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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
DATE: September 22, 2020
SUBJECT: Reducing and Eliminating Disproportionate Discipline

PURPOSE:

To review an update on work related to COMAR 13A.08.01.21C *Reducing and Eliminating Disproportionate/Discrepant Impact*.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

With the adoption of COMAR 13A.08.01.21C *Reducing and Eliminating Disproportionate/Discrepant Impact*, a workgroup was developed to determine the model for reducing and eliminating disproportionate impact in the area of discipline. The workgroup, with the approval of the State Board, identified a risk ratio, in which the removal rate for one student group was compared to the removal rate for students not in that group. A second measure was a state comparison measure in which the removal rate of a student group was compared to the statewide removal rate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Following identification of the model, collection and analysis of data, and review by experts in the field, the Maryland State Department of Education identified staff to work with all local school systems, and in particular the 14 local school systems that had schools identified. Across the 14 local school systems, 79 schools were identified. The presentation will review the model and the work of the local school systems to address the disproportionality in the identified schools. In many cases, the processes have been applied across the school system.

ACTIONS:

Information for discussion

ATTACHMENTS:

Reducing and Eliminating Disproportionate Discipline PowerPoint

Reducing and Eliminating Disproportionate Discipline



September 22, 2020

COMAR 13A.08.01.21C

Reducing and Eliminating Disproportionate/Discrepant Impact Adopted January 2014

- Department was required to develop a method to analyze local school system discipline data to determine disproportionate impact.
- If identified, the local school system shall develop a plan to reduce the impact within one year and eliminate it within three years.

Background - Defining Disproportionate Discipline

The MSDE convened a workgroup of stakeholders to determine the model that would be used to identify a school with disproportionate discipline. The workgroup consisted of MSDE staff, local Directors of Student Services, other local school system (LSS) administrative staff, student advocacy representatives, and other stakeholders. The State Board accepted the recommendations of the workgroup.

- The model includes only out-of-school suspension and expulsion. In-school suspensions are not part of the calculation.
- Unduplicated student data will be used. Unduplicated student data refers to counting the number of students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions or expulsions, not the number of out-of-school suspensions or expulsions issued by a school.
- Disproportionality by race and students with disabilities will be identified.
- The workgroup agreed upon the use of two complementary measures:
 - Risk ratio; and
 - State comparison.
- A school must meet both measures to be identified by the MSDE.

Disproportionate Discipline – the Maryland Model

Risk Ratio Measure

- The risk ratio compares the removal rate of each student group in a school to the removal rate of a comparison group in the school (i.e., all other students in the school). The risk ratio measure captures whether the “risk” of removal for a student in one student group is lower or higher than the risk of removal for a student in a comparison group.
- The workgroup agreed upon using a risk ratio of 3.0 or greater for identification.

Risk Ratio Measure

(Students in the school in one group compared to students in the school who are not in that group)

Step 1. Calculate Removal Rates (Student Group and All Other Students)

$$\text{Removal Rate} = \frac{\text{Unduplicated Count of Students in Group Removed}}{\text{Total Count of Students in the Group}} \times 100$$

Step 2. Calculate Risk Ratio

$$\text{Risk Ratio} = \frac{\text{Student Group Removal Rate}}{\text{All Other Students Removal Rate}}$$

Risk Ratio Example

Example: 20 African American students out of 100 were removed at ABC Elementary School. The removal rate for this group of students is therefore 20%.

The removal rate for all other students (non-African American) is 6.67%. The risk ratio is $20 \div 6.67 = 3.00$.

Therefore, the risk of removal for African American students is 3 times higher than the risk of removal for all other students at the school.

1.00	Risk Ratio Value is the same
2.00	Two times higher risk
3.00	Three times higher risk

Disproportionate Discipline – the Maryland Model

State Comparison Measure

- The state comparison measure compares the removal rate of each student group in a school to a statewide removal rate. The statewide removal rate is a three-year cumulative rate based on the prior three years of Maryland's out-of-school suspension/expulsion and enrollment data. Frequency of removal rates vary by grade band; thus, the MSDE calculated two separate removal rates, one for elementary school and one for middle/high school.
- The elementary school state comparison removal rate is 1.53%.
- The middle/high school state comparison removal rate is 6.75%.

State Comparison Measure

(Students in the school compared to students in the State)

Step 1. Calculate Student Group Removal Rate

$$\text{Removal Rate} = \frac{\text{Unduplicated Count of Students in Group Removed}}{\text{Total Count of Students in the Group}}$$

Step 2. Calculate State Comparison Measure

$$\text{State Comparison Measure} = \frac{\text{Student Group Removal Rate}}{\text{Statewide Removal Rate}}$$

State Comparison Example

The removal rate for students with disabilities at XYZ Middle School is 18%.

