

**Connecticut State Board of Education****Hartford**

**To:** State Board of Education  
**From:** Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education  
**Date:** March 4, 2026  
**Subject:** 2024-25 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools

***Executive Summary***

Please find attached the *2024-25 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools*. This report presents analyses of trends in student disciplinary behaviors in Connecticut public schools. It fulfills the requirements in [Connecticut General Statutes \(C.G.S.\) Section 10-233n](#).

Over the past decade, Connecticut has made major strides in reducing exclusionary discipline.

- From 2018-19 to 2024-25 (pre-to post-pandemic) the total number of suspensions has decreased or is now similar to pre-pandemic levels. In-school suspensions (ISS) have decreased by 9.7 percent, and expulsions (EXP) have decreased by 2.6 percent. Out-of-school suspensions (OSS) are slightly higher (0.7 percent) above the pre-pandemic level. There were significant declines from 2023-24 to 2024-25 in the number of ISS (45,071 to 43,732), OSS (34,758 to 32,897), and EXP (755 to 726).
- While some incident categories showed lower rates in 2024-25 than in 2018-19 (e.g., School Policy Violations declined 9.5 percent, Sexually Related Behavior declined 44.9 percent, and Fighting and Battery declined 22.4 percent), other categories showed higher rates (e.g., Property Damage increased 28.9 percent, Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco increased 8.0 percent, Physical and Verbal Confrontation increased 36.2 percent, and Weapons increased 9.6 percent).
- The total number of incidents reported for marijuana possession or use has increased nearly four and a half times from 2021-22 (261 incidents) to 2024-25 (1,150 incidents); however, incidents coded as possession or use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) (e.g., vapes, e-cigarettes) (2,801 incidents) far exceed those coded as marijuana (1,150 incidents) or tobacco (440 incidents). ENDS possession/use and tobacco use increased from the prior year.
- In 2024-25, nearly 35,716 students (6.8 percent) or approximately one out of approximately every 15 students statewide, received a suspension or an expulsion. This is similar to the pre-pandemic rate of 6.7 percent. Disparities remain in these suspension rates between Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students and their White counterparts. While one out of 24 White students received at least one suspension, one out of eight Black/African American students and one out of 11 Hispanic/Latino students experienced the same sanction. In other words, Black/African American students are

three times as likely and Hispanic/Latino students are more than twice as likely as their White counterparts to be suspended or expelled. This pattern exists in many districts across the state. Males receive a suspension/expulsion at greater rates (8.7 percent) than females (4.8 percent).

- When analyzing suspension rates by grade, the data reveal that suspension rates in middle school grades remain greater than pre-pandemic levels. Suspension rates increased from 2018-19 to 2024-25 in Grade 6 (8.2 percent to 9.7 percent), Grade 7 (11.0 percent to 12.8 percent), and Grade 8 (11.1 percent to 12.6 percent). Conversely, most elementary and high school grades show lower or similar suspension rates in 2024-25 to those in 2018-19. One bright spot is that the middle school suspension rates in 2024-25 are slightly lower than in 2023-24 .
- The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) groups districts into four tiers based on overall and disproportionate use of suspensions and expulsions to provide a system of supports and targeted action planning. The 2024-25 district tiers will be used to identify those districts needing support and the type of support needed.
- Among young children in Pre-K through Grade 2, the number of suspensions (ISS and OSS combined) declined by 17.2 percent from 2018-19 (1,926 sanctions) to 2024-25 (1,689 sanctions). In 2024-25, fewer than 1,000 students in Pre-K through Grade two (just over one-half of one percent) received at least one suspension. Note that C.G.S. 10-233(f) prohibits the suspension or expulsion of students in Pre-K through Grade 2 unless the incident was “of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.”

The CSDE continues to engage the Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative to advise the CSDE on strategies for transforming school discipline to reduce the overall and disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline and use data to drive the implementation of a statewide, systems approach to address disproportionality in school discipline. This includes developing an infrastructure to support high-quality and effective fidelity of implementation that is data-driven, evidence-based, scalable, and sustainable within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).

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# 2024-25 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools

March 2026

Connecticut State Department of Education  
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## Introduction

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This report presents analyses of trends in student disciplinary behaviors in Connecticut public schools. It fulfills the requirements in [Connecticut General Statutes \(C.G.S.\) Section 10-233n](#). Improving student academic and behavioral outcomes requires ensuring that all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions. Schools must create environments where all students feel emotionally and physically safe. Students lose important instructional time when they receive exclusionary discipline. The use of disciplinary sanctions such as in-school and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or referrals to law enforcement authorities creates the potential for significant, negative educational and long-term outcomes, and can contribute to what has been termed as the “school to prison pipeline.” Studies suggest a correlation between exclusionary discipline policies and practices and an array of serious educational, economic, and social problems, including school avoidance and diminished educational engagement, decreased academic achievement, increased behavior problems, increased likelihood of dropping out, increased risk of substance use disorders, and involvement with the juvenile justice system (Eyllon et al., 2022; Fabelo et al., 2011; Wolf & Kupchik, 2017).

[C.G.S. Section 10-233a](#) defines removal, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion as follows:

- Removal - an exclusion from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond ninety minutes.
- In-School Suspension (ISS) - an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than ten consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school.
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) - an exclusion from school privileges or from transportation services only for no more than ten consecutive school days.
- Expulsion - an exclusion from school privileges for more than ten consecutive school days.

## Data Collection and Reporting

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Local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to report to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) all disciplinary incidents that result in any of the following:

- In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Bus Suspension
- Expulsion (EXP)

In addition, all ["serious" offenses](#) and all incidents involving alcohol, drugs, or weapons must be reported, regardless of the type of sanction imposed. All verified bullying incidents must also be reported regardless of sanction. Data collected regarding disciplinary incidents are released publicly on CSDE’s data portal, [EdSight](#). A detailed explanation of the data collection and reporting processes is included in Appendix B of this report. Comprehensive information about the disciplinary offense data collection (also known as the ED166) is available on the documentation page of the [ED166 Help Site](#).

### Special Note about 2019-20 and 2020-21 Data

In the 2019-20 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person classes were cancelled in mid-March and all districts switched to fully remote instruction for the remainder of the school year. In the 2020-21 school year, students attended school in-person to varying degrees; some learned fully/mostly remotely for the entire school year. Therefore, any inferences relative to changes in rates over years are based on 2018-19 data; 2024-25 data are compared to 2018-19 data to examine the differences from pre- to post-pandemic.

## Results

### Sanctions and Incidents

The total number of sanctions is a count of all sanctions (ISS, OSS, and Expulsions) given to all students. It is not a count of students; if one student received more than one sanction, then all sanctions received are included below. Students received less severe sanctions in 2024-25 than in 2022-23 and 2023-24. In 2024-25, ISS and EXP were lower than in the last pre-pandemic year of 2018-19, while OSS was slightly higher.

Table 1: Total Number of Sanctions

Sanction Type	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% Change from 2018-19
In-School Suspension	48,431	38,739	44,820	45,071	43,732	-9.7
Out-of-School Suspension	32,681	34,580	37,376	34,758	32,897	0.7
Expulsion	745	858	979	755	726	-2.6

The behaviors associated with the sanctions received by students are grouped into ten categories (Table 2). Except for Property Damage, incident counts in all other categories were lower in 2024-25 than in 2022-23 and 2023-24. In 2018-19, school policy violations accounted for approximately 46 percent of all incidents, down from

56 percent in 2015-16 and down from 48 percent in 2017-18. This trend has continued post-pandemic with school policy violations accounting for 41 percent of reportable incidents in 2021-22 through 2023-24, and was 43 percent in 2024-25.

With respect to incident types, Sexually Related Behavior showed a substantial decline of 45 percent since 2018-19 but Physical and Verbal Confrontation increased 36.2 percent, and Personally Threatening Behavior increased 17.8 percent during the same period. In 2018-19, Vandalism accounted for 84 percent (N=1,216 incidents) of all incidents in the Property Damage category. In 2021-22, Vandalism declined to 82 percent of all incidents in the Property Damage category, and in 2024-25 it decreased slightly to 80 percent (N=1,507). Vandalism is defined as the willful destruction or defacement of school property (destroying school computers, carving a desk, spray painting walls, damaging vehicles, etc.).

