



# CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Final report on

*OVERREPRESENTATION BY GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY, OR DISABILITY IN  
DISCIPLINE-RELATED ACTIONS AND/OR SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENT*

Produced by the

Superintendent's Educational Opportunities Advisory Council

For

Dwight D. Jones  
Superintendent of Schools  
Clark County School District

February 5, 2013  
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*Vision Statement*

All students will graduate from high school having the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to achieve academically, prosper economically, and contribute in a diverse global society.

“Policies which require out-of-school suspension or expulsion for certain inappropriate behaviors have become the go-to disciplinary approach in many schools, but research suggests some downsides.”

“Punishments that force students out of school disproportionately affect black, Latino, and male students and those with disabilities.”

*Education Week*  
October 13 and November 7, 2012

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## I. PREFACE

Media reports are raising public awareness of the impact of school policies on student engagement. While safety is paramount in every school community, evidence shows that the efforts of urban school districts to educate all students to high levels of achievement are helped or hindered by policies and practices related to code of conduct. Communities across the nation are searching for approaches that promote safety yet ensure schools are stimulating places that provide every student with opportunity and a pathway to success.

In July 2012, Superintendent Dwight D. Jones called upon a group of District stakeholders to consider how changes in District policies and practices concerning discipline and special education placement can improve the prospects of academic success for every student. A group was assembled called the Superintendent's Educational Opportunities Advisory Council (SEOAC). Its charge was to study the matter and deliver recommendations within six months. The report that follows is a synopsis of results from the work of that SEOAC. This report identifies recommendations and provides insight into the process used to derive them.

A by-product of the SEOAC's work is the learning that emerged as well-intentioned people came together to address an issue of keen interest and importance. Members learned how much can be accomplished when a community unites to transparently confront an issue that impacts the life chances of many youth. Members learned how much is possible when a team refuses to let individual self-interest impede work. While differences in opinion were encouraged and disagreements arose, SEOAC took the challenges in stride. For instance, faced with data of questionable quality, SEOAC elected not to perseverate and delay its work. Instead, members took to heart the advice of one participant who urged, "We know enough to act." Granting that it would be helpful if better data were available, SEOAC accepted the data "as is" and shifted gears. SEOAC maintained momentum by asking questions such as "So what?" and "Now what?" This resolve permitted the project to be completed on time.

While this report makes available all the data used for this study (see Section X titled "References"), the report did not list every concern that was expressed during SEOAC meetings. That is to say, some issues were raised but were judged to be beyond the scope of SEOAC's charge. For example, issues that were raised include underrepresentation by race/ethnicity within gifted and talented programs, how the District will ensure that professional development related to cultural competency is implemented according to plan, and whether quarterly monitoring and public reporting will include results published according to populations protected by federal law, that is, by race/ethnicity, gender, special education, and English language learners.

As well, observations offered by secondary principals in a focus group were passed along but were addressed by SEOAC only in a tangential way. Administrators noted that schools vary widely in how staff members implement discipline policies in the school. These principals further observed that while some latitude is needed (because schools face different kinds of challenges), the wide variation that exists is more than what is necessary. These observations are important, but only appear in a recommendation calling for professional development in cultural competency for new teachers and principals.

SEOAC cochairs, Dr. Robert L. Green and Dr. Andre Denson, extend thanks to the Superintendent for convening the committee and to the Board for its support. The cochairs convey appreciation to staff who supported SEOAC, which includes Gay Johnson in the Academic Services Division and Joyce Pistone in the Office of the Superintendent. These staff members provided invaluable project management support. It also includes two former District teachers, Kristen Cragwall and Rasheed Thompson who are associated with Teach for America, who provide support with special projects to the Special Consultant to the Superintendent. They assisted SEOAC in policy research and analysis. Finally, the cochairs express their thanks to every SEOAC member for their dedication and commitment to this work.

## II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This describes the proceedings and findings of a Superintendent-appointed committee of 23 individuals that met from August 2, 2012, to January 10, 2013, to address one question.

*What changes in District policy, procedure, or structure will mitigate overrepresentation by gender, race/ethnicity, or disability in discipline-related actions and/or special education placement?*

Secondary schools were exclusively the focus of study. Recommendations that follow provide general direction and address philosophy, accountability, and training. Ten consensus recommendations follow.

1. **Improve Data Quality:** Data collection related to suspension and expulsion will be consistent, reliable, standard (across schools), annually available to the public, and will reflect the intent of SEOAC recommendations.
2. **Reduce Overrepresentation:** Impose a moratorium on suspensions and expulsions except for the Big 5 offenses, at the Superintendent's discretion as to terms, with a caveat that student-on-student assault and battery that result in injury now fall under the Big 5 heading.
3. **Develop Cultural Competency:** Mandatory professional development on cultural competency will be provided for all new teachers and new administrators.
4. **Extend Cultural Competency:** At every school each year, at least one professional development day will be devoted to cultural competency.
5. **Gauge the Benefit of Professional Development:** Implement an evaluation procedure to identify the impact of professional development that is intended to promote cultural competency.
6. **Refine What We Mean by Cultural Competency:** Articulate standards and expectations of professional responsibility related to cultural competency.
7. **Provide Early Intervention:** Restructure Title I to focus on early interventions with the most at-risk student population.
8. **Enhance Early Literacy:** Students in Grades K-3 who are not-yet-proficient in literacy will receive appropriate interventions.
9. **Provide Better, Earlier, and Different Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion:** During the moratorium period, investigate for possible implementation, various models of tiered-intervention disciplinary systems that include parent notification policies; for example, the Baltimore model.
10. **Monitor Progress:** Appoint a CCSD administrator who is responsible for monitoring and publicly reporting (at least quarterly) the implementation of these recommendations.

