



CONNECTICUT STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative

*Virtual Meeting and Webinar*

March 18, 2021



# Opening and Welcome

John D. Frassinelli, Division Director  
School Health, Nutrition and Family Services



# Agenda Overview

- Opening & Welcome
- Commissioner of Education Updates
- Setting the Stage-John Lewis Video-  
*Together, You Can Redeem the Soul of Our Nation*
- Discipline Board Report Overview
- Alicia B. Settlement Agreement and CSDE's Response
- Facilitated Feedback on Connecticut's System of  
Supports Model for Disproportionate Suspension Rate
- Wrap Up and Next Steps

# Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative

## Overarching Goal:

- To advise the Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education on strategies for transforming school discipline in Connecticut.

## Outcome:


- To reduce the overall and disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline in Connecticut schools.



# Meeting Objectives for Today

- To advise the CSDE regarding the next phase of the work on school discipline.
- To provide time for members of the Collaborative to react to/provide feedback on Alicia B Settlement Agreement approach.





**State Level Updates**  
Charlene Russell-Tucker,  
Commissioner of Education



# **7 WAYS** **CSDE is Leading** **Social-Emotional** **Learning**



1. **Procured the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) System**
2. **Conducted a Statewide SEL Landscape Scan**
3. **Developed the Components of Social, Emotional, and Intellectual Habits: K-3**
4. **Providing Flexibilities for Educator Evaluations**
5. **Designed the CT Learning Hub**
6. **Hosting Webinars and Resources for School Staff and Families**
7. **Collaborating with State Agencies, Statewide Partners, and Communities**

*“7 Ways CSDE is Leading Social-Emotional Learning” with linked resources can be found [here](#).*





# Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021 **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II)**

## STATE-LEVEL PRIORITIES FOR ESSER II

- **Academic Supports, Learning Loss, Learning Acceleration and Recovery**
  - Access must be focused on our most vulnerable students, including students with barriers to remote learning.
  - Targeted supports to implement should include:
    1. Additional classroom supports;
    2. High dosage small group tutoring programs (in-school and after school);
    3. Extended day programs and expanded access to summer school.
- **Family and Community Connections**
  - Direct engagement with families and the community will provide added supports for our students.
  - Opportunity to engage “Family Academy” programs aimed at providing parents and guardians with the skills to support their children’s academic endeavors, including those skills necessary to support technology use in the home.







# Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021 **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II)**

## STATE-LEVEL PRIORITIES FOR ESSER II

- **School Safety and Social-Emotional Well-being of the “Whole Student” and of our School Staff**
  - Focus on additional behavioral and mental health services delivered in-person or via remote/ telehealth access and social and emotional support mechanisms
    - Ensure these supports are available even for individuals who may have limited in-person access.
  - Resources should also continue to be allocated to support the physical health and safety of our students and staff
  
- **Remote Learning, Staff Development, and the Digital Divide**
  1. Maintain or upgrade access to technology and connectivity for the long term;
  2. Increase robust professional development for staff to hone their skills in providing remote learning; and
  3. Provide technical assistance and/or training for families, so that students, school staff, and families are all prepared to use remote platforms to effectively maximize student learning.





**The School Discipline Report**  
Ajit Gopalakrishnan,  
Chief Performance Officer





CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools 2019-20



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Summary of Findings

- From 2014-15 to 2018-19, the total number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions has declined by 17.4 and 13.3 percent respectively.
- Incidents coded as school policy violations declined 28.5 percent and now account for 42 percent of all incidents – down from 59 percent in 2014-15.
- Large disparities remain in suspension rates between Black/African American (1 out of 10) and Hispanic/Latino students (1 out of 14) and their white counterparts (1 out of 34).



# Summary of Findings (continued)

- From 2014-15 to 2018-19 among young children in Grades Pre-K through two, in-school suspensions declined by over 45 percent while out-of-school suspensions declined by over 72 percent
- Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students who received a suspension or expulsion were involved in more than one incident during the school year at a greater rate than their white peers.
- In three of four cases, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students were more likely to receive a more severe sanction (i.e., OSS or Expulsion) for similar behavior than white students.