Table 2: Incidents by Category

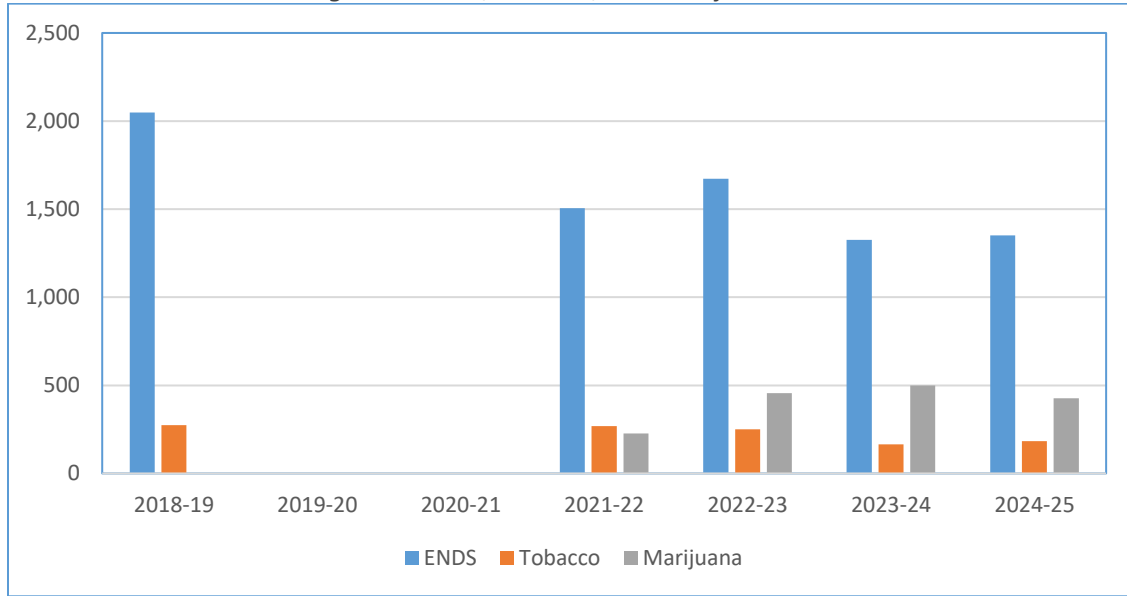
Incident Type	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% Change from 2018-19
Violent Crimes Against Persons	398	427	403	322	320	-19.6
Sexually Related Behavior	1,254	1,018	936	878	691	-44.9
Personally Threatening Behavior	6,787	7,559	8,755	8,956	7,993	17.8
Theft Related Behaviors	1,217	1,058	1,382	1,173	1,162	-4.5
Physical and Verbal Confrontation	14,976	15,764	20,616	21,582	20,390	36.2
Fighting and Battery	18,036	17,165	17,141	16,761	14,002	-22.4
Property Damage	1,455	2,161	1,756	1,761	1,876	28.9
Weapons	801	1,298	1,432	1,001	878	9.6
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco	5,933	6,449	7,793	6,576	6,407	8.0
School Policy Violations	43,869	36,687	41,785	40,861	39,711	-9.5

The use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) – otherwise known as E-Cigarettes, “pens,” or “vapes” – was first reported in the 2015-16 school year. It is included in the Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco category. Tobacco and ENDS use have decreased since 2018-19 while possession has increased (see Figure 1 and Table 3).

As of July 1, 2021, Public Act 21-1 legalized possession of up to 1.5 oz of marijuana, and allowed use in specified locations, for those over 21. As with tobacco-based products, marijuana is not legal on school grounds regardless

of age. To accompany this change in legislation, marijuana-based codes were introduced in the 2021-22 discipline collection to detach it from the illegal drug category.

Figure 1: ENDS, Tobacco, and Marijuana Use



For consistency, both “possession” and “use” codes have been included in this report for each substance. While ENDS use was lower than in 2018-19, possession has more than doubled. Tobacco possession in 2024-25 is above the pre-pandemic count and Tobacco use has decreased. In 2021-22, marijuana violations included 35 incidents of possession and 226 of use. In 2024-25, marijuana possession increased over 21 times to 724 and marijuana use has nearly doubled to 426.

Table 3: ENDS, Tobacco and Marijuana Possession and Use

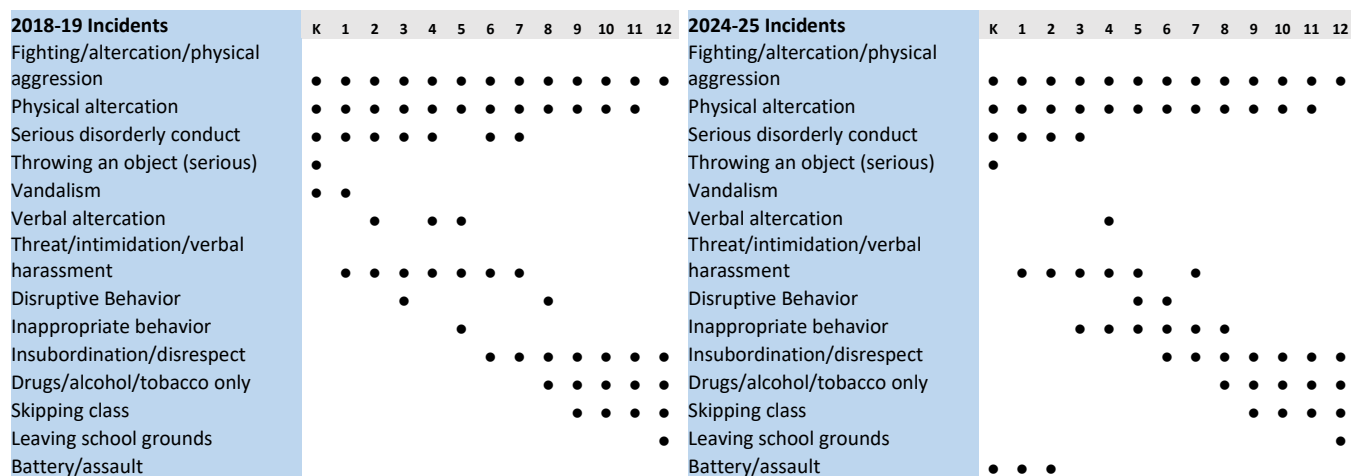
Incident Type	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
ENDS Possession	675	1,323	1,630	1,394	1,449
ENDS Use	2,048	1,506	1,672	1,326	1,352
Tobacco Possession	201	160	205	205	256
Tobacco Use	274	268	251	165	184
Marijuana Possession	N/A	35	823	770	724
Marijuana Use	N/A	226	456	499	426

## Incidents by Grade

What are the most common behaviors/incidents that manifest themselves in a particular grade? How do they change across the grades? For this analysis, the CSDE identified the five most frequent incidents for each grade and then organized them by grade (see Figure 2). A brief definition for each incident type in Figure 2 is provided below.

- **Fighting/altercation/physical aggression** – Participation in an incident that involved a physical confrontation in which one or more participants received a minor physical injury. A minor injury is one that does not require professional medical attention, such as a scrape on the body, knee, or elbow; and/or minor bruising.
- **Physical altercation** – Participation in a confrontation, or some type of physical aggression that does not result in any injury.
- **Serious disorderly conduct** – Security/police were called, an injury may have occurred, and/or there was a major disruption to the educational process.
- **Throwing an object (serious)** – Use this category if there is a victim with any level of injury.
- **Vandalism** - Willful destruction or defacement of school property (destroying school computers, carving a desk, spray painting walls, damaging vehicles, etc.).
- **Verbal altercation** - Participation in an incident involving a verbal confrontation (shouting match, yelling, etc.).
- **Threat/intimidation/verbal harassment** – Physical, verbal, written, or electronic communication (without displaying a weapon and without a physical attack) which results in fear of harm.
- **Disruptive behavior** – Disruption of class; in the hallway, cafeteria, or any other area of the school.
- **Inappropriate behavior** – Horseplay, play fighting, playing cards.
- **Insubordination/disrespect** – Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request, or other situation in which a student is disobedient.
- **Drugs/alcohol/tobacco** – A substance-related offense.
- **Skipping class** – As defined by LEA policy.
- **Leaving school grounds** – As defined by LEA policy.
- **Battery/assault** – Striking another person with the intent of causing serious bodily harm to the individual. A physical attack on an individual resulting in an injury requiring any type of medical attention.
- **Disorderly conduct** – Any behavior that seriously disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function or which substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.

Figure 2: Top Five Incidents by Grade, a Two-Year Comparison



NOTE: Some incident types were not prevalent in both years displayed above; in those circumstances a blank row exists (battery/assault and vandalism).

Pre-and post-pandemic trends are similar. These data reveal that while some incidents like *Fighting/altercation/physical aggression* appear among the most frequent incidents in every grade, other incidents are more prevalent in certain grade ranges. For example, *throwing an object* occurs as a prevalent incident in kindergarten only. As it did prior to the pandemic, *Insubordination/disrespect* appears among the most frequent incidents in the middle school years and remains prominent in every subsequent grade. *Skipping class* remains prominent in all high school grades.

## Suspension Rates

The suspension rate equals the unduplicated number of students reported with at least one suspension (in-school or out-of-school) or expulsion divided by the unduplicated student enrollment count for the school or district for the given school year. Prior to the pandemic, 6.7 percent of all students received at least one suspension or expulsion during the 2018-19 school year; in 2022-23 and 2023-24, the rate increased slightly to 7.0 percent, and in 2024-25 decreased to 6.8 percent. Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students showed a decline from pre-pandemic rates and from the prior year. (Table 4).

