

San Diego County Office of Education

Plan for Serving Expelled Students 2024-27

This plan for serving expelled students is for the San Diego County Office of Education and San Diego County school districts for the plan period of 2024-27 under the leadership of San Diego County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paul Gothold.

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San Diego County Overview

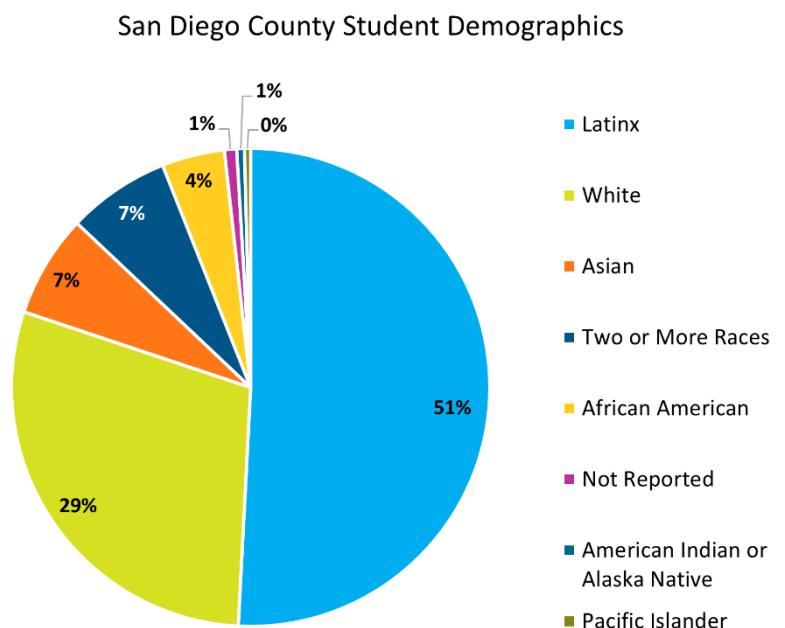
San Diego County is the second largest county in California by population and the fifth largest in the United States. According to the 2022 census data, San Diego County is currently home to over 3.2 million people. San Diego County is ethnically diverse, with residents who are 35% Hispanic, and nearly a quarter are immigrants. 10.7% of San Diego County residents live below the federal poverty line of \$24,860 or less annually for a family of four. The county's poverty numbers surpass the entire population of 93% of all other U.S. counties.

There were 476,760 students enrolled in San Diego County schools in the 2022-23 school year. Of those, 81,437 were enrolled in a charter school program. 243,349 (51%) were eligible for free and reduced priced meals in 2022-23 compared to 59.9% statewide. Students are served in our county by 768 schools in 42 school districts, 125 direct-funded charter schools, and the Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) which serves 12,000 students annually.

San Diego County Student Population by Ethnicity 2022-23

San Diego students are identified by CDE Dataquest (2022-23) as:

- Latinx 49.1%
- White 28.3 %
- Asian 6.7%
- Two or More Races 6.7%
- African American 4.1%
- Not Reported 0.8%
- American Indian or Alaska Native 0.5%
- Pacific Islander 0.4%



San Diego County School Districts

- Alpine Union School District
- Bonsall Unified School District
- Borrego Springs Unified School District
- Cajon Valley Union School District
- Cardiff School District
- Carlsbad Unified School District
- Chula Vista Elementary School District
- Coronado Unified School District
- Dehesa School District
- Del Mar Union School District
- Encinitas Union School District
- Escondido Union School District
- Escondido Union High School District
- Fallbrook Union Elementary District
- Fallbrook Union High School District
- Grossmont Union High School District
- Jamul-Dulzura Union School District
- Julian Union High School District
- Julian Union School District
- La Mesa-Spring Valley School District
- Lakeside Union School District
- Lemon Grove School District
- Mountain Empire Unified School District
- National School District
- Oceanside Unified School District
- Poway Unified School District
- Ramona Unified School District
- Rancho Santa Fe School District
- San Diego Unified School District
- San Dieguito Union High School District
- San Marcos Unified School District

- San Pasqual Union School District
- San Ysidro School District
- Santee School District
- Solana Beach School District
- South Bay Union School District
- Spencer Valley School District
- Sweetwater Union High School District
- Vallecitos School District
- Valley Center-Pauma Unified District
- Vista Unified School District
- Warner Unified School District

Expulsion Plan Requirements

Education Code - 49826

Each county superintendent of schools in counties that operate community schools pursuant to Section 1980, in conjunction with superintendents of the school districts within the county, shall develop a plan for providing educational services to all expelled pupils in that county.

