

# Office of Pupil Personnel Services

School Committee Update:  
Disproportionality in Special Education and District Response  
10/20/2021

# Historical Information

- ▶ In 2017 and 2018, the district was indentified by DESE as being “At Risk” for two disproportionalities in Special Education (based on previous multi-years of data)
  - Disproportional identification of students who identify as Black/African American in special education category of Communication Disability
  - Disproportional School Discipline Removals of students who identify as Black/African American

# Data DESE Used in this Determination: COMMUNICATION

	2017-18 Risk Ratio 3.43			2018-19 Risk Ratio 3.75			2019-20 Risk Ratio 4.45			2020-21 Risk Ratio 3.80		
	stud ents	# IEPs	% IEPS	stud ents	# IEPs	% IEPS	stud ents	# IEPs	% IEPS	stud ents	# IEPs	% IEPS
African American/ Black	643	45	7.0	617	35	5.7	624	31	5.0	581	30	5.2
Asian	286			309			318			330	6	1.8
Hispanic/Latino	188			190			212			238		
Multi Racial	186			198			220					
Native American												
Native Hawaiian	7											
White	2952	58	2.0	2998	43	1.4	3096	30	1.0	3025	35	1.2



# Action Steps to Date

- ▶ 2019–20: Disproportional Summit
  - Team Attended Summit with DESE at state level
  - Initial Action Plan developed
    - Looked at furthering district wide PBIS
    - Beginning of Root Cause Analysis
    - Identification of in district resources and what other supports we would need to address concerns
- ▶ 2019–20 & 2020–21: 258 Grants
  - Two competitive grants designed to address:
    - Beginning to train administrators in Restorative Justice
    - Providing reluctant learners Teacher Mentors to re-engage in school
    - Training and PD and resource purchases for School Psychologists on Evaluation Tools that could eliminate Bias in Assessment of students based on cultural background

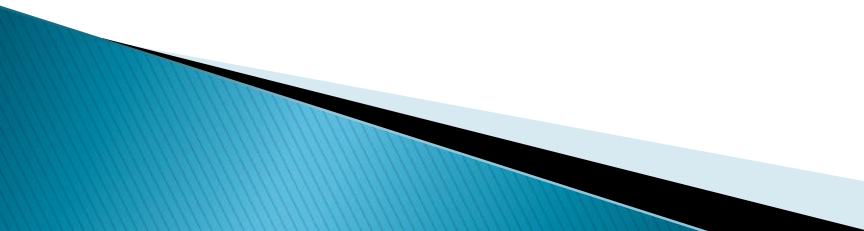
# 2020–21 Root Cause Analysis

- Deep dive into data analysis and Root Cause Analysis
  - 15 year continuum of IEPS
  - 4+ years discipline data
  - Across schools, subgroups and specific students, student clusters of identified subgroups
  - Many students in cross two disproportional subgroups
  - Development of robust Action Plan to be implemented 21–22 and beyond!
    - DESE supported development of the Action Plan
    - Looking for mechanisms for systematic, programmatic and philosophical changes and development of a long term mechanism for sustained elimination of the disproportionalities

# How are we funding this work?

- ▶ 15% of Four of our Federal Entitlement Grants will support this work in the 21–22 school year
  - IDEA (Individuals with Disability Act) 240 & 262
  - ARP (American Rescue Plan) IDEA 252 & 264
- ▶ Long term fiscal planning will need to be addressed

# Overview of this year's Action Plan

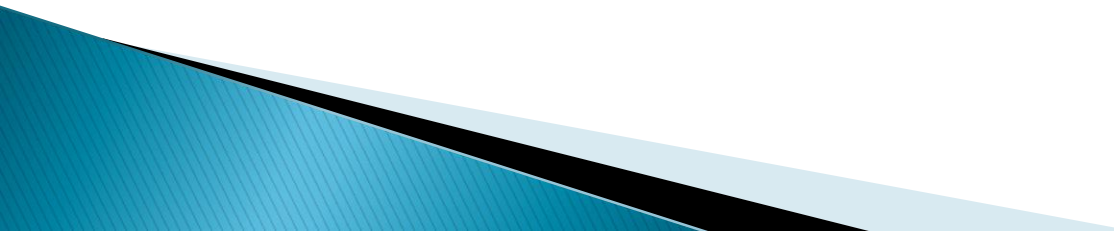
- ▶ Review of district practices and procedures regarding eligibility and discipline with a lens of Equity and Inclusion, utilizing Restorative Justice Mindset
  - ▶ Implementation of Initial Evaluation/Eligibility Team for equity in eligibility opportunity
  - ▶ Restorative Justice Tier 1,2,3 PD for all Administrators and key staff
  - ▶ Purchase of culturally diverse assessment tools and instructional tools/materials
  - ▶ Tracking of referrals, eligibility and student performance via referral process and literacy coach direct instruction (DESE recommended data management tools)
  - ▶ In class instructional support on gap skills for at risk general and special education students (pre-k and K district wide, at risk grade 1&2 students)
  - ▶ Introduction of additional Adjustment Counselors to therapeutic programs 6-12 to address social emotional needs as kids age through the district
  - ▶ Data collection and analysis on work of students who are targeted for supports via Literacy Coach work
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# Targeted High Quality Professional Development:

- ▶ 2020–21:
  - All staff completing Cultural Competency Training
- ▶ 2021–22
  - Prek and K Teacher High Quality PD & In Class Coaching on:
    - Referral and eligibility
    - UDL/RTI/MTSS (Universal Design for Learning, Response to Intervention, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support)
    - History of Educational Achievement Gaps
    - Learning Style, strength-based modeling
    - ELA and Early Literacy and how to identify instructional gaps
    - Progress monitoring and data collection on student outcomes

# Next Steps

- ▶ Hiring Restorative Justice Coach and Early Literacy Coaches \*in process\* and Adjustment Counselors
  - ▶ Full implementation of Action Plan Steps, including High Quality PD for staff
  - ▶ Invitation from DESE to participate in a National Conference on Disproportionality (November, 2021 sponsored by the IDEA Data Center)
  - ▶ Ongoing data analysis and refinement of work based on student need/performance and data
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# Questions

▶ Thank you!