Special Education in the Partner Districts

Report of School Year 2019-20 Results

March 2021

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The Special Education in the Partner Districts report is produced annually by the **SSD Evaluation and Research Division**.

Executive Summary

SSD produces an annual report of the Special Education Part B State Performance Plan (SPP) results achieved by its partner districts in St. Louis County. SPP Part B Indicators include (1) **incidence rates and identification patterns**; (2) **educational environments (LRE)**; (3) **academic achievement**; (4) **discipline (suspensions)**; (5) **graduation and dropout trends**; and (6) **post-secondary placement**. A discussion of result trends and implications is provided. In some cases supplemental data (e.g., identification risk ratios) is reported and analyzed.

Key Findings

- School closures and the transition to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in spring of 2020 resulted in the cancellation of the annual accountability assessments used to assess academic achievement among students with disabilities. The shortened in-person school year also impacted disciplinary outcomes and potentially results for other special education performance indicators as well.
- Overall disability incidence in St. Louis County (16.4%) has gradually increased since 2015 and remains well above incidence state wide (13.7%). The report reviews trends in incidence across individual partner districts.
- African-American students remain approximately three times more likely than students in other race groups to receive services under the disability category of Intellectual Disability. Disproportionality in other eligibility categories is low to moderate county wide.
- The proportion of students receiving services in the least restrictive category of ≥80% (of the school day in general education) has remained steady over 3 years. The St. Louis County rate (63.4% in 2020) exceeds the state-wide rate (57.4%), which means that more students with disabilities in St. Louis County receive the large majority of their instruction in the general education setting alongside nondisabled peers. All partner districts met the ≥80% state LRE target in 2020. In addition, the proportion of students in the more restrictive <40% category has decreased each year since 2013 for St. Louis County as a whole.
- Published county-wide suspension rates for students with disabilities in 2020 were difficult to evaluate and compare to those from past years given reduced in-person attendance days. Notwithstanding this caveat, full year projections based on occurrences prior to virtual learning suggest suspension rates were on track to decline in 2020 (following a modest decline in 2019). The ratio of suspensions administered to students with disabilities compared to those without disabilities declined in 2020 as well, and suspension rates and ratios in St. Louis County compared more favorably to those observed state wide. However, suspension rates and ratios in some districts remain quite high. Furthermore, students with disabilities in St. Louis County continue to be much more likely to receive a suspension exceeding 10 days than nondisabled students (by a factor of 2.5 in 2020), and African-American students with disabilities continue to receive suspensions greater than 10 days at a much higher rate than both nondisabled peers and White students with disabilities. At the same time, administration of long-term suspensions to students with disabilities is increasingly rare in some partner districts.
- The county-wide 4-year graduation rate for students with disabilities fell to 75% in 2020, and five partner districts failed to achieve the SPP target of 74.5%. The dropout rate fell from 1.7% in 2019 to 1.2% in 2020, though adaptations made to administrative procedures for attendance and enrollment during virtual instruction could have impacted this trend.
- The proportion of graduates found to have met criteria for a positive post-secondary outcome increased in 2020. Sixteen partner districts both met the state target and exceeded the state-wide rate in this domain. However several districts identified few or no students who met the criteria for a positive post-secondary outcome.

Description

The SSD Mission Statement reads, *In collaboration with partner districts, we provide technical education and a wide variety of individualized educational and support services designed for each student's successful contribution to our community*. This report highlights SSD-partner district collaboration through a review of special education process and outcome data, focusing on results of the State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators (Part B).

The majority of data used in this report is taken from the "Special Education District Profiles" generated by DESE for each district in the state. These profiles are typically made available in the late fall of each school year. They provide data on the performance of each Local Education Agency (LEA) in relation to the targets established in the SPP.

School closures and the transition to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in spring of 2020 impact the results presented in this report in various ways. First and foremost, state accountability assessments were not administered in school year 2020, and thus updated academic achievement results are unavailable. Secondly, the administration of disciplinary suspensions was minimized during virtual learning, which reduces the comparability of 2020 school year results. See the Disciplinary Outcomes section of the report for further discussion. In addition, dropout, and potentially graduation, results could have been impacted by modifications to administrative practices related to attendance, grading, and the award of course credits.

Special education delivery in St. Louis County is unique in that SSD collaborates with 22 partner districts to provide services and supports. Service delivery occurs through the coordination of many "programs" and departments. Collectively these efforts result in the provision of high quality special education services to a large number of students attending a range of independent school districts, each of which possess unique curriculum, programs, systems of student support, technology infrastructure, financial resources, etc. SSD services include eligibility evaluation, direct and collaborative instruction, related services, and administration of stand-alone programs housed in partner district buildings. SSD also provides programs for students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing county wide, as well as early childhood special education services for 14 of its 22 partner districts. In addition, SSD offers professional learning opportunities open to partner district staff, and many SSD educators engage in consultative services and/or contribute to school-wide planning and programming for students both with and without disabilities.

This report focuses on students attending K-12 public schools who receive special education, of whom there were **21,270** in St. Louis County as of December 1, 2019 (in addition, 2,061 students were receiving early childhood special education services, and 1,068 students with disabilities were attending private/parochial schools). District enrollments and demographic summaries are provided in **Appendix A**.

Current SSD CSIP Strategies Most Relevant to This Report

Strategy 1.1 Support educators in implementing multi-tiered systems of support county-wide for literacy, numeracy, and behavior.
Strategy 1.2 Implement individual student post-secondary plans through processes of communication, self-advocacy, and self-determination.
Strategy 1.3 Ensure that students will learn, and staff will teach in an environment in which they feel safe and secure.
Strategy 1.4 Ensure that families and educators will partner to achieve high outcomes for students.
Strategy 4.1 Collaborate with customers, stakeholders, programs, and departments within SSD to ensure processes are in place to achieve equity in student outcomes through educational practices, business operations, and allocation of resources.

How to Use This Report

PURPOSE

This report includes an extensive amount of data. However, wading through all the data in order to identify important trends and improvement targets may be challenging for many readers. While some trends for individual districts are highlighted in the narrative of the report, more frequently the discussion centers around outcomes for students served by SSD as a whole. Thus, the purpose of this "how to" guide is to offer suggestions on how consumers of this report might approach utilizing the information presented in a manageable, efficient way.

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR USE

Evaluate effectiveness of service delivery

ASSESS: Performance over time

HOW: Trend over time is depicted in the charts by three horizontal bars/ data points corresponding to the years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Determine outcome patterns that require additional study

ASSESS: Performance relative to other districts

HOW: The figures generally list individual districts in order by level of performance on the indicator in question.

Identify opportunities for improvement

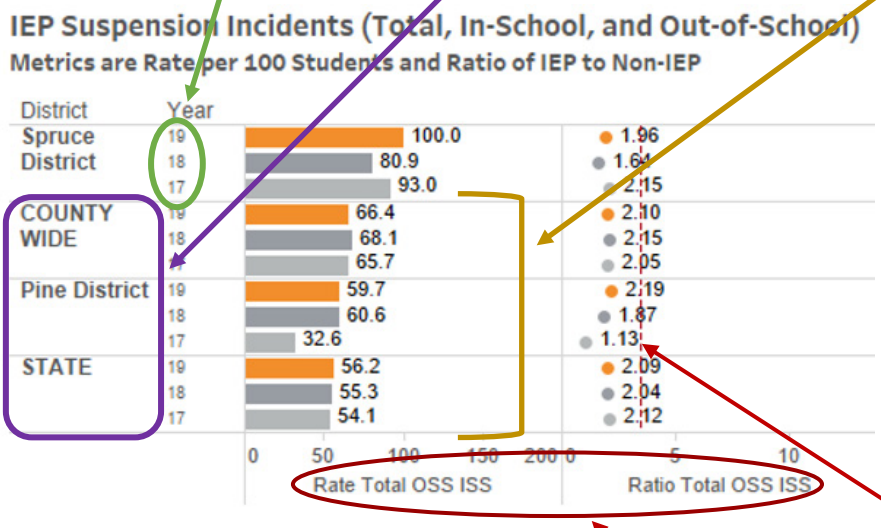
ASSESS: Set future performance targets based on state- and county-wide performance (and/or similar districts)

HOW: (a) Consult county-wide data and set a multi-year goal that falls in line with those results

AND/*OR*

(b) Consult *Appendix A* to find a district with similar demographics. Based on that information, consider the data of comparable districts with stronger performance and set improvement targets reflective of their outcomes.

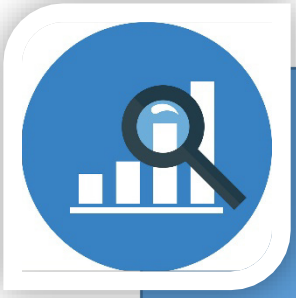
**Note: Your team may also benefit from reaching out to the comparable district to learn about their practices.*



Metrics

Dashed red lines indicate state targets

HYPOETHETICAL EXAMPLE OF DATA USE IN PRACTICE
(Based on Data Shown on the Prior Page)



Issue: Leaders in the Spruce School District would like to better understand and improve suspension rates among students with disabilities.

STEPS:

1. Spruce district leaders locate their district's data (see annotated chart above) and observe the three stacked horizontal bars to understand trends in suspension rates over time in their district.

2. After recognizing there has been a substantial increase over the previous year, Spruce leaders consult the state-wide and county-wide suspension rates to assess how they are doing comparatively.

3. Spruce leaders realize their suspension rates greatly exceed the state and county averages. They decide to additionally explore what suspension rates might be in other local districts that operate in similar contexts to themselves. After reviewing districts with lower suspension rates and consulting Appendix A, Spruce leaders determine that the Pine district would be a good comparator, based on (a) its lower rates of suspension, and (b) its similar demographic makeup and geographic proximity to Spruce.

4. After conducting the analysis above and engaging in discussion regarding possible factors contributing to the issue, Spruce district leaders determine that it would also be worthwhile to reach out to Pine district leaders in the hopes of better understanding practices and conditions that may be contributing to Pine's lower suspension rates that could be emulated.

5. Having acknowledged opportunities for improvement with respect to reducing suspension rates, Spruce leaders now turn their conversation to determining what success would look like. In doing so, they look to state- and county-wide rates, as well as their identified comparator's (Pine district) recent performance, as reference points that will inform annual improvement targets that are ambitious yet feasible to achieve over time. Based on that review, they also decide to track and set within-year targets for suspensions and office discipline referrals among students with disabilities in order to assess the effectiveness of improvement efforts in the short term.

EQUITY

Notes on "implications for equity" are provided throughout the report to underscore outcome disparities that may inform improvement targets. Some figures include data points that reflect discrepancies in outcomes between students with disabilities and those without disabilities, and/or comparison of outcomes by student racial group. Drawing connections between performance and demographic features of districts as shown in **Appendix A** may inform discussions around not only equitability of outcomes but also equitability of opportunity.

DATA SOURCE / REPRESENTATION

Most figures include special education performance trends over 2-4 years for each district in St. Louis County, as well as results for the county and state as a whole. Data is presented on six key outcome areas from the Special Education Profiles. The source of the information provided in the report is the MO DESE Special Education Profiles[1].

LIMITATIONS FOR USE

In some cases, the outcomes reported are based upon data from a relatively small number of students. Be aware that as sample sizes decrease, the likelihood that year-to-year changes in performance represent random variation (as opposed to a "true" trend) increases. Also note that rates for some indicators could be impacted by variations in data collection procedures (e.g., post-secondary success) or administrative practices/policies (e.g., suspensions). In addition, the user is reminded that the county-wide performance data provided in figures includes outcomes for students attending SSD separate schools and programs. This is typically the reason why county-wide results do not necessarily rank toward the "middle" of the distribution relative to SSD's partner districts. Finally, DESE continues to update the Special Education Profile results across the year if/when data exceptions or errors are identified. Therefore, data presented here sourced from the late fall release may not align perfectly with results updated later in the current school year.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

This report has been developed by the SSD Evaluation and Research Department. The SSD director and/or area coordinator that supervise special education services in a given district or school might also provide assistance in contextualizing the information.

[1] https://apps.dese.mo.gov/MCDS/Reports/SSRS_Print.aspx?Reportid=d0568068-7df0-44bb-8140-f12e6d34d933

Results

Data/Reporting Element 1: Incidence Rates and Identification Patterns

Performance/Effectiveness Question(s) These Data Inform: *How have incidence rates changed over time? Incidence of which disability categories are increasing or decreasing? What are patterns in incidence rate trends across individual partner districts? Where is disproportionality in incidence/identification a concern?*

The figure that follows displays trends in incidence over 4 years for each of SSD's partner districts as well as St. Louis County and the state of Missouri as a whole. The incidence rate refers to the proportion of students who receive special education among all students in a district. Total incidence rate along with the incidence rates for each of the seven most common disability categories are displayed. Note that, for districts with lower enrollment, the addition or subtraction of a relatively small number of students from a disability category can impact incidence rate. Also note that the incidence rate is based upon a December census of special education enrollment, and as such the data presented here should be impacted minimally if at all by school closures (and resulting reduction of special education evaluations) that occurred in spring of 2020.

Results Summary (Incidence)

- Overall incidence in St. Louis County has increased each year since 2015 and lies at 16.4% as of school year 2020. The 2020 incidence rate substantially exceeds the state-wide rate of 13.7% (the rate across all Missouri districts excluding St. Louis County was 13.2%). The St. Louis County 2020 incident rate *excluding non-public students* served through SSD was 15.6%. Because 44% of non-public students identified with disabilities in the state of Missouri received services through SSD, this segment of students contributes proportionally more to St. Louis County's incidence rate, in comparison to the remainder of the state.
- Districts with the highest incidence rates[2] as of 2020 include **Ferguson-Florissant** (17.5%), **Ritenour** (17.1%), **Jennings** (16.8%), **Hancock Place** (16.4%), and **Bayless** (16.3%).
- Districts with the lowest incidence rates (i.e., rates that lie below the state-wide rate) as of 2020 include **Clayton** (11.0%), **Valley Park** (12.2%), **Ladue** (12.2%), **Webster Groves** (13.0%), **Normandy** (13.2%), and **Brentwood** (13.3%).
- Districts demonstrating the largest increases in overall incidence across 4 years include **Affton** (+3.2 percentage points), **University City** (+3.0), **Lindbergh** (+2.1), and **Jennings** (+1.9).
- Districts that experienced the most sizeable declines in incidence rate across 4 years include **Riverview Gardens** (-0.8 percentage points), **Bayless** (-0.7), and **Pattonville** (-0.7).
- Trends for individual disability categories are summarized below.
    - Other Health Impairment (OHI) remains the most common primary disability category under which students receive services. OHI incidence in St. Louis County (3.7% in 2020) is considerably higher than it is state wide (3.0%).
    - The incidence of Specific Learning Disability (SLD) has remained stable over 5 years following multiple years of decline. SLD remains the second most common disability category. The state-wide incidence rate for SLD (3.6% in 2019) exceeds the rate in St. Louis County (3.3%).
    - The incidence of Autism (AU) has increased every year since 2010, rising from 1.3% to 2.4% over the last decade in St. Louis County. AU is the fourth most common disability among students in St. Louis County; at present, the number of students with the primary disability of AU approaches the number of students served under the primary categories of Emotional Disability (ED) and Intellectual Disability (ID) combined. The state-wide incidence rate for Autism in 2020 was substantially lower at 1.5%.
    - The county-wide incidence of Language Impairment (LI) has decreased each year since 2014, and currently stands at 0.9%. Revised LI eligibility criteria were introduced in school year 2019-20 that are likely to impact LI incidence trends.

[2] Note that students attending SSD separate schools and programs do not count toward a partner district's incidence rate in these statistics. Were they included, incidence rates would be higher for many districts. Find data on SSD school/program enrollment in Appendix C.

- The incidence of ED (1.4%) increased just slightly in 2020 following a more sizable increase between 2018 and 2019.
- Incidence for the category of Speech Impairment (SI; 2.7% in 2020) has risen in small increments annually since 2015. Speech Impairment incidence is higher in St. Louis County than it is state wide (1.9%).
- Incidence for ID (1.14%) remained unchanged. The rate of ID is marginally higher in St. Louis County than it is state wide (1.00%).

- Several individual districts experienced changes within a given category over 4 years that considerably exceeded those for the county as a whole.[3] A summary of districts with notable increases or decreases within a given category is provided in the table below.

