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Connecticut State Board of Education

Hartford

To: State Board of Education

From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

Date: April 2, 2025

Subject: 2023-24 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools

Executive Summary

Please find attached the *2023-24 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.

Connecticut schools have made significant progress in reducing exclusionary discipline, but broader challenges have emerged that continue to have adverse effects on education.

- From 2018-19 to 2023-24 (pre-to post-pandemic) the total number of in-school suspensions (ISS) decreased by 6.9 percent, but the total number of out-of-school suspensions (OSS) increased by 6.4 percent and expulsions (EXP) increased by 1.3 percent. There were significant declines from 2022-23 to 2023-24 in the number of OSS (37,376 to 34,578) and EXP (979 to 755).

- While some incident categories showed lower rates in 2023-24 than in 2018-19 (e.g., School Policy Violations declined 6.9 percent, Sexually Related Behavior declined 30.0 percent, and Fighting and Battery declined 7.1 percent), other categories showed higher rates (e.g., Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco increased 10.8 percent, Physical and Verbal Confrontation increased 44.1 percent, and Weapons increased 25.0 percent).

- The total number of incidents reported for marijuana possession or use has increased nearly five times from 2021-22 (261 incidents) to 2023-24 (1,269 incidents); however, incidents coded as possession or use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) (e.g., vapes, e-cigarettes) (2,720 incidents) far exceed those coded as marijuana (1,269 incidents) or tobacco (370 incidents). ENDS possession/use and tobacco use declined from the prior year.

- In 2023-24, nearly 37,000 students (7.0 percent) or approximately one out of approximately every 14 students statewide, received a suspension or an expulsion. Disparities remain in these suspension rates between Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students and their White counterparts. While one out of 23 White students received at least one suspension, one out of seven Black/African American students and one out of 11 Hispanic/Latino students experienced the same sanction. In other words, Black/African American students are more than three times as likely and Hispanic/Latino students are more than twice as likely as their White counterparts to be

suspended or expelled. This pattern exists in many districts across the state. Males receive a suspension/expulsion at greater rates (8.9 percent) than females (5.1 percent).

- When analyzing suspension rates by grade, the data reveal that suspension rates in middle school grades in 2023-24 are substantially greater than pre-pandemic levels. Suspension rates increased from 2018-19 to 2023-24 in Grade 6 (8.2 percent to 10 percent), Grade 7 (11.0 percent to 13.1 percent), and Grade 8 (11.1 percent to 13.6 percent). Conversely, most elementary and high school grades show lower suspension rates in 2023-24 than in 2018-19. One bright spot is that the middle school suspension rates in 2023-24 are slightly lower than in 2022-23.

- The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is grouping districts into four tiers based on overall and disproportionate use of suspensions and expulsions in order to provide a system of supports and targeted action planning. The 2023-24 district tiers will be used to identify those districts needing support and the type of support needed.

- Among young children in Pre-K through Grade 2, the number of suspensions (ISS and OSS combined) declined by 17.2 percent from 2018-19 (1,926 sanctions) to 2023-24 (1,595 sanctions). In 2023-24, fewer than 900 students in Pre-K through Grade two (approximately one half of one percent) received at least one suspension. Note that C.G.S. 10-233(f) prohibits the suspension or expulsion of students in pre-K through Grade 2 unless the incident was "of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons."

The CSDE continues to engage the Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative to advise the CSDE on strategies for transforming school discipline to reduce the overall and disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline and use data to drive the implementation of a statewide systems approach to address disproportionality in school discipline. This includes developing an infrastructure to support high-quality and effective fidelity of implementation that is data-driven, evidence-based, scalable, and sustainable within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).

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2023-24 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools

April 2025

Connecticut State Department of Education
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Introduction

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 behavioral outcomes requires ensuring that all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions. Schools must 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, increased risk of substance use disorders, and involvement with the juvenile justice system[1].

C.G.S. Section 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.

Data Collection and Reporting

Local educational agencies (LEAs) 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)

[1] From "Dear Colleague" Letter: https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201401-title-vi.html

In addition, all "serious" offenses and all incidents involving alcohol, drugs, or weapons must be reported, regardless of the type of sanction imposed. All verified 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 is included in Appendix B of this report. 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 2019-20 and 2020-21 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 the 2020-21 school year, students attended school in-person to varying degrees; some learned fully/mostly remotely for the entire school year. Therefore, any inferences relative to changes in rates over years are based on 2018-19 data; 2023-24 data are compared to 2018-19 data to examine the differences from pre- to post-pandemic.

Results

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; if one student received more than one sanction, then all sanctions received are included below. Students received less severe sanctions in 2023-24 than in 2018-19. While ISS was lower than in 2018-19, OSS and EXP have increased since 2018-19.

Table 1: Total Number of Sanctions

Sanction Type	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	% Change from 2018-19
In-School Suspension	49,667	48,431	38,739	44,820	45,071	-6.9
Out-of-School Suspension	31,834	32,681	34,580	37,376	34,758	6.4
Expulsion	797	745	858	979	755	1.3

The behaviors associated with the sanctions received by students are grouped into ten categories (Table 2). In 2018-19, school policy violations accounted for approximately 46 percent of all incidents, down from 56 percent in 2015-16 and down from 48 percent in 2017-18. This trend has continued post-pandemic with school policy

violations accounting for 41 percent of reportable incidents in 2021-22; it remained steady at 41 percent in 2022-23 and 2023-24.

With respect to incident types, Sexually Related Behavior showed a substantial decline of 30 percent since 2018-19 but Physical and Verbal Confrontation increased 44.1 percent, and Personally Threatening Behavior increased 32 percent during the same period. In 2018-19, Vandalism accounted for 84 percent (N=1,216 incidents) of all incidents in the Property Damage category. In 2021-22, Vandalism declined to 82 percent of all incidents in the Property Damage category, and in 2023-24 it decreased to 79 percent (N=1,395). Vandalism is defined as the willful destruction or defacement of school property (destroying school computers, carving a desk, spray painting walls, damaging vehicles, etc.).

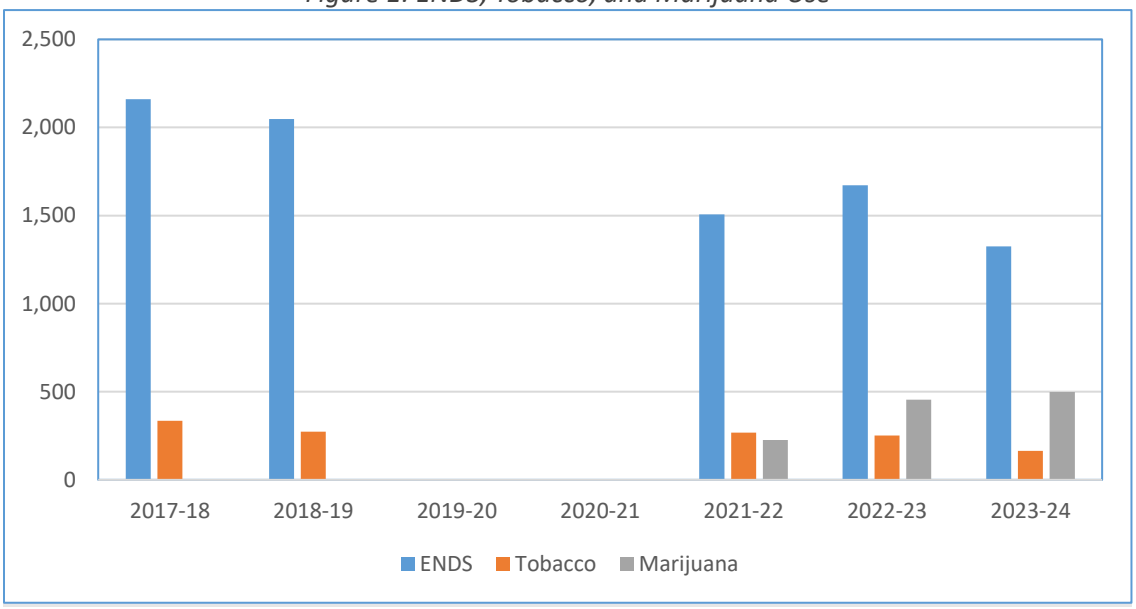
Table 2: Incidents by Category

Incident Type	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	% Change from 2018-19
Violent Crimes Against Persons	483	398	427	403	322	-19.1
Sexually Related Behavior	1,329	1,254	1,018	936	878	-30.0
Personally Threatening Behavior	7,208	6,787	7,559	8,755	8,956	32.0
Theft Related Behaviors	1,312	1,217	1,058	1,382	1,173	-3.6
Physical and Verbal Confrontation	14,811	14,976	15,764	20,616	21,582	44.1
Fighting and Battery	16,952	18,036	17,165	17,141	16,761	-7.1
Property Damage	1,431	1,455	2,161	1,756	1,761	21.0
Weapons	917	801	1,298	1,432	1,001	25.0
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco	4,964	5,933	6,449	7,793	6,576	10.8
School Policy Violations	45,769	43,869	36,687	41,785	40,861	-6.9

The Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco category continues 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 use increased in 2017-18. Tobacco and ENDS *use* have decreased since 2018-19 while possession has increased (see Figure 1 and Table 3).

As of July 1, 2021, Public Act 21-1 legalized possession of up to 1.5 oz of marijuana, and allowed use in specified locations, for those over 21. As with tobacco-based products, marijuana is not legal on school grounds regardless of age. To accompany this change in legislation, marijuana-based codes were introduced in the 2021-22 discipline collection to detach it from the illegal drug category.

