

# Examining Staff Role in Disproportionate Identification of Children of Color in Special Education



**MILWAUKEE**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## **Presenters:**

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Superintendent

# FIVE PRIORITIES FOR SUCCESS

**Improve District and  
School Culture**

**Ensure Fiscal Responsibility  
and Transparency**



**Increase Academic  
Achievement and  
Accountability**

**Develop Our Staff**

**Strengthen Communication  
and Collaboration**

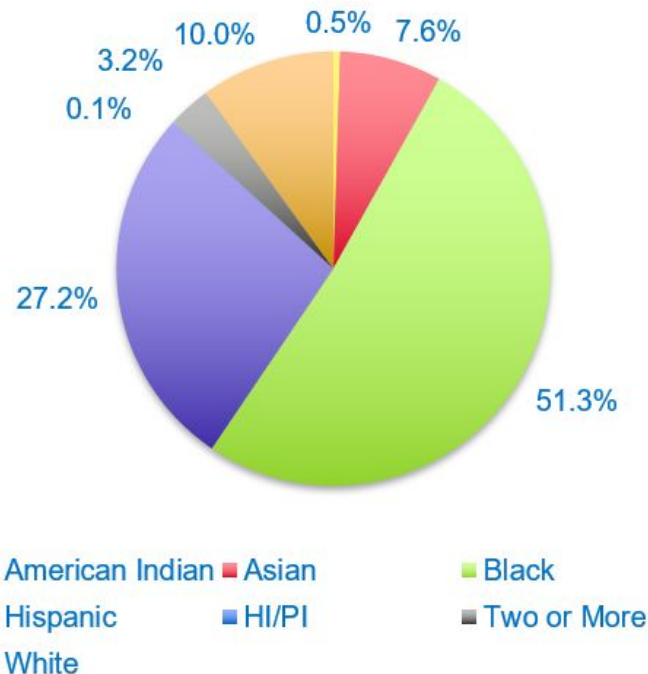


# Diversity is Our Greatest Strength

## MPS Demographics 2019-20\*

- 75,616 Students
- 159 Schools
- 12.2% English Language Learners
- 20.1% Special Education
- 82.6% Economically
- Ethnicity

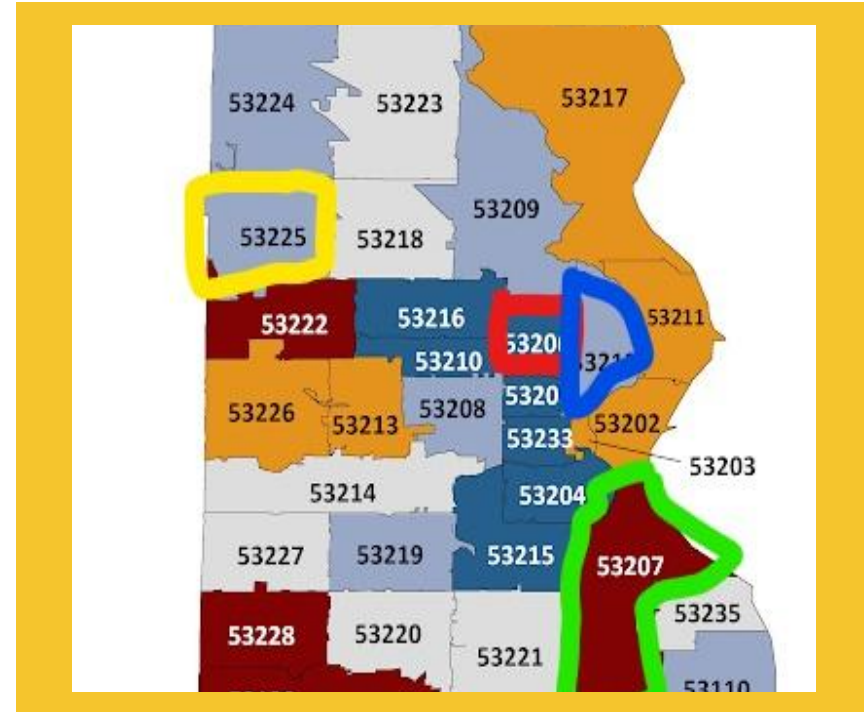
\*Third Friday count September 2019



# Zip Code and Disability Status

- **Goal:** To determine if race and/or SES status impact educational disability identification in Milwaukee
- **Rationale:** City of Milwaukee Health Department (2017) found evidence that infant deaths were highest in zip codes with highest population of residents of color/lowest SES populations and suggested this was a “barometer” of the overall health and well-being of a community
- **Method:** Analysis of educational disability status and zip code of residence for approximately 5,000 students in 12 neighborhood schools

Ngui E, Michalski K, LeCounte E, Mohr A. 2017 *City of Milwaukee Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) Report: Status Report on 2012-2015 Stillbirths and Infant Deaths*. Milwaukee: WI: City of Milwaukee Health Department and Zilber School of Public Health, April 2017.



