

Effective Evaluation Resource Center



Blumberg Center for
Interdisciplinary Studies and
The Equity Project

Effective Evaluation Resource Center

- The purpose of the **Effective Evaluation Resource Center (EERC)** is to increase Indiana educators' use of skills that (a) ensure targeted and high quality interventions and strategies for struggling students; (b) promote the use of appropriate special education evaluation tools and methods for all students; and (c) assist local educational agencies (LEAs) in the correction of noncompliance and implementation of systemic changes to prevent future noncompliance.
- In collaboration with the Indiana Resource Network, the EERC will provide an array of professional development and coaching opportunities, develop resources and materials, facilitate statewide and regional collaborative networks, and advance the use of statewide technology during the evaluation process.

Equity Project

- Our mission is to provide evidence-based information specific to issues of school discipline, school violence, special education and equality of educational opportunity for all students. In addition, the project provides support and technical assistance to educational agencies seeking to create equitable school systems.
- The Equity Project supports educators and educational institutions in developing and maintaining safe, effective, and equitable learning opportunities for all students.

Welcome Dr. Russ Skiba



Welcome Shana Ritter



Understanding Disproportionality: What Do We Know and What Should We Do?

Russ Skiba and Shana Ritter
The Equity Project at Indiana University

Illuminate Live! Online Webinar,
Educational Evaluation Resource Center

Bloomington, Indiana
March 10, 2011

Equal Educational Opportunity Since Brown v. Board of Education

- Federal Protections:
 - Title VI of Civil Rights Act
 - No Child Left Behind
 - IDEA
- Yet Disparities Remain:
 - Achievement gap
 - Gifted/Talented
 - Discipline



Indiana: Ahead of the Curve on Disproportionality

- Began 1998
- IDOE/Equity Project (CEEP), 10 corporations
- Currently EERC
- Goals
 - Monitor and evaluate
 - Understand context and causes
 - Address the issues creating and maintaining inequity in special education

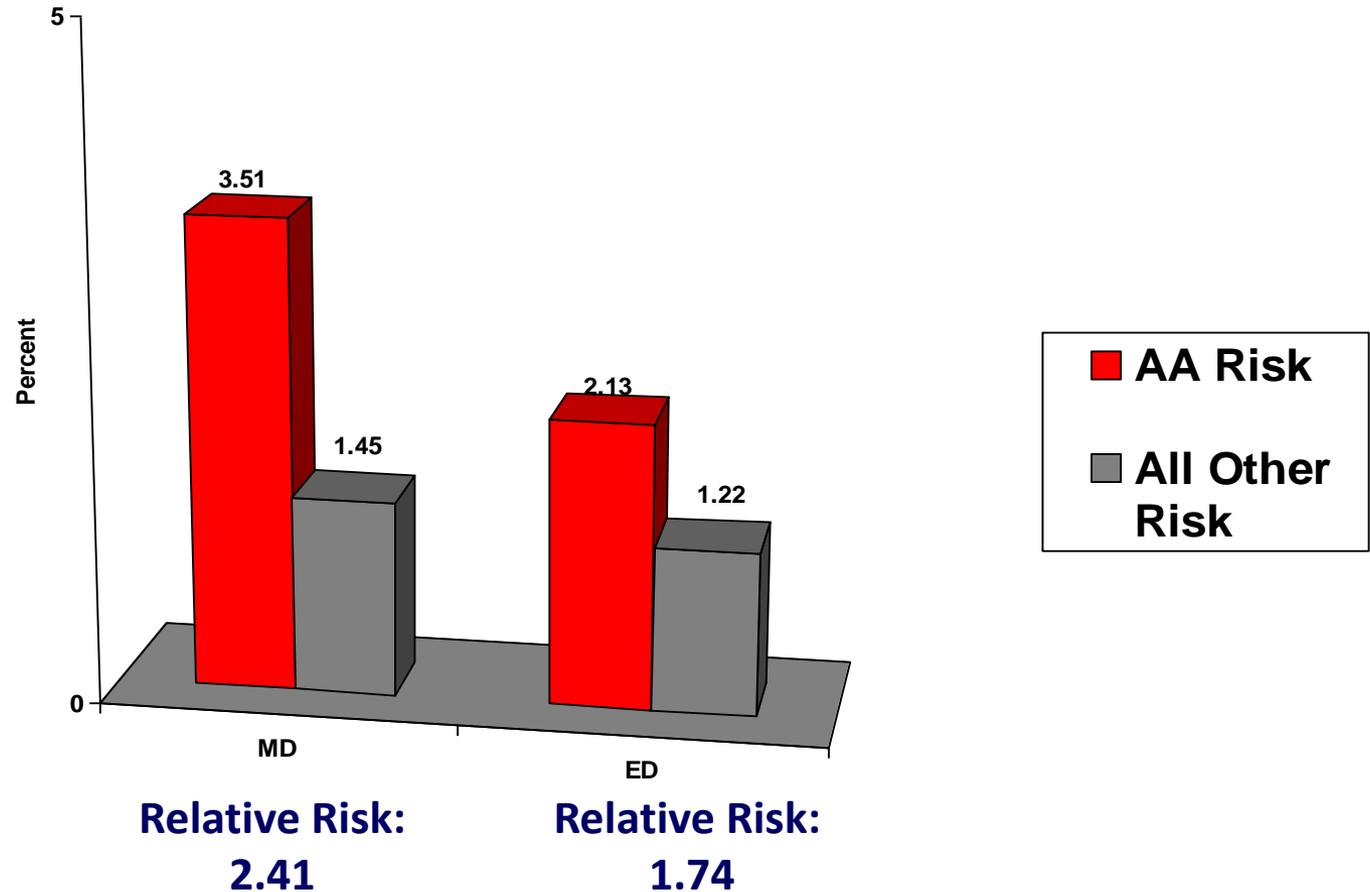
I. What does the data say?