Section XI of this report includes a complete list of recommendations. It includes important clarification for recommendations 2 and 7.

### III. DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARGE AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

In July 2012, the Superintendent of Schools in the Clark County School District invited 23 individuals (and three speakers or guests) to convene to address the following charge:

*By January 30, 2013, present the Superintendent with recommendations that are designed to mitigate and remedy overrepresentation by gender, race/ethnicity, or disability in discipline-related actions and/or special education placement.*

#### Success Criteria:

- Reflect consensus of the SEOAC.
- Conform to requirements of law, contract, and policy.
- Delivered on time (by January 30, 2013), under budget, and to specification.
- Incorporate actions that are achievable within the existing resources.
- Support schools in their efforts to ensure every student is Ready By Exit.
- Achieve the desired effect of eliminating undesirable overrepresentation.
- Make sure claims that are made are defensible, valid for their purpose, and based on reliable information.
- Provide direction but leave to others responsibility for translating high-level recommendations into practice.

### IV. MEMBERSHIP

Tami Bass	Attorney, United Family Services and Instructor, College of Southern Nevada
Richard Boulware	Vice President, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Shawn Boyle	CCSD – Principal, Sierra Vista High School
Dr. Kay Carl	CCSD - Retired Administrator
Teresa Cooper	Parent Volunteer
Dr. Andre Denson	CCSD - Associate Superintendent and SEOAC Cochair
Reverend Raymond L. Giddens	Unity Baptist Church
Dr. Robert L. Green	Dean and Professor Emeritus, Michigan State University, SEOAC Cochair
Frank Hawkins	President, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
April Key	CCSD – Principal, Cheyenne High School
Sylvia Lazos	Professor of Law, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Susie Lee	Board President, Communities in Schools of Nevada
Lavonne Lewis	Las Vegas Urban League
Lily Lin	Parent Volunteer
Steve Linder	Businessman
Jose Melendrez	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Leon Pearson	State Farm Insurance
Dr. Greta Peay	CCSD - Equity and Diversity Education Department
Lee Quick	Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority
Dr. Kenneth Turner	CCSD - Superintendent's Representative - Special Assistant to the Superintendent
Brad Waldron	CCSD - Assistant Superintendent, Education Services Division
Yvette Williams	Chair and Founder, Clark County Democratic Black Caucus
Kim Wooden	CCSD - Chief Student Services Officer, Student Support Services Division
Invited Speakers and Guests	
Dr. Gwen Marchand	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Dr. Tamara White	CCSD - Grant Writer, Grants Development and Administration Department
Dr. Dan Reschly	Vanderbilt University

## V. TERMS, DESIRED BENEFITS OF A SOLUTION, AND FRAME FOR THE WORK

### Terms:

- This work will be referred to simply as “overrepresentation” or “disproportionality” or “rates”.
- The charge to SEOAC includes a reference to “discipline-related actions.” In this context, the term “discipline-related actions” means referrals for expulsions, as well as its precursors (in this case suspensions and referrals to alternative schools).
- “African American” is used throughout this report except in cases where a quotation is drawn from a publication that relies on another identifier. The identifier “black” is commonly used in official documents provided by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Recommendations 3, 4, and 6 include a reference to “cultural competency.”
  - In this context, the term “cultural competency” means the ability to understand, appreciate, and interact with persons from cultures and/or belief systems other than our own. Cultural competency entails knowledge, skills, dispositions, and expressions (such as: what we know, do, believe, and respect) about ourselves, others, and society.
    - The aim of professional development in cultural competency is to create environments free from bias, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, and disenfranchisement.
    - Cultural competency is demonstrated through thoughts, words, actions, and interactions.
    - Training in cultural competency equips educators with a framework for making schools more welcoming, engaging, and rewarding for students.
    - The intended outcome of professional development in cultural competency is mutual respect among all persons; that is, respect for others who differ from us.
  - Objectives related to cultural competency include:
    - Promote community by bridging differences in a way that does not sacrifice identity.
    - Understand how learning styles, values, and sensitivities vary.
    - Understand and identify how cultural boundaries impact learning.
    - Display attitudes and behaviors that reflect the belief that even those who are different can also be right.
  - Objectives related to cultural competency and communication include:
    - Facilitate productive cross-cultural dialogue by knowing when, how, and why to vary language, symbols, and stories.
    - Interact productively on culturally-sensitive issues in a way that surfaces biases and brings beliefs and practices into better alignment.
    - Create learning environments where staff members seek valid information, make informed choices, and take responsibility for monitoring their effectiveness and the effectiveness of classrooms, programs, and schools.
  - An objective related to cultural competency and curriculum, instruction, and assessment is:
    - Differentiate content, materials, and conduct in order to optimize learning for students of various backgrounds.

- Recommendation 2 includes a reference to the “Big 5.” In this context, the term Big 5 refers to behaviors that warrant mandatory expulsion due to Federal statute (Federal Guns- Free School Act of 1994), Nevada law (N.R.S. 392.466), or District policy (R-5141.1). These include the following: arson; weapons; drug distribution; battery or assault on a staff member leading to harm; and inappropriate sexual relationship involving students. In addition to these requirements concerning mandatory expulsion, there are related laws and regulations and policies that pertain to mandatory suspensions. While it is the intent of SEOAC to use the Big 5 to reduce the rate of suspension, it is also the intent of SEOAC to ensure that the District remains in compliance with existing laws, regulations, and policies.
  
