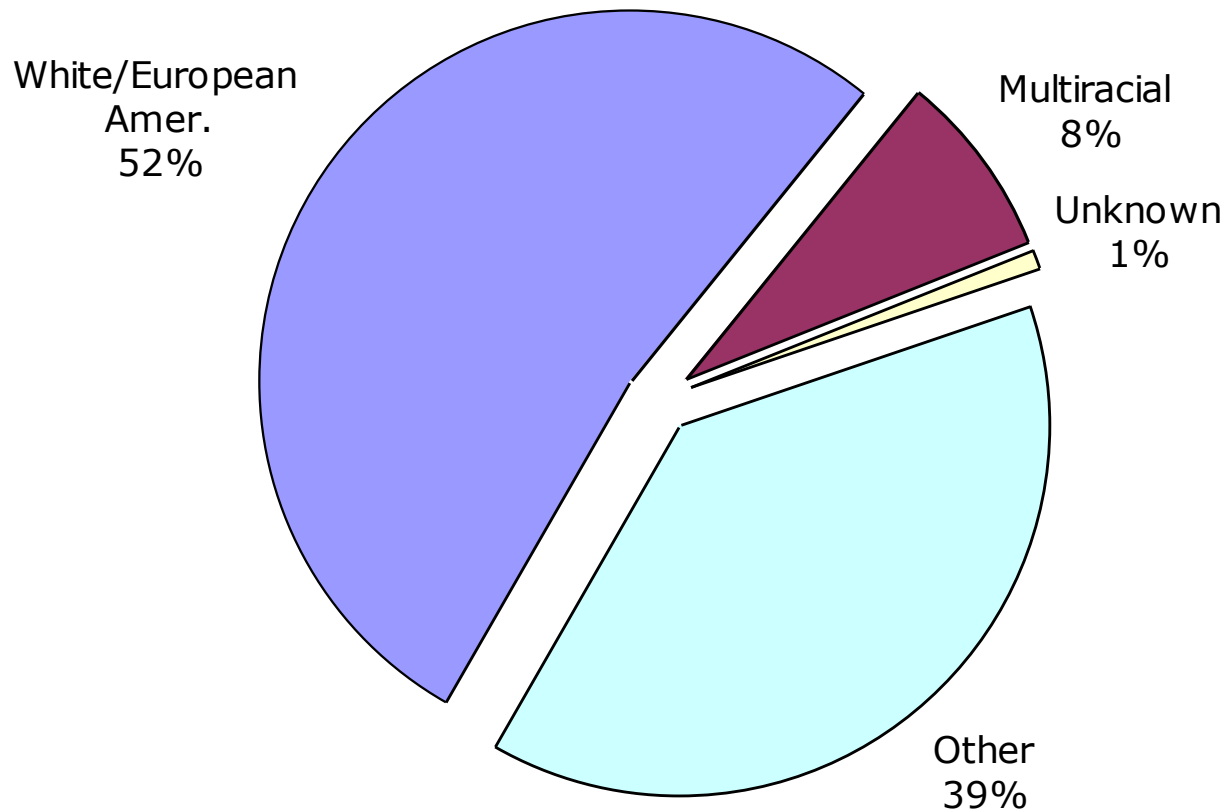
# School-Wide Results

## School Demographics by Variable



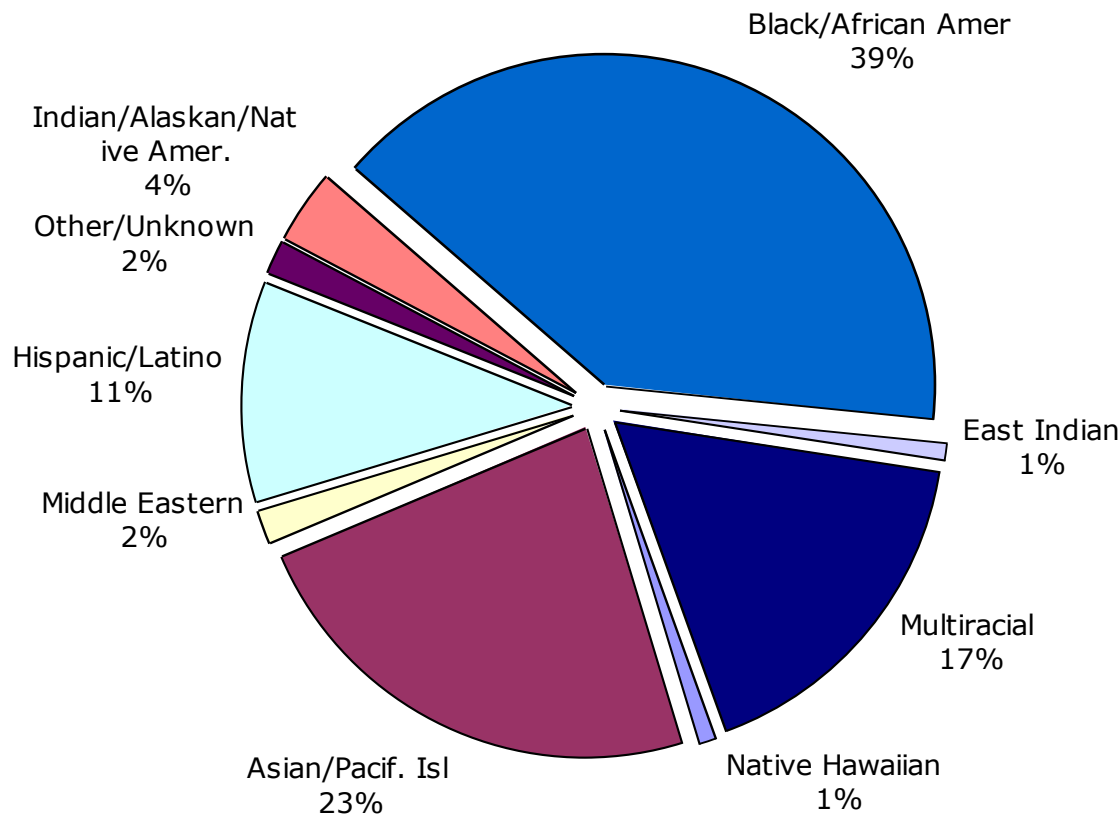
# School-Wide Results

## Race and