

## Connecticut State Board of Education

### Hartford

**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

**DATE:** April 6, 2022

**SUBJECT:** 2020-21 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools

### *Executive Summary*

Please find attached the *2020-21 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools*. This report presents analyses of trends in student disciplinary behaviors in Connecticut public schools. It fulfills the requirements in [Connecticut General Statutes \(C.G.S.\) Section 10-233n](#).

In the 2019-20 school year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person classes were cancelled in mid-March and all districts switched to fully remote instruction for the remainder of the school year. In 2020-21, districts implemented different learning models (i.e., in-person, hybrid, or remote) and those models often changed during the year due to changing local health metrics. Moreover, parents could choose for their child to learn remotely.

In consideration of these untraditional school years, any inferences relative to changes in rates over years are based on 2018-19 data; the 2019-20 and 2020-21 data are presented for informational purposes. Disproportionality analyses that evaluate differences in rates between groups within a single year have been excluded for the 2020-2021 school year due to the wide variations of in-person participation between student groups; for example, students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals were twice as likely to be in-person than those eligible for free meals.

In the past several years, Connecticut has made major strides in reducing exclusionary discipline.

- From 2014-15 to 2018-19, the total number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions declined by 17.4 and 13.3 percent respectively. Incidents coded as school policy violations declined 28.5 percent and accounted for 46 percent of all incidents in 2018-19 – down from 59 percent in 2014-15.
- Disparities remain in suspension rates between Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students and their white counterparts. While one out of 34 white students received at least one suspension, one out of 10 Black/African American students and one out of 14 Hispanic/Latino students experienced the same sanction.
- The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is grouping districts into four tiers based on suspension/expulsion data in order to provide a system of supports and

targeted action planning. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2018-19 district tiers are being used to identify those districts needing support.

- From 2014-15 to 2018-19 among young children in Grades Pre-K through two, in-school suspensions declined by over 45 percent while out-of-school suspensions declined by over 72 percent, especially with the passage of C.G.S. 10-233(f) which prohibited the suspension or expulsion of students in Grades Pre-K through two unless the incident was “of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.”

As traditional trends and comparisons were not possible using either the 2019-20 or 2020-21 data, the CSDE decided to conduct a specialized in-depth longitudinal analysis to explore the impact of exclusionary discipline on future school engagement and outcomes.

The results of this cohort study point to a link between exclusionary discipline and ninth grade outcomes including attendance, academic scores, and future disciplinary behavior. However, the students who receive exclusionary discipline in middle school are more likely to have histories of exclusionary discipline, potentially forming cycles of poor behavior, academic performance, and engagement in school that only worsen in the later grades. Students with any reported behavior incidents are at increased risk of negative outcomes in Grades 8 and 9, though the difference between students with In-School Suspension (ISS) and no exclusionary discipline is small. Students who receive Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) and Expulsion have more than double the rates of chronic absence, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade retention over peers with ISS or no exclusionary discipline. This may be correlated with the seriousness of the behavior that resulted in disciplinary sanctions.

The CSDE continues to engage the Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative and use data to drive the implementation of a statewide, systems approach to address disproportionality in school discipline. This includes universal and targeted interventions in a tiered system approach that is evidence-based.

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# 2020-21 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools

April 2022

Connecticut State Department of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard | Hartford, CT 06103

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## Introduction

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This report presents analyses of trends in student disciplinary behaviors in Connecticut public schools. It fulfills the requirements in [Connecticut General Statutes \(C.G.S\) Section 10-233n](#).

Improving student academic and behavior outcomes requires ensuring that all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions. Schools must strive to create environments where all students feel emotionally and physically safe. Students lose important instructional time when they receive exclusionary discipline.

The use of disciplinary sanctions such as in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or referrals to law enforcement authorities creates the potential for significant, negative educational and long-term outcomes, and can contribute to what has been termed as the “school to prison pipeline.” Studies suggest a correlation between exclusionary discipline policies and practices and an array of serious educational, economic, and social problems, including school avoidance and diminished educational engagement; decreased academic achievement; increased behavior problems; increased likelihood of dropping out; substance abuse; and involvement with juvenile justice systems<sup>1</sup>.

[C.G.S. 10-233a](#) defines removal, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and expulsion as follows:

- Removal - an exclusion from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond ninety minutes.
- In-School suspension (ISS) - an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than ten consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school.
- Out-of-School suspension (OSS) - an exclusion from school privileges or from transportation services only for no more than ten consecutive school days.
- Expulsion - an exclusion from school privileges for more than ten consecutive school days.

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<sup>1</sup> From “Dear Colleague” Letter: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201401-title-vi.html>

## Data Collection and Reporting

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Local Educational Agencies are required to report to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) all disciplinary incidents that result in any of the following:

- In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Bus Suspension
- Expulsion (EXP)

In addition, all ["serious" offenses](#) and all incidents involving alcohol, drugs, or weapons must be reported, regardless of the type of sanction imposed. All bullying incidents must also be reported regardless of sanction. Data collected regarding disciplinary incidents are released publicly on CSDE's data portal, [EdSight](#). A detailed explanation of the data collection and reporting processes are included in Appendix B. Comprehensive information about the disciplinary offense data collection (also known as the ED166) is available on the documentation page of the [ED166 Help Site](#).

### Special Note about 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Data

In the 2019-20 school year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person classes were cancelled in mid-March and all districts switched to fully remote instruction for the remainder of the school year. In 2020-21, districts implemented different learning models (i.e., in-person, hybrid, or remote) and those models often changed during the year due to changing local health metrics. Moreover, parents could choose for their child to learn remotely. Consequently, nearly half of all students attended school in a hybrid format while over 26 percent of students (i.e., over 134,000 students) received less than one quarter of their school days in-person. Consequently, the extent of student/staff in-person interaction was vastly different from that in any other school year.

In consideration of these untraditional school years, any inferences relative to changes in rates over years are based on 2018-19 data; the 2019-20 and 2020-21 data are presented for informational purposes. Disproportionality analyses that evaluate differences in rates between groups within a single year have been excluded for the 2020-2021 school year due to the wide variations in in-person participation between student groups; for example, students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals were twice as likely to be in-person than those eligible for free meals.

As traditional trends and comparisons were not possible using either the 2019-20 or 2020-21 data, the CSDE decided to conduct a specialized in-depth longitudinal analysis to explore the impact of exclusionary discipline on future school engagement and outcomes.

# Longitudinal Analysis of the Impact of Exclusionary Discipline

## Relation of Disciplinary Action in Middle School to Grade 8/9 Outcomes

Prior studies have demonstrated that disciplinary action can result in school disengagement and poor academic outcomes for students. To explore how disciplinary sanctions impact student outcomes in Connecticut, this analysis uses a longitudinal cohort design, following students who have reported negative behaviors in Grades 6-8 and examining differences on outcomes at the end of Grade 8 and Grade 9. This study is descriptive, not causal in nature; there are unexplained differences between groups in Grades 4 and 5 before the study begins.

68,835 students were enrolled in grades six through nine between 2015 and 2019 and had complete Smarter Balanced assessment data at the end of Grade 8. Of those, 13,801 (20.0%) had reported disciplinary behaviors in Grades 6 through 8. Of the students with disciplinary behaviors, less than half had more than two events reported to the state over the course of three years. Table 1 shows the gender and racial breakdown of students by their most serious disciplinary sanction. Students were grouped into five buckets: No discipline reported, No exclusionary discipline, ISS only, OSS, and Expulsion in Grades 6 through 8. Males are overrepresented in each disciplinary category, representing 65 percent or more of students receiving each kind of disciplinary sanction. The rate of Black and Hispanic students with serious disciplinary sanctions was disproportionate to that of white students, representing 30 percent and 40 percent of middle school OSS respectively.