- A variety of statistics are typically used to characterize disproportionality. Those terms are described here along with their advantages and limitations.
  - o A term that has been used in the past to characterize disproportionality is “composition statistic” (or “compositional ratio”). The compositional ratio is 1.0 if a group constitutes 10 percent of the student population at large in a district and the same group also represents 10 percent of the expelled student population in the district. By comparison, the compositional ratio is 2.0 if a group constitutes 10 percent of the student population in the district and the same group represents 20 percent of the expelled population. Care should be taken when this term is used because this approach is no longer endorsed by the National Research Council. It was used by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights until 2010-2011 when the Office for Civil Rights discontinued its use because a more accurate and descriptive term had emerged in the research literature (see below for discussion of “relative risk”). The National Research Council now discounts “compositional ratio” because “compositional statistics are easily misunderstood and often distorted.” (Reschly , D., *Analysis of CCSD Discipline Outcomes by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Disability*, July 30, 2012, p. 9)
  - o Despite its limitations, compositional ratio statistics still appear on the Web site for the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights. The information is no longer current because it is based on information schools provided for 2009-2010; nonetheless, it provides an approximate way to compare expulsion rates across and within districts nationally. In the interest of fairness and accuracy, when presenting and interpreting comparisons of compositional ratios, it is vital to declare the limitations of this approach.
  - o For details, go to <http://ccsd.net/internal/documents/items.php?category=Quantitative>
  - o Beginning in 2010, use of “compositional ratio” declined and the term “relative risk” gained prominence. This shift occurred because the term “relative risk” earned the endorsement of the National Research Council Panel on Disproportionality (see Donovan and Cross, *Minority and Gifted Students in Special Education*, 2002). In the context of the work of SEOAC, the notion of overrepresentation was most appropriately and reliably characterized by the term “relative risk.” Relative risk is computed by dividing the number of behavioral events (in this case expulsion) for a student group by the total population of the same group (call the result x). Then take the sum of the behavioral events for all other groups and divide it by the total population of all other student groups (call the result y). The relative risk is derived by dividing x by y. Relative risk of 1.0 indicates exact proportional representation. Relative risk of 2.0 means that students in a group are overrepresented at a rate that is twice that of students in all other groups (Reschly, D., *Analysis of CCSD Discipline Outcomes by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Disability*, July 30, 2012, p. 9)
  
- Recommendation 9 includes a reference to “various models of tiered-intervention disciplinary systems that include parent notification policies; for example, the Baltimore model.” In this context, the term “Baltimore model” refers to a district system of student discipline and adult response that is characterized by the following features.

- It divides staff response to student behavior into four levels. Levels correspond to the seriousness of the student offense, the degree or harm involved, and the impact on a school community. Lower levels (one or two) concern less serious behaviors; higher levels (three or four) concern more serious offenses. Inappropriate student behaviors are classified according to levels. A particular student behavior is assigned a specific level of staff intervention and response. When responding to a specific inappropriate behavior, staff members make note of the level of expected response. Staff members apply a response that is associated with that level (or lower).
- For every level, there is an expectation that parents will receive information and prompt notification of inappropriate or disruptive behaviors by their students. For lower levels, this contact may occur via phone, e-mail, or text.
- For more details, go to <http://ccsd.net/internal/documents/items.php?category=Structural>

**Desired Benefits of a Solution:**

- Advance accountability for students, staff, schools, and parents.
- Enhance the achievement and academic growth at all school sites.
- Promote access, equity, efficiency, and quality in educational programming.
- Enhance retention (that is, extend ownership of each school for the success and safety of each student).
- Increase site-based responsibility as it relates to programming and services for each and every student.
- Narrow gaps separating particular student subgroups with respect to academic achievement and growth.
- Promote continuous improvement, greater transparency, and public understanding of causes/remedies.

**Work Frame:**

- The window for examining discipline-related outcomes extends from 2009-2010 (concerning expulsion) and 2011-2012 (concerning suspension and referral to alternative school).
- The window for examining special education representation extends from 2003 to 2012.

**VI. KEY FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH**

Two studies on disproportionality within the Clark County School District were commissioned by the District and conducted by Vanderbilt University. Both culminated in reports that were made available to SEOAC members. One of the studies used data from 2003-2012 to analyze overrepresentation by gender, race, and ethnicity in rates of special education placement. The other study analyzed data from 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 and examined how discipline-related events varied by gender, race/ethnicity, and disability. The findings from these two studies provided SEOAC with the most definitive assessment of District performance in the two areas of focus.

**Discipline-Related Findings Arising from the Vanderbilt Report:** The Vanderbilt study on discipline concluded that, “black students were about 2.7 times more likely than other groups to be excluded (expelled) by action of the school board.” This translates into a relative risk of 2.7. By contrast, with respect to other racial/ethnic groups, the Vanderbilt Report showed that during the same time period, only one other group had a slightly elevated level of expulsion (relative risk of 1.1 for Hispanic students). This means that students in this group are 1.1 times more likely than other groups to be expelled. No other group had a level of relative risk that exceeded this. A relative risk of 1.0 means that there is no evidence of disproportionality (Reschly, D., *Analysis of Clark County School District 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Discipline Outcomes by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Disability*, July 30, 2012, p. 43)