Figure 1: ENDS, Tobacco, and Marijuana Use



For consistency, both "possession" and "use" codes have been included in this report for each substance. While ENDS use was lower than in 2018-19, possession has more than doubled. Tobacco possession in 2023-24 has returned to the pre-pandemic count and Tobacco use has decreased. In 2021-22, marijuana violations included 35 incidents of possession and 226 of use. In 2023-24, marijuana possession increased over 22 times to 770 and marijuana use has more than doubled to 499.

Table 3: ENDS, Tobacco and Marijuana Possession and Use

Incident Type	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
ENDS Possession	N/A	675	1,323	1,630	1,394
ENDS Use	2,160	2,048	1,506	1,672	1,326
Tobacco Possession	172	201	160	205	205
Tobacco Use	335	274	268	251	165
Marijuana Possession	N/A	N/A	35	823	770
Marijuana Use	N/A	N/A	226	456	499

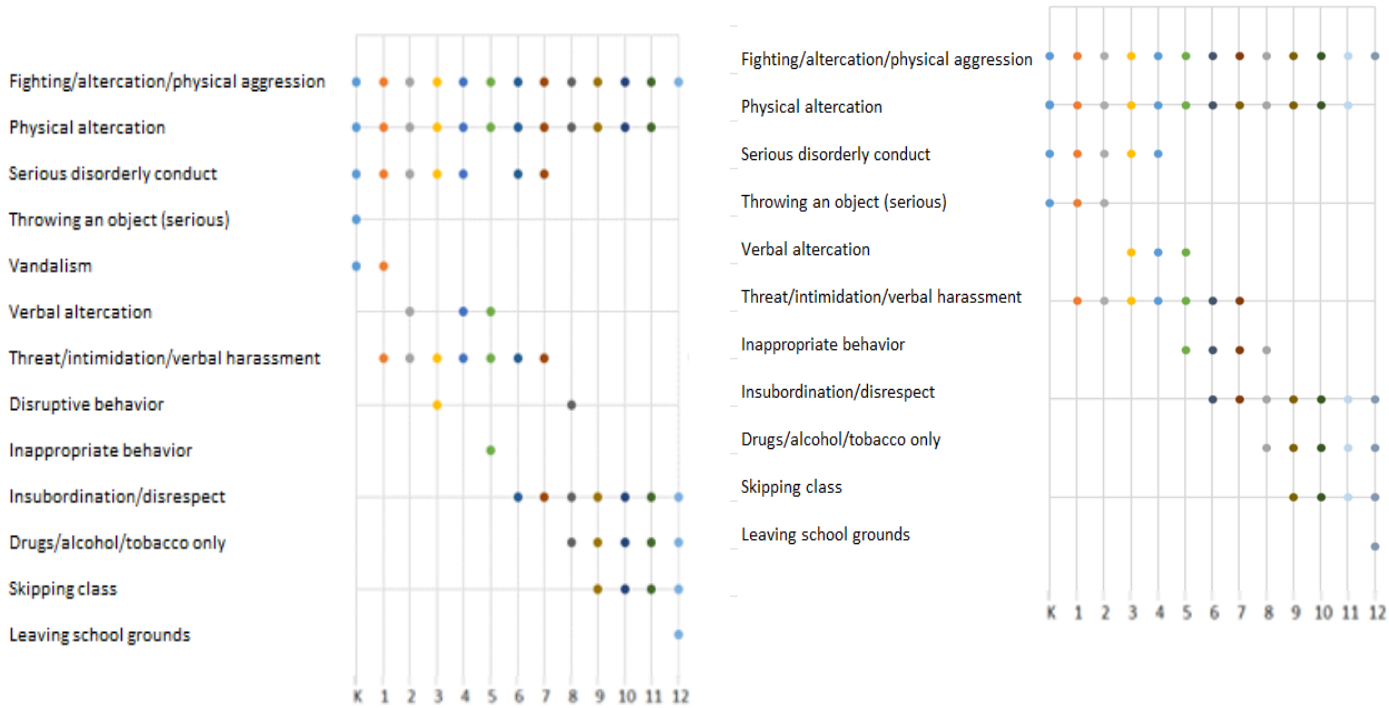
Incidents by Grade

What are the most common behaviors/incidents that manifest themselves in a particular grade? How do they change across the grades? For this analysis, the CSDE identified the five most frequent incidents for each grade and then organized them by grade (see Figure 2). A brief definition for each incident type in Figure 2 is provided below.

- **Fighting/altercation/physical aggression** – Participation in an incident that involved a physical confrontation in which one or more participants received a minor physical injury. A minor injury is one that does not require professional medical attention, such as a scrape on the body, knee, or elbow; and/or minor bruising.
- **Physical altercation** – Participation in a confrontation, or some type of physical aggression that does not result in any injury.
- **Serious disorderly conduct** – Security/police were called, an injury may have occurred, and/or there was a major disruption to the educational process.
- **Throwing an object (serious)** – Use this category if there is a victim with any level of injury.
- **Vandalism -** Willful destruction or defacement of school property (destroying school computers, carving a desk, spray painting walls, damaging vehicles, etc.).
- **Verbal altercation** - Participation in an incident involving a verbal confrontation (shouting match, yelling, etc.).
- **Threat/intimidation/verbal harassment** – Physical, verbal, written, or electronic communication (without displaying a weapon and without a physical attack) which results in fear of harm.
- **Disruptive behavior –** Disruption of class; in the hallway, cafeteria, or any other area of the school.
- **Inappropriate behavior** – Horseplay, play fighting, playing cards.
- **Insubordination/disrespect** – Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request, or other situation in which a student is disobedient.
- **Drugs/alcohol/tobacco** – A substance-related offense.
- **Skipping class –** As defined by LEA policy.
- **Leaving school grounds** – As defined by LEA policy.
- **Battery/assault** – Striking another person with the intent of causing serious bodily harm to the individual. A physical attack on an individual resulting in an injury requiring any type of medical attention.
- **Disorderly conduct** – Any behavior that seriously disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function or which substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.

Figure 2: Top Five Incidents by Grade, a Two-Year Comparison

2018-19 **2023-24**



Pre-and post-pandemic trends are similar. These data reveal that while some incidents like *Fighting/ altercation/physical aggression* appear among the most frequent incidents in every grade, other incidents are more prevalent in certain grade ranges. For example, *throwing an object* occurs as a prevalent incident in Grades K-2 only. As it did prior to the pandemic, *Insubordination/disrespect* appears among the most frequent incidents in the middle school years and remains prominent in every subsequent grade. *Skipping class* remains prominent in all high school grades.

Suspension Rates

The suspension rate equals the unduplicated 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. Prior to the pandemic, 6.7 percent of all students received at least one suspension or expulsion during the 2018-19 school year; in 2023-24, the rate increased slightly to 7.0 percent. Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students showed a decline from pre-pandemic rates; however, students of two or more races, and White students showed increases. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders showed an increase of 1.5 percent; however, it should be noted that small student groups may show greater variability in rates (Table 4).

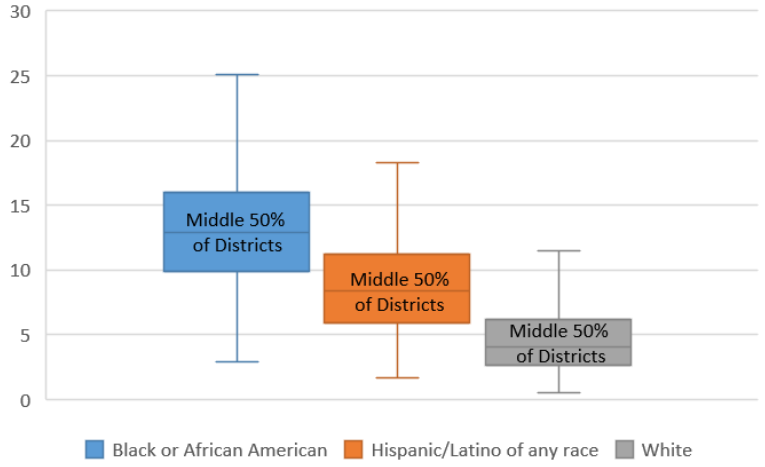
Both pre-and post-pandemic, the suspension rate of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students remains significantly greater than that of White students. Black/African American students are more than three times as likely as their White student peers, and Hispanic/Latino students are more than twice as likely as their White student peers to receive a suspension/expulsion. Pre-pandemic, one out of 24 White students received at least one suspension/expulsion, while one out of seven Black/African American students and one out of eleven Hispanic/Latino students received the same sanction. Post-pandemic, one out of 23 White students, one out of seven Black/African American students, and one out of eleven Hispanic/Latino students received at least one suspension/expulsion in 2023-24.

Table 4: Suspension Rates by Race/Ethnicity

	2017-18		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
Race/Ethnicity	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**
American Indian or Alaska Native	117	8.4	119	8.3	119	8.5	112	8.0	98	7.2
Asian	501	1.8	530	1.9	446	1.6	510	1.8	500	1.8
Black or African American	9,884	14.3	9,897	14.0	8,518	12.5	8,925	13.2	8,806	13.1
Hispanic/Latino of any race	12,819	9.4	13,214	9.2	13,574	8.6	15,462	9.5	15,362	9.1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	32	5.8	34	5.7	46	8.5	47	8.6	37	7.2
Two or More Races	1,248	7.0	1,368	7.0	1,636	7.0	1,875	7.7	1,849	7.4
White	12,167	4.2	11,696	4.1	10,310	4.0	10,66	4.3	10,339	4.3
Total	36,768	6.8	36,858	6.7	34,649	6.5	37,595	7.0	36,991	7.0

The distribution of suspension rates by Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and White students (Figure 3) across districts illustrates the pattern of higher suspension rates for students of color in many districts.

