



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wenzell, Commissioner of Education 

DATE: May 16, 2016

SUBJECT: Racial Composition Statistics for Connecticut Public Schools 2015-2016

The racial composition statistics for each school under the jurisdiction of your local or regional board of education are now available on the State Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ct.gov/sde/racialimbalance>. Once on this page, select 2015 Public School Enrollment by District [PDF]. The racial statistics are based upon enrollment numbers for each district as of October 1, 2015. Each district should use this information to analyze any disparity in racial diversity that may exist among its schools. Failure to manage significant disparity could result in one or more schools being found to be racially imbalanced.

Racial imbalance exists when the proportion of minority students for any school exceeds 25 percentage points more than the comparable proportion for the school district. For all grades of a given school, the total number of minority students enrolled in the same grades throughout the school district is divided by the district-wide total student enrollment in such grades, and the resulting percentage is the comparable proportion for the school district. If a school is identified as racially imbalanced, the board of education must file a plan to correct the imbalance with the State Board of Education. Impending racial imbalance exists when the proportion for a school falls outside a range from 15 percentage points less to 15 percentage points more than the comparable proportion for the school district. Although a board of education is not required to file a plan to address impending imbalance, boards are strongly encouraged to address the matter in a proactive manner to avoid future identification of racial imbalance. Boards of education should strive to maintain balanced schools so that each child has the advantage of attending a school that is as diverse as possible.

Please note that districts have another important responsibility in regard to reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation. Connecticut law requires all school districts to take action to provide educational opportunities for their students to interact with students and teachers from other racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds. These opportunities may include participation in the following programs: interdistrict magnet schools; charter schools; after-school, Saturday and summer programs, sister-school projects and intradistrict public school choice programs; and many other experiences to increase awareness of the diversity of individuals and cultures. This is particularly important for districts with small minority populations where such interaction might otherwise not take place.

I hope this information is helpful to you. If you have any questions, please contact Attorney Laura L. Anastasio, Division of Legal and Governmental Affairs, at 860-713-6520.

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