SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT OUTCOMES REPORT

Natasha M. Rivers, PhD

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Seattle Public Schools Enrollment and Student Outcomes Report

INTRODUCTION

The condition of Special Education (SPED) in Seattle Public Schools (SPS) is a high priority for the staff, particularly in the SPED department, at the Central Office. This department works in partnership with schools, district leaders, teachers, students, and families to provide the best education for students with learning disabilities.

The district is currently piloting the Specific Learning Disability (SLD) program in selected schools and its general education Readiness to Learn (RTL) or Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) policies, procedures, and practices in others. The RTLMTSS response is only one element of determining whether a child has a specific learning disability. Anyone, including parents and teachers, can make a referral at any time in a RTL system. The evaluation includes whether the child performs adequately to meet the grade-level standards in the general curriculum and a determination that the failure to make progress is the result of: a physical, mental, emotional, cultural or environmental factor or limited English proficiency; or inadequate instruction in reading or mathematics.

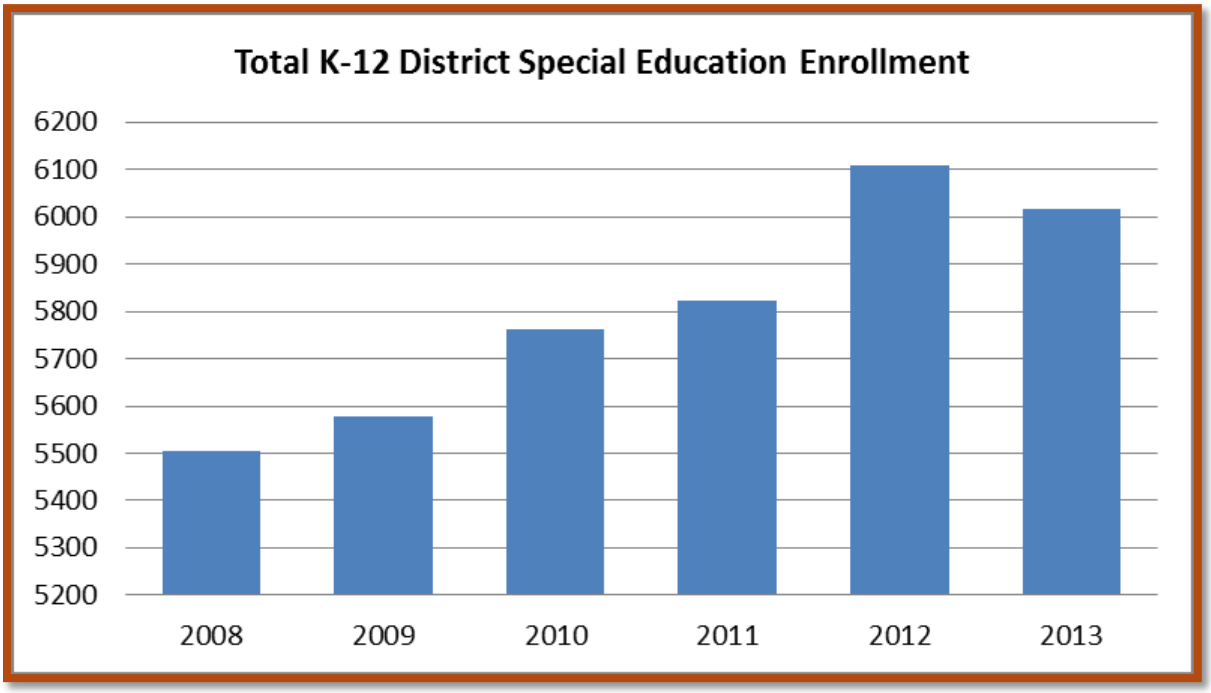
The SPED department also supports a process called “Child Find” that locates, identifies, and evaluates children with disabilities to ensure that they receive services to which they are entitled. Children and youth, age ranges from birth to 21 and, living in the Seattle school district area, that are suspected of having a disability may be referred for a possible evaluation to determine if they are eligible for special education services.

Purpose of Report

This report will evaluate student outcomes as they pertain to the mental, emotional, and behavior-related factors contributing to the educational experience of students in the Seattle Public Schools system. More specifically, this report will examine student outcomes as they relate to 1) program placement and benefit of SPED for some students compared to others, 2) youth risk behavior as assessed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and 3) SPS reported educational status of students from 2012 which highlights areas that may need directed focus in the near future, for example: detention and retention.