Figure 3: Distribution of 2023-24 District-Level Suspension Rates by Race/Ethnicity



Males continue to be suspended at higher rates than females (Table 5). The suspension rate for males nearly matches the pre-pandemic rate, while that of females increased in 2023-24 from their pre-pandemic rate.

Table 5: Suspension Rates by Gender

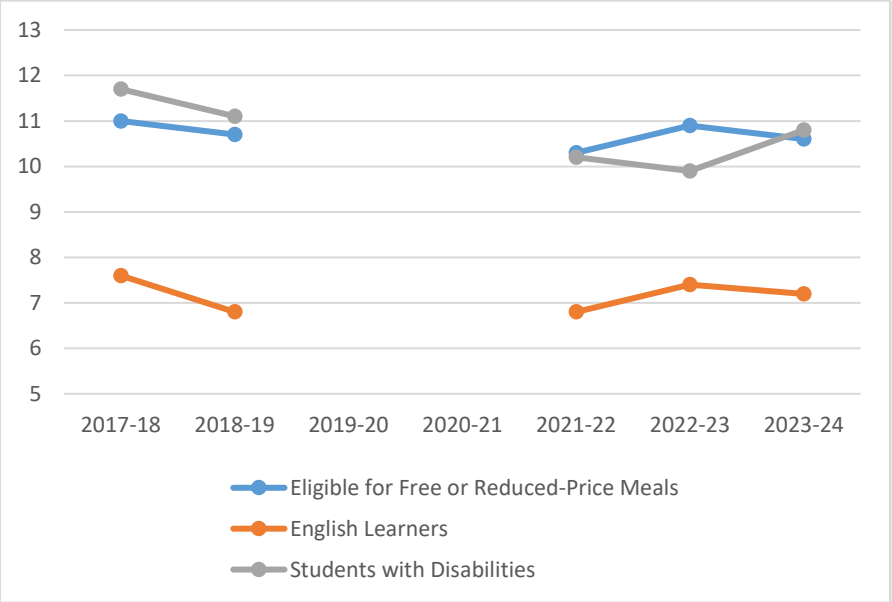
	2017-18		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
Gender	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Female	11,356	4.4	11,638	4.4	12,156	4.7	13,119	5.1	12,878	5.0
Male	25,410	9.1	25,215	8.9	22,459	8.2	24,427	8.9	24,063	8.8

Suspension rates for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (10.6 percent), students with disabilities (10.8 percent), and English learners (7.2 percent) are higher than the state average (7.0 percent). Suspension rates for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals and students with disabilities were declining pre-pandemic; rates in 2023-24 have decreased to below pre-pandemic levels (Table 6 and Figure 4).

Table 6: Suspension Rate by Program Status

	2017-18		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Count	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**
Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals	25,585	11.0	26,223	10.7	24,049	10.3	26,013	10.9	26,161	10.6
English Learners	3,154	7.6	3,070	6.8	3,446	6.8	4,121	7.4	4,391	7.2
Students with Disabilities	10,442	11.7	10,551	11.1	10,145	10.2	10,125	9.9	11,392	10.8

Figure 4: Suspension Rate by Program Status



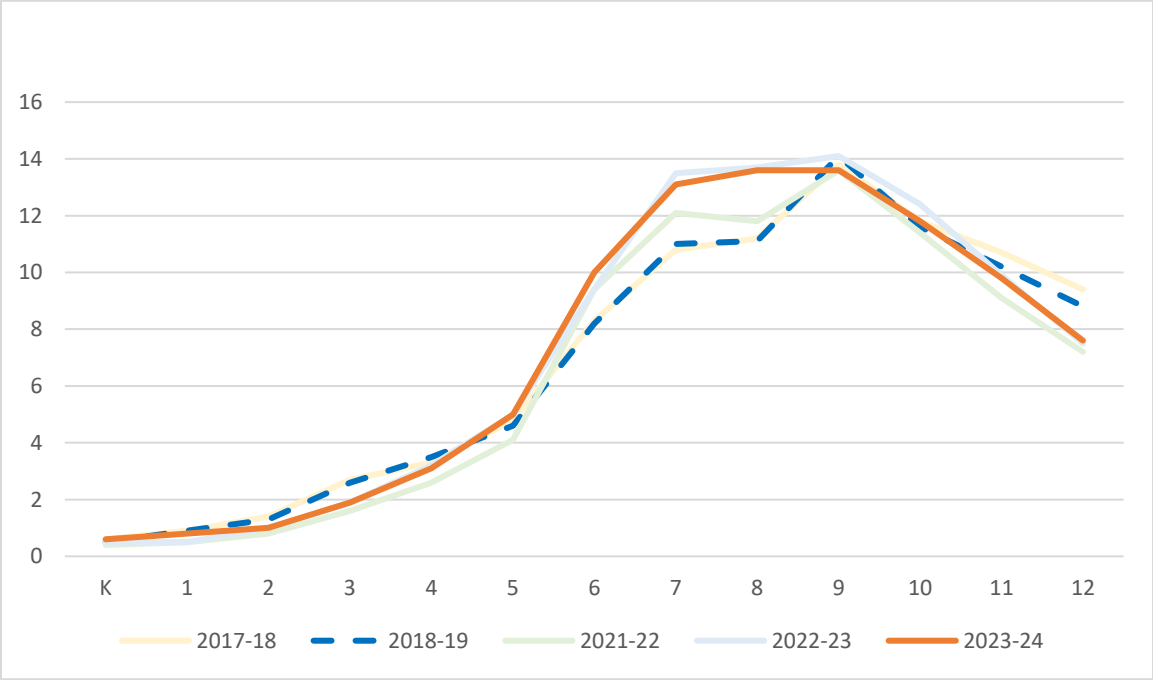
Analyses by grade (Table 7 and Figure 5) reveal that suspension rates increase gradually in the elementary grades and begin to spike in Grade 6. The highest suspension rates occur in Grades 8 and 9. The five-year trend indicates the suspension rate of 12th graders has an overall decrease despite a small uptick in 2022-23 and 2023-24.

Table 7: Suspension Rates by Grade

	2017-18		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
Grade	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
K	203	0.6	198	0.5	142	0.4	197	0.5	208	0.6
1	351	0.9	337	0.9	162	0.5	202	0.5	284	0.8
2	501	1.4	504	1.3	290	0.8	354	1.0	389	1.0
3	1,022	2.7	986	2.6	603	1.6	696	1.9	694	1.9
4	1,305	3.3	1,374	3.5	971	2.6	1,186	3.2	1,163	3.1
5	1,948	4.8	1,861	4.6	1,552	4.1	1,918	5.0	1,899	5.0
6	3,327	8.3	3,387	8.2	3,599	9.4	3,600	9.4	3,823	10.0
7	4,371	10.8	4,494	11.0	4,815	12.1	5,225	13.5	5,058	13.1
8	4,589	11.2	4,598	11.1	4,824	11.8	5,533	13.7	5,355	13.6
9	6,023	13.8	6,245	14.1	6,226	13.6	6,220	14.1	5,905	13.6
10	4,856	11.8	4,950	11.6	4,772	11.4	5,384	12.4	4,968	11.8
11	4,330	10.7	4,170	10.2	3,608	9.1	3,935	9.9	4,012	9.8
12	3,916	9.4	3,746	8.8	3,065	7.2	3,139	7.5	3,212	7.6

Figure 5 is a graphical representation of Table 7. Note the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic data are represented in bold for easier identification. Suspension rates in middle school grades in 2023-24 are substantially greater than their pre-pandemic levels.

Figure 5: Suspension Rates by Grade



District Tiers Based on Suspension/Expulsion Data

Effective in the 2020-21 school year, the CSDE grouped districts into four tiers based on racial/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 ISS, OSS or EXP during the school year. This metric represents 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 is 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 >=15 percent in 2 recent years.
- Tier 3 - Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either Black or Hispanic Relative Risk Index (RRI) >=3 in 2 recent years.
- Tier 2 - Consistently Medium Disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either Black or Hispanic RRI >=2 in 2 recent years.
- Tier 1 - Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality: All other districts

Districts are listed according to their identified tiers for 2023-24 in Appendix A.

Suspensions of Young Students, Pre-K through Grade 2

Public Act No. 15-96, *An Act Concerning Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions for Students in Preschool and Grades Kindergarten to Two,* limited out-of-school suspensions in Grades 3-12 and prohibited the suspension or expulsion of students in Pre-K through Grade 2 unless the incident is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.[2] The total number of suspensions and expulsions (Table 8) for these youngest students declined from over 5,000 prior to Pubic Act 15-96 to 1,926 pre-pandemic in 2018-19 and under 1,600 in 2023-24 post-pandemic. The number of out-of-school suspensions, however, for students in Pre-K through Grade 2 is higher in 2023-24 than in any year since 2017-18, inclusive.

Table 8: Total Number of Sanctions (Pre-K through Grade 2) – not a student count

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
ISS	1,152	1,032	395	560	685
OSS	791	894	599	738	910
EXP	0	0	0	*[3]	0

Correspondingly, the total number of students (unduplicated count) in Grades Pre-K-2 who received at least one suspension or expulsion has also declined significantly from 1,046 in 2018-19 to less than 900 in 2023-24 (Table 9) which remains to be about one-half of one percent of all students in Grades Pre-K-2. The declines over the past several years are attributable largely to the passage of Public Act No. 15-96 which was subsequently codified as C.G.S. 10-233(f).