The plan shall enumerate existing educational alternatives for expelled pupils, identify gaps in educational services to expelled pupils, and strategies for filling those service gaps. The plan shall also identify alternative placement for pupils who are expelled and placed in district Community Day School programs, but who fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan or who pose a danger to other district pupils, as determined by the governing board.

Each County superintendent of schools, in conjunction with the superintendents of the local school districts, shall submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction the County plan for providing educational services to all expelled pupils in the County no later than June 30, 2003, and shall submit a triennial update to the plan to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, including the outcome data pursuant to Section 48916. (1) on June 30th thereafter.

Education Code - 48916. (1)

At the time an expulsion of a pupil is ordered, the governing board of the school district shall ensure that an educational program is provided to the pupil who is subject to the expulsion order for the period of the expulsion, but only the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose in the annual Budget Act or other legislation, or both.

San Diego County Plan

Educational programs within San Diego County provide numerous opportunities for students who are in need of traditional and/or alternative educational programs. Individual school districts offer a broad spectrum of services and the San Diego County Office of Education offers additional options, providing a continuum of alternatives to expelled students.

Existing Interventions and Supports

The following are a list of interventions and supports employed at the site and district level throughout San Diego County to minimize the number of suspensions and expulsions and support expelled youth upon re-entry.

California Multi-Tiered System of Support (CA MTSS)

San Diego County school districts employ the California MTSS model. A comprehensive framework that aligns academic, behavioral, social-emotional learning, and mental health in a fully integrated system of support for the benefit of all students. CA MTSS offers the potential to create needed systemic change through intentional design and redesign of services and supports to quickly identify and match to the needs of all students. The MTSS framework is established to provide effective supports for districts and schools to meet the needs of each and every student in the most inclusive and equitable learning environment. 14 school districts in the county are participating in a School Climate Transformation grant that provides MTSS coaching and support.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The San Diego County school districts utilize PBIS as a strategy to prevent problematic behavior that can lead to suspension or expulsion. Within a PBIS systems, the school-wide expectations and rules are intentionally created with faculty, student, and community voice. Through instruction, comprehension and regular practice, all adults use this consistent set of behavior expectations and rules. When students do not meet behavioral expectations, PBIS schools view it as an opportunity for re-teaching, not punishing. Systems are created for regularly reviewing data and using data-based decision-making skills to drive action planning for school improvement. The goal of implementing PBIS data, systems, and practices that center equity is to improve outcomes. PBIS intentionally supports staff and student behavior, decision making, social competence and academic achievement. In 2023, San Diego County had 20 school districts who were recognized by the State for their schools PBIS Statewide implementation, including the Juvenile Court and Community Schools.

Community Schools Strategy

A community school strategy transforms a school into a place where educators, local community members, families, and students work together to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy development. As partners, they organize in- and out-of-school resources, supports, and opportunities so that young people thrive. SDCOE was awarded the 2022-23 California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP) Regional Technical Assistance Center contract to provide support to school districts in San Diego, Orange, and Imperial counties. In 2022-23, San Diego County had eight school districts who were awarded CCSPP implementation grants and an additional four school districts who were awarded planning grants.

Restorative Practices

Restorative practices are based on principles that emphasize the importance of positive relationships as central to building community. They promote values and principles that use inclusive, collaborative approaches. When broadly and consistently applied, they promote and strengthen positive, transformational school culture. Restorative practices involve processes that repair relationships when harm has occurred. Accountability is achieved through understanding impact, repairing harm and restoration, rather than through punitive or exclusionary discipline. Fifteen school districts in the county are partnering with the National Conflict Resolution Center to implement restorative justice practices as an alternative to suspension program.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a process whereby young people and adults build strong, respectful, and lasting relationships that facilitate co-learning to critically examine root causes of inequity, and to develop collaborative solutions that lead to personal, community, and societal well-being ([CASEL, 2020](#)). Through learning about and implementing systemic SEL, students have the opportunity to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions ([CASEL, n.d.](#)). The

transformative SEL Community of Practice is available to all school districts throughout the county.

