

Significant Discrepancy by Race/Ethnicity in Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions



Special Education Indicator 4b
Fact Book

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**Department of
Education &
Workforce**

What is Significant Discrepancy in Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions by Race/Ethnicity (Indicator 4b)?

This Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) indicator is part of a set of equity measures that measures whether students with disabilities are being disciplined¹ at a higher rate than their peers without disabilities. This measure assesses significant discrepancy between students with disabilities by race/ethnicity and students without disabilities with more than 10 cumulative days of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. This indicator is a compliance measure with required targets of 0.00 percent each year, which means the goal is that no district or community school has significant discrepancy by race that is the result of noncompliant policies, procedures, or practices.

Why is Significant Discrepancy in Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions by Race/Ethnicity Important?

Significant discrepancy (Indicator 4b) aims to understand whether:

- Students are equally likely to receive exclusionary discipline regardless of disability and race/ethnicity.
- Discipline is being administered in a nondiscriminatory manner.

To promote the most equitable environment for students with disabilities, it is important for districts and schools to consistently review their discipline practices.

How is Significant Discrepancy by Race/Ethnicity Calculated?

Ohio calculates significant discrepancy by race/ethnicity in out-of-school suspensions and expulsions (OSSE) using a rate ratio (see Figure 1 and Table 1). Districts and community schools must have at least 10 students disciplined for at least 10 cumulative days and at least 30 students enrolled for a rate ratio to be calculated. Ohio uses three years of data to define “significant discrepancy.” The below graphic shows how to calculate the rate ratio for Black students with disabilities.

Figure 1. Calculation step 1: The number of Black students with disabilities with out-of-school suspensions and expulsions (OSSE) of greater than 10 cumulative days divided by the district enrollment of students with disabilities equals the district rate for Black students with disabilities with OSSE of greater than 10 cumulative days.

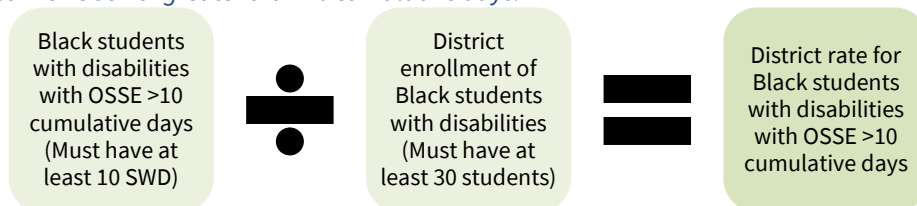
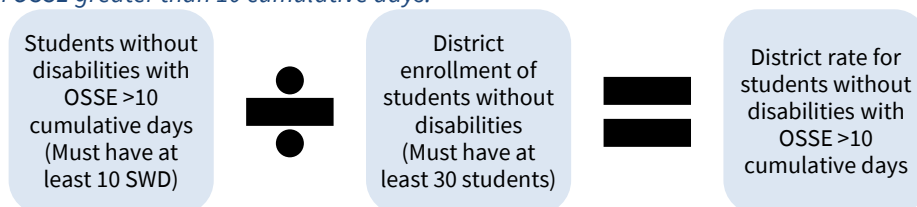


Figure 2. Calculation step 2: The number of students without disabilities with out-of-school suspensions and expulsions (OSSE) of greater than 10 cumulative days divided by the district enrollment of students without disabilities equals the district rate for students without disabilities with OSSE greater than 10 cumulative days.



¹ IDEA 20 U.S.C. [1416\(a\)\(3\)\(c\)](#)

Figure 3. Calculation step 3: The district rate for Black students with disabilities with greater than 10 out-of-school suspensions or expulsions (OSSE) of greater than days divided by the district rate for students without disabilities with OSSE greater than 10 cumulative days equals the discipline rate ratio for Black students.