Table 9: Number of Students Suspended/Expelled (Pre-K through Grade 2) by Grade

	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Pre-K	7	7	*	*	*
K	203	198	142	197	210
Grade 1	351	337	162	202	281
Grade 2	501	504	290	354	392

[2] *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.*

[3] *The data are suppressed to protect student confidentiality pursuant to the CSDE's data suppression guidelines.*

When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, the number of students in Pre-K through Grade 2 receiving at least one suspension or expulsion has declined within almost all student race/ethnicity groups from pre-pandemic levels, especially among Black/African American students (Table 10).

Table 10: Number of Students Suspended/Expelled (Pre-K through Grade 2) by Race/Ethnicity

	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
American Indian or Alaska Native	*	*	0	*	*
Asian	12	10	*	8	6
Black/African American	354	345	151	182	205
Hispanic/Latino of any race	349	330	235	304	326
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*
Two or More Races	48	57	37	47	55
White	291	302	169	212	291

An In-depth Look at Disparities by Race/Ethnicity

The statewide data clearly illustrate that Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students experience suspensions at substantially greater rates than White students. To explore these racial disparities further, two additional questions were explored:

1. How many students are involved in more than one disciplinary incident during the school year? Are Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students involved in multiple incidents at greater rates than White students?
2. Are different sanctions imposed for similar behavior? Do Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students receive more severe sanctions (e.g., OSS instead of ISS) for the same behavior?

Most of the students who were suspended or expelled (nearly 22,000 students or 59.1 percent) committed only one incident during the 2023-24 school year; this rate is slightly higher than the pre-pandemic rate of 58.2 percent (Table 11).

Table 11: Percentage of Students with One or More Incidents

	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students
Only one incident	58.0	58.2	59.1	58.5	59.1
Two to four incidents	31.8	31.9	31.9	31.9	31.2
Five to nine incidents	8.0	7.9	7.4	7.5	7.4
Ten or more incidents	2.1	2.0	1.5	2.0	1.8

When the data are disaggregated by race (Table 12), it is evident that Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students are reported for more than one disciplinary incident at greater rates than White students. In 2023-24, 46.2 percent of Black/African American and 42.8 percent of Hispanic/Latino students who received a suspension/expulsion were involved in two or more incidents as compared to 33.9 percent of White students. Note that these percentages are the totals of the three columns labeled 2-4, 5-9 and 10+ incidents.

Table 12: Percentage of Students with Multiple Incidents by Race/Ethnicity

			American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino of any race	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White	Total
2017-18	Student Count →		117	501	9,884	12,819	32	1,248	12,167	36,768
	% with Incident Count	1	53.8	75.1	51.8	54.9	63.2	60.8	65.4	58.0
		2 thru 4	*	21.6	35.3	33.3	*	30.9	27.9	31.8
		5 thru 9	*	*	10.1	9.2	*	6.2	5.6	8.0
		10 plus	*	*	2.8	2.5	0	2.1	1.2	2.1
2018-19	Student Count →		118	532	9,875	13,217	35	1,396	11,685	36,858
	% with Incident Count	1	61.0	69.9	53.8	55.0	62.9	56.9	65.2	58.2
		2 thru 4	30.5	26.5	34.7	33.9	28.6	31.4	27.8	31.9
		5 thru 9	7.6	2.4	9.1	8.7	8.6	10.0	5.8	7.9
		10 plus	0.8	1.1	2.4	2.4	0	1.6	1.1	2.0
2021-22	Student Count →		119	446	8,518	13,574	46	1,636	10,310	34,649
	% with Incident Count	1	55.6	71.9	54.5	57.4	60.9	55.2	65.5	59.1
		2 thru 4	35.9	24.4	35.3	32.9	28.3	34.6	27.8	31.9
		5 thru 9	*	*	8.4	8	*	7.9	5.7	7.4
		10 plus	*	*	1.8	1.7	*	2.3	1	1.5

			American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino of any race	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White	Total
2022-23	Student Count →		111	513	8,933	15,439	48	1,900	10,693	37,637
	% with Incident Count	1	64.9	74.1	56.1	64.7	58.7	64.7	66.8	63.5
		2 thru 4	25.2	22.0	37.2	37.0	*	38.0	29.5	34.7
		5 thru 9	*	*	8.8	9.5	*	10.5	5.8	8.2
		10 plus	*	*	2.4	2.6	0.0	2.9	1.4	2.2
2023-24	Student Count →		102	499	8,814	15,319	40	1,846	10,392	37,012
	% with Incident Count	1	59.8	72.7	53.7	57.2	55.0	56.8	66.1	59.1
		2 thru 4	32.3	24.2	35.0	32.6	35.0	32.6	27.7	31.6
		5 thru 9	*	3.0	9.0	8.1	*	8.2	5.1	7.4
		10 plus	*	0	2.2	2.1	*	2.4	1.1	1.8

Are different sanctions imposed for similar behavior? Does the severity of sanction vary based on race/ethnicity? To answer these questions, an in-depth examination was conducted of four various types of incidents:

1. Fighting/Altercation/Physical Aggression
2. Knife 2½ Inches or Greater in Length
3. Sexual Harassment
4. School Policy Violations

Fighting/Altercation/Physical Aggression was selected because it is the most common incident reported. A Knife of 2 ½ inches or Greater was analyzed because it is the most common weapon reported. Sexual Harassment was selected to represent "serious" incidents. Four types of School Policy Violations were selected for this analysis to evaluate whether there are any disparities with less severe incidents.

The first three incident types are required to be reported to CSDE regardless of sanction, while the fourth type is only reported when the incident results in a suspension or expulsion. In all cases, the analyses were limited to cases where this was the only incident reported for that student. This was done to eliminate the possibility that the choice of the sanction for a particular behavior was somehow influenced by repeat behavior. Due to small numbers of students across the different race/ethnicity groups, these analyses were limited to the three largest groups of Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and White students. The results from prior years have been included to identify areas where improvements have been made and where disparities may continue to exist.

CASE #1: Fighting/Altercation/Physical Aggression

This incident type is reported for a student who participated in an incident that involved a physical confrontation in which one or more participants received a minor physical injury. A minor injury is one that does not require

professional medical attention, such as a scrape on the body, knee, or elbow; and/or minor bruising. Medical attention from the school nurse qualifies the injury as minor unless further medical attention is required. This incident type can also be used when one person strikes another (causing a minor injury), and the incident ends prior to the other participant retaliating. Among students who were reported with a single fighting/altercation/physical aggression incident during 2023-24 and where this was their only incident, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students received an OSS or EXP at rates of 74.9 and 72.2 percent respectively, while the rate for White students is significantly lower at 46.7 percent (Table 13).

Table 13: Fighting/altercation/physical aggression Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

	2017-18			2018-19			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
		Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP	
	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%
Black/African American	1,215	902	74.2	1,333	708	53.1	492	353	71.7	404	285	70.5	435	326	74.9
Hispanic/ Latino	1,417	1,061	74.9	1,591	796	50.0	560	384	68.6	493	349	70.8	515	372	72.2
White	729	511	70.1	1,022	247	24.1	336	152	45.2	332	156	47.0	317	148	46.7
Total	3,361	2,474	73.6	3,946	1,751	44.4	1,388	889	64.0	1,229	790	64.3	1,569	1,127	66.8

CASE #2: Knife 2½ Inches or Greater

In 2017-18 regardless of race/ethnicity, all students statewide reported with a single weapons incident where the weapon was a knife that was 2½ inches or greater (e.g., a steak knife, hunting knife), received either an OSS or an EXP. During the 2018-19 school year and beyond this was not the case. In 2023-24 97.1 percent of Black/African American students and 95.3 percent of Hispanic/Latino students received an OSS, or an EXP, as compared to 85.4 percent of White students who received the same consequence.

Table 14: Knife 2½ Inches or Greater Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

	2017-18			2018-19			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
		Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP	
	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%
Black/African American	36	36	100	23	21	91.3	40	37	92.5	40	38	95.0	35	34	97.1
Hispanic/Latino	71	71	100	38	34	89.5	97	92	94.8	78	74	94.9	64	61	95.3
White	68	68	100	42	32	76.2	62	55	88.7	50	45	90.0	41	35	85.4
Total	175	175	100	103	87	84.5	199	184	92.5	168	157	93.4	140	130	92.9

CASE #3: Sexual Harassment

An incident that is reported as sexual harassment involves inappropriate and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual acts, other physical or verbal conduct, or communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment. Examples include leering, pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures, or jokes; or pressure to engage in sexual activity. In 2017-18, there were no significant differences among Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or White students in the rate at which they received an OSS or EXP. In 2018-19, however, Black/African American students received OSS at a significantly greater rate (57.1 percent) than Hispanic/Latino students (40 percent) and White students (38.8 percent). In 2023-24 the disparity still exists with the rates of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students receiving these sanctions (49.0 and 44.0 percent respectively), compared to White students (22.5 percent).

