

2.5 Determine Root Cause(s) Based on Data

Describe the identified Root Cause(s) of disproportionality and briefly reference the data that supports the root cause(s).

Note: Root causes of disproportionality include an intersection between beliefs and practices and should describe an identified LEA gap or deficiency that will be addressed by the LEA.

Root Cause	Describe the Data Source(s) that Supports the Root Cause
<p>Our district-wide MTSS system is in development and only partially implemented leading to the perception that Special Education is still a primary intervention tool for students struggling academically or behaviorally.</p>	<p><i>Annotated Checklist for Addressing Racial Disproportionality in Special Education (AKA: "The Wisconsin"):</i> Reflections completed using this tool describe the lack of district-wide processes in place that teachers are trained to use in order to engage students in pre-referrals and monitor progress of interventions due to the MTSS system still being in development.</p> <p><i>Racial/Ethnic Disproportionality in Special Education: Data Analysis Workbook (NYU, Dr. Edward Fergus and Roey Ahram):</i> Hispanic/Latino qualifying for Special Education services under the designation SLD (Specific Learning Disability) is significantly disproportionate. For example, nearly 71% of students qualified under SLD are Hispanic/Latino, compared to 3.5% of their Asian peers.</p> <p><i>Focus Group with Teachers:</i> The results of the focus group illustrated that there is a strong perception among teachers of students in the lower grades that seeking special education services is one of few avenues for helping struggling students regardless of disability status due to the real or perceived vacuum of support services available.</p>
<p>Implicit or explicit bias towards Hispanic/Latino students and a deficit-based approach to instruction for racialized or</p>	<p><i>Performance Trends Analysis:</i> Overall, MVWSD has seen an improvement in students' Math and Reading scores over time.</p>

<p>minoritized groups may lead to negative impact on academic achievement for those student groups</p>	<p>ELLs have made significant progress in both English and Math achievement indicators. That being said, gaps between student groups remain, especially for Hispanic/Latino students, SWD, ELLs, and students who are SED. This trend is consistently illustrated in all of our data including iReady, CAASPP, DRA, ELPAC, student attendance, and math placement data.</p> <p><i>Annotated Checklist for Addressing Racial Disproportionality in Special Education (AKA: "The Wisconsin"):</i> Reflections completed using this tool tell us that District administrators, teachers, and staff have all been trained in sensitivity to racial bias, but only in a limited capacity. To date, the district has not formally adopted nor implemented a set of culturally-responsive practices, though there are intentions to do that in the near future. The racial disparities in special education mirror similar disparities in rates of discipline, achievement, and placements in accelerated academic tracks.</p>
<p>Lack of understanding and alignment of ELD teaching practices and a deficit-based approach to EL instruction across the district may lead to negative impact on achievement for English Learners</p>	<p><i>Annotated Checklist for Addressing Racial Disproportionality in Special Education (AKA: "The Wisconsin"):</i></p> <p>The CCEIS leadership team recognized some trends related to instruction of ELL students at the school site level. After completing the inventory, it became clear that the English Language Development (ELD) instruction at school sites varied across the district in both quality and consistency. While all schools complied with the number of minutes and placement of ELLs, instructional practices and use of materials varied. This past summer, the entire district staff received training in teaching strategies for ELs (SIOP), but this training is recent and will not be reflected in the data referenced in this report.</p> <p>Given the prior training on racial implicit and explicit bias and our continued disproportionality, it is likely that student-facing staff may still be interacting with their Hispanic/Latino, EL, and SED students from a</p>

	<p>deficit mindset rather than from an asset-based approach which can contribute to lowered expectations for these groups and have a negative effect on academic achievement.</p> <p><i>Performance Trends Analysis:</i></p> <p>Gaps between student groups remain, especially for Hispanic/Latino students, SWD, ELLs, and students who are SED on standardized assessments. This trend is consistently illustrated in all of our data including iReady, CAASPP, and DRA. Student math placement data at the middle schools also reveals that English Learners are less likely to be enrolled in accelerated courses of study than their peers.</p> <p><i>English Learner population and trends, Dataquest:</i></p> <p>Among our students with disabilities, nearly one-third are also classified as English Learners. This composition has steadily decreased over the years from 40.2% in 2018-19 to 33.9% in 2020-21, though is still disproportionately high. This may suggest that EL-status could be a confounding variable during the pre-referral process of assessing struggling learners for special education testing and could ultimately be contributing to our significant disproportionality in SLD.</p>
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