



2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection

# Student Discipline and School Climate in U.S. Public Schools



U.S. Department of Education  
*Office for Civil Rights*

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# About this Report

The 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) is a mandatory survey of all public school districts and schools serving students in preschool through grade 12 in the 50 states, Washington, D.C., and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and therefore includes data from 17,821 public school districts and 97,575 public schools.<sup>1</sup> The CRDC measures student access to courses, programs, Internet and devices, instructional and other staff, and resources – as well as school climate factors such as student discipline, use of restraint and seclusion, harassment or bullying, and offenses occurring at schools – that impact education opportunity for students. This report highlights student discipline and school climate data public school districts submitted to the U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) for the 2020-21 school year.<sup>2</sup>

The calculated counts and percentages in this report may differ from those reported by other offices within ED due to differences in methodology, data sources, and survey population (or the universe of schools and school districts that submit data).<sup>3</sup> OCR cautions readers and data users to consider the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on students and on education conditions when comparing the 2020-21 CRDC to CRDCs from previous years.

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# Who's in the 2020-21 CRDC?

Total student enrollment in public preschool through grade 12



**49.2 MILLION<sup>4</sup>**

Total number of preschool children

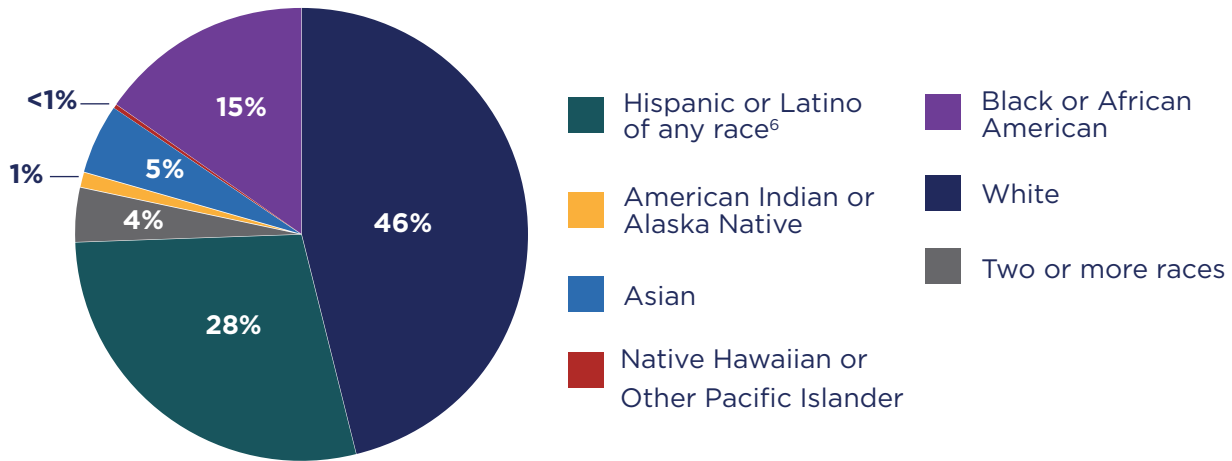


**1.2 MILLION**

**51% BOYS**

**49% GIRLS**

## Student enrollment by race/ethnicity<sup>5</sup>



## Enrollment of English learner students<sup>7</sup>

**11%**

## Enrollment of students with disabilities

### Total students with disabilities:

**17%**

Students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):<sup>8</sup>

**14%**

Students served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 only):<sup>9</sup>

**3%**

## Number of school districts



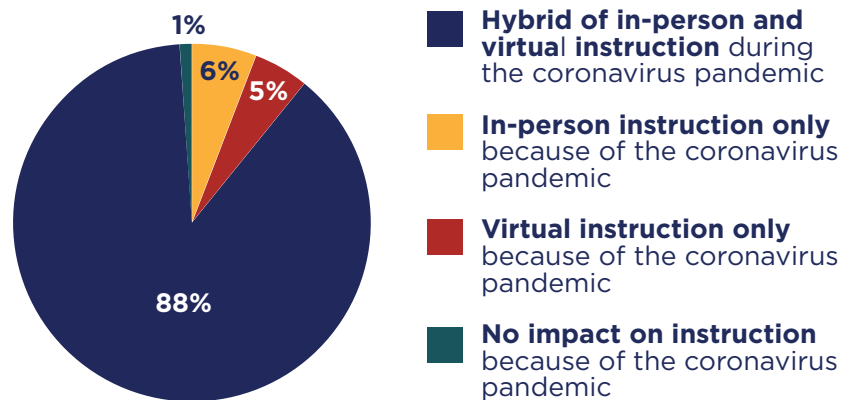
**17,821**

## Number of schools



**97,575**

## Percent of schools by type of instruction provided during the coronavirus pandemic



# About the CRDC

The purpose of the CRDC is to obtain data and information related to the obligation of public school districts and of elementary and secondary schools to provide equal educational opportunity. OCR administers the CRDC and uses the data to enforce civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, and disability. It is also a valuable resource for other ED offices and federal agencies, policymakers and researchers, educators and school officials, parents and students, and the public who seek data on students' access to educational opportunities. The CRDC is authorized under the Department of Education Organization Act of 1979 (20 U.S.C. § 3413(c)(1)), and the federal civil rights laws and regulations that OCR enforces, including: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(b), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and 34 C.F.R. § 106.81, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and 34 C.F.R. § 104.61.

## ED Spotlight

### Supportive and Safe School Climates and Nondiscriminatory Student Discipline

ED has made promoting supportive and safe school climates and nondiscriminatory student discipline a top priority. U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona released a Dear Colleague Letter urging state and school leaders to [end the practice of corporal punishment](#) and to use funding provided by ED through the [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) and the [Bipartisan Safe Communities Act](#), among other sources, to support evidence-based programs and fair student discipline practices designed to improve school climate, keep the school community safe, and keep students in school and learning. OCR has released resources to support school and school district efforts to create and maintain school climates that are free of discrimination. They are: [Dear Colleague Letter: Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and [Resource on Confronting Racial Discrimination in Student Discipline](#). For more information about these resources and others released by ED, please visit ED's [School Climate and Student Discipline Resources webpage](#).

# Student Discipline

## SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

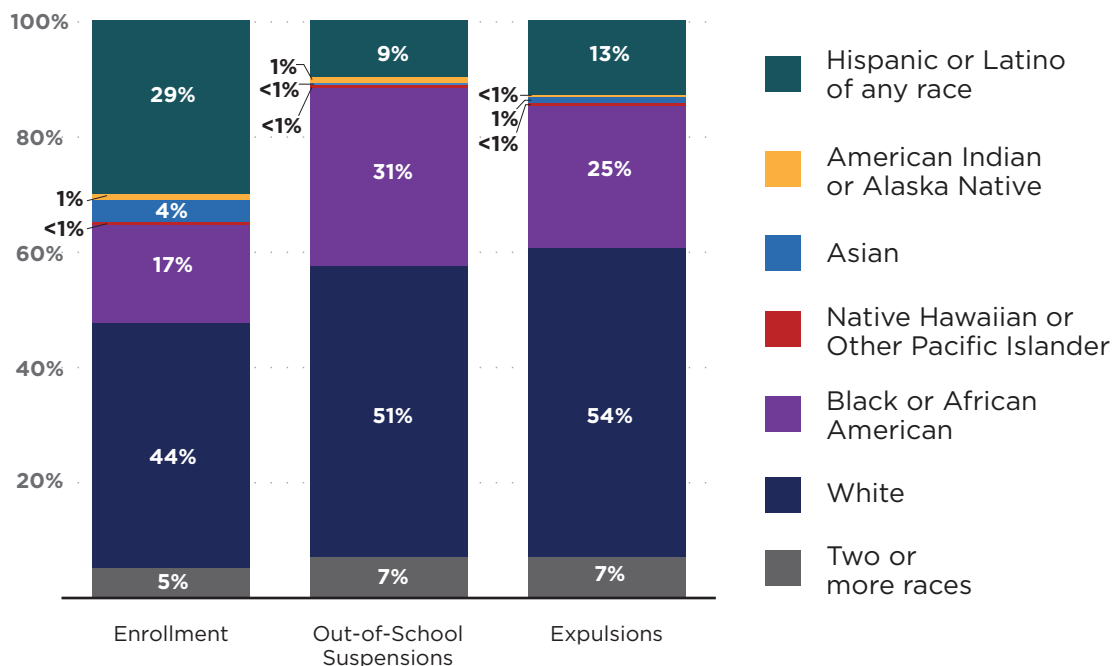
### Preschool out-of-school suspensions and expulsions in public schools, by students' race/ethnicity and sex