Both pre-and post-pandemic, the suspension rate of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students remains significantly greater than that of White students. Black/African American students are more than three times as likely as their White student peers, and Hispanic/Latino students are more than twice as likely as their White student peers to receive a suspension/expulsion. Pre-pandemic, one out of 24 White students received at

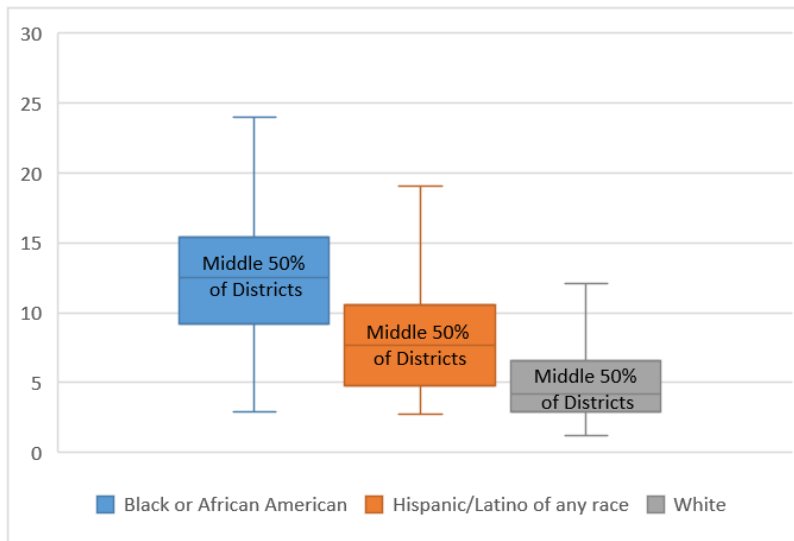
least one suspension/expulsion, while one out of seven Black/African American students and one out of eleven Hispanic/Latino students received the same sanction. In 2024-25, one out of 24 White students, one out of eight Black/African American students, and one out of eleven Hispanic/Latino students received at least one suspension/expulsion.

Table 4: Suspension Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
American Indian or Alaska Native	119	8.3	119	8.5	112	8.0	98	7.2	83	6.4
Asian	530	1.9	446	1.6	510	1.8	500	1.8	557	2.0
Black or African American	9,897	14.0	8,518	12.5	8,925	13.2	8,806	13.1	8,362	12.7
Hispanic/Latino of any race	13,214	9.2	13,574	8.6	15,462	9.5	15,362	9.1	15,097	8.9
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	34	5.7	46	8.5	47	8.6	37	7.2	36	7.8
Two or More Races	1,368	7.0	1,636	7.0	1,875	7.7	1,849	7.4	1,886	7.4
White	11,696	4.1	10,310	4.0	10,66	4.3	10,339	4.3	9,695	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,858</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>34,649</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>37,595</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>36,991</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>35,716</b>	<b>6.8</b>

The distribution of suspension rates by Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and White students (Figure 3) across districts illustrates the pattern of higher suspension rates for students of color in many districts.

Figure 3: Distribution of 2024-25 District-Level Suspension Rates by Race/Ethnicity



Males continue to be suspended at higher rates than females (Table 5). The suspension rate for males nearly matches the pre-pandemic rate. Pre-pandemic the female suspension rate was 4.4 percent, it rose to 5.1 and 5.0 percent in 2022-23 and 2023-24, and in 2024-25 decreased to 4.8 percent.

Table 5: Suspension Rates by Gender

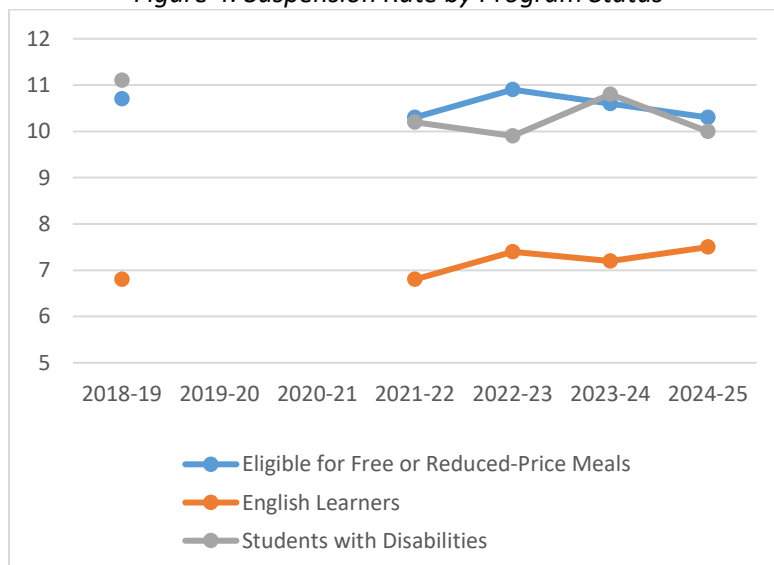
Gender	2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Female	11,638	4.4	12,156	4.7	13,119	5.1	12,878	5.0	12,014	4.8
Male	25,215	8.9	22,459	8.2	24,427	8.9	24,063	8.8	23,657	8.7

Suspension rates for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (10.3 percent), students with disabilities (10.0 percent), and English learners (7.5 percent) are higher than the state average (6.8 percent). Suspension rates for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals and students with disabilities were lower than in the prior year and are below pre-pandemic (Table 6 and Figure 4).

Table 6: Suspension Rate by Program Status

	2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals	26,223	10.7	24,049	10.3	26,013	10.9	26,161	10.6	25,325	10.3
English Learners	3,070	6.8	3,446	6.8	4,121	7.4	4,391	7.2	4,605	7.5
Students with Disabilities	10,551	11.1	10,145	10.2	10,125	9.9	11,392	10.8	10,752	10.0

Figure 4: Suspension Rate by Program Status



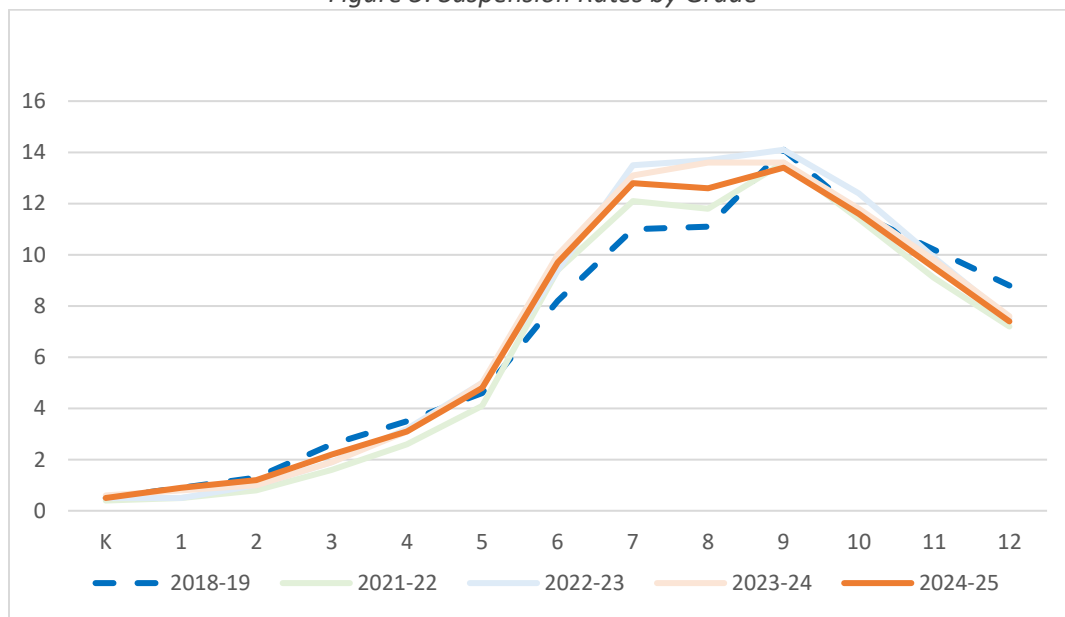
Analyses by grade (Table 7 and Figure 5) indicate the suspension rates increase gradually in the elementary grades and begin to spike in Grade 6. Suspension rates in middle school grades have decreased from the prior year but are still greater than their pre-pandemic levels. The highest suspension rates continue to occur in Grades 7 through 10.

Table 7: Suspension Rates by Grade

Grade	2018-19		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
K	198	0.5	142	0.4	197	0.5	208	0.6	161	0.5
1	337	0.9	162	0.5	202	0.5	284	0.8	322	0.9
2	504	1.3	290	0.8	354	1.0	389	1.0	446	1.2
3	986	2.6	603	1.6	696	1.9	694	1.9	847	2.2
4	1,374	3.5	971	2.6	1,186	3.2	1,163	3.1	1119	3.1
5	1,861	4.6	1,552	4.1	1,918	5.0	1,899	5.0	1821	4.8
6	3,387	8.2	3,599	9.4	3,600	9.4	3,823	10.0	3713	9.7
7	4,494	11.0	4,815	12.1	5,225	13.5	5,058	13.1	4892	12.8
8	4,598	11.1	4,824	11.8	5,533	13.7	5,355	13.6	4935	12.6
9	6,245	14.1	6,226	13.6	6,220	14.1	5,905	13.6	5630	13.4
10	4,950	11.6	4,772	11.4	5,384	12.4	4,968	11.8	4762	11.6
11	4,170	10.2	3,608	9.1	3,935	9.9	4,012	9.8	3823	9.5
12	3,746	8.8	3,065	7.2	3,139	7.5	3,212	7.6	3229	7.4

Figure 5 is a graphical representation of Table 7. Note the pre-pandemic (2018-19) and current year (2024-25) data are presented in brighter colors for easier identification.

Figure 5: Suspension Rates by Grade



## District Tiers Based on Suspension/Expulsion Data

Effective in the 2020-21 school year, the CSDE grouped districts into four tiers based on racial/disparities in suspension/expulsion data to provide targeted interventions and supports. The primary metric used for placing districts into tiers is the “Suspension/Expulsion Rate.” This is the percentage of students receiving at least one ISS, OSS or EXP during the school year. This metric represents the broadest inclusion of students who may experience any exclusionary discipline during the school year.

