



# Illinois State Board of Education

Dr. Tony Sanders, State Superintendent of Education

Dr. Steven Isoye, Chair of the Board

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## 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, 2026**.

| DISCIPLINE IMPROVEMENT PLAN                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                      |                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Name of School District/Charter School:<br><b>Evanston/Skokie School District 65</b>                                                                                                          | School Year:<br><b>2025-2026</b>                                     | Board Approval Date(s):                        |
| Link to district website where plan is posted: <a href="https://www.district65.net/learning/culture-climate">https://www.district65.net/learning/culture-climate</a>                          |                                                                      |                                                |
| School District/Charter School Address: <b>1500 McDaniel Ave. - Evanston, IL 60201</b>                                                                                                        |                                                                      |                                                |
| Superintendent/Administrator Name: <b>Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent</b>                                                                                                                    |                                                                      |                                                |
| <b><u>Discipline Improvement Plan Team</u></b><br>Districts are encouraged to convene a Discipline Improvement Plan Team to address exclusionary discipline and/or racial disproportionality. |                                                                      |                                                |
| <b>Team Leader:</b>                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                      |                                                |
| <b>Name</b><br>Bryon Harris                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Position/Title</b><br>Director of Climate and Safety              | <b>Email Address</b><br>harrisb@district65.net |
| <b>Team Members:</b>                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                      |                                                |
| <b>Name</b>                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Position/Title</b>                                                | <b>Email Address</b>                           |
| Donna Cross                                                                                                                                                                                   | Executive Director of Research, Assessment, Accountability, and Data | crossd@district65.net                          |
| Jessica Plaza                                                                                                                                                                                 | Director of MTSS and SEL                                             | plazaj@district65.net                          |
| 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 of Illinois school districts for the exclusionary discipline metric of racial disproportionality. District 65 recognizes that this is a concern for our students as it has a correlation to academic success of our students of color. Additionally it indicates that we have continued work that is necessary to create learning environments where students feel like they belong and where their identities and cultures are represented.

Racial disproportionality is defined as the overrepresentation of students of color or white students in comparison to their total enrollment as of October 1 of the school year in which the data are collected, specifically with respect to the use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. This calculation is conducted using the same methodology established by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

District 65's identification was made in accordance with Illinois compliance requirements, specifically Section 2-3.162 of the Illinois School Code, which requires the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to annually determine the top 20 percent of districts in exclusionary discipline metrics.

This designation underscores the district's responsibility to critically examine discipline practices, implement corrective action plans where necessary, ensure equitable treatment and outcomes for all students and ensure that we are using culturally responsive teaching practices in all of our classrooms.

## **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, 4 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. This is down from 7 schools when last reported in SY24/25. Kingsley Elementary School has an average population of 26% of African American students. However, African American students account for 80% of disciplinary infractions. Our Pre-K school program which also looks at this data has an average of 33% of African-American students. However, African-American Pre-K students account for 82% of disciplinary infractions. Haven Middle School has an average population of 20% of African American students; however, they account for 63% of the disciplinary infractions. Dewey Elementary School has an average of 15% of African American students; however, they account for 54% of the infractions. While disproportionality exists at 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.

**District 65 Behavior Incident Data: All Discipline Types**

**SY25/26**

| <b>School</b> | <b>Percent enrollment of African American Students</b> | <b>Percent of incidents attributed to African American Students</b> | <b>Disproportionality Rate</b> | <b>Change in Disp. Rate from SY24-25</b> |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tier 3</b> |                                                        |                                                                     |                                |                                          |
| Kingsley      | 26%                                                    | 80%                                                                 | 54                             | +21                                      |
| Haven         | 20%                                                    | 63%                                                                 | 43                             | +1                                       |
| <b>Tier 2</b> |                                                        |                                                                     |                                |                                          |
| Dewey         | 15%                                                    | 54%                                                                 | 39                             | +36                                      |
| Lincolnwood   | 31%                                                    | 70%                                                                 | 39                             | -17                                      |
| Dawes         | 27%                                                    | 59%                                                                 | 32                             | -9                                       |
| Nichols       | 17%                                                    | 49%                                                                 | 32                             | +9                                       |
| Oakton        | 41%                                                    | 71%                                                                 | 30                             | -1                                       |
| <b>Tier 1</b> |                                                        |                                                                     |                                |                                          |
| Chute         | 29%                                                    | 48%                                                                 | 19                             | -7                                       |
| Walker        | 23%                                                    | 42%                                                                 | 19                             | -16                                      |
| Lincoln       | 19%                                                    | 37%                                                                 | 18                             | -8                                       |
| King Arts     | 40%                                                    | 57%                                                                 | 17                             | -4                                       |
| Orrington     | 8%                                                     | 25%                                                                 | 17                             | -31                                      |
| Rice          | 46%                                                    | 60%                                                                 | 14                             | +12                                      |
| Willard       | 10%                                                    | 14%                                                                 | 4                              | -40                                      |
| Park          | 30%                                                    | 31%                                                                 | 1                              | -36                                      |
| Washington    | 12%                                                    | 13%                                                                 | 1                              | -58                                      |
| Bessie Rhodes | 8%                                                     | 8%                                                                  | 0                              | -29                                      |