Notable Individual Disability Category Incidence Changes Over 4 Years

Disability Category	Notable Relative Increases in Incidence Rate	Notable Relative Decreases in Incidence Rate
OHI	Affton (+1.51) Maplewood-Richmond Heights (+0.68) Ferguson-Florissant (+0.67) Hazelwood (+0.54) Brentwood (+0.51)	Valley Park (-0.46) Pattonville (-0.43)
SLD	Jennings (+1.04) Lindbergh (+0.76) University City (+0.72) Ritenour (+0.62) Bayless (+0.72) Hancock Place (+0.60)	Ladue (-0.78) Pattonville (-0.51)
SI	Kirkwood (+0.71) Maplewood-Richmond Heights (+0.60) University City (+0.51) Ladue (+0.51)	Bayless (-1.51) Riverview Gardens (-0.54)
AU	Maplewood-Richmond Heights (+0.97) Valley Park (+085) University City (+0.74) Bayless (+0.69) Lindbergh (+0.56)	None
ED	Bayless (+0.96) Affton (0.54) Ritenour (+0.44) Lindbergh (+0.42)	Valley Park (-0.52) Brentwood (-0.48)
ID	Ritenour (+0.20)	Riverview Gardens (-0.28) Bayless (-0.28) Normandy (-0.24)
LI	Hancock (+0.24) University City (+0.21)	Bayless (-0.96) Maplewood-Richmond Heights (-0.60) Jennings (-0.48) Mehlville (-0.44) Parkway (-0.41) Riverview Gardens (-0.41)

Note. The data provided refer to the change in incident rate percentage for the respective disability category. 2020 student counts by disability are provided in Appendix A. OHI = Other Health Impairment; SLD = Specific Learning Disability; SI = Speech Impairment; AU = Autism; ED = Emotional Disability; ID = Intellectual Disability; LI = Language Impairment.

[3] It is important to reiterate that the lower a district's enrollment, the greater fluctuation in incidence we might expect based on random variation alone. In fact, districts identified as having large relative changes are districts are often those with lower enrollment.

K-12 Disability Incidence Rate Trends

District	Year	Total Incidence	OHI	SLD	SI	AU	ED	ID	LI
Ferg Flor	20	17.5%	3.6%	4.1%	2.5%	2.1%	1.3%	2.16%	0.9%
	19	16.8%	3.4%	4.1%	2.2%	2.0%	1.4%	2.12%	0.8%
	18	17.0%	3.3%	4.0%	2.4%	1.9%	1.3%	2.05%	1.0%
	17	16.3%	3.0%	4.0%	2.1%	1.9%	1.1%	2.04%	1.2%
Ritenour	20	17.1%	3.6%	4.1%	2.0%	2.4%	1.7%	1.58%	0.9%
	19	16.9%	3.6%	4.1%	2.1%	2.3%	1.6%	1.47%	0.9%
	18	16.2%	3.5%	3.9%	1.8%	2.1%	1.6%	1.49%	1.0%
	17	15.7%	3.4%	3.5%	2.2%	2.0%	1.2%	1.38%	1.1%
Jennings	20	16.8%	3.3%	4.5%	2.2%	1.8%	1.0%	2.14%	1.0%
	19	16.5%	3.1%	4.1%	2.1%	1.8%	1.1%	2.55%	1.1%
	18	15.5%	2.9%	3.8%	1.9%	1.4%	1.0%	2.50%	1.3%
	17	15.0%	2.8%	3.5%	2.0%	1.7%	0.9%	2.10%	1.5%
COUNTY WIDE	20	16.4%	3.7%	3.3%	2.7%	2.4%	1.4%	1.14%	0.9%
	19	16.2%	3.6%	3.2%	2.6%	2.3%	1.4%	1.14%	1.0%
	18	16.0%	3.4%	3.3%	2.6%	2.2%	1.3%	1.15%	1.1%
	17	15.9%	3.3%	3.3%	2.5%	2.1%	1.2%	1.18%	1.2%
Hancock	20	16.4%	4.4%	3.0%	3.4%	2.4%	0.9%	1.06%	0.9%
	19	15.2%	4.2%	2.6%	2.9%	2.6%	0.7%	1.18%	0.5%
	18	15.3%	4.0%	2.4%	4.0%	2.4%	0.4%	0.97%	0.7%
	17	15.6%	4.0%	2.4%	3.8%	2.4%	0.7%	0.95%	0.7%
Bayless	20	16.3%	4.0%	3.0%	1.7%	2.7%	1.8%	1.05%	1.2%
	19	17.5%	4.2%	3.3%	2.7%	3.0%	1.7%	0.90%	1.2%
	18	17.1%	4.3%	3.2%	2.9%	2.6%	1.1%	1.01%	1.4%
	17	17.0%	4.2%	2.5%	3.2%	2.1%	0.9%	1.33%	2.2%
Hazelwood	20	15.9%	3.4%	3.1%	2.2%	2.0%	1.5%	1.57%	1.1%
	19	16.1%	3.3%	3.2%	2.3%	1.9%	1.4%	1.53%	1.3%
	18	15.6%	3.0%	3.4%	2.1%	1.8%	1.3%	1.64%	1.3%
	17	15.1%	2.8%	3.5%	1.9%	1.6%	1.3%	1.61%	1.3%
Affton	20	15.5%	4.2%	2.6%	2.6%	2.1%	1.5%	0.66%	0.7%
	19	13.9%	3.6%	2.2%	2.6%	2.0%	1.3%	0.74%	0.8%
	18	12.7%	3.0%	2.2%	2.4%	1.9%	1.1%	0.74%	0.7%
	17	12.4%	2.7%	2.3%	2.3%	1.7%	0.9%	0.85%	0.8%
Mehlville	20	15.5%	4.0%	3.0%	2.5%	2.3%	1.4%	0.90%	0.7%
	19	15.5%	4.0%	3.0%	2.4%	2.2%	1.5%	0.85%	0.9%
	18	15.1%	3.8%	2.7%	2.6%	2.0%	1.3%	0.76%	1.1%
	17	15.0%	3.7%	2.9%	2.4%	2.0%	1.3%	0.77%	1.1%
Lindbergh	20	15.3%	4.1%	2.5%	2.7%	2.9%	1.3%	0.59%	0.7%
	19	14.1%	3.9%	1.9%	2.5%	2.8%	1.2%	0.58%	0.7%
	18	13.4%	3.8%	1.6%	2.6%	2.4%	1.0%	0.60%	0.9%
	17	13.3%	3.9%	1.7%	2.4%	2.3%	0.9%	0.52%	0.9%
Parkway	20	15.2%	3.7%	2.9%	2.8%	2.2%	1.1%	0.54%	0.8%
	19	15.2%	3.6%	2.9%	2.7%	2.1%	1.2%	0.51%	1.0%
	18	15.0%	3.4%	3.0%	2.6%	2.2%	1.1%	0.53%	1.0%
	17	15.1%	3.3%	3.0%	2.6%	2.2%	0.9%	0.56%	1.3%
Pattonville	20	15.2%	3.3%	2.9%	2.5%	2.7%	1.5%	0.57%	1.0%
	19	16.2%	3.7%	3.0%	2.8%	2.7%	1.4%	0.58%	1.1%
	18	16.3%	3.7%	3.3%	2.5%	2.6%	1.4%	0.62%	1.1%
	17	15.9%	3.7%	3.4%	2.2%	2.3%	1.3%	0.69%	1.1%
Riverview	20	15.1%	3.1%	4.3%	1.6%	1.4%	1.1%	2.23%	0.8%
	19	15.5%	3.1%	4.2%	1.7%	1.3%	1.0%	2.34%	1.0%
	18	15.8%	2.9%	4.1%	2.0%	1.3%	0.9%	2.46%	1.1%
	17	15.9%	3.3%	3.9%	2.2%	1.1%	1.0%	2.51%	1.2%
University City	20	14.7%	2.6%	3.0%	1.8%	2.8%	1.4%	1.04%	1.2%
	19	14.5%	2.7%	3.1%	1.7%	2.7%	1.1%	0.93%	1.2%
	18	13.2%	2.5%	2.8%	1.7%	2.2%	1.0%	0.93%	1.5%
	17	11.6%	2.2%	2.2%	1.2%	2.1%	1.1%	0.95%	1.0%
Kirkwood	20	14.4%	2.4%	3.0%	3.4%	2.3%	0.9%	0.55%	1.0%
	19	14.2%	2.3%	3.2%	3.0%	2.4%	1.0%	0.55%	1.0%
	18	13.8%	2.1%	3.0%	2.9%	2.2%	1.1%	0.59%	1.2%
	17	13.7%	2.2%	3.0%	2.7%	2.1%	1.0%	0.56%	1.2%
Maplewood	20	14.3%	3.3%	2.2%	2.7%	2.9%	1.3%	0.42%	0.5%
	19	13.6%	2.8%	2.2%	2.4%	2.5%	1.1%	0.43%	0.9%
	18	13.3%	2.7%	2.1%	2.3%	2.2%	0.8%	0.37%	1.0%
	17	12.8%	2.7%	2.4%	2.1%	2.0%	0.9%	0.47%	1.1%
Rockwood	20	13.8%	3.5%	3.4%	2.4%	1.6%	0.9%	0.49%	0.9%
	19	13.7%	3.3%	3.3%	2.5%	1.5%	0.9%	0.51%	1.0%
	18	13.9%	3.2%	3.6%	2.6%	1.4%	0.8%	0.51%	1.0%
	17	14.0%	3.1%	3.7%	2.7%	1.4%	0.7%	0.53%	1.1%
STATE	20	13.7%	3.0%	3.6%	1.9%	1.5%	0.8%	1.00%	1.0%
	19	13.5%	2.9%	3.5%	2.0%	1.4%	0.8%	1.05%	1.0%
	18	13.4%	2.8%	3.5%	2.1%	1.3%	0.8%	1.10%	1.0%
	17	13.1%	2.7%	3.4%	2.1%	1.3%	0.8%	1.07%	1.1%
Brentwood	20	13.3%	3.7%	1.3%	1.7%	3.3%	0.7%	0.65%	0.7%
	19	12.8%	3.2%	1.5%	1.2%	3.1%	0.4%	0.64%	0.6%
	18	12.9%	2.9%	1.3%	1.7%	3.1%	0.8%	0.77%	1.0%
	17	13.4%	3.1%	1.4%	1.8%	3.0%	1.1%	0.75%	1.0%
Normandy	20	13.2%	2.9%	2.7%	1.9%	1.1%	1.4%	1.84%	0.6%
	19	12.8%	2.8%	2.3%	2.1%	1.1%	1.3%	1.89%	0.8%
	18	12.9%	3.2%	2.2%	1.6%	1.0%	1.1%	1.91%	0.8%
	17	13.2%	2.6%	2.5%	1.7%	1.2%	1.2%	2.08%	0.8%
Webster	20	13.0%	2.5%	2.8%	2.7%	2.3%	1.1%	0.31%	0.7%
	19	13.4%	2.9%	2.6%	2.7%	2.4%	1.1%	0.40%	0.7%
	18	13.3%	2.9%	2.4%	2.7%	2.4%	0.9%	0.36%	0.9%
	17	12.9%	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%	2.3%	0.9%	0.41%	0.9%
Ladue	20	12.2%	2.8%	2.0%	2.8%	1.6%	0.9%	0.42%	0.5%
	19	11.8%	2.8%	2.1%	2.4%	1.6%	0.7%	0.45%	0.7%
	18	12.2%	2.7%	2.3%	2.5%	1.5%	0.8%	0.43%	0.7%
	17	12.3%	2.7%	2.7%	2.3%	1.7%	0.6%	0.51%	0.7%
Valley Park	20	12.2%	2.5%	2.0%	2.4%	2.1%	0.9%	1.03%	0.6%
	19	13.5%	3.3%	2.0%	2.5%	1.9%	1.1%	0.83%	1.0%
	18	12.6%	3.2%	2.1%	2.4%	1.6%	0.9%	1.03%	0.9%
	17	12.3%	3.0%	2.2%	2.1%	1.2%	1.4%	0.89%	0.8%
Clayton	20	11.0%	3.2%	2.4%	1.8%	1.8%	0.8%	0.27%	0.2%
	19	11.4%	3.1%	2.4%	1.9%	2.1%	0.7%	0.38%	0.3%
	18	11.0%	2.8%	2.5%	1.5%	2.2%	0.6%	0.41%	0.4%
	17	11.1%	3.0%	2.5%	1.7%	1.9%	0.7%	0.34%	0.6%
		0% 10% 20%	0% 10% 20%	0% 10% 20%	0% 10% 20%	0% 10% 20%	0% 10% 20%	0% 10% 20%	0% 10% 20%

Note. Sorted top to bottom by 2020 total incidence and left to right by incidence per disability category. Higher incidence is shaded orange while lower incidence is shaded blue. "County Wide" includes SSD schools and programs. 2020 student counts by disability are provided in Appendix A. OHI = Other Health Impairment; SLD = Specific Learning Disability; SI = Speech Impairment; AU = Autism; ED = Emotional Disability; ID = Intellectual Disability; LI = Language Impairment. The county-wide difference in incidence rate between 2017 and 2020 is significant at $p < .01$.

Results Summary (Disproportionate Representation)

In addition to incidence, DESE also reviews data pertaining to disproportionate representation of minority students in special education disability categories.[4] A district's "risk ratio" for a given disability category serves as an indicator of disproportionality. The risk ratio represents the extent to which students in one racial/ethnic group are more or less likely to be identified for special education (or under a specific special education disability category) than students in other racial/ethnic groups. For example, a risk ratio of 2.0 for a given racial group in a disability category would indicate that students from that group are twice as likely to be receiving services under that category than are students in all other groups; a risk ratio of 1.0 indicates that the risk of identification for students in a given racial group is the same as that for students in other groups.

As of 2019-20, the DESE SPP threshold for "disproportionate representation" is a risk ratio exceeding 2.5 in 2 consecutive years. The threshold established for "significant disproportionality" under IDEA is a risk ratio exceeding 3.5 in 3 consecutive years.[5] A chart displaying risk ratio data over 10 years for African-American students (as well as White students in the category of Autism), across six disability categories, appears below.

- The county-wide risk ratio for the disability category of ID continues to far exceed the state-wide risk ratio, as well as risk ratios for other disability categories in St. Louis County. Although the risk ratio of 2.95 for 2020 is slightly down from the 2019 result of 3.02, African-American students county-wide continue to be approximately three times more likely to be identified with ID than students in all other racial groups combined.
- Underrepresentation of African-American students (and corresponding overrepresentation of White students) in the category of Autism continues to decline (i.e., improve).
- Risk ratios for African-American students are relatively close to 1.0 in disability categories including ED, OHI, Speech and Language[6], and SLD. With the exception of SLD, the risk ratio for St. Louis County falls either below or approximately equal to that state wide in these categories.