The Suspension/Expulsion rate is reported publicly for all students and student groups on [EdSight](#) and is included in the [Profile and Performance Report](#) for every district/school. Districts are placed into tiers according to the following criteria:

- Tier 4 - Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, Black, or Hispanic suspension rate  $\geq 15$  percent in 2 recent years.
- Tier 3 - Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either Black or Hispanic Relative Risk Index (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

Districts are listed according to their identified tiers for 2024-25 in Appendix A.

## Suspensions of Young Students, Pre-K through Grade 2

[Public Act No. 15-96](#), *An Act Concerning Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions for Students in Preschool and Grades Kindergarten to Two*, limited out-of-school suspensions in Grades 3-12 and prohibited the suspension or expulsion of students in Pre-K through Grade 2 unless the incident is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.<sup>1</sup> The total number of suspensions and expulsions (Table 8) for these youngest students declined from over 5,000 prior to Pubic Act 15-96 to 1,926 pre-pandemic in 2018-19 and under 1,700 in 2024-25 post-pandemic. The number of out-of-school suspensions, however, for students in Pre-K through Grade 2 is higher in 2024-25 than in any year since 2017-18, inclusive.

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<sup>1</sup> While the general suspensions statute, Section 10-233c of the General Statutes, continues to include preschool in the grade range for which out-of-school suspensions are permissible, this reference was most likely inadvertent in view of the explicit prohibition, in Section 10-233l, of out-of-school suspensions for students in preschool programs operated by boards of education, charter schools or interdistrict magnet schools.

Table 8: Total Number of Sanctions (Pre-K through Grade 2) – *not a student count*

Year	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
ISS	1,032	395	560	685	718
OSS	894	599	738	910	971
EXP	0	0	* <sup>2</sup>	0	0

Correspondingly, the total number of students (unduplicated count) in Grades Pre-K-2 who received at least one suspension or expulsion has also declined significantly from 1,046 in 2018-19 to less than 1,000 (Table 9) which is just over one-half of one percent of all students in Grades Pre-K-2. The declines over the past several years are attributable largely to the passage of [Public Act No. 15-96](#) which was subsequently codified as C.G.S. 10-233(f).

Table 9: Number of Students Suspended/Expelled (Pre-K through Grade 2) by Grade

	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Pre-K	7	*	*	*	16
K	198	142	197	210	160
Grade 1	337	162	202	281	322
Grade 2	504	290	354	392	446

When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, the number of Black/African American and White students in Pre-K through Grade 2 receiving at least one suspension or expulsion has declined from pre-pandemic levels (Table 10).

Table 10: Number of Students Suspended/Expelled (Pre-K through Grade 2) by Race/Ethnicity

	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
American Indian or Alaska Native	*	0	*	*	0
Asian	10	*	8	6	*
Black/African American	345	151	182	205	233
Hispanic/Latino of any race	330	235	304	326	390
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*
Two or More Races	57	37	47	55	60
White	302	169	212	291	251

<sup>2</sup> The data are suppressed to protect student confidentiality pursuant to the [CSDE's data suppression guidelines](#).

## An In-depth Look at Disparities by Race/Ethnicity

The statewide data clearly illustrate that Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students experience suspensions at substantially greater rates than White students. To explore these racial disparities further, two additional questions were explored:

1. How many students are involved in more than one disciplinary incident during the school year? Are Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students involved in multiple incidents at greater rates than White students?
2. Are different sanctions imposed for similar behavior? Do Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students receive more severe sanctions (e.g., OSS instead of ISS) for the same behavior?

Most of the students who were suspended or expelled (approximately 21,000 students or 59.7 percent) committed only one incident during the 2024-25 school year; this rate is slightly higher than the pre-pandemic rate of 58.2 percent (Table 11).

*Table 11: Percentage of Students with One or More Incidents*

2018-19		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students	Percentage of Students
Only one incident	58.2	59.1	58.5	59.1	59.7
Two to four incidents	31.9	31.9	31.9	31.2	31.1
Five to nine incidents	7.9	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.3
Ten or more incidents	2.0	1.5	2.0	1.8	1.9

When the data are disaggregated by race (Table 12), it is evident that Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students are reported for more than one disciplinary incident at greater rates than White students. In 2024-25, 44.7 percent of Black/African American and 42.3 percent of Hispanic/Latino students who received a suspension/expulsion were involved in two or more incidents as compared to 33.7 percent of White students. Note that these percentages are the totals of the three columns labeled 2 - 4, 5 - 9 and 10+ incidents.

Table 12: Percentage of Students with Multiple Incidents by Race/Ethnicity

		American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino of any race	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White	Total	
2017-18	Student Count →	117	501	9,884	12,819	32	1,248	12,167	36,768	
	% with Incident Count	1	53.8	75.1	51.8	54.9	63.2	60.8	65.4	58.0
		2 - 4	*	21.6	35.3	33.3	*	30.9	27.9	31.8
		5 - 9	*	*	10.1	9.2	*	6.2	5.6	8.0
		10 plus	*	*	2.8	2.5	0	2.1	1.2	2.1
2018-19	Student Count →	118	532	9,875	13,217	35	1,396	11,685	36,858	
	% with Incident Count	1	61.0	69.9	53.8	55.0	62.9	56.9	65.2	58.2
		2 - 4	30.5	26.5	34.7	33.9	28.6	31.4	27.8	31.9
		5 - 9	7.6	2.4	9.1	8.7	8.6	10.0	5.8	7.9
		10 plus	0.8	1.1	2.4	2.4	0	1.6	1.1	2.0
2021-22	Student Count →	119	446	8,518	13,574	46	1,636	10,310	34,649	
	% with Incident Count	1	55.6	71.9	54.5	57.4	60.9	55.2	65.5	59.1
		2 - 4	35.9	24.4	35.3	32.9	28.3	34.6	27.8	31.9
		5 - 9	*	*	8.4	8	*	7.9	5.7	7.4
		10 plus	*	*	1.8	1.7	*	2.3	1	1.5
2022-23	Student Count →	111	513	8,933	15,439	48	1,900	10,693	37,637	
	% with Incident Count	1	64.9	74.1	56.1	64.7	58.7	64.7	66.8	63.5
		2 - 4	25.2	22.0	37.2	37.0	*	38.0	29.5	34.7
		5 - 9	*	*	8.8	9.5	*	10.5	5.8	8.2
		10 plus	*	*	2.4	2.6	0.0	2.9	1.4	2.2
2023-24	Student Count →	102	499	8,814	15,319	40	1,846	10,392	37,012	
	% with Incident Count	1	59.8	72.7	53.7	57.2	55.0	56.8	66.1	59.1
		2 - 4	32.3	24.2	35.0	32.6	35.0	32.6	27.7	31.6
		5 - 9	*	3.0	9.0	8.1	*	8.2	5.1	7.4
		10 plus	*	0	2.2	2.1	*	2.4	1.1	1.8
2024-25	Student Count →	84	560	8,388	15,087	37	1,874	9,707	35,737	
	% with Incident Count	1	56.0	74.6	55.3	57.7	59.5	57.2	66.3	59.7
		2 - 4	39.3	20.7	34.0	31.8	37.8	32.9	27.5	31.1
		5 - 9	*	3.6	8.4	8.3	0	8.0	5.0	7.3
		10 plus	*	1.1	2.2	2.2	2.7	1.9	1.2	1.9

Are different sanctions imposed for similar behavior? Does the severity of sanction vary based on race/ethnicity?

To answer these questions, an in-depth examination was conducted of four various types of incidents:

1. Fighting/Altercation/Physical Aggression
2. Knife 2½ Inches or Greater in Length
3. Sexual Harassment
4. School Policy Violations

Fighting/Altercation/Physical Aggression was selected because it is the most common incident reported. A Knife of 2 ½ inches or Greater was analyzed because it is the most common weapon reported. Sexual Harassment was selected to represent “serious” incidents. Four types of School Policy Violations were selected for this analysis to evaluate whether there are any disparities with less severe incidents.

The first three incident types are required to be reported to CSDE regardless of sanction, while the fourth type is only reported when the incident results in a suspension or expulsion. In all cases, the analyses were limited to cases where this was the only incident reported for that student. This was done to eliminate the possibility that the choice of the sanction for a particular behavior was somehow influenced by repeat behavior. Due to small numbers of students across the different race/ethnicity groups, these analyses were limited to the three largest groups of Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and White students. The results from prior years have been included to identify areas where improvements have been made and where disparities may continue to exist.

#### **CASE #1: Fighting/Altercation/Physical Aggression**

This incident type is reported for a student who participated in an incident that involved a physical confrontation in which one or more participants received a minor physical injury. A minor injury is one that does not require professional medical attention, such as a scrape on the body, knee, or elbow; and/or minor bruising. Medical attention from the school nurse qualifies the injury as minor unless further medical attention is required. This incident type can also be used when one person strikes another (causing a minor injury), and the incident ends prior to the other participant retaliating. Among students who were reported with a single fighting/altercation/physical aggression incident during 2024-25 and where this was their only incident, Black/African American received an OSS or EXP at a rate of 72.7. Hispanic/Latino students was 58.3 percent, which was a substantial decrease from the prior year (72.2 percent). The rate for White students is significantly lower than both groups at 44.0 percent (Table 13).

