

Civil Rights Data Collection Detailed Methodology (2024)

OCTOBER 8, 2024

This year's briefs are the fifth time CLE has analyzed data from the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC).

COLLECTED BIANNUALLY SINCE 1968, the CRDC represents the U.S. Department of Education's most substantial effort to understand data related to students' educational opportunities throughout K-12 schooling, particularly for historically marginalized student populations. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department delayed planned data collection in the 2019-20 school year to the 2020-21 school year and released that data in November 2023.

CLE's briefs use CRDC data to understand the overall state of access and opportunity for students with disabilities in both traditional public and in charter schools. This report describes the methodological decisions necessary to produce the findings across the six briefs, particularly decisions made on variable use, data cleaning, and how to report findings.

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Data Cleaning

The 2020–21 CRDC collected information from 97,575 schools. Of these schools, 7,653 were identified as charter schools. However, schools may have data missing from the final report (coded with a “-5” or “-6”), or have data suppressed for privacy reasons (coded with a “-11”). These values were cleaned from the data. Additionally, some schools were misclassified as charter schools in the data set. A school’s charter identification was considered incorrect if the school was reported as a charter school in a state without charter school legislation in 2020–21. Seven states (Kentucky, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia) did not have charter schools or charter school legislation as of the 2020–21 school year.¹

Six steps were used to clean the data to remove these schools:

STEP 1

First, we checked for schools where the total enrollment of males and females were missing; CRDC reports student populations separated into “males” and “females” rather than a single total. No schools were removed as the data for these variables was present. The CRDC variable names used in this step were:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F

STEP 2

Next, we reclassified two schools where schools were identified as charter schools in states without charter school laws or operational charter schools. Nebraska and West Virginia reported one school each as a charter. These schools were re-categorized as non-charter schools. The CRDC variable names used in this step were:

- LEA_STATE
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER

STEP 3

Next, we checked for schools with missing values (-5 or -6) on variables related to school sector. No schools were re-categorized. The CRDC variable names used in this step were:

- SCH_STATUS_SPED
- SCH_STATUS_MAGNET
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- SCH_STATUS_ALT

STEP 4

Next, we removed schools where the total enrollment of males and females, the total enrollment under IDEA of males and females, and the total enrollment under Section 504 of males and females were suppressed. 1,368 schools were removed. The CRDC variable names used in this step were:

- TOT_ENR_F
- TOT_ENR_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_ENR_504_M
- SCH_ENR_504_F

STEP 5

Next, we checked for schools that reported having more students with disabilities than the total number of students. No schools were removed at this step. The CRDC variable names used in this step were:

- TOT_ENR_F
- TOT_ENR_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F

STEP 6

Finally, removed 841 schools that reported their LEA state as Puerto Rico. The CRDC variable name used in this step was the following: LEA_STATE_NAME.

¹ Kentucky enacted charter laws in 2017, but the state did not have any active charter schools in 2020–21. Retrieved from: <https://publiccharters.org/charter-school-state-resources/kentucky/>

Table 1 describes the schools from the 2020–21 CRDC that were included in the final sample by school sector. **Table 2** details the total number of schools that were re-categorized or removed from the sample.

Table 1: Schools from the 2020–21 CRDC Included in Sample by School Sector

School Sector	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Traditional Public Schools	87,798	92.10%
Charter	7,568	7.90%
Alternative	2,829	3.00%
Magnet	4,040	4.20%
Special Education	1,842	1.90%

Table 2: Total Number of School Re-Categorized or Removed in Steps 1-5

Steps	Number of Schools Re-Categorized	Number of Schools Removed from the Sample
Step 1	-	0
Step 2	2	-
Step 3	0	-
Step 4	-	1,368
Step 5	-	0
Step 6	-	841
Total	2	2,209

After cleaning all the data, 95,366 schools were included. Of those schools, 7,568 were charters and 87,798 were traditional public schools. **Table 3** below details the summary statistics for schools included in the sample by sector. Because the CRDC reports total enrollment variables by gender, the gender counts were aggregated to create the total enrollment. This method is also applied to all other variables where counts are disaggregated by gender.

Table 3: Summary Statistics of Total Enrollment by School Sector

Statistics	All Schools in Analysis	Charter Schools in Analysis	Traditional Public Schools in Analysis
Number of Schools	95,366	7,568	87,798
Average Enrollment of Students	525.0	439.1	531.7
Median Enrollment of Students	414	352	418
Total Enrollment of Students	48,264,140	3,639,923	44,624,217
Standard Deviation of Enrollment	465.5	682.2	441.8

In one state (Iowa), the population of students with disabilities in charter schools was between 1 and 10 students. While this data is available publicly, we believe our targeted analysis and its audience introduce unique concerns around the identifiability of these students. Following best practices articulated by the U.S. Department of Education Privacy Technical Assistance Center,² we have suppressed this value from relevant state-level analyses across the six briefs to limit student identifiability.