Implications for Equity: Incidence Rates and Identification Patterns

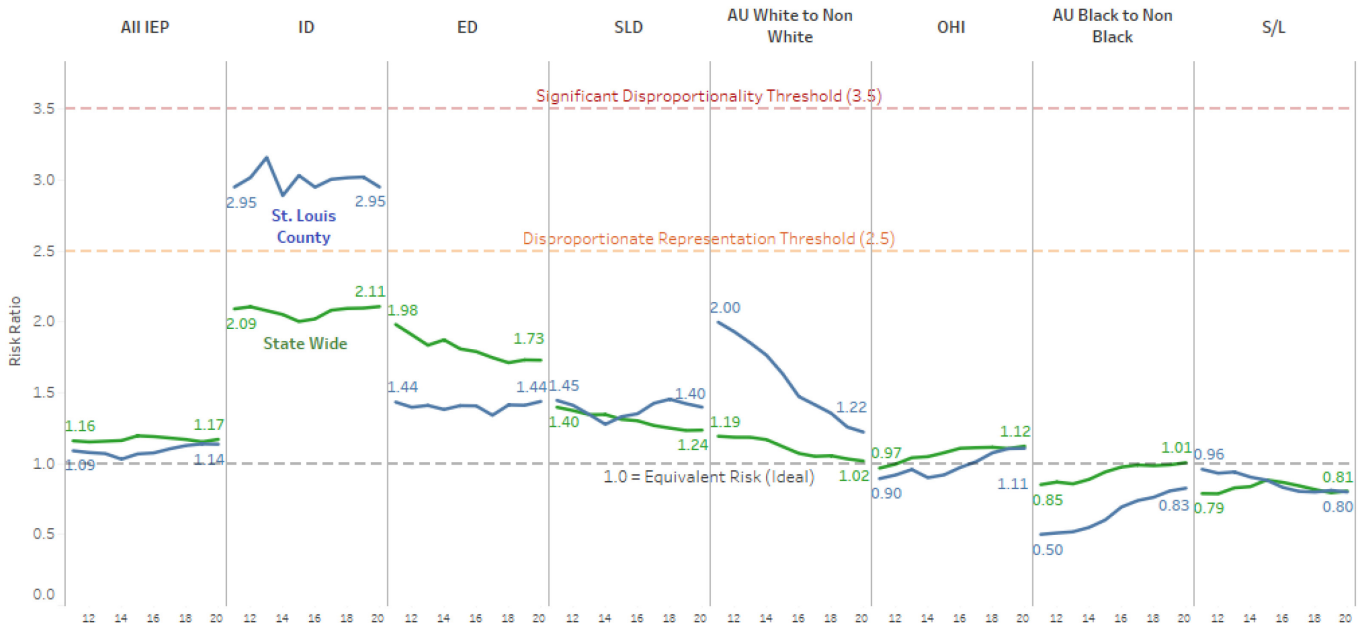
- The likelihood that a student is identified with an educational disability (as represented by the incidence rate) ranges from 11.0% to 17.5% across SSD's partner districts, reflecting considerable variance.
- African-American students continue to be overrepresented in the disability category of ID. For most other disability categories, however, risk of identification among African-American students falls equivalent to or below that state wide.

[4] Note that disproportionality metrics (i.e., risk ratios) for incidence are not included in the Special Education Profiles. A detailed report analyzing incidence risk ratios by partner districts is available upon request.

[5] The requirement to allocate a portion of IDEA Part B funds for Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) is triggered when this significant disproportionality criteria is met (at the County level for SSD). Exceeding the lower disproportionate representation threshold prompts a DESE review and requires a self-assessment, along with goal/progress reporting in cases where the disproportionality persists over multiple years. Moving forward, the disproportionate representation calculation will be based on identification in grades K-12, while the significant disproportionality calculation will expand to students in grades Pre-K (age 3) through 12.

[6] Speech Impairment and Language Impairment eligibilities are combined in data DESE provides.

Change in Disability Risk Ratios for African-American* Students, 2011-2020
St. Louis County and State-Wide



Note. In additional to risk ratios for African-American students, the chart also includes an Autism risk ratio for White students. Individual disability categories are sorted left to right by 2020 risk ratio. Risk ratios compare the "risk index" for a disability among African-American students to the risk index for students in all other race categories. Risk ratios below 1.0 suggest *under*-representation. Speech Impairment and Language Impairment disability categories are combined. AU = Autism; ED = Emotional Disability; ID = Intellectual Disability; OHI = Other Health Impairment; S/L = Speech Impairment and Language Impairment; SLD = Specific Learning Disability.

Data/Reporting Element 2: Educational Environments (LRE)

Performance and Effectiveness Question(s) These Data Inform: *As indicated by LRE, how inclusive are SSD services in the partner districts? What proportion of students are being served in each LRE category across districts and county wide? How are patterns in LRE changing over time?*

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) refers to the percentage of the school day that students with disabilities spend in settings alongside nondisabled peers. Though some students require more restrictive placements to be successful, in most cases maximizing LRE is preferable. The DESE State Plan sets yearly LRE targets for districts with respect to the proportion of students whose placements fall in the categories of ≥80% of the school day, <40% of the school day, and placement in separate settings. State targets have remained the same since 2013-14 and are 56.0%, 10.2%, and 3.7%, respectively, for the ≥80%, <40%, and separate placement LRE categories. Results are summarized below and depicted in the figure on the following page. An estimate of the proportion of students attending an SSD separate placement for each district is also provided in **Appendix C**.[7]

Results Summary

- The proportion of students in the ≥80% LRE category county wide has remained stable over 3 years. The percentage of students in St. Louis County that fall in the least restrictive category of ≥80% (63.4% in 2020) exceeds the state-wide percentage (57.4%), which means that more students with disabilities in St. Louis County receive the large majority of their instruction in the general education setting alongside nondisabled peers. In contrast to St. Louis County, the state-wide ≥80% rate has decreased each year since 2016.
- All districts met the ≥80% SPP target in 2020, which hadn't otherwise occurred in the previous 10 years.
- The proportion of students in the more restrictive <40% category was 6.6% as of 2020, continuing a trend of decreases each year since 2013. The percentage of St. Louis County students in separate placements (4.3% in 2020) has ranged between 4.3% and 4.5% annually dating back to 2014. This exceeds the state-wide rate (either 3.5% or 3.6% annually since 2014), as well as the SPP target of 3.65%. In total, however, the percentage of students who spend the majority of their day outside the general education setting (including the <40% and separate placement categories combined) remains marginally lower in St. Louis County (10.9% in 2020) than it is state wide (12.0%).
- Eighteen of SSD's twenty-two partner districts met the <40% SPP target of 10.2% in 2020 (identical to 2019). Though **Pattonville** again claimed the highest <40% rate among partner districts in 2020, its atypically high <40% rate of 18.7% for school year 2019 (highlighted in the prior version of this report) fell to 13.1% in 2020.
- Eleven of twenty-two districts have demonstrated improvements in LRE since 2018 as indicated by rising proportions of students in the ≥80% category. Partner districts experiencing notable increases since 2018 include **Clayton** (+6.8 percentage points since 2018), **Bayless** (+6.7), and **Lindbergh** (+3.5). Inclusiveness as indicated by ≥80% LRE *declined* most markedly over 3 years **Valley Park** (-6.9), **University City** (-6.7), **Maplewood-Richmond Heights** (-5.9), and **Riverview Gardens** (-3.4).
- Parent private placements (i.e., students who attend parochial schools but receive services through the SNAP program) remain considerably higher in St. Louis County (4.8% of students with IEPs in 2020) than across the state as a whole (2.0% of students with IEPs). As noted previously, St. Louis County accounted for 44% of all parentally-placed private school students that received special education services in the state of Missouri in 2020 (vs. the 19% of school age students with disabilities overall in the state that are served by SSD).

[7] Note that, except in rare circumstances, all separate placements are attributed to SSD schools and programs on Special Education Profiles of districts in St. Louis County (as students who attend SSD schools and programs are considered enrollees of SSD).

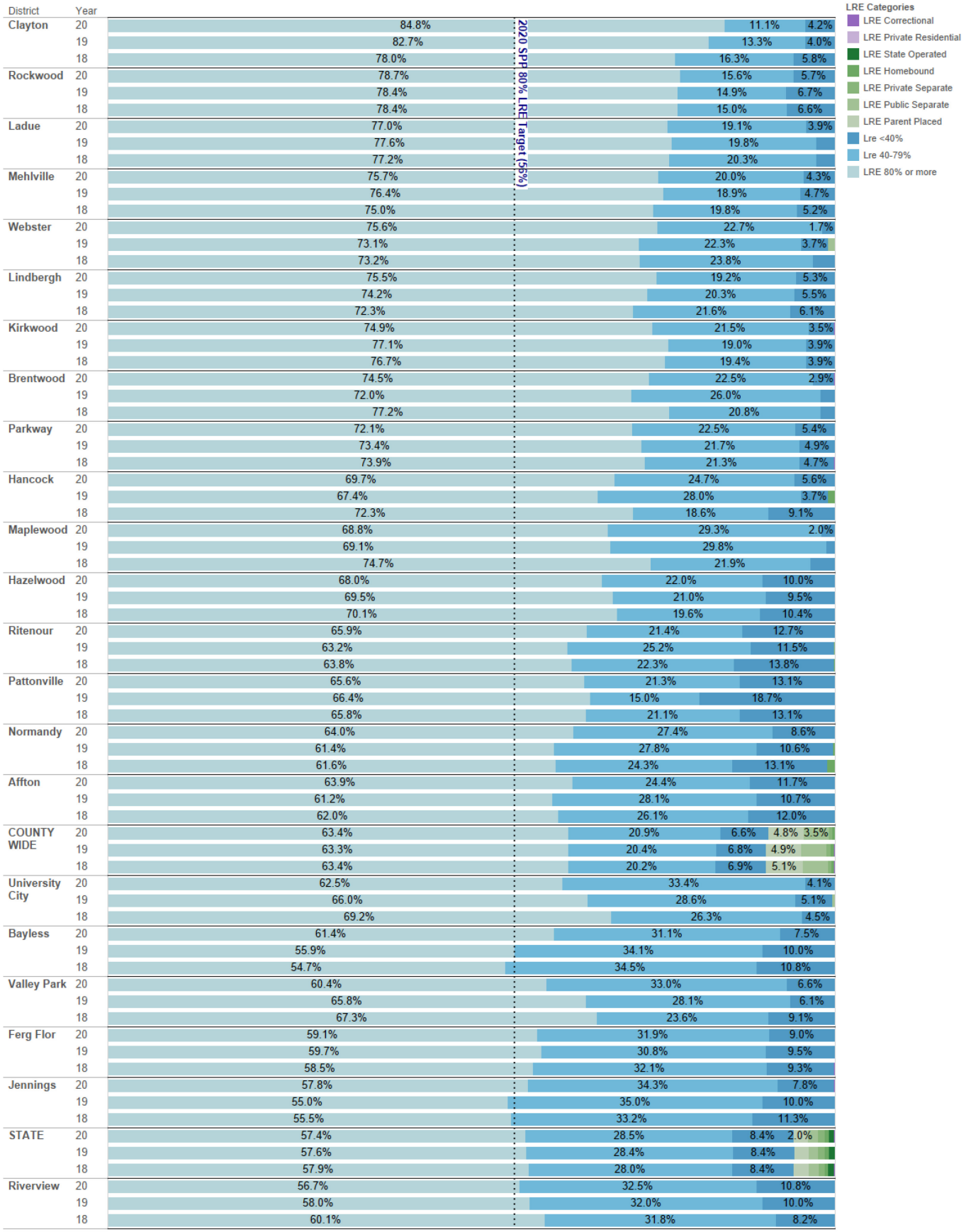
Implications for Equity: Educational Environments

- Certain research indicates that greater inclusiveness tends to be associated with improved outcomes for students with disabilities.[8] However, opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside nondisabled peers vary depending upon the St. Louis County district they attend. Comparing SSD's partner districts, the proportion of students receiving services under the least restrictive category ranged from 56.7% (**Riverview Gardens**) to 84.8% (**Clayton**) in 2020. Similarly, the proportion of students served in the more restrictive category of <40% varies considerably across districts. These variances may reflect differences in service delivery and/or prioritization of inclusiveness across districts. In addition, differential patterns/rates of students transferring from outside St. Louis County might effect LRE, given that teams generally attempt to provide comparable services/minutes to those received at the sending school, at least initially.
- The proportion of a given district's *overall* student population that attends an SSD separate school or program (see **Appendix C**) varies across partner districts, with school year 2021 estimates ranging from as low as 0.2% (**Clayton**) to as high as 1.6% (**Normandy**).[9] This pattern may be a result of differences across districts with respect to student needs, the continuum of services and supports available, the frequency of transfers into a district of students with high needs from outside St. Louis County, etc. The distribution of SSD school enrollment as a proportion of overall district enrollment mirrors fairly closely the ranking of SSD's partner districts on socioeconomic indicators such as child poverty and student mobility rates (see **Appendix A**).

[8] For example, see Rojewski, Lee, & Gregg (2015). Causal effects of inclusion on postsecondary education outcomes of individuals with high-incidence disabilities. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 25*(4).

[9] With respect to the Normandy rate, as of February 2021, this moreover equates to **approximately 10% of students with disabilities** being served through an SSD school, Purchase of Service, or the SSD Homebound program (excluding transition, early childhood, and CTE).

Proportion of Students With Disabilities in Each LRE Category Over 3 Years



Note. Sorted top to bottom by 2020 percentage in the 80% or more LRE category. Partner district rates exclude students attending SSD schools. Overall student counts used to calculate the LRE percentages are equivalent to the IEP enrollments that appear in Appendix A. The county-wide differences between 2018 and 2020 in 80% or more, 40-79%, and <40% category rates failed to achieve statistical significance at $p < .05$.

Data/Reporting Element 3: Academic Achievement

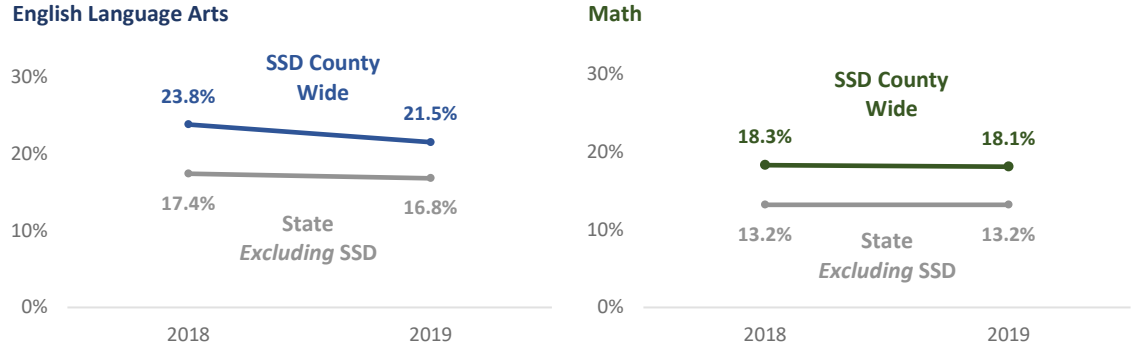
Performance and Effectiveness Question(s) These Data Inform: *How well are students with IEPs performing on state accountability assessments overall and across partner districts? Where has performance improved or declined?*

State accountability assessments were not administered in school year 2020 due to COVID-19 related school closures. A summary of academic achievement outcomes from school year 2019 that appeared in the previous version of this report is provided here for reference.

The proportion of students with IEPs across St. Louis County who scored Proficient or Advanced on the state assessment in the content areas of ELA and math over 2 years appears in the figure below. Given that the state transitioned to a new assessment in school year 2018, results for 2018 and 2019 only are provided, based on their direct comparability. Results by district for 2019 appear in a subsequent figure. Proficiency rates for *all* students (i.e., those with and without disabilities combined) in the respective partner district are also included in this figure in order to provide context for the performance of students with disabilities. Results disaggregated by grades 3-5, 6-8, and high school are provided in **Appendix D**. The Appendix D charts also include a calculation of the proficiency rate of students with IEPs as a proportion of the overall district proficiency rate (a higher proportion roughly indicating that students with IEPs are performing relatively "closer" to nondisabled students). Note that MAP results presented include *all* students with IEPs, regardless of whether their IEP included academic goals or they received ELA or math instruction/services from a special educator.

State assessment results should be interpreted in light of DESE guidance in 2017-18 that prompted districts to begin re-assessing MAP-A determinations based upon the finding of undesirably high alternative assessment participation. Re-categorizing a portion of students from MAP-A to grade-level MAP or EOC was anticipated to reduce proficiency rates, as such students are, in general, more likely to perform well on the MAP-A and less likely to perform well on the standard assessment. In fact, state wide across school years 2018 and 2019, the percentage of students taking the alternative assessment who scored proficient or advanced decreased from 35.9% to 27.5% in ELA, and from 11.4% to 9.0% in math (though state-level results for students with disabilities taking the regular assessment formats were not discernably different). The percentage of students with disabilities across the state who took the MAP-A decreased from 7.7% in 2018 to 6.2% in 2019.[10]

Proficient and Advanced Percentage Among Students with Disabilities



Note. Counts of students assessed can be found in Appendix D.

