Methodology for Identifying District Tiers Based on Suspension/Expulsion Data

As part of the settlement of Alicia B. vs. Malloy, district tiers based on suspension/expulsion data have been established to identify disproportionality in exclusionary discipline for students of color.

What is the primary metric used?

The primary metric used for placing districts into tiers with meaningful disparities in regard to 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.

Why use the suspension/expulsion rate?

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.

What minimum Ns are applied?

A suspension/expulsion rate for all students as well as students reported in the Race/Ethnicity category of black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, or white student are considered if the numerator is at least 6 and the denominator is at least 20.

How is disproportionality assessed?

In addition to looking at the absolute suspension rate of all students and the primary race/ethnic groups (i.e., black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, and white students), a relative risk index (RRI) is also calculated for black or African American and Hispanic/Latino students relative to white students. RRI is a measure of disproportionality. It tells us how many times more likely black or African American or Hispanic/Latino students are to be suspended/expelled relative to white students.

How are districts grouped into tiers?

Districts are grouped into tiers based on the following criteria:

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

How is the RRI calculated?

For black or African American students, the RRI is the black or African American student suspension rate divided by the white student suspension rate. For Hispanic/Latino students, the RRI is the Hispanic/Latino student suspension rate divided by the white student suspension rate. If there are fewer than 20 black or African American students or 20 Hispanic/Latino students in the district, then a black or African American or Hispanic/Latino student suspension rate cannot be calculated, and so an RRI also cannot be calculated. If the district does not have at least 20 white students to calculate a white student suspension rate, then the statewide white suspension rate for the year is used for the RRI calculation.