How Do We Know Its Disproportionate?

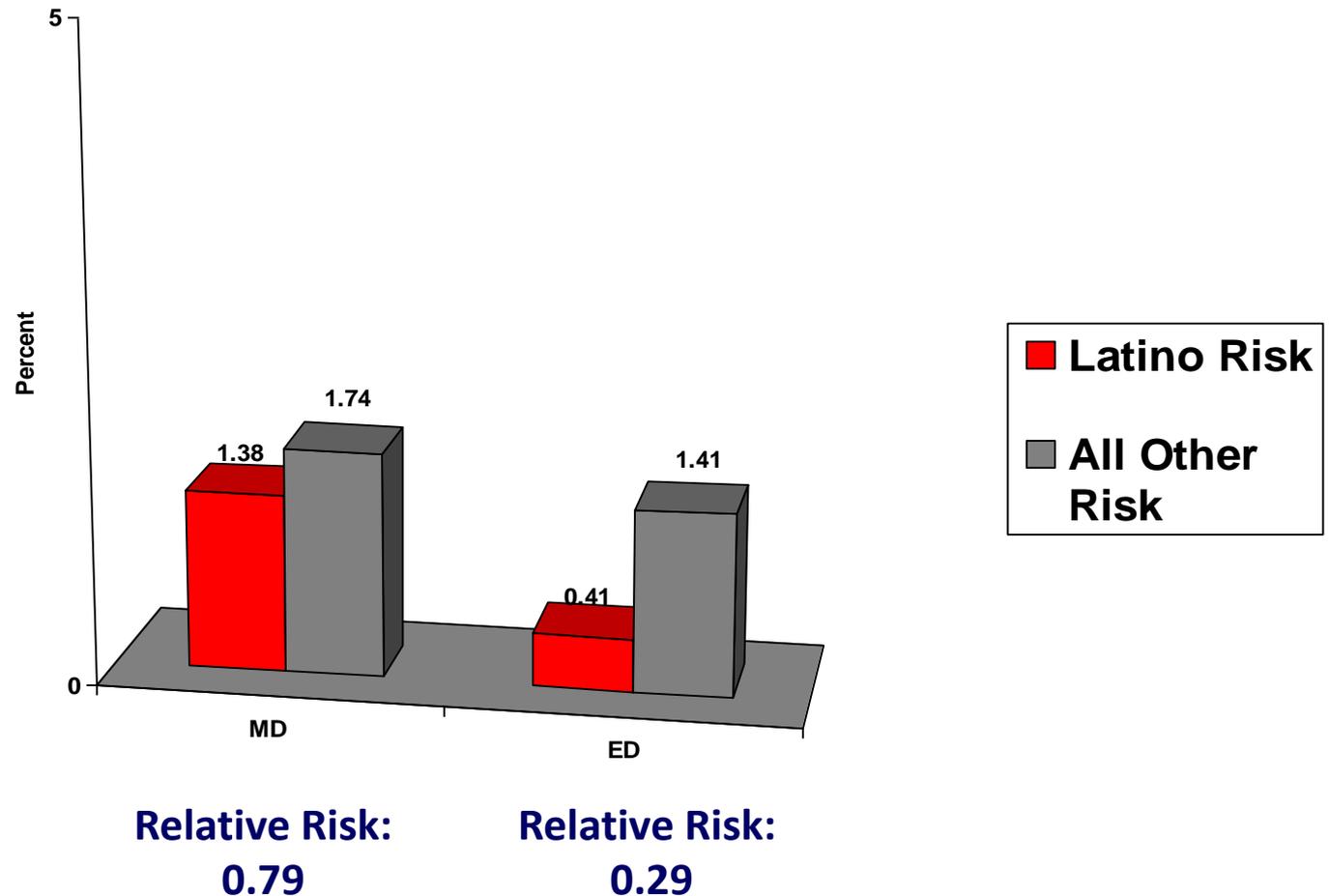
Three Measures

- **Composition Index**
 - African Americans represent 11% of our students who are enrolled but 25% of those in special ed.
- **Risk Index**
 - The risk of any AA student being in special education is 16.5%
- **Relative Risk Index**
 - African American students are 2.6 times as likely to be served in the mental disability categories

