

Board Narrative: Student Services Annual Report Part 1

Introduction

The Student Services Department annually updates the board regarding student engagement and school climate, as these are important components of the educational environment and home-school relations that impact students' academic success. Student engagement and school climate are two of the eight State Priority Areas under the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), which is how we have framed the content of this board report.

It is important to note that updates on student engagement and school climate are generated twice each year for the board and public: once in June through the LCAP Annual Update and the accompanying LCAP that contains plans, actions, and budget for the upcoming 3-Year plan, and once in the winter through this annual student services report. This year the winter report will be broken into two shorter reports, with the School Climate Update presented on 2/25/2020 and the Student Engagement report presented on 3/10/2020. Updates on specific programs or initiatives are also reported throughout the year in addition to these two primary reports. The LCAP Annual Update explains in detail the actions that were taken to improve student outcomes that respective academic year, the LCAP contains preliminary end-of-year data, and all expenditures for Student Services are reflected in the district's budget for the LCAP and overall budget. This annual Student Services report to the board contains the final summative LCAP data, and a few additional data points, with a summary of the previous year's progress and areas of challenge in light of the analysis of the final end-of-year data.

School Climate

Given that school climate is a broad and complex phenomenon, the state has identified three primary ways for public school districts to monitor school climate, and our district has added three more; all six are the focus of this section of the report. Although not exhaustive or all-encompassing, the three state-required metrics provide insight into school climate through the district-wide suspension rate, expulsion rate, and students' self-reported sense of safety at their school; our district also monitors drug- and alcohol-related offenses, weapon-related offenses, and acts of physical violence.

Suspensions

The reported rate of student suspension has increased by 1.4% in three years, with increases seen across all subgroups (Table 1). The most concerning increases are amongst students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged (2% increase in three years) and students with disabilities (1.8% increase in three years). In addition, the total number of suspensions has increased by 37% since 2015-16.

Expulsions

In 2018-19 the number of expulsions (27) hit a four year low (Table 2). In addition, the number of recommendations for expulsion fell by 17% from 49 in 2015-16 and 41 in 2018-19. These decreases can be attributed to an effort on the part of schools to work with students who are struggling behaviorally, in most cases only recommending students for expulsion when it is required by California Education Code. The decreases are also a result of a policy of utilizing suspended expulsions when appropriate.

Drug- and Alcohol-Related Offenses

There has been a 26% increase in the number of suspensions for drug- and alcohol-related offenses over the past four years (Table 3). These offenses most often involve marijuana/THC or alcohol. Suspensions for use of prescription medications (Xanax, Opiates, ADHD medications) and illegal substances (e.g., methamphetamine, cocaine) are less frequent because of difficulty in detection. It is important to note that the overall number of suspensions does not necessarily translate into increased usage. Rather, this could be a result of more effective enforcement efforts on the part of site administrators and school resource officers, especially in light of the vaping epidemic. In fact, 2018-19 California Healthy Kids Survey data shows a slight decrease in self-reported drug and alcohol use by secondary students in grades 7, 9, and 11. Most notably, the self-reported rate of heavy drug use amongst 11th graders has dropped from 13% in 2015-16 to 10% in 2018-19. In addition, the rate of students reported use of drugs and alcohol on campus stayed static between 2015 and 2019 at 6% in high school and 3.5% in junior high (CHKS, 2019).

Disproportionality between sub-groups is an ongoing concern in SB Unified, and has been for many years. Students with disabilities, Latinx, SED, English Learners, and Homeless/Foster Youth are disproportionately suspended as compared to students in other sub-groups.

Violent Offenses

The number of student suspensions related to violence, harassment, and bullying have increased by 32% since 2015-2016 (Table 4). Per our district's discipline guidelines, more serious incidents of physical violence, harassment, and bullying warrant suspension coupled with RA for repair and reintegration. This increase is a disturbing trend that can partially be explained by three rationale. First, Santa Barbara is experiencing a heightened level of gang-related tensions, leading some students to resort to acts of violence at school. Next, the increased rate of cyber harassment and bullying causes drama that is sometimes acted on or addressed at school. Finally, in 2017 it was discovered that many elementary administrators were not regularly recording suspensions properly in Aeries. As a result, the number of suspensions for fights and bullying were not making their way into the data. Those actions are now being recorded with fidelity.