The statewide removal rate for all students in Maryland middle/high schools is 6.75%.

The risk of removal for students with disabilities at XYZ Middle School is 2.67 times higher than the risk of removal for middle/high school students statewide ($18\% \div 6.75\%$).

Statewide Removal Rate ¹	School Type
1.53%	Elementary
6.75%	Middle/High

Disproportionate Discipline - Identification of Schools

2019 Identification of Schools

- The three years of data used for the 2019 identification were: 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018.
- The data review identified any school that was disproportionate in the risk ratio and state comparison measures for each of the three years.
- 14 LSSs had schools identified.
- 79 schools were identified.

Disproportionate Discipline - 2019 Identification

Local School System	Number of Schools
Allegany County	1
Anne Arundel County	10
Baltimore City	10
Baltimore County	11
Carroll County	4
Cecil County	1
Charles County	2
Frederick County	3
Harford County	6
Howard County	6
Montgomery County	1
Prince George's County	19
Talbot County	1
Wicomico County	4

Disproportionate Discipline - MSDE Requirements

All 24 Local School Systems

- Student discipline root cause analysis completed by a system level team of stakeholders in each LSS during the spring of 2019.
- Strategies to address identified root causes for discipline disproportionalities were developed by the system level team and enacted during the 2019-2020 school year.

The 14 Local School Systems with Identified Schools

- Each system submitted a formal written plan (fall 2019) to the MSDE.
- The MSDE reviewed all plans and met with system level teams to provide logistical support.
- The MSDE met with system level teams to review implementation and outcome progress (winter 2019-2020).
- The MSDE provided direct coaching to building administrators upon request from the system level team.

Disproportionate Discipline - Strategies of Note

The LSS engages all schools (not just those identified) in a focus on eliminating discipline disproportionalities as well as academic equity gaps. Coordination and collaboration exists among system level divisions and initiatives.

- Inclusion of an equity and/or discipline goal is required in all school improvement plans. The school team must use an analysis of discipline data to develop an annual improvement goal and specific action steps. All school systems incorporated this.
- Charles County engaged in a system-wide book study to increase the capacity of all staff to meet the diverse needs of their students. This was done through the selection and supply of one title for everyone in the system. Central office leaders led and modeled monthly dialogue with building administrators, who then led monthly dialogue with their building staff. The expectation was a change in practice to occur over the course of the school year through the extended study.
- Coordination and collaboration with smaller school systems, where often one system leader manages multiple initiatives, happens with ease. This effort in the larger systems, however, is more complicated and has proven to be an obstacle in some instances. Howard County and Montgomery County are two large systems that utilized a disproportionate discipline review team model that ensured collaboration across divisions from the very beginning of the process.

Disproportionate Discipline - Strategies of Note (contd.)

The system has developed data dashboards using early warning indicators and requires school leadership and intervention teams to respond to the data at least monthly. Principals, principal supervisors, and school intervention teams engage in continuous dialogue about behavior interventions which are schoolwide, classroom specific, and for individual students.

- Several systems have demonstrated positive outcomes in 2019-2020 with this strategy. Howard, Frederick, Wicomico, and Montgomery Counties have electronic data dashboards that make monitoring and responding to student progress extremely efficient for school leaders and teams.
- St. Mary's County produced a less technical version on paper that administrators receive monthly. Baltimore County, Baltimore City, and Prince George's County began building dashboards last year.
- The dashboard only leads to positive outcomes if it is used consistently and wisely. Each of the four systems previously listed have procedures to ensure school leaders and teams are reviewing and responding to the data. The improvement dialogue is continuous among school and system leaders. In each instance, this strategy has been deployed system-wide, beyond identified schools.

Disproportionate Discipline - Strategies of Note (contd.)

The increased use of restorative and trauma responsive approaches by classroom teachers and school administrators.

- Montgomery, Howard, Charles, and Frederick Counties have been building the capacity for restorative approaches across the system over the past few years.
- Howard County has redesigned their Student Code of Conduct to integrate restorative language and practices throughout.
- Cecil County has utilized a grant from the National Institute of Justice to develop system-wide efforts to train all staff and increase the use of restorative approaches in classrooms.
- Allegany County invested 2019-2020 resources to have several system leaders trained and lead the restorative approach efforts. Expectations exist for training and usage of restorative approaches by school staff.
- The Charles County book study mentioned earlier related to the topic of trauma responsive approaches.

Disproportionate Discipline - Strategies of Note (contd.)

The system and school have engaged in equity efforts that include all school staff through school-based equity teams, system and school-based training, and study through experts and book talks.