School-Based Mental Health Services

SchoolLink is a partnership between the County of San Diego and local school districts to provide behavioral health services to students and families at schools. Services are provided at no or low cost to the family as authorized by the behavioral health provider's contract with the County of San Diego. Services can be provided during or outside of school hours, on-campus, in a community setting or home in some circumstances, based on the student's and family's needs. The SchoolLink providers have regional offices and are located at schools with a significant number of Medi-Cal and uninsured students.

Social Work and School Counseling Services

School social workers play an important role in education, serving as the link between the home, school, and community, providing direct and indirect services to students, families, and school employees to promote and support the academic, social, and behavioral success of students. They are trained mental health professionals providing services related to a student's social and emotional well-being. San Diego County currently has over 150 social workers employed in schools.

School counselors play a critical role in ensuring schools provide a safe, caring environment and that students have the necessary mindsets and behaviors to advance academic and social achievement outcomes. School counselors deliver programs that have an impact on student growth in three domain areas: academic development, career development, and social / emotional development.

Re-Entry Meetings

When youth are expelled and are returning from an expulsion placement, San Diego County school districts are utilizing re-entry meetings to bring together the student, family, the support team that assisted the student in meeting the conditions of the rehabilitation plan, and the team that will be supporting the student in their return to the comprehensive school. Often, the placement provides a transitional support person who communicates

with the returning district liaison to share student strengths and progress during the expulsion placement and ensure that the district is prepared for the student's return. During these meetings, a re-entry success plan is created, and the student is connected to supportive adults on campus as well as interventions and services to aide their academic, social, and behavioral growth during the transition from the expulsion placement and beyond.

Existing Educational Alternatives

Each school district offers alternatives to expulsion as well as educational alternatives for youth who are expelled and who do not pose a continuing danger to the physical safety of district pupils or others. These alternatives include:

- In lieu of expulsion behavioral contract with placement at a comprehensive district school
- Pre-expulsion referral to a district operated trauma informed behavioral program
- Pre-expulsion referral to a San Diego County Office of Education Community School
- Expulsion with suspended enforcement and placement at a comprehensive district school
- Expulsion with placement in an online learning program or district-operated homeschool
- Expulsion and connection to a district-authorized charter school
- Referral or expulsion placement in a district-operated Community Day School

Alternative Placement Process

For those expelled students who have been placed in a district community day school but who fail to meet the term or conditions of their rehabilitation plan or who pose a continuing danger to the physical safety of district pupils or others:

Step I

The School District of residence continues to maintain responsibility for developing a rehabilitation plan for the student, referring the student to an appropriate educational setting, and ensuring that an educational program is provided either within or outside the school district.

Step II

Expelled students who fail to meet the terms and conditions of the district rehabilitation plan may be referred to a different district school, another district program, a district-operated Community Day School Program, or the San Diego County Office of Education Community School.

For expelled students who are referred to a San Diego County Office of Education Community School (which is a permissive program) a Personalized Learning Plan will be developed with the students' parents and County Office of Education staff. Part of this plan will include a goal of returning to the school district of residence after the district expulsion term. If students are not successful in the county-operated program, they may be referred back to the district for possible review and re-placement.

SDCOE Juvenile Court and Community Schools

The San Diego County Office of Education will continue to provide an educational option for expelled students. The Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) facilitate the students' completion of the rehabilitation plan, while responsibility for the long-term educational needs of the student remains with the referring district.

JCCS provides a fully accredited educational program for school-age youth who have been expelled.

JCCS values diversity and strives to eradicate institutionalized racism and discrimination in all forms. The priority of JCCS is to raise the achievement of all students through the elimination of the racialized opportunity gap that negatively impacts our students of color. JCCS will accomplish this through the delivery of culturally and linguistically responsive standards-driven instruction, courageous and advocacy-oriented leadership, and relevant professional learning. All JCCS community members stand personally committed and professionally accountable for the achievement of this mission.

SDCOE JCCS Programs

Eastern San Diego County

- Cuyamaca Prep Community School
- East County Community School
- Project SAFE East

Northern San Diego County

- Escondido Community School
- Innovations Academy of Empowerment
- North County Technology Academy
- Project SAFE North

Metro/Central

- 37ECB Community School
- Bayside Community School
- Bridges Community School
- CTEC Community School
- Lindsay Community School
- Monarch (K-12)

Southern San Diego County

- South County Community School
- Southwest Prep
- Global Academy
- SOUL Academy

JCCS Services

The San Diego County Office of Education Juvenile Court and Community Schools offer the following services for expelled youth:

- Daily educational programs that meet for 300-360 minutes per day in community classrooms
- Direct instruction and/or contracted blended learning programs (e.g. face-to-face, independent study and/or online courses). Students are required to complete a minimum of 80 hours of educational product per five-credit course completion

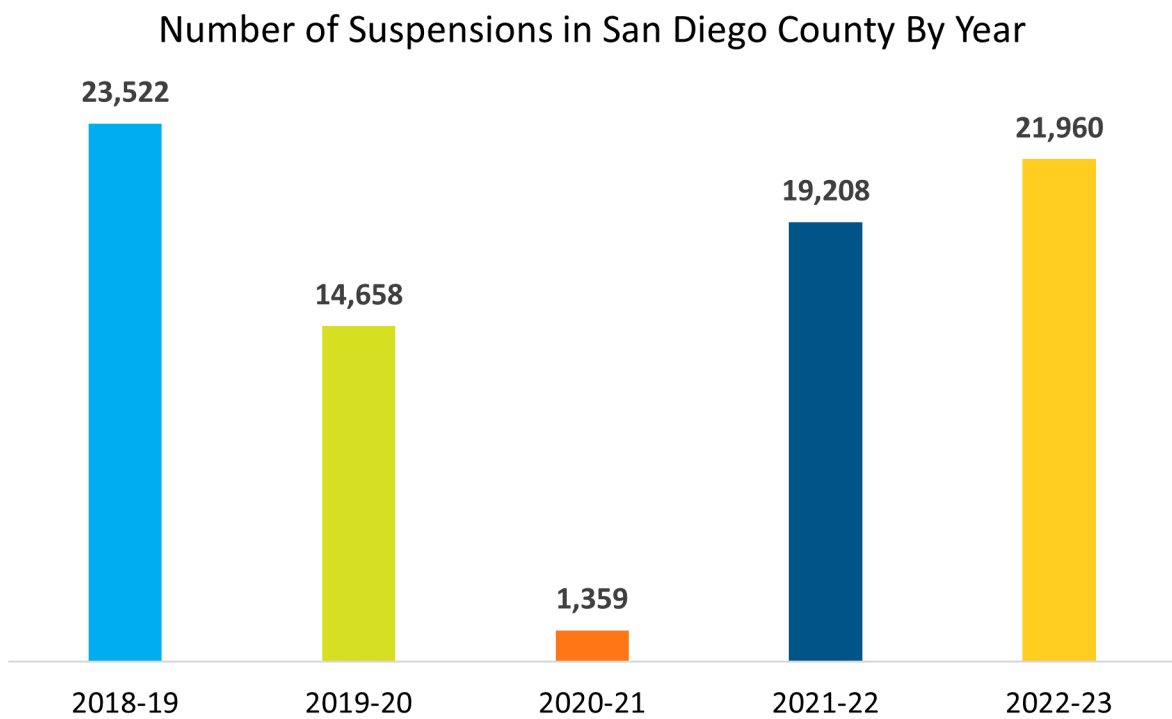
Community Schools Strategy

Student Attendance and Family Engagement (SAFE) teams meet weekly to collaborate on services and resources to support our students and families with social emotional needs, community-based services, and referrals, including support during transition between programs and schools. The SAFE team consists of counselors, social workers, parent family liaisons and transition technicians.

- MTSS teams meet weekly to support students with academic, attendance and behavioral needs
- On-site therapy services through various agency providers
- On-site agency partners to help link to Medi-Cal, medical referrals (mobile clinics for vision and dental)
- SEL lessons taught in the classroom
- Arts agency partnerships that infuse SEL within the art lessons
- Youth Development and Leadership Clubs (Friday Night Live)
- Restorative approaches to student needs aligned with PBIS