| Change in Tier from SY24-25 to SY25-26 |              |              |
|----------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| School                                 | SY24-25 Tier | SY25-26 Tier |
| Chute                                  | 2            | 1            |
| Dawes                                  | 3            | 2            |
| Dewey                                  | 1            | 2            |
| Haven                                  | 3            | 3            |
| JEH                                    | 3            | 3            |
| King Arts                              | 1            | 1            |
| Kingsley                               | 2            | 3            |
| Lincoln                                | 2            | 1            |
| Lincolnwood                            | 3            | 2            |
| Nichols                                | 1            | 2            |
| Oakton                                 | 2            | 2            |
| Orrington                              | 3            | 1            |
| Park                                   | 2            | 1            |
| Rice                                   | 1            | 1            |
| Rhodes                                 | 2            | 1            |
| Walker                                 | 2            | 1            |
| Washington                             | 3            | 1            |
| Willard                                | 3            | 1            |

**District 65 Incident Rate and Rate Ratio for All Behavioral Incidents (Levels 1–5):**

- *Incident Rate = Total Incidents ÷ Total Enrollment*
- *Rate Ratio = Incident Rate (Students of Color) ÷ Incident Rate (White Students)*
  - White Students Incident Rate ≈ 0.85
  - Students of Color Incident Rate ≈ 1.76
  - Rate Ratio (Students of Color to White Students) ≈ 2.08

Students of color experienced an average of 1.76 discipline incidents per student, compared to 0.85 for White students. This results in a rate ratio of 2.08, indicating that students of color experience disciplinary incidents at just over twice the rate of their White peers.

### ISBE Exclusionary Discipline Data (OSS and Expulsion)

- SY24-25 District Suspension Rate: 0.3307 (second lowest in the State)
- SY24-25 District Racial Disproportionality Rate for Exclusionary Discipline: 3.8254

### District Racial Disproportionality Rate for Exclusionary Discipline by Year

| School Year | Racial Disproportionality Rate<br>(Exclusionary Discipline Only (OSS/ISS)) |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2018        | 5.8667                                                                     |
| 2019        | 3.4211                                                                     |
| 2020        | 3.6691                                                                     |
| 2021        | 0                                                                          |
| 2022        | 5.5269                                                                     |
| 2023        | 6.1302                                                                     |
| 2024        | 0                                                                          |
| 2025        | 3.8254                                                                     |

### Identifying the cause

As we examine the disproportionality data within our district, we recognize that these patterns do not exist in isolation. They are reflective of broader systemic and historical inequities that have shaped educational institutions across Illinois and the United States. Well-documented racist educational practices and the longstanding academic disenfranchisement of students of color—particularly African American students—have created enduring structural conditions that continue to influence outcomes today.

An internal review of our district demographics reveals that the majority of District 65 staff members do not reflect the cultural background of the targeted student population discussed in this plan and are reflected in our discipline disproportionality data. Additionally, discipline data

indicates that most infractions involving African American students are logged by educators who are not African American. While this does not imply intent, it does signal the need to examine this trend within our established disciplinary systems. Addressing disproportionality requires a deeper dive into our district expectations and a systemic reflection.

In response, District 65 has strengthened Tier 1, whole-school practices during the 2025–2026 school year to create more proactive, relationship-centered learning environments. Through our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework, schools are implementing structured morning meetings and schoolwide town halls designed to build belonging, reinforce community norms, and promote positive student engagement, as well as weekly Tier 1 social-emotional lessons in all PreK-8th grade classrooms.

Additionally, In collaboration the Climate and Safety and MTSS departments have delivered two districtwide trainings for all staff addressing the District Behavior Response Continuum. These sessions focus on ensuring equitable and developmentally appropriate responses to student behavior, clarifying expectations, and reinforcing the district's primary behavior management framework. By training all employees, we are working to ensure consistent, aligned, and equitable approaches to student discipline across schools. The Climate and Safety and MTSS teams also provided two targeted trainings for our Lunch and Recess staff members in our K-8th grade schools in order to review setting clear and consistent behavior expectations, discuss equitable and developmentally appropriate responses to student behavior, and identify activities that increase student engagement in expected behaviors during lunch and recess.