Ethnicity of EEU Students



# School-Wide Results

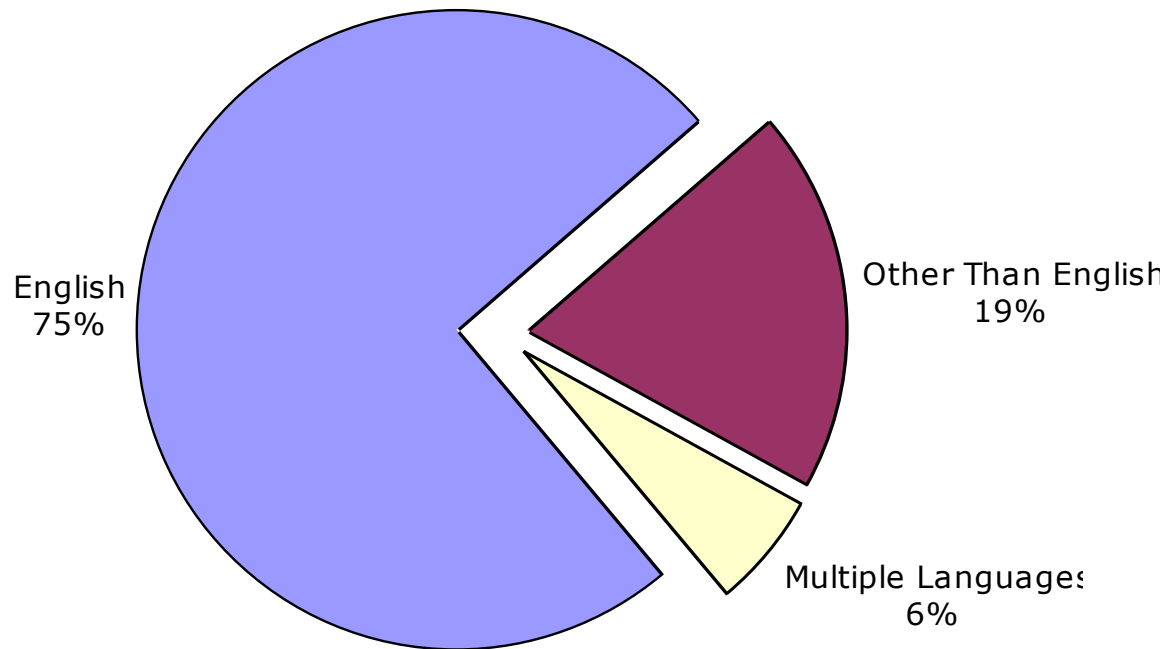
## Race and Ethnicity, Other Than White/European American, of Students at the EEU