Program Placement in SPED

The table below displays the total K-12 district Special Education enrollment for school years 2008-2009 through 2013-2014. Special Education enrollment has increased each year until 2013-2014, when Seattle Public Schools experienced a decline of roughly 90 students in enrollment. Seattle Public Schools added roughly 600 students between 2008 and 2012. Much of this growth occurs after fourth grade, especially in fifth grade, and is potentially problematic for students transitioning from elementary into middle school and middle school into high school (see the Special Education Enrollment by Grade in the Appendix).



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Table 1: Percent SPED Enrollment by racial background, 2014

Grade	A.I.	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Ra	P.I.	White
-1	0.63	11.43	14.20	14.82	11.93	0.63	46.23
0	0.29	10.00	22.65	20.00	7.06	0.59	39.41
1	1.50	13.72	17.21	18.20	6.48	0.25	42.64
2	1.06	13.16	22.08	18.68	7.86	0.42	36.73
3	1.89	9.45	15.98	14.95	9.28	0.34	48.11
4	0.45	7.30	18.63	14.61	7.75	0.30	50.97
5	2.02	9.24	21.34	15.97	6.39	0.50	44.54
6	1.41	11.31	20.49	16.61	8.83	0.35	40.99
7	2.28	10.77	24.43	20.50	6.42	0.41	35.20
8	1.84	10.04	22.95	19.88	6.35	0.61	38.32
9	3.14	7.55	26.62	16.14	6.50	0.21	39.83
10	2.51	8.12	25.73	21.47	5.42	0.39	36.36
11	2.30	13.10	26.90	15.63	4.83	0.23	37.01
12	1.41	16.47	24.90	13.45	5.62	0.40	37.75
Grand Total	**1.58%**	**10.70%**	**21.24%**	**16.94%**	**7.46%**	**0.41%**	**41.65%**

Source: PowerSchool Quick Report, October 17, 2014. N = 7320
Note: -1 = Pre-K; 0=Kindergarten; A.I. =American Indian; P.I. =Pacific Islander

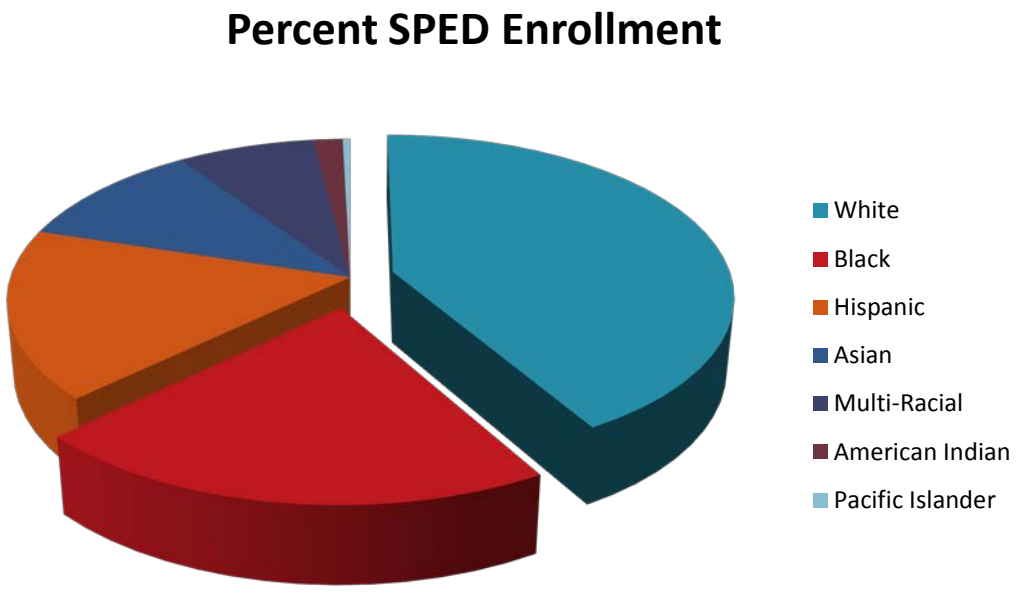


Table 1, above, shows the breakdown of SPED Enrollment by racial background for the current school year 2014-2015. The Seattle Public Schools student population that identifies as