Staff members have also engaged in de-escalation and crisis prevention intervention training to strengthen their ability to defuse situations before behaviors escalate to higher-level disciplinary responses. This proactive investment in adult skill-building is essential to reducing exclusionary practices and creating safer, more supportive school environments. This training continues to be

offered on a rolling basis so that all schools have at least 12 staff members fully certified in de-escalation and crisis prevention intervention.

### **District-wide Training**

District 65 provides crisis prevention intervention training and deescalation training for school staff. The training offers equitable behavior management strategies to address and manage student behaviors. In SY25/26, 175 staff will have been trained in crisis prevention intervention strategies.

### **Improvement Action Plan**

Our district discipline improvement plan is ongoing, we have determined that a multi-tiered plan would be most effective in decreasing the actions that have led 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 175 staff members across all schools, early childhood staff, before and after school staff.
- Relationship building and Intervention support from Family and Community Engagement Liaison (FACE) at the Elementary and Middle School level.
- Restorative Conference
- New bullying procedure and follow up process in alignment with the revisions to

the IL school code

- SEL curriculum for PreK-8th Grade (Character Strong)
- SEL and behavior MTSS framework available to all schools aligned with the academic and attendance MTSS frameworks
- Required district approval for exclusionary discipline
- Climate and Safety team presence and School Climate and Culture Team meetings
- The District 65 Student Support Committee comprising District 65 Administration and District 65 Union Leadership meet on a monthly basis 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/Behavior Response Continuum and its consistent use across all schools and grade levels
- District led training for all school leaders regarding building climate and safety expectations.

We have identified 5 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 Dewey Elementary School, Lincolnwood Elementary School, Dawes Elementary School, Oakton Elementary School, Nichols 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
- Intervention support from FACE Liaison at the Elementary and Middle School level.
- Intervention and planned support from the School Counselor at the Middle School

level.

- Data review meetings with the school-based SIT, CARES, Culture and Climate, and SEL teams.
- Staff data sharing and reflection with school leaders
- Implementation of school-wide Tier 1 behavior management practices; school leader led with district support
- Restorative conferencing book study for Middle School Counselors
- CPI verbal de-escalation training for all educators
  - Mandating 1-2 Building administrators become trainers to lead ongoing support to their staff

- **Tier 3 Interventions:**

- All of tier 1 and tier 2
- Intervention support from the School Counselor at the Middle School level.
- Data review meeting with the school culture and climate team, and CARES Team and admin to notify of status as disproportionate numbers and to develop a Culture Improvement Plan
- District 65 Director of Climate and Safety school meetings to address student behavior infractions.
- Datadashboard for schools to review current discipline data.
- CPI verbal de-escalation training for district staff in all buildings.
- CARES Team members trained across districts in Crisis Prevention Intervention Training.

### **Goal, Timeframe, Success Criteria and Method of Evaluation**

We are prioritizing the development of ambitious, measurable goals to drive marked

improvement, particularly within our Tier 3 schools. While these schools are identified for intensive support, we will continue strengthening Tier 1 systems to ensure foundational practices are implemented with fidelity and are effectively reducing disproportionality at the universal level. As we assess our data, we are focused on two primary goals:

#### Goal 1: Reduce Disproportionality in Tier 3 Schools

District 65 Administration will partner closely with the three identified Tier 3 schools to reduce their disproportionality rates to 25 or below, as outlined in the table below. This will include targeted staff coaching, ongoing data reviews, professional learning focusing on appropriate de-escalation strategies,, and progress monitoring through discipline data reviews to ensure sustained improvement. Review of the Five Essentials categories; Support Environment and Collaborative Teachers. Review of student driven feedback from mySAEBRS (Grades 2-8th) and Panorama (Grades 3-8th) data. Implementation into school culture and climate work plans.

#### Goal 2: Reduce Districtwide Disproportionality for African American Students

We will decrease the overall rate of disproportionality in discipline infractions for African American students across the district. This work will include strengthening Tier 1 instructional and behavioral practices, examining referral patterns, and implementing accountability structures to address systemic disparities. These goals reflect our commitment to equity, data-driven decision-making, and ensuring safe and supportive learning environments for all students.

#### **Method of Evaluation:**

The Climate and Safety Department provides a tiered level of support to each school within the district through monthly reviews of discipline data. This review includes overall monthly infractions, identification of students with the highest number of referrals, racial disproportionality trends, and detailed behavior referral logs. In addition, we analyze

teacher-specific data to determine whether discipline patterns indicate the need for targeted professional development or coaching. We also examine student-level data to identify those who may require MTSS interventions, individualized safety/support plans, or additional tiered level of support. Moving forward, we will continue to establish clear benchmarks for each Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention support, along with defined implementation timelines and progress monitoring protocols to ensure accountability and measurable impact.