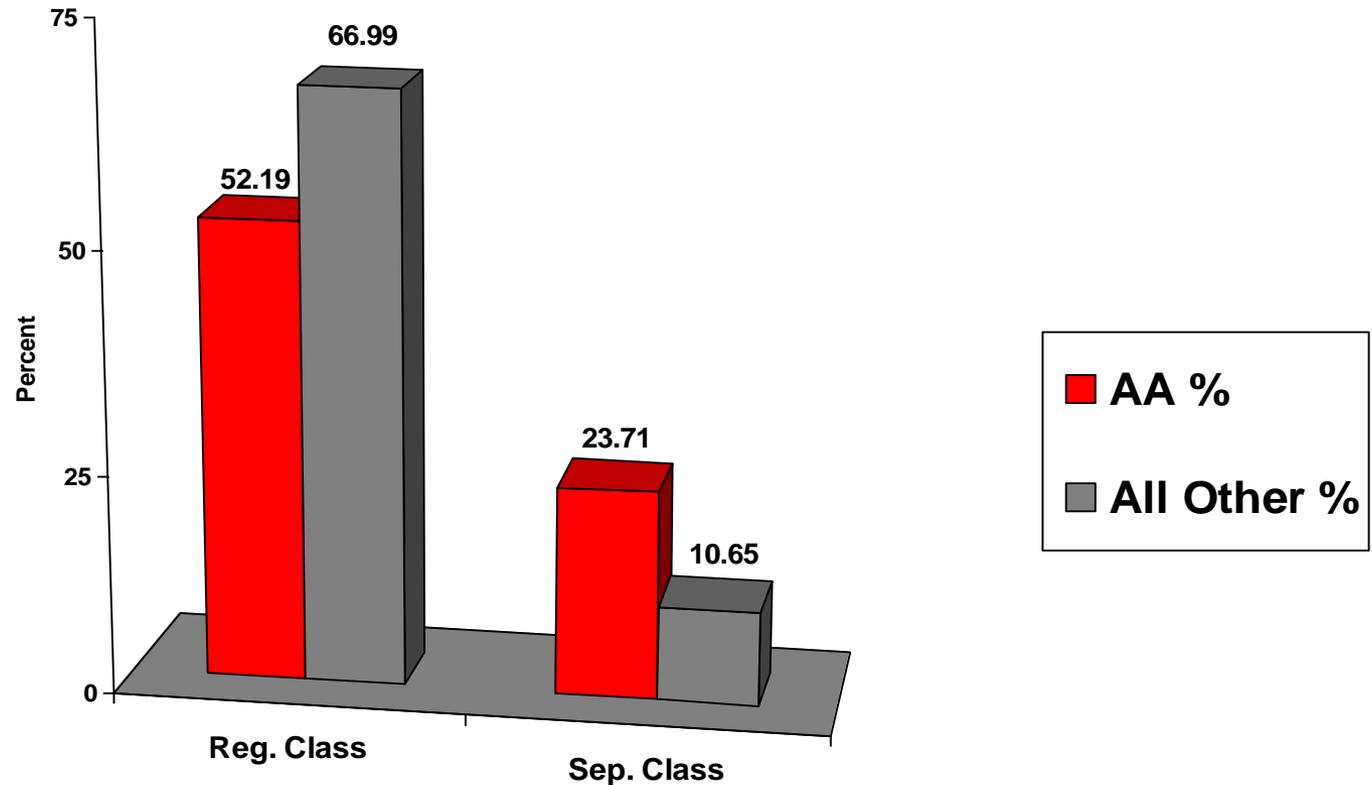
Disproportionality in Special Education: African American Students, 2009-2010



