



Hazel Crest School District 152 ½
Discipline Improvement Plan 2025-26

Data Analysis and Identified Trends:

Hazel Crest School District 152.5 Suspension Data
ISBE Data Source

School Year	Total Enrollment	Suspension Rate	Top 20%	Suspension Rank
2020	931	4.83%	Yes	151
2022	849	23.79%	Yes	11
2023	868	23.61%	Yes	20
2024	829	29.91%	Yes	243
2025	849	14.65%	Yes	50

Hazel Crest School District 152½ is among the top 20 percent of districts for out-of-school suspensions over the past five years. We are one of the few predominantly African American school districts in the south suburbs, with a 90–95 percent African American student population and an average mobility rate of 14.43 percent over the past six years. Despite reducing our suspension rate by nearly 50 percent—from 29.92% in 2024 to 14.65% in 2025—we remain among the top 20 percent. It is important to note that ISBE’s comparison system ranks districts without accounting for differences in demographics, size, grade configuration, or geographic context, creating a constantly shifting target that makes meeting the criteria exceedingly difficult.

Our response to student misbehavior had been uneven and inconsistent. Too often, we were reactive rather than proactive. Student behavior went unaddressed at the classroom level, and students were allowed to display and engage in poor social behavior until they were deemed out of control, prompting administrator assistance or requiring it. As a result, out-of-school suspension is overused.

Some of the root causes of the discipline issues we still face as a district stem from high teacher turnover and a lack of strong classroom management skills among both new and experienced staff. Additionally, there is limited parent involvement to support the school in addressing poor student behavior.

The Discipline Plan

In 2023, we adopted the district-wide student behavior management system of the Safe and Civil Schools CHAMPS model. Entering our second full year of CHAMPS implementation, we continue to experience high teacher turnover and, each year, have had to train and retrain teachers in classroom management and expectations. Higher-than-average mobility and teacher turnover have contributed to some of the severe out-of-school suspension rates we have experienced over the past 5 years. In reviewing our 2024-2025 suspension data prior to receiving this notice, we had already begun developing school exclusion interventions, and as a result, we reduced our suspension rate from 29.92% in 2024 to 15.65% in 2025.

PRONG 1: Goal 1: Reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions by 90% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

We are continuing with the plan developed and approved by our Board on April 22, 2025. We identify the top three areas of concern using 2024–2025 discipline data and categorize the data by type (e.g., physical altercations involving peers, hitting adults). We identify 5–7 viable interventions to support students in crisis (e.g., Conflict Resolution, Restorative Practices, Intensive Support). Next, we review our student data to identify students in each category listed above. Each group is assigned a 6–8-week intervention session with a social worker or behavioral interventionist, each lasting 30 minutes. Students needing intensive support receive one semester of sessions covering Conflict Resolution, Restorative Practices, Self-Regulation, Responsible Decision-Making, Goal-Directed Behavior, and Personal Responsibility.

Next, we reviewed our student data to identify students in each category listed above. Each group is assigned a 6–8-week intervention session with a social worker or behavioral interventionist, and each session lasts 30 minutes. In addition to these supports, we hire two additional social workers, bringing our total to four districtwide. We also partner with the South Cook Intermediate Service Center (ISC4) to secure two Student Advocates—one per building—to provide additional wraparound services and deliver crisis interventions as needed. In addition, we have counselors funded through the Stronger Connections grant, which provides additional wraparound services for students in crisis. Students needing intensive support receive one semester of sessions covering Conflict Resolution, Restorative Practices, Self-Regulation, Responsible Decision-Making, Goal-Directed Behavior, and Personal Responsibility.

PRONG 2 Goal 2: Increase parental involvement of the identified students by 50% by the end of the 2025-2026 school year:

We require our parents or guardians of each identified student to attend Parent University sessions focused on social-emotional learning. As part of the student's behavioral intervention plan, parents participate in ongoing progress-monitoring meetings to review their child's growth and needs. We continue to assist parents in developing an action plan to implement at home, reinforcing the strategies used in school. Additionally, we provide families with access to external counseling and mentoring resources, as needed, to support students beyond the school day. Through these efforts, we establish a collaborative partnership with families to develop a sustainable, comprehensive approach to SEL programming that builds resilience among staff, students, and the broader community.

PRONG 3 Goal 3: Train 100% of staff on developing and implementing trauma-responsive classroom structures by the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

We have a unique staff composition, with both new and veteran teachers, but very few mid-career teachers. Our new teachers often struggle with classroom management due to limited preparation at the collegiate level, even though they enter the profession with strong pedagogical skills and deep content knowledge. Their greatest challenge—and source of frustration—is maintaining consistent classroom management, particularly when working with students who exhibit trauma-related behaviors.

As a district, we aim to continue building a trauma-responsive school culture grounded in self-awareness, emotional well-being, and supportive adult-student relationships. We contract with the Partnership for Resilience to provide ongoing professional development for administrators, teachers, and staff. This training emphasizes the importance of self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social-emotional learning for adults and students.

As we begin this school year, as we did last year, we will provide 30 hours of SEL training for all staff. In addition, we provide monthly skill-based SEL sessions during our dedicated professional learning community time. These sessions support the ongoing implementation of trauma-responsive practices that strengthen adult effectiveness and improve interactions with students.

