

Significant Disproportionality in Special Education

School Committee

June 2, 2021

PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE

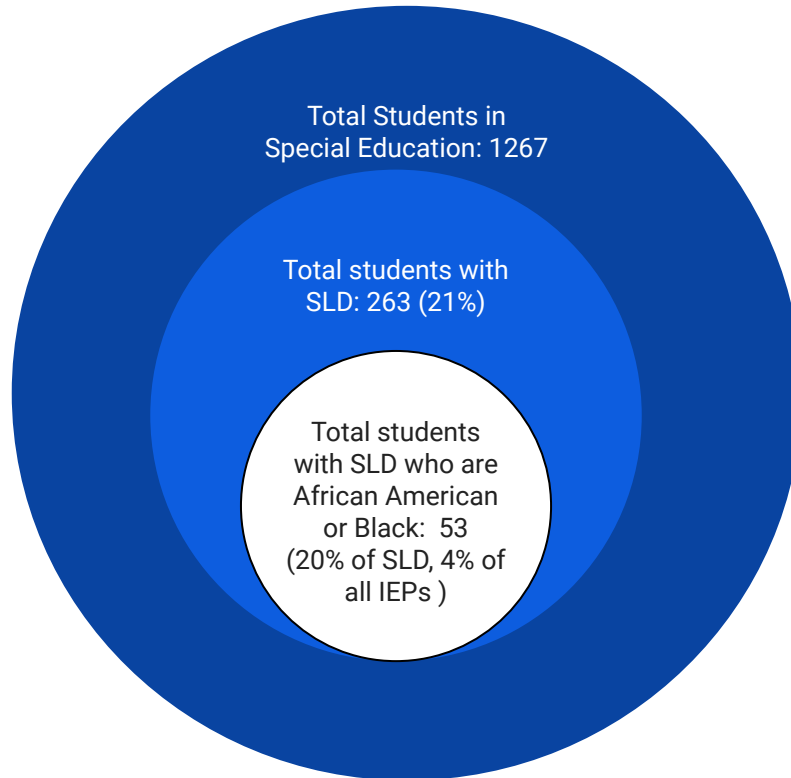


Background and Context

PSB has a significantly disproportionate number of African American and Black students with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

- ▶ SLD is one of the disability categories that qualifies a student for special education

Background and Context



*Based on October 2019
SIMS data

Background and Context

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2019-20)		
Race	% of District	% of State
African American	6.0	9.2
Asian	20.8	7.1
Hispanic	10.2	21.6
Native American	0.0	0.2
White	53.0	57.9
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	10.0	3.9

% of Students with IEPs by Race (2019-2020)*	
Race	% of Students with an IEP
African American/Black	34.8%
Asian	8.3%
Hispanic or Latinx	26.2%
Multiracial	14.7%
White	15.7%