# Alicia B. Settlement Agreement and CSDE's Response

Jessa Mirtle, Legal Director

Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer



# District Tiers for State Support

- A requirement pursuant to the stipulated resolution of the legal case of “*Alicia B.*”
- Primary metric is the suspension rate. In light of the pandemic, 2018-19 districts tiers are being used to identify those districts needing support.
  - **Tier 4 - Consistently High Suspension Rates** (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, black, or Hispanic suspension rate  $\geq 15\%$  in 2 recent years.
  - **Tier 3 - Consistently High Disproportionality**: Not in Tier 4 AND either black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 3$  in 2 recent years.
  - **Tier 2 - Consistently Medium Disproportionality**: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 2$  in 2 recent years.
  - **Tier 1 - Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality**: All other districts





# Connecticut's System of Supports Model for Disproportionate Suspension Rate

John D. Frassinelli, Division Director  
School Health, Nutrition and Family Services



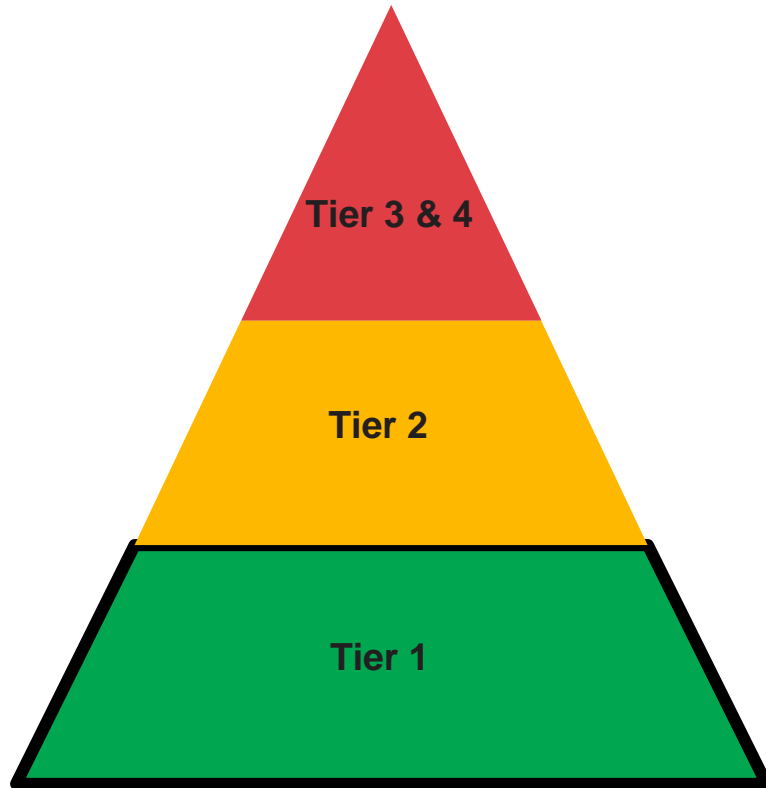


# Transforming School Discipline

- **Data Monitoring and Support**
  - Targeted Support with Districts
  - IDEA
- **Policy Guidance and Professional Learning**
  - Restorative alternatives; Trauma-Informed Practices
- **Grades PreK to Two supports**
  - Partnering with the Office of Early Childhood
- **Social–Emotional Learning**
  - Statewide Landscape Scan
  - Statewide Social Emotional Universal and Supplemental Screening Assessments
  - Social, Emotional, and Intellectual Habits Framework 4-12
- **School Discipline Collaborative**
  - Stakeholder Engagement
  - Critical Consciousness for Schools on Racial Justice
  - Family Guides on Suspension and Expulsion



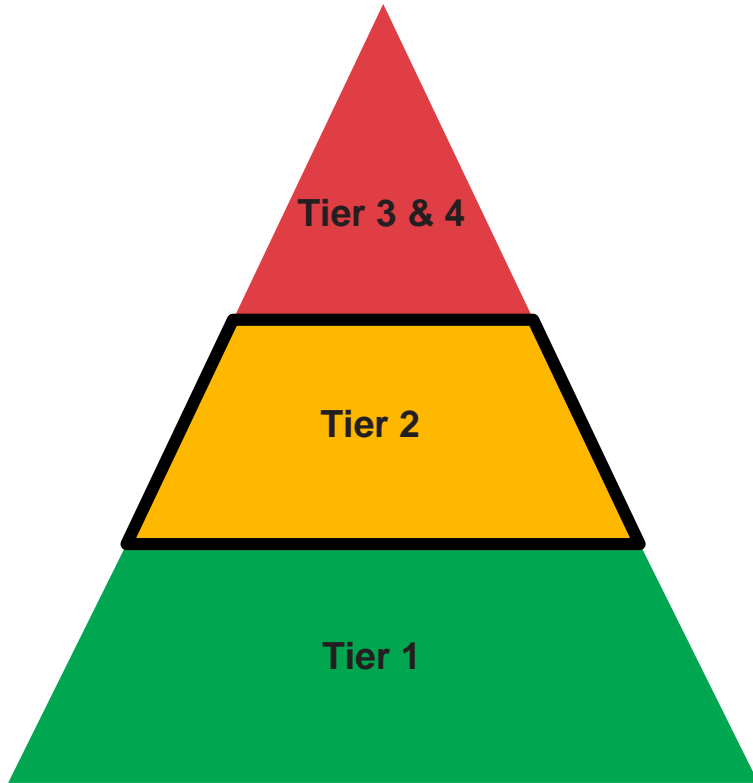
## Connecticut's Tiered System of Supports