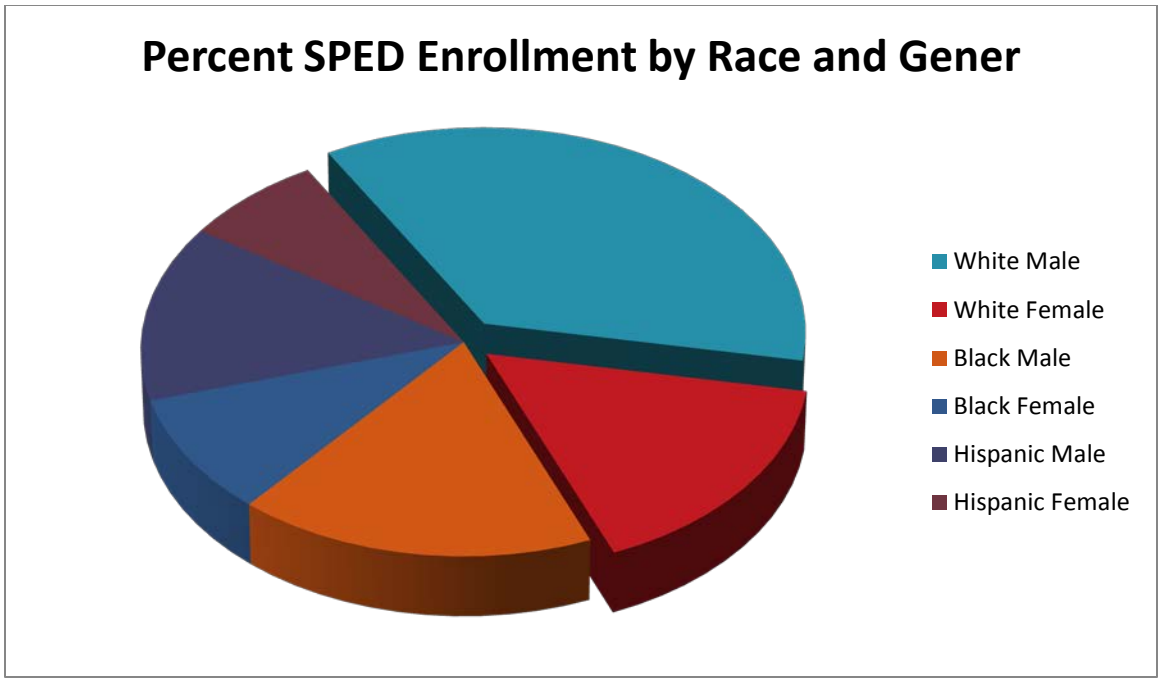
White/Caucasian currently has a higher percent share of students enrolled in the multi-tiered SPED program, followed by Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian, and then Multi-racial students. The percent distribution is similar across most grades K-12. The issue of proportionality is vital to understanding the achievement gap and enrollment in SPED, especially for the Black/African American and Hispanic student populations in SPS. It will be important to evaluate the SPED enrollment of PreK and K-12 through a closer lens in a follow-up study, in particular, a breakdown of students' specific and categorized special learning needs.

The following table (Table 2) displays the percent SPED enrollment by race and gender for the current year of 2014-2015. Generally speaking, there is a higher percentage of male student enrollment in special education across all grade levels and racial background.

Table 2: Percent SPED Enrollment by Race and Gender, 2014

Grade Level	White		Black		Hispanic	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
-1	15.33	30.90	4.02	10.18	4.65	10.18
0	10.00	29.41	7.94	14.71	8.24	11.76
1	11.22	31.42	4.99	12.22	4.74	13.47
2	8.49	28.24	5.31	16.77	6.16	12.53
3	15.64	32.47	4.12	11.86	4.64	10.31
4	18.48	32.49	5.66	12.97	4.92	9.69
5	13.11	31.43	9.24	12.10	5.71	10.25
6	11.66	29.33	8.13	12.37	7.24	9.36
7	10.14	25.05	8.70	15.73	7.25	13.25
8	10.66	27.66	7.99	14.96	5.74	14.14
9	13.63	26.21	10.48	16.14	5.03	11.11
10	11.41	24.95	10.44	15.28	8.32	13.15
11	10.80	26.21	9.89	17.01	5.52	10.11
12	12.25	25.50	9.84	15.06	5.42	8.03
Grand Total	**12.75%**	**28.91%**	**7.43%**	**13.81%**	**5.86%**	**11.08%**

Source: PowerSchool Quick Report, October 17, 2014. N=7320
Note: -1 = PreK; 0 = Kindergarten



Children and Youth with Disabilities across the Nation

> *Enacted in 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), formerly known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA), mandates the provision of a free and appropriate public school education for eligible children and youth ages 3-21. (U.S. DOE 2014: 54)*

According to the U.S. Department of Education the number of children and youth ages 3-21 receiving special education services was about 13 percent of all public school students for the 2011-12 school year. Furthermore, one-third of these students have specific learning disabilities. Children served under IDEA has declined each year from 2005-06 through 2011-2012. The percentage of children and youth served under IDEA was highest for American Indian/Alaska Natives, followed by Blacks, Whites, children or youth of two or more races, Hispanics, Pacific Islanders, and Asians (U.S. DOE 2014: 56). Black children served under IDEA accounted for the largest percent of students who received services for emotional disturbances. This particular outcome will be evaluated in greater detail in a follow-up study.