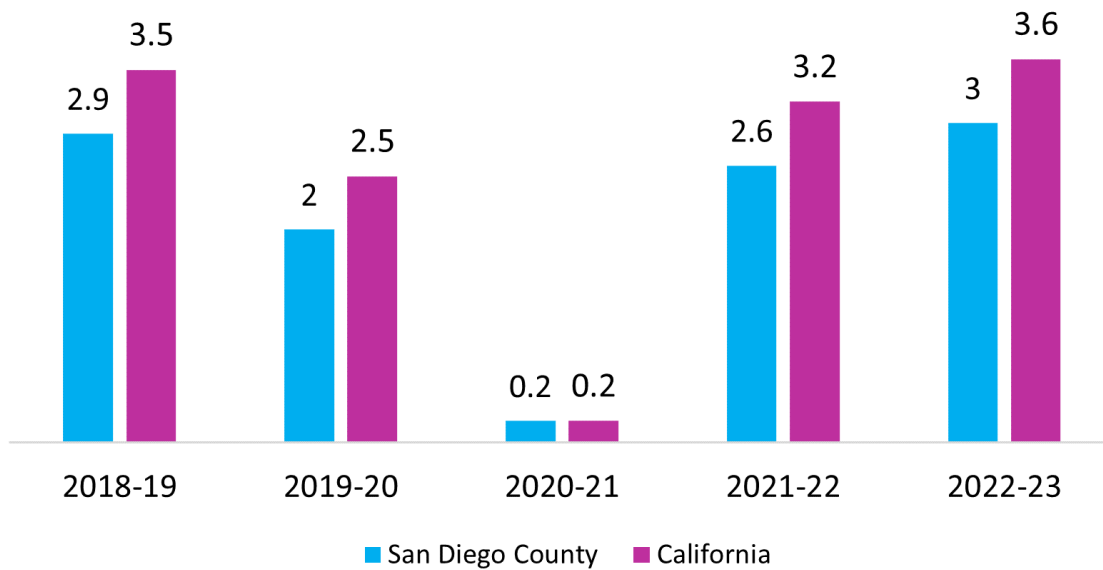
- University practicum placement for student interns from school programs in counseling, social work and/or criminal justice administration
- Career technical education offerings in an array of programs, such as food handlers certification, gardening, screen printing, wood working
- Field trips for students
- Parent workshops, coffee with the principal and parent excursions (field trips)
- On-site agency partner “The Movement” (college readiness, tutoring, empowerment)
- Early Childhood Development/Head Start with Teen Parent Specialized Academic Instruction
- Transportation support

San Diego County Suspension and Expulsion Data 2018-23



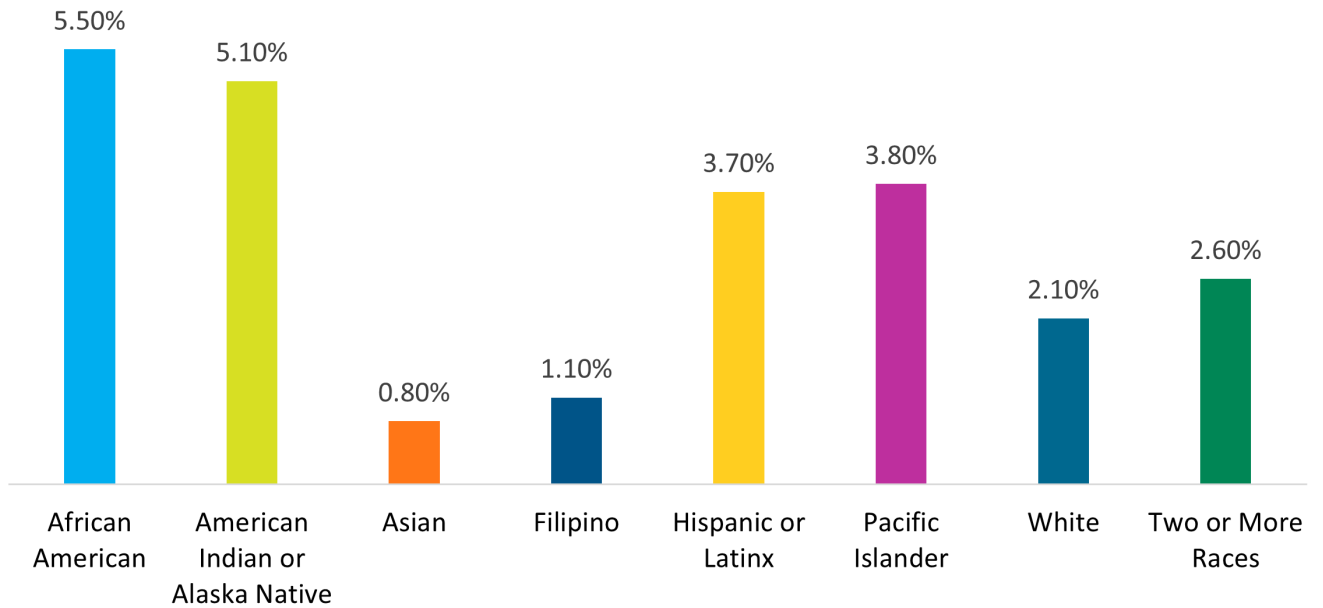
The number of students suspended in the 2022-23 school year decreased from the 2018-19 school year which was the last school year that was not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of suspensions in 2018-19 was 23,522, and in 2022-23 it was 21,960.