Table 13: Fighting/altercation/physical aggression Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

	2018-19			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			2024-25		
	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%
Black/African American	1,333	708	53.1	492	353	71.7	404	285	70.5	435	326	74.9	267	194	72.7
Hispanic/Latino	1,591	796	50.0	560	384	68.6	493	349	70.8	515	372	72.2	345	201	58.3
White	1,022	247	24.1	336	152	45.2	332	156	47.0	317	148	46.7	275	121	44.0
Total	3,946	1,751	44.4	1,388	889	64.0	1,229	790	64.3	1,569	1,127	66.8	887	516	58.2

### CASE #2: Knife 2½ Inches or Greater

In 2017-18 regardless of race/ethnicity, all students statewide reported with a single weapons incident where the weapon was a knife that was 2½ inches or greater (e.g., a steak knife, hunting knife), received either an OSS or an EXP. During the 2018-19 school year and beyond this was not the case. In 2024-25 88.9 percent of Black/African American students and 97.9 percent of Hispanic/Latino students received an OSS, or an EXP, as compared to 80.0 percent of White students who received the same consequence.

Table 14: Knife 2½ Inches or Greater Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

	2018-19			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			2024-25		
	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%
Black/African American	23	21	91.3	40	37	92.5	40	38	95.0	35	34	97.1	27	24	88.9
Hispanic/Latino	38	34	89.5	97	92	94.8	78	74	94.9	64	61	95.3	47	46	97.9
White	42	32	76.2	62	55	88.7	50	45	90.0	41	35	85.4	30	24	80.0
Total	103	87	84.5	199	184	92.5	168	157	93.4	140	130	92.9	104	94	90.4

### CASE #3: Sexual Harassment

An incident that is reported as sexual harassment involves inappropriate and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual acts, other physical or verbal conduct, or communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment. Examples include leering, pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures, or jokes; or pressure to engage in sexual activity. In 2017-18, there were no significant differences among Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or White students in the rate at which they received an OSS or EXP. In 2018-19, however,

Black/African American students received OSS at a significantly greater rate (57.1 percent) than Hispanic/Latino students (40 percent) and White students (38.8 percent). In 2024-25 the disparity still exists with the rates of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students receiving these sanctions (37.2 and 31.2 percent respectively), compared to White students (19.2 percent). The rate within each racial group has decreased from 2018-19 to 2024-25, and is overall 26.8 percent compared to 41.9 percent.

Table 15: Sexual Harassment Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

2018-19				2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			2024-25		
	Total Incidents	Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP		Total Incidents	Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP		Total Incidents	Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP		Total Incidents	Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP		Total Incidents	Incidents Resulting in OSS/ EXP	
		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
Black/African American	70	40	57.1	57	34	59.6	43	19	44.2	49	24	49.0	43	16	37.2
Hispanic/Latino	75	30	40.0	88	43	48.7	95	33	34.7	75	33	44.0	77	24	31.2
White	134	52	38.8	105	35	33.3	110	29	26.4	71	16	22.5	104	20	19.2
Total	265	111	41.9	250	112	44.8	248	81	33.7	195	73	37.4	224	60	26.8

**CASE #4: Select School Policy Violations**

The following four school policy violations were examined for this analysis:

- Insubordination/Disrespect: Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request, or other situation in which a student is disobedient.
- Disorderly conduct: Any behavior that seriously disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function or which substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.
- Inappropriate behavior: Horseplay, play fighting, playing cards.
- Disruptive behavior: Disruption of class; in the hallway, cafeteria, or any other area of the school.

None of these incidents are classified as “serious,” so their reporting to CSDE is required only if the incident results in a suspension or expulsion. Therefore, this analysis was limited to those incidents that resulted in a suspension/expulsion to determine if students of color received OSS at a greater rate than White students. As with the prior cases, the students selected for this analysis were those who had only one incident type, indicating this is the only issue that took place during the incident. Moreover, this was the only incident for which the student was reported for the school year, and the incident was not classified as a bullying incident. Among students who were reported with a single school policy violation incident during 2018-19 and where this was their only incident, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students received an OSS or EXP at a greater rate (34.3 and 27.7 percent respectively) than White students (19.5 percent). The disparity was higher in the subsequent three years with Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students receiving an OSS or EXP at a

greater rate in 2023-24 (44.1 and 38.9 percent respectively) than White students (16.3 percent). In 2024-25 Black/African American and White students neared pre-pandemic rates while Hispanic/Latino students were over 7 percent higher than the pre-pandemic rate.

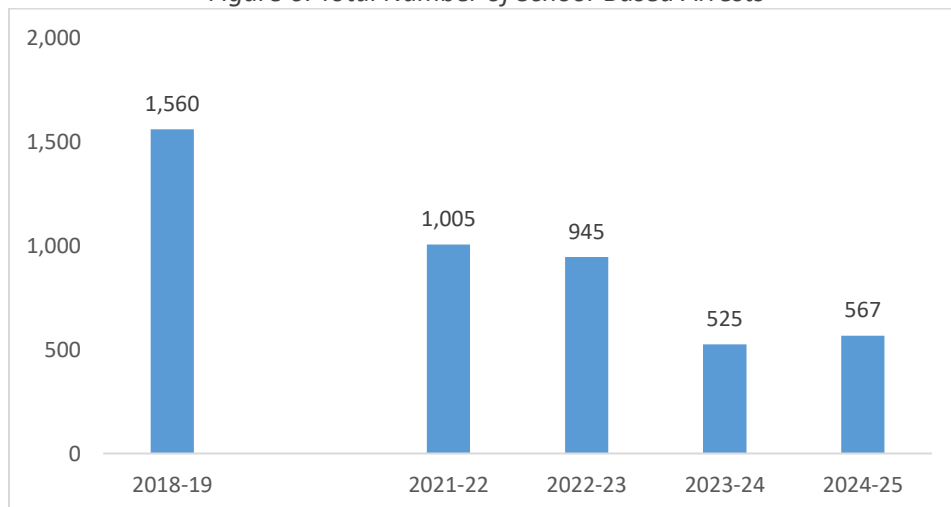
Table 16: School Policy Violation Incidents Resulting in OSS/EXP

	2018-19			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			2024-25		
	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%	Total Incidents	#	%
Black/African American	957	328	34.3	190	98	51.6	210	101	48.1	252	111	44.1	169	54	32.0
Hispanic/Latino	1,240	343	27.7	301	129	42.9	396	167	42.2	452	176	38.9	373	130	34.9
White	1,349	263	19.5	390	109	27.9	431	104	24.1	423	69	16.3	424	85	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,518</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>35.9</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>27.9</b>

### School-Based Arrests

Effective July 1, 2015, [Public Act No. 15-168](#), *An Act Concerning Collaboration Between Boards of Education and School Resource Officers and the Collection and Reporting of Data on School-Based Arrests*, redefined a School-Based Arrest as “an arrest of a student for conduct of such student on school property or at a school-sponsored event.” The total number of school-based arrests reported to the CSDE declined significantly in 2024-25 from the pre-pandemic count (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Total Number of School-Based Arrests



Fighting and Battery continues to be the most common reason for a school-based arrest (Table 17).

*Table 17: Incident Categories for School-Based Arrests*

Incident Categories for School-Based Arrests	2018-19 Count	2021-22 Count	2022-23 Count	2023-24 Count	2024-25 Count
Fighting and Battery	515	408	363	218	228
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco	403	88	115	57	43
Physical and Verbal Confrontation	215	167	164	75	87
Personally Threatening Behavior	134	80	77	52	49
School Policy Violations	84	49	55	34	42
Weapons	71	135	114	45	60
Violent Crimes Against Persons	48	25	22	12	21
Theft Related Behaviors	49	19	15	23	17
Property Damage	14	26	14	*	*
Sexually Related Behavior	27	8	6	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,560</b>	<b>1,005</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>567</b>

The majority of students arrested were male. Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students were disproportionately represented among those arrested relative to enrollment, but the number of students arrested declined significantly among all student groups since 2018-19 (Table 18).

*Table 18: Student Demographics for School-Based Arrests (student counts)*

Race/Ethnicity	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Black or African American	390	270	242	118	156
Hispanic/Latino of any race	601	421	394	254	234
White	468	217	188	103	121
Male	1,067	649	539	303	363
Female	493	313	326	209	185
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,560</b>	<b>962</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>548</b>

Counts of School-Based Arrests by Local Education Agency are available on [EdSight](#).