With respect to suspension, within the same time period, the Vanderbilt study concluded that black students were 2.2 more likely than other groups to be suspended. In other words, the relative risk for suspension for black students was 2.2. By contrast, Hispanic students were 1.3 times more likely than other groups to be suspended. Secondly, the study showed that a more fine-grained look at the data revealed that the likelihood of suspension in response to a

particular student behavior varies by race/ethnicity and by gender. That is to say, different groups are more likely to be suspended for certain behaviors. (Reschly, D., *Analysis of Clark County School District 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Discipline Outcomes by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Disability*, July 30, 2012, p. 25)

**Cautionary Note About Discipline-Related Results:** To clarify findings from the Reschly report in context, members of the SEOAC considered how other big-city districts compare nationally with respect to expulsion rates for different racial and ethnic groups. When early evidence pointed to an overrepresentation of African American students in the expelled population, attempts were made to gauge the magnitude of the overrepresentation. With this purpose in mind, attention turned to sources of data that would provide the desired comparisons.

A national Web site hosted by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights provided one such source. The site included district-by-district and school-by-school data describing the demographic composition of the student population and also the expelled population. Information appearing on the Web site of the Office for Civil Rights represented both mandatory and discretionary expulsions. The information that was portrayed was used to generate compositional statistics. While statistics on compositional ratios are an outdated approach and been replaced by the more descriptive term of relative risk, compositional ratios were used in a preliminary way by SEOAC to gauge how the Clark County School District compared to districts of similar size and complexity.

Analyses indicated that the compositional ratio of the Clark County School District (2.5) exceeded the compositional ratios of Baltimore (1.9), Miami-Dade (1.8), Houston (1.6), Dallas (1.5), Boston (1.4), Los Angeles (1.4), and Philadelphia (1.3). When considering these results, members noted that the data was of questionable validity. In part this was due to questions about how districts count students who are expelled. In spite of this, SEOAC accepted the district-to-district comparisons of compositional ratios, treated the results as "directionally correct," and found them useful to guide discussion about next steps.

**Special Education-Related Findings Arising from the Vanderbilt Report:** The report from the other Vanderbilt study focused on special education placement rates. The report begins with a description saying that the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs has historically avoided setting specific numerical standards for overrepresentation with respect to special education placement rates but instead has traditionally left these decisions for each state to make.

The report states that "the question is what level of disproportionality should be identified as potentially problematic. The State of Nevada criterion for special education disproportionality is a relative risk that is greater than 3.0, similar to many other states (Albrecht et al., 2011). The criterion seemed excessively lenient, leading possibly to failure to identify discipline patterns that need further attention and analysis." Continuing, Reschly reported "The CCSD Division of Student Support Services has applied a relative risk criterion that is greater than 2.0 to identify potential disproportionality that should receive further attention and analysis." This means that a group has to be two or more times as likely to be in special education as other groups. This has been the approach taken by the District for the last nine years. This standard "is substantially more stringent than the significant disproportionality criterion established by the State of Nevada." (Reschly, D., *Analysis of Clark County School District 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Discipline Outcomes by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Disability*, July 30, 2012, p. 2, 6, 9-10)

By this standard (2.0), the Reschly report revealed a single occurrence where a student group was overrepresented. "Black students were overrepresented in the disability categories of emotional disturbance." (Reschly, D., *Analysis of Clark County School District Special Education Representation 2003-2012*, July 28, 2012, p. 2, 11). The relative risk for black students is 2.7. At the same time, the report showed that while "persistent overrepresentation of black students in the emotional disturbance category occurred in all nine years" it was largely attributable to racial/ethnic imbalances in the overall population of students receiving special education services. Further, largely because the District has a sustained effort underway to implement a strategy (called Response to Instruction or RTI), SEOAC members elected to devote greater attention to mitigating overrepresentation in discipline-related matters.

## VII. PROCESS AND WORK STREAMS

At the outset of this work, SEOAC participants were invited to reply to two questions:

1. If you could have what you want with respect to a solution for disproportionality, what would you have?
2. What beliefs should SEOAC consider as a philosophical guide for this work?

With respect to question 1, SEOAC responses were compiled and placed in a table with four columns:

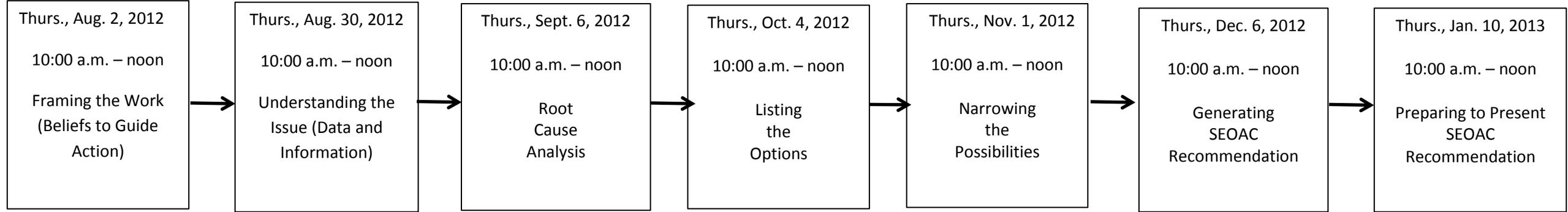
- Improvements that are within our prerogative
- Improvements that are possible only with a change in District policy
- Improvements that are possible only with a change in State law
- Improvements that are possible only with a change in a collective bargaining agreement

A large majority of SEOAC member responses (total of 50) appeared in the first column (“within our prerogative”). A far smaller number (total of 4) appeared in the second column (“possible only with a change in District policy”). Fewer responses (total of 2) appeared in the third column (“possible only with a change in State law”). A single response appeared in the fourth column (“possible only with a change in a collective bargaining agreement”). This demonstrated to SEOAC membership how work of the committee could proceed relatively – though not completely – unhindered by laws or contracts. This realization helped SEOAC members think creatively about what was possible in terms of solutions.

