



**Columbia Heights Public Schools  
Semi-Annual Discipline Report  
October 1, 2020**

# Summary of Settlement Agreement

Columbia Heights Public School District entered into a settlement agreement with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights on May 22, 2018. This report consists of two sections:

- Progress toward Intended Outcomes as defined in the five strategies
- Appendices
  - Appendix A: Provides additional information and evidence for the Metrics listed in each strategy
  - Appendix B: Suspension data for January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020

The Columbia Heights Public Schools signed the agreement in 2018 and began to implement the five strategies. Every year, the district has continued to scale up its implementation and maintenance of newly adopted practices to make equity visible in our work.

The district has engaged various teams across various departments to ensure that students are served well. The first three strategies have been met fully. Strategy #4 and #5 outcomes are in progress because they require a consistent review of data and dialogue across teams. The results we are observing are showing progress for our district schools.

This report includes data and metrics from January 1 to June 30, 2020.

## Section One: Strategies

- Intended outcomes
- Specific steps the district took to implement the strategy
- Metrics the District developed to measure the effectiveness of the strategy
- Any changes implemented in light of results in the reporting period.

### Columbia Heights Public Schools Strategic Discipline Plan

Goal: To reduce disproportionalities of student suspensions.

Strategy	Progress
Revise District Student Behavior Handbook on Rights and Responsibilities	<b>Outcome met.</b> Every year the district updates the student handbook based on feedback from various stakeholders.
Establish a District Discipline Assessment Team	<b>Outcome met.</b> Every year the District Discipline Assessment team continue to meet and review data and discuss strategies.
Explore possibilities of and funding for a District Discipline Supervisor	<b>Outcome met.</b> The superintendent works with the finance department to support this position.
Provide and/or Expand Professional Development Opportunities for School Personnel in the Area of Cultural Competency.	<b>Ongoing.</b> The district continues to meet its commitment to provide ongoing professional development for staff to promote equitable practices and instruction.
Obtain Qualitative Engagement Data and Input from Parents, Students and Teachers on issues Related to Discipline	<b>Outcome in progress.</b> The teams continue to review data, learn and change practices that support all students in equitably.

**Strategy 1: Revise District Student Behavior Handbook on Rights and Responsibilities**

Intended Outcome	Steps	Metrics January to June 2020
<p>To have a comprehensive, E-12 Student Behavior Handbook to be used across all Columbia Heights Public Schools.</p> <p><b>Outcome met.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● A revision committee was formed and met on June 11, 2018 and June 21, 2018.</li><li>● A draft of the handbook was shared with the School Board on 8/8/18</li><li>● The input was used to make final revisions and the final draft was approved on 8/21/18.</li><li>● Training was provided to all district and school level administration on 8/15/2018.</li><li>● Train staff on handbook during the week of 8/27/2018.</li><li>● Handbook distribution to families took place in Fall 2018 and 2019 and the handbook was posted to the district website.</li><li>● Handbook continued to be used during distance learning due to COVID19</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Columbia Heights Public Schools Handbook found online at <a href="https://bit.ly/2n2clUi">https://bit.ly/2n2clUi</a></li></ul>

Strategy 2: <b>Establish a District Discipline Assessment Team</b>		
Intended Outcome	Steps	Metrics January to June 2020
<p>To understand and reduce disproportionalities of student suspensions in order to maintain a safe and orderly educational environment.</p> <p><b>Outcome met.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish a District-wide Admin Discipline Assessment Team to work in conjunction with School Leadership Teams</li> <li>● The District-wide Admin Discipline Assessment Team will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ review and analyze monthly suspension data</li> <li>○ review reports from school Leadership Teams</li> <li>○ engage in PLC discussions around suspension data disaggregated by race, ethnicity and disability</li> <li>○ review DIRS reporting process and discuss subjectivity/objectivity of DIRS categories that lead to suspension such as bullying, harassment, disruptive/disorderly conduct/insubordination and other.</li> <li>○ be responsible for the semi-annual reports to MDHR</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● District-wide Admin Discipline Assessment Team membership list &amp; presentations are listed in Appendix A</li> <li>● Monthly suspension data was reviewed by the DDAT</li> <li>● Semi-annual reports is prepared using data reviewed by the DDAT</li> </ul>