Disproportionality in Special Education: Latino Students, 2009-2010



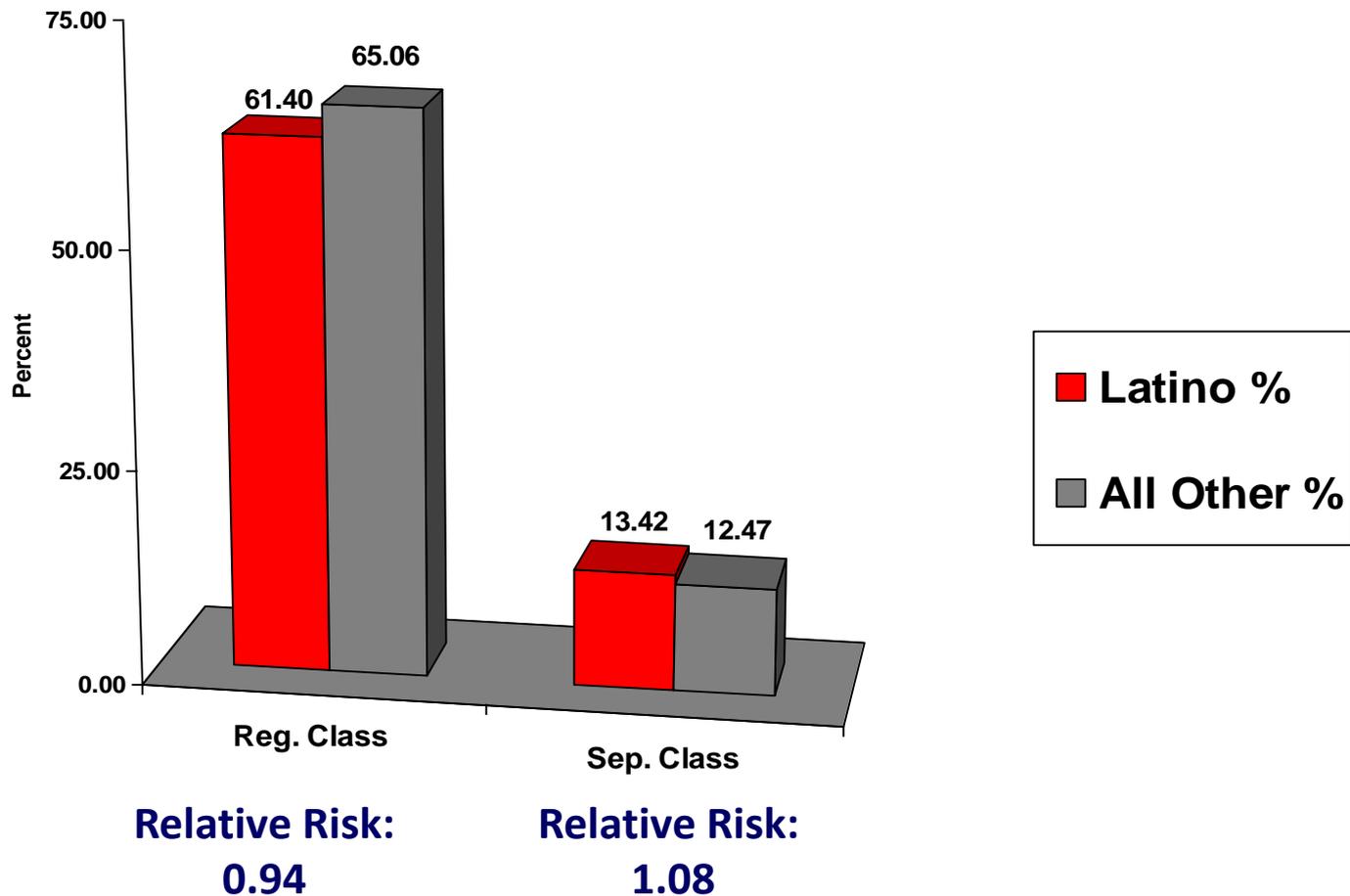
Disproportionality in Settings: African American Students, 2009-2010



**Relative Risk:
0.78**

**Relative Risk:
2.23**

Disproportionality in Settings: Latino Students, 2009-2010



Disproportionate Representation: Some Interesting Characteristics

- Greatest in the judgmental categories (Donovan & Cross, 2002; Losen & Orfield, 2002)
- Increases as the racial/ethnic group increases in proportion (Parrish, 2002)
- Complex patterns across national, state, and local (Harry & Klingner, 2006)

Disproportionality Terms in IDEA 2004

- Significant Disproportionality
 - Racial/ Ethnic Over-representation in
 - Overall Special Ed Enrollment
 - Categories & Settings
 - Suspensions and expulsions
 - Requires reservation of 15% of funds for EIS
- Disproportionate Representation Due to Inappropriate Identification
 - Federal monitoring priorities B9 and B10
 - Overall, Categories, Discipline: Over- and under-
 - Requires submission of action plan

Indiana's Criteria for Disproportionality

- Disproportionate Representation Due to Inappropriate Identification
 - Over- : Risk Ratio > 2.0 , Rate greater than state average
 - Under- : Risk Ratio < 0.5
 - Inappropriate Identification: Self-Assessment Survey
- Significant Disproportionality
 - Over-representation: Risk Ratio > 2.5

II. What are the causes?

What Causes Disproportionality in Special Education and Discipline?

- Test bias?
- Poverty?
- Unequal Educational Opportunity?
- Special Education Eligibility Process?
- Classroom Behavior/Management?
- Issues of Culture?

Psychometric Test Bias

- Extensively studied in 1970's/80's
- Evidence against test bias:
 - Extensive analysis yielded little evidence
- But is the case closed?
 - Old and not fully representative research
 - New research on item bias
 - What about bias in language, administration?

The Effects of Poverty (In General)

- Poverty is associated with lower achievement/cognitive growth
 - Neighborhood & housing stability
 - Home environment
 - Family health care

The Effects of Poverty in Indiana

“Is ethnicity the problem or is poverty the problem?”