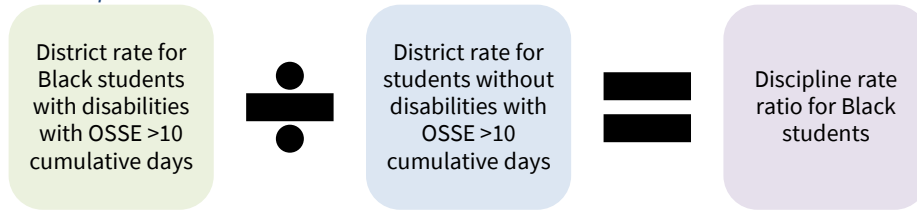


Table 1. Example of a step-by-step calculation for significant discrepancy by race/ethnicity in out-of-school suspensions and expulsions (Indicator 4b).

Calculation	Description	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
A	Black students with disabilities with out-of-school suspensions and expulsions of more than 10 cumulative days	8	150	180
B	Black students with disabilities enrollment	2,200	2,000	2,000
$C = A \div B$	Discipline rate for Black students with disabilities	<10 SWD	7.50%	9.00%
D	Students without disabilities with out-of-school suspensions and expulsions of more than 10 cumulative days	55	580	680
E	Students without disabilities enrollment	17,500	17,200	17,800
$F = D \div E$	Discipline rate for students without disabilities	0.31%	3.37%	3.82%
$G = C \div F$	Rate ratio for Black students with disabilities	NC*	2.22	2.36

Using the example in Table 1, this district’s rate ratio was not calculated (NC) for the 2020-21 school year because the district disciplined fewer than 10 Black students with disabilities for 10 cumulative days as denoted in row C. This district’s overall result for significant discrepancy by race would be “NC”. To have a significant discrepancy by race in Ohio, the rate ratio must be greater than 2.50 for all three years considered. A rate ratio of 2.50 means that the rate of suspensions and expulsions of greater than 10 cumulative days for students with disabilities within a specific racial group is two and a half times more than the rate for students without disabilities in the district. A rate ratio of 1.00 means that students with disabilities within a racial/ethnic group are no more or less likely to be disciplined than students without disabilities.

Historical Data for Significant Discrepancy in Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions by Race

The data source for Indicator 4b is the Education Management Information System (EMIS).

Figure 4. Ohio’s percentage of districts and community schools with a significant discrepancy by race/ethnicity greater than 2.50 increased from 5.26 percent in 2018-2019 to 15.79 percent in 2019-2020. Ohio met the target of 0 percent in 2020-21 and has continued to meet that target. Zero districts or community schools have had significant discrepancy by race/ethnicity that is the result of noncompliant policies, procedures, or practices since 2018-2019.

4b: Percentage of Districts and Community Schools with a Significant Discrepancy by Race/Ethnicity >2.50 for Three Consecutive Years

==== Districts and Community Schools with a Significant Discrepancy by Race/Ethnicity ••••• Target

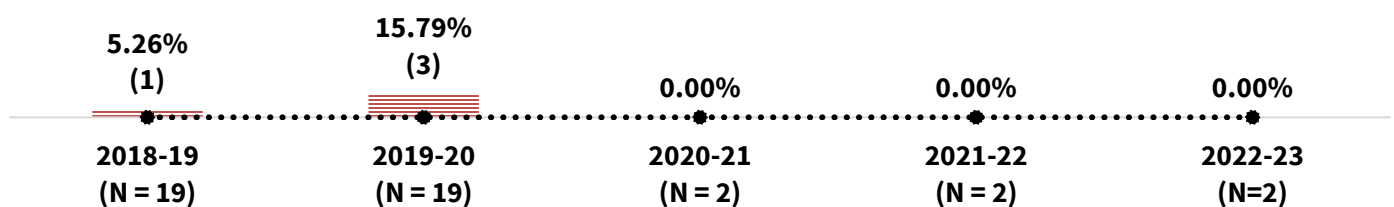


Table 2. Ohio's percentage of districts and community schools with a discipline discrepancy by race/ethnicity of greater than or 2.50 for three consecutive years, including the number who were included in the analysis because they met the minimum cell and N sizes.