■ During the 2020-21 school year, there were 1.2 million children enrolled in preschools. Nearly 1,000 public preschool children received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and approximately 220 preschool children were expelled.<sup>10</sup>

■ In public preschools, Black and White children, and children of two or more races were disproportionately suspended and expelled, with Black public preschool children receiving out-of-school suspensions at a rate nearly twice their enrollment. (Figure 1)

- Although Black preschool children accounted for 17% of preschool enrollment, they represented 31% of children who received one or more out-of-school suspensions and 25% of those expelled.
- White preschool children accounted for 43% of preschool enrollment, they represented 51% of children who received one or more out-of-school suspensions and 54% of those expelled.
- Preschool children of two or more races accounted for 5% of preschool enrollment, but they represented 7% percent of those who received one or more out-of-school suspensions and 7% of those expelled.

**Figure 1.** Percent of preschool children who were disciplined in public schools, by race/ethnicity



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

■ **Preschool boys represented 54% of the 1.2 million students enrolled in public preschool.**

**However, preschool boys accounted for 81% of preschool children who received one or more out-of-school suspensions and 85% of preschool children who were expelled. (Figure 2)**

■ **Both Black and White preschool boys attending public preschools received out-of-school suspensions and were expelled at a rate higher than their rate of enrollment.**

- Black boys accounted for 9% of preschool enrollment, but represented 23% of preschool children who received one or more out-of-school suspensions and 20% of preschool children who were expelled.
- White boys accounted for 24% of preschool enrollment, but represented 43% of preschool children who received one or more out-of-school suspensions and 47% of preschool children who were expelled.

■ **The percentage of preschool girls of all races attending public schools who received one or more out-of-school suspensions or expulsions was lower than their respective percentages of preschool enrollment.**

■ **Preschool children with disabilities served under IDEA represented 24% of preschool enrollment, but 34% of preschool children who received one or more out-of-school suspensions and 62% of preschool children who were expelled.**

**Figure 2.** Percent of preschool children who were disciplined, by sex and race/ethnicity

		Hispanic or Latino of any race	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Black or African American	White	Two or more races
<b>Boys</b>	Enrollment	16%	1%	2%	<1%	9%	24%	3%
	<i>Discipline Outcomes</i>							
	One or more Out-of-School Suspensions	8%	1%	<1%	<1%	23%	43%	6%
	Expulsions	11%	<1%	1%	<1%	20%	47%	6%
<b>Girls</b>	Enrollment	14%	<1%	2%	<1%	8%	19%	2%
	<i>Discipline Outcomes</i>							
	One or more Out-of-School Suspensions	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	7%	9%	1%
	Expulsions	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	5%	7%	1%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 suspensions and expulsions in public schools, by students' race/ethnicity and sex

- **Approximately 786,600 students, 2% of K-12 public school enrollment, received one or more in-school suspensions. About 638,700 students, 1% of K-12 public school enrollment, received one or more out-of-school suspensions.**
- **Nearly 28,300 students were expelled, less than 1% of K-12 public school student enrollment.**
- **Black boys and girls, White boys, and boys of two or more races attending public schools were overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions. (Figure 3)**
  - Black boys were disciplined at higher rates, compared to boys of other races. Black boys represented 8% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 15% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 18% of those who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 18% of those who were expelled.
  - Black girls represented 7% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 8% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 9% of students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 8% of students who were expelled.
  - White boys represented 24% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 37% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 36% of students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 34% of students who were expelled.
  - Boys of two or more races represented 2% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 3% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 4% of students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 3% of those who received expulsions.
- **Both White and Black boys were overrepresented in discipline outcomes. Black boys were nearly two times more likely than White boys to receive an out-of-school suspension or expulsion in K-12 public schools.**
- **Black girls were nearly two times more likely to receive one or more in-school suspensions, one or more out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions than White girls.**
- **Public school students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions missed a total of more than 2 million school days.**

**Figure 3.** Percent of K-12 students who were disciplined in public schools, by sex and race/ethnicity

		Hispanic or Latino of any race	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Black or African American	White	Two or more races
<b>Boys</b>	Enrollment	15%	<1%	3%	<1%	8%	24%	2%
	In-School Suspensions	13%	1%	<1%	<1%	15%	37%	3%
	Out-of-School Suspensions	12%	1%	1%	<1%	18%	36%	4%
	Expulsions	14%	1%	1%	<1%	18%	34%	3%
<b>Girls</b>	Enrollment	14%	<1%	3%	<1%	7%	22%	2%
	In-School Suspensions	6%	<1%	<1%	<1%	8%	14%	2%
	Out-of-School Suspensions	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	9%	13%	2%
	Expulsions	6%	<1%	<1%	<1%	8%	13%	2%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

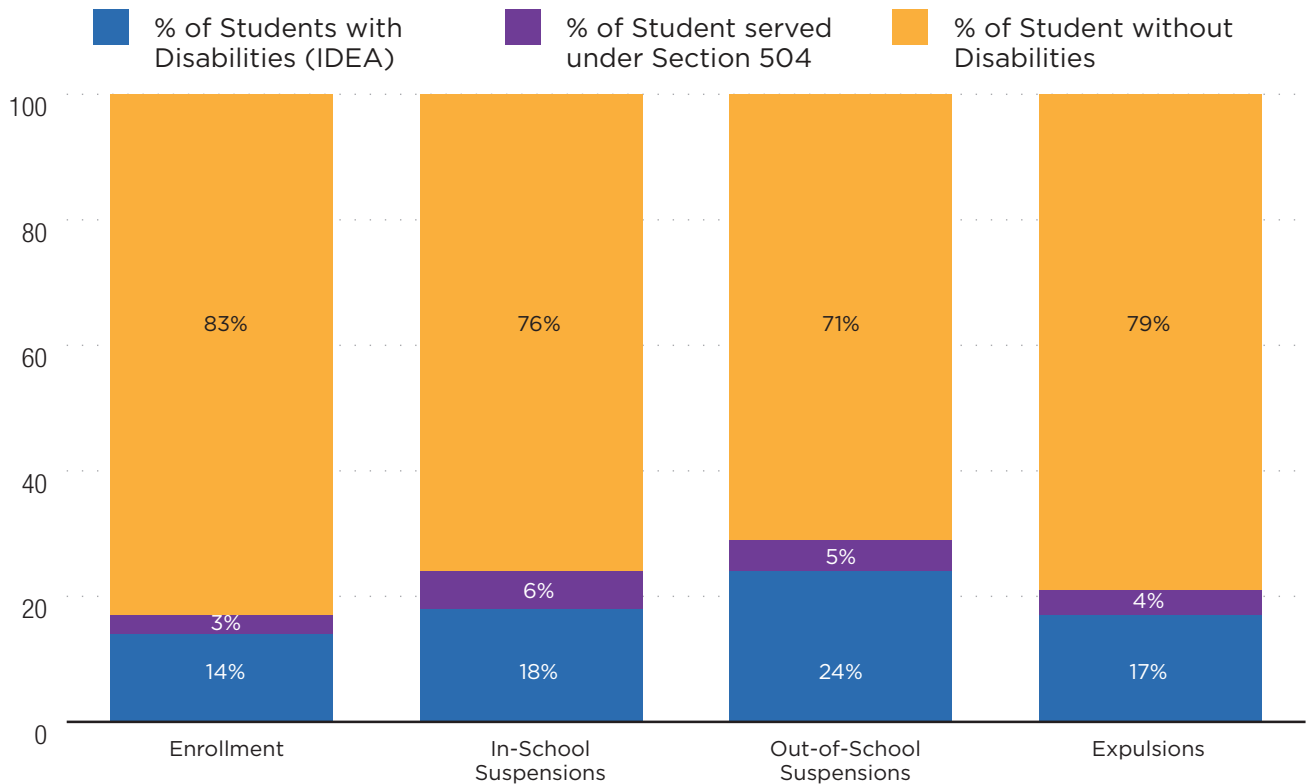
## Kindergarten — grade 12 suspensions and expulsions in public schools, by students' disability