*Table 1: Student Gender and Race breakdown for Grade 6-8 Discipline Groups*

Grade 6-8 Discipline Group	Male %	Female %	White %	Black/African American %	Hispanic/Latino %	Other Racial / Ethnic Category %
No Discipline reported	46.8	53.2	61.5	8.8	21.1	8.7
No Exclusionary discipline	69.7	30.2	31.7	20.4	40.2	7.6
ISS Only	69.5	30.4	47.0	17.7	28.6	6.6
OSS	65.0	35.0	24.5	31.1	39.7	4.7
Expulsion	77.4	22.6	29.8	21.4	44.0	4.8

\*Note: Exclusionary discipline is ISS, OSS, or EXP. Each category represents the most serious sanction received by the child; a child in the OSS row may also have ISS or non-exclusionary discipline.

The students who receive different levels of disciplinary sanctions come to middle school with different elementary school histories, shown in table 2. Students who were expelled or had OSS during middle school had higher rates of chronic absence in Grades 4 and 5 (20.6% and 13.1% respectively), compared to their peers with ISS only (5.9%), no exclusionary discipline (7.5%) or no disciplinary infractions (3.6%). Students who had EXP or OSS were more likely to have a history of disciplinary sanctions, especially those that resulted in exclusion. Students who were expelled in middle school came to middle school with an average of 2.4 disciplinary sanctions in Grades 4-5. Over 40 percent of students who were expelled in middle school had prior exclusionary discipline in Grades 4-5. This compares to only two percent of students who did not have any disciplinary behaviors reported in middle school. Students also differed on academic measures (5th grade Smarter Balanced) prior to entering middle school; those that had no discipline reported had higher Grade 5 Smarter Balanced

assessment scores than their peers with serious disciplinary sanctions. Students who had no discipline reported averaged a level 2 on the Smarter Balanced math, and a level 3 on Smarter Balanced ELA. Students with EXP or OSS in middle school averaged a level 1 on both tests.

*Table 2: Differences Between Grade 6-8 Discipline Groups in Grades 4-5*

Grade 6-8 Discipline Group	N	Chronically Absent %	Number of disciplinary reports in grades 4-5	ISS/OSS/Exp in grades 4-5 %	Grade 5 ELA Mean (SD)	Grade 5 Math Mean (SD)
<b>No Discipline reported</b>	55,034	3.6	0.05	2.2	2,529 (90)	2,510 (84)
<b>No Exclusionary discipline*</b>	838	7.5	0.43	16.2	2,456 (94)	2,445 (85)
<b>ISS Only</b>	5,984	5.9	0.35	14.1	2,473 (88)	2,465 (81)
<b>OSS</b>	6,811	13.1	1.32	32.5	2,435 (86)	2,428 (77)
<b>Expulsion</b>	168	20.6	2.37	43.5	2,423 (88)	2,420 (73)

\*Note: Exclusionary discipline is ISS, OSS, or EXP. Each category represents the most serious sanction received by the child; a child in the OSS row may also have ISS or non-exclusionary discipline.

We examined four outcomes for each group: 8th grade Smarter Balanced scores, 9th grade attendance, 9th grade disciplinary records, and retention in the 9th grade. Outcome measures are shown in table 3. Students with no disciplinary behaviors had the most positive 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade outcomes on average. There were small differences between students who had no exclusionary discipline and ISS without OSS or EXP. Students who experienced OSS and EXP were at higher risk for negative 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade outcomes than their peers.

Students who experienced expulsion or OSS were at risk for high levels of chronic absence (47.9% and 31.8% respectively), compared to their peers who had ISS only or no exclusionary discipline (15.5 and 18.3% respectively). Students who had no middle school disciplinary record had the lowest chronic absence rate in 9<sup>th</sup> grade (6.4%). Similarly, students who had OSS or EXP in middle school were more likely to be reported for disciplinary infractions, and experience exclusionary discipline in Grade 9. They were also more likely to be retained in Grade 9, with a quarter of expelled students repeating 9th grade and 1 in 6 students who had OSS repeating 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Smarter Balanced scores decreased with more serious disciplinary sanctions, though the differences are small. Students who had no discipline behaviors reported in middle school averaged a Smarter Balanced Math score at level 2 and ELA score at level 3 in Grade 8. Students who had OSS or EXP during middle school averaged Smarter Balanced Math and ELA scores at level 1.



*Table 3: Grade 8/9 Outcomes*

Grade 6-8 Discipline	N	Chronically Absent %	Number of disciplinary reports in grade 9	ISS/OSS/Exp in grade 9 %	Grade 8 ELA (SD)	Grade 8 Math (SD)	Repeating Grade 9 %
<b>No Discipline reported</b>	55,034	6.4	0.07	4.4	2,595 (95)	2,581 (114)	1.7
<b>No exclusionary discipline</b>	838	18.3	0.47	19.7	2,514 (99)	2,484 (112)	6.6
<b>ISS Only</b>	5,984	15.5	0.51	23.4	2,530 (94)	2,503 (109)	6.3
<b>OSS</b>	6,811	31.8	1.38	42.7	2,485 (90)	2,448 (101)	16.1
<b>Expulsion</b>	168	47.9	1.38	48.2	2,473 (92)	2,436 (99)	24.4

\*Note: Exclusionary discipline is ISS, OSS, or EXP. Each category represents the most serious sanction received by the child; a child in the OSS row may also have ISS or non-exclusionary discipline.

The results of this cohort study point to a link between exclusionary discipline and ninth grade outcomes including attendance, academic scores, and future disciplinary behavior. However, the students who receive exclusionary discipline in middle school are more likely to have histories of exclusionary discipline, potentially forming cycles of poor behavior, academic performance, and engagement in school that only worsen in the later grades. Students with any reported behavior incidents are at increased risk of negative outcomes in Grades 8 and 9, though the difference between students with ISS and no exclusionary discipline is small. Students who receive OSS and Expulsion have more than double the rates of chronic absence, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade retention over peers with ISS or no exclusionary discipline. This may be correlated with the seriousness of the behavior that resulted in disciplinary sanctions.

## 2020-2021 Results

This section presents the trend data that is typically presented in prior reports. As stated previously, given the untraditional nature of schooling in 2019-20 and 2020-21, any inferences relative to changes in rates over years are based on 2018-19 data; the 2019-20 and 2020-21 data are presented for informational purposes.

### Sanctions and Incidents

The total number of sanctions is a count of all sanctions (ISS, OSS, and Expulsions) given to all students. It is not a count of students, therefore if one student received more than one sanction, then all the sanctions are included below.

*Table 4: Total Number of Sanctions*

Sanction Type	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Percent (%) Change from 2014-15	2019-20	2020-21
In-School Suspension	58,638	56,866	53,057	49,667	48,431	-17.4	30,526	5,974
Out-of-School Suspension	37,701	34,415	32,982	31,834	32,681	-13.3	21,634	4,640
Expulsion	849	848	750	797	745	-12.3	472	138

The behaviors that are associated with the sanctions received by students are grouped into 10 categories (Table 5). In 2018-19, school policy violations accounted for approximately 46 percent of all incidents, down from 59 percent in 2014-15 and down from 48 percent in 2017-18.

While many incident categories showed substantial declines from 2014-15 (i.e., school policy violations declined 28.5 percent, theft related behaviors declined 30.8 percent, weapons declined 21.7 percent, and violent crimes declined 16.7 percent), other categories showed substantial increases (i.e., drugs/alcohol/tobacco increased 97.6 percent, property damage increased 17.7 percent, physical/verbal confrontation increased by 15.6 percent, and fighting and battery increased by 24.5 percent).