# A Statewide Systems Approach to Turning the Curve

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## Setting the Stage

The Connecticut State Board of Education developed the Every Student Prepared for Learning, Life, and Work Beyond School: The Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023–28 to set forth the state’s vision for education and to provide direction for policy consideration and administrative actions designed to help meet the challenge of effectively preparing each student for learning, life, and work beyond the classroom. The State Board of Education Plan Goal One states: *All learners are supported, including those with high needs, and have equitable access to education regardless of background or advantage, as well as access to great teachers and leaders, and a diverse educational workforce.* One strategic initiative of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is to assist LEAs in enhancing the school climate and implementing alternatives to exclusionary disciplinary practices. It is important to understand the evolving changes within the context of building internal systems. The objective of this initiative is twofold: first, to ensure strategic alignment that directs the team towards a unified goal, thereby harnessing each individual's distinct capabilities to advance the overarching organizational mission. Second, it aims to foster innovation by leveraging a diverse range of expertise to develop unique, comprehensive solutions that could not be realized by any single individual or department in isolation. Coherent systems provide an essential organizational framework for the CSDE, LEAs, and schools. By promoting communication and collaboration among interest-holders, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) significantly enhance the overall efficacy of disciplinary practices. The CSDE focuses on the social-emotional and behavioral (SEB) aspects of MTSS, which creates a proactive, comprehensive support framework to support the social, emotional, and behavioral growth of every student, in partnership with families and educators. This approach aims to mitigate disparities in suspensions and expulsions across student demographics. MTSS-SEB is built on a strong evidence-based MTSS framework to support students’ SEB growth centered on equitable access, engagement, and benefit by prioritizing:

- Meaningful and measurable **outcomes** that educators, families, and students collaboratively identify and define.
- An integrated continuum of evidence-based and culturally sustaining **practices** that are proactive, supportive, responsive, and restorative to improve students’ engagement and foster growth and development of academic and SEB skills.
- Regular use of relevant disaggregated **data** for decision-making to continuously improve implementation fidelity and outcomes.
- Supportive and sustainable **systems** that promote coherence and enhance educators’ implementation fidelity.

The CSDE not only conducts comprehensive data analyses but also disseminates this information to promote transparency and demonstrate a commitment to systemic change. The CSDE emphasizes the importance of adopting a more thoughtful approach to disciplinary practices within LEAs and facilitates comparative analysis, enabling schools to assess their discipline practices and outcomes relative to those of other LEAs. A significant development this year is the CSDE's introduction of a mid-year data collection period for school discipline, which allows LEAs to address and rectify disciplinary issues within the same academic year, rather than waiting until the end of the year. This proactive approach will enable the CSDE to identify any anomalies and engage with LEAs as needed.

Furthermore, the CSDE, in collaboration with stakeholders, has established a comprehensive contact resource, the Central Office School Discipline Contact. This initiative aims to enhance communication between the CSDE and LEAs on school discipline issues, encompassing oversight of discipline-related data, management of student suspensions, and responsibilities for expulsions.

Since 2022-23, the trend in school discipline sanctions (see the Results section) has been consistently declining. Concurrently, the State of Connecticut is making significant progress statewide with the 2024–25 Next Generation Accountability System. This system provides a comprehensive evaluation of school and district performance across twelve distinct indicators. It extends beyond test scores and graduation rates to encapsulate the various ways schools foster student learning and well-being. The results indicate that students have shown improvement across most indicators, including academic achievement, chronic absenteeism, the timely progression of ninth-grade students toward graduation, postsecondary readiness, four- and six-year graduation rates, physical fitness, and participation in the arts.

#### [Key Reasons to Use Disaggregated Discipline Data in MTSS-SEB](#)

The use of data helps educators develop a foundational understanding of root causes, rather than merely addressing superficial symptoms. Data informs decision-making, identifies trends and patterns, and helps monitor progress and implementation. Disaggregated discipline data also highlights the necessity of making informed adjustments derived from data-driven insights. The collection and utilization of school discipline data are essential for cultivating fair, effective, and positive learning environments. This process aids in identifying behavioral patterns, ensuring equitable treatment across diverse student groups, including race, ethnicity, gender, and IEP status, tracking the effectiveness of interventions, preventing behavioral escalations, and fostering trust with families through transparency. Such data underpins decisions regarding proactive support, intervention strategies, and policy modifications. The emphasis shifts from reactive and punitive measures to preventive initiatives that address potential issues before they arise. Analyzing school discipline data enables educators to refine instructional methods, allocate resources effectively, and strengthen intervention strategies, thereby creating a continuous cycle of improvement that builds, enhances, and sustains educational systems.

The CSDE leverages this data to shape and enhance professional learning (PL) initiatives for LEAs. By analyzing detailed incident patterns and identifying disproportionate rates of suspensions and expulsions among different student demographics, the CSDE can better target PL sessions for school leaders and educators. This foundational and systemic approach facilitates the application of evidence-based strategies that directly address the underlying causes of behavioral challenges while enhancing the overall educational environment. As a result, PL initiatives become not only more pertinent but also effectively equip educators with the necessary tools to promote inclusivity and improve student outcomes. This year, the CSDE has introduced several new PL offerings and has broadened its existing programs in response to both qualitative and quantitative data.

- MTSS Leadership Series
- Indicator 4 (State Performance Plan Reporting Indicator to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs)
- Non-Compliance Districts Data and Action Planning. Next year's proposal will add technical assistance and coaching for all LEAs identified for Indicator 4.
- Monitoring Outcomes and Building State Capacity
- Using Data and Protocols to Determine Effective Behavior (enhanced series)
- Developing Tier 3 Supports: Intensive, Individualized Support to Improve Behavior
- Developing Secondary Systems of Supports for Students using the standardized Tier Fidelity Assessment
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (enhanced series)
- Classroom Practices for Improving Student Learning and Behavior (enhanced)
- Understanding Disproportionality in School Discipline Series (enhanced)
- Pyramid Model Practices for Early Childhood (enhanced)
- Introduction to Restorative Practices (enhanced)
- Deepening Collaboration: The Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) to Support Students with Mental Health Needs
- Understanding Drivers of Chronic Stress and Burnout and What Can Be Done
- Social Emotional Learning within Multi-tiered Systems of Support (enhanced)
- Designing for Belonging to Strengthen School Communities
- Aligning/Integrating Practices Using MTSS Framework (enhanced)

Furthermore, through the application of special education Indicator 4 initiatives, the CSDE has established an MTSS-SEB Advisory Committee. This committee is dedicated to developing, enhancing, and expanding the Statewide MTSS-SEB framework. The primary objective is to promote collaboration and cultivate a shared understanding of the MTSS-SEB goals among all stakeholders involved. By creating a common language and a

unified framework, the committee seeks to improve communication and strengthen support systems, ultimately benefiting the entire educational ecosystem. The Advisory Committee members include educational leaders, educators, and representatives from parent organizations, Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), the State Education Resource Center (SERC), and higher education institutions.

Below are actions within the CSDE system of supports for districts to further reduce the use of exclusionary discipline and increase the utilization of data, evidence-based practices, and wraparound supports.

### **Connecticut Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS) and MTSS**

The CSDE is offering professional learning and coaching services to assist districts with the newly developed CT-SEDS MTSS module. The objective of this initiative is to integrate academic instruction, special education support, and SEB through an interfaced system that supports districts in implementing tier-two and tier-three interventions. The aim is to provide LEAs with research-based, evidence-informed practices and results-driven strategies. Currently, over 40 LEAs are engaged in this training and developing their MTSS intervention plans. Several LEAs have shared their best practices through workshops, the Performance Matters Forum, and the Northeast Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Forum.

### **Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative (est. 2018)**

Students with disabilities and students of color are significantly more likely to be excluded from school, according to national and state data. The Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative (SDC) includes a diverse group of experts in education, law, public policy, child welfare, mental health, youth development, and community leadership. The SDC advises the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education on strategies to transform school discipline and reduce the overall and disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline. The SDC convenes biannually, with the initial meeting dedicated to a comprehensive review of student discipline data available through the EdSight platform. During this meeting, the Performance Office presents reports detailing the data collection process and definitions employed. Additionally, the committee examines supplementary statistics, including the most frequently imposed sanctions by grade level, Pre-Kindergarten to Grade Two counts, incident types, and data disaggregated by vulnerable groups. The SDC facilitates collaboration and the exchange of innovative ideas among professionals across Connecticut and beyond, aiming to create a more equitable and supportive school environment for all students and to enhance their well-being and academic success.

The SDC plays a crucial role in keeping the CSDE updated on emerging trends and developments in the educational landscape. Through observations and collaborative discussions, the SDC helps the CSDE craft informed guidelines and protocols aligned with best practices. This year, the CSDE is issuing a reminder regarding Connecticut General Statutes 10-233(c), which pertains to in-school suspensions and proper documentation of

situations in which families are asked to pick up their child from school for disciplinary reasons. This statute outlines the procedures and requirements that schools must follow when implementing such disciplinary measures, ensuring that student rights are upheld while maintaining a safe and conducive learning environment. The emphasis on this statute aims to reinforce clarity and compliance among educators and administrators throughout the state.

The CSDE and SDC have created three resources to assist families and school districts with issues related to school discipline. Two specific Family Guides ([When a Child is Suspended from School](#) and [When a Child is Expelled from School](#)) are designed to clarify laws and policies and empower families to understand their rights within Connecticut's public school system.

The State Board of Education (SBE) has issued a Position Statement titled [Reducing Disproportionality in Suspensions and Expulsions \(Exclusionary Discipline\)](#). This document provides strategies and frameworks for implementing fair and equitable school discipline policies. It contains comprehensive guidelines for school district leaders, educational staff, families, and students, emphasizing a proactive approach to reduce disparities in suspension and expulsion rates across demographic groups.

## Discipline Disproportionality Protocol

The CSDE's Protocol for Facilitation on Disproportionate Suspension/Expulsion 2025-26 targets districts with at least two consecutive years of race/ethnicity disproportionality, aiming to reduce these disparities. The process uses a systematic approach to evaluate current systems, behavioral support mechanisms, and practices related to social-emotional learning. It also involves analyzing data on disproportionality and assessing existing policies and practices related to suspensions and expulsions. Districts are encouraged to identify actionable goals and develop strategic action plans with specific targets and tracking measures. Follow-up support includes mid-year checks and ongoing community engagement to monitor progress and implement necessary adjustments. Additional disaggregated data on suspension and expulsion incidents is also necessary to inform these efforts.