■ **Students with disabilities were overrepresented in discipline outcomes when compared to their total student enrollment in public schools. (Figure 4). These students represented 17% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 24% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 29% of those who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 21% of those who received expulsions.**

- Students with disabilities served under IDEA represented 14% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 18% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 24% of students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 17% of students who received expulsions.
- Students with disabilities served only under Section 504 represented 3% of total K-12 student enrollment, but represented 6% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 5% of students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 4% of students who received expulsions.



**Figure 4.** Percent of K-12 students who were suspended and expelled in public schools, by disability



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten – grade 12 suspensions and expulsions in public schools, by English learner

■ English learner students were underrepresented in suspensions and expulsions outcomes when compared to their total student enrollment in public schools.

- English learner students represented 11% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 7% of students who received one or more in-school suspensions, 6% of those who received one or more out-of-school suspensions, and 6% of those who received expulsions.

## REFERRALS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SCHOOL-RELATED ARRESTS

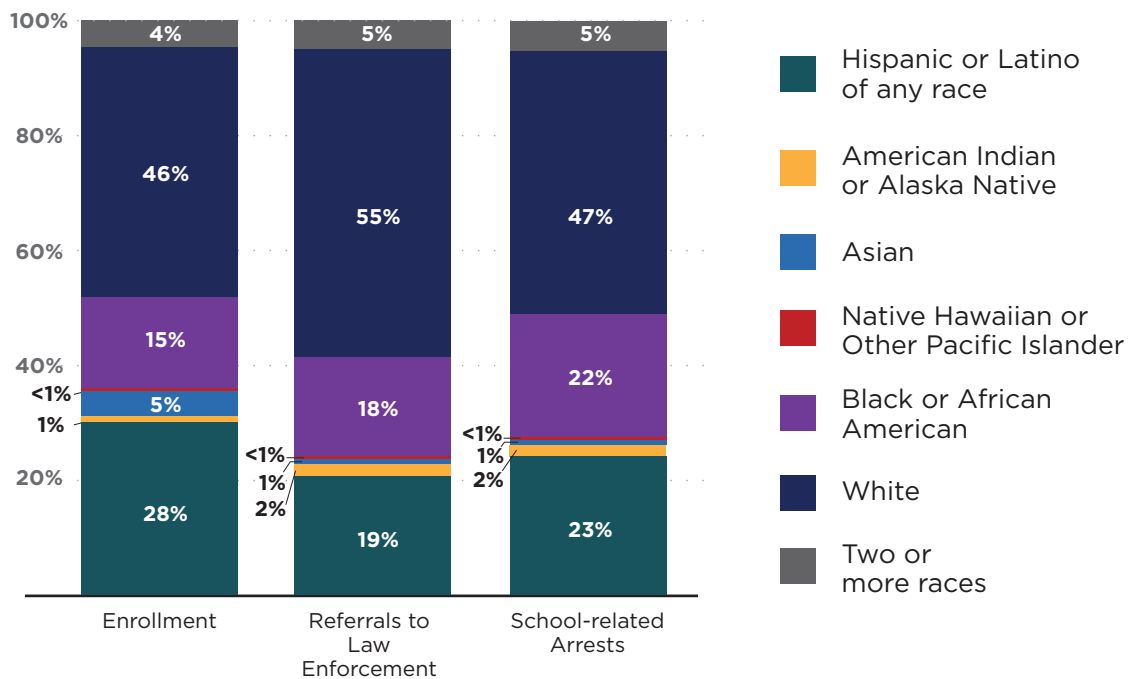
### Public kindergarten – grade 12 referrals and arrests, by students’ race/ethnicity

■ Public school districts referred about 61,900 K-12 students to law enforcement, and approximately 14% of those referrals (8,900) were subjected to a school-related arrest.<sup>11,12,13</sup>

**■ American Indian or Alaska Native students, Black students, White students, and students of two or more races were overrepresented in referrals to law enforcement and school-related arrests in public schools. (Figure 5)**

- American Indian or Alaska Native students represented 1% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 2% of students referred to law enforcement, and 2% of students subjected to school-related arrests.
- Black students represented 15% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 18% of students who were referred to law enforcement, and 22% of students subjected to school-related arrests.
- White students represented 46% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 55% of students who were referred to law enforcement, and 47% of students subjected to school-related arrests.
- Students of two or more races represented 4% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 5% of students who were referred to law enforcement, and 5% of students who were subjected to school-related arrests.

**Figure 5.** Percent of K-12 students referred to law enforcement or subjected to school-related arrests in public schools, by race/ethnicity



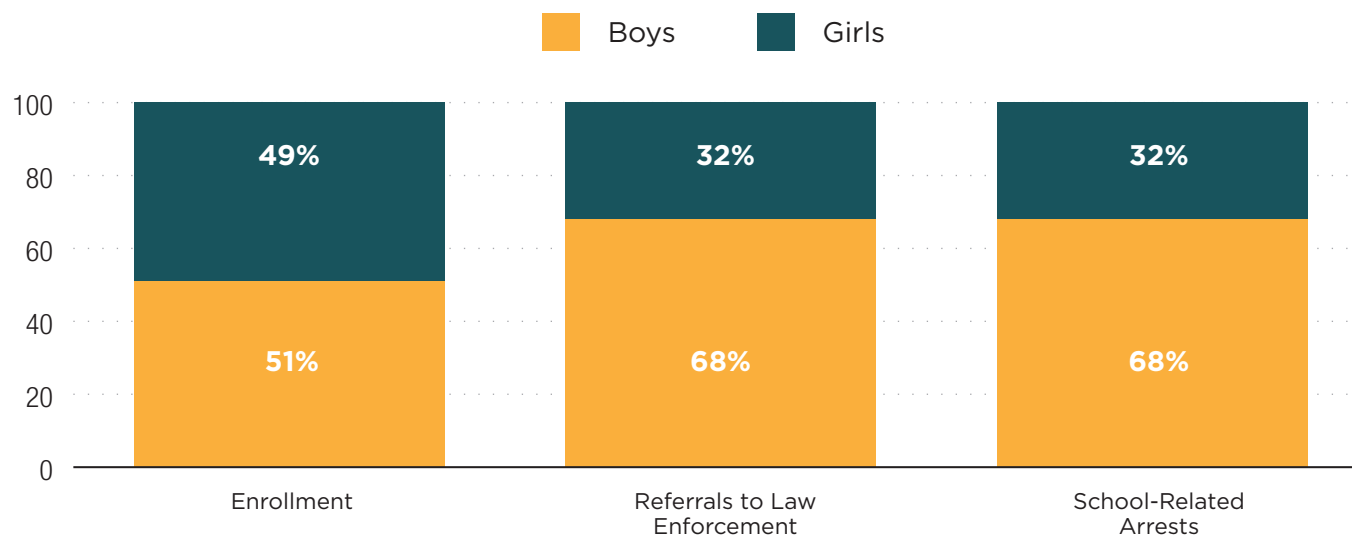
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 referrals and arrests in public schools, by students' sex

