



Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

May 12, 2025



**Saint Paul Public Schools
Special Education
Advisory Council**

Welcome & Grounding



Introduction to SEAC

What is SEAC:

SEAC is a group of parents, guardians, staff and community members that meet monthly “to increase the involvement of parents of children with disabilities in policymaking and decision-making”.

Source MN Statute 125.A.24

How does SEAC work:

At SEAC meetings members are informed and share input to improve programs and systems for students with disabilities and their families.



“What are Parents Supposed To Do At SEAC?”

- **Learn** something that will benefit your child.
- **Share** what you learn with people in your community (neighbor, friend, child’s teacher....).
- **Ask questions and share input.**

*For more check out PACER’s SEAC materials.



Member and Guest Introductions

Share:

- your name
- if you're a member or guest
- a little about yourself or your child
- how has your child or a student you work with amazed you?



Agenda

6:05 p.m. Introductions

6:15 p.m. Approve April minutes

6:20 p.m. Student Panel

7:20 p.m. SpEd Update: Heidi Nistler, Assistant Superintendent Specialized Services

7:40 p.m. Forum, Reflection and Resource Moment (20 min)

8:00 p.m. Adjourn



Approve Minutes: April minutes



Student Panel

- Kathleen, Focus Beyond
- Kateri, Junior at Johnson High School
- Jackson, Junior at Washington Tech. Magnet School
- Khia, Sophomore at Washington Tech. Magnet School



Special Education Update

1. Special education program names
2. Mandatory CEIS overview and next steps



SPED Program Names

- Currently, specialized (setting 3) programs are referred to by the most common disabilities of students in the programs
 - ASD/DCD
 - EBD
- However, many students served in these programs do not have these disabilities
 - Not inclusive of all students
 - Focus on disability name does not emphasize student's strengths
- Many districts have transitioned from disability-based program names to meaningful words or acronyms



Changing SPED Program Names - Why?

Promotes Inclusion

- Using program names (like “REACH” or “SUN”) focuses on the skills and strengths, not the student’s disabilities or needs.

Avoids Stigmatizing Language

- Disability-based labels can unintentionally reduce a student’s identity to their diagnosis, reinforcing stereotypes.

Highlights Strengths and Supports

- Program names emphasize the services and resources in place, shifting attention to growth and opportunity.

Builds Respect and Belonging

- Inclusive language fosters a positive, respectful school culture where all students are seen for their full potential.



Brainstorming Meaningful Words

What are words that:

- Describe your child's strengths?
- Describe what is most important about school to your child and your family?
- Describe your hopes for the future for your child?



What is Mandatory CEIS?

Mandatory Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) in special education refers to required activities and supports that a district must implement when it is found to have **significant disproportionality** in the identification, placement, or discipline of students with disabilities based on race or ethnicity.

- Purpose is to early support, reduce discipline, build capacity
- Required by IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- Target Group: Primarily directed toward students who are not currently identified as needing special education, but under mandatory CEIS, the funds can be used for students with disabilities as well
- A district is mandated to use 15% of its IDEA Part B funds for CEIS when the state identifies it as having significant disproportionality
 - Saint Paul Public Schools: Approx. \$1.4 million per year
 - Required for 3 years, can choose to continue past 3 years



Mandatory CEIS: Why are we here?

- 3 years of disproportionality in suspensions
 - Based on school years 21-22, 22-23, and 23-24
 - Risk ratio of 3.0: *Black or African American students with disabilities are more than three times as likely to be suspended compared to all students (overall dismissals AND more than 10 cumulative days of suspension)*
 - See next slide
- Required CEIS plan & \$1.4M funding
 - Plan due to MDE by July 1, 2025
 - Must address areas of disproportionality - students with and without disabilities
- Parent input is essential
 - Public reporting is required
 - Partnership with SEAC for planning and communication