### Tier 1: CSDE Supports-All

- Provide guidance, ongoing training and technical assistance for districts to address concerns, challenges in school discipline and disproportionality
- Provide professional learning and sharing of best practices
- Provide a brief baseline screening self-assessment tool for system effectiveness and to identify strengths and needs
- CSDE School Discipline Protocol- belief, policies, practices, data, and structures
- Assess current interventions for fidelity of implementation and alignment to other initiatives (school climate, equity, social-emotional-behavioral, family engagement, mental health).

# Connecticut's Tiered System of Supports

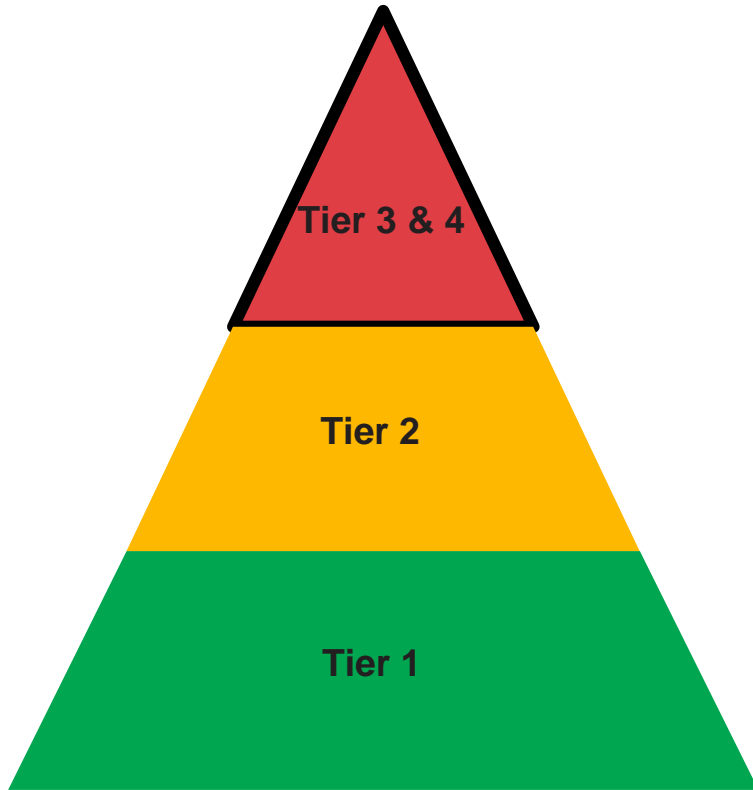


## Tier 2: CSDE Supports-Some

- Continue to utilize data to drive actions and monitor progress toward improvement and using the supports identified in Tier 1 to ensure districts are on target
- Targeted professional learning and technical assistance with Tier 1 supports as determined by the district's self-assessment, implementation fidelity and resource mapping