**Largest**  
Black/African American: 39%  
Asian/Pacific Islander: 23%  
Multiracial: 17%

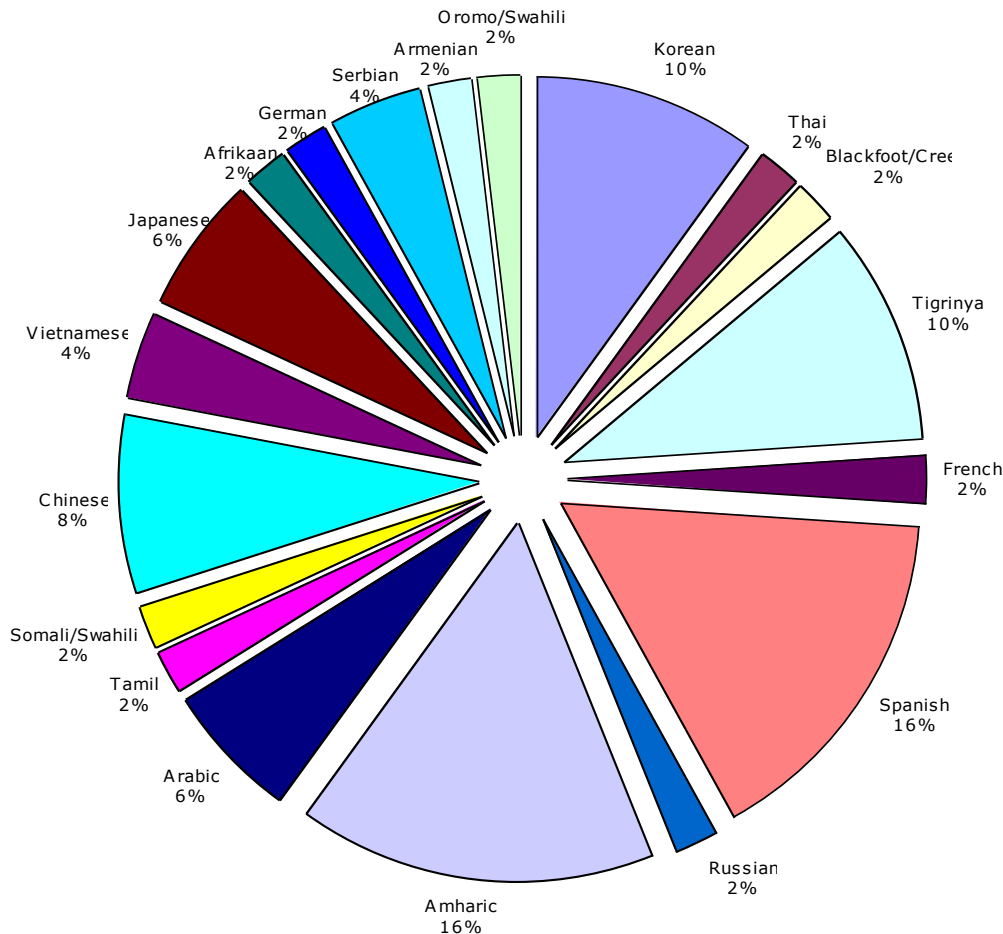
# School-Wide Results

## Primary Languages Spoken In Homes of EEL Students



# School-Wide Results

## Languages Other Than English Spoken in Homes of EEU Students

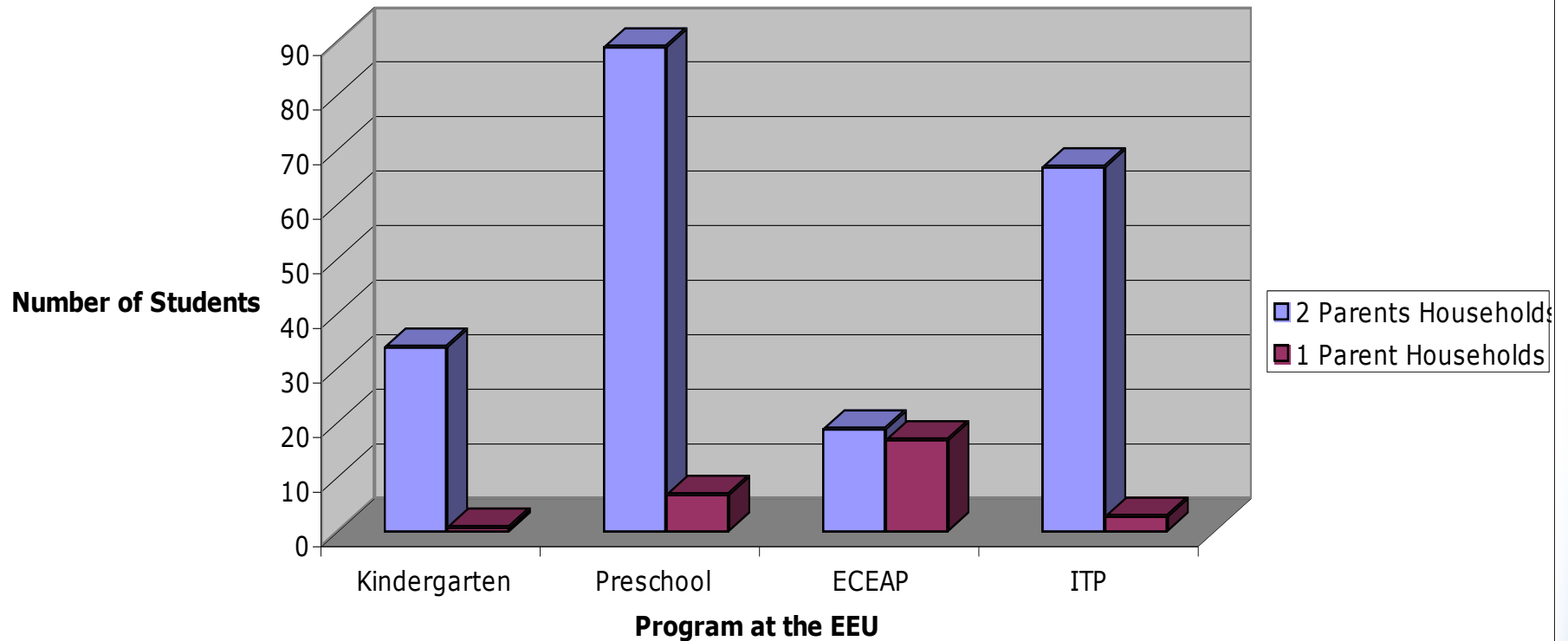


### By Percentage:

Spanish: 16%  
Amharic: 16%  
Tigrinya: 10%  
Korean: 10%  
Chinese: 8%  
Japanese: 6%  
Arabic: 6%  
Vietnamese: 4%  
Serbian: 4%  
Thai, Blackfoot/Cree,  
French, Russian, Tamil,  
Somali/Swahili, Afrikaans,  
German, Armenian, and  
Oromo/Swahili: 2% each