Mandatory CEIS

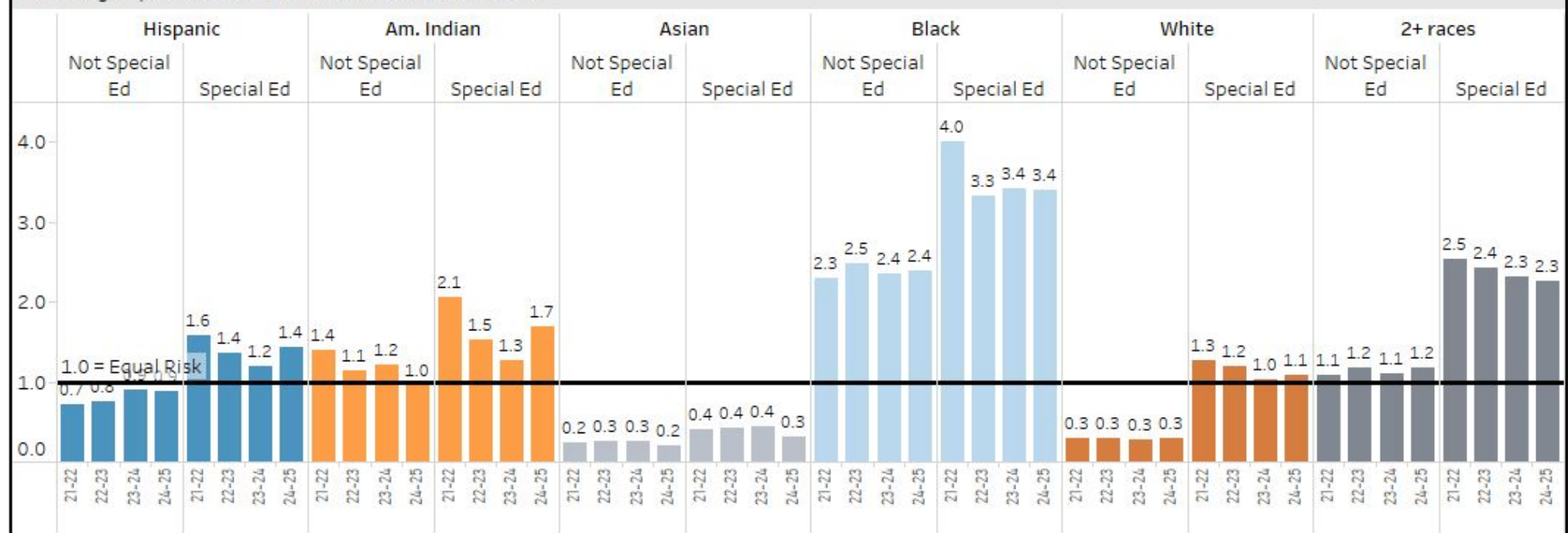
- Risk ratio of 1 or More Days of Suspension or Dismissal*

Risk Ratio of 1 or More Suspension or Dismissal

Q: How much more likely is it that a student from a given group will receive 1 or more Suspension or Dismissal?

Timeframe: Entire School Year | Disaggregated by: Race, Special Ed Status | Resolution(s) Included: Suspension or Dismissal

*Student groups with fewer than 10 students are not shown.