--Principal

“There are days that I walk away with like 200 pounds on my shoulders thinking ‘it keeps getting worse.’ The stories are more bizarre, more traumatic; how can we possibly meet all these needs?”

--Classroom Teacher

The Effects of Poverty (on Disproportionality)

- Poverty predicts lower achievement
 - But disability categories are more than low achievement
- The Data
 - Prediction of sp.ed.from poverty inconsistent and often counterintuitive
 - ED: Richer districts have more disproportionality
- Do we carry our assumptions about poverty too far?

Unequal Opportunity in General Education

- Racial and ethnic disparities in:
 - Physical facilities/resources
 - Unequal funding formulas
 - Curriculum
 - High quality teaching

Educational Resources in Indiana

“I do have to wonder why we don’t invest a little bit more resources at the primary level when things are little smaller..as opposed to waiting till they get to middle school and high school and their parents have just about given up.”

--Principal

Special Education Eligibility and Decision Making

- Referral
 - Disproportionality appears to begin at referral
- Assessment and decision making (NRC)
 - Numerous sources of slippage
 - But findings were mixed.

Referral and Decision Making in Indiana

“I am pretty open to referring any child that is not finding success.
My goal is for every child to be successful.”

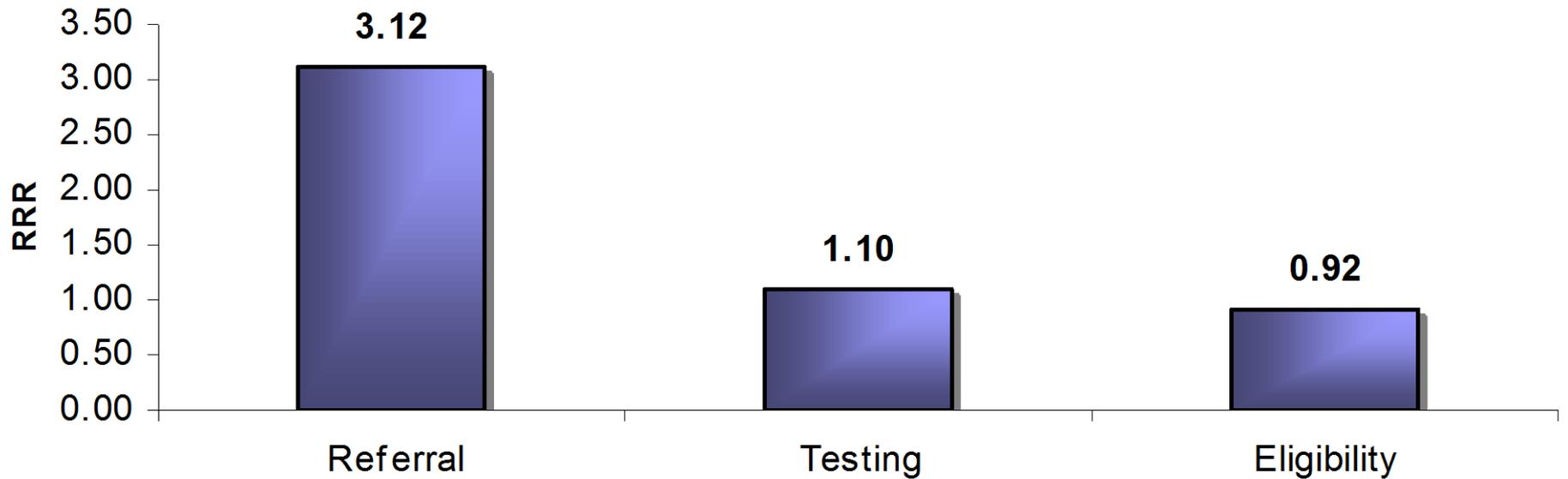
--Classroom Teacher

“If there’s a chance they might qualify, it’s always to their benefit
to have them checked.”

--Classroom Teacher

Disproportionality Begins at Referral

**African American Disproportionality
Referral-to-Eligibility**



Classroom Behavior and Classroom Management

- Disproportionality in school discipline
 - Not simply due to poverty
 - No evidence of differential disruption

What Behaviors are Students Referred For? By Race

Of 32 infractions, only 8 significant differences:

➤ White students referred more for:

- Smoking
- Vandalism
- Leaving w/o permission
- Obscene Language

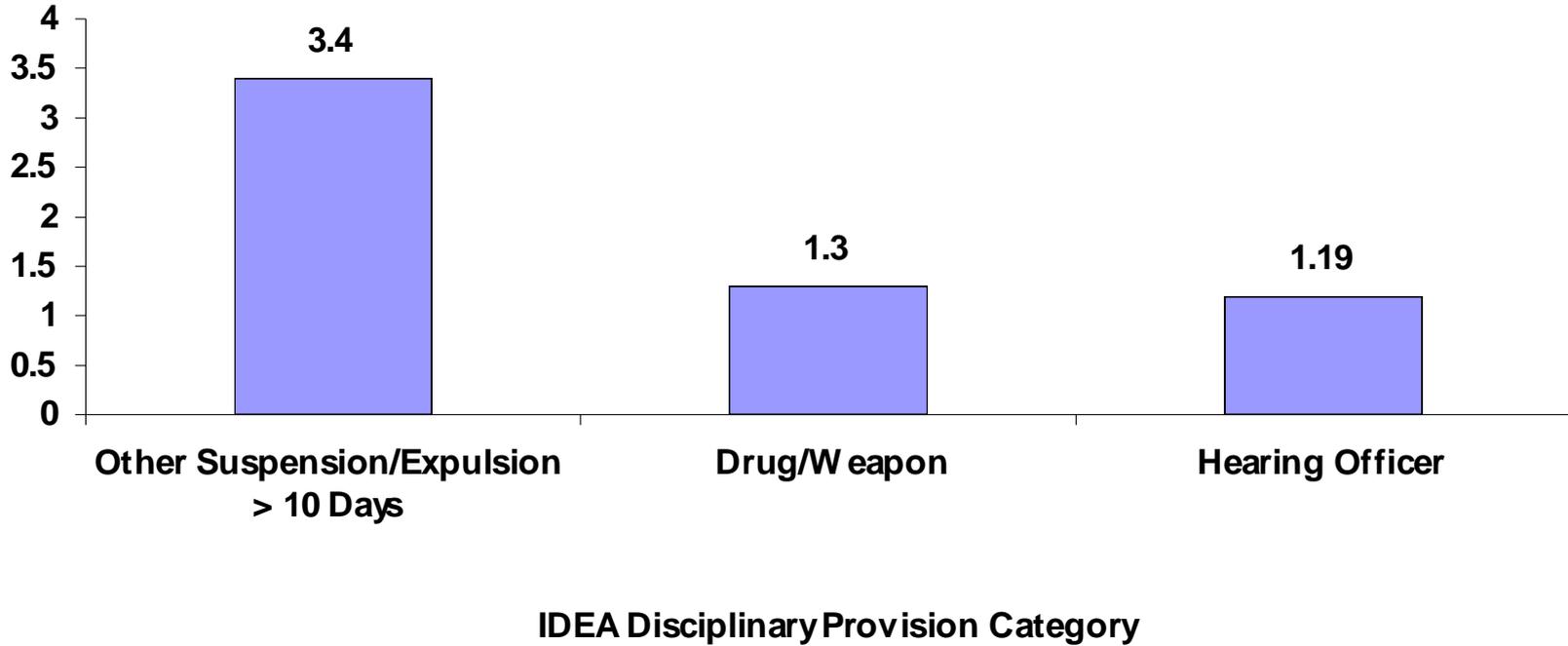
➤ Black students referred more for:

- Disrespect
- Excessive Noise
- Threat
- Loitering

Classroom Behavior and Classroom Management

- Disproportionality in school discipline
 - Not simply due to poverty
 - No evidence of differential disruption
- Also disproportionality in special ed. disciplinary provisions
 - African American students more likely to be referred for behavior

**Figure 6. Black Student Relative Risk for IDEA Discipline:
2004-2005 School Year**



Behavioral Issues in Indiana Schools

“Behaviorally I don’t feel that the needs of the children are met adequately at all.”

--Classroom Teacher

“If we had more resources for behavior and we could take care of those problems and address those issues in class...we could get that behavior controlled in class [and] they might not need a referral.

--Classroom Teacher

Issues of Culture in Indiana Schools

“A lot of things that go on if the teacher doesn’t understand it, while it isn’t really acting out behavior it could appear to be...threatening behavior.”

--Special Education Director

“We talked about it at lunch the other day and one of the black teachers said, ‘You know, sometimes I think some teachers are afraid of the little black boys.’”

--Classroom Teacher

The Multiply-Determined Nature of Disproportionality

- Implications:
 - There is no single cause of disproportionality
 - Underlying causes will vary by area, locale, grade level
 - Intervention plans must be tailored to local needs
 - Needs assessment as crucial

III. What do we do?

LOCAL EQUITY ACTION DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

ONGOING QUESTIONS

- What do we know about disproportionality in our district?
- What changes in school-based processes will have the greatest impact on disproportionality in our schools?
- How do we involve others in the process of creating ownership for and bringing about change?
- How will we know if our efforts are working?
- What impact will this have on other issues of equity?

