



Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality in Education Position Statement Indiana Association of School Psychologists

The Indiana Association of School Psychologists (IASP) along with the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) are dedicated to supporting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students and eliminating discriminatory practices that result in disproportionate access to a free and appropriate public education. **IASP believes that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identification, or sexual orientation, are entitled to equitable access to safe, supportive, and healthy learning environments. IASP supports the use of inclusive, high quality, research-supported, and multi-tiered educational practices to reduce or eliminate disproportionate administration of punitive or exclusionary discipline techniques or placement in more restrictive educational settings for any particular group of children.**

Decades of research has indicated patterns of disproportionate application of harsh discipline practices, including the use of suspension and expulsion, for specific ethnic groups as compared to other populations. Nationally, according to the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Black or African American students represent only 15% of the general population but represent 40% of all students receiving at least one out-of-school suspension. Similar disparities exist in Indiana as Black or African American students represent 32% of out-of-school suspensions despite being slightly less than 10% of the overall population. Additional disparities exist both nationally and in our state with respect to expulsions and referrals to law enforcement (OCR, 2016).

History has also proved inequities in academic achievement and special education placement rates. the *41st Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2019* indicates that American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic/ Latino, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students were more likely to be represented in special education when compared to the overall population. Also of note in the report, Black or African American students were twice as likely to be represented in the categories of emotional disturbance and intellectual disability.

IASP supports the following practices to address inequitable and disproportionate access to academic and behavioral supports:

Multi-tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

A collection of practices that involve problem solving, providing increased frequency and duration of intervention and support to students struggling academically and/or behaviorally as well as frequent progress monitoring toward meaningful goals.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Direct teaching and reinforcement of pro-social behaviors as well as emotional management strategies.

Positive School Climate

Positive school climate is the intentional design of school systems to promote positive relationships and a supportive educational experience.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice seeks to maintain or repair relationships and repair the harm caused from negative behaviors through mediated conversation and by emphasizing personal accountability and restitution for wrongs.

Resource: National Association of School Psychologists. (2013). Racial and ethnic disproportionality in education [Position statement]. Bethesda, MD: Author.