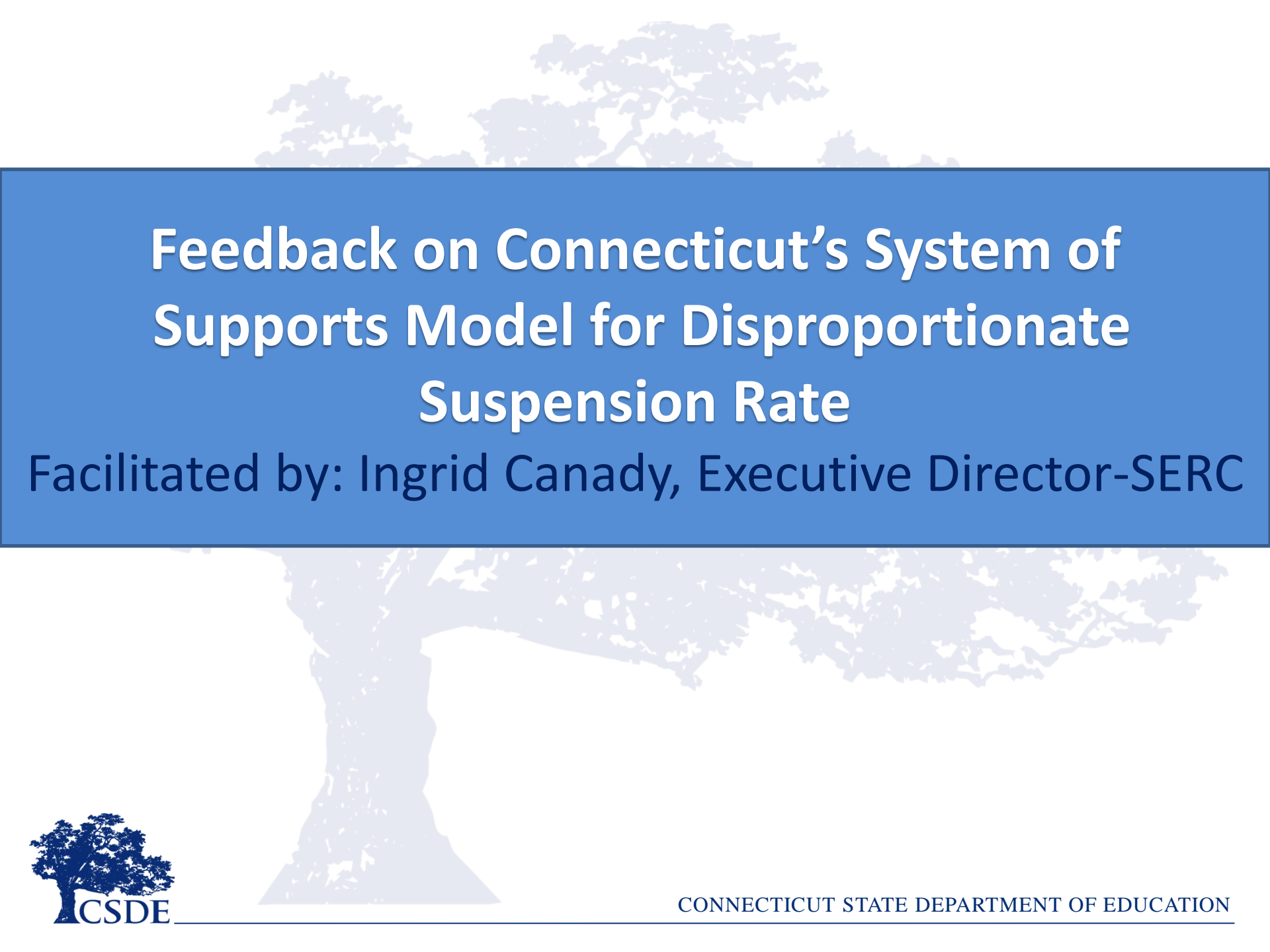


# Connecticut's Tiered System of Supports



## Tier 3 and 4: CSDE Supports-Few

- Establish Community of Practice (CoP)- quarterly progress monitoring, sharing of practices and challenges
- Provide individual coaching sessions for school districts
- Continued professional learning from Tiers 1 and 2 and added individualized support and targeted professional learning
  - Assess utilization of existing funding sources and resources to shift focus on reducing exclusionary discipline
  - Employ cross-agency collaboration to align supports for Charter Schools, Alliance Districts, Magnet Schools and Alternative Education Programs for continuous improvement



# Feedback on Connecticut's System of Supports Model for Disproportionate Suspension Rate

Facilitated by: Ingrid Canady, Executive Director-SERC



# Breakout Rooms Questions

## Feedback on the Tiers:

- Within each Tier – what two things resonate with you and why?
- What more would you like to see/add?
- What questions about the tiers do you still have?





# Wrap Up and Next Steps

Ingrid Canady, Executive Director-SERC



# A Reflection on Our Work Together

## Milestones

Fourth meeting of the School Discipline Collaborative – Commissioner Cardona’s Vision & Student Voice and historical timeline in public education.

Fifth meeting of the School Discipline Collaborative- Commissioner Cardona’s state level priorities & insight on critical consciousness in schools.

Sixth meeting of the School Discipline Collaborative- Commissioner Cardona’s state level updates & book discussion on critical consciousness in schools & Addendum 10.

Seventh meeting of the School Discipline Collaborative- Commissioner Russell-Tucker state level updates & review of the CSDE’s response to Alicia B .

November 2019

June 2020

November 2020

March 2021





# Next Meeting

**Next Meeting: June 2021 (Tentative June 24, 2021)**



# Thank You

## Contact Information

Kimberly Traverso, Education Consultant  
[kimberly.traverso@ct.gov](mailto:kimberly.traverso@ct.gov)