Strategy 3: Explore possibilities of and funding for a District Discipline Supervisor		
Intended Outcome	Steps	Metrics January to June 2020
<p>Determine if the position of Discipline Supervisor is financially feasible and sustainable for the district, or if the oversight of this position can be embedded within the job descriptions of existing positions in the district.</p> <p><b>Outcome Met.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review district budget constraints for Fiscal Year 2019.</li> <li>● Study the future sustainability of the position of Discipline Supervisor.</li> <li>● Explore a possible job description for the position of Discipline Supervisor.</li> <li>● Explore already existing job descriptions within the district in which these responsibilities may be embedded.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See previous reports for employment letter of verification</li> <li>● The district continue to fund this position to support discipline strategies.</li> </ul>

**Strategy 4: Provide and/or Expand Professional Development Opportunities for School Personnel in the Area of Cultural Competency.**

Intended Outcome	Steps	Metrics January to June 2020
<p>Deepen staff understanding for applying culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate strategies.</p> <p><b>Outcome Ongoing.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore and/or extend collaborative partnerships with MDE and other outside agencies to provide professional development</li> <li>● Provide professional development on Restorative Practices that may include, but are not limited to, age appropriate responses to behavior, de-escalation techniques, trauma-informed practices, equitable learning environment and implicit bias</li> <li>● Provide professional development on the Social Emotional Competencies as prescribed by the MN Department of Education</li> <li>● Provide targeted professional development for remedial measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See appendix A for presentations titles and various professional development offered to district staff from January to June 2020</li> </ul>

**Strategy 5: Obtain Qualitative Engagement Data and Input from Parents, Students and Teachers on issues Related to Discipline**

Intended Outcome	Steps	Metrics January to June 2020
<p>To obtain and consider information from stakeholders involving discipline to refine discipline practices.</p> <p><b>Outcome in Progress.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School climate surveys for parents, students and staff</li> <li>● Timely communication and input from families regarding discipline</li> <li>● Obtain input from district committees and focus groups including, but not limited to, World's Best Workforce, American Indian Parent Advisory Committee, Community Education Advisory Committee, the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee, Responsive Classroom Leadership Team, Student Assistance Team, Student WEB and Link Crew Leaders</li> <li>● Obtain input from Peer Reviewers on targeted remediation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The collection of data and engagement of various stakeholders group continue to happen when the identified groups meet according to the schools' event calendar. Each group is asked to provide feedback for the district to revise or implement equitable practices.</li> <li>● Due to COVID19 the district was limited in the data collection with some stakeholders.</li> </ul>



## Summary of Progress

Over the past three years Columbia Heights Public Schools has seen more than a sixty-five percent decrease in the total number of out-of-school suspensions. During the period of January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020 we have observed a decrease compared to the first semiannual report submitted on March 1, 2020. During COVID19 the district did not suspend any student. Multiple factors contributed to this decrease. New practices and the metrics used to help measure their success can be seen in previous reports submitted to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, and include,

- Monthly District Discipline Assessment Team meetings to analyze data and problem solve on a district level
- Employment of a Discipline Supervisor to help track suspensions and data
- Publication of a common PreK-12 student handbook to help align practices district wide
- Professional development on culturally relevant practices and restorative practices.
- Progress update to the monthly E-12 district meeting.