Table 4 below shows the total enrollment of all students and students with disabilities eligible for services under IDEA by sector and state. **Table 5** below shows the total enrollment of all students and students eligible for services under Section 504 by sector and state.

Table 4: Total IDEA Enrollment by State and School Type

State	Traditional Public Schools			Charter Schools		
	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs
Alabama	1,321	687,215	102,910	5	1,926	194
Alaska	453	102,056	14,732	29	7,770	795
Arizona	1,478	862,022	115,596	527	224,658	21,198
Arkansas	972	436,114	57,573	86	42,140	4,642
California	8,812	5,250,326	668,988	1,275	677,229	76,785
Colorado	1,661	749,846	94,578	262	131,647	9,852
Connecticut	1,151	495,181	78,201	21	10,897	1,118
Delaware	208	122,394	21,525	24	16,793	1,722
District Of Columbia	118	49,375	7,661	121	39,692	6,531

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² Privacy Technical Assistance Center. (2012). Data De-identification: An Overview of Basic Terms. U.S. Department of Education. <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/data-de-identification-overview-basic-terms>

State	Traditional Public Schools			Charter Schools		
	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs
Florida	3,290	2,396,676	363,863	679	339,691	33,430
Georgia	2,268	1,628,266	210,738	115	85,514	8,929
Hawaii	189	90,820	10,322	31	7,878	682
Idaho	682	278,957	32,208	66	29,147	2,251
Illinois	4,001	1,784,476	255,167	137	62,775	9,275
Indiana	1,735	971,235	143,494	113	49,527	6,865
Iowa	1,296	490,677	61,647	2	123	*
Kansas	1,322	467,241	71,150	8	1,828	278
Kentucky	1,394	657,099	102,953	-	-	-
Louisiana	1,193	592,348	73,655	144	87,963	10,647
Maine	555	164,485	30,727	13	2,665	530
Maryland	1,357	857,420	99,662	48	24,103	2,668
Massachusetts	1,757	852,900	155,177	90	51,175	8,362
Michigan	2,974	1,211,535	168,372	360	150,203	15,635
Minnesota	1,977	812,326	131,865	242	64,774	9,567
Mississippi	916	437,291	58,467	7	2,655	98
Missouri	2,269	864,308	119,630	70	22,801	2,216
Montana	812	142,079	17,814	-	-	-
Nebraska	1,045	322,727	50,702	-	-	-
Nevada	636	411,773	53,742	90	61,602	6,268
New Hampshire	457	163,735	27,813	35	4,702	568
New Jersey	2,433	1,273,445	208,291	98	58,507	6,050
New Mexico	771	280,158	47,000	96	29,647	4,361
New York	4,465	2,319,600	417,750	339	168,178	26,192
North Carolina	2,481	1,389,536	170,732	198	125,674	12,711
North Dakota	477	118,115	16,762	-	-	-
Ohio	3,156	1,537,705	237,427	322	119,811	18,356
Oklahoma	1,706	592,619	99,049	58	76,639	8,889
Oregon	1,169	497,838	71,076	130	47,532	5,414
Pennsylvania	2,733	1,514,787	264,910	179	168,536	32,731
Rhode Island	269	126,754	19,582	34	9,712	1,252
South Carolina	1,164	715,940	97,895	81	47,587	4,913
South Dakota	692	138,974	19,802	-	-	-
Tennessee	1,706	926,526	117,250	114	43,726	4,130
Texas	7,710	4,742,312	546,240	928	408,863	33,467

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State	Traditional Public Schools			Charter Schools		
	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs
Utah	920	591,635	74,167	136	79,791	11,950
Vermont	298	78,255	13,782	-	-	-
Virginia	1,972	1,233,913	169,115	7	1,265	186
Washington	2,385	1,077,709	145,223	12	3,670	513
West Virginia	678	253,715	45,213	-	-	-
Wisconsin	1,958	767,921	112,510	231	48,299	5,779
Wyoming	356	93,857	13,521	5	608	76

Values referring to between 1 and 10 students are shown as "*" to limit student identifiability

Table 5: Total 504 Enrollment by State and School Type

State	Traditional Public Schools			Charter Schools		
	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	Total Enrollment of SWDs
Alabama	1,321	687,215	102,910	5	1,926	194
Alaska	453	102,056	14,732	29	7,770	795
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Indiana	1,735	971,235	143,494	113	49,527	6,865
Iowa	1,296	490,677	61,647	2	123	*
Kansas	1,322	467,241	71,150	8	1,828	278
Kentucky	1,394	657,099	102,953	-	-	-

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Maryland	1,357	857,420	99,662	48	24,103	2,668
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Nevada	636	411,773	53,742	90	61,602	6,268
New Hampshire	457	163,735	27,813	35	4,702	568
New Jersey	2,433	1,273,445	208,291	98	58,507	6,050
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New York	4,465	2,319,600	417,750	339	168,178	26,192
North Carolina	2,481	1,389,536	170,732	198	125,674	12,711
North Dakota	477	118,115	16,762	-	-	-
Ohio	3,156	1,537,705	237,427	322	119,811	18,356
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Values referring to between 1 and 10 students are shown as “*” to limit student identifiability.