The U.S. Department of Education published a 2014 report titled, "Participation in Education" that detailed the percentage of children ages 3-21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, by disability type during the 2011-2012 school year.

The breakdown of children and young adults served under IDEA is as follows: 36 percent had a specific learning disability; 21 percent had a speech or language impairment; 12 percent other health impairments; 7 percent Autism and intellectual disability; and less than 7 percent reported having a developmental delay, emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, hearing impairments, and orthopedic impairments. Additionally, among all children and youth ages 6-21 who were served under IDEA, the percentage of children and youth who spent most (80 percent or more) of their school day in general classes in regular schools was higher in 2011-12 than in any other reported year.

YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR ASSESSED BY RACE AND GENDER

The June 2013 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly report on Youth Risk Behavior in the United States discusses findings from a national school-based survey conducted by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Surveys conducted by state, territorial, and local education and health agencies and tribal governments were included. This report addresses the issue of morbidity and mortality among youth and young adults by evaluating the health-risk behaviors having the most impact. Here is one of the findings:

> *In the United States, 70% of all deaths among youth and young adults aged 10-24 years result from four cases: motor vehicle crashes (23%), other unintentional injuries (18%), homicide (15%), and suicide (15%).*

The study further evaluates these cases to discuss the prevalence of access to guns and weapons and use of them at schools, the fear students have for their safety at school, and also how incidents of extreme sadness, isolation and depression have resulted in thoughts and plans for suicide. Another finding:

> *Among youth aged 15-19 years, substantial morbidity and social problems also result from the estimated 329,772 births; 548,032 cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis; and 2,240 cases of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) reported annually.*

These incidents of morbidity and mortality are not done in isolation. There are usually warning signs before the risky behavior occurs for youth and young adults, especially in terms of sexual activities, smoking, and involvement in physical altercations. The following charts display some of the behavior risks that are prevalent among youth and young adults, for example being threatened or threatening another person with a gun, involvement with a physical fight, electronic bullying, and suicidal thoughts and plans.

In 2013, 27 percent of the students threatened with a weapon on school property in the U.S. were male students. Of students in a physical fight, the largest percent share of students in a physical fight was identified as Black/African American. There was also a higher percent share of male students involved in a physical fight compared to female students. There was a higher percent share of Hispanic male students injured in a physical fight, compared to their female counterparts and black and white ethnic groups.

Table 3: Percentage of high school students who were threatened with a weapon on school property, US

	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%) share
Percent threatened	14.6	27.1	20.9

Table 4: Percentage of high school students who were in a physical fight and injured in a physical fight, US

Physical Fight	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%) share
White	14.6	27.1	20.9
Black	32.1	37.5	34.7
Hispanic	22.8	34.2	28.4
Injured in physical fight			
White	1.5	2.7	2.1
Black	4.1	4.7	4.4
Hispanic	3.6	5.9	4.7

Table 5 shows that the largest percent share of students electronically bullied and who were bullied on school property were white female students followed by Hispanic female students. For all racial categories, there was a higher percent share of female students electronically bullied and bullied on school property when compared to their male counterparts respectively. A slightly

higher percentage of white male students had been electronically bullied and bullied on school property compared to black and Hispanic male students.

Table 5: Percentage of high school students who were electronically bullied and who were bullied on school property, U.S.

Electronically bullied	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%) share
White	25.2	8.7	16.9
Black	10.5	6.9	8.7
Hispanic	17.1	8.3	12.8
Bullied on School Property			
White	27.3	16.2	21.8
Black	15.1	10.2	12.7
Hispanic	20.7	14.8	17.8

Tables 6, 7, and 8 show that in 2013, the percent share of male high school students in Seattle who carried a weapon is nearly twice the percent of female high school students who carried a weapon in Seattle. Male high school students are almost three times more likely to be involved in a physical fight than their female counterparts in Seattle. Roughly the same amount of female and male students did not go to school because of safety concerns related to a recent physical fight. Similar to the nationwide statistics, female students in high school were more likely than their male counterparts to be electronically bullied and also bullied on school property in Seattle.