Results Summary

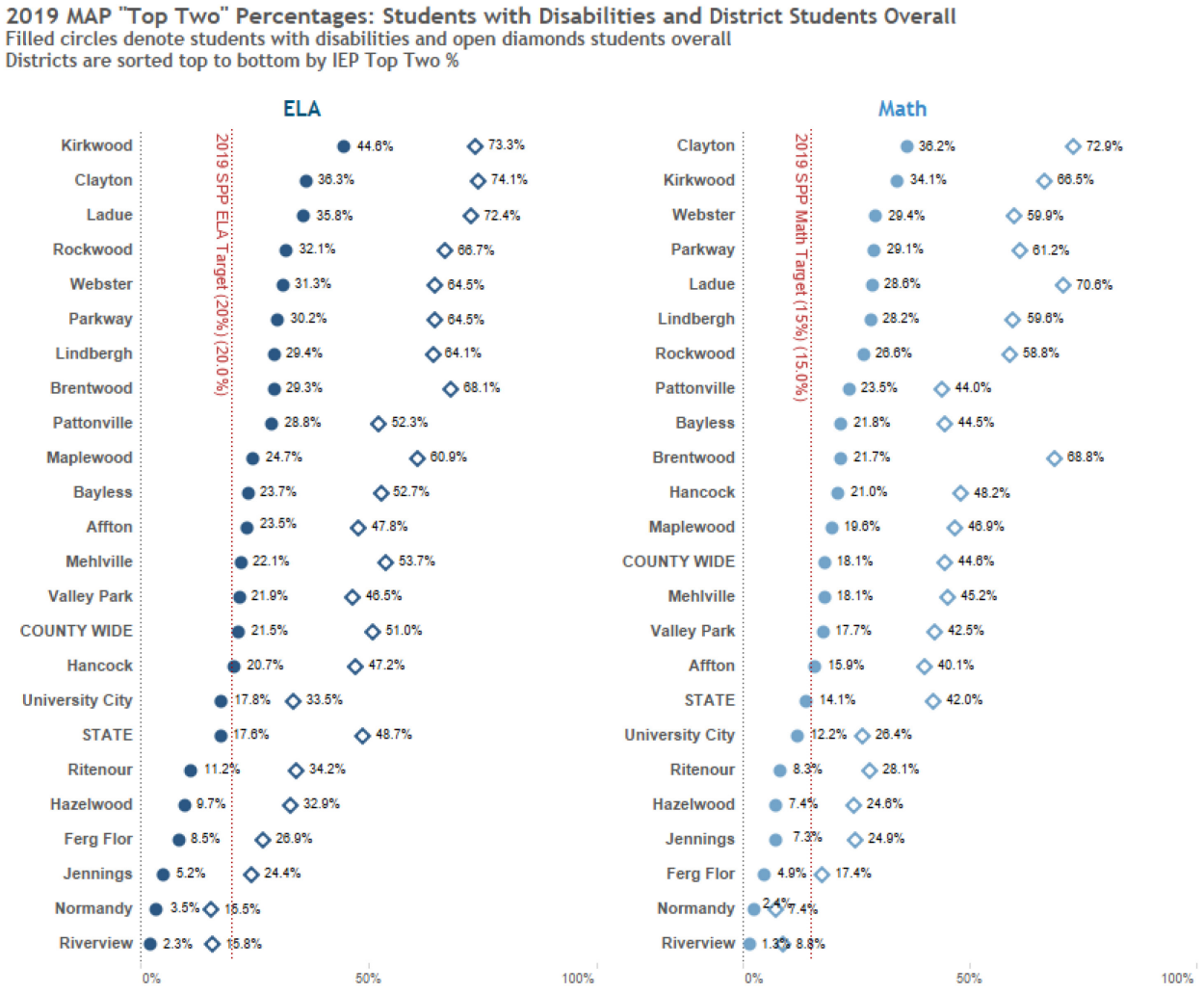
- Students with disabilities in St. Louis County continue to perform in the proficient or advanced range in ELA and math at higher percentages than students with disabilities across the rest of the state. They also achieve proficiency rates that lie closer to those for the overall student population based on comparison ratios (see **Appendix D**).

[10] A detailed summary of MAP-A participation rates for St. Louis County was unavailable at the time of this report. DESE public reports exclude MAP-A results for many districts due to insufficient cell size.

- County-wide proficiency rates among students with disabilities decreased by 2.3 percentage points in ELA, and just slightly in math, from 2018 to 2019.[11] ELA and math proficiency rates also fell in 2019 for students in St. Louis County as a whole (i.e., all students, not only those with disabilities).
- The SPP targets for 2019 were 20% for ELA and 15% for math. Performance of students with IEPs overall in St. Louis County **met** these targets. Fifteen of the twenty-two St. Louis County districts achieved the target in ELA, and likewise (the same) fifteen of twenty-two achieved the target in math.

Implications for Equity: Academic Achievement

- Substantial variance in the state test performance of students with disabilities across individual partner districts persists. Partner district ELA proficiency rates for students with disabilities in 2019 ranged from a high of 44.6% (**Kirkwood**)[12] to a low of 2.3% (**Riverview Gardens**). Math proficiency rates ranged from a high of 36.2% (**Clayton**) to a low of 1.3% (**Riverview Gardens**).
- Generally proficiency rates of students with disabilities track overall partner district proficiency rates. However, students with IEPs in some districts achieved a proficiency rate that was "closer" to that district's overall proficiency rate (i.e., when the IEP rate is calculated as a proportion of the overall rate). These patterns can be examined visually in the chart below, and comparison ratios are provided in the right-most columns of the charts found in **Appendix D**. The ratio metric can serve as an alternate comparison of IEP test performance that attempts to account for differences in overall district proficiency rates.



Note. Counts of students assessed can be found in Appendix D.

[11] The ELA difference is statistically significant at $p < .01$, while the math difference failed to achieve statistical significance.

[12] Note that in some cases, students with disabilities in a particular district are outperforming students overall (both IEP and non-IEP) in other districts. For example, Kirkwood's 2019 ELA IEP proficiency rate of 44.6% exceeds the overall ELA proficiency rates of 7 St. Louis County districts. Likewise, Clayton's 2019 Math IEP proficiency rate of 36.2% exceeds the overall math proficiency rates of 7 St. Louis County districts.

Data/Reporting Element 4: Disciplinary Outcomes

Performance and Effectiveness Question(s) These Data Inform: *What are the rates of exclusionary discipline for students with IEPs? Where is exclusionary discipline more problematic? Where are rates of exclusionary discipline increasing or decreasing? How equitable are exclusionary discipline outcomes?*

The figure below displays total suspension, in-school suspension (ISS), and out-of-school suspension (OSS) incident rate data for students with disabilities by district over 3 years. Districts are sorted from highest to lowest by the most recent year combined (OSS and ISS) suspension rate. Discipline rates by student (rather than by incident) appear in **Appendix E**.

Two distinct metrics are displayed in the chart below: (1) Incidents of suspension per 100 students (indicated by horizontal bars in the figure), and (2) the ratio of suspension rates among students with disabilities to that among students without disabilities (indicated by circles in the figure). The ratio metric is calculated by dividing the rate for students with disabilities by that for students without disabilities; an OSS ratio of 2.0 would indicate that students with disabilities in a district were twice as likely to have received an OSS as were students without disabilities that school year.

A subsequent chart displays data on incidents of suspension exceeding 10 days for students with disabilities. The chart also highlights rates and ratios of >10 day suspension for African-American students. Note that, in some cases, these ratios are based on a very small number of suspensions, and thus interpretations of individual district results should be made with caution and in light of overall >10 day suspension counts shown in the first column of the chart. As of 2020, the DESE threshold for "significant discrepancy" in discipline is a risk ratio for OSS removals greater than 10 days exceeding 4.0 in 2 consecutive years; this applies to both students with disabilities overall as well as students with disabilities in specific race/ethnicity groups.[13]

A note on interpretation of disciplinary data for school year 2020. The suspension metrics are based on cumulative data across the school year. However, in the final several months of the school year, few if any suspensions would have been recorded given school closings and the initiation of distance learning. This will impact the *rate* metric, in that the denominator for the metric (i.e., point-in-time enrollment) remained the same, whereas the period of time for schools to accumulate suspensions (i.e., the numerator in the calculation) decreased by approximately 2 months in most cases. Thus the 2020 suspension *rates* are not directly comparable to those from prior years. However, note that the suspension rates for 2020 *could only have increased* from what is shown in the charts that follow had closures not occurred. That is, where the 2020 rate nears or exceeds the prior years' rates, it can be assumed that the hypothetical full-year 2020 rate would increase further given a relatively similar accumulation of suspensions over the final two months of the year. In contrast, the *ratio* metric is a comparison of suspension rates between students who have disabilities and those who do not have disabilities. Thus this ratio metric is less influenced by the number of school days / a reduced in-person school year, and results from school year 2020 should be relatively comparable to those from prior years.

Results Summary

- Given the caveats described above, it is unclear how county-wide rates of ISS and OSS in 2020 compare to prior years. The rates (based on a partial in-person school year) for 2020 do fall well below those from prior years. Extrapolating based on percent of in-person days completed, however, it does appear suspensions were on pace to decline in 2020. Students with disabilities received 10,906 total suspensions in 2020, versus 16,176 in 2019 and 16,593 in 2018. SSD schools completed 77.4% of scheduled attendance days in person in 2020; presumably the percentage in partner districts approximated this, though some districts initiated virtual instruction sooner (this includes several districts with high

[13] The "significant discrepancy" indicators for discipline correspond to SPP/APR indicators 4A and 4B. DESE evaluates the presence of significant discrepancy in discipline at the County level for SSD. Note that "significant *disproportionality*" in discipline is calculated differently than significant discrepancy. As of 2020, significant disproportionality determination is based on a comparison of the count of students with disabilities who receive ISS and/or OSS (including unique examination of suspensions 10 days or less and over 10 days) in one race/ethnicity category to the count of students with disabilities who receive ISS and/or OSS in all other race/ethnicity categories. Districts are cited for significant disproportionality when risk ratios resulting from these comparisons exceed 3.5 in 3 consecutive years. The requirement to allocate IDEA Part B funds for Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) is triggered when significant *disproportionality* criteria is met. Risk ratios corresponding to the significant disproportionality indicators are not detailed here given that data available in the special education profiles are insufficient to calculate estimates of them.

suspension rates). Assuming a relatively stable pace of suspensions administered across the year, total suspensions for 2020 would project to 14,090 for St. Louis County (based SSD schools' 22.6% of school days completed virtually), which falls well below the totals for 2019 and 2018.

- Suspension ratios also decreased in 2020 county-wide, for both ISS and OSS. Students with disabilities were 1.99 times more likely to receive any suspension, and 2.37 times more likely to receive an OSS, than students without disabilities in 2020. This is the lowest county-wide OSS ratio since 2015.
- Furthermore, although students with disabilities in St. Louis County continue to be suspended at a higher rate than is the case state wide, the gap narrowed again in 2020. This difference remains largely accounted for by out-of-school suspension rates (22.4 OSS incidents per 100 students in St. Louis County vs. 15.4 OSS incidents per 100 students across the entirety of Missouri in 2020, which is less than the 2019 difference of 11.9). In addition, suspension *ratios* for St. Louis County fell further below those for the state as a whole. The 2020 OSS ratio for St. Louis County districts of 2.37 compares favorably to the state-wide result of 2.55.
- Suspension incident rates decreased in most districts in 2020 given school closures. However, several partner districts did experience clear *increases* in suspension incidence rates in 2020 compared to preceding years, included **Hancock Place** (which had the highest total rate in 2020) and **Pattonville**.
- Partner districts that experienced clear *decreases* in suspension incidence rates in 2020 (i.e., rates approximately half of the prior year rate or less), included **Valley Park**, **Kirkwood**, **Affton**, **Bayless**, and **Riverview Gardens**.
- Districts that have exceeded an IEP suspension incident *ratio*[14] of 4.0 for 2 consecutive years or more for OSS or ISS as of 2020 include: **Maplewood-Richmond Heights**, **Mehlville**, **Brentwood, Affton**, **Parkway**, **Webster Groves**, and **Kirkwood**. Districts that exceeded the ratio of 4.0 in consecutive years for OSS >10 days include **Lindbergh**, **Kirkwood**, **Webster Groves**, **Bayless**, **Affton**, and **Jennings**, though in many cases the count of >10 day IEP suspensions for these districts is small (i.e., less than 10).

Implications for Equity: Disciplinary Outcomes

- Rates of OSS and/or ISS are high in some districts. For example, **Hancock Place** and **Ferguson-Florissant** experienced combined suspension incident rates exceeding 100 suspensions for every 100 students with disabilities in 2020, even with the shortened in-person school year. The percentage of *students* with disabilities receiving a suspension of some form exceeded 30% in several districts including **Jennings**, **Ferguson-Florissant**, **Hancock Place**, and **Riverview Gardens** (see **Appendix E**).
- By some measure ISS, under which condition students attend school and can complete work or continue to receive instruction in some form under supervision, may be a preferable disciplinary response to OSS, a completely exclusionary consequence. Trends suggest that partner districts vary in their use of ISS or OSS as the more common disciplinary response. For example suspensions in **Hancock Place** and **Jennings** are much more likely to be ISS, whereas suspensions in **Normandy** and **University City** are more commonly OSS.
- Several partner districts continue to administer suspensions exceeding 10 days at a high rate compared to what is typical across the county and state (see second chart below). For example, **Ferguson-Florissant** experienced a rate of 9.7 >10 day incidents per 100 students in 2020, vs. the county-wide rate of 2.4. It is difficult to evaluate whether >10 day suspension rates improved in 2020 given the spring transition to virtual learning.
- Students with disabilities county wide were 2.5 times more likely than nondisabled students to receive >10 day suspensions in 2020, up just slightly from 2019 (see column *Ratio Incident OSS >10*).
- In general, districts with the highest suspension rates tend to have student populations that are impacted by high poverty and mobility rates (see **Appendix A** for demographic data).

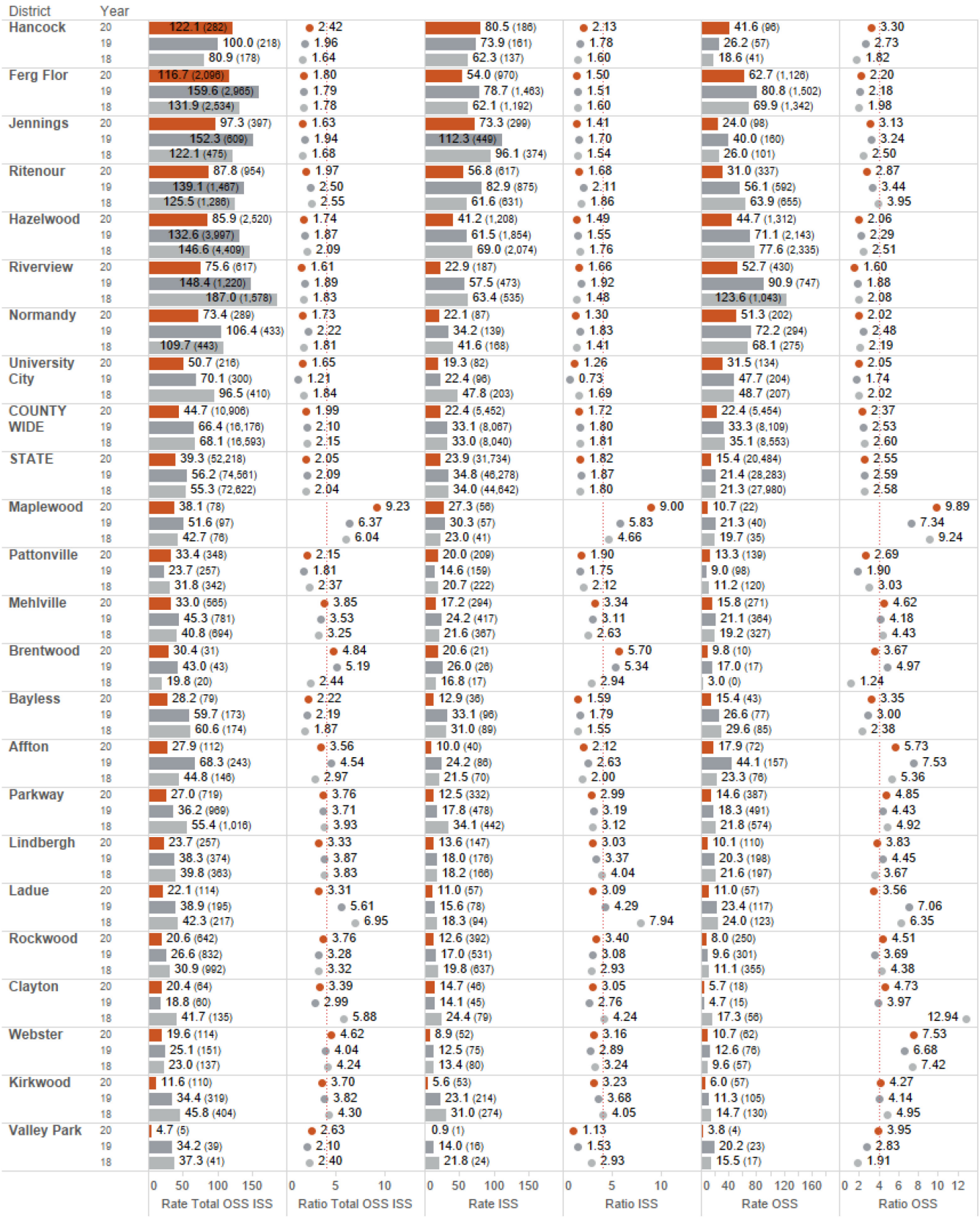
[14] In general, districts with higher IEP *disproportionalities* in discipline as indicated by the ratio metric tend to tend to have low to moderate suspension incident *rates*. This is often partly a function of lower rates of ISS/OSS among general education students in those districts. Several districts with the lowest IEP suspension rates in the county also experience high OSS disproportionality ratios. SSD's partner districts with high rates of suspension of students with disabilities appear to also suspend nondisabled students at a fairly high rate in many cases (resulting in lower ratios).