Suspension Rate by Year



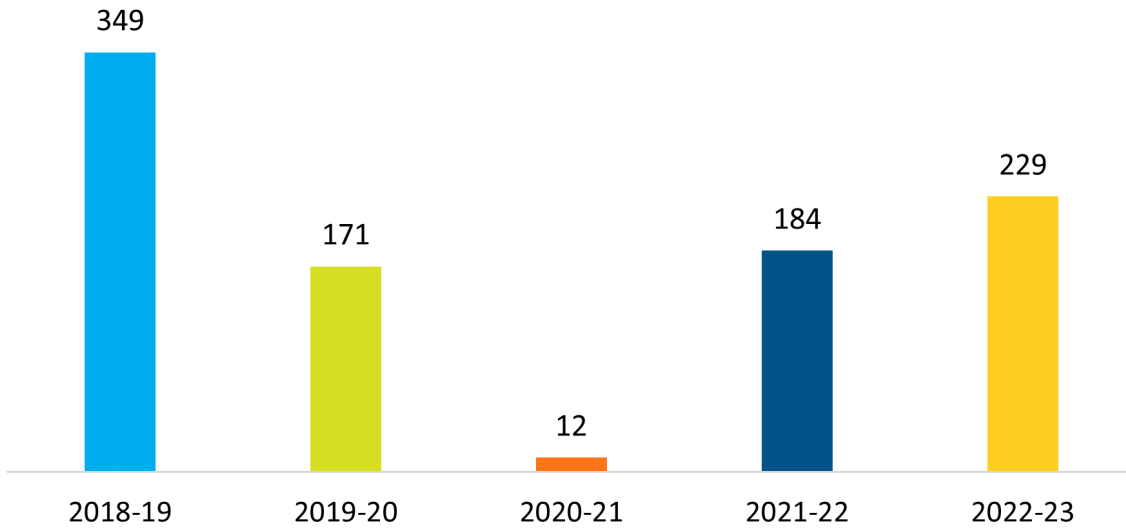
The suspension rate in San Diego County rose to 3.0% in the 2022-2023 school year due to the decline in enrollment between the two school years. Enrollment in San Diego County decreased from 526,792 students in 2018-19 to 497,710 students in 2022-2023. The 3.0% suspension rate in San Diego County is lower than the State rate of 3.6%, yet the 2022-23 suspension rate is the highest in San Diego County since the 2014-2015 school year.

2022-23 Suspension Rate By Ethnicity in San Diego County



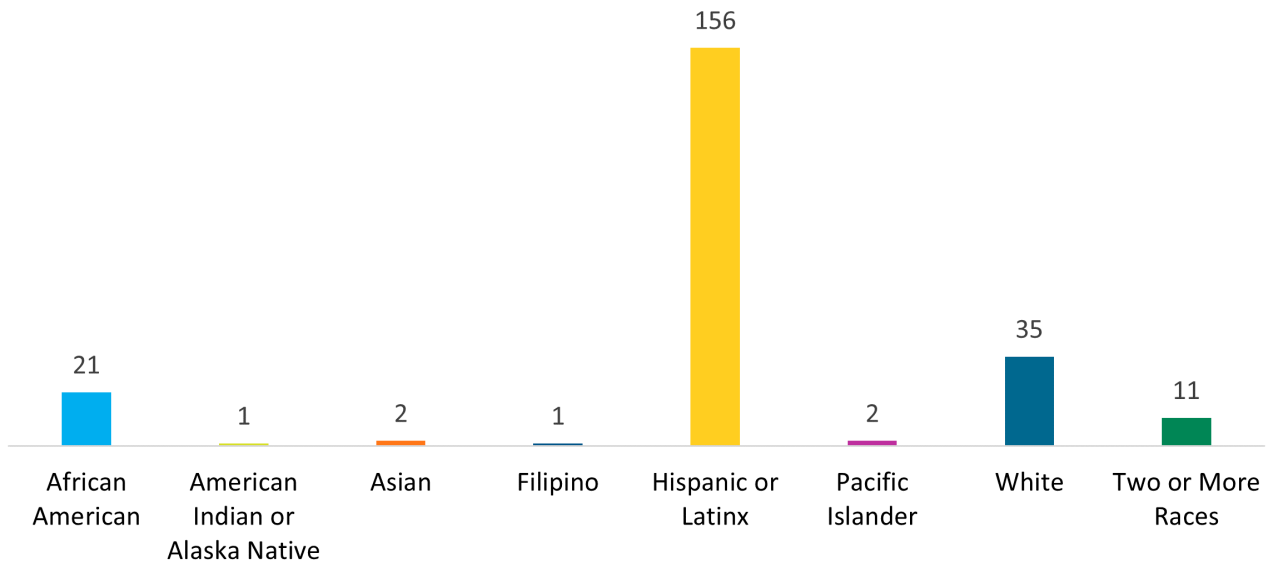
African American students were suspended at a rate of 5.5% in the 2022-23 school year, which was the highest rate for any ethnicity group. The second most suspended ethnicity group was American Indian or Alaska Native at 5.1%.