The CSDE has initiated a comprehensive PL series designed to address disparities in educational practices. This series comprises distinct sessions that underscore the importance of nuanced decision-making in implementing disciplinary measures in educational settings. An effective understanding of discipline requires a multifaceted approach that accounts for the specific contexts in which challenging behaviors occur. This approach entails a comprehensive assessment of numerous individual factors, including the student's personal history, emotional well-being, and behavioral patterns. Additionally, it examines cultural influences, social dynamics, developmental stages, and environmental conditions that may affect a student's actions. Throughout this series, educators engage in reflective practices and consider adults' behaviors and actions. By integrating these diverse elements,

educators and administrators are positioned to make more informed, equitable decisions that address behavioral concerns and support students' overall growth and development.

## Focus on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Behavioral Health

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) submitted an application for the Federal Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) Grant. Connecticut has been awarded \$154 million in total. The estimated allocation for the CSDE in the first year is approximately \$3.8 million.

The primary objective is to establish integrated systems that enhance mental and behavioral health in designated rural school districts. This will involve assessing existing programs, staffing, and resources to identify gaps, thereby informing the design of evidence-based support systems for students and staff. Through data-driven evaluation, targeted training, partnerships, and improved referral systems, the model will create a coordinated framework (MTSS-SEB) that promotes student well-being and academic success.

In recognition of the pressing need for improved behavioral and mental health support within rural K-12 educational systems, funding will be allocated to establish a Rural Behavioral Health Transformation Model (RBHTM). This initiative aims to assess and enhance the effectiveness of the behavioral and mental health frameworks employed by the districts. This process will entail a thorough analysis of existing programs and an evaluation of the available resources. Through this approach, school administrators will be better positioned to identify their needs, pinpoint gaps, and establish priority areas for enhancement. Furthermore, this model will aid the CSDE and its collaborators in proposing suitable, scalable interventions for implementation within rural communities. These interventions may include increased staffing and service provision, opportunities for training and professional development, technical assistance and coaching, partnerships with external mental health providers, and streamlined referral processes. Participating districts will complete the School Mental Health Quality Assessment (SMHQA) and the student-based Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA). Furthermore, the school-level School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) System will also be employed. SHAPE is a public-access, web-based platform that provides schools, districts, and states/territories with a workspace and targeted resources to support internal and external improvement in school mental health quality.

### Ongoing Actions

- Assisting districts with evaluating the effectiveness of school discipline policies and practices
- Continue to design, execute, and assess multiple professional learning and technical assistance opportunities based on need, demographics, capacity, and resources. (See the multi-tiered series of supports section for these professional learning offerings)

- Continue to analyze district data and engage school districts.

## Focus on Positive School Climate

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) affirms that positive, safe, and inclusive learning environments are essential for student success and well-being. Consistent with [Section 10-222h\(b\)](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Department continues to focus on fostering school climates that are physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe for all members of the school community.

Connecticut has made important progress through legislation and strategic initiatives designed to prevent bullying, support student mental health, and promote SEL. The State Board of Education’s (SBE) [Five-Year Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023–28](#), *Every Student Prepared for Learning, Life, and Work Beyond School*, identifies Strategic Priority Two, which specifically addresses school climate: *Learning spaces are safe, compassionate, and culturally responsive and are designed to support the academic, physical, and social-emotional well-being of all learners, including learners of color, multilingual learners, those with a disability, learners experiencing food and housing insecurities, learners coming from low-income families, and those who identify as LGBTQ+.*

Guided by this priority, the CSDE is taking a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach to support the wellness of educators, students, families, and communities, while building leader capacity to create positive school climates. This approach emphasizes helping districts select strategies that fit their local contexts. Current CSDE initiatives—both direct and indirect—support school climate and overall wellness, including:

- Publication of [Connecticut School Climate Guidance](#).
- Partnership with Connecticut Children’s Hospital, Yale School of Public Health, and state agencies to host a [3-part Virtual House Calls for Families](#) series on social-emotional wellness, seasonal health preparation, and suicide prevention (Oct 2024) as well as a follow-up Student Support Series for 2025-26.
- Adoption of SBE position statement on [personal technology use in schools](#) and development of a [K–12 Model Digital Citizenship Curriculum](#) (Jan 2025).
- Professional development on systemic approaches to enhancing school climate, including Tier 1 initiative evaluation and access to evidence-based strategies.
- Learning opportunities for school teams to assess and improve behavioral response systems through data review and best practice reflection.
- Targeted technical assistance to Alliance Districts, Commissioner Network schools, and Charter Schools (e.g., Netstat).
- Response to family, student, district, and community complaints or inquiries.

- Guidance on policy implementation and best practices.
- Partnership with WestEd to support Sheff districts and magnet schools in systemic school climate implementation.
- Training and support to external partners that focus on the elements of positive school climate, partnership and collaboration strategies, and resources for systemic implementation of best practices. Partners include: Western Connecticut State University’s Regional Crisis Teams, Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI), Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), Office of Early Childhood (OEC), School Based Health Centers, Cooperative Education Services (CES) Leadership Institute, RESC Alliance Curriculum Leadership Council.
- Support Civil Rights compliance on-site reviews as a team member conducting interviews with leadership, educators, and students (i.e., regular, special education and English learners). This collaboration provides an invaluable opportunity to get students’ perspectives about their school experiences to inform the guidance and support that the CSDE Office of Student Supports provides to school district leadership, and the feedback that is given to the CSDE.
- CSDE serves as a Tri-Chair and content area experts provided guidance and content expertise to the legislative efforts of the Connecticut Social-Emotional Learning and School Climate Collaborative.
- Internal collaboration within CSDE and with other key partners to align and integrate school climate and culture efforts to promote a comprehensive wellness approach to learning environments.

Despite these efforts, statewide data and district feedback highlight ongoing needs for consistent frameworks, sustainable resources, and coordinated systems that align school safety, discipline, and school climate priorities. These findings underscore the importance of continued investment and policy guidance to sustain Connecticut’s commitment to safe, inclusive, and positive learning environments.

## Focus on Alternative Education Programs

Connecticut General Statutes 10-233o required the SBE to adopt standards for the provision of an adequate alternative educational opportunity for students who have been expelled.

### Ongoing Actions:

- Developed [Guidelines for Alternative Education Settings](#) in collaboration with the Connecticut Alternative Schools Committee.
- Developed, in collaboration with the Alternative Schools Committee, and disseminated a companion document to the Guidelines, [Alternative Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled: Best Practice Guidelines for Program Implementation](#). The guidelines and standards are

designed to ensure that students who are expelled continue to have access to high-quality education that will position them for future success.

- Developed and disseminated a comprehensive document, [Guidance Regarding Student Expulsions](#). This Guidance outlines the process and procedures required for expulsions and provides an overview of key legal considerations relevant to expulsions in Connecticut.
- Conducted a statewide survey of Alternative Education Programs that provided education to expelled students in school year 2023-24 and produced a summary report: [Expelled Students in Alternative Education Opportunities](#)

### Ongoing and Future Actions

- In 2025, the CSDE established a centralized statewide directory in EdSight requiring each district to designate a District Alternative Education Program Coordinator responsible for overseeing all alternative education programs and placements.
- In 2025-26, the CSDE provided additional funding to districts participating in the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) to expand home visits for students attending district Alternative Education Programs to address chronic absenteeism through student reengagement and family outreach.
- Beginning in 2026-27, the CSDE will conduct targeted site visits to Alternative Education Programs, prioritizing districts serving high numbers of expelled students or identified through survey and discipline data, to assess instructional models and support systems; identify promising practices and challenges; provide targeted technical assistance and professional development; and use findings to strengthen policies and program quality.

## APPENDIX A: District Tiers, 2024-25

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The CSDE groups district into four tiers based on racial/ethnic disparities in suspension/expulsion data to provide targeted interventions and supports. The primary metric used for placing districts into tiers is the “Suspension/Expulsion Rate.” This is the percentage of students receiving at least one in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion during the school year. This metric represents the broadest inclusion of students who may experience any exclusionary discipline during the school year.

The Suspension/Expulsion rate is reported publicly for all students and student groups on [EdSight](#) and included in the [Profile and Performance Report](#) for every district/school. Districts are placed into tiers according to the following criteria:

- **Tier 4** - Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, Black, or Hispanic suspension rate  $\geq 15$  percent in 2 recent years.
- **Tier 3** - Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either Black or Hispanic Relative Risk Index (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.

### Relative Risk Index (RRI)

In addition to looking at the absolute suspension rate of all students and the primary race/ethnic groups (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White students), a relative risk index (RRI) is also calculated for Black and Hispanic students relative to White students in each district. The RRI is a measure of disproportionality that indicates how many times more likely Black or Hispanic students are to be suspended/expelled relative to White students. For example, an RRI of 3.0 for Black students in a district means that Black students are 3 times as likely to be suspended/expelled as White students in that district.