- St. Michaels Elementary in Talbot County is an exemplar for previously mentioned strategies. One unique practice worth noting is the use of a school-based equity team. The team has been conducting monthly equity walks for the past two years. Each month has specific focus or “look for” – e.g., instructional rigor, student groupings, teacher interactions. The team reports results to the whole staff and staff track progress toward meeting their individual and schoolwide equity goals.
- The Equity Officers in Harford, Allegany, and Anne Arundel Counties have been engaged in leading racial equity efforts throughout their system through direct training and a variety of book studies. They have been consistent collaborators with the MSDE in seeking to eliminate racial disparities.

Disproportionate Discipline - MSDE Partnership

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) at Mathematica

The MSDE seeks to expand the programs and practices being considered for use by LSSs in their effort to eliminate disproportionate discipline and meet the academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs of all students.

REL, through the MSDE partnership, is currently:

- Researching evidence-based and/or promising programs and practices for student discipline and disproportionate discipline. Using the information gathered, REL will:
 - Develop a document summarizing the outcome of research to share with all LSSs.
 - Conduct a webinar presenting the results for all LSSs.
- The 2020-2021 disproportionate discipline cycle of improvement will be initiated by the REL webinar.

Disproportionate Discipline - MSDE Ongoing Support to LSSs

All 24 Local School Systems

- Following the REL webinar, each LSS will be guided through a review of their 2019 root cause analysis results to make updates based upon current realities, expanding the analysis and strategies beyond those initially identified.
- The MSDE will assist systems and schools in expanding the use of programs and practices that have demonstrated success in eliminating disproportionalities.
- The MSDE will assist systems and schools in identifying and eliminating practices and programs that have demonstrated poor outcomes and/or contributed to disproportionalities.

The 14 Local School Systems with Identified Schools

- In addition to the items listed above, the MSDE will:
 - Monitor progress of plans for implementation and outcomes with the expectation that strategies will be updated accordingly.
 - Provide targeted coaching as needed to systems and schools, including increasing coaching frequency and methodology in instances of poor outcomes.

2019 Schools Identified with Disproportionate Discipline

Local School System (Number of Schools Identified)	Identified Schools
Allegany County (1)	Allegany High
Anne Arundel County (10)	Belvedere Elementary Eastport Elementary Hillsmere Elementary Park Elementary Seven Oaks Elementary Southgate Elementary Van Bokkelen Elementary Phoenix Academy Annapolis Middle Wiley H. Bates Middle
Baltimore City (10)	Arlington Elementary/Middle, K-8 Collington Square Elementary Curtis Bay Elementary Glenmount Elementary/Middle, K-8 Harford Heights Elementary Holabird Elementary Maree Garnett Farring Elementary Moravia Park Elementary Pimlico Elementary Sharp-Leadenhall Elementary
Baltimore County (11)	Elmwood Elementary Grange Elementary Gunpowder Elementary Mays Chapel Elementary Milbrook Elementary Pleasant Plains Elementary Reisterstown Elementary Sandy Plains Elementary Seneca Elementary Shady Spring Elementary Victory Villa Elementary
Carroll County (4)	Friendship Valley Elementary Robert Moton Elementary Taneytown Elementary William Winchester Elementary
Cecil County (1)	Rising Sun Elementary
Charles County (2)	Dr. James Craik Elementary Milton M. Somers Middle

Local School System (Number of Schools Identified)	Identified Schools
Frederick County (3)	Emmitsburg Elementary Walkersville Elementary Waverley Elementary
Harford County (6)	Bel Air Elementary Church Creek Elementary Forest Lakes Elementary Prospect Mill Elementary Roye-Williams Elementary William S. James Elementary
Howard County (6)	Harpers Choice Middle Longfellow Elementary Phelps Luck Elementary Stevens Forest Elementary Swansfield Elementary Waterloo Elementary
Montgomery County (1)	Flower Hill Elementary
Prince George's County (19)	Benjamin Stoddert Middle Imagine Lincoln Public Charter, K-8 William W. Hall Academy, K-8 Carmody Hills Elementary Catherine T. Reed Elementary District Heights Elementary Edward M. Felegy Elementary Francis Scott Key Elementary Hillcrest Heights Elementary Hyattsville Elementary Indian Queen Elementary Longfields Elementary Mary Harris "Mother" Jones Elementary Perrywood Elementary Port Towns Elementary Princeton Elementary Robert R. Gray Elementary Templeton Elementary William Paca Elementary
Talbot County (1)	St. Michaels Elementary
Wicomico County (4)	Parkside High Mardela Middle & High North Salisbury Elementary Pinehurst Elementary