Grade Heuristic

To distinguish high schools from non-high schools, we used a five part heuristic based on grade level variables:

- 1 The school characteristics files for each of the CRDCs from 2010 to 2021 were cleaned, so that all of the datasets had the same column layouts.
- 2 The numerical identifiers for school grades in the 2010 and 2012 CRDCs were converted into a binary “Yes”/”No” variable in order to match the data format of the 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2021 CRDCs.
- 3 The cleaned and renumbered school characteristics datasets were aggregated into a single file in preparation for the calculation of the grade heuristic.
- 4 For each pair of binary school grade identifiers, a numerical value was assigned to the school if it served a given grade.
 - SCH_GRADE_PS = -1
 - SCH_GRADE_KG = 0
 - SCH_GRADE_G01 = 1
 - SCH_GRADE_G02 = 2
 - SCH_GRADE_G03 = 3
 - SCH_GRADE_G04 = 4
 - SCH_GRADE_G05 = 5
 - SCH_GRADE_G06 = 6
 - SCH_GRADE_G07 = 7
 - SCH_GRADE_G08 = 8
 - SCH_GRADE_G09 = 9
 - SCH_GRADE_G10 = 10
 - SCH_GRADE_G11 = 11
 - SCH_GRADE_G12 = 12
- 5 The numerical values generated in Step 4 were used to find the maximum and minimum grades served in each school. Schools with a minimum grade greater than 5 and a maximum grade greater than 8 were classified as high schools, while all other schools were classified as non-high schools.

These cut-off points were selected in order to maximize the number of schools serving grades 9 through 12 in the dataset, while ensuring that schools serving K through 5 students were not classified as high schools. This list of schools was then merged with the clean list of schools generated from the data cleaning process, and any schools with a grade heuristic that did not match the clean list were dropped from the analysis.



Table 6: Schools Counts from the Grade Heuristic

CRDC Data Year	Count of Non-High Schools	Count of High Schools
2010	57,214	14,954
2012	73,381	22,254
2014	73,151	22,356
2016	73,819	22,541
2018	74,837	22,795
2021	74,884	22,691

Total school counts in the 2010 CRDC were noticeably lower across all school categories compared to the following years.

Charter LEA Status

Several analyses across the briefs differentiate charter schools based on their legal status. Charter schools can either be categorized as an independent entity serving as their own LEA or part of another LEA. Since the CRDC does not contain any information pertaining to the charter legal status for a school, the 2020–21 CCD Local Education Agency Universe file and the agency charter status collected using the National Center for Education Statistics’ Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSi) were used to determine a charter school’s legal status.

The following variables were used to determine charter LEA status:

- Education Agency Type Code (LEA_TYPE):
 - Regular public school district that is not a component of a supervisory union
 - Regular public school district that is a component of a supervisory union
 - Supervisory union administrative center
 - Service agency
 - State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Independent charter district
 - Other education agency
 - Specialized public school district

- LEA Charter School Status for Federal Programs (CHARTER_LEA_TEXT):
 - LEA for ESEA and Perkins
 - LEA for federal programs
 - LEA for IDEA
 - Not LEA for federal programs
 - Not a charter district
 - Not applicable
- Agency Charter Code:
 - 1 – All associated schools are charter schools
 - 2 – All associated schools are charter and non-charter
 - 3 – All associated schools are non-charter
 - † – Data are not applicable

A charter school was considered to be its own LEA if the following were reported:

- 1** An “Education Agency Type Code” of 7 (Independent charter district),
- 2** An “LEA Charter Status” of “LEA for ESEA and Perkins,” “LEA for IDEA,” or “LEA for federal programs,” and
- 3** An “Agency Charter Code” of “1 – All associated schools are charter schools.”

Conversely, all charter schools in Connecticut and New Hampshire, and charter schools with their reported LEA city as New York, New York were considered part of an LEA for this analysis.

Since the CRDC differs in its definitions and reporting from CCD and NCES, some schools in the CRDC were not found in the CCD or NCES. This resulted in an inability to determine the charter legal status for 1,284 charter schools—981 located in California, and 303 across 28 other states. The charter LEA status of this subset of schools was determined manually by CLE staff and consultants. Schools located in California were manually classified by reviewing SELPA Local Plans for 2020–21 and by looking at charters that are locally funded or authorized by the County Office of Education or the State Board of Education.

Of the 7,568 charter schools included in this analysis, 4474 (59.1%) were classified as their own LEA, while 3,094 (40.9%) were considered to be part of an LEA. **Table 7** details the number of schools by charter legal status and state.