With respect to question 2, responses that SEOAC members submitted were arranged thematically. These were then translated into a “Statement of Guiding Principles.” That statement appears as an Appendix 1 in this report.

Superintendent’s Educational Opportunities Advisory Council (SEOAC)

**WORK STREAMS**



What is our charge?  
 What are our operating agreements?  
 How do we reach agreement?  
 What are our work streams?  
 What do we mean by terms we use?  
 What period of time is our focus?  
 If we had what we wanted (re this issue), what would we have?

Historically, how have these rates been associated with gender, race, ethnicity, and/or disability?  
 How, why, and to what extent do rates vary in CCSD?  
 What explains why rates vary?  
 How do rates change over time?  
 Which factors that explain the variability in rates are in our control?

What has helped eliminate variability in rates?  
 How do CCSD rates compare to other districts of similar size and complexity that have higher academic performance (Broward, Houston, and Miami-Dade)?  
 Of those factors in our control that explain the variability in rates, which ones hold the greatest promise as possible remedies?  
 What lessons can we learn from areas of success?

What is the universe of possible options for solutions?  
 In what areas and to what extent do SEOAC members agree are the most promising options?  
 How many and which of the most promising options are related to or dependent on one another and how many and which are independent of each other?

If we were to place the options in a rank order (from most to least promising), what would we find?  
 When we consider the top-ranked option, what are the implications for policy, procedure, and/or practice?  
 If we could only offer one structural recommendation, what would it be (in other words, what is the difference that makes the biggest difference)?

After we lock down the most important recommendation, what other recommendations can we agree to offer?  
 At what point in our deliberations does consensus begin to wane and we need to agree to wrap up our work?  
 Is a meeting needed on January 10, 2013 to prepare for a presentation of the recommendation to Superintendent Jones and/or to the Board of Trustees?

As we check the pulse of all our members do we find that we still have a consensus around the most important elements of our recommendation?  
 Do we all still agree to subordinate our self-interests so that we can achieve something as a team that no one of us can achieve alone?  
 Do we all still agree to support what we helped create in this work?

## VIII. MONTH-BY-MONTH PROGRESS

Seven SEOAC meetings were held between August 2, 2012, and January 10, 2013. A thumbnail summary follows for each meeting.

- August 2, 2012** SEOAC members agreed that to deliver on the charge, members must be flexible; that is, willing to subordinate self-interest so the team can accomplish what no individual can achieve alone. SEOAC members agree that to “mitigate and remedy” overrepresentation means annually reducing overrepresentation.
- August 30, 2012** SEOAC agreed with findings from the Vanderbilt studies. African American students (especially males) are overrepresented in expulsion. To a lesser extent, Hispanic students (especially males) are overrepresented in suspensions. To a lesser degree, African Americans are disproportionately overrepresented in special education placement (related to behavior). SEOAC concluded that with respect to discipline-related matters, precursors of interest include suspensions. Going forward, SEOAC will focus attention chiefly on mitigating and remedying expulsions, suspensions, and referrals to alternative schools among African Americans (especially males).
- September 6, 2012** SEOAC identified a preliminary set of the most likely root causes of overrepresentation in discipline-related events. The set included: (a) lack of early intervention; (b) lack of accountability by parties; (c) bias; (d) lack of positive interventions; (e) variability in execution of policy; (f) lack of basic skills; and (g) lack of basics support.
- October 4, 2012** Root causes were rank-ordered: (1) bias, (2) lack of administrative awareness of disproportionality, (3) unacceptably-variable execution of procedures, (4) lack of accountability on everyone’s part, (5) too much discretion, (6) lack of care about conditions contributing to discipline, and (7) lack of cultural competency.
- November 1, 2012** SEOAC identified solutions to root causes and then gauged its support for each solution. Solutions included: (a) address discretion via a moratorium on expulsions for all but the “Big 5” but add student-on-student assault; (b) address bias via summer staff training; and (c) address lack of accountability by measuring teacher discipline referral.
- December 6, 2012** SEOAC identified solutions to additional root causes and gauged support for each solution. Solutions included: (a) address lack of cultural competency for all staff, (b) address early intervention for Grades 4, 5, 7, and 8, and (c) address lack of understanding about conditions that may contribute to discipline-related events.
- January 10, 2013** SEOAC finalized 10 recommendations. All members indicated that they agreed to support each of the 10 recommendations.

## IX. DATA

This report includes a small subset of all data that SEOAC reviewed. Section X of this report describes the data elements that were reviewed by SEOAC members. Altogether, 90 separate documents were reviewed totaling 918 pages of text.

