

An Overview of WI Racial Equity Reports

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What We'll Learn

- **What racial disproportionality is and how it is calculated.**
 - **How to interpret the data visualizations and tables in the report.**
 - **Common detours in conversations about racial equity.**
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What is Racial Disproportionality?

- An annual evaluation by State Education Agencies (SEAs) required by federal law (20 USC. §1412(a)(11)(A)(i)).
 - Examines identification, placement, and discipline in special education by race/ethnicity.
 - Primarily an internal measure of the LEA, not a comparison to other LEAs
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State-Set Criteria

- Minimum numerator / cell: 10
- Minimum denominator / n: 30
- Risk ratio (RR) of 2.0 or greater
- Three consecutive years
- Waiver if RR reduced by 0.25 annually for last two years.

Calculating Risk

- A group's "risk" is the chance of an outcome compared to all other outcomes.
- Example: Identification with a disability among Black students.

Group Risk

$$\frac{\text{Black students with IEPs}}{\text{All Black students}}$$

Comparison Group Risk

$$\frac{\text{Non-Black students with IEPs}}{\text{All non-Black students}}$$

Calculating Standard Risk Ratio

- If the comparison group meets minimum cell / n size, the standard RR is used.
- An internal measure within the LEA
- The local group's risk is divided by the comparison group's risk.

Standard Risk Ratio

$$\frac{\textit{Local Black students' risk}}{\textit{Local Non-Black students' risk}}$$

Calculating Alternate Risk Ratio

- If the comparison group is below either the minimum cell or n size, the alternate RR is used.
- A comparison to statewide data
- The local group's risk is divided by the statewide comparison group's risk.

Alternate Risk Ratio

$$\frac{\textit{Local Black students' risk}}{\textit{Statewide Non-Black students' risk}}$$

Calculating Risk Ratio Example

Group Code	Race	Group Count	Base Count	Group Risk	Comparison Group Risk	Risk Ratio	Met Cell
SwIEPs	A	0	10	0	0.1342	0	FALSE
SwIEPs	B	50	200	0.25	0.1072	2.33	TRUE
SwIEPs	H	10	50	0.2	0.1299	1.54	TRUE
SwIEPs	I	3	20	0.15	0.1327	1.13	FALSE
SwIEPs	P	1	5	0.2	0.1327	1.51	FALSE
SwIEPs	T	3	20	0.15	0.1327	1.13	FALSE
SwIEPs	W	80	800	0.1	0.2197	0.46	TRUE

How to Access the Reports

- Secure Access File Exchange (SAFE) accessed through WAMS.
- Contain unredacted, sensitive data.
- Never email; store on a secure shared drive if necessary.
- Access is governed by LEA's security administrator

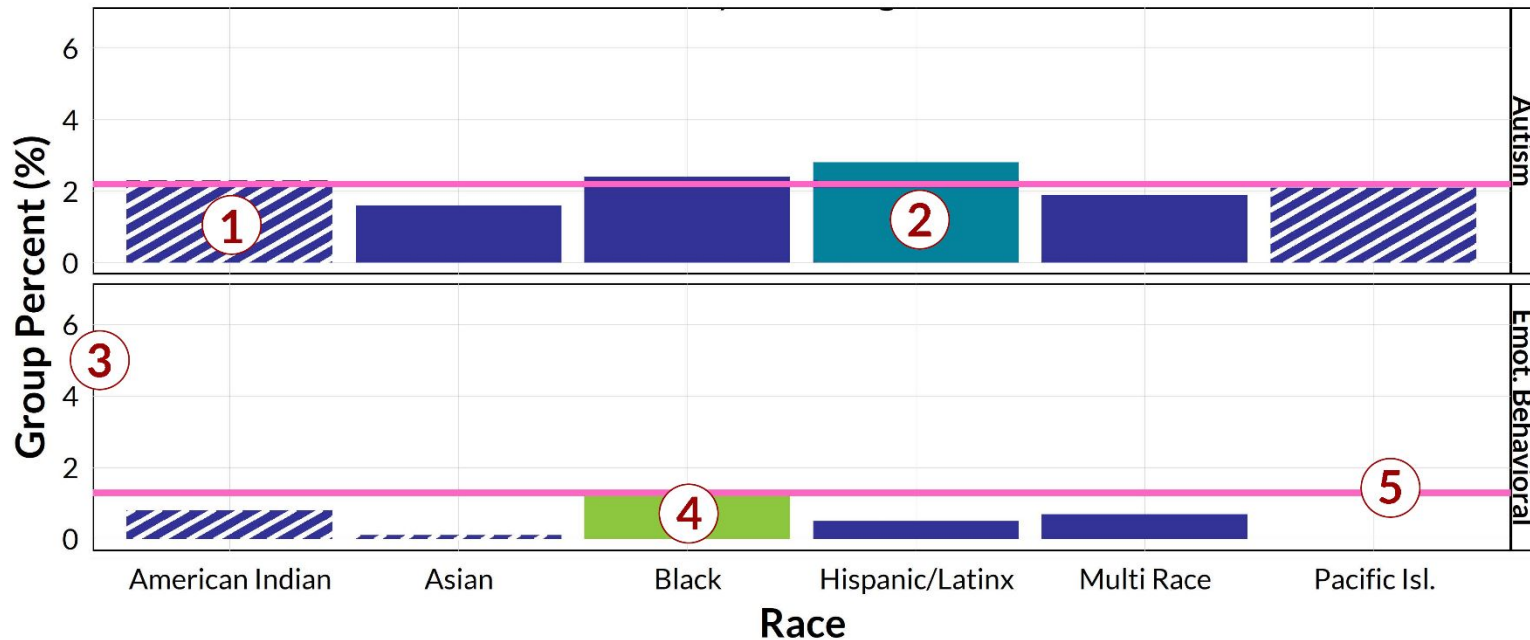
The screenshot displays the SAFE web application interface. At the top, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction logo is on the left, and the SAFE logo is on the right. A navigation bar below the logos contains links for SAFE Home, WISEhome, File Update Timeline, Data Disclaimer, and File Analysis. The user is identified as Seth Bishop, with a sign-out option.