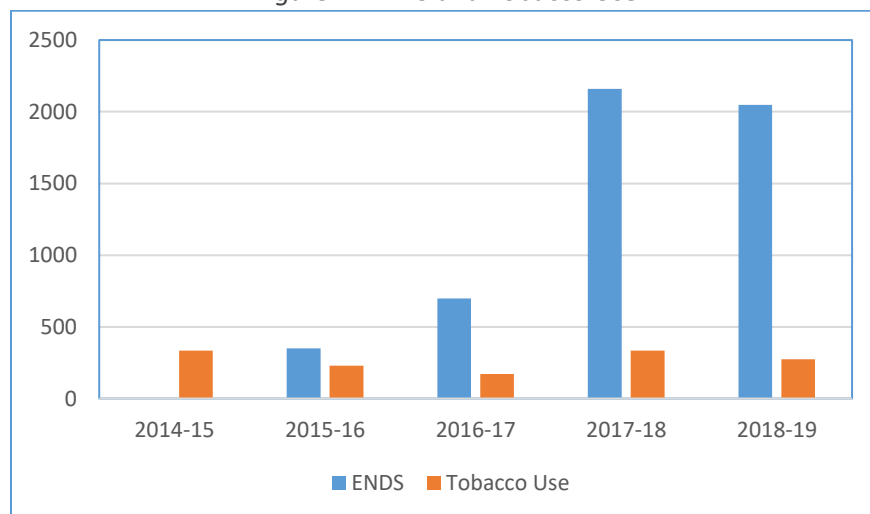
In most cases the change from the prior year is consistent with the long-term trend (either up or down); however, while Personally Threatening Behavior shows an increase over the five-year period, it did decrease 5.8 percent in 2018-19. Data from 2019-20 and 2020-21 are listed below for informational purposes.

Table 5: Incidents by Category

Incident Type	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Percent (%) Change from 2014-15	2019-20	2020-21
Violent Crimes Against Persons	478	440	392	483	398	-16.7	314	82
Sexually Related Behavior	1,367	1,134	1,286	1,329	1,254	-8.3	857	227
Personally Threatening Behavior	6,592	6,622	6,870	7,208	6,787	3.0	5,623	1,677
Theft Related Behaviors	1,758	1,669	1,686	1,312	1,217	-30.8	995	155
Physical and Verbal Confrontation	12,955	13,862	14,985	14,811	14,976	15.6	12,117	2,520
Fighting and Battery	14,486	15,744	16,744	16,952	18,036	24.5	14,831	2,698
Property Damage	1,236	1,234	1,529	1,431	1,455	17.7	1,325	335
Weapons	1,023	920	936	917	801	-21.7	596	298
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco	3,003	2,551	3,098	4,964	5,933	97.6	3,510	1,253
School Policy Violations	61,315	56,281	51,879	45,769	43,869	-28.5	29,414	5,042

In 2018-19 the Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco category continued to see an increase in incidents. The use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) – otherwise known as E-Cigarettes, “pens,” or “vapes” – was first reported in the 2015-16 school year. From 2015-16 to 2016-17 the use of ENDS doubled, while tobacco use decreased. In 2017-18, the use of ENDS more than tripled from 2016-17. Tobacco use also increased. While tobacco use dipped slightly when ENDS were beginning to increase in popularity, tobacco reached the same level in 2017-18 as in 2014-15. In 2018-19 tobacco use dipped 18.2 percent from the prior year while ENDS use dipped 5.2 percent.

Figure 1: ENDS and Tobacco Use



In 2018-2019 several new codes pertaining to ENDS were introduced:

- ENDS Possession
- ENDS Distribution
- ENDS Suspicion of sale/use.

These codes were in addition to the existing *ENDS Use* code. The new codes were introduced to make the coding structure consistent with other substances (e.g., alcohol, tobacco). While ENDS Use was slightly lower in 2018-2019 from the prior year, the new ENDS codes accounted for 752 additional incidents.

The 2019-20 and 2020-21 counts have been included to illustrate the variance in data during the pandemic, especially when data are examined in a more granular way such as for specific incidents or student groups.

*Table 6: ENDS and Tobacco Use*

Incident Type	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
ENDS Use	0	349	697	2,160	2,048	772	32
Tobacco Use	335	229	172	335	274	85	282
ENDS Possession	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	675	716	238
ENDS Distribution	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	27	33	11
ENDS Suspicion of sale/use	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	50	45	20

## Suspension Rates

The suspension rate equals the number of students reported with at least one suspension (in-school or out-of-school) or expulsion divided by the unduplicated student enrollment count for the school or district for the given school year.

Just under five percent of all students received at least one suspension or expulsion during the 2019-2020 school year. This rate has declined over the past five years for all students, and for most student race/ethnic groups (Table 7). In the 2020-21 school year, students attended school in-person to varying degrees; some learned fully/mostly remotely for the entire school year. The suspension rate in 2020-21 was 1.4 percent.

In each of the past five years, the suspension rate of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students has significantly exceeded those of white students. This includes the shortened 2019-2020 school year. While one out of 34 white students received at least one suspension/expulsion in 2019-20, one out of 10 Black/African American students and one out of 14 Hispanic/Latino students received the same sanction.

Table 7: Suspension Rates by Race/Ethnicity

	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
Race/Ethnicity	Count	%	Count	(%)	Count	(%)	Count	(%)	Count	(%)
American Indian or Alaska Native	121	8.4	117	8.4	119	8.3	93	6.6	25	1.8
Asian	442	1.6	501	1.8	530	1.9	309	1.1	97	0.4
Black or African American	10,745	15.2	9,884	14.3	9,897	14	7,157	10.3	1,394	2.1
Hispanic/Latino of any race	12,710	9.7	12,819	9.4	13,214	9.2	10,269	6.9	2,224	1.5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	36	6.8	32	5.8	34	5.7	29	5.3	7	1.4
Two or More Races	1,080	6.7	1,248	7	1,368	7	1,031	4.9	411	1.9
White	11,448	3.9	12,167	4.2	11,696	4.1	7,863	2.9	3,364	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,582</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>36,768</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>36,858</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>26,751</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>7,522</b>	<b>1.4</b>

Though the suspension rates are higher for students of color, those rates are declining.

Males continue to be suspended at substantially higher rates than females (Table 8). Suspension rates for both genders have declined slightly over the past few years.

Table 8: Suspension Rates by Gender

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
Gender	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)
Female	11,886	4.5	11,373	4.3	11,356	4.4	11,638	4.4	8,587	3.3	*	*
Male	26,214	9.3	25,209	9	25,410	9.1	25,215	8.9	18,158	6.5	5,500	2.0

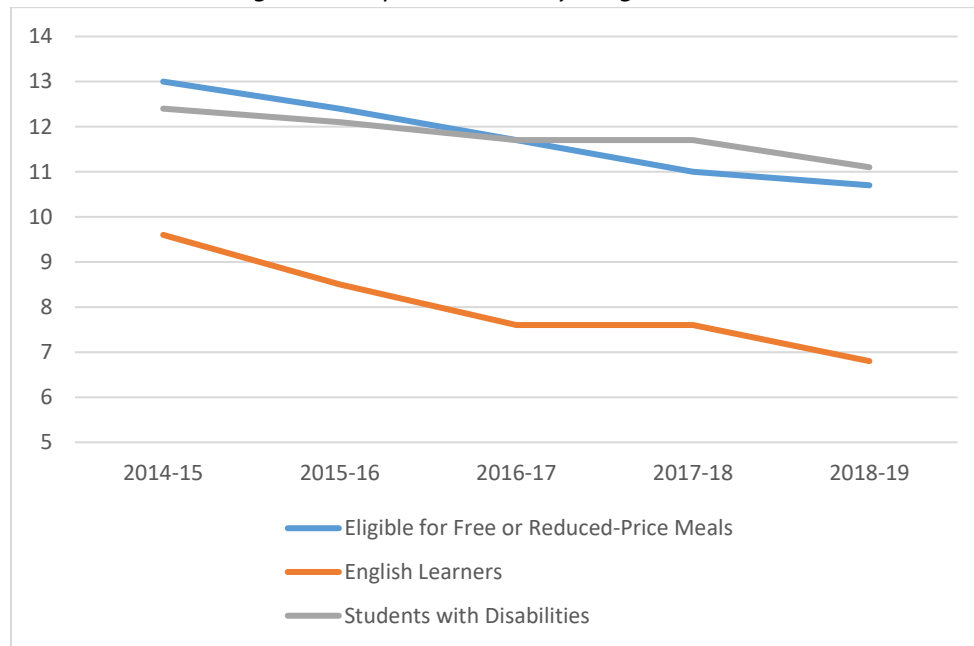
Note: Female suspension data are suppressed complementarily to protect those who identify with a gender code of "non-binary."