### ■ Boys attending public school were overrepresented in referrals to law enforcement and school-related arrests. (Figure 6)

- Boys represented 51% of total K-12 student enrollment, and accounted for 68% of students who were referred to law enforcement and 68% of students who were subjected to school-related arrests.

**Figure 6.** Percent of K-12 students who were referred to law enforcement or subjected to school-related arrests in public schools, by sex



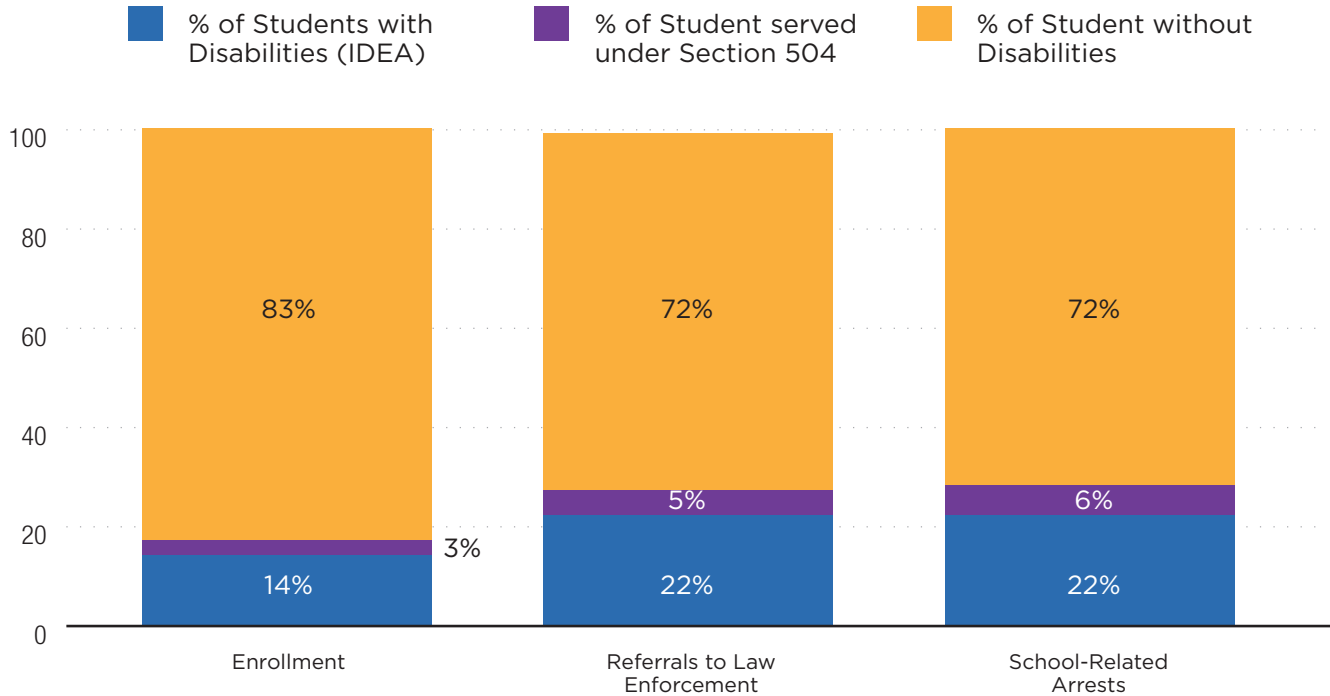
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 referrals and arrests in public schools, by students' disability

### ■ Students with disabilities attending public school were overrepresented in referrals to law enforcement and school-related arrests. (Figure 7)

- Students with disabilities served under IDEA represented 14% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 22% of students referred to law enforcement, and 22% of students who were subjected to school-related arrests.
- Students with disabilities served only under Section 504 represented 3% of total K-12 student enrollment, but and 5% of students referred to law enforcement, and 6% of students who were subjected to school-related arrests.

**Figure 7.** Percent of K-12 students with disabilities who were referred to law enforcement or subjected to school-related arrests in public schools, by students' disability



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 referrals and arrests in public schools, by English learner

English learner students were underrepresented in referrals to law enforcement or arrests in public schools. They comprised 11% of total K-12 student enrollment, 5% of students referred to law enforcement, and 7% of students arrested.

## CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

### Kindergarten — grade 12 corporal punishment in public schools, by students' race/ethnicity and sex

Approximately 19,400 K-12 students received corporal punishment in public schools.

American Indian or Alaska Native, Black, and White boys were overrepresented in students who received corporal punishment in public schools. (Figure 8)

- American Indian or Alaska Native boys accounted for less than 1% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 2% of students who received corporal punishment.
- Black boys accounted for 8% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 18% of students who received corporal punishment.
- White boys accounted for 24% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 50% of students who received corporal punishment.

**Figure 8.** Percent of K-12 students who received corporal punishment in public schools, by race/ethnicity and sex

		Hispanic or Latino of any race	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Black or African American	White	Two or more races
<b>Boys</b>	Enrollment	15%	<1%	3%	<1%	8%	24%	2%
	Corporal Punishment	9%	2%	<1%	<1%	18%	50%	2%
<b>Girls</b>	Enrollment	14%	<1%	3%	<1%	7%	22%	2%
	Corporal Punishment	3%	<1%	<1%	<1%	5%	9%	1%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 students subjected to corporal punishment in public schools, by students’ disability

■ Public school students with disabilities served only under Section 504 were overrepresented in receiving corporal punishment when compared to their enrollment, while students with disabilities served under IDEA were underrepresented in receiving corporal punishment.

- Students with disabilities served only under Section 504 represented 3% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 5% of students who received corporal punishment.
- The 12% of students with disabilities served under IDEA who received corporal punishment was less than their 14% of total K-12 student enrollment.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 subjected to corporal punishment in public schools, by English learner

■ English learner students were subjected to corporal punishment in public schools at a rate that was lower than their enrollment.

- English learners represented 11% of total K-12 student enrollment but only 3% of students who received corporal punishment.