Table 7: Number of Schools by Charter Legal Status and State

State	Part of LEA	Own LEA	Total
Alabama	0	5	5
Alaska	29	0	29
Arizona	38	489	527
Arkansas	31	55	86
California	688	587	1,275
Colorado	219	43	262
Connecticut	21	0	21
Delaware	0	24	24
District Of Columbia	4	117	121
Florida	679	0	679
Georgia	77	38	115
Hawaii	31	0	31
Idaho	8	58	66
Illinois	125	12	137
Indiana	0	113	113
Iowa	2	0	2
Kansas	8	0	8
Louisiana	35	109	144
Maine	0	13	13
Maryland	48	0	48
Massachusetts	6	84	90
Michigan	0	360	360
Minnesota	0	242	242
Mississippi	0	7	7
Missouri	0	70	70
Nevada	21	69	90
New Hampshire	35	0	35
New Jersey	1	97	98
New Mexico	41	55	96
New York	339	0	339
North Carolina	0	198	198
Ohio	2	320	322
Oklahoma	0	58	58
Oregon	130	0	130
Pennsylvania	12	167	179
Rhode Island	3	31	34
South Carolina	26	55	81

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State	Part of LEA	Own LEA	Total
Tennessee	114	0	114
Texas	103	825	928
Utah	0	136	136
Virginia	7	0	7
Washington	0	12	12
Wisconsin	206	25	231
Wyoming	5	0	5

Briefs 1 and 2: Enrollment

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

In order to analyze the demographics of students in different school settings, the following CRDC variables were used to calculate the enrollment of students by race/ethnicity and sector:

- TOT_ENR_F
- TOT_ENR_M
- SCH_ENR_AM_F
- SCH_ENR_AM_M
- SCH_ENR_AS_F
- SCH_ENR_AS_M
- SCH_ENR_BL_F
- SCH_ENR_BL_M
- SCH_ENR_HI_F
- SCH_ENR_HI_M
- SCH_ENR_HP_F
- SCH_ENR_HP_M
- SCH_ENR_TR_F
- SCH_ENR_TR_M
- SCH_ENR_WH_F
- SCH_ENR_WH_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_AM_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_AM_M
- SCH_IDEAENR_AS_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_AS_M
- SCH_IDEAENR_BL_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_BL_M
- SCH_IDEAENR_HI_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_HI_M
- SCH_IDEAENR_HP_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_HP_M
- SCH_IDEAENR_TR_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_TR_M
- SCH_IDEAENR_WH_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_WH_M
- LEA_STATE

Since the CRDC disaggregates variables by gender, the variables were aggregated to create total enrollment counts by race/ethnicity and student group. Once all the totals were calculated, the data were checked for missing race/ethnicity information by subtracting the sum of all race/ethnicity variables from overall student enrollment. No students were reported with missing race/ethnicity data in the 2020–21 CRDC.

Next, the data were aggregated based on sector. For state-level analyses, the data were also aggregated by the LEA state. Variables that had missing or suppressed values were ignored when aggregating. In order to determine proportions, the enrollment of students by race/ethnicity was divided by the total student enrollment of their respective student group.

In line with emergent best practice, we use the term “Latine” to refer to students identified in the CRDC as “Hispanic and Latino students of any race.” While we recognize that no single signifier is perfect, the term “Latine” is intended to include non-binary and gender non-confirming individuals while also respecting the linguistic conventions of Spanish.³

Enrollment by English Proficiency

The following variables were used to calculate the enrollment of students by English Proficiency:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- TOT_MLENR_F
- TOT_MLENR_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_ML_F
- SCH_IDEAENR_ML_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

We use the term “multilingual learners” to refer to the student group identified in the CRDC as “students with limited English proficiency.” This term has been promoted by advocacy organizations as a more asset-based description of what students bring to classrooms, and has also been adopted by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA).⁴ It also adds important precision: in important respects, all students are “English learners” and many students from all backgrounds may have limited English proficiency. As with all attempts at categorization, we recognize that this category contains a variety of student backgrounds, assets, and needs.

The variables were aggregated to create the total enrollment of students and the number of multilingual learner students by student group. The data were aggregated based on sector. For state-level analyses, the data were also aggregated based on the LEA state. Variables that had missing or suppressed values were ignored when aggregating. In order to find proportions, the enrollment of students by English proficiency was divided by the total student enrollment of their respective student groups.

CRDC data suggest relatively consistent levels of enrollment for multilingual learners between traditional public schools and charter schools. For example, out of the 95,366 public schools observed in 2021, 17,025 schools (17.9%) reported no multilingual learners. For charter schools, out of 7,568 schools, 1,273 charter schools (16.8%) reported no multilingual learners. For traditional public schools, out of 87,798 schools, 15,752 schools (17.9%) reported no multilingual learners.