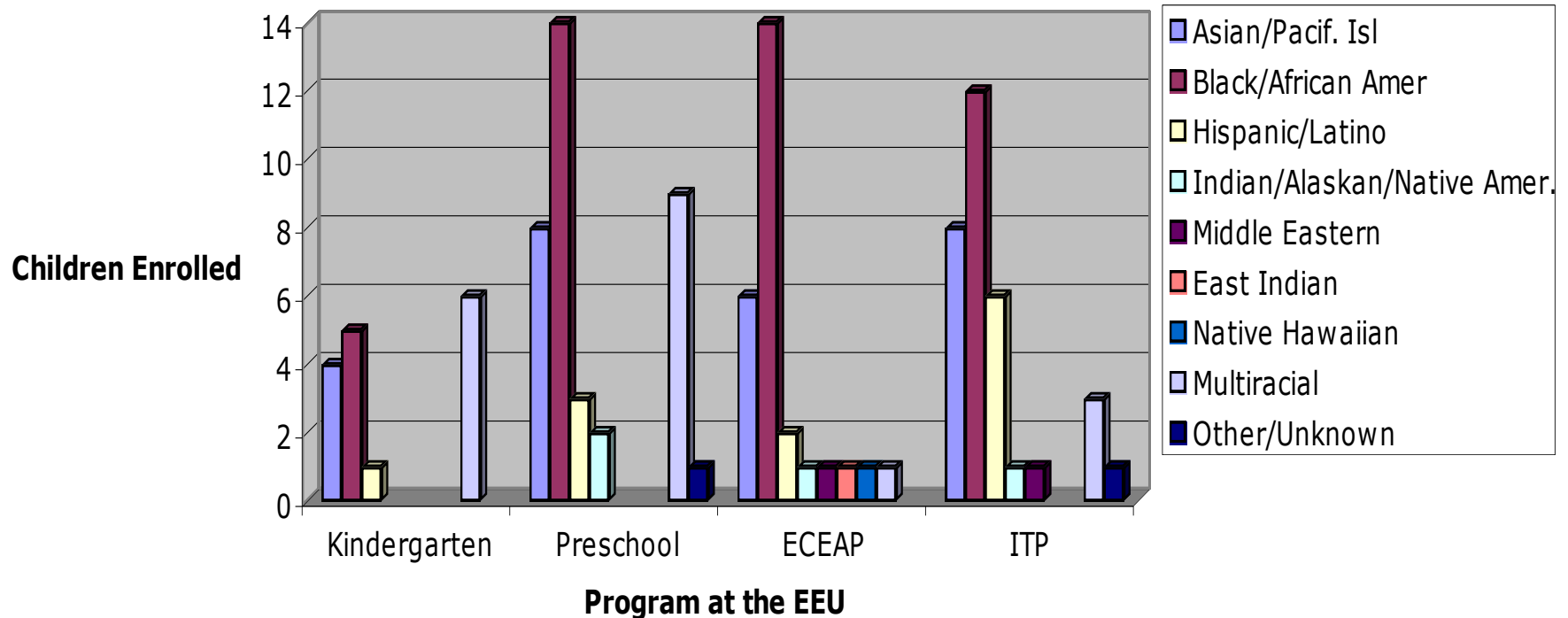
# Results by Program

## Parents in Household by Program



# Results by Program

## Race/Ethnicity other than White/European American by Program

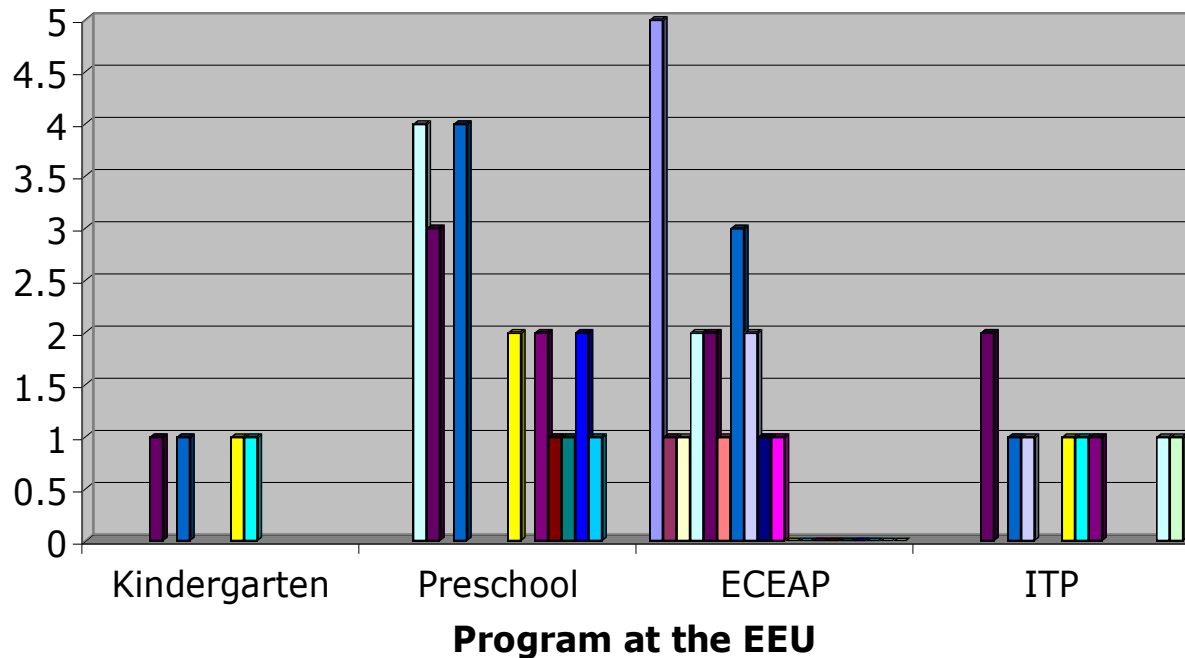


\*For White/European American: K=19, P=59, E=9, I=38

# Results by Program

**Primary Languages Other Than English Spoken at Home for Students by Program**

Number of Students