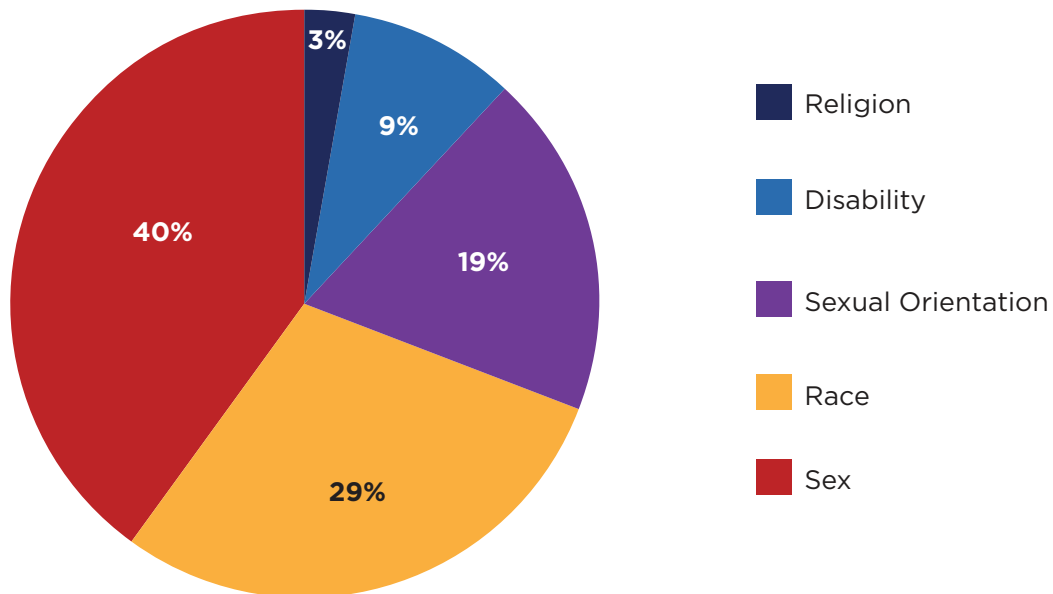
# Harassment and Bullying

## Kindergarten – grade 12 students’ harassment or bullying allegations in public schools on the basis of sex, race, or disability<sup>14</sup>

■ Public school students reported to school employees more than 42,500 allegations of harassment or bullying on the basis of sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, or religion. (Figure 9)

- 40% of the allegations involved harassment or bullying on the basis of sex.
- 29% of the allegations involved harassment or bullying on the basis of race.
- 19% of the allegations involved harassment on the basis of sexual orientation.
- 9% of the allegations involved harassment on the basis of disability.
- 3% of the allegations involved harassment on the basis of religion.

**Figure 9.** Percent of allegations of harassment or bullying in public schools, by basis



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten – grade 12 students reported being harassed or bullied in public schools on the basis of sex, race, or disability, by race/ethnicity<sup>15</sup>

■ About 29,100 public school students reported being harassed or bullied on the basis of sex, race, or disability.

■ Black students and students of two or more races attending public schools were overrepresented in reports of being harassed or bullied on the basis of race. (Figure 10)

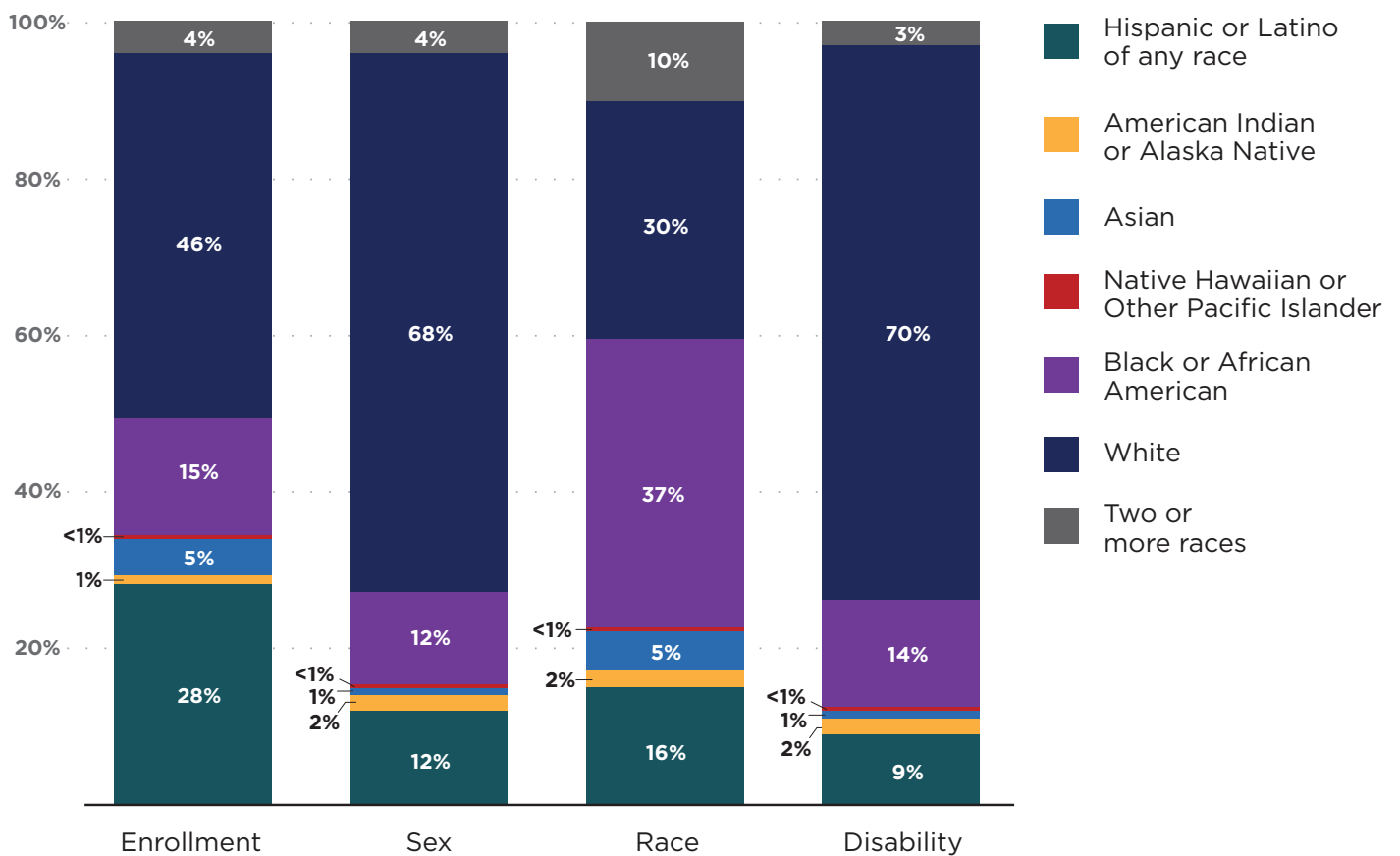
- Black students represented 15% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 37% of students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of race.
- Students of two or more races represented 4% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 10% of students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of race.

■ American Indian or Alaska Native students attending public schools accounted for 1% of the total K-12 student enrollment, but 2% of the students who were reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of race, sex, or disability.

■ White students attending public schools were overrepresented in reports of being harassed or bullied on the basis of sex and disability.

- White students represented 46% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 68% of students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of sex, and 70% of students who reported being harassed or bullied on the basis of disability.