- County wide in 2020, African-American students with disabilities were 5.0 times more likely to receive a suspension exceeding 10 days than were nondisabled students across all race categories (see column labelled *Ratio to Gen Ed Black IEP*), which is the same ratio as 2019. This ratio falls below the comparable 2020 state-wide ratio of 6.2. African-American students with disabilities were 6.6 times more likely to receive a suspension exceeding 10 days than were White students with disabilities (see column *Ratio Black IEP to White IEP*). While this ratio fell in 2020, it still exceeds the ratio for the state as a whole (4.3).
- Some districts have administered a relatively small number of suspensions to students with disabilities, and/or significantly reduced suspensions of students with disabilities in recent years.

IEP Suspention Incidents (Total, In-School, and Out-of-School)

Metrics are Rate per 100 Students and Ratio of IEP to Non-IEP

The 2020 rate metrics are impacted by spring school closures (see discussion in the report narrative)

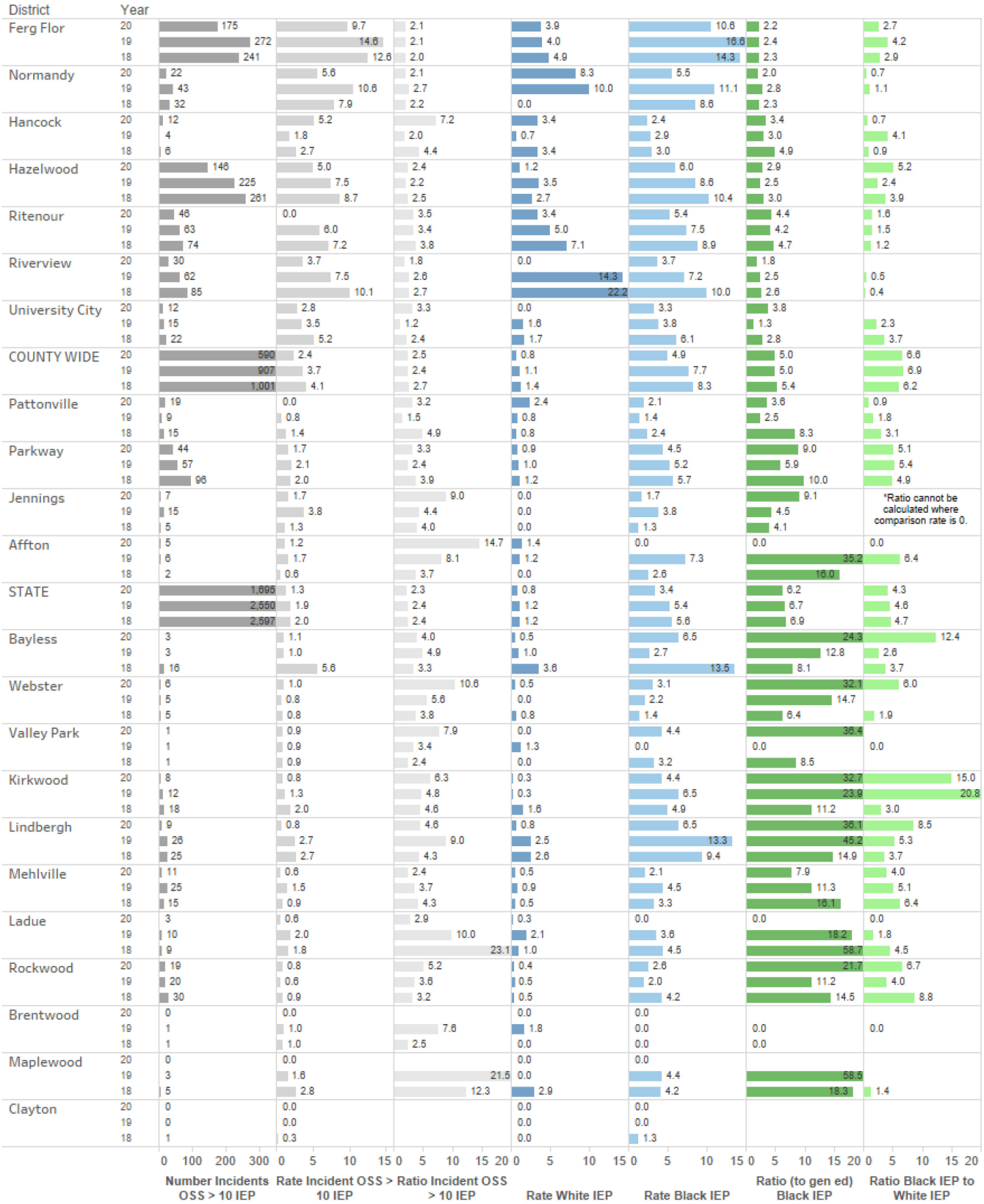


Note. See notes on interpretation of 2020 results provided in the report narrative. Sorted top to bottom by total suspension incident rate in 2020. Counts of suspension incidents appear in parentheses. The red dotted line represents the current DESE threshold for significant discrepancy (ratio > 4.0) in the case of OSS removals greater than 10 days. However note that total suspensions of any length (as shown here) do not factor into significant discrepancy criteria. The Valley Park result for 2020 appears to reflect a reporting error; follow-up review indicated 47 total OSS and ISS incidents.

Incidents of Out-of-School Suspension Exceeding 10 days per 100 Students

Overall and Comparisons by Race (White and African-American)

The 2020 rate metrics are impacted by spring school closures (see discussion in the report narrative)



Note. See notes on interpretation of 2020 results provided in the report narrative. Sorted top to bottom by total district rate of >10 OSS in 2020. Ratios represent a comparison between the rate of >10 day suspensions for one group with that for another. Ratios can be interpreted as the factor by which students in one group are more likely to receive a >10 day suspension than students in the comparison group. Ratios cannot be calculated when the rate for the comparison group is zero (represented by blank cells in the chart). Rates and ratios for students in other race categories were excluded based on low student counts and few indicators of discipline disproportionality among those groups. The Valley Park result for 2020 appears to reflect a reporting error; follow-up review indicated 4 OSS >10 days.

Data/Reporting Element 5: Graduation and Dropout Trends

Performance and Effectiveness Question(s) These Data Inform: *Across partner districts and St. Louis County, what proportion of students with disabilities graduate in four years? What proportion drop out of school?*

Four-year graduation and dropout rates over 3 years for students with disabilities are shown in the figure at right. Partner districts are sorted top to bottom by average IEP graduation rate over three years. DESE listed an SPP graduation target 74.5% for students exiting in 2019 (the dropout target was 3.5%). Smaller districts with fewer students with disabilities in a grade-level cohort may be prone to greater fluctuation in graduation rate across school years.

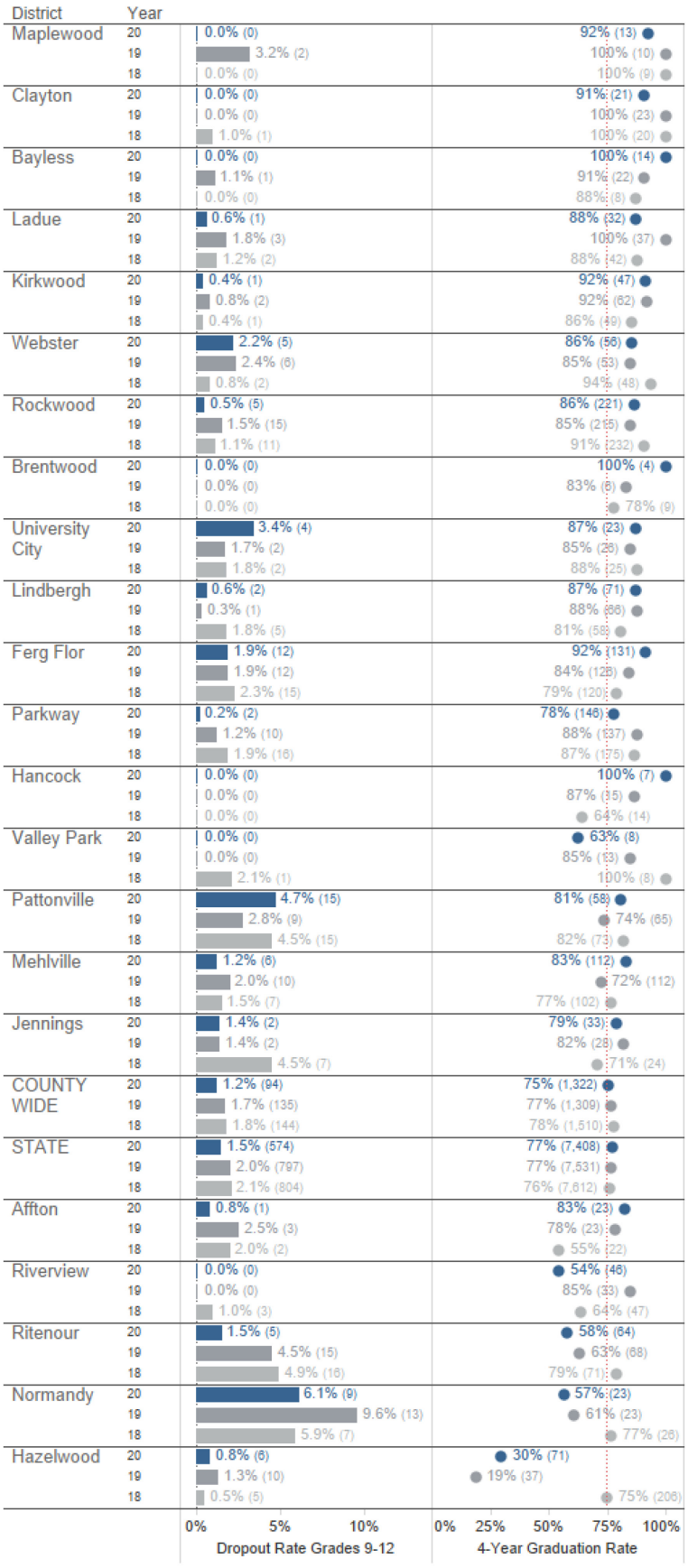
Results Summary

- The reported overall graduation rate for students with IEPs in St. Louis County was 75% in 2020, which is a decline from the two prior years and falls below the state-wide rate of 77%.
- The dropout rate among students with disabilities across the county decreased in 2020 to 1.2%. The switch to virtual learning may have impacted administrative processes related to dropout reporting.
- Across individual districts, 2020 graduation rates for students with disabilities ranged from 30% to 100%. Seventeen of SSD's twenty-two partner districts achieved graduation rates that exceeded the SPP target and state-wide rate in 2020, while five districts failed to meet these benchmarks.
- **Hazelwood**, a populous district, has reported low graduation rates in two consecutive years, though they have not coincided with particularly high dropout rates. The count of Hazelwood graduates reported has also declined substantially over 3 years.

Implications for Equity: Graduation and Dropout Trends

- The likelihood of graduation, as well as the risk of dropout, varies across county districts for students with disabilities.
- Graduation rates in **Ferguson-Florissant**, whose implementation of a monitoring process and credit recovery class targeting students with disabilities was previously highlighted in this report, continued to improve.

Graduation and Dropout Rates for Students With Disabilities



Note. Counts appear in parentheses. Grad rate count represents the number of exiters in the 4-year cohort. The dropout rate represents the proportion of all students with disabilities in grades 9-12 who dropped out during the school year. Thus the graduation rate and dropout rate would not be expected to sum to 100%.

Data/Reporting Element 6: Post-Secondary Outcomes

Performance and Effectiveness Question(s) These Data Inform: *What proportion of students who were receiving special education services at the time of graduation (or dropout) reported education or employment status that meets DESE standards?*

Post-secondary outcomes are displayed in the chart below. These data represent the results of follow-up inquiries partner districts conduct with students approximately 6 months following their graduation cohort's exit.[15] There are three distinct metrics: (1) Percent of students in higher education (i.e., the percent who completed a semester at a 2-year or 4-year institution); (2) Percent of students in higher education or employment (i.e., the percent who either fell in the first category and/or had been competitively employed at least half time for a period of 90 days or longer); and (3) Any post-secondary training or employment (this includes graduates who fall in either of the first two categories plus those who were completing other types of training programs, those who were non-competitively employed, and those who were serving in the military). Although all three metrics are of interest, which to focus more attention on may depend on a district's priorities and specific post-secondary objectives for students with disabilities. It may make sense to highlight the second category (shown in the middle column in the chart below) given that it includes both education and employment outcomes but also defines a successful outcome more narrowly than the third category.

DESE relies on districts to correctly apply the criteria for successful IEP post-graduate outcomes in the classification of students. Each partner district conducts their own follow-up. This likely introduces some degree of error into the results given the intricacies of the criteria. In addition, students whom districts are unable to locate and whose whereabouts are unknown contribute to the calculation as a negative outcome. Thus rates for this SPP indicator, in part, represent a district's capacity to successfully locate and survey exiting students. Smaller districts will likely be subject to greater year-to-year variability than will larger districts.

Results Summary

- County wide, the proportion of graduates meeting the positive post-secondary outcome criteria increased in 2020, and also exceeded that for the state as a whole.
- Sixteen of SSD's twenty-two partner districts both met the state target and exceeded the state-wide rate for "percent of students in higher education or employment" in 2020.