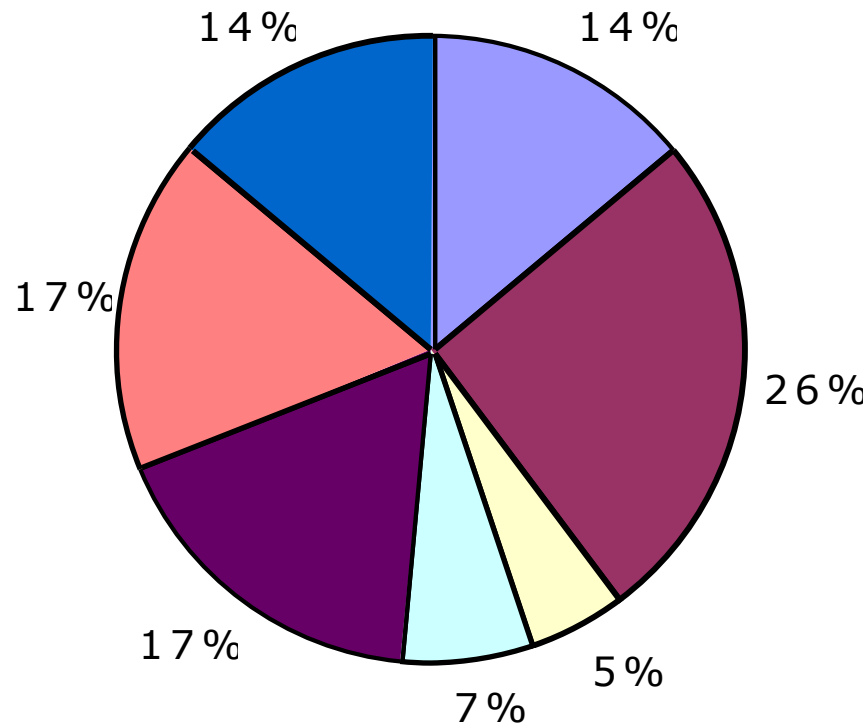


- Korean
- Thai
- Blackfoot/Cree
- Tigrinya
- Spanish
- Russian
- Amharic
- Arabic
- Tamil
- Somali/Swahili
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Japanese
- Afrikaan
- German
- Serbian
- Armenian
- French
- Oromo/Swahili

\*English: K=31, P=76, E=31, I=61    \*\*Multiple Languages: K=0, P=10, E=14, I=4