**Figure 10.** Percent of K-12 students reported as being harassed or bullied in public schools, by basis and race/ethnicity



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 students reported being harassed or bullied on the basis of sex, race, or disability in public school, by sex

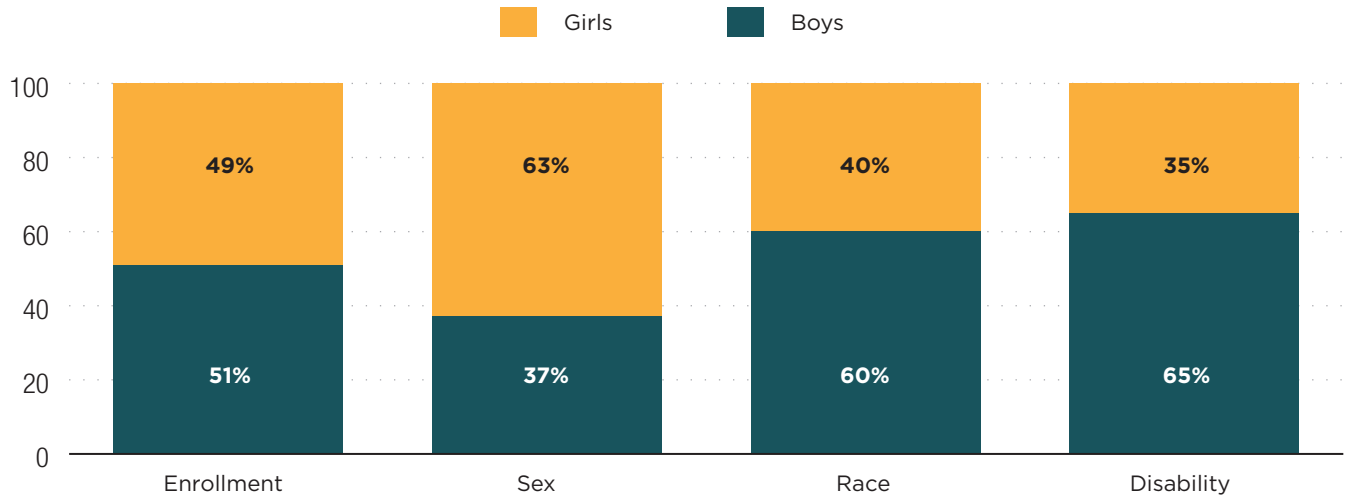
### ■ Boys in public schools were overrepresented in reports of being harassed or bullied on the basis of race or disability. (Figure 11)

- Boys represented 51% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 60% of the students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of race, and 65% of the students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of disability.

### ■ Girls in public schools were overrepresented in reports of being harassed or bullied on the basis of sex.

- Girls made up 49% of the total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 63% of the students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of sex.

**Figure 11.** Percent of K-12 students reported as being harassed or bullied in public schools, by basis and sex



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten — grade 12 students reported being harassed or bullied in public schools on the basis of sex, race, or disability, by students' disability

### ■ Students with disabilities in public schools reported as being harassed or bullied at rates higher than their representation in the total school enrollment. (Figure 12)

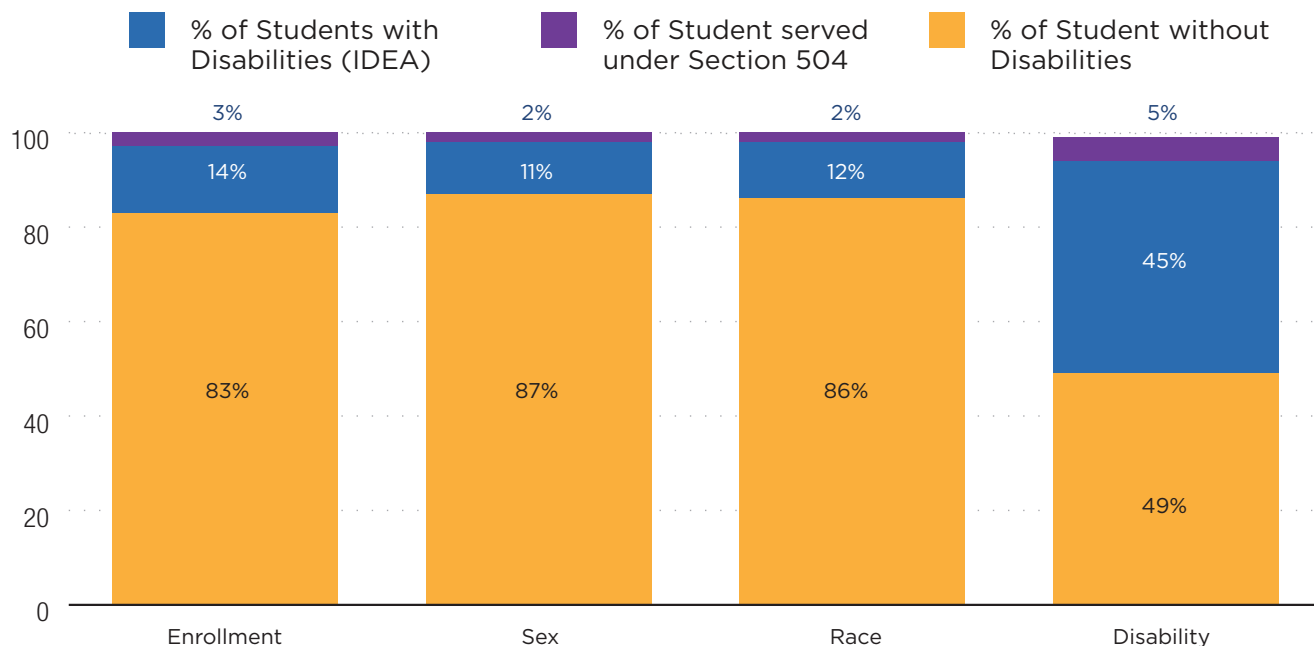
- Students served under IDEA represented 14% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 45% of students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of disability.
- Students served only under Section 504 represented 3% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 5% of students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of disability.



■ **Students without disabilities in public schools reported as being harassed and bullied on the basis of sex and race at higher rates than their representation in the total school enrollment.**

- Students without disabilities comprised 83% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 87% of students who reported as being harassed or bullied on the basis of sex and 86% on the basis of race.

**Figure 12.** Percent of K-12 students reported as being harassed or bullied in public schools, by basis and students' disability



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

**Kindergarten – grade 12 students disciplined for harassment or bullying in public schools on the basis of sex, race, or disability by race/ethnicity**

■ **Approximately 42,300 students in public schools were disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of sex, race, or disability.**

■ **White students in public schools were overrepresented among students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the bases of sex, race, and disability. (Figure 13)**

- White students represented 46% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 61% of students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of sex, 64% of students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of race, and 65% of students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of disability.

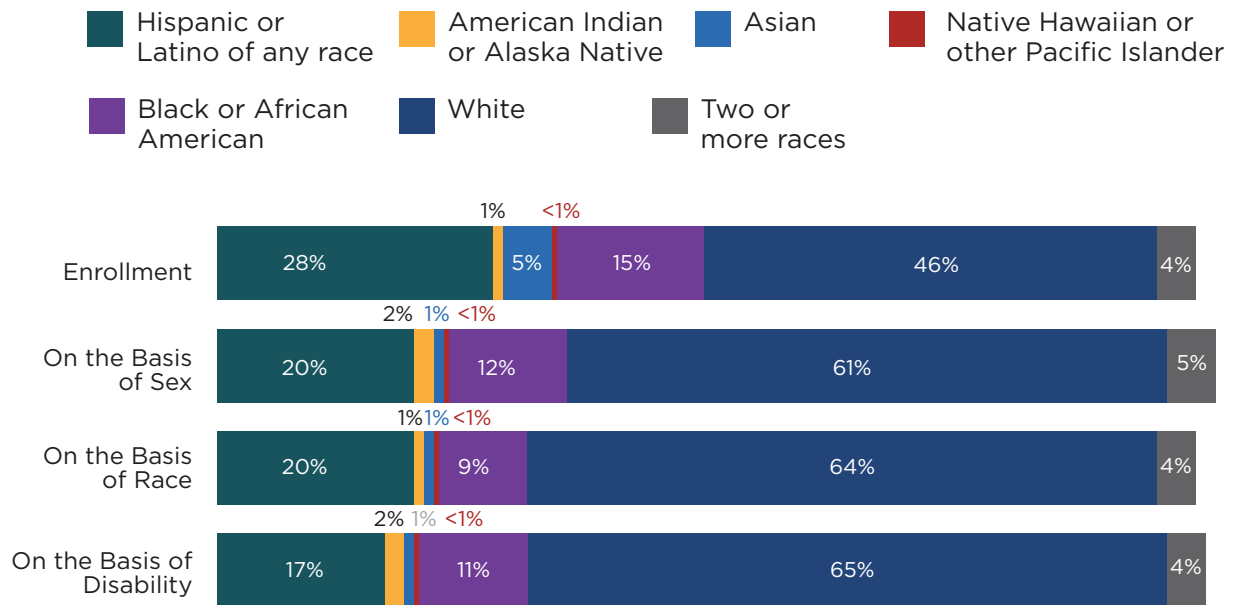
■ **American Indian or Alaska Native students in public schools were overrepresented among students who were disciplined for harassment on the bases of sex and disability.**