4b: Discipline Discrepancy by Race/Ethnicity	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Three consecutive years of discipline data	Data from the 16-17, 17-18, and 18-19 school years	Data from the 17-18, 18-19, and 19-20 school years	Data from the 18-19, 19-20, and 20-21 school years	Data from the 19-20, 20-21, and 21-22 school years	Data from the 20-21, 21-22, and 22-23 school years
Number of districts and community schools with a discipline discrepancy by race/ethnicity >2.50 three consecutive years	1	3	0	0	0
Total number of districts and community schools included in the analysis	19	19	2	2	2
Percentage of districts with a discipline discrepancy by race/ethnicity >2.50	5.26%	15.79%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Number of districts with a discipline discrepancy by race/ethnicity that is the result of noncompliant policies, procedures, or practices	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of districts with a discipline discrepancy by race/ethnicity that is the result of noncompliant policies, procedures, or practices	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Total number of districts and community schools	969	933	932	943	968
Percentage of all districts and community schools included in the analysis	1.96%	2.04%	0.21%	0.21%	0.21%

Stakeholder Input on Methodology

Ohio is asking for stakeholder input on the number of years considered in the calculation for Indicator 4b. Two methodological options are proposed below. Use [this form](#) to provide your feedback.

Methodological Options

Both methodological options proposed below:

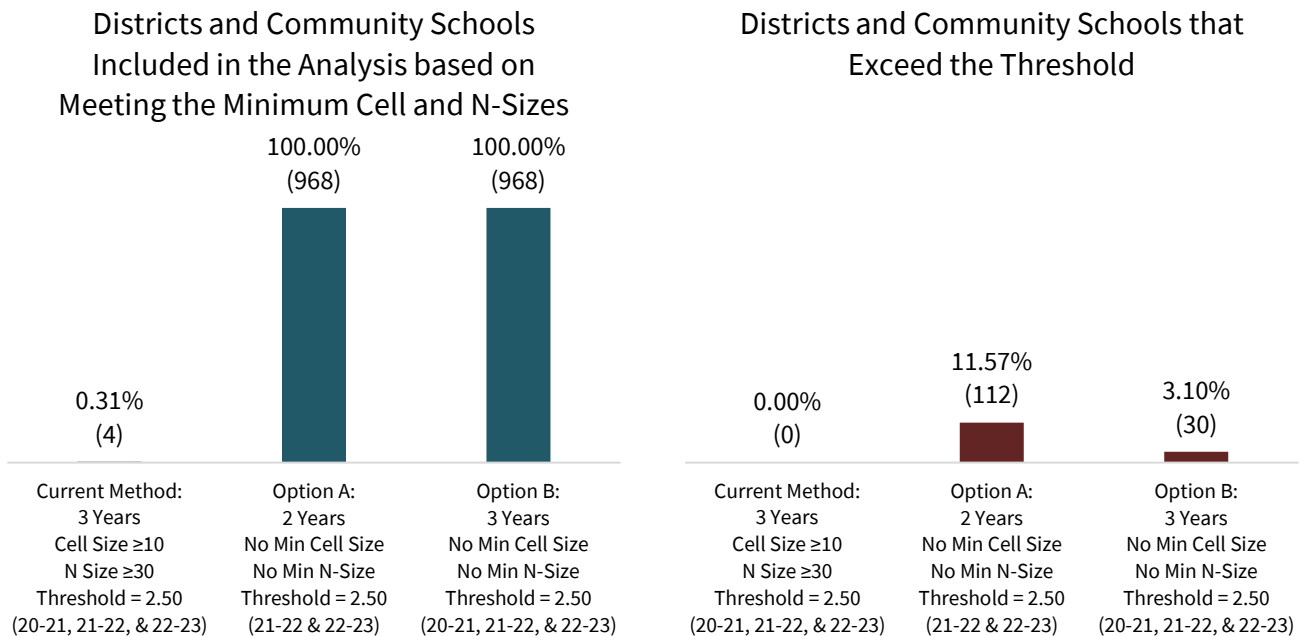
- Are based on a minimum cell size of zero and minimum n size of zero. This ensures that Ohio is assessing discipline rate differences in all districts and community schools across the state each year.
- Maintain the state's current threshold of 2.50 to determine whether progress can be made in decreasing discipline rate differences when including all districts and community schools in the analysis each year.
- Consider multiple consecutive years of data to ensure districts and community schools are reviewed based on systemic discipline concerns rather than a single year anomaly.