Assembling data that permitted district-to-district and school-to-school comparisons proved to be challenging. Reasons for this include uncertainty about how other districts define, interpret, measure, and report expulsion and uncertainty about the way in which data from our own schools travels from a school to the District to a national Web site such as the one hosted by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

A cautionary note is included. Care should be used when reviewing data in the tables that appear immediately below or when citing or reporting the data or findings in this report. Tables that follow include data on expulsions that was drawn from the Web site of the OCR. Data on expulsion that appear are three years old (from the 2009-2010 academic year) and are no longer being collected by the OCR. Figures that appear for expulsion are summarized in a compositional ratio. For reasons explained earlier in this report (see Section IV on "Terms"), care should be taken when interpreting these findings because "compositional statistics are easily misunderstood and often distorted" (Reschly, D., *Analysis of Clark County School District 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Discipline Outcomes by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Disability*, July 30, 2012, p. 9). Although the figures are out-of-date, the figures are presented here because they offer roughly comparable information on school-by-school expulsion rates. The information on expulsions that follows in the tables is limited in usefulness because the figures do not depict current conditions and because a more accurate descriptor (relative risk) is now available. Nevertheless, the data proved helpful to SEOAC because they provided a glimpse of district-to-district and school-to-school variability in expulsion rates.

In addition to expulsion data, the tables that follow also display school-by-school rates of alternative school referrals and suspensions. The Clark County School District (Education Services Division) is the source of this data. The time period for this data (2011-2012) differs from the time period for the expulsion data (2009-2010).

To aid in interpreting the information found in the tables that follow, a single column is found in each of the three panels. The column heading is "Composition Ratio" and provides a way to compare rates between and among schools. It also provides a way to compare expulsion rates to suspension rates and to the rates of referral to alternative schools.

**Middle School by Middle School Comparison of  
Discipline-Related Activity for CCSD**

MIDDLE SCHOOLS	Data Based on 2009-10 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year				
	2009-10 School Year		EXPULSIONS			2011-12 School Year		ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL REFERRALS			2011-12 School Year		SUSPENSIONS		
	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL EXPULSIONS	TOTAL AA EXPULSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL REFERRALS	TOTAL AA REFERRALS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL SUSPENSIONS	TOTAL AA SUSPENSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO
Bailey	1305	235	5	0	0.0	1,250	206	35	14	2.4	1,250	206	No data is reported here due to the unavailability of the data at time of print.		
Becker	1465	230	5	0	0.0	1,406	209	15	3	1.3	1,406	209			
Bridger	1305	235	5	0	0.0	1,431	164	47	15	2.8	1,431	164			
Brinley	920	190	20	5	1.2	862	158	53	19	2.0	862	158			
Brown	900	115	0	0	0.0	849	79	15	5	3.6	849	79			
Burkholder	865	70	0	0	0.0	802	48	22	3	2.3	802	48			
Cadwallader	1585	209	30	5	1.3	1,511	142	41	9	2.3	1,511	142			
Canarelli	1520	205	0	0	0.0	1,766	206	18	3	1.4	1,766	206			
Cannon	935	105	10	5	4.5	908	77	24	6	2.9	908	77			
Cashman	1360	105	25	5	2.6	1,479	119	30	5	2.1	1,479	119			
Cortney	1205	149	10	5	4.0	1,219	134	55	5	0.8	1,219	134			
Cram	1580	330	0	0	0.0	1,493	278	35	17	2.6	1,493	278			
Escobedo	1185	260	0	0	0.0	1,163	175	13	6	3.1	1,163	175			
Faiss	1230	180	15	5	2.3	1,343	163	24	7	2.4	1,343	163			
Fertitta	1370	175	0	0	0.0	1,430	173	31	6	1.6	1,430	173			
Findlay	1525	485	5	5	3.1	1,493	478	59	32	1.7	1,493	478			
Fremont	840	85	5	0	0.0	941	88	45	11	2.6	941	88			
Garrett	525	15	5	0	0.0	495	5	9	2	22.0	495	5			
Garside	1205	125	5	0	0.0	1,114	106	16	3	2.0	1,114	106			
Gibson	905	125	10	0	0.0	1,109	126	17	6	3.1	1,109	126			
Greenspun	1400	134	5	0	0.0	1,310	92	10	1	1.4	1,310	92			
Guinn	890	105	15	0	0.0	797	77	42	8	2.0	797	77			
Harney	1670	256	0	0	0.0	1,815	194	55	12	2.0	1,815	194			
Hughes	585	5	0	0	0.0	588	3	2	0	0.0	588	3			
Hyde Park	1775	190	0	0	0.0	1,707	150	18	4	2.5	1,707	150			
Johnson	1150	175	30	15	3.3	1,190	158	9	5	4.2	1,190	158			
Johnston	1395	455	25	15	1.8	1,389	445	66	34	1.6	1,389	445			
Keller	1310	130	15	5	3.4	1,192	101	22	4	2.1	1,192	101			
Knudson	1365	171	0	0	0.0	1,259	126	25	3	1.2	1,259	126			
Lawrence	1415	200	0	0	0.0	1,446	177	19	3	1.3	1,446	177			
Leavitt	1535	206	0	0	0.0	1,529	182	41	13	2.7	1,529	182			
Lied	1445	280	5	0	0.0	1,342	224	31	10	1.9	1,342	224			
Lyon	450	8	0	0	0.0	414	2	6	0	0.0	414	2			
Mack	1330	156	5	0	0.0	1,331	138	54	16	2.9	1,331	138			