- American Indian or Alaska Native students represented 1% of the total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 2% of students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the bases of sex and disability.

**Public school students of two or more races were disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of sex at rates that were higher than their total student enrollment.**

- These students represented 4% of total K-12 student enrollment, but 5% of students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of sex.

**Figure 13.** Percent of K-12 students who were disciplined for harassment or bullying in public schools, by basis and race/ethnicity



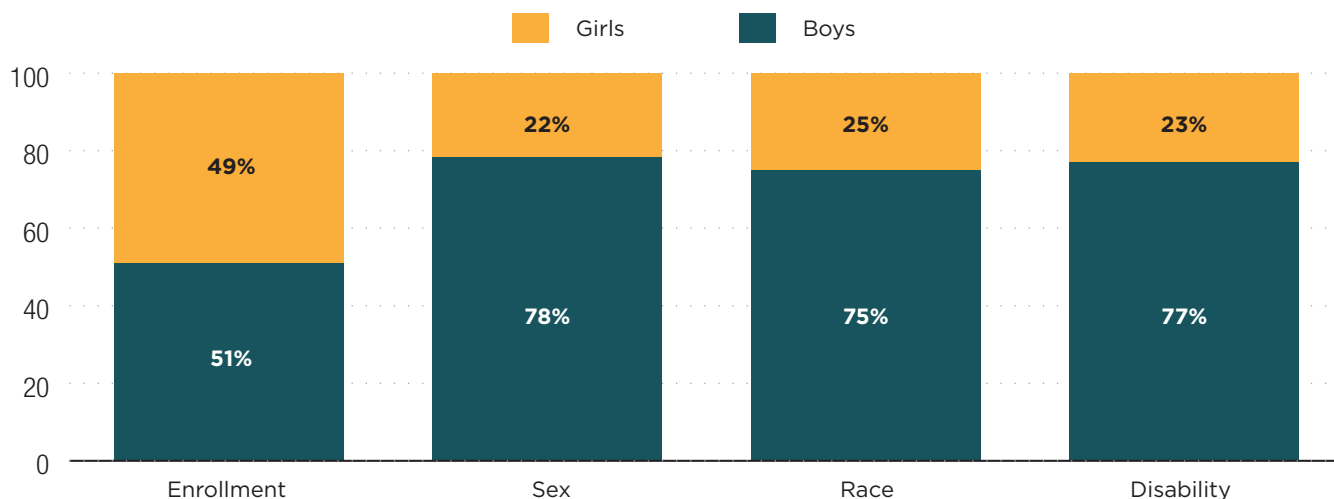
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

**Kindergarten – grade 12 students disciplined for harassment or bullying in public schools on the basis of sex, race, or disability, by sex**

**Boys in public schools were disciplined for harassment or bullying on the bases of sex; race, color, or national origin; and disability at rates that were higher than their total student enrollment. (Figure 14)**

- Boys represented 51% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 78% of students who were disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of sex, 75% of students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of race, and 77% of students disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of disability.

**Figure 14.** Percent of K-12 students disciplined for harassment or bullying in public schools, by basis and sex



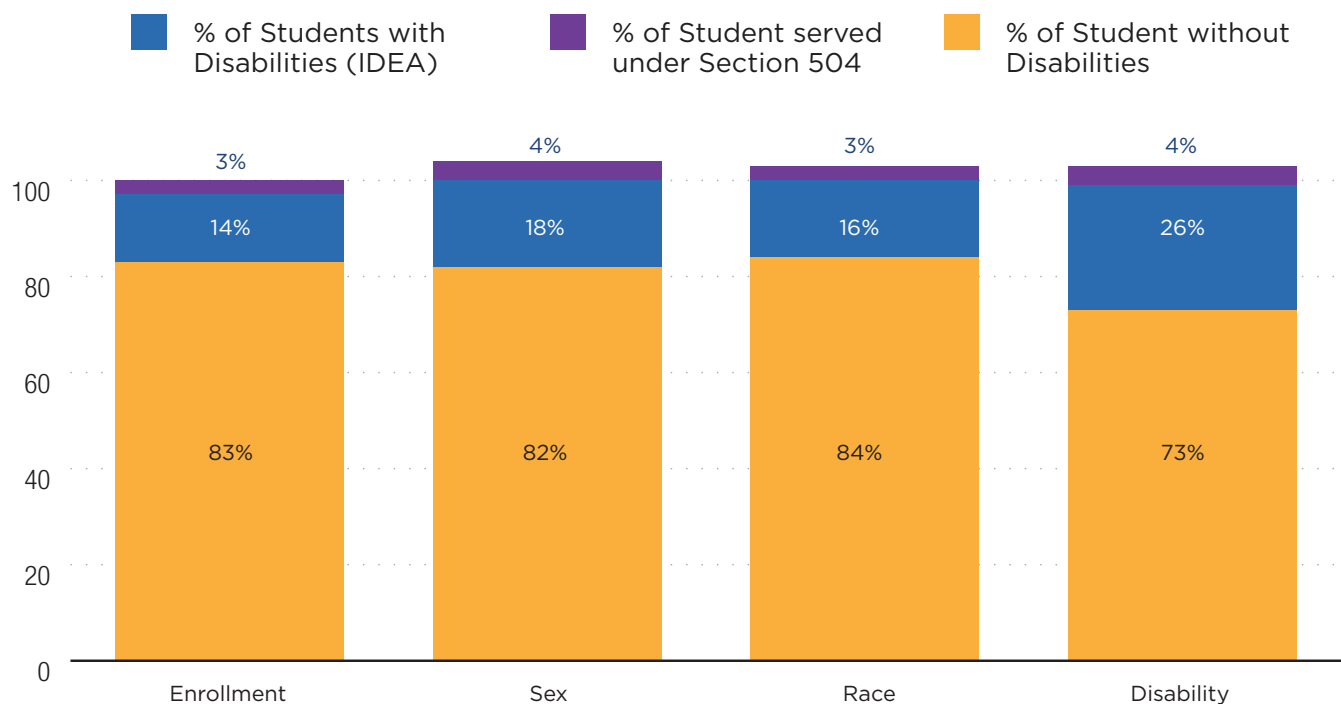
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Kindergarten – grade 12 students disciplined for harassment or bullying in public schools on the basis of sex, race, or disability, by students’ disability

### ■ Students with disabilities were disciplined for harassment or bullying on the bases of sex; race, color, or national origin; and disability at rates that were higher than their total student enrollment. (Figure 15)

- Students with disabilities served under IDEA represented 14% of total K-12 student enrollment yet accounted for 18% of students who were disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of sex, 16% of students disciplined on the basis of race/ethnicity, and 26% of students disciplined on the basis of disability.
- Students with disabilities served only under Section 504 represented 3% of total K-12 student enrollment, but accounted for 4% of students who were disciplined for harassment or bullying on the basis of sex and 4% of students disciplined on the basis of disability.