The main content area features three report cards, each with a 'No Access Permissions' message and a 'Request Access' link. The 'Joint Federal Notification Packet (ESSA/IDEA)' report card is expanded to show data for three years:

Year	Districts	Schools
2022-23	451 districts	2,098 schools
2021-22	449 districts	2,104 schools
2020-21	429 districts	140 schools

Interpreting the Visualizations

Visualization Example



Finding



Dispro



Progress Waiver



Not Dispro

MetCell



FALSE



TRUE

Horizontal line indicates statewide mean

Interpreting the Tables (1/2)

Table 3: Racial Disproportionality in Specific Categories


Group	Race	Years (Count)		Risk Ratio		
		Met Cell Size	Made Progress	2022	2023	2024
Emot. Behavioral	Asian	0	0	0.1098	0.0963	0
	Black	3	0	2.4506	2.467	2.4301
	Hispanic/Latinx	3	0	0.5306	0.5754	0.5523
	American Indian	0	2	1.2106	0.894	0.5849
	Pacific Isl.	0	0	0	0	0
	Multi Race	3	0	0.7507	0.6055	0.9499

Interpreting the Tables (2/2)


Table 5: Racial Disproportionality in Special Ed. - Discipline

Group	Race	Years (Count)		Risk Ratio		
		Met Cell Size	Made Progress	2021	2022	2023
All Removals	Asian	2	0	0	0.1327	0.2385
	Black	2	0	0.0061	2.4993	2.3935
	Hispanic/Latinx	2	0	0	0.4725	0.4673
	American Indian	1	1	0	1.1294	0.649
	Pacific Isl.	0	0	0	0	0.5052
	Multi Race	2	0	0	1.0287	1.0954

Significant Discrepancy in Discipline

- Separate federal requirement with its own methodology
 - Risk *rate*, not risk *ratio*
 - Max 2 years of data
 - Minimum n of 30, no minimum cell
 - Fewer requirements
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Detours from Racial Equity

- **Discussing racial inequities can be uncomfortable.**
 - **Easy to get sidetracked.**
 - **Three common 'detours' crop up in these conversations.**
 - **Be prepared to identify them as such, and right the conversation.**
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Detours: Statistical Sophistry

- Blaming small cell sizes or cherry-picking alternate methodologies / calculations as evidence that there isn't a problem.

Example of the detour: “Racial disparities may appear high in our district, but that is because we have so few students. A single student of color drastically changes our numbers.”

Why is this a detour?

- Wisconsin currently uses the highest minimum cell/n sizes allowed by federal guidelines (10 / 30).
- A single year of data may be an aberration, but the same finding across multiple years is a pattern.
- Wisconsin currently uses the maximum number of years allowed by federal guidelines (3).



Detours: Correlated Causes

- Claiming that an observed racial inequity is the result of other factors, not race.

Example of the detour: “Positive outcomes for Black student are low because of the higher rate of poverty in Black communities, not because of racial inequities.”

Why is this a detour?

- Acknowledging race’s effect does not mean that other variables are irrelevant.
- Racial inequities consistently have the most pronounced effect on student achievement.
 - *Example:* non-economically disadvantaged Black students have slightly lower ELA and math proficiency rates than economically disadvantaged white students.



Detours: Passing the Buck

- Shifting responsibility or blaming another source for an observed inequity.

Example of the detour: “These inequities aren’t our fault, it’s the fault of the [student’s family / previous school / student / etc.]”

Why is this a detour?

- It doesn’t matter whose ‘fault’ it is. Our obligation to address it remains.
- Accept the things you cannot change and focus on implementing strategies and solutions that can improve students’ achievement and opportunities.



Questions?