# Results

*Disability rate appeared to increase in zip codes with highest population of children of color and lowest SES*

<b>Overall Disability Rate per Zip Code</b>	
<b>Zip Code (in order of highest SES/lowest students of color total to lowest SES/highest students of color total)</b>	<b>Overall Disability Rate</b>
53207	14%
53225	19%
53212	27%
53206	32%

# Results, cont'd.

*Disability rate increased as a function of increasing population of children of color and decreasing SES, with the areas of Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and Speech/Language Impairment following different patterns*

Specific Disability Rate per Zip Code/Wisconsin							
	ID	OHI	EBD	SLD	ASD	Speech	Other (SDD, TBI, OI, HI, VI)
53207	0.2%	1.2%	0.1%	1.2%	0.4%	2.4%	0.2%
53225	0.5%	2.3%	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%	2.6%	1.0%
53212	0.8%	3.9%	0.9%	1.8%	1.4%	1.6%	1.4%
53206	3.9%	8.9%	1.7%	2.8%	1.6%	1.6%	3.9%
Wisconsin Public Schools	0.9%	2.5%	1.4%	3.2%	1.4%	3.2%	1.1%

# 53206 vs. 53207

- A child in 53206 is **19.5 times more likely** to be labeled with an **Intellectual Disability** than a child in 53207 and **4.3 times more likely** compared to other children across the state of Wisconsin
- A child in 53206 is **17 times more likely** to be labeled with an **Emotional Behavioral Disability** than a child in 53207 and **1.2 times more likely** compared to other children across the state of Wisconsin
- A child in 53206 is **19.5 times more likely** to be labeled with **another form of disability** (SDD, TBI, OI, VI, HI, etc.) than a child in 53207 and **3.5 times more likely** compared to other children across the state of Wisconsin
- A child in 53206 is **7.4 times more likely** to be labeled with an **Other Health Impairment** than a child in 53207 and **3.6 times more likely** compared to other children across the state of Wisconsin
- A child in 53206 is **4 times more likely** to be labeled with an **Autism Spectrum Disorder** than a child in 53207 and **1.1 times more likely** compared to other children across the state of Wisconsin
- A child in 53206 is **2.3 times more likely** to be labeled with a **Specific Learning Disability** than a child in 53207 and **1.2 times less likely** compared to other children across the state of Wisconsin
- A child in 53206 is **1.5 times less likely** to be labeled with a **Speech and Language Impairment** than a child in 53207 and **2.0 times less likely** compared to other children across the state of Wisconsin



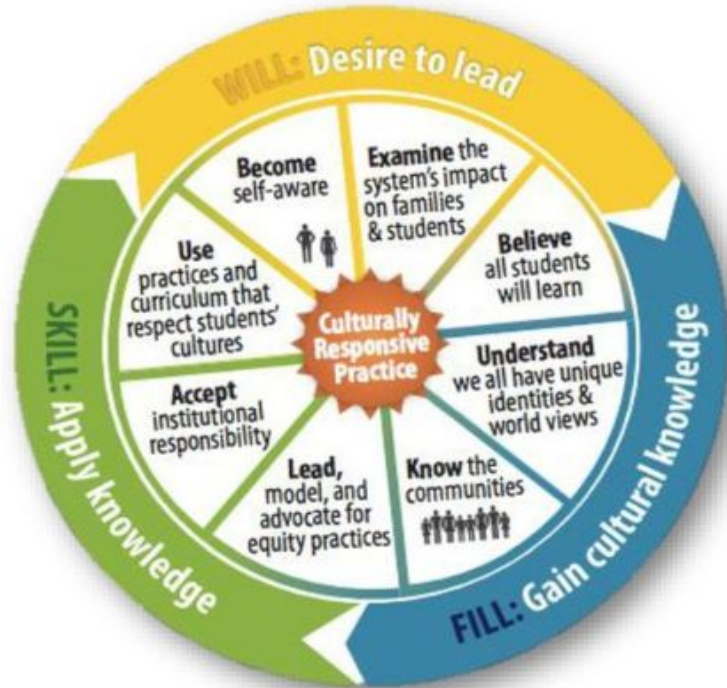
## Original Hypothesis:

*There should be distances between zip codes and where students should be reallocated to meet the needs of students in specific areas of the city.*





# What school psychologists in MPS are doing about it



- School Psychologists for Anti-Racism and Cultural Equity (SPACE)
- Culturally Responsive Problem Solving Training
- Anti-Racist and Non-Discriminatory Assessment Practices
  - ◆ History and Bias of Cognitive Assessment in the U.S.
  - ◆ Second-Generation Theories of Cognitive Assessment
  - ◆ Practices to determine validity of assessment results for English-Language Learners
  - ◆ Much more to come...

# Thank you!

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