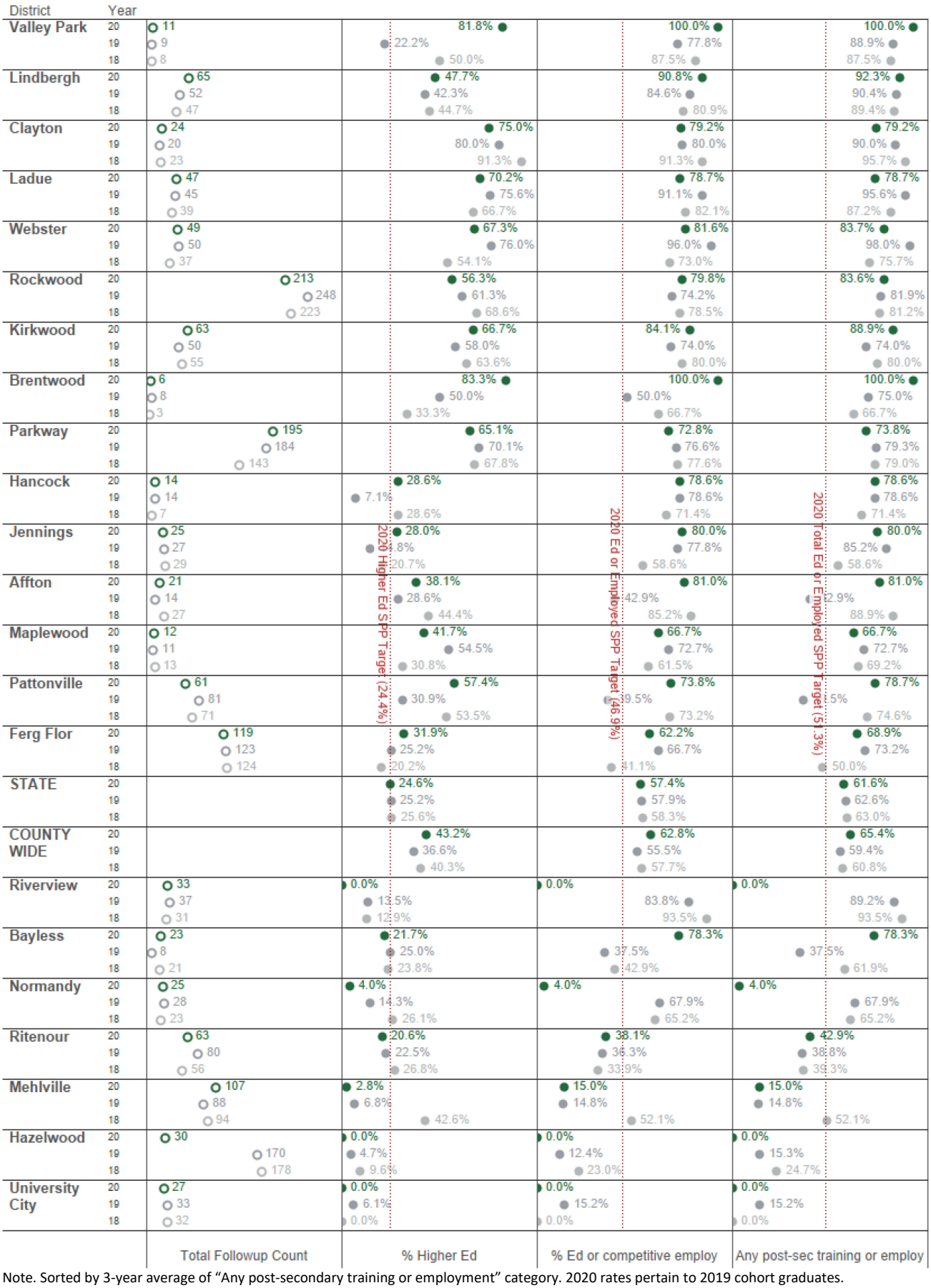
Implications for Equity: Post-Secondary Outcomes

- Several districts identified few or no students exiting in school year 2019 who met the criteria for a positive post-secondary outcome in the first 6 months following exit. These districts included **University City**, **Riverview Gardens**, **Hazelwood**[16], and **Normandy**. Positive post-secondary outcomes for **Mehlville** have also fallen well below those of most other districts for consecutive years.
- The successful pursuit of post-secondary education and/or employment among students with disabilities in the relative short term following graduation varies considerably across SSD's partner districts. This variance includes the type of post-secondary pursuits; in some districts, graduates with disabilities are largely college-bound, while in other districts graduates more commonly enter the workforce following high school.
- Differences in data patterns suggest potential inconsistencies in follow-up procedures and coding across districts. Successful follow-up may be more challenging in locations where student mobility rates are high. Inconsistencies in assessment procedures pose challenges to confident evaluation of how well SSD and its partners are preparing students with disabilities for post-secondary success.

[15] Thus follow-up should have been completed well prior to the initiation of virtual instruction in March of 2020, and also prior to the emergence of any business closures or economic downturn stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic that may have impacted employment opportunities.
[16] Hazelwood's total follow-up count in 2020 was markedly lower than in past years, possibly suggesting some form of data exception.

Post-Secondary Employment/Education Outcomes

(1) Higher education; (2) Higher education or completitively employed; (3) Any post-secondary education/training or employment



Note. Sorted by 3-year average of "Any post-secondary training or employment" category. 2020 rates pertain to 2019 cohort graduates.

Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

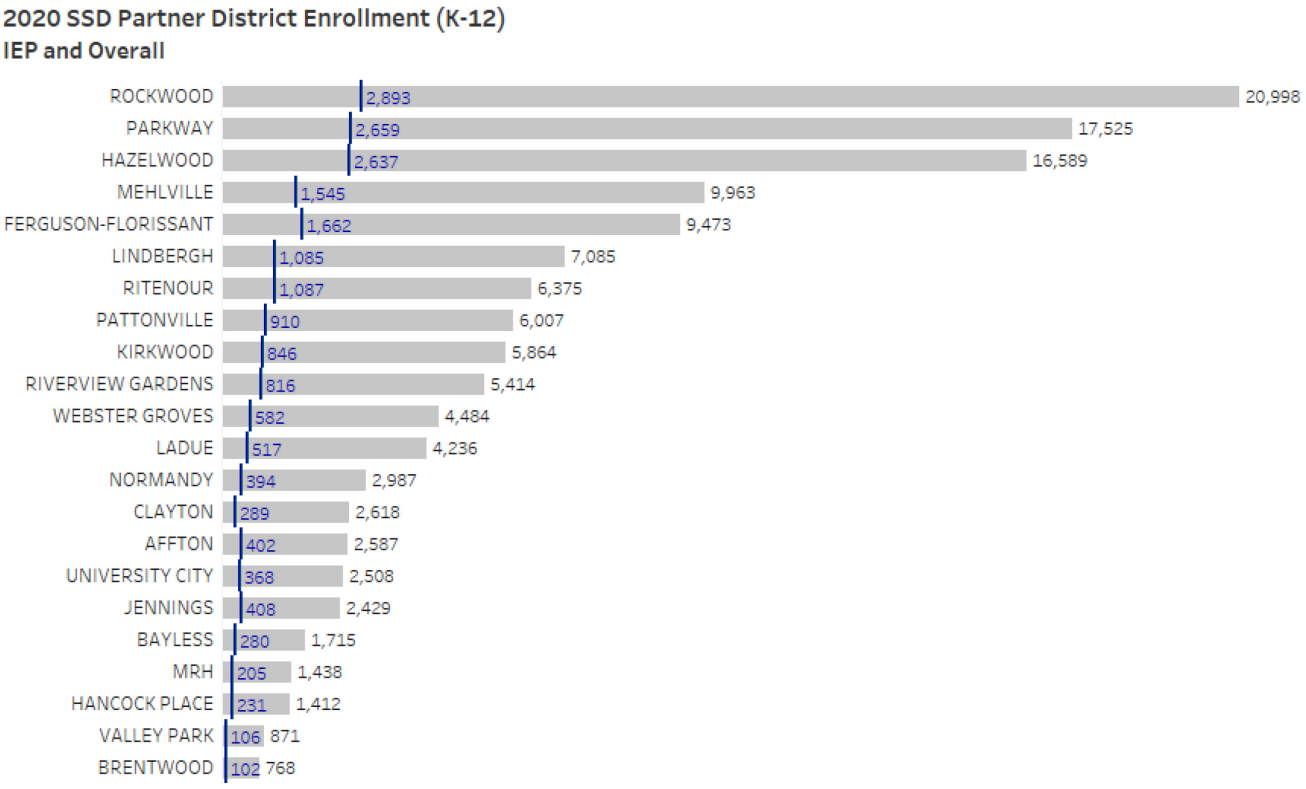
Positive Trends/Strengths

- Underrepresentation of African-American students in the disability category of Autism continues to decrease/improve. Risk ratios for disability categories other than ID fall well below the DESE threshold for disproportionality.
- The percentage of students in St. Louis County that fall in the least restrictive service delivery category of ≥80% (63.4% in 2020) exceeds the state-wide percentage (57.4%), which means that more students with disabilities in St. Louis County receive the large majority of their instruction in the general education setting alongside nondisabled peers. All partner districts met the ≥80% state LRE target in 2020, the rates for several increasing substantially over 3 years. In addition, the proportion of students in the more restrictive <40% category has decreased each year since 2013 for St. Louis County as a whole.
- County-wide suspension rates for students with disabilities appeared on track to decline in 2020 prior to districts' transition to virtual instruction in March. This follows the first decline in 7 years observed in 2019. The ratio of suspensions administered to students with disabilities against those without disabilities also declined in 2020 and fell to a 5-year low. Several districts rarely administer suspension exceeding 10 days as a consequence for students with disabilities. These districts may be implementing disciplinary or positive behavior strategies that could inform improvement efforts in other districts.
- The dropout rate among students with IEPs in St. Louis County fell to 1.2% in 2020.
- The proportion of graduates found to have met criteria for a positive post-secondary outcome increased in 2020. Sixteen partner districts both met the state target and exceeded the state-wide rate in this outcome area.

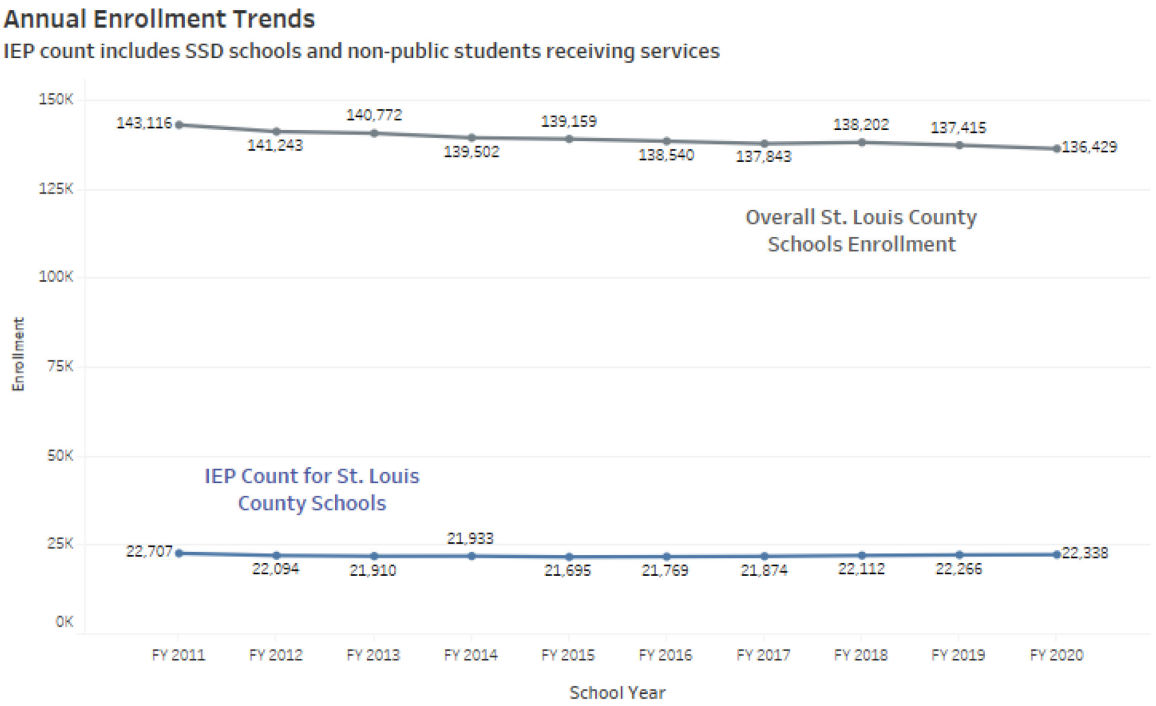
Trends of Potential Concern and Opportunities for Improvement

- Special education outcomes across SSD's 22 partner districts are highly variable, suggesting potential inequities in opportunity and/or service provision.
- The disability incidence rate in St. Louis County has gradually increased since 2015 and remains considerably higher than that for the state overall. Incidence in several partner districts increased substantially over 4 years.
- Disproportionate representation of African-American students in the eligibility category of Intellectual Disability remains high, and well in excess of the state-wide rate.
- Several partner districts have a large percentage of their students placed in SSD separate schools and programs relative to other districts.
- Rates of suspension for students with disabilities remain high in some districts. Suspension incident rates among students with disabilities have exceeded those among students without disabilities by a factor of 4.0 or more across multiple years in several partner districts. Students with IEPs were 2.5 times more likely to receive a suspension exceeding 10 days than were nondisabled students in 2020. African-American students with disabilities remain considerably more likely to receive long-term suspensions than both nondisabled peers and White students with disabilities.
- The county-wide IEP graduation rate for students with disabilities fell to 75% in 2020. Five partner districts failed to achieve the SPP target of 74.5%.
- Several districts identified few or no students who met the criteria for a positive post-secondary outcome. Positive post-secondary outcome rates vary substantially across St. Louis County districts.

Appendix A
Enrollment and Demographic Data



Source: Missouri DESE. Sorted by partner district overall enrollment. IEP enrollment is indicated by the blue line/label. IEP counts exclude those students attending SSD schools and programs.



Source: Missouri DESE.

Counts of K-12 Students by Disability Category

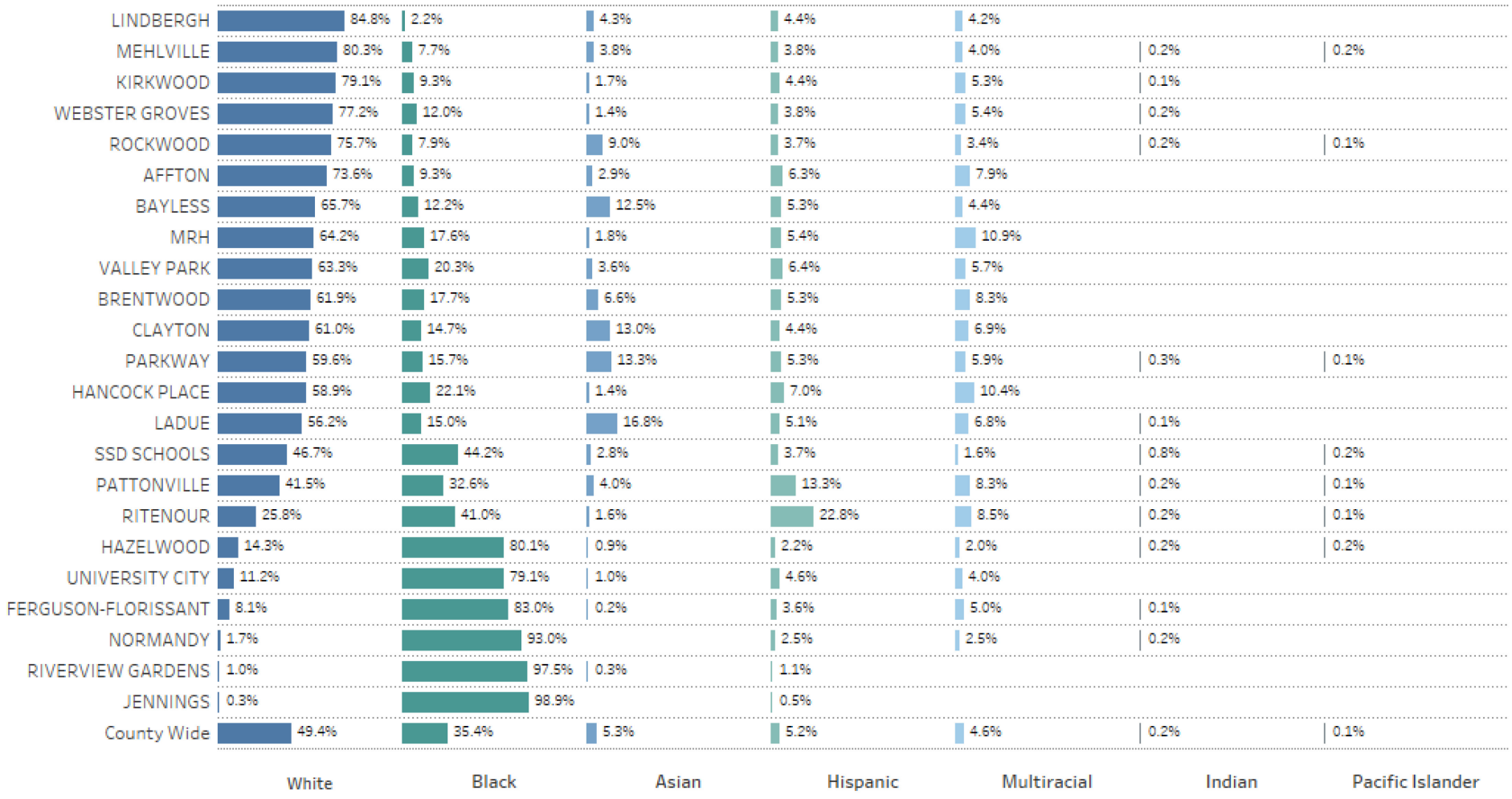
2020

District	Total IEP	Count OHI	Count SLD	Count SI	Count AU	Count ED	Count ID	Count LI
Affton	402	109	67	68	54	38	17	18
Bayless	280	69	52	29	47	31	18	21
Brentwood	102	28	10	13	25	5	5	5
Clayton	289	83	64	48	47	21	7	6
Ferg Flor	1,662	344	388	239	197	123	205	83
Hancock	231	62	42	48	34	13	15	13
Hazelwood	2,637	561	520	364	327	243	261	182
Jennings	408	79	109	54	44	24	52	25
Kirkwood	846	140	175	197	134	55	32	58
Ladue	517	120	83	119	68	37	18	20
Lindbergh	1,085	288	176	193	202	90	42	47
Maplewood	205	48	31	39	42	18	6	7
Mehlville	1,545	400	301	253	228	141	90	68
Normandy	394	85	80	57	34	43	55	19
Parkway	2,659	654	499	483	386	191	95	147
Pattonville	910	197	172	151	163	89	34	58
Ritenour	1,087	232	263	130	152	106	101	55
Riverview	816	165	230	87	75	59	121	42
Rockwood	2,893	726	722	511	335	187	103	181
University City	368	66	74	44	70	34	26	30
Valley Park	106	22	17	21	18	8	9	5
Webster	582	112	126	122	104	47	14	31
SSD Schools	2,314	388	299	373	451	297	228	64
COUNTY WIDE	22,338	4,978	4,500	3,643	3,237	1,900	1,554	1,185