Table 6: Percentage of high school students who carried a weapon, Seattle

	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%) share
Percent HS students who carried a weapon	4.1	8.2	6.4

Table 7: Percentage of high school students who were in a physical fight and did not go to school because of safety concern, Seattle

	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%) share
Physical fight	5.6	12.9	9.5
Did not go to school because of safety concern	3.0	4.2	3.9

Table 8: Percentage of high school students who were electronically bullied and who were bullied on school property, Seattle

	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%) share
Electronically bullied	11.8	6.4	9.2
Bullied on school property	13.5	11	12.4

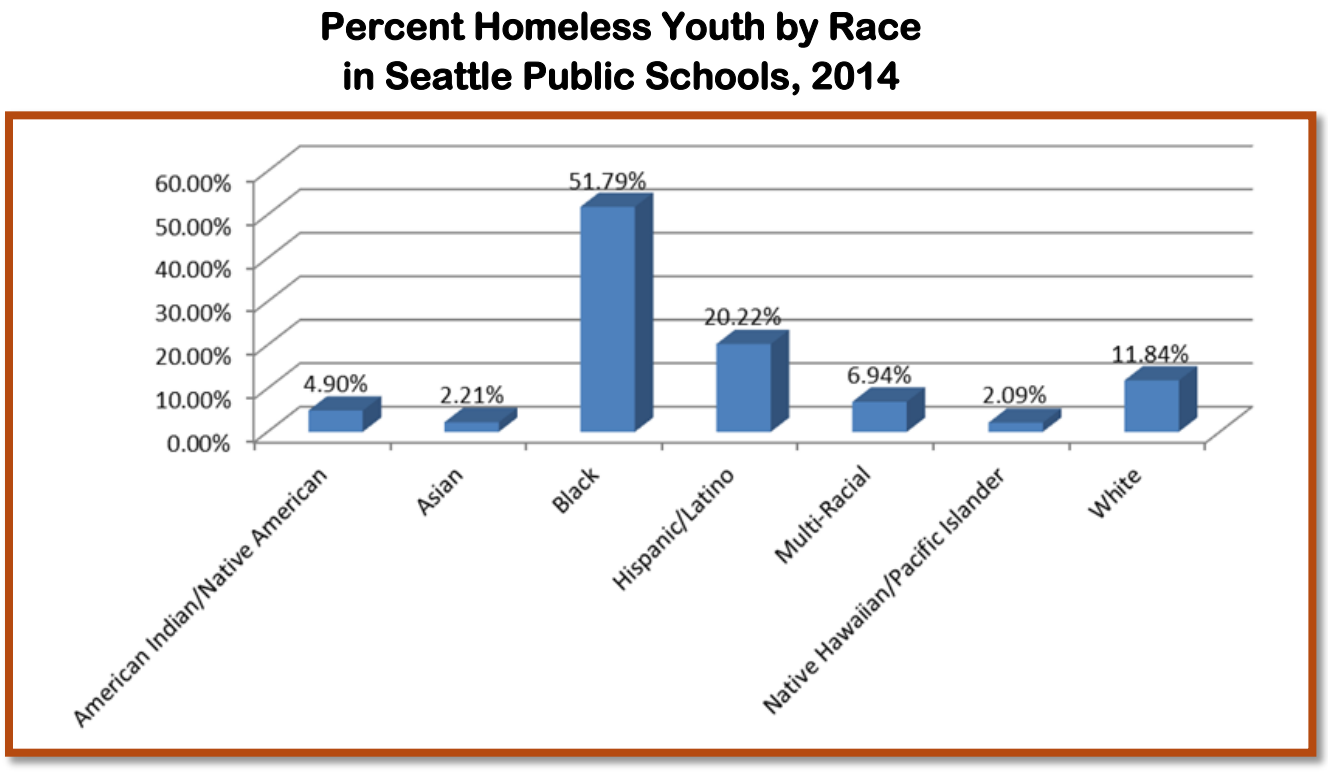
Table 9 shows that the percent share of Seattle high school students who felt sad, seriously considered suicide and made a plan was significantly higher for female students than their male counterparts.

Table 9: Percentage of high school students who felt sad, seriously considered suicide and made a plan, Seattle

	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%) share
Felt sad or hopeless	26.5	15.8	21.2
Seriously considered suicide	16.1	10.3	13.3
Made a suicide plan	11.7	8.1	10.1