*SIMS data

Background and Context

Route to Special Education



Addressing Significant Disproportionality

Student Profile

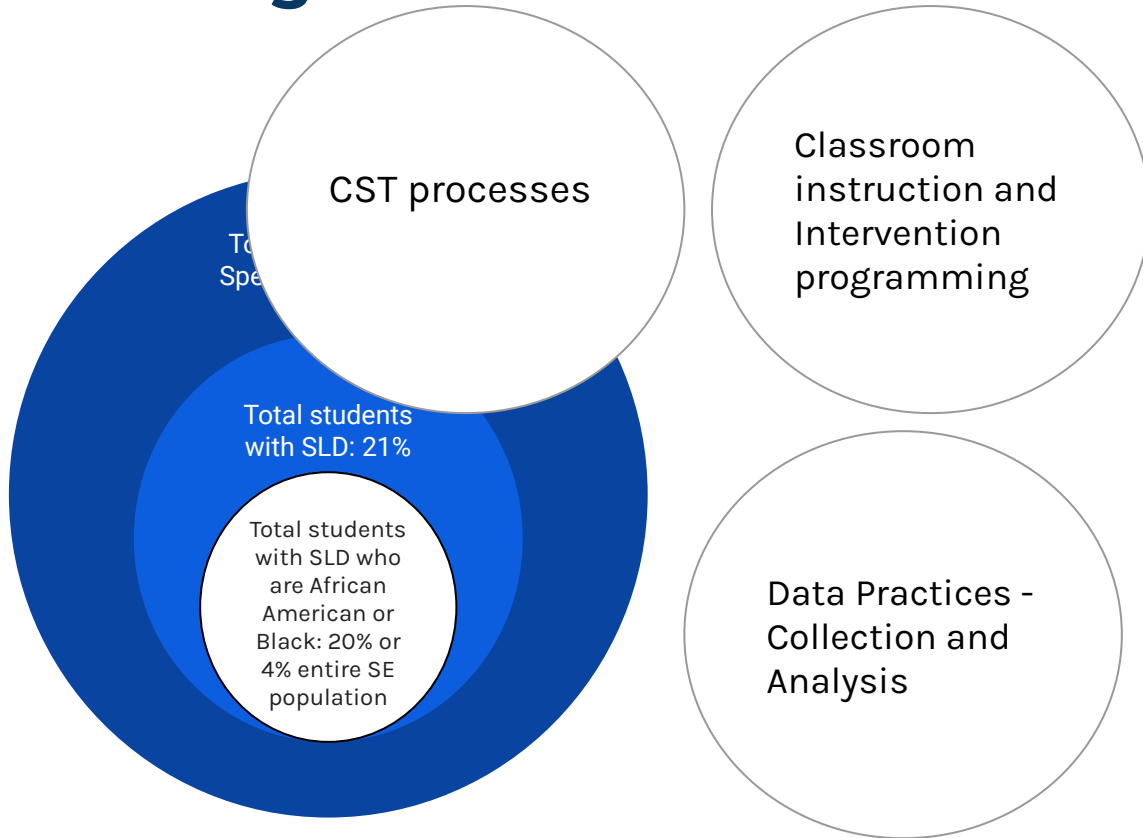
- Grades 2 - 12
- 45% identified when in K - 2
- 32% identified with an SLD in all three areas (Reading, Math, Writing)
- 30% of students are in STS
- 26% of students are in METCO
- 13% of students moved in with SLD determination
- 45% of students did not receive a general education reading/literacy intervention from PSB

What We've Done: Responding to Significant Disproportionality

Convene Multidisciplinary Team

- a. Judy Atanasov, School Psychologist
- b. Julie Boss, District-Wide Math Specialist
- c. Melissa Devine, SE Director
- d. Michelle Herman, OTL
- e. Joanna Lieberman, K-8 ELA Coordinator
- f. Nadene Moll, SE Director
- g. Jeanette Sergeant, Steps to Success Coordinator
- h. Coral Rondeau, SE Educational Team Facilitator
- i. Wendy Ryder, SE Director
- j. Jen Watkins, School Psychologist

Background and Context



What We've Done: Responding to Significant Disproportionality

- 1. Learned about significant disproportionality and Brookline's data snapshot**
 - a. Created profile of students impacted
 - b. Identified shared characteristics and potential patterns and trends for these students
- 2. Conducted SWOT Analysis**
 - a. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
- 3. Conducted Root Cause Analysis**
 - a. Progressive questioning of data
- 4. Action planning**

Addressing Significant Disproportionality

Root Cause Analysis

- Need for cultural proficiency
 - Trauma-informed practices
 - Culturally responsive practices
 - Implicit bias
- Need for review of tiered system of supports - PK-12
 - Child Study Team: training, processes, procedures
 - Identification criteria for SLD
 - Tier 1 Instruction
 - Interventions

Action Plan

- ▶ Obligation to be a culturally responsive district
- ▶ We need to take this on as a district
 - ▷ General Education
 - ▷ Special Education
 - ▷ Professional Development
 - ▷ Child Study Team

Action Plan

- I. Train
- II. Review
- III. Adjustments/ Make Change

Action Plan

I. Training

- ▷ Culturally Responsive Practices
- ▷ Trauma Informed Practices
- ▷ Implicit Bias
- ▷ Curriculum approaches for math and literacy, as well as academic intervention programs

What We've Done:

- General Education
 - Cultural Proficiency course
 - Speakers on topic of equity
 - New teacher training on anti-racist and anti-bias teaching
 - Data-Wise Project
 - Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED)
- Special Education
 - ETFs review referral process to specialized district-wide programs
 - Criteria for identification of disability

Action Plan

- II. Review existing structures and processes
 - Tier 1 instruction in literacy and math
 - Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in literacy and math
 - Curriculum for culturally responsive, anti-bias, and anti-racist materials
 - Team Facilitators and SE Evaluators to ensure common understanding of identification criteria for SLD
 - CST processes

Action Plan

- II. Review existing structures and processes
 - ▷ Use of data and our practices around collection and analyses
 - ▷ Screenings and benchmarking

Action Plan

III. Make Changes

- ▶ Recommitment to district goal of equity
- ▶ Programmatic and systematic adjustments
 - ▷ Re-allocation of funds and resources, based on reviews
- ▶ Regular updates to community via School Committee meetings