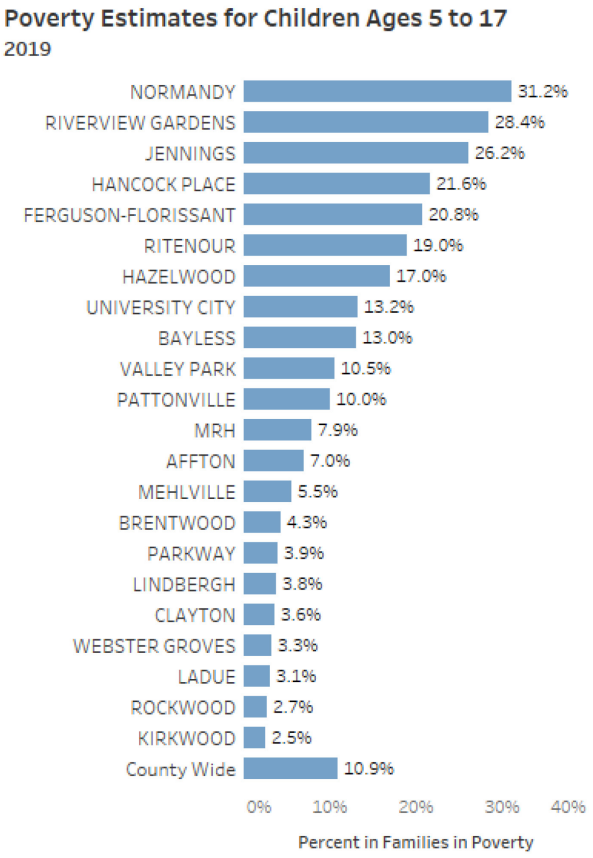
Source: Missouri DESE. IEP counts for partner districts exclude students attending SSD schools and programs. SSD Schools includes students with disabilities attending full-day career technical education programs and non-public students.

District Total Enrollment by Race

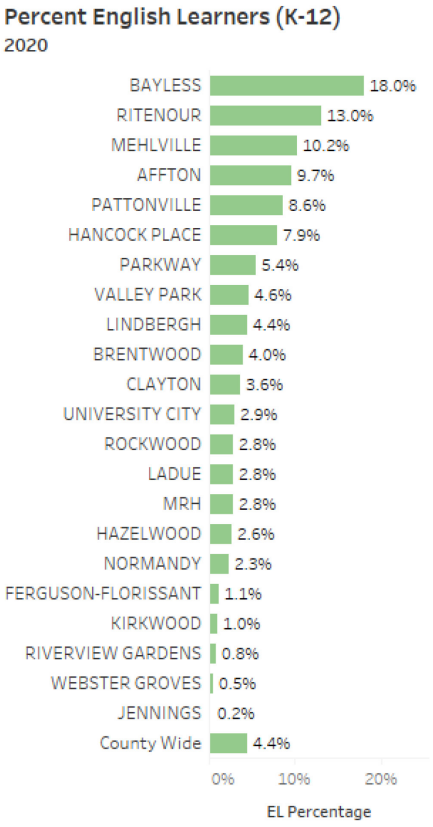
2020



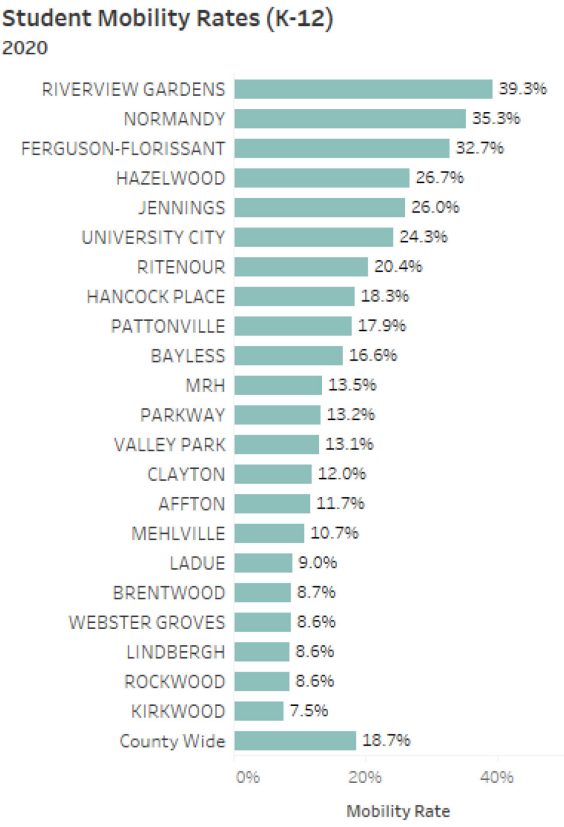
Source: Missouri DESE. Districts are sorted by percentage White. DESE obscures counts/percentages by race in publicly-available data files when cell count is very low (typically less than 10) and thus the chart may omit data for smaller districts, and percentages presented may not total 100% in some cases.



Source: US Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program. This estimate is based on 2019 data. The metric represents the estimated percentage of children ages 5 to 17 who live in a family whose income lies below the poverty threshold. SAIPE uses different thresholds than are used by the Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL) program. The 2019 Census Bureau threshold for a family of four containing two related children under age 18 was $25,926. For additional information, see https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe.html.



Source: Missouri DESE.

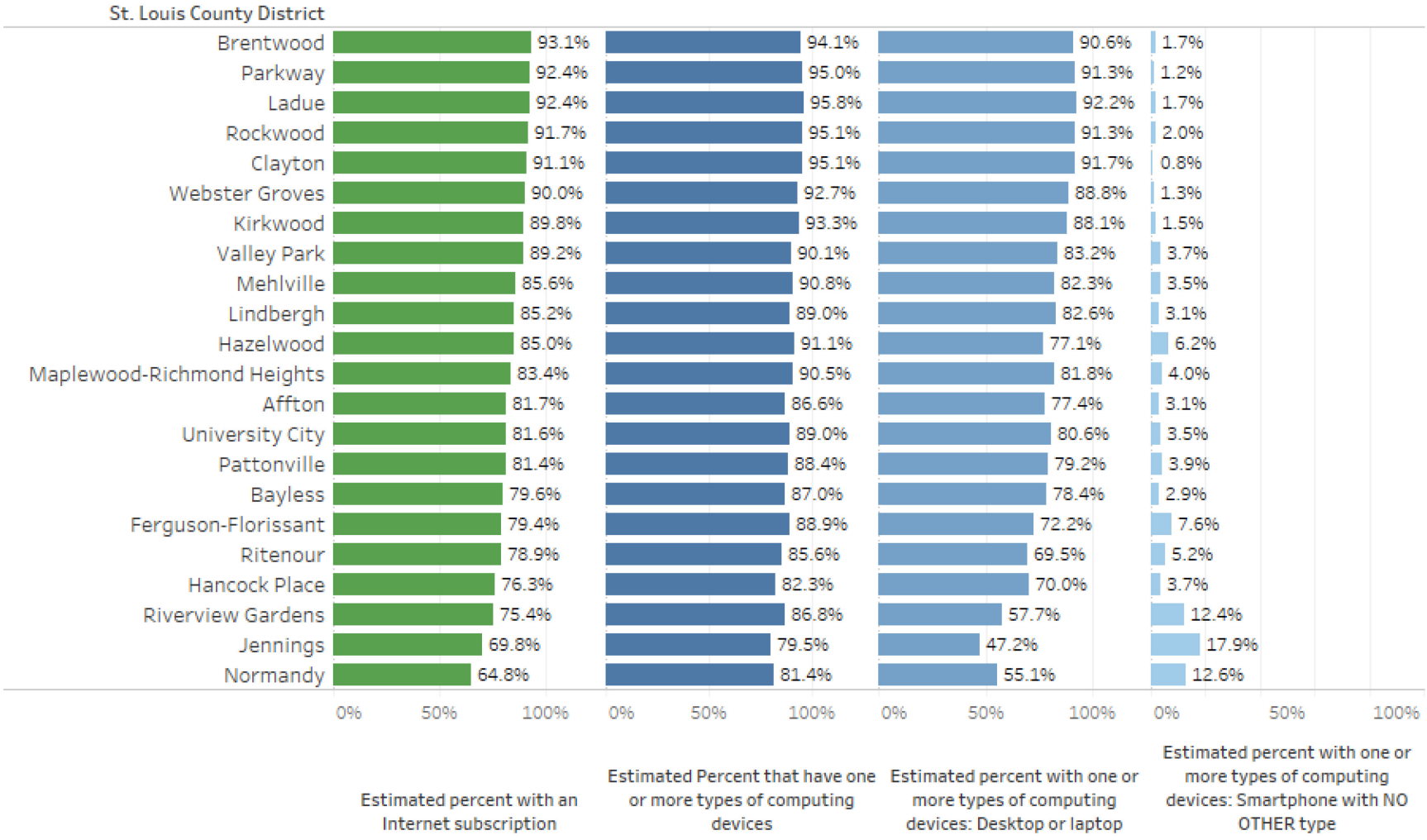


Source: Missouri DESE. DESE defines mobility as the proportion of students who changed schools during a school year.

Appendix B: Household Computer and Internet Use Estimates

Household Computer and Internet Use Population Estimates, by Geographic Feature Unified School District

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2018 5-year estimate)

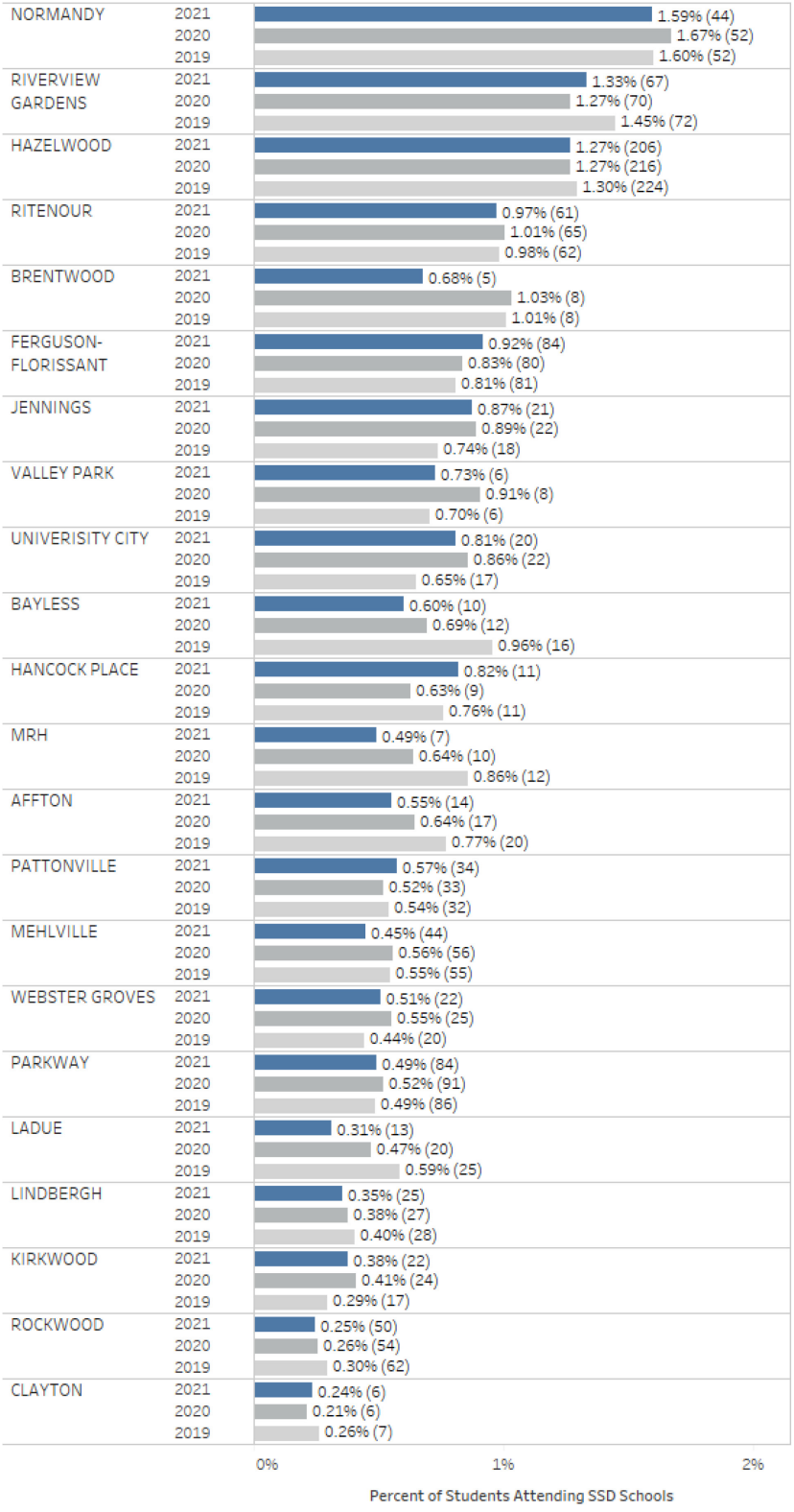


Note. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/

Appendix C: SSD School and Program Enrollment

Proportion of Partner District K-12 Students Attending SSD Separate Schools and Programs (Estimated)