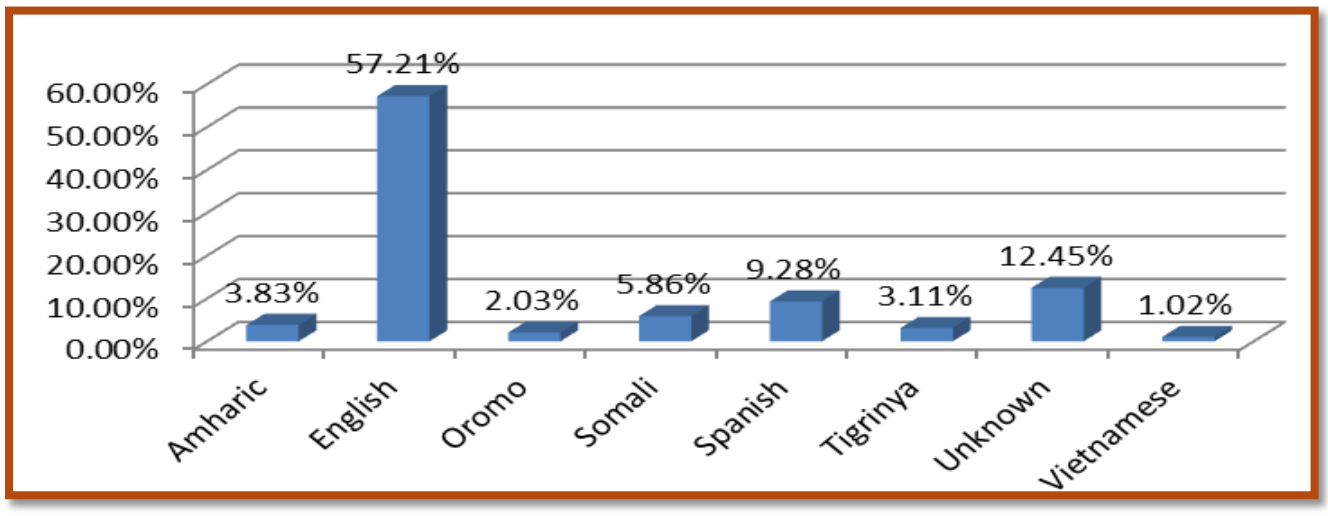
Figures 1 and 2 highlight other aspects of student outcomes, namely homelessness. The total number of reported homeless youth (3-21 years old) in Seattle Public Schools is 1,672.

Figure 1: Percent Homeless Youth by Race in SPS



Black students make up over half of the homeless student population, followed by Hispanic/Latino students, and then whites.

Figure 2: Percent Home Language of Homeless Youth in SPS



English is the most common home language spoken by homeless Seattle Public Schools students, followed by Spanish. There are over 100 home languages spoken by the SPS student populations (and their parents). Special learning needs and ELL (English Language Learning) impact student outcomes. Homelessness results from a variety of circumstances which may include poverty, domestic violence, etc. These factors may impact the academic performance of students who are concerned about their safety, where they will sleep and where their next meal will come from. . Data for figures 1 and 2 were pulled from PowerSchool on October 17, 2014 and may have changed since that date.

The importance of school based health centers (SBHCs)

School-based health centers enable children with acute or chronic illnesses to attend school by improving their health and wellness through health screenings (www.bphc.hrsa.gov). They are often operated as partnership between the school and a community health organization. The following statistics are from the Seattle SBHC User Demographics survey between September 2008 and June 2009. The breakdown of SBHC users by race is: Asian 21.9 percent; Black 30.8 percent; Hispanic 13.7 percent; Native American 2.5 percent; White 31.1 percent. Over half of the SBHC users are on Free/Reduced Lunch (53.7 percent). Limited English Proficiency (LEP) among SBHC users is 13 percent. Overall, 60-65 percent of all SBHC users are female students. The most common reasons for mental health (MH) visits to a SBHC are academic difficulties, family problems, and depressive disorders. SBHCs are positively related to academic outcomes, including grade-point average, attendance, and graduation. SBHC may help ameliorate the relationship between risk categories for dropouts such as low GPA, low attendance, special education, and disciplinary actions by acting as a buffer and preventative care. For example African American students who used the services at a SBHC were 43 percent less likely to dropout; Hispanic students were 59 percent less likely to dropout. No significant difference was reported for white and Asian students. These centers could serve as a support to parents and teachers of SPED students who are believed to have behavioral difficulties and or experience complicated obstacles to learning.

THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF SPS STUDENTS

In December 2012, Seattle Public Schools published a district summary as a Student Outcomes Measures Report. This report can be found on the school district website. The report provides a summary on the following measures: academic grades, student test score achievement, attendance, discipline, truancy, and student educational status. These measures were selected based upon the availability of information compiled into the district summary.

Academic Grades – Secondary Schools

The following are grade reports for students enrolled in the middle and high school. The summary concludes that at the high school level, 1.) Asian and white students earned the greater percentages of A's and lower percentages of C's, D's and E's than the other ethnic groups, 2.) All ethnic groups earned generally the same percentages of B's, 3.) Native American students earned a higher percentage of C's, and 4.) Black/African American students earned a higher percentage of D's than the other ethnic groups. The results in terms of grade outcomes for males compared to females students is that female students earned relatively more A's an fewer B's, C's, D's, and E's than their male counterparts regardless of grade level.