Suspension rates for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, students with disabilities, and English Learners are higher than the state average, but the trend shows that their suspension rates are declining (Table 9 and Figure 2). Note that 2019-20 and 2020-21 data has been omitted from Figure 2.

Table 6: Suspension Rate by Program Status

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals</b>	26,735	12.4	25,863	11.7	25,585	11.0	26,223	10.7	19,603	7.9	4,649	2.0
<b>English Learners</b>	3,148	8.5	2,990	7.6	3,154	7.6	3,070	6.8	2,510	5.3	470	1.0
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	10,199	12.1	10,127	11.7	10,442	11.7	10,551	11.1	8,296	8.9	2,633	2.8

Figure 2: Suspension Rate by Program Status

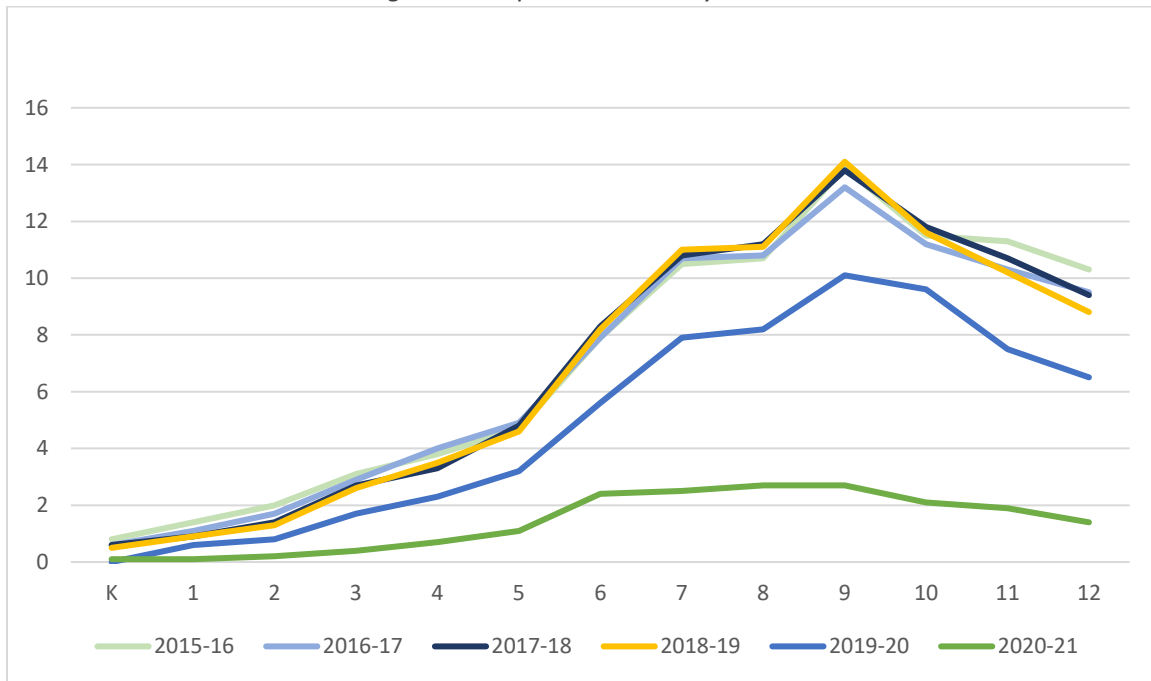


Analyses by grade (Table 10 and Figure 3) reveal that suspension rates increase gradually in the elementary grades and spike in Grade 6. The highest suspension rates occur in Grades 9 and 10. The five-year trend show that the suspension rate of 12<sup>th</sup> graders is steadily decreasing. The 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years reflect the same pattern as in prior years.

Table 10: Suspension Rates by Grade

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
Grade	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)	Count	Percent (%)
K	314	0.8	220	0.6	203	0.6	198	0.5	*	*	40	0.1
1	543	1.4	413	1.1	351	0.9	337	0.9	212	0.6	42	0.1
2	789	2	649	1.7	501	1.4	504	1.3	314	0.8	86	0.2
3	1,237	3.1	1,144	2.9	1,022	2.7	986	2.6	647	1.7	161	0.4
4	1,503	3.8	1,593	4	1,305	3.3	1,374	3.5	895	2.3	247	0.7
5	1,874	4.7	1,929	4.9	1,948	4.8	1,861	4.6	1,276	3.2	410	1.1
6	3,187	7.9	3,195	7.9	3,327	8.3	3,387	8.2	2,272	5.6	928	2.4
7	4,341	10.5	4,354	10.7	4,371	10.8	4,494	11	3,285	7.9	1,024	2.5
8	4,373	10.7	4,484	10.8	4,589	11.2	4,598	11.1	3,400	8.2	1,137	2.7
9	6,202	13.9	5,735	13.2	6,023	13.8	6,245	14.1	4,474	10.1	1,205	2.7
10	4,810	11.5	4,679	11.2	4,856	11.8	4,950	11.6	4,022	9.6	902	2.1
11	4,619	11.3	4,195	10.3	4,330	10.7	4,170	10.2	3,044	7.5	759	1.9
12	4,299	10.3	3,987	9.5	3,916	9.4	3,746	8.8	2,762	6.5	581	1.4

Figure 3: Suspension Rates by Grade



### District Tiers Based on Suspension/Expulsion Data

As part of the settlement in *Alicia B. vs. Malloy*, the CSDE is grouping districts into four tiers based on racial/ethnic disparities in suspension/expulsion data to provide targeted interventions and supports. The primary metric used for placing districts into tiers is the “Suspension/Expulsion Rate”. This is the percentage of

students receiving at least one in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion during the school year. Using this metric allows for the broadest inclusion of students who may experience any exclusionary discipline during the school year.

The Suspension/Expulsion rate is reported publicly for all students and student groups on [EdSight](#) and included in the [Profile and Performance Report](#) for every district/school. Districts are placed into tiers according to the following criteria:

- Tier 4 - Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, black, or Hispanic suspension rate  $\geq 15\%$  in 2 recent years.
- Tier 3 - Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either black or Hispanic Relative Risk Index (RRI)  $\geq 3$  in 2 recent years.
- Tier 2 - Consistently Medium Disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 2$  in 2 recent years.
- Tier 1 - Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality: All other districts

See [Appendix A](#) for a list of districts by tier and an explanation of the RRI. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2018-19 districts tiers are being used to identify districts needing support. Complete data regarding the tiers is available on [EdSight](#).

### Suspensions of Young Students, Pre-K through Grade 2

The number of out-of-school suspensions for students in Grades Pre-K through two has evidenced a steep decline over the past few years (Tables 11 and 12), especially with the passage of [Public Act No. 15-96](#), *The limitations surrounding Out-Of-School Suspensions and Expulsions for Students in Preschool and Grades Kindergarten to Two*. This law limited out-of-school suspensions in grades 3-12 and prohibited the suspension or expulsion of students in Grades Pre-K through Two unless the incident is violent, endangers others, or is of a sexual nature.<sup>2</sup>

The total number of suspensions and expulsions declined from over 5,000 in 2014-15 to 1,926 in 2018-19 (Table 11). Among these young children, in-school suspensions declined by over 45 percent while out-of-school suspensions declined by over 72 percent. Data from 2019-20 and 2020-21 are listed for informational purposes.

Table 11: Total Number of Sanctions (Pre-K-2) – *not a student count*

Year	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
ISS	1,911	1,477	1,152	1,032	661	78
OSS	1,327	983	791	894	577	111
EXP	*	0	0	0	0	0

Correspondingly, the total number of students (unduplicated count) in grades kindergarten through two who receive at least one suspension or expulsion has also declined significantly from 2,363 in 2014-15 to 1,047 in 2018-19 – a decline of over 50 percent (Table 12). 2019-20 and 2020-21 data is listed for informational purposes.

<sup>2</sup> While the general suspensions statute, Section 10-233c of the General Statutes, continues to include preschool in the grade range for which out-of-school suspensions are permissible, this reference was most likely inadvertent in view of the explicit prohibition, in Section 10-233l, of out-of-school suspensions for students in preschool programs operated by boards of education, charter schools or interdistrict magnet schools.