MIDDLE SCHOOLS	Data Based on 2009-10 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year				
	2009-10 School Year		EXPULSIONS			2011-12 School Year		ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL REFERRALS			2011-12 School Year		SUSPENSIONS		
	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL EXPULSIONS	TOTAL AA EXPULSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL REFERRALS	TOTAL AA REFERRALS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL SUSPENSIONS	TOTAL AA SUSPENSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO
Mannion	1645	81	5	0	0.0	1,783	71	14	1	1.8	1,783	71			
Martin	1360	135	5	0	0.0	1,397	91	20	6	4.6	1,397	91			
Miller	1,670	110	0	0	0.0	1,726	84	18	3	3.4	1,726	84			
Molasky	1,435	276	5	5	5.2	1,396	225	19	7	2.3	1,396	225			
Monaco	1,265	130	10	5	4.9	1,215	98	56	14	3.1	1,215	98			
O'Callaghan	1,410	120	10	0	0.0	1,458	119	38	7	2.3	1,458	119			
Orr	910	190	0	0	0.0	932	158	41	15	2.2	932	158			
Robison	1,085	105	0	0	0.0	1,143	65	27	1	0.7	1,143	65			
Rogich	1,765	169	10	5	5.2	1,696	144	25	3	1.4	1,696	144			
Saville	1,500	240	0	0	0.0	1,540	210	23	5	1.6	1,540	210			
Sawyer	1,280	165	5	0	0.0	1,274	174	20	7	2.6	1,274	174			
Schofield	1,405	150	0	0	0.0	1,306	111	22	1	0.5	1,306	111			
Sedway	1,350	400	5	5	3.4	1,371	355	62	27	1.7	1,371	355			
Silvestri	1,535	175	15	0	0.0	1,556	139	19	2	1.2	1,556	139			
Smith	970	55	15	0	0.0	893	47	61	4	1.2	893	47			
Swainston	1,270	370	0	0	0.0	1,202	335	47	27	2.1	1,202	335			
Tarkanian	1,165	144	0	0	0.0	1,310	154	36	8	1.9	1,310	154			
Von Tobel	1,075	115	20	5	2.3	1,168	108	49	7	1.5	1,168	108			
Webb	1,705	124	0	0	0.0	1,820	102	15	3	3.6	1,820	102			
White	1,295	161	0	0	0.0	1,429	163	29	9	2.7	1,429	163			
Woodbury	885	85	15	5	3.5	872	66	25	6	3.2	872	66			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>69,425</b>	<b>9,598</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>69,860</b>	<b>8,222</b>	<b>1,670</b>	<b>453</b>		<b>69,860</b>	<b>8,222</b>			
NOTE: In every case, data displayed represents the most current information available. The data on expulsion are drawn from the Office for Civil Rights national Web site. By contrast, the data on Alternative School referrals and out-of-school suspensions are drawn from CCSD records. Note that African American is indicated by "AA."															

**High School by High School Comparison of  
Discipline-Related Activity for CCSD**

HIGH SCHOOLS	Data Based on 2009-10 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year				
	2009-10 School Year		EXPULSIONS			2011-12 School Year		ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL REFERRALS			2011-12 School Year		SUSPENSIONS		
	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL EXPULSIONS	TOTAL AA EXPULSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL REFERRALS	TOTAL AA REFERRALS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL SUSPENSIONS	TOTAL AA SUSPENSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO
Arbor View	2685	456	10	0	NA	2,691	379	66	26	2.8	2,691	379	538	145	1.9
Basic	2535	375	25	10	2.7	2,389	274	66	16	2.1	2,389	274	109	25	2.0
Bonanza	2235	246	0	0	NA	1,987	200	75	22	2.9	1,987	200	139	33	2.4
Boulder City	665	100	0	0	NA	664	10	11	0	NA	664	10	61	3	3.3
Canyon Springs	2575	966	60	45	2.0	2,601	805	171	88	1.7	2,601	805	116	64	1.8
Centennial	2925	450	5	5	6.5	2,996	415	74	25	2.4	2,996	415	21	8	2.8
Chaparral	2565	400	0	0	NA	2,301	278	56	13	1.9	2,301	278	738	114	1.3
Cheyenne	2380	835	0	0	NA	2,188	691	81	47	1.8	2,188	691	255	137	1.7
Cimarron-Memorial	2705	576	15	5	1.6	2,525	475	102	31	1.6	2,525	475	326	77	1.3
Clark	2610	266	0	0	NA	2,886	255	66	18	3.1	2,886	255	7	0	NA
Coronado	3005	189	10	5	7.9	3,047	150	54	11	4.1	3,047	150	119	11	1.9
Del Sol	2255	280	25	10	3.2	1,994	197	77	8	1.1	1,994	197	347	56	1.6
Desert Oasis	1930	280	40	10	1.7	2,056	283	53	11	1.5	2,056	283	15	7	3.4
Desert Pines	2525	311	5	0	NA	2,231	206	129	17	1.4	2,231	206	814	85	1.1
Durango	2525	341	20	5	1.9	2,208	246	63	8	1.1	2,208	246	258	42	1.5
Eldorado	1815	240	20	5	1.9	1,697	189	67	17	2.3	1,697	189	144	27	1.7
Foothill	2580	191	20	0	NA	2,639	125	63	16	5.4	2,639	125	291	25	1.8
Green Valley	2865	235	0	0	NA	2,809	164	44	5	2.0	2,809	164	73	11	2.6
Indian Springs	80	5	0	0	NA	85	1	9	0	NA	85	1	12	0	NA
Las Vegas	3075	400	15	10	5.1	2,865	249	72	13	2.1	2,865	249	239	34	1.6
Laughlin	405	30	0	0	0.0	424	20	4	0	NA	424	20	92	1	0.2
Legacy	2765	874	100	70	2.2	2,902	904	82	48	1.9	2,902	904	231	146	2.0
Liberty	1970	266	20	5	1.9	2,153	202	67	18	2.9	2,153	202	275	30	1.2
Moapa Valley	590	5	0	0	NA	551	1	5	0	NA	551	1	71	0	NA
Mojave	2180	700	30	20	2.1	2,055	637	130	65	1.6	2,055	637	432	235	1.8
Palo Verde	3055	379	20	5	2.0	2,718	258	57	15	2.8	2,718	258	81	25	3.3