Both the current methodology and Option B are based on three consecutive years of data that include a pandemic year (20-21). The new methodology for Indicator 4b will be first implemented with the 2024-2025 Special Education Profile and based on data from the 21-22, 22-23, and 23-24 school years. The state expects an increase in the number of districts and community schools with a significant discipline discrepancy based on increased discipline rates as students transitioned back to in-person classroom experiences from virtual settings post-pandemic.

Table 3. Comparison of Ohio's current Indicator 4b methodology and the two proposed methodological options.

Methodological Component	Ohio's Current Methodology	Proposed Methodology Option A	Proposed Methodology Option B	Ohio's Definition
Threshold	2.50	2.50	2.50	Ohio defines, "significant discrepancy," as a discipline rate for children with disabilities of a racial/ethnic group that is 2.50 times the discipline rate for all children without disabilities in the same district or community school.
Minimum Cell Size	10	0	0	A proposed minimum cell size of 0 means a rate ratio will be calculated for all districts and community schools. Ohio currently uses a minimum cell size of 10. This means that for a district to be included in the analyses, there has needed to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 10 children with disabilities of the racial/ethnic group suspended/expelled for at least 10 cumulative days in the district; and at least 10 children without disabilities suspended/expelled for at least 10 cumulative days in the district.
Minimum N Size	30	0	0	A proposed minimum n-size of 0 means a rate ratio will be calculated for all districts and community schools. Ohio currently uses a minimum n-size of 30. This means that for a district to be included in the analyses, there has needed to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 30 children with disabilities of the racial/ethnic group enrolled in the district; and at least 30 children without disabilities enrolled in the district.
Multiple Years of Data	3	2	3	The proposed options include using either two or three years of data. Ohio currently uses three years of data to determine if "significant discrepancy" is occurring in a district or community school. A district or community school must have a rate ratio that exceeds 2.50 for each of the years considered to have a significant discrepancy by race/ethnicity as defined by Ohio.

Figure 5. Comparison of the percentage and number of districts and community schools included in the analysis based on meeting the minimum cell and n-sizes and exceeding the threshold by methodological option.



Required Actions for Significant Discrepancy

Districts and community schools that exceed the threshold of 2.50 for each year considered must:

- 1) Review their policies, procedures, and practices and submit documentation to the Department of Education and Workforce. If noncompliance is found during this review, correct the noncompliance according to IDEA.
- 2) Identify and address the factors that may be contributing to the significant discrepancy.

Resources for Addressing Systemic Improvement of Significant Discrepancy

Resource	Resource Description
Implicit Bias Modules from The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity	Activity addressing possible biases staff may have between students with disabilities and students without disabilities.
Learning Management System (LMS)	Professional learning opportunities including <i>Culturally Responsive Practice Program</i> .
Ohio's Whole Child Framework	A framework to support a student-centered environment that meets mental, behavioral, physical health, wellness, nutrition, and safety needs.
Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence's (OCALI) Teaching Diverse Learners Center	Provides learning opportunities through the <i>Challenging Behaviors Webinar Series</i> and <i>Bullying and Individuals with Special Needs and InspirED Zoomcasts</i> .
Ohio Preschool Expulsion Prevention Partnership	Partnership developed between Nationwide Children's Hospital and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to reduce the rate of expulsions for preschool children.
SchoolSafety.gov	Created by the federal government to provide schools and districts with actionable recommendations to create safe and supportive learning environments for students and educators.