Table 15: Sexual Harassment Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

	2017-18			2018-19			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
		Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP	
	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%
Black/African American	80	54	67.5	70	40	57.1	57	34	59.6	43	19	44.2	49	24	49.0
Hispanic/Latino	106	71	67.0	75	30	40.0	88	43	48.7	95	33	34.7	75	33	44.0
White	103	67	65.0	134	52	38.8	105	35	33.3	110	29	26.4	71	16	22.5
Total	289	192	66.4	265	111	41.9	250	112	44.8	248	81	33.7	195	73	37.4

CASE #4: Select School Policy Violations

The following four school policy violations were examined for this analysis:

- Insubordination/Disrespect: Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request, or other situation in which a student is disobedient.
- Disorderly conduct: Any behavior that seriously disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function or which substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.
- Inappropriate behavior: Horseplay, play fighting, playing cards.
- Disruptive behavior: Disruption of class; in the hallway, cafeteria, or any other area of the school.

None of these incidents are classified as “serious,” so their reporting to CSDE is required only if the incident results in a suspension or expulsion. Therefore, this analysis was limited to those incidents that resulted in a suspension/expulsion to determine if students of color received OSS at a greater rate than White students. As

with the prior cases, the students selected for this analysis were those who had only one incident type, indicating this is the only issue that took place during the incident. Moreover, this was the only incident for which the student was reported for the school year and the incident was not classified as a bullying incident. Among students who were reported with a single school policy violation incident during 2018-19 and where this was their only incident, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students received an OSS or EXP at a greater rate (34.3 and 27.7 percent respectively) than White students (19.5 percent). The disparity grew in 2023-24 with Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students received an OSS or EXP at a greater rate (44.1 and 38.9 percent respectively) than White students (16.3 percent).

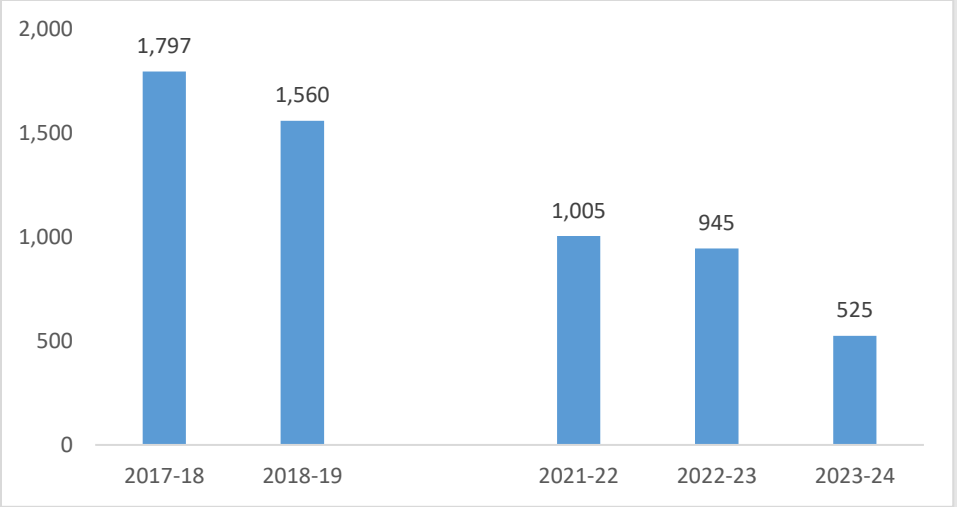
Table 16: School Policy Violation Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

	2017-18			2018-19			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
		Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP			Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP	
	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%
Black/African American	986	270	27.4	957	328	34.3	190	98	51.6	210	101	48.1	252	111	44.1
Hispanic/Latino	1,329	362	27.2	1,240	343	27.7	301	129	42.9	396	167	42.2	452	176	38.9
White	1,446	290	20.1	1,349	263	19.5	390	109	27.9	431	104	24.1	423	69	16.3
Total	3,761	922	24.5	3,518	931	26.5	881	336	38.1	1037	372	35.9	1,127	356	31.6

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 total number of school-based arrests reported to the CSDE declined significantly in 2023-24 (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Total Number of School-Based Arrests



Fighting and Battery continues to be the most common reason for a school-based arrest (Table 17).

Table 17: Incident Categories for School-Based Arrests

Incident Categories for School-Based Arrests	2017-18 Count	2018-19 Count	2021-22 Count	2022-23 Count	2023-24 Count
Fighting and Battery	598	515	408	363	218
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco	319	403	88	115	57
Physical and Verbal Confrontation	240	215	167	164	75
Personally Threatening Behavior	204	134	80	77	52
School Policy Violations	151	84	49	55	34
Weapons	99	71	135	114	45
Violent Crimes Against Persons	65	48	25	22	12
Theft Related Behaviors	60	49	19	15	23
Property Damage	32	14	26	14	4
Sexually Related Behavior	29	27	8	6	5
Total	**1,797**	**1,560**	**1,005**	**945**	**525**

The majority of students arrested were male. Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students were disproportionately represented among those arrested relative to enrollment, but the number of students arrested declined significantly among all student groups (Table 18).

Table 18: Student Demographics for School-Based Arrests (student counts)

Race/Ethnicity	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Black or African American	419	390	270	242	118
Hispanic/Latino of any race	577	601	421	394	254
White	554	468	217	188	103
Male	1,133	1,067	649	539	303
Female	522	493	313	326	209
TOTAL	**1,655**	**1,560**	**962**	**865**	**512**

Counts of School-Based Arrests by Local Education Agency are available on EdSight.

A Statewide Systems Approach to Turning the Curve

Setting the Stage

This section focuses on effective strategies for addressing school discipline, highlighting best practices that districts, schools, and various stakeholders can employ to establish a proactive and comprehensive support framework known as multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). This approach aims to mitigate disproportionality in suspensions and expulsions among different student demographics.

MTSS is modeled after strategies used in public health and disease control, emphasizing a preventative stance that offers support to all students. The framework operates on a tiered system, where all students receive universal supports, while those in need of additional assistance may receive increasing levels of targeted or individualized interventions. This ensures that all students have access to the resources they need for success, while those facing more significant challenges receive intensive support tailored to their specific circumstances.

Additionally, MTSS serves as a critical organizational framework for states, districts, and schools, helping them to coordinate various initiatives and allocate related resources effectively to achieve clearly defined educational goals. By fostering communication and collaboration among stakeholders, MTSS enhances the overall effectiveness of disciplinary practices.

The framework also provides crucial guidance for selecting, integrating, and implementing evidence-based behavioral practices designed to improve social-emotional and behavioral outcomes for all students, focusing on supporting underserved and vulnerable populations. This targeted approach recognizes that different students have varied needs and that tailoring support is essential for fostering an equitable learning environment.

To ensure the success of MTSS in reducing instances of exclusionary discipline, rigorous statewide data collection and analysis are imperative. This data-driven approach not only helps identify trends and disparities in disciplinary actions but also informs continuous improvement efforts, allowing schools to adapt their strategies to meet the diverse needs of their student populations effectively. Ultimately, the implementation of MTSS promotes a positive school climate, reduces behavioral incidents, and supports the success of every student.

Over the past decade, school districts' responsibilities in addressing the diverse needs of families and students have significantly evolved, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools are now faced with the

critical task of ensuring that all students not only meet increasingly rigorous academic standards but also cultivate a supportive and nurturing environment that caters to various aspects of student well-being.

This expanded role encompasses a range of objectives, including reducing disciplinary actions in schools, enhancing social-emotional learning (SEL) frameworks, and improving the overall school climate. Additionally, there is a pressing need to support the mental health needs of both students and staff, recognizing the profound challenges posed by emotional stress and trauma that many students have experienced during recent years.

To effectively tackle these multifaceted issues, it is essential to build a coherent and integrated system that addresses academic, behavioral, and emotional concerns in a unified manner. This approach involves implementing effective teaching strategies and interventions that aim to educate and support students when they encounter behavioral challenges. Similar to academic issues, behavioral concerns should prompt increased instruction and support at the moment they arise rather than imposing punitive measures.

The CSDE acknowledges that there are circumstances under which exclusionary practices, such as suspensions or expulsions, may be warranted. These situations typically arise to protect students from imminent safety risks or comply with specific mandates outlined in state or federal law, such as those articulated in Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Sections 10-233c and 10-233d. However, the CSDE emphasizes that these exclusionary measures should be employed judiciously and balanced with alternative, proportionate and restorative consequences.

Such alternatives prioritize the immediate safety and security of the learning environment and are designed to better serve students' long-term social-emotional development. The goal is to foster a positive outcome or resolution that promotes growth, learning, and resilience, ultimately leading to a more supportive and effective educational experience for all students.

Researchers agree that when students are removed from school and left unsupervised, they miss out on valuable instructional time. This can lead to lower academic achievement, a higher likelihood of grade retention, an increased risk of dropping out, and potential involvement with the juvenile justice system. The CSDE has developed a methodology to identify districts with high suspension rates and the factors contributing to these rates. This includes analyzing disaggregated discipline data, conducting root cause analyses, implementing school-based (arrest) diversion models, establishing effective and equitable disciplinary policies, employing restorative practices, and exploring 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 data, evidence-based practices, and wraparound supports.

Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative

The CSDE has acknowledged the urgent need for collaboration across various sectors to effectively address the significant challenges posed by traditional school discipline practices. In response to these challenges, the CSDE established the Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative (SDC) in October 2018. This initiative provides the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education (SBE) with strategic guidance on transforming school discipline policies and practices. The primary focus is to reduce the overall use of exclusionary discipline measures and also to specifically address and mitigate the disproportionate impact these practices have on certain student populations, as outlined in the data above.