Number of Expulsions in San Diego County By Year



The number of students expelled in the 2022-23 school year decreased from the 2018-19 school year which was the last school year that was not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of expulsions in 2022-23 does represent a slight decrease in the rate of expulsions from .1% in 2018-19 to 0% in 2022-23.

2022-23 Expulsions By Ethnicity in San Diego County



African American students who make up 4.5% of the student population in San Diego County represented 21 of the 229 expulsions (9%) and Hispanic or Latinx students who make up 49.1% of the student population represented 156 of the 229 expulsions (68%).

Regional Articulation

The consistent regional articulation between districts and the San Diego County Office of Education has been occurring over the past 20 years. The San Diego County Office of Education provides quarterly meetings for the pupil services administrators representing the County's 42 school districts and SDCOE's Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS). These meetings provide opportunities for articulation and coordination between SDCOE and school districts on a regular basis. In addition, school districts work with regionally identified JCCS staff for placements for expelled students.

The San Diego County Office of Education worked in conjunction with the district Pupil Services administrators and Superintendents and JCCS staff in the development of the 2024 Countywide Plan for Expelled Students triennial report. The districts were provided an overview of the planning process at the regional articulation meetings and the small district Superintendents meetings. The representatives from each district reviewed the previous plan and provided feedback and recommendations on the gaps and strategies in serving expelled youth. Each district also submitted their alternative placement process for expelled youth, behavioral interventions utilized within each district to minimize the number of suspensions and expulsions, and strategies to support students returning from expulsion. A workgroup with representatives from SDCOE, JCCS, and the school districts compiled the information and collaboratively developed the 2024 triennial update.

Gaps and Strategies 2021-24

Gap 1

Students in grades 1 through 6 who are expelled do not have the same educational options available as do expelled youth who are in grades seven through twelve, due to the limited numbers of students who are expelled in these lower grades. These younger students cannot attend programs designed for middle and high school students.

Strategies

1. Expulsion and placement in district-operated community day school where available.
2. The K-6 school districts will continue to offer available options, which may include the following:

- Suspended expulsion with placement at the same school with the Other Means of Correction contract.
- Suspended expulsion with placement at a different school within the same district with the Other Means of Correction contract.

3. SDCOE will continue to offer placement at a centrally located community school serving elementary students.

4. Independent Study will also continue to be used as a placement option available through districts. When appropriate, JCCS will also offer elementary students the option of independent study through their blended learning model.

Updates

- Districts have increased the virtual learning options available within a district following the COVID-19 pandemic. Districts have utilized referrals to the district's virtual learning programs for elementary students who are expelled.
- Districts and SDCOE will connect families to charter schools that will consider enrolling elementary students who have been expelled.
- SDCOE will work collaboratively with districts to identify and offer placement options within SDCOE operated school sites for elementary-age students who are expelled. These offerings may include placement at Monarch School or an SDCOE-operated community school that serves elementary age students, or an Independent Study program using JCCS itinerant teachers.

Gap 2

Expelled students who live in rural areas of the county, and who would not be appropriately served through independent study contracts, do not always have access to traditional, seat time based, and classroom programs.

Strategies

1. School districts will use independent study with more on-site meetings when appropriate.
2. JCCS will use schools operated at facilities operated by County probation when they are proximal to students in these circumstances.
3. Districts and JCCS will develop and implement the capacity to offer synchronous virtual instruction as a means of reaching student who live in remote areas but have access to internet. Access can be aided by providing hot spots when necessary to connect to virtual support.