³ Gonzales, E. (2023, October 24). *Why We’re Saying “Latine.”* Chicago History Museum. <https://www.chicagohistory.org/why-were-saying-latine/>

⁴ Snyder, S., Fenner, D. S., Smith, S., & Singh, J. (2023). *Terminology to Describe Multilingual Learners: Labels and Their Implications.* SupportED. https://supported.com/wp-content/uploads/Terminology-for-Multilingual-Learners_SupportEd_3.22.23.pdf



The same pattern is true for students with disabilities who are identified as multilingual learners in both school sectors. For example, out of the 95,366 public schools observed in 2021, 33,671 schools (35.3%) reported no multilingual students with disabilities. For the charter sector, out of the 7,568 charter schools, 2,734 charter schools (36.1%) reported no multilingual students with disabilities. For traditional public schools, out of the 87,798 schools, 30,937 schools (35.2%) reported no multilingual students with disabilities.

Table 8. Selected State-Level Differentials in Characteristics Students with Disabilities by ML Status and by Sector⁵

State	Traditional — % of All Students Who Are Multilingual Learners	Traditional — % of Students with Disabilities Who Are Multilingual Learners	Charter — % of All Students Who Are Multilingual Learners	Charter — % of Students with Disabilities Who Are Multilingual Learners
Alabama	6.50%	4.90%	1.60%	1.00%
Alaska	10.80%	12.50%	4.20%	5.00%
Arizona	8.20%	9.80%	6.10%	8.70%
Arkansas	8.10%	9.60%	8.00%	9.00%
California	18.40%	25.80%	13.80%	20.90%
Colorado	12.30%	16.20%	14.40%	23.30%
Connecticut	6.70%	10.50%	7.50%	8.10%
Delaware	10.50%	10.20%	6.50%	8.90%
District of Columbia	14.90%	16.90%	8.40%	12.00%
Florida	9.70%	9.20%	9.30%	8.30%
Georgia	8.10%	9.20%	6.50%	9.00%
Hawaii	Not Available	10.30%	Not Available	4.40%
Idaho	6.60%	9.00%	2.60%	3.50%
Illinois	12.30%	18.90%	16.00%	26.50%
Indiana	9.40%	6.70%	11.50%	7.70%
Iowa	6.20%	8.40%	13.80%	*
Kansas	9.80%	9.50%	2.60%	0.40%
Kentucky	4.60%	3.80%	NA	NA
Louisiana	3.80%	1.70%	4.90%	2.60%
Maine	3.20%	3.20%	0.30%	0.40%
Maryland	11.20%	11.80%	3.40%	3.90%
Massachusetts	10.40%	12.40%	12.80%	19.00%
Michigan	4.70%	4.60%	9.80%	9.10%
Minnesota	7.50%	8.80%	21.80%	16.70%
Mississippi	3.80%	2.90%	0.50%	0.00%

[Continues on the next page](#)

⁵ Seven states, shown as “NA”, did not have operational charter schools in the 2020–21 CRDC. Values referring to between 1 and 10 students are shown as “**” to limit student identifiability; for more information, please review the technical brief.

State	Traditional — % of All Students Who Are Multilingual Learners	Traditional — % of Students with Disabilities Who Are Multilingual Learners	Charter — % of All Students Who Are Multilingual Learners	Charter — % of Students with Disabilities Who Are Multilingual Learners
Missouri	4.20%	3.40%	16.00%	13.60%
Montana	3.50%	4.50%	NA	NA
Nebraska	7.10%	5.10%	NA	NA
Nevada	14.30%	22.40%	8.60%	13.10%
New Hampshire	3.30%	3.60%	2.70%	2.30%
New Jersey	7.00%	4.30%	5.90%	6.60%
New Mexico	18.20%	23.50%	13.80%	22.70%
New York	9.20%	11.70%	8.80%	12.90%
North Carolina	8.10%	11.20%	3.70%	5.30%
North Dakota	3.60%	3.70%	NA	NA
Ohio	3.50%	3.50%	5.00%	3.60%
Oklahoma	9.40%	9.00%	8.40%	9.00%
Oregon	9.80%	13.60%	2.50%	3.40%
Pennsylvania	4.20%	3.90%	3.80%	4.30%
Rhode Island	10.60%	9.30%	17.00%	23.50%
South Carolina	7.60%	7.30%	4.40%	2.70%
South Dakota	4.60%	4.20%	NA	NA
Tennessee	8.70%	6.00%	10.70%	16.70%
Texas	20.10%	19.70%	27.80%	28.10%
Utah	8.20%	11.10%	7.70%	8.30%
Vermont	2.50%	2.20%	NA	NA
Virginia	9.80%	11.50%	1.30%	0.00%
Washington	12.10%	16.40%	12.20%	10.50%
West Virginia	0.90%	0.80%	NA	NA
Wisconsin	5.90%	7.40%	7.10%	9.70%
Wyoming	2.60%	4.40%	4.30%	9.20%

Enrollment by Primary Disability and Educational Placement

In order to observe the enrollment of students with disabilities by primary disability type and the placement of students with disabilities, the ED Facts files provided by the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) were used. These files were provided along with the 2020–21 CRDC. There were 16 ED Facts files provided, but the 14 data files titled “ID 74 SCH – Educational Environment by Gender by Disability plus ML_(Disability Category)” were used to analyze the enrollment of students with disabilities by disability category and educational placement.