# Staff Results

## How Would You Describe the Demographics of Your Classroom?

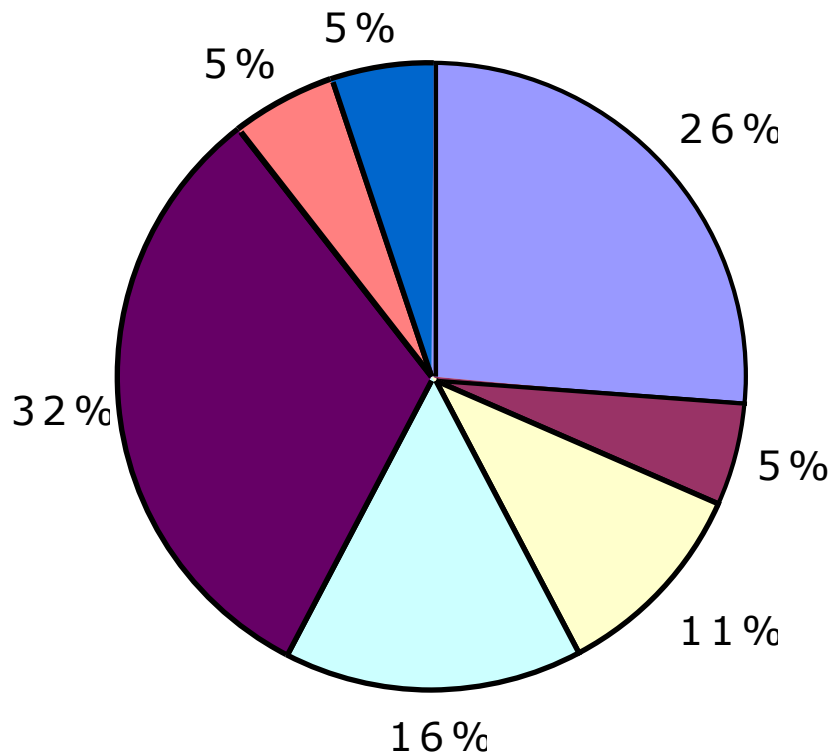


- Address gender
- \* Address race/ethnicity
- Address parent
- Address age
- \* Address SES
- \* Address Ability
- Address languages