Table 12: Number of Students Suspended/Expelled (Pre-K-2) by Grade

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Pre-K	12	9	*	7	7	*	0
K	527	314	220	203	196	145	40
Grade 1	785	543	413	351	341	211	42
Grade 2	1,039	789	649	501	504	314	86

When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, the number of students in Grades Pre-K through two receiving at least one suspension or expulsion has declined within all student race/ethnic groups since 2014-15 (Table 13).

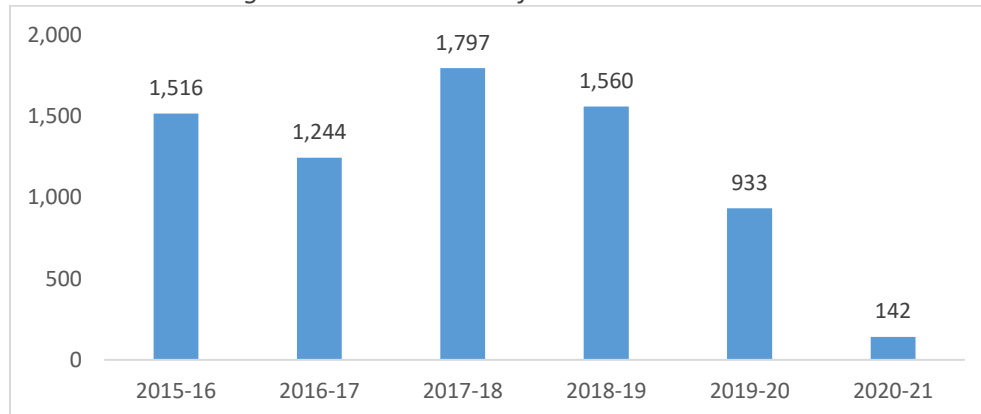
Table 13 Number of Students Suspended/Expelled (Pre-K-2) by Race/Ethnicity

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
American Indian or Alaska Native	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	24	15	10	12	10	*	*
Black or African American	907	622	481	354	345	228	22
Hispanic/Latino of any race	863	576	446	349	330	221	61
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	0	0
Two or More Races	100	73	64	48	57	37	17
White	465	373	292	291	302	182	65

## School-Based Arrests

Effective July 1, 2015 [Public Act No. 15-168](#), “An Act Concerning Collaboration Between Boards Of Education And School Resource Officers And The Collection And Reporting Of Data On School-Based Arrests,” redefined a School-Based Arrest as “an arrest of a student for conduct of such student on school property or at a school-sponsored event.” The trend in the total number of school-based arrests reported to the CSDE is presented below (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Total Number of School-Based Arrests



From 2018-18 through 2019-20 incidents involving Fighting and Battery are the most common reason for a school-based arrest in (Table 14). Data from 2020-21 were excluded from this table due to very small sample sizes; in total 142 school-based arrests were reported for a total of 137 students.

*Table 14: Incident Categories for School-Based Arrests*

<b>Incident Categories for School-Based Arrests</b>	<b>17-18 Count</b>	<b>18-19 Count</b>	<b>19-20 Count</b>
Fighting and Battery	598	515	321
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco	319	403	247
Physical and Verbal Confrontation	240	215	121
Personally Threatening Behavior	204	134	72
School Policy Violations	151	84	50
Weapons	99	71	56
Violent Crimes Against Persons	65	48	16
Theft Related Behaviors	60	49	26
Property Damage	32	14	9
Sexually Related Behavior	29	27	15
	1,797	1,560	933

The majority of students arrested were male. Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students were disproportionately represented among those arrested (Table 15).

*Table 15: Student Demographics for School-Based Arrests*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>17-18 Student Count of School-Based Arrests</b>	<b>18-19 Student Count of School-Based Arrests</b>	<b>19-20 Student Count of School-Based Arrests</b>
Black or African American	419	390	216
Hispanic/Latino of any race	577	601	371
White	554	468	255
Male	1,133	1,067	610
Female	522	493	284
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,655	1,560	894

# A Statewide Systems Approach to Turning the Curve

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## Overview

When removed from school and left unsupervised, students lose valuable instructional time, resulting in lower academic achievement, grade-level retention, an increased risk of dropping out, and possible involvement with the juvenile justice system. Therefore, the CSDE continues to review patterns in disciplinary infractions to promote positive, preventive, and restorative school discipline philosophies and practices, specifically regarding disproportionality. An effective approach to school discipline involves a proactive and comprehensive system of supports designed to provide opportunities for all students to achieve social, behavioral, and learning success. Districts can meet this need by examining the factors that impact behavior and the relationship between environment and behavior. This includes constructive strategies to teach and support students and respond to behavioral concerns similar to academic concerns (i.e., increasing instruction and support when the issues occur). Exclusionary practices may sometimes be necessary for protecting students against imminent safety risks or when such action is required by state or federal law, but these practices should not be employed when other logical and proportionate consequences would better serve the social/emotional development of students. The CSDE continues to set trajectories and targets to reduce statewide suspension rates and provide guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance to public schools grounded in equity and educational access. The CSDE has established a methodology for identifying districts with high suspension rates and disproportionality, including analysis of disaggregated discipline data, root cause analysis, school-based diversion models, effective and equitable disciplinary policies, restorative practices, and alternative discipline practices. Below are actions within the CSDE system of supports for districts to further reduce the use of exclusionary discipline and increase the utilization of evidence-based practices and wraparound supports.

## State Board of Education Position Statement on Reducing Disproportionality in Suspensions and Expulsions

With input from the Alternative Schools Committee, Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative, and the Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education, the CSDE developed a position statement for adoption by the State Board of Education (SBE). The [Position Statement on Reducing Disproportionality in Suspensions and Expulsions](#) addresses the components for reducing suspensions and expulsions in Connecticut public schools.

## Focus on Preschool and Kindergarten to Grade Two

A review of the data in 2017 revealed that suspension and expulsion of students in preschool and Kindergarten to Grade Two occurred in violation of the Connecticut General Statutes. Consequently, the CSDE issued a Commissioner's memorandum to superintendents of schools that clarified state statutes on suspension and expulsion of students in Preschool and Kindergarten to Grade Two. In addition, the memorandum provided resources that required the 15 districts with high numbers of suspensions and expulsions to participate in a mandatory webinar titled: *Ensuring Equity and Excellence: Positive and Effective School Discipline for Preschool and Kindergarten to Grade Two*. The primary goals were to allow for an interactive discussion with other districts and answer essential questions about the use of disciplinary sanctions. The webinar reviewed: early brain development, relevant laws, policy development, information on compliance reporting and coding, and the importance of developing a comprehensive systems approach to address exclusionary discipline for this population. Finally, to generate consistency, the CSDE collaborated with the Connecticut Office of Early

Childhood (OEC) to provide two follow-up sessions with districts and community providers regarding the alignment of practices.

The OEC piloted a new policy to address exclusionary practices for young children in state-funded early childhood programs. In partnership with the OEC, we provided a statewide workshop called *Enhancing Equity in School Discipline: Practical Strategies and Tools*, presented by Dr. Kent McIntosh, professor, and expert in positive behavior support and equity in school discipline, University of Oregon. The workshop provided evidence-based approaches to address racial and ethnic disproportionality in school discipline.

Additionally, on the CSDE continues to work collaboratively with the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight (JJPOC) sub-committee on school discipline. The committee members agree that excluding students from school, especially students in grade two and below, is contrary to supporting students social, emotional and academic development. However, there are times when students exhibit challenging behavior and need to be removed from the classroom for their own safety and the safety of the school community. Therefore, below are the recommendations as part of the CSDE implementation plan for Pre-K through Grade Two.

#### Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- *Policy Guidance and Professional Learning*
  - *Provide a decision-tree guide for supporting behavioral challenges.*
  - *Assist districts in understanding the cycle of behavior and having strategies in place that can de-escalate the situation.*
- *Assisting districts with evaluating the effectiveness of school discipline policies and practices*
- *Continue to design, execute, and assess multiple professional learning and technical assistance opportunities based on need, demographics, capacity, and resources. (See the multi-tiered series of supports section for these professional learning offerings).*
- *Continue to analyze district data and engage school districts regarding data of concern in Preschool and Kindergarten to Grade 2 for out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. Support included:*
  - *Closer examination of individual student's issues;*
  - *Reviewing the data team process to analyze suspension data;*
  - *Recommending professional learning for district staff on how to routinely monitor progress;*
  - *Understanding patterns and trends;*
  - *Building and sustaining capacity; and*
  - *Ensuring readiness within the context of a comprehensive systems approach.*

### Focus on Alternative Education Programs

Public Act 17-220 required the SBE to adopt standards for the provision of an adequate alternative educational opportunity for students who have been expelled.

#### Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- *Developed [standards](#) in collaboration with the Connecticut Alternative Schools Committee.*
- *Disseminated the SBE adopted standards to school districts and multiple stakeholders.*
- *Developed, in collaboration with the Alternative Schools Committee, and disseminated a companion document to the standards, [Alternative Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled](#):*

[\*Best Practice Guidelines for Program Implementation\*](#). The guidelines and standards are designed to ensure that students who are expelled continue to have access to high-quality education that will position them for future success.

- Developed and disseminated a comprehensive document, [\*Guidance Regarding Student Expulsions\*](#). This guidance outlines the process and procedures required for expulsions and provides an overview of key legal considerations relevant to expulsions in Connecticut.

## Focus on Charter Schools

Approximately 11.4 percent of all school districts are public charter schools (i.e., 23 out of 202 districts). However, among the 25 districts with at least three grades with a high outlier suspension rate, six of them (24 percent) are public charter schools.

Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- Continue to evaluate progress of discipline metrics through the charter renewal process, including *Discipline Tiers* to identify disproportionality in exclusionary discipline.
- Continue to require corrective action plans of charters identified as in need of improvement, including the identification of root causes and strategies to address them with support from CSDE. This process includes progress monitoring during plan implementation supported by regular data submission and progress monitoring sessions with CSDE and SBE Accountability and Support Committee, as applicable.
- Continue to provide professional learning for charter schools with high rates of suspensions. Charter school teams were paired with a technical assistance partner and worked on student-level disciplinary data analysis and the development of plans to address the use of exclusionary discipline practices.
- Continue to implement CSDE protocol for addressing philosophy, policy systems, structures, practices, and data in school. This has expanded into the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) work.
- Continue to annually highlight promising practices of charter schools in the Best Practice Report, which includes schools creating positive culture and climates, one of the four performance standards of the Charter Renewal Toolkit.

## Focus on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Behavioral Health

Ensuring the social and emotional well-being of students is always critical to their ability to be healthy, happy, and ready to learn. The need for these supports is even more important during this unprecedented time, when determining and effectively addressing the psychological and physical impact of the pandemic on students is significantly challenging. Additionally, the impact of traumatic experiences and the associated needs are especially prevalent in underserved communities.

Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- In Summer 2021, a Statewide Behavioral Health Landscape Scan was conducted to provide CSDE with information regarding emerging trends, concerns, and work taking place in schools regarding mental and behavioral health services. Afterwards, select districts representing various demographics joined a focus group discussion, where CSDE discussed and documented collective challenges regarding building or scaling up integrated support system, long-term financial backing support; technical assistance and coaching on evidence-based practices for behavioral health; and coordinated referral systems.
- Currently underway in 6 districts, the CSDE is conducting a Behavioral Health Pilot program which aims to create a scalable and sustainable system of coordinated care for all K-12 schools to provide

*comprehensive behavioral and mental health supports and services to students and staff. CSDE identified districts of various demographics to participate in the pilot program to implement targeted supports based on identified needs from the survey and focus group.*

- Conducted a Statewide Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Landscape Scan in September 2020 which provided insight into the work already taking place in districts, including emerging concerns and trends related to SEL for K-12 schools across Connecticut. This was the first step in providing a systematic collection of data to supplement existing efforts.*
- Provided Social, Emotional and Intellectual Habits (SEIH) K-3 that represents the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that form an essential blueprint for college and career readiness and equip every student with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in college, careers, and civic life. While attention to core academic subjects remains important, social, emotional, and intellectual habits set the stage for all future learning, promoting intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive competence. CSDE is also developing the SEIH for Grades 4-12, which will be made available in the fall of 2022.*
- Procured, in 2020, the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) System, a strength-based assessment of behaviors related to social-emotional well-being, to identify interventions and supports. Funded by the CSDE, the DESSA is available to all districts at no cost. The DESSA is commonly used to inform the delivery of SEL at Tier 1 or Tier 2. The assessment is used to measure students' prosocial factors and social-emotional skills as an early indicator tool to screen for potential behavioral concerns. By identifying and addressing these needs early, this leads to positive behavioral and mental health outcomes as well as improved academic performance. In addition, the supplemental assessment is a comprehensive follow-up with at-risk students (targeted) to identify specific areas of need as well as to measure the results of that delivery. Currently, CSDE is rolling out Phase 3 and approximately 66 districts are using the DESSA and over 60,000 students have been assessed through Phases 1 and 2.*
- Continue the School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI) to help keep students in school, improve student outcomes, and ensure that students receive fair and equitable in-school discipline regardless of mental health, special education needs, or demographic characteristics such as race or ethnicity. SBDI is proven to reduce rate of in-school arrests, expulsions, and out-of-school suspensions.*
- Introduced the new Comprehensive School Counseling Framework that is systemic and delivers a range of evidence-based supports, programs, and practices to address student needs. The framework provides a proactive, preventative, and early intervention model for school counselors to support all students in reaching their full potential and acquire critical skills in the areas of academic, career, and SEL.*
- [Launched the 2021](#) Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework, which provides districts with standards to implement a planned, ongoing, and sequential Pre-K-12 health education and physical education curriculum that addresses the physical, mental, social, and emotional dimensions of health through acquiring and effectively applying the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.*
- Introduced the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) that is providing targeted support to 15 districts through home visits in order to improve attendance and engagement and address chronic absenteeism. This program has provided students and families with resources, such as backpacks and technology, as well as referrals to health and social services.*
- Developed the CSDE reopening guidance: Adapt, Advance and Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together. Prioritizing supports for students' social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs is vital for the return to school amidst COVID-19. Some students will have experienced grief and loss,*



*sickness, traumatic experiences in the home, inequities with access to learning and resources, food and housing insecurity, and the uncertainty of these times. Schools were encouraged to emphasize the need for positivity, empathy, reassurance, routines, flexibility, supports, and the implementation of a referral process to support students' return to school.*

- *Developed Addendum 10 of the : Adapt, Advance and Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together: Reframing and Reopening: School Discipline Amidst COVID-19 Guidance. Addendum 10 outlines additional guidance that school districts may rely on regarding discipline during the pandemic. Some students experienced grief and loss, sickness, amplified challenging or traumatic experiences in the home, inequities with access to learning and resources, and the uncertainty of these times. The Addendum outlined best practices, strategies to promote a positive school climate, address misconduct, and foster student safety in lieu of ineffective and potentially retraumatizing exclusionary practices.*

## Focus on Positive School Climate

A healthy learning community that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe is the foundation for a comprehensive high-quality education. When students feel welcome, accepted, valued and safe, they will challenge themselves academically and their readiness for learning is significantly enhanced. Reductions in exclusionary discipline also can be expected when schools achieve and maintain welcoming, supportive and positive school climates.

### Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- *Provided targeted supports and resources for identified districts on school climate data collection and assessments; aligning and integrating school climate initiatives such as restorative practices and trauma-informed practices into action; and evaluating the impact of implementation.*
- *Provided professional development to districts on building community and promoting relationships virtually and in-person to help school leaders understand the importance of relationships especially during this challenging time, and to identify strategies to promote collaboration and relationships with and among staff, students, and families.*
- *Provided training on supporting student well-being using a multidisciplinary approach, including strategies and resources to support students, whether in-person and virtually to ensure that learning environments are physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe.*
- *Collaborated internally within CSDE and with other state agency partners to align and integrate school climate and culture efforts to promote a comprehensive wellness approach to learning environments.*
  - *Internal Partnerships with Civil Rights/Title IX coordinator, Attendance and Engagement Workgroup, Turnaround Cross Divisional Teams, SEL Assessment Implementation Team, Project Aware Advisory Team, School Discipline Collaborative, the Bureau of Special Education, and Talent Office.*
  - *External Partnerships with Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) – State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE), the CAS Student Equity Board (SEB), and the Equity Committee, CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI), Connecticut Children's Medical Center (CCMC), Connecticut Center for Children's Advocacy (CCAR), the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative (SCAC).*

## Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative

The CSDE recognized the need for cross-sector collaboration to address significant challenges and achieve sustainable change in school discipline. In response, the CSDE launched the [Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative](#) in October 2018 to advise the Commissioner of Education and SBE on strategies for transforming school discipline to reduce the overall and disproportionate use of exclusionary practices. The membership reflects a diverse range of expertise in education, education law, public policy, youth development, and family and community leadership. The Collaborative engages experts from across Connecticut and nationally to network, exchange ideas and share best practices regarding the reduction of disproportionate practices in school discipline. Time is dedicated during and in between meetings to gain insight into the current landscape of school discipline in Connecticut.

Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- *Facilitated a panel discussion with superintendents and principals to share their expertise on school discipline, behavioral health, and building systems coherence during this extraordinary time. Panelists described how to amplify the attention to school discipline work for students and adults while fostering a positive school ethos to support students in reaching their fullest potential to flourish and thrive.*
- *Completing Family Guides on Suspension and Expulsions. The Guides are meant to be used by families as well as schools to ensure a shared understanding of school discipline statutes, requirements, rights and responsibilities of all parties, and best practices.*
- *Revisited a prior discussion and gallery walk of the Historical Timeline of Public Education Policy in the United States and the impact on the educational system. Underpinning this work is contextualizing policies so Connecticut can ensure fair, just, and equitable practices in our schools. Information regarding the Collaborative can be obtained at [SDE/Discipline-in-Schools](#). For the Historical Timeline display, e-mail: [library@ctserc.org](mailto:library@ctserc.org).*

## Tiered Systems of Supports

One strategy in implementing Goal 1 of the SBE Comprehensive Plan: Ensuring that students' non-academic needs are met so that they are healthy, happy, and ready to learn, is the implementation of a tiered system of supports, guidance, and professional learning in areas of SEL, attendance, school discipline, restorative practices, and trauma-informed practices that remove barriers and maximize students' potential.

Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- *Training for districts on 10 evidence-based strategies building relationships in the classroom, embedding the language of expectations into praise and correction, escalation and de-escalation, and classroom implementation of behavior support plans. Additionally, high-leverage instructional practices to support academic progress, along with specific literacy strategies.*
- *Training on the Pyramid Model Practices is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices to promote young children's social and emotional development.*
- *Updated the data-informed tiered professional learning framework grounded in equity, access, and evidence to identify and concentrate resources, expertise, and efforts where they are needed most. The framework provides prevention and early intervention strategies to promote a safe and positive school culture and identify vulnerable students.*
- *Redesigned tier one to support capacity-building to develop, enhance, and expand Connecticut's Statewide Systems of Support to LEAs and schools using the MTSS. MTSS provides guidance for the*



*selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based behavioral practices for improving behavioral outcomes for all students.*

- *Continue a two-day professional learning opportunity: “Using Restorative Practices within a Multi-tiered System of Supports” (MTSS), including technical support. School teams were provided with an overview of restorative practices and implementation within an MTSS.*

## Data and Turning the Curve

Over the past five years, Connecticut has made major strides in reducing exclusionary discipline.

- *The total number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions has declined over the five years from 2014-15 to 2018-19 by 17.4 and 13.3 percent respectively. Incidents coded as school policy violations declined 28.5 percent over the past five years and now account for 46 percent of all incidents – down from 59 percent five years ago.*
- *Among young children in Grades Pre-K through Two, in-school suspensions declined by over 45 percent while out-of-school suspensions declined by over 72 percent. This is also largely due to the passage of C.G.S. 10-233(f), which prohibited the suspension or expulsion of students in Grades Pre- K through Two unless the incident was violent or is of a sexual nature that endangers others.*

## Appendix A – District Tiers on 2018-19 Suspension/Expulsion Data

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As part of the settlement in *Alicia B. vs. Malloy*, the CSDE is grouping districts into four tiers based on racial/ethnic disparities in suspension/expulsion data to provide targeted interventions and supports. The primary metric used for placing districts into tiers is the “Suspension/Expulsion Rate.” This is the percentage of students receiving at least one in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion during the school year. Using this metric allows for the broadest inclusion of students who may experience any exclusionary discipline during the school year.

The Suspension/Expulsion rate is reported publicly for all students and student groups on [EdSight](#) and included in the [Profile and Performance report](#) for every district/school. Districts are placed into tiers according to the following criteria:

- **Tier 4** - Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, black, or Hispanic suspension rate  $\geq 15\%$  in 2 recent years.
- **Tier 3** - Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either black or Hispanic Relative Risk Index (RRI)  $\geq 3$  in 2 recent years.
- **Tier 2** - Consistently Medium Disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 2$  in 2 recent years.
- **Tier 1** - Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality: All other districts

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2018-19 district tiers are being used to identify districts needing support. Complete data regarding the tiers is available on [EdSight](#). This model was designed to provide integrated tiered supports to districts to organize initiatives and related resources to maximize effectiveness and impact students’ outcomes. Delivery of services are comprehensive to address student’s academic, behavioral and social-emotional success.

- *Developed professional learning equity series to address disproportionality in suspensions and expulsions.*
- *Identified districts (2 years) and in tier 3 and 4 to participate in Community of Practice (CoP).*
- *Developed CSDE’s System of Support Model for Disproportionate School Discipline by district. This model provides supports and tools to assess and systematically address disparities in school discipline. This structure is designed to address district-based factors that contribute to disparities outlined in the *Alicia B. vs. Malloy* lawsuit and to review the systemic causes of school discipline disparities and why they occur. More importantly, the CSDE will assist districts on how to reduce and eliminate disparities in school discipline.*
- *Methodology for Identifying District Tiers Based on Suspension/Expulsion Data- The primary metric used for placing districts into tiers with meaningful disparities in rates of suspensions/expulsions and racial disparities in such punishments is the “Suspension/Expulsion Rate.” This is the percentage of students receiving at least one in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion during the school year. In addition to looking at the absolute suspension rate of all students and the primary race/ethnic groups (i.e., black, Hispanic, and white students), a relative risk index (RRI) is also calculated for black and Hispanic students relative to white students. The RRI is a measure of disproportionality that indicates how many*

*times more likely black or Hispanic students are to be suspended/expelled relative to white students.*

### Relative Risk Index (RRI)

RRI is a measure of disproportionality. For each district, an RRI is calculated for black and Hispanic students relative to white students. The RRI tells us how many times more likely black or Hispanic students are to be suspended/expelled relative to white students. For example, an RRI of 3.0 for black students in a district means that black students are 3 times as likely to be suspended/expelled as white students in that district.

