



Illinois State Board of Education

Dr. Tony Sanders, State Superintendent of Education

Dr. Steven Isoye, Chair of the Board

EQUITY • QUALITY • COLLABORATION • COMMUNITY

DISCIPLINE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Per [105 ILCS 5/2-3.162](#) and [Public Act 098-1102](#), districts identified on the Top 20% Exclusionary Discipline list are required to submit a Discipline Improvement Plan. The Discipline Improvement Plan must be approved by the district board, placed on the district website, and submitted to ISBE by **February 1, 2024**.

DISCIPLINE IMPROVEMENT PLAN		
Name of School District/Charter School: Evanston/Skokie School District 65	School Year: 2023-24	Board Approval Date(s): January 22, 2024
Link to district website where plan is posted: TBD - Pending Approval		
School District/Charter School Address: 1500 McDaniel Ave. - Evanston, IL 60201		
Superintendent/Administrator Name: Dr. Angel Turner, Interim Superintendent		
<u>Discipline Improvement Plan Team</u>		
Districts are encouraged to convene a Discipline Improvement Plan Team to address exclusionary discipline and/or racial disproportionality.		
Team Leader:		
<i>Name</i> Cherylynn Jones-McLeod	<i>Position/Title</i> Director of Climate and Culture	<i>Email Address</i> <i>jonesmcleodc@district65.net</i>
Team Members:		
<i>Name</i>	<i>Position/Title</i>	<i>Email Address</i>
Michael Johnson	Asst Director of Climate and Culture	<i>johnsonm2@district65.net</i>
Lydia Ryan	<i>Interim Asst Supt of Schools</i>	<i>ryanl@district65.net</i>
Charmekia McCoy	<i>Interim Chief of Schools</i>	<i>mccoyc@district65.net</i>
Donna Cross	<i>Interim Executive Director of Research, Accountability, and Data</i>	<i>crossd@district65.net</i>
Admin teams at each tier 2/tier 3 school		
School Culture Teams at each tier 2/tier 3 school		

Introduction

Evanston/Skokie School District 65 (District 65) has been identified as being in the top 20 percent for the exclusionary discipline metric of Racial disproportionality. Racial disproportionality is defined as the overrepresentation of students of color or white students in comparison to the total number of students of color or white students on October 1st of the school year in which the data are collected, with respect to the use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, which must be calculated using the same method as the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights uses. District 65 was identified in accordance with the IL Compliance Statute, specifically Section 2-3.162 of the School Code which requires ISBE to determine the top 20 percent of districts in exclusionary metrics.

Data Review

In reviewing the data provided by ISBE we see that in school years 2021, 2022 and 2023, we reported high percentages of racial disproportionality amongst African American students in comparison to their White counterparts. In SY 2021 there was a 3.6% rate of racial disproportionality. In SY 2022 there was a 5.5% rate and furthermore a larger increase in SY 2023 at 6.1%.

Although nearly all schools in D65 could improve disproportionate practices related to discipline, 7 out of 18 schools exhibited excessively high rates of disproportionality. These schools have been identified as having a disproportionality rate of 40% or more when compared to how many African American students make up the school population versus the number of disciplinary infractions that have been logged for that same population. Lincolnwood Elementary School has an average population of 27% of African American students; however, African American students account for 83% of disciplinary infractions. Orrington Elementary School has an average population of 12% of African American students; however, they account for 60% of the

disciplinary infractions. Washington Elementary School has an average of 14% of African American students; however, they account for 73% of the infractions. Willard Elementary School has a population of 11% of African American students; however, they account for 55% of the infractions. Haven Middle School has a population of 19% of African American students; however, they account for 61% of the infractions. Dawes Elementary School has a population of 30% of African American students; however, they account for 71% of the infractions. Lastly, the JEH Early Childhood Center has a population of 41% of African American students; however, they account for 83% of the disciplinary infractions. While disproportionality exists at most of District 65 schools, these seven schools account for the greatest rates of disproportionality and therefore have been identified as schools in need of extensive support. We will outline the tiered approaches below within our improvement action plan.

School	Percent enrollment of African American Students	Percent of disciplinary infractions attributed to African American Students	Disproportionality Rate
Tier 3			
Washington	14%	73%	59
Lincolnwood	27%	83%	56
Orrington	12%	60%	48
Willard	11%	55%	44
Haven	19%	61%	42
JEH ECC	41%	83%	42
Dawes	30%	71%	41
Tier 2			
Park	24%	61%	37
Walker	24%	59%	35
Kingsley	26%	59%	33

School	Percent enrollment of African American Students	Percent of disciplinary infractions attributed to African American Students	Disproportionality Rate
Oakton	47%	78%	31
Rhodes	38%	67%	29
Chute	31%	57%	26
Lincoln	21%	47%	26
Tier 1			
Nichols	18%	41%	23
King Arts	41%	62%	21
Dewey	14%	17%	3
Rice	73%	75%	2

Identifying the cause

As we examine the disproportionate data within our district, we are conscious that these practices are a product of larger, systemic, foundational issues within not only Illinois but our country at large. The well researched and documented historical racist educational practices and academic disenfranchisement of people of color, specifically African American students, within the United States has created a lingering legacy of practices that are not conducive to improving the quality of education for populations of color.

Taking an introspective look at the makeup of the staff within our district we've found that the majority of District 65 staff is white. Additionally, the majority of infractions logged for African American students are logged by white educators. We believe that this highlights instances of unconscious or implicit biases. Additionally, there are some tier 1, whole school practices that have not been embedded in our school climate and cultures in a systematic way, practices such as proactive positive environments in classrooms, or tier 1 classroom management practices. In

the absence of these tier 1 approaches, students experience classrooms in very different ways, and staff are left to determine their own approaches to building positive classroom environments and developing behavior management strategies for their classroom spaces. Staff have also not engaged in deescalation training holistically, to help defuse student issues before they warrant an increased disciplinary action.