4. Additional transportation opportunities will be explored beyond a bus pass, including rideshare agreements.

Updates

- During the years of 2021-23, only six students were expelled from rural school districts.
- JCCS itinerant independent study teachers continue to be available to meet with students in their rural communities.
- SDCOE will offer students from rural communities placement in school-based programs and will collaboratively address transportation barriers through the offer of bus passes.

Gap 3

Expelled students do not always have assistance in transitioning back to district schools. Personal, social and academic adjustment should be considered and supported to ensure successful re-entry.

Strategies

1. SDCOE Student Support Services will convene a workgroup of pupil service administrators to study the experiences and needs of students returning from, and who have returned from expulsion. The committee will identify specific needs, propose strategies, and promote the adoption of these strategies.

2. Administrators and counselors in alternative education settings serving expelled students will host re-entry plan meetings with the school counselors of students ready for return to district schools. Each meeting will involve the counselors, student, and the student's parents in developing a plan to support the student's personal, social and academic needs as they re-enter the district.

3. Restorative practices will be used, when appropriate, to help restore the relationships damaged by the act that led to the expulsion, and to assist students in reintegration into the school communities from which they were expelled.

4. School districts and JCCS will train their employees:

- To understand the impact of trauma
- To recognize that negative behavior may be an expression of coping strategies learned in response to past or continuing trauma exposure

- On strategies employees can use to avoid triggering negative coping strategies
- On de-escalation strategies

5. SDCOE Student Support Services will provide training for school personnel on restorative and trauma-informed practices.

Updates

- JCCS Student transition technicians and school counselors help to facilitate student's re-entry from JCCS to the district of expulsion by assisting families in gathering the documentation related to the completion of the rehabilitation plan and applying for readmission. The JCCS Student Transition Technicians and School Counselors will communicate with the district as needed to share information about the student's progress in JCCS.
- Regional Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) teams have been developed to review student progress in their expulsion placement and refer for appropriate supports.
- Students and families are offered counseling with the Mobile Adolescent Services Team (MAST) upon enrollment, as well as through regional partner agencies.
- The student rehabilitation plans have been uploaded to the SIS to increase access and awareness of the student's needs.
- Districts are invited to participate in pre-release meetings in detention facilities, in-person or virtual.

Gap 4

Districts do not always know when a student has enrolled in JCCS, another school system or when they have simply not enrolled anywhere.

Strategies

1. JCCS will confirm with the district of residence, the enrollment of all students entering their system on the day they enroll.
2. In cases in which JCCS has not initiated contact with the school district to confirm enrollment, school districts will investigate whether expelled students are enrolled with JCCS or another school system, within five days of making the referral.
3. In cases in which a district finds that an expelled student is not enrolled, or is unable to determine the student's enrollment status, the case will be referred to the supervisor of attendance for the district, and when appropriate, to the district SARB.

4. Expand the use of enrollment centers to standardize the admissions process for JCCS.
5. JCCS will make “view only” access to their student information system available for referring districts who request it.

Updates

- JCCS confirms with the district of residence the enrollment of all students entering their system on the day they enroll and request an enrollment packet if one has not been sent.
- JCCS will contact a district when the district has sent an enrollment packet and the family has not contacted the JCCCS site to enroll.
- JCCS will contact a district regarding a student who has been referred and is refusing placement.
- Districts can investigate a student’s enrollment through CALPADs when the enrollment of a student who is expelled is unknown.

Gaps and Strategies 2024-27

NEW Gap 5

There is a lack of understanding, communication, and collaboration between districts and JCCS about the programs and services available to students who are expelled.

Strategies

1. JCCS will develop a universal brochure that will be disseminated to school districts for use with families and district personnel.
2. JCCS administrators will present at the regional articulation meetings with the school district student services administrators.
3. JCCS administrators will meet regularly with the student services administrators in the region that they serve students.
4. Develop joint programs and services between districts and JCCS to better serve expelled students. This could include academic support programs, counseling services, or vocational training opportunities that are tailored to the needs of these students.
5. Provide cross-training and professional development opportunities for staff in both districts and JCCS to increase understanding of each other's programs and services.

The 2024-2027 Triennial Report of the Countywide Plan for Expelled students was submitted to the San Diego County Board of Education for adoption on May 8, 2024.