We designed and integrated trauma-responsive strategies that meet the needs of students who have experienced trauma, with the goal of increasing academic engagement, improving achievement, reducing behavioral incidents, and strengthening positive student-adult relationships. We established a collaborative team of educators to develop an action plan that identifies instructional considerations, methods, and best practices aligned to trauma-responsive teaching. Through this work, we created a consistent, holistic support system that ensures coordinated responses and care for students and staff, promoting overall well-being, emotional resilience, and academic success.

Finally, we continue to incorporate restorative practices into our structured discipline system. These practices give students opportunities to repair relationships with peers, teachers, and staff. Both students and staff receive training in restorative practices. As we implement our plan to reduce out-of-school suspensions, we focus on the whole child and seek to understand the underlying causes of behavior before assigning consequences.

3. Implicit Bias Training and Use of the DEI Provider Evaluation Tool

Yes. Our district completed the required implicit bias training outlined in PA 100-0014 and continues to provide it annually to all staff. We are implementing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Provider Evaluation Tool to enhance the quality and consistency of our professional development. The implicit bias training is challenging because it requires staff to reflect deeply and examine long-held beliefs and practices. However, we remain committed to providing consistent training, reinforcing expectations, and supporting staff in applying what they learn in their classrooms, interactions, and instructional planning. Our goal is to ensure that implicit bias training is not a one-time event but an ongoing practice that contributes to a more equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning environment for all students.

4. Potential Action Plan to Reduce the Use of Exclusionary Discipline and/or Racial Disproportionality: (Goal/Objective, Strategy/Action, Timeframe, Responsible Individual(s), Success Criteria, and Method of Evaluation).

Hazel Crest School District 152½ serves a student population that is approximately 95 percent African American. Because our discipline data reflects patterns that disproportionately impact the very students who make up nearly our entire district, our focus is not on racial disproportionality between groups, but rather on reducing overall exclusionary discipline and addressing the systemic factors that contribute to high suspension rates. Our action plan centers on prevention, early intervention, staff capacity-building, and strong family partnerships.

Goal/Objective

Reduce the overall use of exclusionary discipline by increasing proactive, trauma-responsive, and restorative practices across all schools, ensuring that students remain engaged in learning and receive appropriate supports.

Strategy/Action Steps

1. Implement Targeted Student Interventions
 - a. Identify students who fall into high-frequency behavior categories using 2024–2025 discipline data.
 - b. Assign students to 6–8 week intervention cycles led by social workers, behavioral interventionists, or student advocates.
 - c. Provide one-semester intensive support for students with chronic or trauma-related behaviors.
 - d. Expand wraparound services through district social workers, ISC4 Student Advocates, and Stronger Connections grant-funded counselors.

2. Strengthen Family Engagement and Responsibility

- a. Require parents of identified students to attend Parent University sessions on SEL and behavior support.
- b. Conduct progress-monitoring meetings with families as part of each student's intervention plan.
- c. Provide families with home-based action plans and referrals for outside counseling or mentoring services.
- d. Build a sustainable SEL partnership with families to reinforce consistent expectations across home and school.

3. Build Staff Capacity Through Trauma-Responsive and SEL Training

- a. Train 100% of staff on trauma-responsive classroom structures by the end of the 2025–2026 school year.
- b. Continue to provide SEL training and refresher at the start of the school year, and continue to provide training throughout the school year.
- c. We offer monthly skill-based SEL sessions during PLC time as well as during School Improvement Days.
- d. Implemented restorative practices training for all staff and students.
- e. Established educator teams to develop trauma-responsive instructional strategies and classroom practices.

4. Improve Consistency in Classroom Management Practices

- a. We continue to provide coaching and modeling for new teachers who lack classroom management skills.
- b. Reinforce CHAMPS expectations across all classrooms and grade levels.
- c. Monitor implementation fidelity through walkthroughs, coaching cycles, and administrator feedback consistently throughout the school year.

5. Reduce Reliance on Out-of-School Suspension

- a. Continue with our restorative conversations or circles daily at the start of school and as needed throughout the school day.
- b. Continue using our crisis-response protocols, involving our school social worker, student advocates, and administrators, to de-escalate behavior before removal, where and when possible.
- c. Use exclusion only when safety is compromised, and all other interventions have been exhausted.

Timeframe

- Immediate (current school year): Student identification, intervention cycles, Parent University, SEL training, restorative practices rollout.
- By June 2026: Full implementation of trauma-responsive training for all staff; measurable reduction in exclusionary discipline.
- Ongoing: Monthly SEL/trauma-responsive PD, progress monitoring, and fidelity checks.

Responsible Individuals

- Superintendent
- Building Principals
- Social Workers (4 districtwide)
- Behavioral Interventionists
- ISC4 Student Advocates
- Stronger Connections Grant Counselors
- Classroom Teachers
- SEL/Trauma-Responsive Leadership Team

Success Criteria

- Reduction in out-of-school suspensions compared to the previous year.
- Increased use of restorative practices and documented restorative interventions.
- Improved classroom management fidelity as measured by walkthrough data.
- Increased parent participation in Parent University and progress-monitoring meetings.
- Improved student engagement and decreased repeat behavioral incidents.

Method of Evaluation

- Quarterly discipline data reviews.
- Intervention progress-monitoring logs.
- Walkthrough and coaching data.
- Parent participation records.
- Student SEL and behavior progress assessments.
- Annual evaluation of PD effectiveness and staff implementation fidelity.