District-wide Training

District 65 has been committed to providing substantial training for all staff within the district to become aware of the biases and actions that greatly impact outcomes for our students. The district offers diversity training through Beyond Diversity, which is offered approximately 3 times per year and is available to all staff at all levels. Beyond Diversity training is specifically designed to meet the needs of organizations, communities and individuals and is grounded in the ideals of anti-oppression and compassion. Additionally, District 65 has a very active Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) leadership team and they lead district-wide DEIB professional development 2 times a year. These professional development days are inclusive of all staff, regardless of role or title. We believe these practices create a foundation for the greater equity work that will be done on a school basis.

Improvement Action Plan

As we have developed the discipline improvement plan team, we have determined that a multi-tiered plan would be most effective in decreasing the actions that have lead and are leading to racial disproportionality within the discipline data across our schools. We recognize the need to support all schools in District 65 because disproportionality exists at nearly all schools; a tiered approach will ensure all schools receive adequate support. We will implement 3 tiers of intervention based on the needs of each school.

All of our schools will receive tier 1 interventions; many of which have already been implemented this school year. These interventions include:

- **Tier 1 Interventions:**

- Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI) training provided to 180 staff members across all schools, early childhood staff, before and after school staff as well as concierge staff
- Restorative Practices training through the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP)
- Restorative Conference training for DEIB members
- Olweus Bullying
- New bullying procedure in alignment with the revisions to the IL school code
- New SEL curriculum for middle school (Second Step and Character Strong)
- Required district approval for exclusionary discipline
- Alternatives to Suspension one-pager and leader training at BOY 2023-24
- Culture & Climate team presence and School Culture Team meetings
- Courageous Conversations with educators who are enacting racial bias against students of color, in partnership with union leaders
- Committee has been formed to review and revise the Behavior Continuum to more accurately reflect a restorative and responsive approach to discipline
- Providing district-wide training on Branching Minds and its consistent use across all schools and grade levels

We have identified 6 schools who have between 30% and 40% of disproportionality when compared to how many African American students make up the school population versus the number of disciplinary infractions that have been logged for that same population. These schools are Chute Middle School, Bessie Rhodes Magnet School, Oakton Elementary School, Walker Elementary School, Kingsley Elementary School and Dawes Elementary School. These

schools will receive tier 2 level of support in addition to the tier 1 support. These supports include:

- **Tier 2 Interventions:**

- All of tier 1
- Data review meetings with the school-based culture teams
- Staff data sharing and reflection with school leaders
- Implementation of school-wide tier 1 behavior management practices; school leader led with district support
- CPI verbal de-escalation training for all educators
 - Mandating 1-2 Building administrators become trainers to lead ongoing support to their staff

The 7 aforementioned schools who have a disproportionality of 40% or more will receive the tier 3 level of support. This will provide them with individualized, intensive interventions to garner the most improvement in their engagement with students of color as it pertains to disciplinary infractions. These supports include:

- **Tier 3 Interventions:**

- All of tier 1
- Data review meeting with the school culture team and admin to notify of status as disproportionate numbers and to develop a Culture Improvement Plan
- District 65 Director and Assistant Director of Culture and Climate attend all culture team meetings
- All staff data sharing and reflection activity with district staff and school leaders
- If specific students own a disproportionate number at a school, develop behavior plans for the students (for SY24 data)

- CPI verbal de-escalation training for all educators in the tier 3 buildings
 - Mandating 1-2 Building administrators become trainers to lead ongoing support to their staff
- Professional learning series on trauma-informed care (~4 sessions across the year)
- Courageous Conversations with individual adults who do not make adequate progress

Goal, Timeframe, Success Criteria and Method of Evaluation

We are focusing on developing ambitious goals to ensure we are seeing a marked improvement, particularly in our tier 3 schools. We will set a goal for implementing interventions and reviewing the data at various benchmarks over the next year and half. These benchmark timeframes will include the remainder of this 2023-24 school year through May 2024, then from August to December 2024, and again from January 2025 to May 2025. We have two main goals as we assess our data. Our first goal is to reduce the rate of disproportionality amongst our tier 3 schools. We will be working with the tier 3 group to reduce their rate of disproportionality, such that all schools have a disproportionality rate of 25 or below (see table below). Our second goal is to reduce our current rate of disproportionality within the infractions for our African American students district wide. In 2023, our district was cited at a 6.130 disproportionality rate by ISBE, ranking us at 12th in the state. Our goal is to decrease our rating by 2 points by May 2025 and improve our statewide ranking to move out of the 20th percentile .

School	Current percent of disciplinary infractions attributed to African American Students	Current Rate of Disproportionality	Reduction Rate of Disproportionality goal by May 2025 for Tier 3 schools
Tier 3			
Washington	73%	59	34
Lincolnwood	83%	56	31

Orrington	60%	48	23
Willard	55%	44	19
Haven	61%	42	17
JEH ECC	83%	42	17
Dawes	71%	41	16

Method of Evaluation:

The climate and culture department currently provides tier 1 discipline data to every school within the district on a monthly basis. This data set currently includes overall infractions logged for the month; as well as, students with the most infractions and educators who have written the most referrals in the month. We will begin adding racial disproportionality data to this monthly report so our building leaders can keep track of and provide support and interventions where needed. Additionally, we will want to look at teacher-specific data to determine if there are certain adults owning more than their share of the data. We will also look at student-specific data to determine if there are students in need of behavior plans/ safety plans. Lastly, we will determine benchmarks for each of the tier 2 and 3 strategies we determined; building out a timeline for implementation of each strategy.