PROCESS STEPS

Form a Planning Team

Form a preliminary planning team

Review existing data

Name the issue

Expand the planning team to include other key district stakeholders

Gather and analyze new information

Identify the Action of Greatest Potential Impact

Hold focus groups to examine the issue and possible actions

Examine and discuss input from the focus groups

Gather research and information on best practices and models

Engage in honest conversations about expectations for ALL students and staff

Develop a Plan

Design a LEAD pilot

Provide professional development time, and other supports

Develop an Action Plan for Implementation

Pilot in a few places

Gather feedback

Adapt the pilot

Plan for expanded implementation

Implement, Assess, Adapt

Expand the team to include representatives from all sites to assure two-way communication

Provide professional development as needed for best practice

Clarify links and communicate with other district initiatives and ELL, Title, School Improvement etc.

Use data consistently

Deepen conversations about equity and culturally responsive pedagogy

Include parents and community

Ongoing assessments continue to inform implementation

All Plans Must Be Local; Addressing Local Realities and Local Needs.

In order to address the complexity of disproportionality issues in a way that is meaningful and appropriate to the culture of that district, plans must *originate from within the district*.

While center staff provide guidance and technical assistance, decisions on plan design and implementation are made by the district LEAD team.

Planning and Evaluation Must Be Based Upon Local Data.

Local data on equity provide a framework that can motivate and guide local remediation efforts.

The success of any systems change efforts can be judged only by changes in those data.

LEAD Must Be a Collaborative Effort.

LEAD needs to be a shared effort in all aspects; *planning, implementation* and *assessment*.

General and Special education, Title, ELL, Literacy, Mentor Programs, and other initiatives and stakeholders should be represented.

Difficult Dialogues are a Crucial Part of The Process.

Conversations about race, disproportionality, and equity are *awkward and often difficult*, but necessary.

Part of the role of the team is to ensure that team meetings are a *safe place* for having *honest* and “courageous” conversations, where common understandings can be created and culturally responsive practice developed.

Cultural Competence = Culturally Responsive Practice

A developmental process.

A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Having the capacity to function effectively in cultural contexts that *differ from your own*.

Diversity & Culturally Responsive Practice

Valuing Diversity is a necessary step along the continuum of cultural competency and culturally responsive pedagogy, but it is not enough.

Cultural Responsivity requires *knowledge, skills* and *experience* and the ability to transform these into practice which results in improved services and outcomes.

Ongoing Questions

- **What do we know about disproportionality in our district?**
- **What actions can we take to have the greatest impact on disproportionality in our schools?**

Ongoing Questions

- **Who needs to be involved in planning and decisions, how do we include other voices?**
- **How will we know if our efforts are working?**
- **What impact will this have on other issues of equity?**

The LEAD Process

Form a preliminary planning team

key leaders in the district
general & special education
building level & central office

Ask:

- What are our greatest areas of concern with respect to equity in our district?
- What practices might contribute to disproportionality?
- Whose view is represented, whose is not?

Examine The Data

Make the data accessible ; use tables and charts, stories and graphs...

ASK:

- What do we know?
- What else do we need to know to understand and apply the data?
- Whose views are represented?
- How will we find out more?
- How do we share what we know?

Key Roles For Data

- *Improving* the quality of criteria used in problem solving and decision making
- *Describing* institutional processes, practices and progress in schools and districts
- *Examining* institutional belief systems, underlying assumptions, and behaviors
- *Mobilizing* the school or district community for action
- *Monitoring* implementation of reforms
- Accountability

-Using Data to Close the Achievement Gap

Developing Hypotheses

- Have we considered a range of possible hypotheses?
 - Disproportionality is multiply determined
- Is our process culturally responsive?
 - Are all possible hypotheses being considered?

If our examination and understanding of the root causes of social inequality are too shallow, then our approach to corrective action will necessarily be superficial and ineffective.

Christine Sleeter

Identify the Action of Greatest Potential Impact

ASK:

- What *actions, programs* or *interventions* do we believe would be the most promising in addressing the potential causes of disproportionality? Why?
- How do we know this?
- *What have others done* to address these issues?
- *What impact do we expect this action to have*, how will we measure it?

Expand The Planning Team

ASK:

- Is the team representative of your district?
- Are a diversity of views represented?
 - How can we find ways to continually incorporate other voices; staff, parents, community, students, into the planning process?
 - » Consider focus groups, surveys, site based meetings...

Develop a Plan

At each step consider; the students, best practices and the needs and culture of the school.

BEGIN SMALL

ASK:

- What supports do we need? (Professional dev., time, materials?)
- How will incorporate a focus on cultural competence?
- How will we know the effect on disproportionality?
- How will we encourage ownership and involvement?