**Figure 15.** Percent of K-12 students disciplined for harassment or bullying in public schools, by basis and disability



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Offenses

### Preschool – grade 12 offenses in public schools

■ Public schools reported approximately 274,700 offenses. These reported offenses occurred in school buildings or during school-sponsored events.<sup>16</sup>

- Physical attack without a weapon and threats of physical attack without a weapon accounted for the majority of incidents—93%. (Figure 16)
- Public schools reported more than 3,000 incidents of rape or attempted rape and sexual assault (other than rape).

■ Approximately 180 public schools (less than 1%) reported at least one incident involving a school-related shooting, and about 100 public schools (less than 1%) reported a homicide of a student, faculty member, or staff member.

**Figure 16.** Number and percent of offenses in public schools, by offense type

Type of Incident	Number	Percentage
Physical attack without a weapon	214,800	78%
Threats of physical attack without a weapon	41,900	15%
Physical attack or fight with a weapon	5,300	2%
Threats of physical attack with a weapon	4,500	2%
Robbery without a weapon	3,000	1%
Sexual assault (other than rape)	2,700	1%
Possession of a firearm or explosive device	1,900	1%
Rape or attempted rape	350	<1%
Robbery with a weapon	220	<1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>274,670</b>	<b>100%</b>

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, released November 2023, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## ED Spotlight

### Initiatives to Address Sexual Violence and Harassment

ED’s [Best Practices Clearinghouse](#) and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education offer extensive training and other technical assistance for schools, districts, and the public on preventing and responding to sexual violence and harassment, including through the [National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#) and the [Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center](#). In May 2023, the Biden-Harris Administration released the first-ever [U.S. National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), which sets out a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to preventing and addressing gender-based violence in the United States. ED also co-leads the interagency Task Force on Sexual Violence in Education with the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services. As set out in the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022, the Task Force is responsible for making recommendations on preventing and responding to sexual violence in educational settings to the Secretary of Education, the Attorney General, Congress, educational institutions, and the public. ED also launched “Free to Learn” to galvanize state and local efforts to implement and sustain evidence-based practices and policies to support safe, positive school climates and prevent harassment. Resources are available on the Best Practice Clearinghouse and <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/free-learn>.

# Analytical Notes

**Data Exclusion:** The analyses in this report exclude schools that reported potentially erroneous data, as determined by OCR. For more information on the 2020-21 CRDC data quality efforts, review the User’s Manual available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

**Rounding:** The percentages listed are rounded to the nearest whole number. Student counts of 1,000,000 or greater are rounded to the nearest hundred thousand. Student counts of 1,000 or greater are rounded to the nearest hundred. Student counts of less than 1,000 are rounded to the nearest ten.

**Calculations:** Although rounded numbers are presented, all calculations are based on unrounded data. Percentage distributions may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

**Privacy Protections:** To prevent the identification of students in the 2020-21 CRDC, student counts in the public-use data file were privacy protected by making small, random adjustments to the data. This process is called perturbation. For more information on the 2020-21 privacy protection strategy, review the User’s Manual available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> For the first time, 100% of required data submitters submitted and certified data for the 2020-21 school year.
- <sup>2</sup> This report uses data from the public-use data file, which was released in November 2023. The public-use data file is available for download at [civilrightsdata.ed.gov](https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov).
- <sup>3</sup> For additional information about the differences between the CRDC and other ED data, please see, [Building Bridges: Increasing the Power of the CRDC Through Data Linking With an ID Crosswalk](#).
- <sup>4</sup> ED’s Common Core of Data (CCD) reported 49,374,751 as the total enrollment during the 2020-21 school year for prekindergarten through grade 13. For detail information see [Enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by level, grade, and state or jurisdiction: Fall 2020 \(ed.gov\)](#).
- <sup>5</sup> CRDC data submitters report student data using the seven racial/ethnic categories found in ED’s Final Guidance on Collecting, Maintaining and Reporting Data on Race and Ethnicity. The Final Guidance can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/rediguide/pdf/appendixA.pdf>. In this report, race, color, or national origin—as referenced in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964—is referred to as “race.”
- <sup>6</sup> In this report, Hispanic or Latino of any race is referred to as “Latino.”
- <sup>7</sup> The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, defines English learner as an individual:
  - (A) who is aged 3 through 21; (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary

school or secondary school; (C)(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; (ii)(I) who is a American Indian or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and (D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual— (i) the ability to meet the challenging State academic standards; (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

20 U.S.C. § 7801(20).

- <sup>8</sup> As used in this data report, the term “students with disabilities (IDEA)” refers to students who receive special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in ED’s Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) administers the IDEA. For information about the IDEA, please see <https://osepideasthatwork.org/> and [www.ed.gov/osers/osep/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/osers/osep/index.html).
- <sup>9</sup> “Section 504 only” students are students with disabilities who receive educational aids and services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, but not under IDEA.
- <sup>10</sup> Preschool enrollment includes children ages 3 through 5. Preschool enrollment also includes children who are 2 years of age who are allowed to enroll in preschool at the start of the school year because they would turn 3 years of age sometime during the school year. Preschool enrollment data do not distinguish between full-day or part-day preschool programs.
- <sup>11</sup> In the 2020-21 CRDC, a “referral to law enforcement” refers to an action by which a student is reported to any law enforcement agency or official, including a school police unit, for an incident that occurs on school grounds, during school-related events (in-person or virtual), or while taking school transportation, regardless of whether official action is taken. Citations, tickets, court referrals, and school-related arrests are considered referrals to law enforcement.
- <sup>12</sup> For the purposes of the 2020-21 CRDC, any school official or a school official’s designee may refer a student to law enforcement.
- <sup>13</sup> A “school-related arrest” refers to an arrest of a student for any activity conducted on school grounds, during off-campus school activities (in-person or virtual), while taking school transportation, or due to a referral by any school official. All school-related arrests are considered referrals to law enforcement.
- <sup>14</sup> Counts include allegations of harassment or bullying made to school employees.
- <sup>15</sup> Counts include reports of harassment or bullying made to school employees.
- <sup>16</sup> Definitions of the different offenses can be found on the survey form here: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2020-21-crdc-school-form.pdf>.

# Availability of Alternate Formats

Requests for documents in alternate formats such as Braille or large print should be submitted to the Alternate Format Center by calling 202.260.0852 or by contacting the Section 508 Coordinator via e-mail at [om\\_eeos@ed.gov](mailto:om_eeos@ed.gov).

## Notice to Limited-English-Proficient Persons

If you have difficulty understanding English, you may request language assistance services for ED information that is available to the public. These language assistance services are available free of charge. If you need more information about interpretation or translation services, then please call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1.800.872.5327) (TTY: 1.800.877.8339) or e-mail us at [ED.Language.Assistance@ed.gov](mailto:ED.Language.Assistance@ed.gov). You also can write to U.S. Department of Education, Information Resource Center, LBJ Education Building, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, DC, 20202.

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