Weapon-Related Offenses

The number of suspensions for weapon-related offenses have increased 41% since 2015-16 (Table 5). The most common form of weapon involved is the locking-blade knife with a blade in excess of 2.5 inches. Less frequently these offenses involved imitation firearms. The most commonly reported reason for weapons possession is personal safety outside of school. The brandishing of weapons at school is rare.

Students' Sense of Safety

Student CHKS survey results from 2018-19 show that 71% of students "Feel safe at school", with percentages higher in fifth grade (85%) compared to those in seventh grade (76%), ninth grade (64%) and eleventh grade (66%) (Table 6). While these numbers are unacceptable, these rates are 4-6% higher than the state rates for each grade level. It is interesting to note that the student reports are in contrast to reports by staff who reveal perceived rates of student safety at 93% in elementary school, 86% in junior high school, and 93% in high school.

Current Work

In 2019-20 several actions have been taken to address the increase in suspensions and student reports of lack of safety. Those include:

- Vaping Education
- Alternatives to suspension for first offense of nicotine vaping
- In school suspensions for first and second violations of non-violent offenses
- Alternatives to Violence Program
- Continued School Based Mental Health Services
- A Universal Supports for Learning Cadre to explore effective approaches to student behavior

Next Steps

The increase in suspensions over the past few years is unacceptable, and it is clear that many students feel unsafe, emotionally and/or physically at school. As such, a thorough root cause analysis of these phenomena is required. In Spring 2020 a work group will be formed to conduct this root cause analysis and develop an action plan to address those causes.

APPENDIX A: DATA TABLES

Preface

This appendix contains tables with two different types of percentages: rates and proportions. Please note that rates can be compared across subgroups to see if there are differences between subgroups, whereas proportions cannot. Proportions are like a piece of a pie, and can be compared to subgroups' proportion of the overall enrollment district-wide excluding charters (Table 7) to see if a group is over- or underrepresented in a given indicator.

For example, a **rate** is calculated by dividing the total number of students in Subgroup A that were suspended by the total number of students enrolled overall. In other words, "5.4% of Subgroup A were suspended, compared to 3.2% of Subgroup B that were suspended. Therefore, there is a gap in the suspension rates between Subgroups A and B." Ideally, the suspension rates should be within about 1 percentage point of each other so that there is not a "gap" between subgroups' truancy rates.

In contrast, a **proportion** is calculated by dividing the total number of drug and alcohol related suspensions associated with students in Subgroup A by the total number of suspensions for drug and alcohol related suspensions for all students. That is to say, "Subgroup A comprises 40% of all suspensions in that category, whereas they only comprise 25% of the overall enrollment. Therefore, Subgroup A is overrepresented in these types of suspensions - their proportion of suspensions is disproportionate to their overall enrollment." Ideally, the proportion of suspensions should be within about 3 percentage points of a subgroups' proportion of the overall enrollment so that there is not over- or underrepresentation in suspensions.

Please note that in the LCAP, rates are reported; this report contains some rates and some proportions to highlight salient points, as determined by the Student Services Department. Calculations are based upon internal records and may vary somewhat from reports by the California Department of Education (CDE).

Please note all tables exclude data from charter schools.

Table 1. SBUSD Total Number of Suspensions, and Suspension Rate by Student Subgroup, 2015-16 through 2018-19

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total Suspensions	645	742	717	888
Suspension Rate Overall	2.8%	3.4%	3.4%	4.2%
Asian	0.0%	0.8%	1.9%	1.1%
Black/African Am.	3.8%	5.7%	7.7%	5.1%
Filipino	0.0%	4.4%	2.6%	6%
Hispanic/Latino	3.6%	4.4%	4.7%	5.4%
White	1.7%	1.9%	1.9%	2.3%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	4.0%	4.6%	4.5%	6.0%
Special Education	7.0%	7.9%	6.8%	8.8%
English Learner (EL)	3.6%	4.0%	4.3%	5.8%
Homeless/Foster Youth	4.8%	4.2%	4.7%	6.3%

Table 2. SBUSD Total Number of Expulsions, and Expulsion Rate by Student Subgroup, 2015-16 through 2018-19

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
All Students	31	36	33	27
Expulsion Rate Overall	.19%	.25%	.21%	.18%
Hispanic/Latino	.26%	.31%	.31%	.26%
White	.13%	.08%	.13%	.09%

Table 3. SBUSD Total Number of Student Drug- and Alcohol-Related Offenses, and Proportion of Drug- and Alcohol-Related Offenses by Student Subgroup, 2015-16 through 2018-19