\*\*Number of Responses per Survey: 1 Resp.=1, 2 Resp.=3, 3 Resp.=10, 4 Resp.=5

# Staff Results

## What is the Most Important Characteristic in Your Classroom?



\* Age

\* Diversity of fam dynamics

Diff. Needs, strengths, backgrounds

Personality

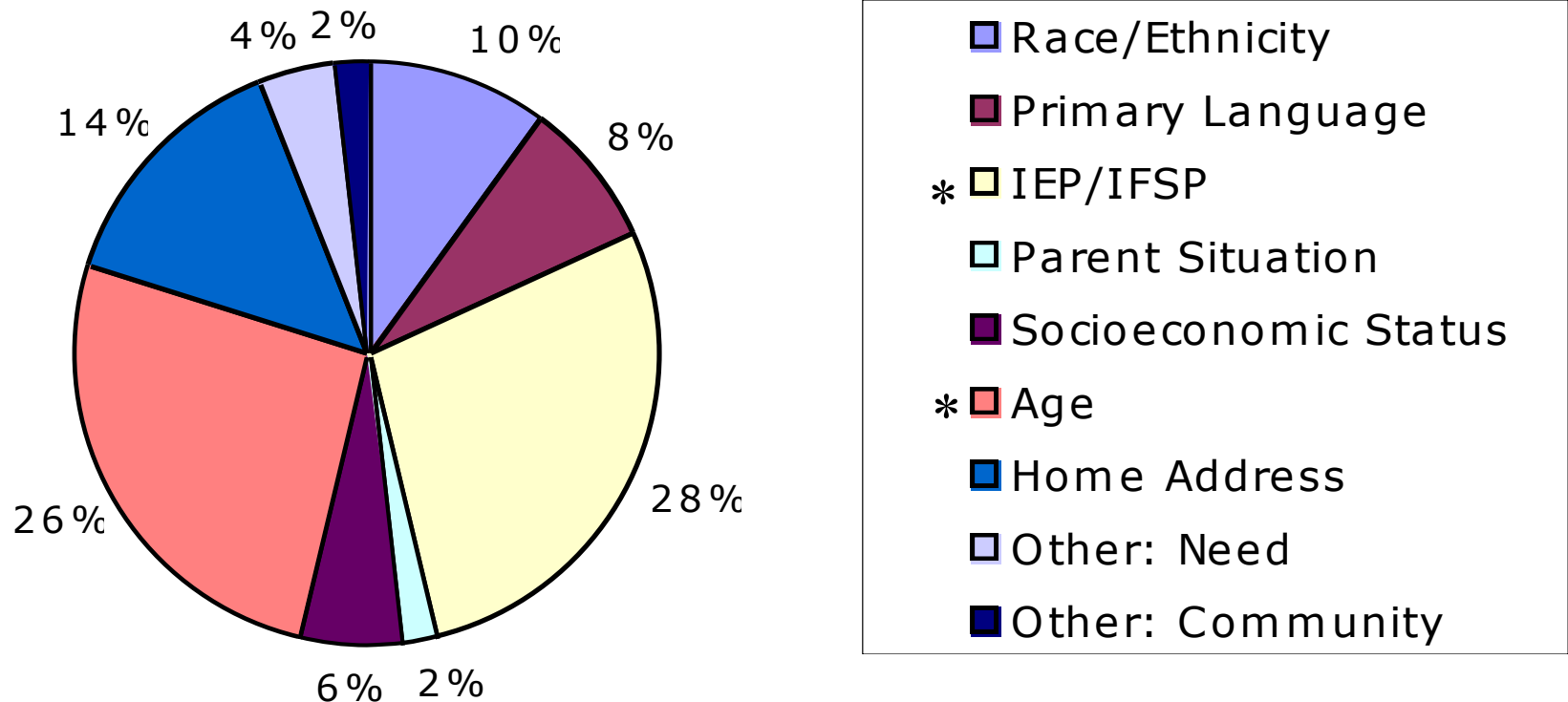
Abilities

Tolerance

Resilience

# Staff Results

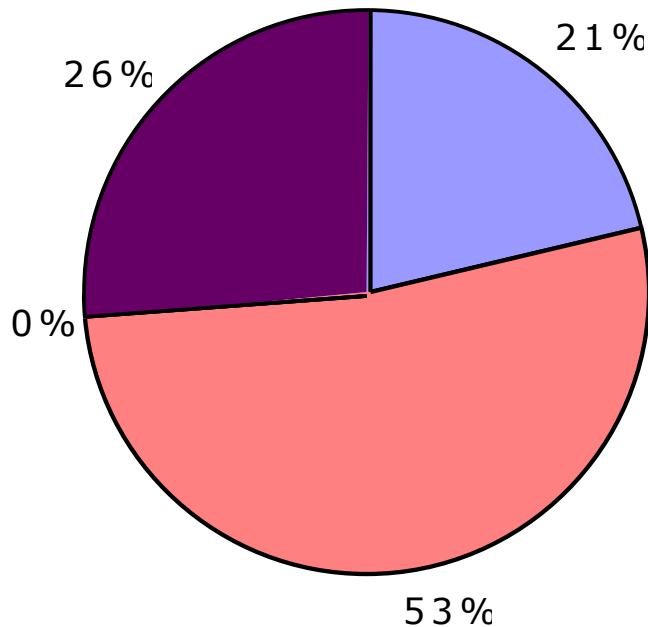
## What Characteristics Should be Priorities When Enrolling Students?



\*\*Respondents Instructed To Choose Up To Three: 1 choice=1, 2 choices=5, 3 choices=13

# Staff Results

## Which Definition of Diversity is Closest to Your Personal Beliefs?



■ No Response

■ The inclusion of a variety of people such as different races or cultures, in a group or organization

■ The inclusion of a variety of people such as different languages or ages, in a group or organization

■ The inclusion of a variety of people such as different physical or cognitive characteristics, in a group or organization

# Summary

- Diversity is more than just abilities
- Most range found among. . .
- While teachers agree diversity is important, define and describe diversity differently
- Average Rating of Diversity: **3.4 of 5**

# Implications

- Regardless, understanding should be expanded
- Exposure is important, meaningful, **IMPACTFUL**
- Teachers should continue to use a variety of tools in the classroom

# Recommendations

- Start a dialogue!
- Brainstorm among teachers
- Classrooms incorporate diversity as much as possible - students are always learning

# Thanks and Questions

- Special Thanks to:
  - ◆ Mara and Vicki
  - ◆ Kate
  - ◆ All teachers who filled out surveys!
- Questions?