While we are, and will continuously be, focused on further reducing the number of suspensions across the district, our District Discipline Assessment Team, comprised of stakeholders from all buildings and departments, has largely turned our focus to continuing to reduce the disproportionalities of suspensions among racial and ethnic groups and different educational settings. We are working to accomplish the goal of erasing our disproportionalities by following the steps outlined in our settlement agreement with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights. There are a few strategies that we have found to be very useful, both anecdotally and quantitatively as supported by our behavior data. A few of these strategies are,

- Implementation of the Innocent Classrooms curriculum at Highland Elementary with the hopes to expand the program to more buildings in the future.
- Working with the Director of Special Education to find therapists who speak the home language of some of our most vulnerable students.
- Strengthening our partnership with Lee Carlson Center for Mental Health & Well Being to provide mental health services directly to students in their school building.
- A strong focus on providing professional development on trauma informed practices to best support all students and to better understand that each student comes to us with a lifetime of their own lived experiences that we must honor and recognize.
- Professional Development on the prevalence of racial bias in schools and how it impacts students of color.

Although we have seen some success in reducing the number of out of school suspensions however, we know that we have work to do to reduce the disproportionalities of our suspensions. This is work that we are committed to seeing through until we have solved the problem and fully achieved our mission of creating worlds of opportunity for each and every learner.

## **Section 2: Appendices**

Appendix A:

- CHPS Report Metrics

Appendix B

- Suspension Data from January 2019 through June 2019 is attached in the Metrics Section and includes the following student information:
  - Date
  - Race, ethnicity, national origin
  - Gender
  - SPED Y/N
  - Reason for suspension
  - Length of suspension

**Appendix A:  
Columbia Heights Public School  
Semi-Annual Discipline Report Metrics  
January 2020–June 2020**

## Looking Forward: Strategy Five

**Strategy 5:** Obtain Qualitative Engagement Data and Input from Parents, Students, and Teachers on Issues Related to Discipline

This year our District Discipline Assessment Team has been reading and discussing the book *Coaching Conversations: Transforming Your School One Conversation at a Time* by Linda M. Cross Cheliotis and Marceta F. Reilly. We have used the *Coaching Conversations* framework as a lens to analyze our conversations about discipline with students, staff, and parents.

During the second half of the year, the District Discipline Assessment Team met with the American Indian Parent Advisory group to discuss the daily experiences of students in the Columbia Heights Public Schools. The group discussed 1) reducing the amount of time students are removed from class because of disciplinary practice and 2) reducing the disproportionalities (race, gender and education setting) in who is removed from class. The DDAT will take the feedback and share with building principals and their teams to reflect and make the necessary changes to support students.

The district conducted the climate survey and shared the results with the school board, administrators and staff who oversee students programs. The climate survey is administered to staff, parent and students to ensure we collect feedback from a wide audience.

Due to the pandemic the additional meetings listed below did not take place. We are planning to have these meetings in the fall.

- Meeting with the Special Education Advisory Committee
- Hosting meetings in individual buildings to obtain parent and teacher feedback