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
All Students	246	224	263	334
Asian	0%	1%	2%	<1%
Black/African Am.	2%	2%	2%	<1%
Hispanic/Latino	70%	77%	74%	71%
White	27%	18%	21%	22%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	67%	72%	76%	72%
Special Education	31%	26%	27%	26%
English Learner (EL)	29%	22%	26%	25%
Homeless/Foster Youth	17%	19%	18%	20%

*Cell contains less than ten cases, data cannot be displayed publicly

-Data not available

Note: This end-of-year report shows the total number of offenses during the academic year that were drug and alcohol related, overall and for student subgroups, as well as the proportionality for each subgroup. The proportion of drug and alcohol related offenses is calculated by dividing the total number of drug and alcohol related offenses associated with a student belonging to a respective subgroup by the total number of drug and alcohol related offenses overall. Students who had multiple drug and alcohol related offenses are counted multiple times in the report totals.

Table 4. SBUSD Total Number of Student Violence Related Offenses (With and Without Injury) by Student Subgroup, 2015-16 through 2018-19

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
All Students	288	388	356	422
Asian	0%	<1%	1%	<1%
Black/African Am.	2%	3%	2%	1%
Hispanic/Latino	83%	79%	85%	81%
White	16%	15%	12%	13%

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	76%	75%	68%	85%
Special Education	41%	37%	31%	42%
English Learner (EL)	37%	37%	32%	36%
Homeless/Foster Youth	19%	1%	15%	25%

-Data not available

Note: This end-of-year report shows the total number of offenses during the academic year that were related to violence, overall and for student subgroups, as well as the proportionality for each subgroup. The proportion of these offenses is calculated by dividing the total number of offenses related to violence that were associated with a student belonging to a respective subgroup by the total number of offenses related to violence overall. Students who had multiple offenses related to violence are counted multiple times in the report totals.

Table 5. SBUSD Total Number of Student Weapon-Related Offenses, and Proportion of Weapon-Related Offenses by Student Subgroup, 2012-13 through 2015-16

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
All Students	24	37	35	41
Asian	*	*	*	*
Black/African Am.	*	0%	6%	2%
Hispanic/Latino	76%	81%	86%	83%
White	8%	16%	9%	10%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED)	64%	87%	68%	85%
Special Education	36%	30%	31%	34%
English Learner (EL)	30%	32%	40%	29%
Homeless/Foster Youth	1%	14%	26%	27%

*Cell contains less than ten cases, data cannot be displayed publicly

-Data not available

Note: This end-of-year report shows the total number of offenses during the academic year that were weapon related, overall and for student subgroups, as well as the proportionality for each subgroup. The proportion of weapon related offenses is calculated by dividing the total number of weapon related offenses associated with a student belonging to a respective subgroup by the total number of weapon related offenses overall. Students who had multiple weapon related offenses are counted multiple times in the report totals.

Table 6. SBUSD Students' Sense of Safety by Grade Span, Overall and by Student Subgroup, 2018-19

Grade Level	School Perceived as Safe or Very Safe
Fifth Grade	85%
Seventh Grade	76%
Ninth Grade	64%
Eleventh Grade	66%

Note: The percentage shown for elementary is the percent of respondents that marked "Yes, most of the time" or "Yes, all of the time" to the question, "Do you feel safe at school?" The percentages shown for secondary are the percent of respondents that marked "Safe" or "Very safe" to the question, "How safe do you feel when you are at school?"

Table 7. SBUSD Total Number of Students Enrolled Excluding Charters, and Proportion of Enrollment by Student Subgroup, 2015-16 through 2018-19

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
All Students	14,134	14,331	14,155	13,890
Asian	4%	3%	3%	3%
Black/African Am.	1%	1%	1%	1%
Hispanic/Latino	60%	60%	60%	60%
White	34%	33%	33%	33%
Socio Economically Disadvantaged (SED)	44%	52%	54%	54%
Special Education	13%	13%	13%	13%
English Learner (EL)	25%	23%	20%	18%
Homeless/Foster Youth		9%	13%	16%

*Cell contains less than ten cases, data cannot be displayed publicly

-Data not available

Note: Data source from California Department of Education (CDE), DataQuest, with Special Education data from internal district records. Total district enrollment is based upon Fall 1 Census, and may vary from other reports where enrollment may be presented as cumulative or as of a certain date.