HIGH SCHOOLS	Data Based on 2009-10 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year					Data Based on 2011-12 School Year				
	2009-10 School Year		EXPULSIONS			2011-12 School Year		ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL REFERRALS			2011-12 School Year		SUSPENSIONS		
	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL EXPULSIONS	TOTAL AA EXPULSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL REFERRALS	TOTAL AA REFERRALS	COMPOSITION RATIO	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL AA ENROLLMENT	TOTAL SUSPENSIONS	TOTAL AA SUSPENSIONS	COMPOSITION RATIO
Rancho Shadow Ridge Sierra Vista	3220	345	15	5	3.1	2,944	291	68	14	2.1	2,944	291	70	9	1.3
	2295	395	65	25	2.2	2,286	324	60	18	2.1	2,286	324	152	59	2.7
	2225	320	70	20	2.0	2,115	305	85	22	1.8	2,115	305	62	21	2.3
Silverado Spring Valley	2495	240	15	0	NA	2,328	165	90	15	2.4	2,328	165	447	76	2.4
	2410	340	30	10	2.4	2,127	273	112	29	2.0	2,127	273	282	75	2.1
Sunrise Mountain Valley	1805	294	30	10	2.0	2,494	349	47	7	1.1	2,494	349	441	80	1.3
	2825	390	15	5	2.4	2,897	403	127	40	2.3	2,897	403	517	172	2.4
Virgin Valley	740	10	0	0	NA	651	3	10	0	NA	651	3	30	0	NA
Western	2395	455	25	15	3.2	2,144	353	129	54	2.5	2,144	353	189	65	2.1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>77,910</b>	<b>12,183</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>300</b>		<b>75,648</b>	<b>10,080</b>	<b>2,472</b>	<b>737</b>		<b>75,648</b>	<b>10,080</b>	<b>7,994</b>	<b>1,898</b>	
NOTE: In every case, data displayed represents the most current information available. The data on expulsion are drawn from the Office for Civil Rights national Web site. By contrast, the data on Alternative School referrals and out-of-school suspensions are drawn from CCSD records. Note that African American is indicated by "AA."															

## X. REFERENCES

SEOAC took advantage of a District Web site where all source documents for this project were stored. To view any of the documents SEOAC used for its work, go to the following Web address.

The address is: <http://ccsd.net/internal/documents>

## XI. CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations appear sequentially in the order they were approved by SEOAC members. They are not arranged thematically, nor are they necessarily arranged by importance. Recommendations that appear enjoy the endorsement of all SEOAC members. All members agreed that they “could live with and support the recommendations.”

1. **IMPROVE DATA QUALITY:** Data collection related to suspension and expulsion will be consistent, reliable, standard (across schools), annually available to the public, and will reflect the intent of SEOAC recommendations.
2. **REDUCE OVERREPRESENTATION:** Impose a moratorium on suspensions and expulsions except for the “Big 5” offenses, at the Superintendent’s discretion as to terms, with a caveat that student-on-student assault and battery that results in injury now fall under the “Big 5” heading.  
Note: The word “terms” refers to how swiftly the moratorium is implemented. That is, will it be immediately imposed or will it be phased in, and if so, over what period of time? Phase-in will ensure the District complies with relevant discipline-related laws, regulations, and policies.
3. **DEVELOP CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Mandatory professional development on cultural competency will be provided for all new teachers and administrators.
4. **EXTEND CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** At every school each year, at least one professional development day will be devoted to cultural competency.
5. **GAUGE THE BENEFIT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Implement an evaluation procedure to identify the impact of professional development that is intended to promote cultural competency.
6. **REFINE WHAT WE MEAN BY CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Articulate standards and expectations of professional responsibility related to cultural competency.
7. **PROVIDE EARLY INTERVENTION:** Restructure Title I to focus on early interventions with the most at-risk student population.  
Note: The term “early intervention” could refer to early in a school year or in any grade and not just the early grades. It is also plausible that the term “early intervention” could refer to the introduction or development of an early warning system; such a system would identify behaviors that research shows could lead to suspensions, expulsions, and/or behavioral school placement, if not corrected.
8. **ENHANCE EARLY LITERACY:** Students in Grades K-3 who are not-yet-proficient in literacy will receive appropriate interventions.
9. **PROVIDE BETTER, EARLIER, AND DIFFERENT ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION:** During the moratorium period, investigate for possible implementation various models of tiered-intervention disciplinary systems that include parent notification policies; for example, the Baltimore model.
10. **MONITOR PROGRESS:** Appoint a CCSD administrator who is responsible for monitoring and publicly reporting (at least quarterly) the implementation of these recommendations.

**Guiding Principles**  
“What should guide this work?”

**Mission**

There is an over-arching goal (prepare all students so they are Ready by Exit).

**Accountability**

Clearly identify who is responsible to whom and for what.

**Sustainable Change**

Durable change is the result when actions match words.

**Equity**

Others are treated with fairness.

**Bias**

Prejudice, stereotype, and favoritism are mitigated and eliminated.

**Human Capital**

Attention is given to recruitment, selection, development, and retention of staff.

**Partnership**

Collaboration is evident (“power with” is more effective than “power over”).

**Safety and Respect**

Mutual regard and concern for the welfare of others are paramount.

**Research**

Claims that are made are credible, defensible, and evidence-based.