Discipline

Schools report discipline incidences, the student's ID number, date, type of action taken, reason, and number of days suspended. If there is more than one reason or more than one action taken, multiple entries are made for that student. The possible actions are divided into two broad categories – interventions and disciplinary actions, the latter including suspensions and expulsions. Suspensions are further divided into short- and long-term suspension since 1996-1997 and are defined as a suspension of 10 days or less (SPS p. 49). A long-term suspension lasts until the end of the semester, and students are withdrawn from school and normally enrolled in a re-entry program (SPS p. 49).

There were many important findings from this report on discipline. For example, across all grade levels, Black/African American short-term suspension rates are highest, while

Asian/Pacific Islander and white suspension rates are lowest (SPS p.50). On the other hand, "the most notable decrease by ethnic group in elementary students receiving short-term suspensions from 2010-11 to 2011-12 occurred for the Black/African American category, falling by 35 students (0.7 percentage points) from the previous year" (SPS p.50). For a follow-up study, it will be important to assess the disciplinary records to note if a student is receiving special education, and if they are, to assess if these numbers have increased, decreased, or remained stagnant.

Truancy

In 1995-1996, a revised statewide truancy law was implemented that mandated that school districts monitor unexcused absences daily and immediately notify parents with letters or phone calls. Schools were also required to intervene when unexcused absences occurred and implement strategies to modify truant behavior.

There were many important findings from this same report on truancy. For instance, the percentage of truancy students at high schools fell by 0.2 percentage points, resulting in the lowest level in seven years (SPS p.71). Middle schools increased in the total number and percentage of truant students from 2010-11 to 2011-2012. Truancies decreased during this period for the Black/African American ethnic group, but rose for all other ethnic groups (SPS p.71). Furthermore, the number of truancies at the elementary student level rose by 43 students from 2010-11 to 2011-12 to the highest number (327) and percentage (1.3 percent) of truant students in seven years (SPS p.71). This may be a result of factors such as migration to a new school or home, unforeseen homelessness, and personal issues at home. As might be expected, truancy rates increase with grade level. Males are generally exhibiting truancy behavior at a somewhat higher rate than females; one notable exception is at the middle school level, where in 2009-2010 the female truancy rate was 0.4 percentage points higher than the truancy rate for males and has been equal to the male truancy rate since 2010-2011 (SPS p.71).

Student educational status

Graduates and dropouts are reported in a cohort approach similar to what is reported to the State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). A cohort is defined by a student's expected year of graduation. This reporting method started in 1993 (SPS p.76). Dropout and graduation statistics, using the cohort approach, are compiled only for high school students and are accumulated over a four-year timeframe for a cohort of new ninth graders entering high school. At the end of the four year period, cumulative dropout and graduation statistics can be determined for each graduating class (SPS p.76).

Since 1994, as part of the transition to the methodology dictated by the State, dropout rates are computed two ways: 1) using the cohort methodology, and 2) using the annual dropout rate procedures used in previous editions of the Seattle Public Schools District Profile. For many years the district has computed graduate and dropout rates on an annual basis. Each school year, the dropout rate was determined by computing dropouts over a 12-month period as a percent of the previous October 1 annual enrollment count (SPS p.76).

For all classes, the Asian/Pacific Islander and White ethnic groups exhibit the highest completion and lowest dropout rates (SPS p.77). Additionally, the graduate rates are lowest and dropout rates highest for the Native American ethnic group for the classes of 2010 and 2011, while for the class of 2012, the graduation rate is lowest for the Black/African American ethnic group and the dropout rate is highest for the Hispanic/Latino ethnic group (SPS p.77). This dropout rate outcome should be assessed in greater detail and retention efforts should be improved for these ethnic groups as well. A higher percentage of female students graduate, as male students drop out at a higher rate (SPS p.77). This report did not disclose the retention rates for SPED students or any detailed information about SPED student graduation or dropout rates and whether or not these students completed a grade level.

Annual dropouts

Dropouts, for the purpose of computing an annual dropout rate, are all students who leave during a 12-month period and prior to graduation for employment, marriage, enlistment in armed forces, or who were suspended or expelled without returning (SPS p.79). There are also three major limitations to the dropout data contained in this section. These limitations are: 1) the district keeps limited records of what happens to students after they leave except for a withdrawal code, 2) students who drop out are frequently in and out of school several times, and 3) many of the students categorized as dropouts may be "no-shows" who are incorrectly withdrawn.