Develop an Action Plan for Implementation

Continue to include as many voices as possible

Consider different ways of providing necessary professional development

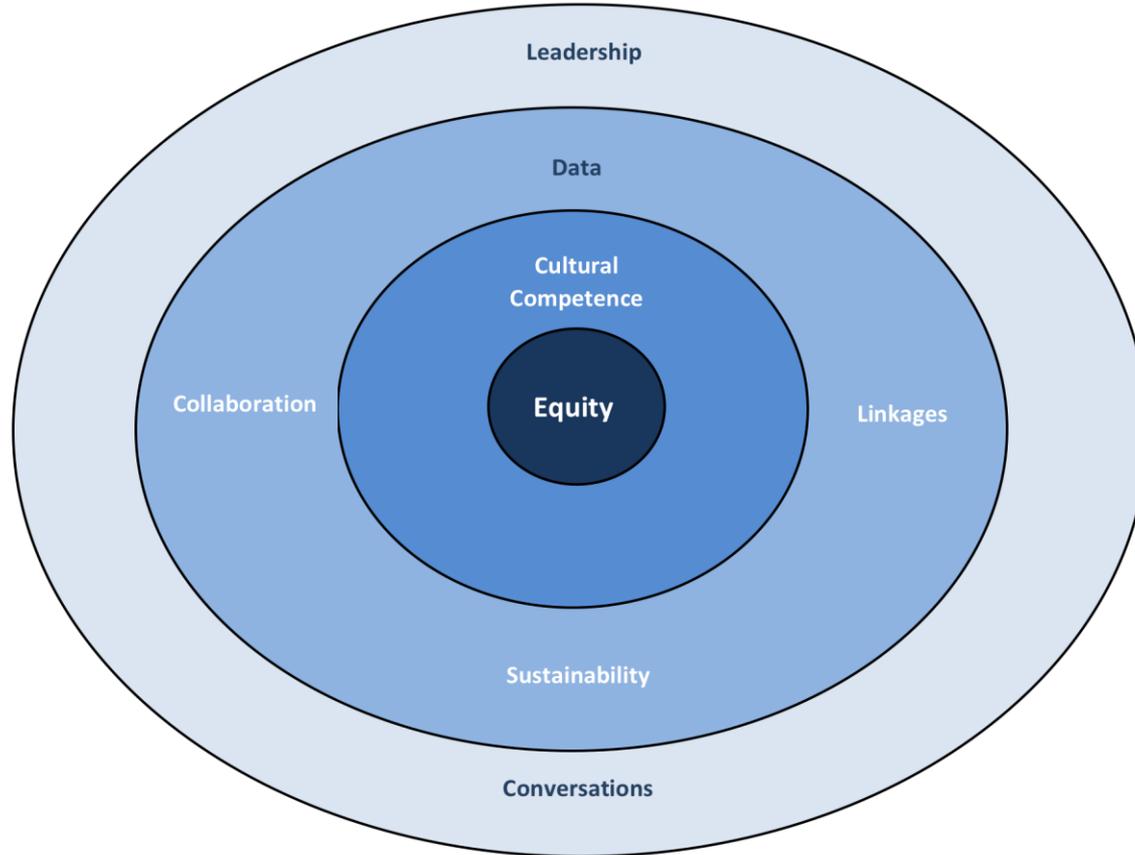
- cultural responsiveness
- leadership
- family involvement
- differentiated instruction
- using data effectively

Addressing Discipline Disparities

- Look at the data on disparities
 - How great are the disparities?
 - In what infractions? In what consequences?
- Interpretation and hypothesis development
 - Must represent *all* groups and perspectives
 - What are the cultural differences?
- Implement culturally responsive intervention
- Evaluate impact *on racial/ethnic disparities*

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

LEAD



Create a Culture of Inquiry

- **Relevant data**
- **Probing questions**
- **Examining beliefs about school culture and equity**
 - Issues of access
 - Opportunities to learn
 - Expectations of students, staff and community

DATA

Data is an integral part of the process when a school is willing to ask itself about the expectations it holds for children and about culture and power it begins to bring accountability for equity inside.

DIFFICULT DIALOGUES

Conversing about issues of equity, especially race, is a developmental process; ample time to build trust is necessary.

OWNERSHIP

Ownership of the process *grows through action*: ongoing dialogue with colleagues, gaining a deeper understanding of the issues, design, implementation, and assessment.

SUSTAINABILITY

Addressing issues of equity is more likely to be ongoing:

- When it is viewed as an effort that benefits all children.
- When incorporated into the district's overall plans for school improvement and other initiatives.
- When the community is involved.

LEADERSHIP

It is by questioning assumptions that a leader is able to influence change. Leadership that is willing to examine their own beliefs, and empower those they work with to do the same, is essential to the process of creating equitable change.

The More You Give....

The more time and concentrated effort focused in a district the better the results.

Disproportionality Must Be Understood Contextually

The disproportionality of students of color in educational programs *cannot be fully comprehended as long as it is considered a singular event*, somehow divorced from the broader context of American education and American society.

Creating change



“The world changes according to the way people see it, and if you can alter, even by a millimeter, the way people look at reality, then you can change the world.”

James Baldwin

Thank you for joining our webinar
today!

The recorded webinar and PowerPoint slides can be accessed on the Effective Evaluation Resource Center website next week.

<http://www.indstate.edu/blumberg/evaluation/training-archive.htm>

We value your feedback! Please don't log out before you evaluate this session by clicking on the link below:

https://indstate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_8ChzZb0BNVAUzha

Thank You!