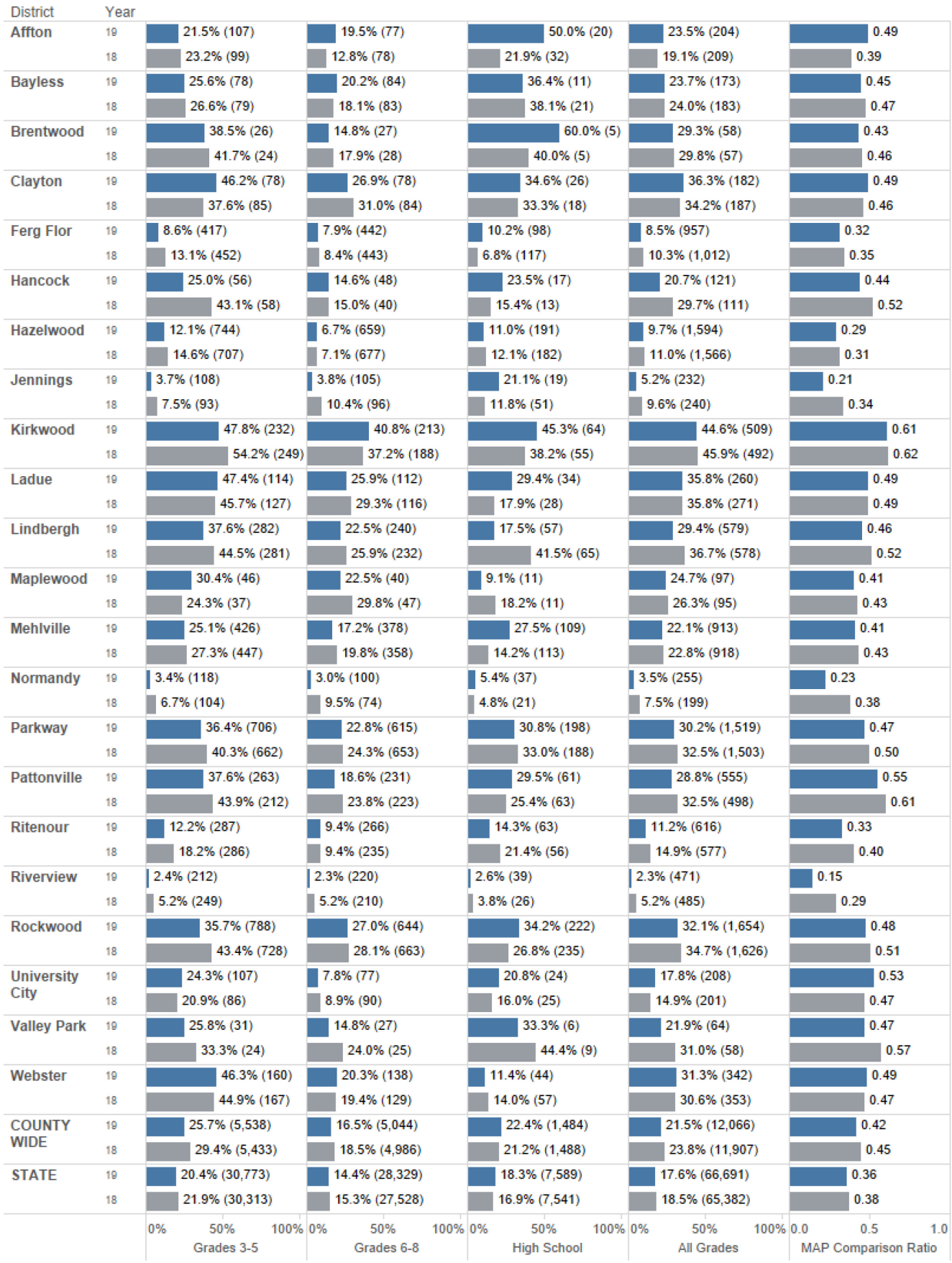
Includes SSD Separate Schools and Purchase of Service placements, but excludes Homebound, Transition Programs and CTE; student counts are shown in parentheses



Source: SSD separate site enrollment was obtained from SSD's Phoenix student information database. Current year data based on enrollment as of February 2021. Partner district enrollments used in the calculation were retrieved from the DESE comprehensive data site (District Enrollment 2021 Preliminary). Districts in the figure are sorted by 3-year average proportion.

Appendix D: Disaggregated State Test Results (ELA and Math)

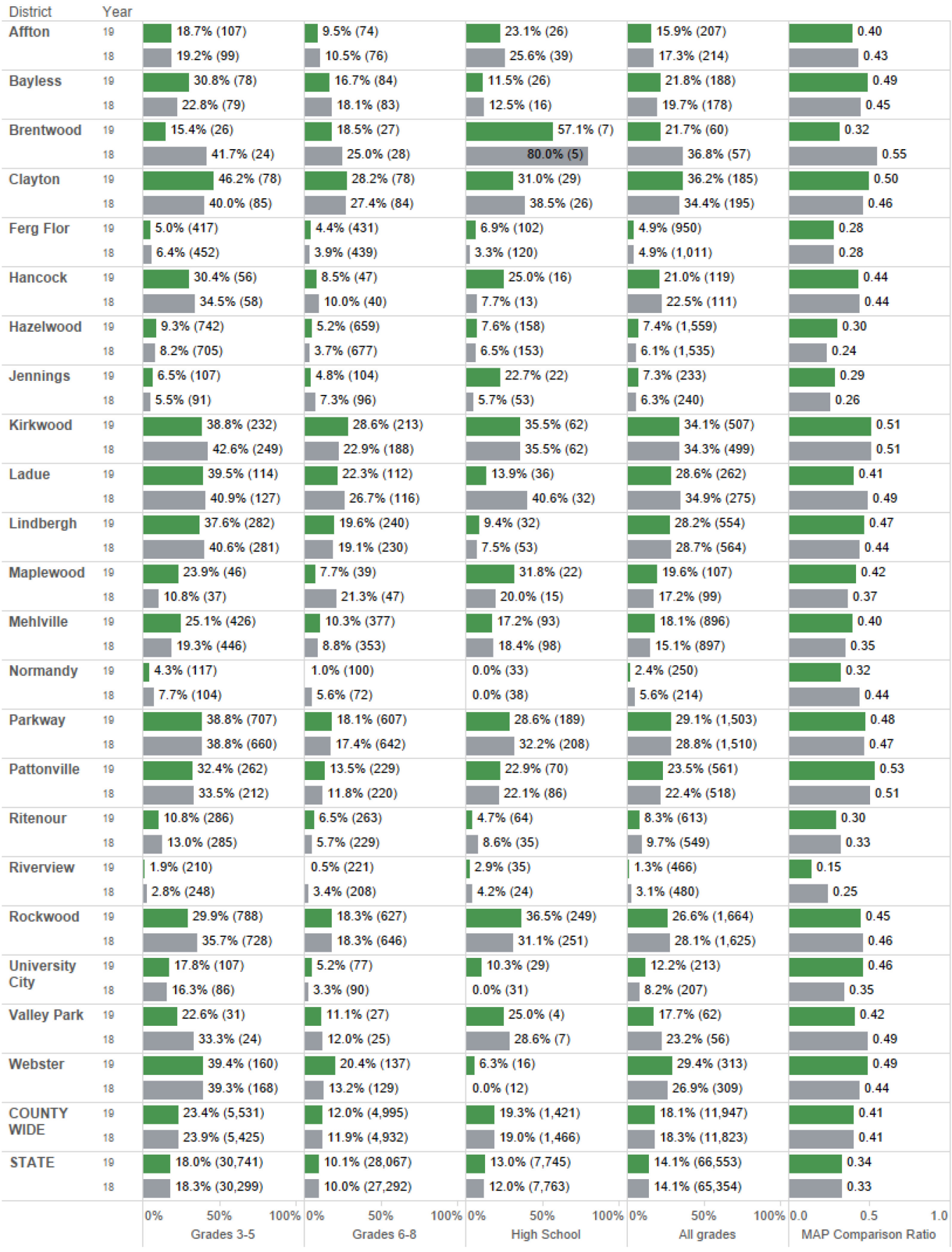
IEP MAP ELA "Top Two" Percentages by Grade Level Group Plus IEP to Overall Result Ratio



District	Year	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8	High School	All Grades	MAP Comparison Ratio
Affton	19	21.5% (107)	19.5% (77)	50.0% (20)	23.5% (204)	0.49
	18	23.2% (99)	12.8% (78)	21.9% (32)	19.1% (209)	0.39
Bayless	19	25.6% (78)	20.2% (84)	36.4% (11)	23.7% (173)	0.45
	18	26.6% (79)	18.1% (83)	38.1% (21)	24.0% (183)	0.47
Brentwood	19	38.5% (26)	14.8% (27)	60.0% (5)	29.3% (58)	0.43
	18	41.7% (24)	17.9% (28)	40.0% (5)	29.8% (57)	0.46
Clayton	19	46.2% (78)	26.9% (78)	34.6% (26)	36.3% (182)	0.49
	18	37.6% (85)	31.0% (84)	33.3% (18)	34.2% (187)	0.46
Ferg Flor	19	8.6% (417)	7.9% (442)	10.2% (98)	8.5% (957)	0.32
	18	13.1% (452)	8.4% (443)	6.8% (117)	10.3% (1,012)	0.35
Hancock	19	25.0% (56)	14.6% (48)	23.5% (17)	20.7% (121)	0.44
	18	43.1% (58)	15.0% (40)	15.4% (13)	29.7% (111)	0.52
Hazelwood	19	12.1% (744)	6.7% (659)	11.0% (191)	9.7% (1,594)	0.29
	18	14.6% (707)	7.1% (677)	12.1% (182)	11.0% (1,566)	0.31
Jennings	19	3.7% (108)	3.8% (105)	21.1% (19)	5.2% (232)	0.21
	18	7.5% (93)	10.4% (96)	11.8% (51)	9.6% (240)	0.34
Kirkwood	19	47.8% (232)	40.8% (213)	45.3% (64)	44.6% (509)	0.61
	18	54.2% (249)	37.2% (188)	38.2% (55)	45.9% (492)	0.62
Ladue	19	47.4% (114)	25.9% (112)	29.4% (34)	35.8% (260)	0.49
	18	45.7% (127)	29.3% (116)	17.9% (28)	35.8% (271)	0.49
Lindbergh	19	37.6% (282)	22.5% (240)	17.5% (57)	29.4% (579)	0.46
	18	44.5% (281)	25.9% (232)	41.5% (65)	36.7% (578)	0.52
Maplewood	19	30.4% (46)	22.5% (40)	9.1% (11)	24.7% (97)	0.41
	18	24.3% (37)	29.8% (47)	18.2% (11)	26.3% (95)	0.43
Mehlville	19	25.1% (426)	17.2% (378)	27.5% (109)	22.1% (913)	0.41
	18	27.3% (447)	19.8% (358)	14.2% (113)	22.8% (918)	0.43
Normandy	19	3.4% (118)	3.0% (100)	5.4% (37)	3.5% (255)	0.23
	18	6.7% (104)	9.5% (74)	4.8% (21)	7.5% (199)	0.38
Parkway	19	36.4% (706)	22.8% (615)	30.8% (198)	30.2% (1,519)	0.47
	18	40.3% (662)	24.3% (653)	33.0% (188)	32.5% (1,503)	0.50
Pattonville	19	37.6% (263)	18.6% (231)	29.5% (61)	28.8% (555)	0.55
	18	43.9% (212)	23.8% (223)	25.4% (63)	32.5% (498)	0.61
Ritenour	19	12.2% (287)	9.4% (266)	14.3% (63)	11.2% (616)	0.33
	18	18.2% (286)	9.4% (235)	21.4% (56)	14.9% (577)	0.40
Riverview	19	2.4% (212)	2.3% (220)	2.6% (39)	2.3% (471)	0.15
	18	5.2% (249)	5.2% (210)	3.8% (26)	5.2% (485)	0.29
Rockwood	19	35.7% (788)	27.0% (644)	34.2% (222)	32.1% (1,654)	0.48
	18	43.4% (728)	28.1% (663)	26.8% (235)	34.7% (1,626)	0.51
University City	19	24.3% (107)	7.8% (77)	20.8% (24)	17.8% (208)	0.53
	18	20.9% (86)	8.9% (90)	16.0% (25)	14.9% (201)	0.47
Valley Park	19	25.8% (31)	14.8% (27)	33.3% (6)	21.9% (64)	0.47
	18	33.3% (24)	24.0% (25)	44.4% (9)	31.0% (58)	0.57
Webster	19	46.3% (160)	20.3% (138)	11.4% (44)	31.3% (342)	0.49
	18	44.9% (167)	19.4% (129)	14.0% (57)	30.6% (353)	0.47
COUNTY WIDE	19	25.7% (5,538)	16.5% (5,044)	22.4% (1,484)	21.5% (12,066)	0.42
	18	29.4% (5,433)	18.5% (4,986)	21.2% (1,488)	23.8% (11,907)	0.45
STATE	19	20.4% (30,773)	14.4% (28,329)	18.3% (7,589)	17.6% (66,691)	0.36
	18	21.9% (30,313)	15.3% (27,528)	16.9% (7,541)	18.5% (65,382)	0.38

Note. The state transitioned to a new assessment in 2018. Counts of students tested appear in parentheses.

IEP MAP Math "Top Two" Percentages by Grade Level Group Plus IEP to Overall Result Ratio



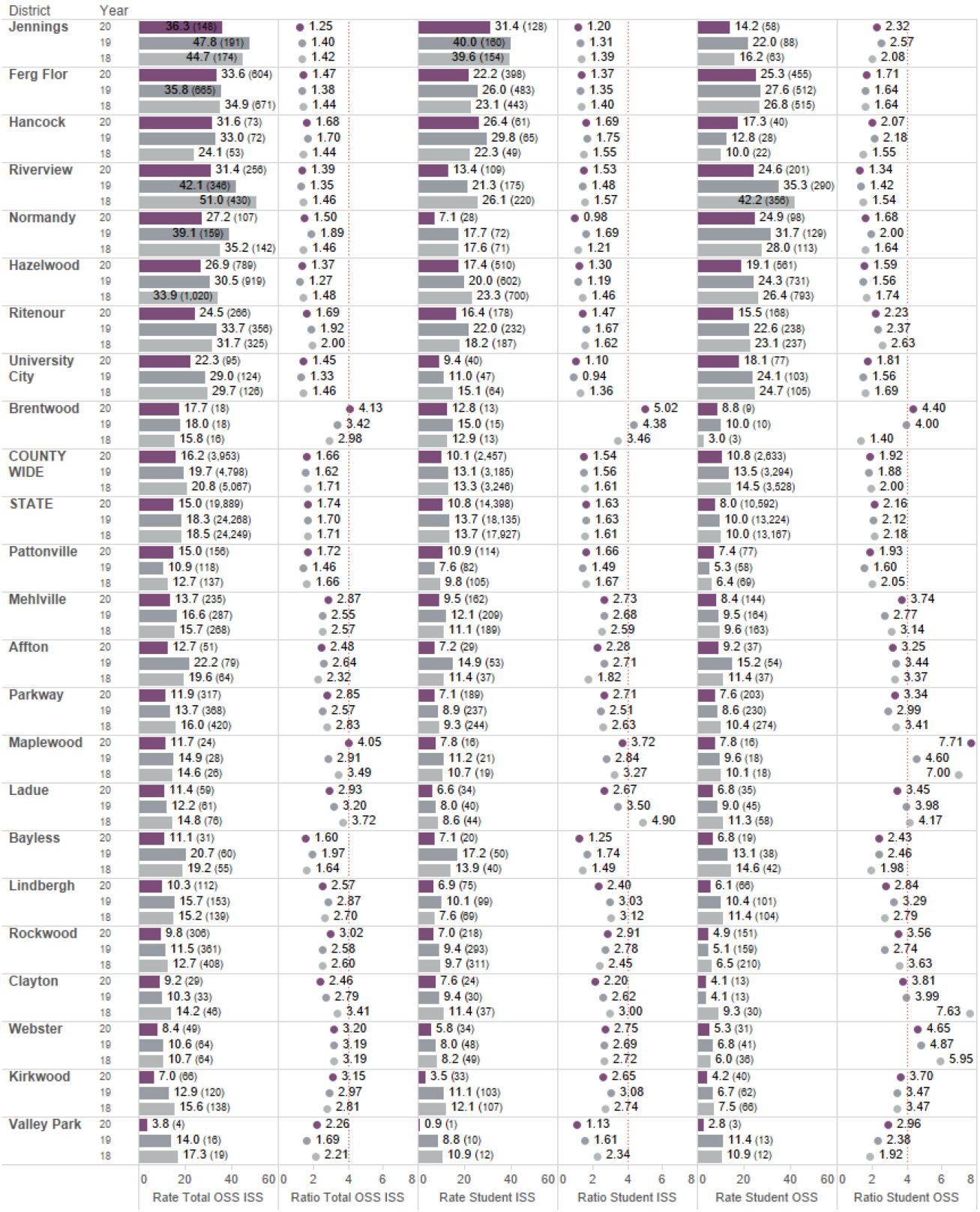
Note. The state transitioned to a new assessment in 2018. Counts of students tested appear in parentheses.

APPENDIX E: Rates of Discipline by Student

Rates at which Individual Students Received Suspensions (Total, In-School, and Out-of-School)

Metrics are Rate per 100 Students and Ratio of IEP to Non-IEP

The 2020 rate metrics are impacted by spring school closures (see discussion in the report narrative)



Note. See notes on interpretation of 2020 results provided in the narrative. Sorted by total OSS and ISS rate in 2020. Counts of students receiving a suspension appear in parentheses. The red dotted line represents the DESE threshold for significant discrepancy (ratio > 4.0) in the case of OSS removals >10 days. However note that count of students receiving a suspensions of any length (as shown here) do not factor into significant discrepancy criteria. The Valley Park result for 2020 appears to reflect a reporting error; follow-up review indicated 21 students received an OSS and/or ISS.