The SDC, codified in statute in 2023, is composed of a diverse group of stakeholders who bring a wealth of expertise in education, education law, public policy, child welfare, mental health care providers, youth development, and community and family leadership (see Appendix A). By assembling professionals from various fields, the SDC aims to foster a comprehensive approach to discipline reform. The SDC convenes experts from across Connecticut and nationally, providing a platform for networking, exchanging innovative ideas, and sharing best practices. This collaboration is essential for developing effective strategies to reduce the reliance on exclusionary discipline practices, which can have detrimental effects on students' educational experiences and outcomes. Through the SDC's efforts, the CSDE works to create a more equitable and supportive school environment for all students, promoting their overall well-being and academic success.

Efforts are being made to dedicate specific time during and between meetings to gain a comprehensive understanding of the school discipline landscape in Connecticut. The CSDE and SDC have developed three essential resources aimed at supporting both families and school districts in navigating these complex issues more effectively. The Family Guides address suspension and expulsion: Family Guide: When a Child is Suspended from School and Family Guide: When a Child is Expelled from School are specifically designed to empower families by clarifying the laws and policies related to school suspensions and expulsions. These guides serve as an informative tool to help parents and guardians comprehend their students' rights within the framework of Connecticut's public school system. While the guides offer valuable insights into the general rights and protections afforded to students, it is important to note that they are not intended to serve as legal advice. Instead, they aim to provide accessible information to help families advocate for their children and make informed decisions regarding school discipline matters.

One significant resource in the effort to create equitable school discipline policies is the State Board of Education (SBE) Position Statement titled "Reducing Disproportionality in Suspensions and Expulsions (Exclusionary Discipline)." This document serves a crucial purpose: it outlines effective strategies and frameworks for implementing school discipline that prioritize fairness and equity. It provides comprehensive guidelines intended for use by school district leaders, boards of education, educational staff, higher education, families, and students. These guidelines are designed to foster a proactive and holistic approach to support systems, aimed specifically at minimizing the disparities observed in suspension and expulsion rates across different demographic groups.

School Discipline Collaborative Working Group

The Commissioner of Education convened the SDC working group members representing students, educators, community members, child welfare and child development experts, mental health care providers, and experts in restorative practices. All members of the SDC were invited to participate in a working group. On March 26, 2024, the SDC met to gain further insight into:

- The Commissioner's vision and priorities.
- The current trends in Connecticut's school discipline data.
- Incidents of OSS for students in Pre-K to Grade 2, through a panel discussion that included district leadership.

These topics set the stage for explaining the SDC study and discussing Public Act 23-167. In advance of the March SDC meeting, the CSDE sent out an email to inform participants about a follow-up meeting that would take place on the same day. This subsequent meeting was specifically designed for SDC members who wished to engage in the workgroup discussions.

The second meeting was held virtually on July 25, 2024. During the meeting, group members engaged in robust discussions, contributing valuable feedback and suggestions for potential changes. The perspectives and feedback provided through the meeting and a subsequent survey encompassed a range of topics, and several notable recommendations emerged.

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

This year, the CSDE has significantly enhanced its support for schools by adding a variety of resources aimed at facilitating their implementation processes. These new resources are designed to provide educators and administrators with the tools, guidance, and best practices necessary to effectively address the unique challenges they face. The CSDE is committed to ensuring that schools have access to training and instructional

materials to improve student outcomes and foster positive and compassionate learning spaces. Below is a list of resources provided to districts.

- Components of Social, Emotional, and Intellectual Habits: Kindergarten through Grade 12 (CSDE)
    - Get Ready to Learn about the Habits K-12! (January 2024 Webinar)
    - Habits K-12 Abridged
    - Habits K-12 Leadership
    - Habits K-12 Educators
    - Habits K-12 Families

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has collaborated with WestED and the Education Development Center (EDC) to develop this series of resources, including the Leadership Launching Tool Kit, which is scheduled for release in May 2025.

Tier One and Decision Rule for Tier Two Supports

The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) is a comprehensive, strength-based assessment tool designed for K-12 students, focusing on social-emotional development. This system is instrumental in fostering students' self-efficacy, enabling them to build resilience and perseverance in the face of various challenges throughout their educational journey.

The DESSA framework aids educators in identifying and prioritizing essential knowledge and skills that form the groundwork for crucial aspects of student development. These include social development, emotional agility, and cognitive flexibility. By honing these skills, students are better equipped for academic growth and effective goal setting, which are vital for readiness for college and careers and aligning with the broader vision of the "portrait of a graduate."

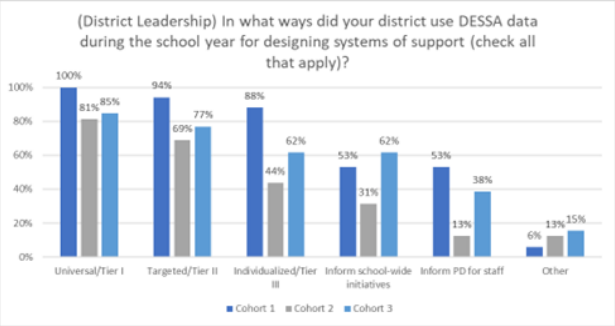
Moreover, the DESSA provides educators with valuable insights into each student's strengths and areas for improvement. This understanding allows for tailored support, helping students enhance their feelings of connection to the school environment. As a result, students are more likely to feel confident, successful, and engaged in the learning process, ultimately contributing to a more positive and productive educational experience.

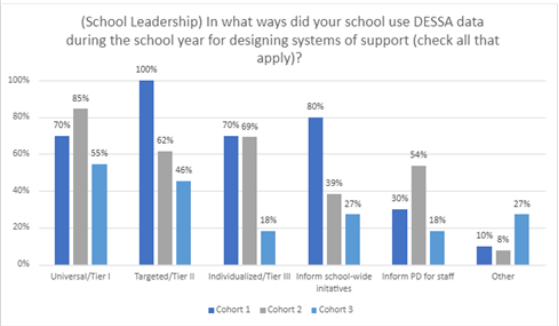
The CSDE has 89 districts participating in the initiative, including approved Special Education Private Schools, Charter Schools, Magnets, Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), Alliance Districts, and Regional School Districts.

DESSA's Impact

- Majority of district leaders agreed or strongly agreed that the initiative has a positive impact on the students in their district
  - Cohort 1: 88%
  - Cohort 2: 80%
  - Cohort 3: 84%
- Leaders highlighted
  - Enhancements in the culture of districts and schools
  - Effective in identifying a focus and guiding instruction for individual students, student groups, and at the school level
  - This information is valuable for guiding the professional development of staff
  - Over 11,000 CT educators have been trained and participated in the initiative
  - CT educators have completed over 650,000 DESSA assessments to date
- Students completing the DESSA System
  - More than 180,000 students received one or more DESSA ratings
  - Identified that middle school students needed the most instruction
  - Students experienced a significant positive growth rate of 2 percent
  - Students experienced a considerable positive growth rate of 23 percent

Findings from Spring 2023 District and School Implementation





Behavioral Health Pilot

The CSDE developed and pilot-tested innovative systems, practices, and procedures aimed at addressing the comprehensive behavioral health needs of students, families, and staff within educational settings. The Behavioral Health Pilot (BHP) was specifically designed to achieve three primary objectives:

1) Conduct a thorough assessment of the comprehensiveness of school mental health systems, evaluating factors such as accessibility, resource allocation, and the integration of mental health services within the educational framework.

2) Identify gaps in existing services, highlighting priority areas that require urgent attention and improvement to effectively support the mental well-being of the school community.

3) Develop a cohesive system that implements evidence-based interventions and supports, tailored to meet identified needs, while ensuring that measurable outcomes are established to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions.

In addition to receiving grant funding to facilitate the implementation of these initiatives, the BHP sites also benefited from ongoing technical assistance and support provided by the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI). This expert guidance was instrumental in helping schools refine their approaches and enhance the overall quality of mental health services available to students and staff.
The BHP cohort encompasses a total of 48 school buildings, serving an impressive 23,007 students across diverse educational environments. The BHP sites vary significantly in size, accommodating anywhere from one to 22 schools, with student populations ranging between 149 to 11,405. This broad spectrum includes two schools and five districts located in rural, urban, and suburban regions, reflecting the varied landscape of Connecticut's educational system.

Representing six out of the eight counties in Connecticut, BHP sites provide a comprehensive overview of regional educational demographics. The range of demographic characteristics among BHP sites illustrates a rich tapestry of student backgrounds, encompassing different races, ethnicities, and socio-economic statuses. This diversity within the BHP cohort enhances the understanding of educational needs across Connecticut and ensures a robust representation of the state's student population. Consequently, the BHP sites serve as a well-rounded sample for analyzing educational trends and outcomes.

BHP System Assessment and Implementation Plan Review

As part of the BHP initiative, diverse teams comprised of educators, mental health professionals, and community stakeholders were tasked with conducting a comprehensive assessment of their school's mental health system. The primary objective of this assessment was to identify specific gaps in services, resources, and support mechanisms and to prioritize targeted areas for improvement to enhance student well-being.

To facilitate this critical evaluation process, teams were instructed to utilize the School Mental Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System (SHAPE) System, a robust assessment tool developed by the National Center for School Mental Health. The SHAPE System is specifically engineered to assist educational

institutions in performing thorough self-assessments and implementing evidence-based quality improvement strategies. This tool provides a structured framework for evaluating existing mental health services and resources, ensuring that schools can effectively address the diverse needs of their student populations.

The SHAPE System encourages teams to analyze various components of their mental health delivery system, including the availability of counseling services, crisis intervention strategies, training for staff, and the inclusion of family and community resources. By conducting this evaluation, schools can align their mental health programming with best practices and national standards in mental health delivery.