> *The annual high school dropout rate as percentage of enrollment fell from 7.4% in 2010-2011 to 6.2% in 2011-2012, the lowest number and percentage of high school dropouts in 30 years. (SPS p.80)*

For 2011-2012, whites replaced Asian/Pacific Islanders as having the lowest dropout rate since 2006-2007; Native American students had the highest dropout rate in high school. For middle school, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African American and white ethnic group's dropout rates increased during the 2011-2012 school year.

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The OSPI report titled, "Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee Report," assesses the achievement gap for students in the Washington State public education system. The report states that the "achievement gap" classically refers to the difference in test scores between the racial and ethnic groups of students.

The research suggests the achievement gap arises from inequities in the education system. All students can succeed, but they need highly effective teachers, exemplary curriculum and materials, and appropriate academic and social support – resources that are often missing today for students of color. These "opportunity gaps" or "access gaps" make student success difficult or impossible.

The racial achievement gap grows in magnitude as a child nears entry to the workforce from grade 4 to grade 12. Between fourth and twelfth grade, the gap grows 41% for Latino students and 22% for black students. (The Racial Achievement Gap, Copyright © Mckinsey & Company, April 2009)

Currently students of color and low-income students may encounter:

1) Lower expectations, inadequate instruction and support from their schools and teachers;
2) Lower level content;
3) Less experienced and qualified teachers; and/or
4) Inferior or limited curriculum materials.

Schools also reflect the culture of white, middle-class society, which can lead to a disconnection between students who come from different cultures and family conditions and traditional school structure and expectations (OSPI p.5).

Top priorities of the Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability committee:

1) Supporting and facilitating parent, family, and community involvement and outreach;
2) Identifying data elements and systems needed to monitor progress in closing the gap;
3) Enhancing the cultural competence of current and future educators and the cultural relevance of curriculum and instruction;
4) Expanding pathways and strategies to prepare and recruit diverse teachers and administrators;
5) Recommending current programs and resources that should be redirected to narrow the gap;
6) Making closing the achievement gap part of the school and school improvement process;
7) Exploring innovative school models that have shown success in closing the achievement gap;
8) Health and wellbeing;
9) Post-secondary education and job training; and
10) Early Learning and childhood education.

To read about the full synthesis of the above recommendations, follow this link: www.k12.wa.us/cisl/pubdocs/Synthesis2008Recommendations.pdf

IMPLICATIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the Student Outcome Measures for Seattle Public Schools, there were four primary themes emerging as areas of opportunity for transforming the Special Education program in SPS: leadership, infrastructure, communication, and professional development.

- Leadership refers to characteristics and practices of those persons in leadership roles within the SPS Central Office, especially the Special Education program.
- Infrastructure is broadly defined as the structure and systems used by the SPS Special Education program, in areas such as quality standards, data, technical assistance, and accountability/monitoring.
- Communication is broadly defined, and refers to the degree to which information is effectively and efficiently communicated within the Central Office and stakeholders throughout the district
- Professional development includes learning and development opportunities that are provided to ALL staff across SPS, particularly the Special Education staff throughout the district, including Central Office leadership in Special Education.

OSPI C-Cap outcomes[1]: 1) establish and implement an effective, equitable, and systemic strategic plan for the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE); 2) create and maintain a uniform mechanism for Special Education Program and administrative accountability which includes a centralized system of internal controls and informed decision-making; and 3) recruit, hire, and maintain stable leadership for special education at the district level.

[1] Note: C-CAP refers to Comprehensive Corrective Action Plan issued by the Washington Department of Education, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

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APPENDIX

Special Education Enrollment by Grade

Grade		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	K	292	256	269	276	311	320
	1	323	358	326	341	365	384
	2	374	392	426	393	429	450
	3	508	481	496	527	522	534
	4	528	579	569	554	615	554
	5	560	583	623	580	569	605
Total		**2585**	**2649**	**2709**	**2671**	**2811**	**2847**

Grade		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	6	466	479	545	540	544	476
	7	442	463	450	511	524	486
	8	420	416	437	434	494	500
Total		**1328**	**1358**	**1432**	**1485**	**1562**	**1462**

Grade		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	9	404	398	384	410	439	425
	10	373	374	389	376	385	409
	11	343	334	356	366	374	347
	12	471	464	494	514	539	526
Total		**1591**	**1570**	**1623**	**1666**	**1737**	**1707**
District Total K-12		**5504**	**5577**	**5764**	**5822**	**6110**	**6016**
District Total Pre-K		**552**	**556**	**602**	**654**	**737**	**799**