These files were merged with the list of sample schools from the 2020–21 CRDC using a unique school identifier called the “COMBOKEY” in both datasets. The “COMBOKEY” is a combination of the LEA ID and school ID. However, due to differences in definitions and procedures between ED Facts and the CRDC, the “COMBOKEY” ID could vary between datasets. Ultimately, this led to an inability to match all the schools in our sample to the schools reported in the ED Facts file. Table 8 shows the results of the merging process by school sector.

Table 9: Merging of EdFacts and CRDC Data

	Traditional Public Schools	Charter Schools	Total
Number of Schools in Sample	87,798	7,568	95,366
Number of Schools in Disability Category Enrollment Analysis	78,321	6,682	85,003
Percentage of Schools in Disability Category Enrollment Analysis Matched in Sample	89.2%	88.3%	89.1%

Primary Disability

The ED Facts file disaggregates student enrollment and educational placement by disability category (DISABILITY_CATEGORY). The disability categories were defined as follows:

- AUT – Autism
- DB – Deaf-blindness
- DD – Developmental Delay
- EMN – Emotional Disturbance
- HI – Hearing Impairment
- MD – Multiple Disabilities
- MR – Intellectual Disability
- OHI – Other Health Impairment
- OI – Orthopedic Impairment
- SLD – Specific Learning Disability
- SLI – Speech or Language Impairment
- TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury
- VI – Visual Impairment
- MISSING – Missing Data

Using the disability category and the total number of students reported (TOTAL_STUDENTS_REPORTED), the data from ED Facts were modified so that every school was reported once, with student enrollment broken down by disability category. Additionally, the total number of students reported was calculated by summing the enrollment of students for each disability category. Table 9 details the number of traditional public schools and charter schools that reported enrollment by disability category. All of these modifications allowed the data to be aggregated again based on sector. For state-level analyses, the data were also aggregated based on the LEA state. Variables that had missing or suppressed values were ignored when aggregating. In order to find the proportions, the enrollment of students by disability category was divided by the total number of students reported.

Table 10: Number of Schools and Enrollment by Disability Category and School Type

Disability Category	Traditional Public Schools		Charter Schools	
	Schools in Sample	Enrollment	Schools in Sample	Enrollment
AUT	67,788	628,936	5,225	38,811
DB	1,062	1,297	28	42
DD	25,238	221,649	1,705	9,516
EMN	50,580	264,081	3,997	19,100
HI	26,460	53,354	1,610	2,847
ID	53,022	353,153	3,370	15,825
MD	26,914	95,269	904	3,115
OHI	72,685	907,611	6,068	62,716
OI	17,321	26,288	897	1,371
SLD	73,987	1,903,811	6,373	142,479
SLI	66,362	955,491	5,469	64,762
TBI	1,706	2,144	187	218
VI	14,661	20,178	720	975
Missing	1,245	60,665	1	7

Brief 3: Settings

Educational Placement

Data on educational placements also appears in the EDfacts files, and was merged with CRDC data in the manner described above. The educational placement variables used for the analyses were:

- RC80_M/RC80_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities in the general education classroom for 80% or more of the school day
- RC79TO40_M/RC79TO40_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities in the general education classroom from 40% to 79% of the school day
- RC39_M/RC39_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities in the general education classroom for 39% or less of the school day
- CF_M/CF_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities in a correctional facility
- HH_M/HH_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities who are homebound or in a hospital
- PPPS_M/PPPS_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities who are parentally placed in private schools
- RF_M/RF_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities in a residential facility
- SS_M/SS_F – the number of male/female students with disabilities in a separate school

First, the data from ED Facts were modified so that every school was reported once, with student enrollment broken down by educational placement. Next, since CRDC disaggregates variables by gender, the variables were aggregated to create the total number of students with disabilities for each educational placement. The disability category was ignored when aggregating. Then, the “other” category was created to report the number of students who do not spend any time in the general education classroom. This included students in a correctional facility, students who are parentally placed in private schools, students in a residential facility, and students in a separate school. The table below shows the number of traditional public schools and charter schools that reported enrollment by educational placement.

All these modifications allowed the data to be aggregated based on the school sector and/or the LEA state. Variables that had missing or suppressed values were ignored when aggregating. In order to find the proportions, the enrollment of students by educational placement was divided by the total number of students reported.