### System of Support Model for Disproportionate School Discipline

Considering the impact on in-person learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2019-20 school year, the 2018-19 district tiers are being used to identify districts needing additional support. Complete data regarding the tiers is available on [EdSight](#). The CSDE has developed a System of Support Model for Disproportionate School Discipline to assist districts in reducing and eliminating disparities in school discipline. This model: (1) is designed to review and assess the systemic and root causes of school

discipline disparities; and (2) provides supports and tools to systematically address district-based factors that contribute to disparities in school discipline. The CSDE provides professional learning on aligning/integrating social-emotional learning and Restorative Practices into a multi-tiered framework. The focus is on disproportionality to prompt districts to consider the potential impacts of a program or practice on specific students and whether the implementation of the program or practice could advance equitable outcomes for all individuals and families.

## Tier 4

Consistently High Suspension Rates (may also have high disproportionality): Overall, Black, or Hispanic suspension rate  $\geq 15$  percent in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
2440014	Area Cooperative Educational Services
9000016	Connecticut Technical Education and Career System
0370011	Derby School District
0430011	East Hartford School District
0470011	East Windsor School District
0490011	Enfield School District
2310018	Goodwin University Educational Services (GUES)
0560011	Granby School District
0580011	Griswold School District
0590011	Groton School District
2860013	Highville Charter School District
0690011	Killingly School District
0730011	Lisbon School District
0860011	Montville School District
9010022	Norwich Free Academy District
1040011	Norwich School District
1130011	Portland School District
9020022	The Gilbert School District
1430011	Torrington School District
1510011	Waterbury School District

### Tier 3

Consistently High Disproportionality: Not in Tier 4 AND either Black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 3$  in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
0040011	Avon School District
0110011	Bloomfield School District
0230011	Canton School District
2970013	Capital Preparatory Harbor School District
2410014	Capitol Region Education Council
2680013	Common Ground High School District
0400011	East Granby School District
0510011	Fairfield School District
0620011	Hamden School District
0930011	New Haven School District
1030011	Norwalk School District
1100011	Plainville School District
1190011	Rocky Hill School District
1350011	Stamford School District
1550011	West Hartford School District
1640011	Windsor School District

## Tier 2

Consistently Medium Disproportionality: Not in Tiers 4 or 3 AND either Black or Hispanic RRI  $\geq 2$  in 2 recent years.

District Code	District Name
0070011	Berlin School District
0090011	Bethel School District
0140011	Branford School District
0170011	Bristol School District
0180011	Brookfield School District
0250011	Cheshire School District
0330011	Cromwell School District
0440011	East Haven School District
0480011	Ellington School District
0540011	Glastonbury School District
0570011	Greenwich School District
0640011	Hartford School District
0800011	Meriden School District
0830011	Middletown School District
0960011	New Milford School District
0940011	Newington School District
1010011	North Haven School District
2830013	Park City Prep Charter School District
2050012	Regional School District 05
2150012	Regional School District 15
2160012	Regional School District 16
1280011	Simsbury School District
1290011	Somers School District
1320011	South Windsor School District
1310011	Southington School District
1380011	Stratford School District
1390011	Suffield School District
1460011	Vernon School District
1520011	Waterford School District
1580011	Westport School District
1590011	Wethersfield School District
1650011	Windsor Locks School District

## Tier 1

Low Suspension Rate/Disproportionality: All other districts

District Code	District Name
2850013	Achievement First Bridgeport Academy District
2880013	Achievement First Hartford Academy District
2790013	Amistad Academy District
0010011	Andover School District
0020011	Ansonia School District
0030011	Ashford School District
0050011	Barkhamsted School District
0080011	Bethany School District
0120011	Bolton School District
2950013	Booker T. Washington Academy District
0130011	Bozrah School District
2900013	Brass City Charter School District
0150011	Bridgeport School District
0190011	Brooklyn School District
0210011	Canaan School District
0220011	Canterbury School District
0240011	Chaplin School District
0260011	Chester School District
0270011	Clinton School District
0280011	Colchester School District
0290011	Colebrook School District
0300011	Columbia School District
2430014	Cooperative Educational Services
0310011	Cornwall School District
0320011	Coventry School District
0340011	Danbury School District
0350011	Darien School District
0360011	Deep River School District
3370015	Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
0410011	East Haddam School District
0420011	East Hampton School District
0450011	East Lyme School District
2530014	Eastern Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center (EASTCONN)
0390011	Eastford School District
0460011	Easton School District
2420014	EdAdvance

District Code	District Name
2890013	Elm City College Preparatory School District
2910013	Elm City Montessori School District
0500011	Essex School District
2720013	Explorations District
0520011	Farmington School District
0530011	Franklin School District
2940013	Great Oaks Charter School District
0600011	Guilford School District
0630011	Hampton School District
0650011	Hartland School District
0670011	Hebron School District
2640013	Integrated Day Charter School District
2650013	Interdistrict School for Arts and Comm District
2610013	Jumoke Academy District
0680011	Kent School District
2450014	Learn
0710011	Lebanon School District
0720011	Ledyard School District
0760011	Madison School District
0770011	Manchester School District
0780011	Mansfield School District
0790011	Marlborough School District
0840011	Milford School District
0850011	Monroe School District
0880011	Naugatuck School District
2800013	New Beginnings Inc Family Academy District
0890011	New Britain School District
0900011	New Canaan School District
0910011	New Fairfield School District
0920011	New Hartford School District
0950011	New London School District
0970011	Newtown School District
0980011	Norfolk School District
0990011	North Branford School District
1000011	North Canaan School District
1020011	North Stonington School District
2630013	Odyssey Community School District
1060011	Old Saybrook School District

District Code	District Name
1070011	Orange School District
1080011	Oxford School District
1090011	Plainfield School District
1110011	Plymouth School District
1120011	Pomfret School District
1140011	Preston School District
1160011	Putnam School District
1170011	Redding School District
2010012	Regional School District 01
2040012	Regional School District 04
2070012	Regional School District 07
2080012	Regional School District 08
2090012	Regional School District 09
2100012	Regional School District 10
2110012	Regional School District 11
2120012	Regional School District 12
2130012	Regional School District 13
2140012	Regional School District 14
2170012	Regional School District 17
2180012	Regional School District 18
2190012	Regional School District 19
2200012	Regional School District 20
1180011	Ridgefield School District
1210011	Salem School District
1220011	Salisbury School District
1230011	Scotland School District
1240011	Seymour School District
1250011	Sharon School District
1260011	Shelton School District
1270011	Sherman School District
2700013	Side By Side Charter School District
1330011	Sprague School District
1340011	Stafford School District
2960013	Stamford Charter School for Excellence District
1360011	Sterling School District
1370011	Stonington School District
2690013	The Bridge Academy District
9030022	The Woodstock Academy District

District Code	District Name
1400011	Thomaston School District
1410011	Thompson School District
1420011	Tolland School District
1440011	Trumbull School District
3360015	Unified School District #1
3470015	Unified School District #2
1450011	Union School District
1470011	Voluntown School District
1480011	Wallingford School District
1530011	Watertown School District
1560011	West Haven School District
1540011	Westbrook School District
1570011	Weston School District
1600011	Willington School District
1610011	Wilton School District
1620011	Winchester School District
1630011	Windham School District
1660011	Wolcott School District
1670011	Woodbridge School District
1690011	Woodstock School District

## APPENDIX B – The Data Collection and Reporting Processes

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### ED166 Data Collection

LEAs submit data to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) annually via an online data collection application known as the ED166 Student Disciplinary Offense Collection. After initial data submission, the CSDE conducts numerous validations to identify potential irregularities in the data. LEAs are expected to review and resolve all anomalies; then, a district administrator certifies electronically that the data are complete and accurate.

### Public School Information System (PSIS)

Student demographic data is collected in an application known as the Public-School Information System or PSIS. PSIS contains student enrollment and demographic information (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender). Enrollment data, which are used for calculations such as suspension rates, are based on PSIS enrollment.

### Race/Ethnicity Information

In PSIS, all students must be assigned to a racial/ethnic subgroup for analysis purposes. If a parent or student will not select a category from the five race codes provided, appropriate school personnel are advised to select the category for the child. In accordance with the final guidance and regulations issued by the United States Department of Education (USED), race and ethnicity are collected using the following two-part question:

1. Is the respondent Hispanic/Latino? – Yes/No
2. Hispanic or Latino is defined as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
  - a. Is the respondent from one or more races using the following (choose all that apply):
  - b. American Indian or Alaskan Native - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
  - c. Asian - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
  - d. Black or African American - A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
  - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

- f. White - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

CSDE then reports this racial/ethnic data to the USED and the public using the following categories:

- Hispanic/Latino of any race;
- American Indian or Alaska Native;
- Black or African American;
- Asian;
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander;
- White; and
- Two or more races

Race/Ethnicity information can be updated at any time during the school year and be changed as many times as a student or his or her parents or guardian wish.

## EdSight

Data collected through ED166 are released publicly on CSDE's data portal, EdSight, sometime in October. EdSight is available at <http://edsight.ct.gov>. EdSight provides detailed information about schools/districts and offers information on key performance measures that make up Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System. A variety of reports are available on EdSight. They include:

- The Profile and Performance Reports and Connecticut Report Cards;
- Numerous interactive reports on topics like enrollment, chronic absenteeism, discipline, educator demographics, graduation rates, and test results;
- The special education Annual Performance Reports; and
- Data and research bulletins on critical topics of interest.

## EdSight Data Suppression Guidelines

Data on both EdSight and within this report are suppressed following CSDE's Data Suppression Guidelines. In general, counts less than 5 are suppressed; however, there are some instances where other numbers may be suppressed as well. The complete [data suppression policy](#) is available online.