**Appendix B:  
Columbia Heights Public Schools  
Suspension Data  
January 2020 - June 2020**

Student Name	Gender	Grade	Incident		Disposition	Disposition		Race/Ethnicity	Instructional Setting	
			Role	Date		Violation	Start Date			End Date
Student 1	Male	8	Offender	1/2/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/3/2020	1/7/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 2	Male	8	Offender	1/2/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/3/2020	1/7/2020	Two or More	1
Student 3	Male	5	Offender	1/8/2020	Assault	OSS	1/9/2020	1/9/2020	Black or African American	2
Student 4	Male	9	Offender	1/9/2020	Theft	OSS	1/9/2020	1/14/2020	Hispanic	0
Student 5	Male	2	Offender	1/10/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/13/2020	1/13/2020	Black or African American	1
Student 6	Male	7	Offender	1/13/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/14/2020	1/17/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 7	Female	7	Offender	1/13/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/14/2020	1/17/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 8	Female	6	Offender	1/16/2020	Theft	OSS	1/17/2020	1/17/2020	Black or African American	1
Student 9	Male	8	Offender	1/17/2020	Weapon	OSS	1/23/2020	1/29/2020	Two or More	0
Student 10	Male	4	Offender	1/23/2020	Harassment	OSS	1/24/2020	1/24/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 11	Male	7	Offender	1/24/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/27/2020	1/27/2020	White	0
Student 12	Male	7	Offender	1/24/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/27/2020	1/27/2020	Hispanic	1
Student 13	Male	2	Offender	1/27/2020	Assault	OSS	1/28/2020	1/29/2020	Two or More	0
Student 14	Male	2	Offender	1/29/2020	Assault	OSS	1/29/2020	1/29/2020	White	0
Student 15	Female	7	Offender	1/29/2020	Assault	OSS	1/29/2020	1/31/2020	Black or African American	3
Student 16	Female	8	Offender	1/30/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/31/2020	2/6/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 17	Female	8	Offender	1/30/2020	Fighting	OSS	1/31/2020	2/6/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 18	Male	1	Offender	2/3/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/3/2020	2/4/2020	Two or More	1
Student 19	Female	7	Offender	2/3/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/3/2020	2/7/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 20	Female	7	Offender	2/3/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/3/2020	2/7/2020	Hispanic	0
Student 21	Male	1	Offender	2/5/2020	Assault	OSS	2/6/2020	2/7/2020	Two or More	1
Student 22	Male	9	Offender	2/5/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/5/2020	2/7/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 23	Male	2	Offender	2/6/2020	Terroristic Threat	OSS	2/6/2020	2/7/2020	Black or African American	1
Student 24	Male	2	Offender	2/10/2020	Assault	OSS	2/11/2020	2/12/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 25	Female	8	Offender	2/12/2020	Assault	OSS	2/13/2020	2/20/2020	White	3
Student 26	Male	9	Offender	2/12/2020	Weapon	OSS	2/13/2020	2/19/2020	Black or African American	8
Student 27	Male	9	Offender	2/12/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/13/2020	2/14/2020	Black or African American	2
Student 28	Female	10	Offender	2/14/2020	Illegal Drugs	OSS	2/19/2020	2/21/2020	White	0
Student 29	Female	10	Offender	2/14/2020	Illegal Drugs	OSS	2/19/2020	2/21/2020	White	0
Student 30	Male	6	Offender	2/18/2020	Threat/Intimidation	OSS	2/19/2020	2/21/2020	Black or African American	1
Student 31	Male	7	Offender	2/19/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/20/2020	2/26/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 32	Male	8	Offender	2/20/2020	Other	OSS	2/21/2020	2/27/2020	Black or African American	3
Student 33	Male	2	Offender	2/21/2020	Assault	OSS	2/24/2020	2/24/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 34	Male	7	Offender	2/24/2020	Weapon	OSS	2/25/2020	3/2/2020	American Indian or Alaska Native	0
Student 35	Male	7	Offender	2/26/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/28/2020	3/3/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 36	Male	7	Offender	2/26/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/27/2020	3/2/2020	Black or African American	2
Student 37	Male	7	Offender	2/26/2020	Fighting	OSS	2/27/2020	3/4/2020	White	0
Student 38	Female	4	Offender	3/2/2020	Bullying	OSS	3/2/2020	3/3/2020	Two or More	0
Student 39	Female	6	Offender	3/4/2020	Fighting	OSS	3/5/2020	3/6/2020	Black or African American	2
Student 40	Male	3	Offender	3/5/2020	Assault	OSS	3/5/2020	3/5/2020	Hispanic	0
Student 41	Male	6	Offender	3/5/2020	Fighting	OSS	3/5/2020	3/6/2020	Black or African American	3
Student 42	Male	7	Offender	3/5/2020	Fighting	OSS	3/9/2020	3/11/2020	Black or African American	0
Student 43	Female	9	Offender	3/6/2020	Fighting	OSS	3/11/2020	3/13/2020	Hispanic	0
Student 44	Male	8	Offender	3/10/2020	Robbery (using force)	OSS	3/11/2020	3/17/2020	Black or African American	3

Student 45 Male

12 Offender 3/12/2020 Illegal Drugs OSS

3/13/2020 3/17/2020 White

0