Table 11: Number of Schools and Enrollment by Educational Placement and School Type

Disability Category	Traditional Public Schools		Charter Schools	
	Schools in Sample	Enrollment	Schools in Sample	Enrollment
RC80	78,321	3,709,655	6,682	300,725
RC7940	78,321	955,329	6,682	35,563
RC39	78,321	701,131	6,682	18,775
Missing	78,321	19,148	6,682	1,171
Other:	78,321	108,664	6,682	5,550
CF	78,321	4,634	6,682	158
HH	78,321	6,617	6,682	186
PPPS	78,321	19,265	6,682	34
RF	78,321	5,502	6,682	211
SS	78,321	72,646	6,682	4,961

Gifted and Talented Education

The following variables were used to calculate the number of students participating in gifted and talented education:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- TOT_GTENR_M
- TOT_GTENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_GTENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_GTENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE
- RC80_M/RC80_F
- RC79TO40_M/RC79TO40_F
- RC39_M/RC39_F
- CF_M/CF_F
- HH_M/HH_F
- PPPS_M/PPPS_F
- RF_M/RF_F
- SS_M/SS_F

Since the CRDC disaggregates variables by gender, the variables were aggregated to create the total enrollment counts and the number of students participating in gifted and talented education based on student group. All the data were then aggregated based on sector. For state-level analyses, the data were also aggregated by the LEA state. Variables that had missing or suppressed values were ignored when aggregating. In order to find proportions, the number of students participating in gifted and talented education was divided by the total student enrollment of their respective student group.

Brief 4: School Discipline and Engagement of Law Enforcement

Once variables were identified for each disciplinary outcome described in this brief, data were managed similarly:

- ✓ First, the variables were aggregated to create the total enrollment of students and the number of students by the student group.
- ✓ Next, enrollment of students without disabilities was calculated by subtracting the enrollment of students with disabilities from the total student enrollment. This allowed an analysis to be conducted on students without disabilities in each case.
- ✓ Lastly, all the data were aggregated based on sector. For state-level analyses, the data were also aggregated based on the LEA state. Variables that had missing or suppressed values were ignored when aggregating. In order to find proportions, the number of students who had experienced each outcome was divided by the total student enrollment of their respective student group.

Suspension

The following variables were used to calculate the number of students who received suspensions:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_ISS_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_ISS_IDEA_M
- TOT_DISCWDIS_SINGOOS_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_SINGOOS_IDEA_M
- TOT_DISCWDIS_MULTOOS_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_MULTOOS_IDEA_M
- TOT_DISCWDIS_ISS_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_ISS_M
- TOT_DISCWDIS_SINGOOS_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_SINGOOS_M
- TOT_DISCWDIS_MULTOOS_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_MULTOOS_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

The number of students who received one or more out-of-school suspensions was calculated by summing the number of students who received only one and more than one out-of-school suspension.

Referrals to Law Enforcement

The following variables were used to calculate the number of students referred to law enforcement:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_REF_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_REF_IDEA_M
- TOT_DISCWODIS_REF_F
- TOT_DISCWODIS_REF_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

School-Related Arrests

The following variables were used to calculate the number of students who received a school-related arrest:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_ARR_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_ARR_IDEA_M
- TOT_DISCWODIS_ARR_F
- TOT_DISCWODIS_ARR_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

Restraint

The following variables were used to calculate the number of students subjected to mechanical or physical restraint:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- TOT_RS_IDEA_MECH_F
- TOT_RS_IDEA_MECH_M
- TOT_RS_IDEA_PHYS_F
- TOT_RS_IDEA_PHYS_M
- TOT_RS_NONIDEA_MECH_F
- TOT_RS_NONIDEA_MECH_M
- TOT_RS_NONIDEA_PHYS_F
- TOT_RS_NONIDEA_PHYS_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

Seclusion

The following variables were used to calculate the number of students subjected to seclusion and the number of instances of seclusion:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- TOT_RS_IDEA_SECL_F
- TOT_RS_IDEA_SECL_M
- TOT_RS_NONIDEA_SECL_F
- TOT_RS_NONIDEA_SECL_M
- SCH_RSINSTANCES_SECL_IDEA
- SCH_RSINSTANCES_SECL_WODIS
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

Corporal Punishment

The following variables were used to calculate the number of students who received corporal punishment:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- TOT_DISCWDIS_CORP_IDEA_M
- TOT_DISCWODIS_CORP_F
- TOT_DISCWODIS_CORP_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

For this analysis, the data were filtered to only include schools in states in which corporal punishment is allowed prior to aggregation based on sector.

Online or Virtual Schools

Since online or virtual schools have alternative discipline strategies, the brief examines discipline rates when online or virtual schools are removed from the sample. Since the CRDC does not provide an indicator for virtual schools, the Common Core of Data (CCD) was used to identify virtual schools in the sample.