Mandatory CEIS

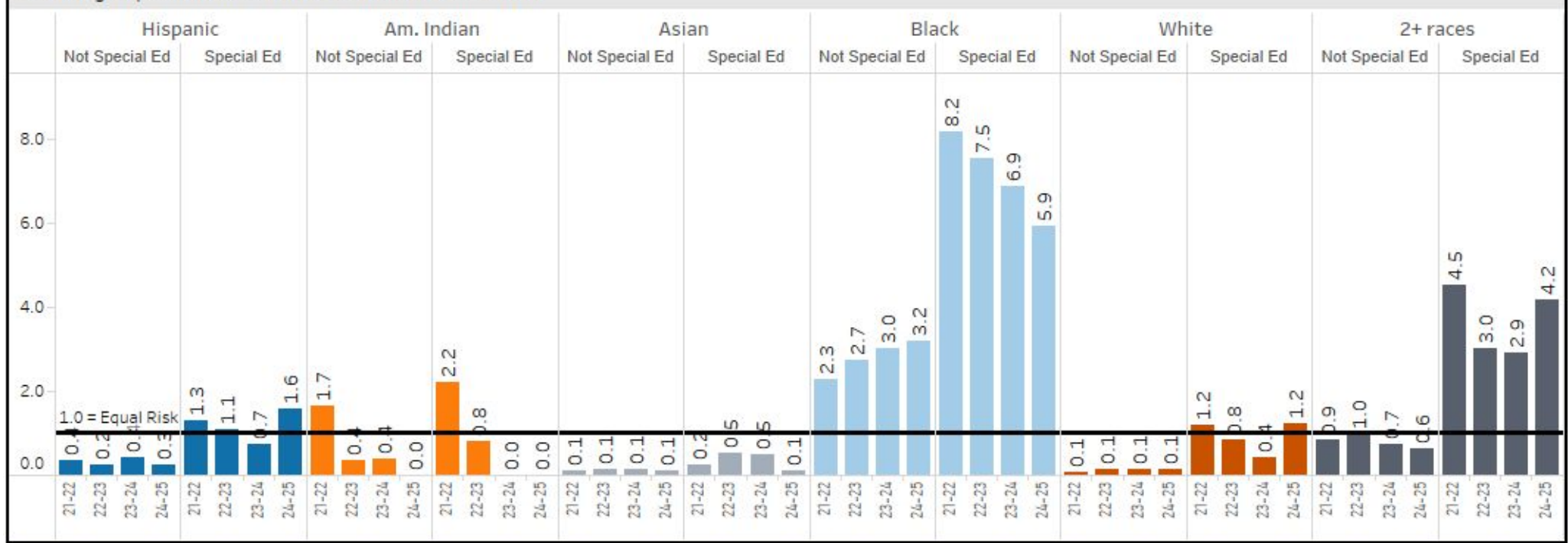
- Risk ratio of more than 10 days of Suspension or Dismissal*

Risk Ratio of 10 or More Cumulative Days of Suspension or Dismissal

Q: How much more likely is it that a student from a given group will receive 10 or more cumulative days of suspension or dismissal?

Timeframe: Entire School Year | Disaggregated by: Race, Special Ed Status | Resolution(s) Included: Suspension or Dismissal

*Student groups with fewer than 10 students are not shown.



What can Mandatory CEIS funds be used for?

(1) **Professional development** for teachers and other school staff to deliver strong academic and behavioral interventions

(2) Providing educational and behavioral **evaluations, services, and supports**



Mandatory CEIS Next Steps

May

- Attending MDE webinars
- Starting to gather some preliminary input (principals)

June

- Create tentative plan, get additional feedback/input
- Write application on how we will use these funds
- Create job descriptions, post positions

July/August

- Prepare for upcoming school year - communication to schools, SEAC, Board of Education



SEAC Next Steps

Tonight

- Heidi provide overview of Mandatory CEIS and upcoming process

June

- Heidi provide engagement opportunities for SEAC
- SEAC provide feedback and input



SEAC Forum - Reflections & Resource Moment

Open time for...

- hearing parent voice
- sharing stories from the disability community
- giving feedback for future agenda items
- sharing SUMMER resources



Summer Resources

[Pacer Center](#)

[Boost your child's learning over the summer](#)

[Ramsey County Children's Mental Health Collaborative-Families Bulleting Board](#)

[MN Disability Hub](#)

St. Paul Parks and Recreation

[Summer camps and activities](#)

[Adapted Recreation](#)

[MN State Parks](#)

[Summer activities](#)

[I can! programs](#)





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**Next meeting: Monday, June 2nd
HYBRID join us in-person or virtually**