By leveraging the insights gained from the SHAPE System, teams aim to create actionable implementation plans tailored to their specific contexts. These plans include targeted interventions, resource allocation, and strategies for building a supportive school environment that fosters mental well-being. Ultimately, the goal is to promote the overall mental health and resilience of their school communities, ensuring that every student has access to the support they need to thrive.

Sites also completed the School Mental Health Quality Assessment (SMHQA), which is a team-based self-assessment of comprehensive school mental health system quality at the school or district level based on seven quality domains:

1) Teaming
2) Needs Assessment and Resource Mapping
3) Mental Health Services and Supports (Tier 1)
4) Early Intervention and Treatment Services and Supports (Tiers 2/3)
5) Funding and Sustainability
6) Impact
7) Screening

The BHP initiative successfully enhanced staff awareness of mental health issues, cultivating a more supportive and inclusive environment for students. Through a series of interactive training sessions, educators received critical insights into various mental health conditions and the specific challenges students and their families face. This training equips educators with the tools to identify warning signs and implement effective support strategies tailored to individual needs.

Furthermore, the initiative encouraged improved collaboration among school staff, mental health professionals, and community organizations, establishing a network of resources that enabled schools to align their mental health practices. Educators were able to share best practices and effective strategies, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the school community.

Overall, BHP participation laid a solid foundation for ongoing enhancements in mental health services within schools. This proactive approach has significantly contributed to building a more resilient school community where students feel safe, understood, and supported in their mental health journeys.

Additionally, respondents across sites noted significant enhancements in universal (Tier 1) programming, such as positive behavior supports, SEL, and identifying student mental health risks and higher-level needs. In several sites, implementing or enhancing a school-wide SEL program or approach ensured consistency in strategies across classrooms. One of the biggest successes is the development of mental health and wellness teams, fostering collaboration to enhance services for students and staff. Training in various mental health areas improved intervention and monitoring practices. Overall, BHP participation has provided essential insights into the district's strengths and challenges, contributing to a more integrated approach to mental health and well-being and targeted improvements.

Focus on Preschool and Kindergarten to Grade Two

Public Act 24-45 Sec. 14 revises the standard for determining when a school may issue an OSS for Kindergarten through Grade Two students. An OSS is permissible only if it is determined that it is necessary based on evidence that the student's conduct (on school grounds) constitutes behavior that causes physical harm. School suspensions for such students cannot exceed five consecutive school days. Districts must also provide trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate services that align with any behavioral intervention plan, individualized education program (IEP), or Section 504 upon the student's return to school immediately following the out-of-school suspension. Also, the districts must identify, locate, and evaluate all students suspected of having a disability and may need special education or related services or a Section 504 plan. Districts must promptly refer to a planning and placement team meeting for all students who are suspended repeatedly or exhibit a pattern of behavioral concerns. In addition, the CSDE has clarified the requirements under Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-233l, that preschool program providers, which include school districts that provide such programs, may not impose an OSS on preschool students.

The CSDE is developing school discipline guidance and resources for Pre-K to Grade 12 to address this requirement. In addition, the CSDE is proposing new sessions, coaching, and technical assistance for a continuum of supports to address behavioral concerns, including intensive interventions for Pre-K to Grade Two. The CSDE is actively developing school discipline guidance and resources to address the specific needs of students from Pre-

Kindergarten through Grade 12. This initiative is part of a broader effort to fulfill the requirements of state legislation concerning equitable disciplinary practices in schools.

To complement these guidelines, the CSDE is proposing a series of new professional learning sessions, coaching opportunities, and targeted technical assistance, creating a continuum of supports designed to effectively address behavioral concerns. Special emphasis will be placed on delivering intensive interventions specifically tailored for students in Pre-K to Grade Two, recognizing the critical early years of development and the importance of fostering positive behavioral patterns.

These professional development sessions will assist school districts in analyzing data that reveals an atypically high rate of suspensions among young children in the early grades. The goal is to shift this detrimental trajectory and promote a more supportive school environment.

Key topics to be covered in the sessions will include comprehensive strategies for data analysis to identify trends and patterns in disciplinary actions, an overview of relevant Connecticut laws governing school discipline, frameworks for systems of support to be implemented at the district level, developmental and prosocial approaches that encourage positive behavior, and strategic planning techniques to implement these frameworks within schools effectively. Through this multifaceted approach, the CSDE aims to foster an educational landscape that prioritizes student well-being and effective behavioral management from the earliest stages of students' educational experiences.

The resources below have been disseminated to districts:

- Decision Guide for Behavioral Supports Pre-K To Grade Two
- Tip Sheet: Seek To Understand a Child's Behavior
- Tip Sheet: De-escalation Strategies
- Videos (YouTube)
    - Mobile Crisis Intervention/211 for children experiencing a behavioral or mental health crisis
    - The Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP)
    - The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children
    - Understanding Challenging Behavior in Young Children

Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- Policy Guidance and Professional Learning

- 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 Pre-K to Grade Two for OSS and EXP. Supports include:
    - Closer examination of individual student's issues;
    - Use of data to ascertain risk factors for suspensions and expulsions;
    - Recommending professional learning for district staff on how to routinely monitor progress; and
    - Understanding patterns and trends.

Focus on Positive School Climate

The CSDE believes that schools must create healthy learning communities that are physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe. We know that 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 inclusive, affirming, supportive and positive school climates.

The CSDE is taking a multidisciplinary, and comprehensive approach to enhancing positive school climate support to districts. Our approach is based on a philosophy of supporting districts in selecting strategies that fit the context of their needs. We are thinking critically about how to do this work in an aligned and comprehensive manner, and we have been working internally to identify those projects, supports, and initiatives that align.

Ongoing and Completed Activities:

- Provided professional development to districts/schools on the essential components of a systemic approach to enhancing school climate, including opportunities to evaluate their current Tier 1 initiatives and gain access to resources that support evidence-based and best practice strategies.
- Provided professional learning opportunities designed for school teams to assess and enhance their behavioral response systems by reviewing current data trends and practices, and reflecting on considerations for effective implementation.
- Receive and respond to family, student, LEA, and community complaints and inquires. Provide technical assistance on policy implementation and best practices.
- Co-Facilitate monthly roundtables with Director of Equity and Languages.

- Provide support to the Sheff vs. O'Neill districts and Magnet Schools with systemic school climate implementation.
- Provide targeted support and technical assistance to identified Alliance Districts and Charter Schools.
- Additional Training and Support Provided:
    - Attendance and Engagement Talk Tuesday Presentation – School Climate: Impact on Attendance.
    - Co-facilitated a breakout session at the RESC Alliance Igniting Change Conference centered on the importance of a climate of belonging and inclusion, and evidence-based attendance strategies.
    - Co-facilitated a breakout session at the CT Annual Secondary Transition Symposium - Supporting Wellness as a Life Skill with CPAC Youth Specialist.
    - Ongoing collaboration with the Regional School Choice Office and WestEd to provide direct supports on school climate.
    - Developed the 2025 School Climate Guidance for school districts outlining the changes in legislation with regard to school climate artifacts and required actions on the part of schools.
- Provided training and support to external partners that focus on the elements of positive school climate, partnership and collaboration strategies, and resources for systemic implementation of best practices. Partners include: School Resource Officers, the Connecticut Trauma Task Force, Western Connecticut State University's Regional Crisis Teams, Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) Youth Leadership Conference, and the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) Social Emotional Workgroup.
- Support Civil Rights compliance on-site reviews as a team member conducting interviews with leadership, educators, and students (i.e., regular, special education and English learners). This collaboration provides an invaluable opportunity to get students' perspectives about their school experiences to inform the guidance and supports that the CSDE Division of School Health, Nutrition and Family Services provides to school district leadership, and the feedback that is given to CSDE colleagues.
- CSDE leadership serves as a Tri-Chair and content area experts provided guidance and content expertise to the legislative efforts of the Connecticut Social-Emotional Learning and School Climate Collaborative.
- CSDE School Climate Consultant Co-Chair's the School-Based Health Center Advisory Committee to support collaboration in student wellness efforts.
- Collaborated internally within CSDE and with other key partners to align and integrate school climate and culture efforts to promote a comprehensive wellness approach to learning environments.

Connecticut's System of Supports Model for Disproportionate Suspension Rate

The CSDE, in collaboration with the State Education Resource Center (SERC), has established a Community of Practice (CoP) to address disparities in suspension rates among different student demographics. This initiative involves a systematic approach where the CSDE identifies specific school districts for targeted monitoring of their progress in reducing disproportionality in disciplinary actions.

As part of this process, participating districts are encouraged to engage in comprehensive reviews of their existing policies, procedures, and practices related to student suspensions and expulsions. The CoP emphasizes the importance of utilizing assessment data to share best practices, identify ongoing challenges, and collaboratively develop solutions.

The ultimate goal of this initiative is to foster a proactive environment through careful planning and coordination, including organizing training sessions focused on relevant topics. Additionally, the program facilitates in-depth data analysis and supports action planning protocols, enabling districts to implement effective strategies that promote equitable disciplinary practices and enhance student well-being.