The CCD reports different values for the virtual status of a school; any school identified as exclusively virtual, or “FULLVIRTUAL,” would be removed from the sample. The CCD reported 644 schools in 2020–21 as exclusively virtual. The dataset from CCD was merged with the clean data using the “COMBOKEY” found in the CRDC and the “NCESSCH” from the CCD. The “COMBOKEY” is a unique school-level identifier developed by the OCR, while the “NCESSCH” is a unique school level identifier developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). In most cases, the “COMBOKEY” will match the NCES identifier, but there are some schools where the CRDC and NCES identifiers will differ due to different definitions and procedures.

628 out of the 644 virtual schools (98%) were found in the CRDC. These were removed from the sample for the analysis identified as excluding virtual schools.



Brief 5: Preparation for College and Career

Data for this brief was managed in the same way as data were managed for Brief 4, namely:

- ✓ First, the variables were aggregated to create the total enrollment of students and the number of students by the student group.
- ✓ Next, enrollment of students without disabilities was calculated by subtracting the enrollment of students with disabilities from the total student enrollment. This allowed an analysis to be conducted on students without disabilities in each case.
- ✓ Lastly, all the data were aggregated based on sector. For state-level analyses, the data were also aggregated based on the LEA state. Variables that had missing or suppressed values were ignored when aggregating. In order to find proportions, the number of students who participated in each program was divided by the total student enrollment of their respective student group.

AP Course Participation

The following variables were used to determine AP course participation:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_APENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_APENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

Dual Enrollment

The following variables were used to determine dual enrollment participation:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_DUALENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_DUALENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE



International Baccalaureate

The following variables were used to determine International Baccalaureate (IB) participation:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_IBENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_IBENR_IDEA_F
- TOT_IBENR_M
- TOT_IBENR_F
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

SAT/ACT Participation

The following variables were used to determine SAT/ACT participation:

- TOT_ENR_M
- TOT_ENR_F
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_M
- SCH_ENR_IDEA_F
- SCH_SATACT_IDEA_M
- SCH_SATACT_IDEA_F
- TOT_SATACT_F
- TOT_SATACT_M
- SCH_STATUS_CHARTER
- LEA_STATE

Alternative Schools

A brief examination into the overlap between charter schools and alternative schools in the CRDC was conducted to determine if trends in test participation and discipline rates could be explained by any disproportionality of alternative charter schools in the charter sector. However, 3.5% of charter schools were identified as alternative schools in the CRDC, and 2.9% of traditional schools were identified as alternative schools, so it is unlikely that such a small population of schools would explain substantial differences in trends.

The CRDC defines alternative schools as “a public elementary or secondary school that addresses the needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school program, and is designed to meet the needs of students with academic difficulties, students with discipline problems, or both students with academic difficulties and discipline problems. Alternative education schools may be sited in locations other than a traditional school building such as hospitals, mental health centers, jails, or juvenile detention centers.”

Brief 6: Specialized Charter Schools

A specialized charter school is a school that primarily or entirely focuses on serving students with either a particular disability or any disability. In order to observe the experiences of the students attending these schools, a list of specialized charter schools was created using a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis.

We identified specialized charter schools in three ways:

- ✓ Schools that self-identify as charter schools with a special education focus, with at least 25% of students being served under IDEA, or
- ✓ Charter schools with at least 50% of students being served under IDEA, regardless of their identification.
- ✓ Additional schools included based on prior knowledge, research by CLE, identification by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS), or research conducted on other charter schools with at least 25% of students being served under IDEA.

NAPCS data was used to validate the list of specialized charter schools identified by CLE and the methodology applied to the CRDC. The NAPCS list identified 8 specialized charter schools that were not previously found by CLE, 6 of which were included in the table of specialized charter schools, and 5 of which were found in the CRDC. All of the schools found in the CRDC were also later identified by the methodology.

These criteria identified 176 total schools operating in 2020-21, of which 174 had data available in the CRDC. While LEAs and charter school systems may represent their data in a variety of ways (for example, some systems may list out separate campuses or grade bands, while others may include these as a single data point) this list includes all relevant schools with a unique identifier (or “COMBOKEY”) listed in the CRDC.





About the Center for Learner Equity (CLE)

CLE is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that students with disabilities have equitable access to high-quality public education. CLE provides research, policy analysis, coalition building, and technical assistance to a variety of stakeholders nationwide.

Mission

We are committed to catalyzing student success and eradicating the complex, pervasive, and systematic barriers that prevent students with disabilities from accessing school choice, educational opportunities, quality support, and inclusive environments.

Vision

All students with disabilities are respected, learning, and thriving.

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge Patrick Gibson, Morgan Considine, and Ashley Robles from the State & School Finance Project for their data cleaning, analysis, and synthesis of findings and Atelier LKS for design and layout. Li Ma, Chase Nordengren, and Lauren Morando Rhim from the Center for Learner Equity contributed to the brief, with review feedback from Wendy Tucker, Jennifer Coco, Amanda Fenton, Laura Kaloi, Erik Robelen, and data verification support from Lauren Davis and Kate Dove.

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