### Tier 4

Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, black, or Hispanic suspension rate  $\geq 15\%$  in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
0020011	Ansonia School District
0070011	Berlin School District
0150011	Bridgeport School District
0370011	Derby School District
0400011	East Granby School District
0430011	East Hartford School District
0470011	East Windsor School District
0490011	Enfield School District
0620011	Hamden School District
0640011	Hartford School District
1130011	Portland School District
1290011	Somers School District
1510011	Waterbury School District
1630011	Windham School District
2440014	Area Cooperative Educational Services
2650013	Interdistrict School for Arts and Comm District
2790013	Amistad Academy District
2850013	Achievement First Bridgeport Academy District
2890013	Elm City College Preparatory School District
2940013	Great Oaks Charter School District
9000016	Connecticut Technical Education and Career System
9010022	Norwich Free Academy District
9020022	The Gilbert School District

### Tier 3

Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 3$  in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
0040011	Avon School District
0230011	Canton School District
0510011	Fairfield School District
0520011	Farmington School District
0560011	Granby School District
0570011	Greenwich School District
0950011	New London School District
1030011	Norwalk School District
1280011	Simsbury School District
1310011	Southington School District
1320011	South Windsor School District
1350011	Stamford School District
1550011	West Hartford School District
1580011	Westport School District
2150012	Regional School District 15
2410014	Capitol Region Education Council
2860013	Highville Charter School District

## Tier 2

Consistently Medium Disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 2$  in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
0110011	Bloomfield School District
0140011	Branford School District
0170011	Bristol School District
0330011	Cromwell School District
0480011	Ellington School District
0540011	Glastonbury School District
0590011	Groton School District
0770011	Manchester School District
0800011	Meriden School District
0830011	Middletown School District
0930011	New Haven School District
0990011	North Branford School District
1010011	North Haven School District
1190011	Rocky Hill School District
1370011	Stonington School District
1380011	Stratford School District
1430011	Torrington School District
1530011	Watertown School District
1560011	West Haven School District
1590011	Wethersfield School District
1640011	Windsor School District
1650011	Windsor Locks School District
2050012	Regional School District 05
2080012	Regional School District 08
2450014	Learn
2610013	Jumoke Academy District
2680013	Common Ground High School District
2690013	The Bridge Academy District
2780013	Trailblazers Academy District
2830013	Park City Prep Charter School District
2880013	Achievement First Hartford Academy District
2970013	Capital Preparatory Harbor School District

## Tier 1

Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality: All other districts

District Code	District Name
0010011	Andover School District
0030011	Ashford School District
0050011	Barkhamsted School District
0080011	Bethany School District
0090011	Bethel School District
0120011	Bolton School District
0130011	Bozrah School District
0180011	Brookfield School District
0190011	Brooklyn School District
0210011	Canaan School District
0220011	Canterbury School District
0240011	Chaplin School District
0250011	Cheshire School District
0260011	Chester School District
0270011	Clinton School District
0280011	Colchester School District
0290011	Colebrook School District
0300011	Columbia School District
0310011	Cornwall School District
0320011	Coventry School District
0340011	Danbury School District
0350011	Darien School District
0360011	Deep River School District
0390011	Eastford School District
0410011	East Haddam School District
0420011	East Hampton School District
0440011	East Haven School District
0450011	East Lyme School District
0460011	Easton School District
0500011	Essex School District
0530011	Franklin School District
0580011	Griswold School District
0600011	Guilford School District
0630011	Hampton School District
0650011	Hartland School District
0670011	Hebron School District

District Code	District Name
0680011	Kent School District
0690011	Killingly School District
0710011	Lebanon School District
0720011	Ledyard School District
0730011	Lisbon School District
0740011	Litchfield School District
0760011	Madison School District
0780011	Mansfield School District
0790011	Marlborough School District
0840011	Milford School District
0850011	Monroe School District
0860011	Montville School District
0880011	Naugatuck School District
0890011	New Britain School District
0900011	New Canaan School District
0910011	New Fairfield School District
0920011	New Hartford School District
0940011	Newington School District
0960011	New Milford School District
0970011	Newtown School District
0980011	Norfolk School District
1000011	North Canaan School District
1020011	North Stonington School District
1040011	Norwich School District
1060011	Old Saybrook School District
1070011	Orange School District
1080011	Oxford School District
1090011	Plainfield School District
1100011	Plainville School District
1110011	Plymouth School District
1120011	Pomfret School District
1140011	Preston School District
1160011	Putnam School District
1170011	Redding School District
1180011	Ridgefield School District
1210011	Salem School District
1220011	Salisbury School District
1230011	Scotland School District

District Code	District Name
1240011	Seymour School District
1250011	Sharon School District
1260011	Shelton School District
1270011	Sherman School District
1330011	Sprague School District
1340011	Stafford School District
1360011	Sterling School District
1390011	Suffield School District
1400011	Thomaston School District
1410011	Thompson School District
1420011	Tolland School District
1440011	Trumbull School District
1450011	Union School District
1460011	Vernon School District
1470011	Voluntown School District
1480011	Wallingford School District
1520011	Waterford School District
1540011	Westbrook School District
1570011	Weston School District
1600011	Willington School District
1610011	Wilton School District
1620011	Winchester School District
1660011	Wolcott School District
1670011	Woodbridge School District
1690011	Woodstock School District
2010012	Regional School District 01
2040012	Regional School District 04
2060012	Regional School District 06
2070012	Regional School District 07
2090012	Regional School District 09
2100012	Regional School District 10
2110012	Regional School District 11
2120012	Regional School District 12
2130012	Regional School District 13
2140012	Regional School District 14
2160012	Regional School District 16
2170012	Regional School District 17
2180012	Regional School District 18



District Code	District Name
2190012	Regional School District 19
2420014	EdAdvance
2430014	Cooperative Educational Services
2530014	Eastern Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center (EASTCONN)
2630013	Odyssey Community School District
2640013	Integrated Day Charter School District
2700013	Side By Side Charter School District
2720013	Explorations District
2800013	New Beginnings Inc Family Academy District
2820013	Stamford Academy District
2900013	Brass City Charter School District
2910013	Elm City Montessori School District
2950013	Booker T. Washington Academy District
2960013	Stamford Charter School for Excellence District
3360015	Unified School District #1
3370015	Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
3470015	Unified School District #2
9030022	The Woodstock Academy District

## APPENDIX B – The Data Collection and Reporting Processes

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### ED166 Data Collection

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) submit data to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) on an annual basis via an online data collection application known as the ED166 Student Disciplinary Offense Collection. After initial data submission, the CSDE conducts numerous validations to identify potential irregularities in the data. LEAs are expected to review and resolve all anomalies; then, a district administrator certifies electronically that the data are complete and accurate.

### Public School Information System (PSIS)

Student demographic data are collected in an application known as the Public School Information System or PSIS. PSIS contains student enrollment and demographic information (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender). Enrollment data, which are used for calculations such as suspension rates, are based on PSIS enrollment.

### Race/Ethnicity Information

In PSIS all students must be assigned to a racial/ethnic subgroup for analysis purposes. If a parent or student will not select a category from the five race codes provided, appropriate school personnel are advised select the category for the child. In accordance with the final guidance and regulations issued by the United States Department of Education (USED), race and ethnicity are collected using the following two-part question:

1. Is the respondent Hispanic/Latino? – Yes/No

Hispanic or Latino is defined as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

2. Is the respondent from one or more races using the following (choose all that apply):
  - American Indian or Alaskan Native - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
  - Asian - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand and Vietnam.
  - Black or African American - A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
  - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
  - White - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

CSDE then reports this racial/ethnic data to the USED and the public using the following categories:

- Hispanic/Latino of any race;

- American Indian or Alaska Native;
- Black or African American;
- Asian;
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander;
- White; and
- Two or more races

Race/Ethnicity information can be updated at any time during the school year and be changed as many times as a student or his or her parents or guardian wish.

## EdSight

Data collected through the ED166 are released publicly on CSDE's data portal, EdSight, sometime in October. EdSight is available at <http://edsight.ct.gov>. EdSight provides detailed information about schools/districts and offers information on key performance measures that make up Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System. A variety of reports are available on EdSight. They include:

- The Profile and Performance Reports (also referred to as school/district report cards);
- Numerous interactive reports on topics like enrollment, chronic absenteeism, discipline, educator demographics, graduation rates, and test results;
- The special education Annual Performance Reports; and
- Data and research bulletins on critical topics of interest.

## EdSight Data Suppression Guidelines

Data on both EdSight and within this report are suppressed following CSDE's Data Suppression Guidelines. In general, counts less than 5 are suppressed; however, there are some instances where other numbers may be suppressed as well. The complete data suppression policy is available online at <http://edsight.ct.gov/relatedreports/BDCRE%20Data%20Suppression%20Rules.pdf>.