Furthermore, the CSDE has introduced a comprehensive professional learning series consisting of distinct sessions to address disparities in educational practices. These sessions emphasize the importance of nuanced decision-making when it comes to the application of disciplinary measures in schools. Understanding the appropriate use of discipline requires a multifaceted approach considering the specific context in which challenging behaviors arise. This includes evaluating the myriad individual factors—such as the student's personal history, emotional state, and behavioral patterns—as well as cultural influences, social dynamics, developmental stages, and environmental conditions that may impact a student's actions. By considering these various elements, educators and administrators can make more informed and equitable decisions that aim to support students' growth while addressing behavioral concerns effectively.

Equity Series Program Titles- specifically addressing disproportionate suspension rate

- Disproportionality in school discipline.
- The impact of childhood trauma on students of color.
- Community of Practice-addressing disproportionality.
- Social Emotional Learning within Multi-tiered Systems of Support.
- Designing for Belonging to Strengthen School Communities.
- Understanding drivers of chronic stress and burnout and what can be done.

- The Interconnected Systems Framework.
- Indicator 4 Non-Compliance Districts action planning meeting for policy, procedure and practice.
- Wired from birth-executive functioning: what does race and culture have to do with it?
- Classroom Practices for Improving Student Learning and Behavior.

Completed and Ongoing Actions:

- Aligning/Integrating Practices Using MTSS Framework and a Review of the Hexagon Tool.
- Clustering Data to Determine Behavioral Strategies Priorities for Student Success.
- Using Protocols to Determine Effective Behavior Supports for Student Success.
- Training for districts on ten evidence-based strategies for 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. This 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.

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.

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.
- Conducted a statewide survey of Alternative Education Programs that provided education to expelled students in school year 2023-24 and produced a summary report.

The Alternative Education Community of Practice

The *Alternative Education Community of Practice* (*CoP)* meets throughout the school year based on the needs and interests of the CoP. These meetings provide opportunities for educators such as school administrators, teachers, and support specialists to engage in discourse and activities to increase students' attendance and reduce the rate of suspensions and expulsions. Trainings target key areas of interest by the CoP and are designed to enhance educator understanding, skillsets, and access to resources that promote social-emotional, academic and community connections in support of whole-child development.

The Alternative Education Community of Practice

- Conduct site visits to alternative education programs, prioritizing those whose data demonstrate educating high numbers of students who were expelled;
- Collect data from Alternative Education program leaders, staff, and students to understand experiences and drive improvements; and
- Provide training and support to programs in the areas of Program Placement, Individualized Learning Plans (ILP), and Review of Performance and Placement to ensure appropriateness.

APPENDIX A: District Tiers, 2023-24

The CSDE groups 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. This metric represents 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 >=15 percent in 2 recent years.
- **Tier 3** - Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either Black or Hispanic Relative Risk Index (RRI) >=3 in 2 recent years.
- **Tier 2** - Consistently Medium Disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either Black or Hispanic RRI >=2 in 2 recent years.
- **Tier 1** - Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality: All other districts.

Relative Risk Index (RRI)

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 in each district. 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. 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.

System of Support Model for Disproportionate School Discipline

In light of the impact on in-person learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2019-20 school year, the 2018-19 district tiers are being used to identify districts needing additional support. Complete data regarding the tiers is available on EdSight. The CSDE has developed a System of Support Model for Disproportionate School Discipline to assist districts in reducing and eliminating disparities in school discipline. This model: (1) is designed to review and assess the systemic and root causes of school

discipline disparities; and (2) provides supports and tools to systematically address district-based factors that contribute to disparities in school discipline. The CSDE provides professional learning on aligning/integrating social-emotional learning and Restorative Practices into a multi-tiered framework. The focus is on disproportionality to prompt districts to consider the potential impacts of a program or practice on specific students and whether the implementation of the program or practice could advance equitable outcomes for all individuals and families.

Tier 4

Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, Black, or Hispanic suspension rate >=15 percent in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
2440014	Area Cooperative Educational Services
9000016	Connecticut Technical Education and Career System
0370011	Derby School District
0470011	East Windsor School District
0490011	Enfield School District
0590011	Groton School District
0640011	Hartford School District
2650013	Interdistrict School for Arts and Comm District
0690011	Killingly School District
0800011	Meriden School District
0860011	Montville School District
9010022	Norwich Free Academy District
1040011	Norwich School District
1100011	Plainville School District
1130011	Portland School District
2080012	Regional School District 08
2110012	Regional School District 11
9020022	The Gilbert School District
1430011	Torrington School District
1510011	Waterbury School District
1630011	Windham School District

Tier 3

Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either Black or Hispanic RRI >=3 in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
0040011	Avon School District
0070011	Berlin School District
0230011	Canton School District
2970013	Capital Preparatory Harbor School District
2410014	Capitol Region Education Council
0400011	East Granby School District
0510011	Fairfield School District
0560011	Granby School District
0620011	Hamden School District
2860013	Highville Charter School District
1030011	Norwalk School District
1280011	Simsbury School District
1320011	South Windsor School District
1350011	Stamford School District
1550011	West Hartford School District

Tier 2

Consistently Medium Disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either Black or Hispanic RRI >=2 in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
2850013	Achievement First Bridgeport Academy District
0090011	Bethel School District
0110011	Bloomfield School District
0140011	Branford School District
0170011	Bristol School District
0180011	Brookfield School District
2680013	Common Ground High School District
0330011	Cromwell School District
0340011	Danbury School District
0440011	East Haven School District
0450011	East Lyme School District
2530014	Eastern Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center (EASTCONN)
0480011	Ellington School District
0520011	Farmington School District
0540011	Glastonbury School District
2310018	Goodwin University Educational Services (GUES)
0570011	Greenwich School District
0830011	Middletown School District
0840011	Milford School District
0850011	Monroe School District
0930011	New Haven School District
0940011	Newington School District
0970011	Newtown School District
1010011	North Haven School District
2050012	Regional School District 05
2150012	Regional School District 15
1190011	Rocky Hill School District
1240011	Seymour School District
1290011	Somers School District
1310011	Southington School District
1370011	Stonington School District
1380011	Stratford School District
1390011	Suffield School District
9030022	The Woodstock Academy District
1460011	Vernon School District
1520011	Waterford School District

District Code	District Name
1560011	West Haven School District
1580011	Westport School District
1590011	Wethersfield School District
1640011	Windsor School District

Tier 1

Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality: All other districts

District Code	District Name
2880013	Achievement First Hartford Academy District
2790013	Amistad Academy District
0010011	Andover School District
0020011	Ansonia School District
0030011	Ashford School District
0050011	Barkhamsted School District
0080011	Bethany School District
0120011	Bolton School District
2950013	Booker T. Washington Academy District
0130011	Bozrah School District
2900013	Brass City Charter School District
0150011	Bridgeport 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
2430014	Cooperative Educational Services
0310011	Cornwall School District
0320011	Coventry School District
0350011	Darien School District
0360011	Deep River School District
3370015	Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
0410011	East Haddam School District

District Code	District Name
0420011	East Hampton School District
0430011	East Hartford School District
0390011	Eastford School District
0460011	Easton School District
2420014	EdAdvance
2890013	Elm City College Preparatory School District
2910013	Elm City Montessori School District
0500011	Essex School District
2720013	Explorations District
0530011	Franklin School District
2940013	Great Oaks Charter School District
0580011	Griswold School District
0600011	Guilford School District
0630011	Hampton School District
0650011	Hartland School District
0670011	Hebron School District
2640013	Integrated Day Charter School District
2610013	Jumoke Academy District
0680011	Kent School District
2450014	Learn
0710011	Lebanon School District
0720011	Ledyard School District
0730011	Lisbon School District
0740011	Litchfield School District
0760011	Madison School District
0770011	Manchester School District
0780011	Mansfield School District
0790011	Marlborough School District
0880011	Naugatuck School District
2800013	New Beginnings Inc Family Academy District
0890011	New Britain School District
0900011	New Canaan School District
0910011	New Fairfield School District
0920011	New Hartford School District
0950011	New London School District
0960011	New Milford School District
0980011	Norfolk School District
0990011	North Branford School District

District Code	District Name
1000011	North Canaan School District
1020011	North Stonington School District
2630013	Odyssey Community School District
1060011	Old Saybrook School District
1070011	Orange School District
1080011	Oxford School District
2830013	Park City Prep Charter School District
1090011	Plainfield School District
1110011	Plymouth School District
1120011	Pomfret School District
1140011	Preston School District
1160011	Putnam School District
1170011	Redding 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
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
2190012	Regional School District 19
1180011	Ridgefield School District
1210011	Salem School District
1220011	Salisbury School District
1230011	Scotland School District
1250011	Sharon School District
1260011	Shelton School District
1270011	Sherman School District
2700013	Side By Side Charter School District
1330011	Sprague School District
1340011	Stafford School District
2960013	Stamford Charter School for Excellence District
1360011	Sterling School District

District Code	District Name
2690013	The Bridge Academy District
1400011	Thomaston School District
1410011	Thompson School District
1420011	Tolland School District
1440011	Trumbull School District
3360015	Unified School District #1
3470015	Unified School District #2
1450011	Union School District
1470011	Voluntown School District
1480011	Wallingford School District
1530011	Watertown School District
1540011	Westbrook School District
1570011	Weston School District
1600011	Willington School District
1610011	Wilton School District
1620011	Winchester School District
1650011	Windsor Locks School District
1660011	Wolcott School District
1670011	Woodbridge School District
1690011	Woodstock School District

APPENDIX B – The Data Collection and Reporting Processes

ED166 Data Collection

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 to 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
2. 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.
    a. Is the respondent from one or more races using the following (choose all that apply):
    b. 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.
    c. 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.
    d. Black or African American - A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
    e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

f. 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 and Connecticut 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.