



# 2017-18 Special Education Data Brief

## Student Outcomes by Student Race/Ethnicity

May 2019

### Background and Introduction

The *Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)* which outlines how states and public agencies provide special education and related services to eligible children and youth requires states to collect and evaluate data to determine whether there is significant disproportionality based on race and ethnicity in local educational agencies (LEAs) with respect to:

- (A) The identification of children as children with disabilities, including the identification of children as children with disabilities in accordance with a particular impairment;
- (B) The placement in particular educational settings of such children; and
- (C) The incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions, including suspensions and expulsions.<sup>1</sup>

If an LEA is determined to be disproportionate for three consecutive years under the same indicator the LEA enters *Significant Disproportionality* status. In 2019, after evaluating the 2017-18 school year data, the CDE determined that for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year Black/African-American students with disabilities at Pasadena Unified were being disproportionately suspended.

This data summary examining educational outcomes for 2017-18 has been requested by and for the aid of the District leadership team which will develop and submit a plan for *Comprehensive Coordinating Early Intervening Services (CCEIS)* to improve disproportionate outcomes for students with disabilities.

### Summary of Main Data Findings

- In 2017-18, Black/African-American students who made up 12.2% of the Districtwide K-12 student population accounted for:
  - 16% of students with disabilities
  - Nearly 27% of students in separate settings
  - 24% of chronically absent students with disabilities
  - 37% of suspended students with disabilities
  - 20% of high school graduates with disabilities
  - 17% of UC/CSU eligible high school graduates with disabilities
- Black students were twice as likely (12%) to be identified as disabled for *emotional disturbance*.
- Black students were about 10% more likely than their peers to be suspended for acts of physical aggression.

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<sup>1</sup> [34 CFR § 300.646](#)

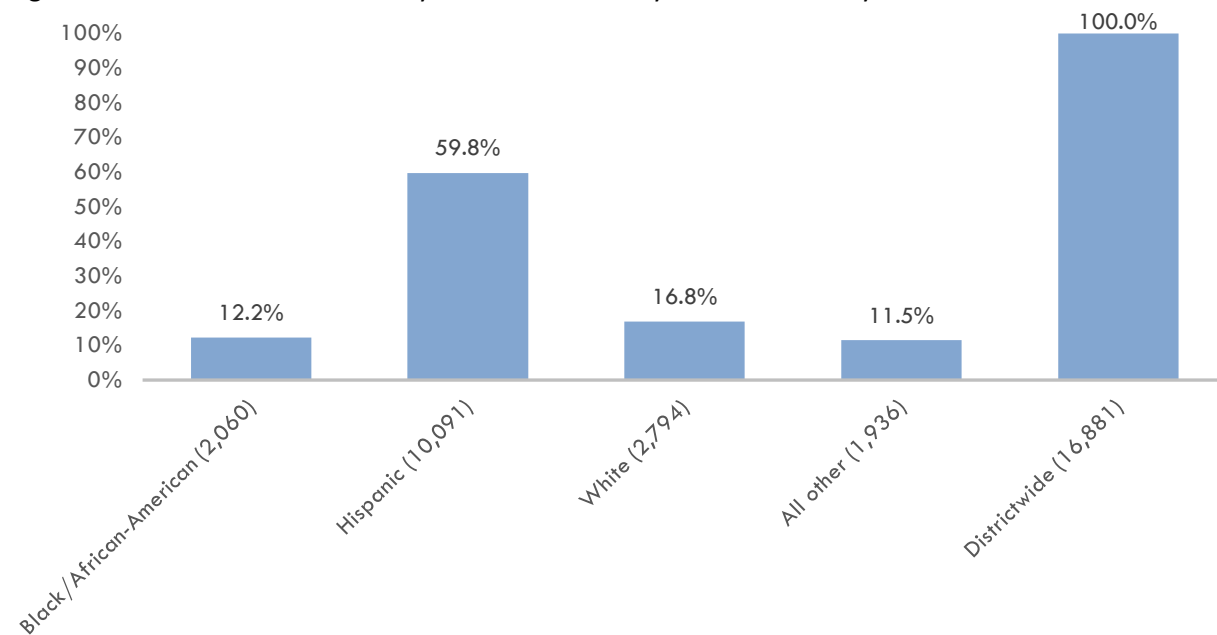
## Data Summary

This data brief reviews 2017-18 school year educational outcomes for students with disabilities by ethnicity to provide insight into inequities in students' experiences. It will examine whether students of color and more specifically, students of color with disabilities are disproportionately represented among students who do not achieve desired student outcomes (e.g. non-graduates) or experience negative outcomes (e.g. suspension, absenteeism). For greatest consistency with the data used for accountability, only CALPADS and CASEMIS data/reports or reports which are based-on one of these two sources (such as CDE's DataQuest<sup>2</sup> Reports) were used for this report.

### *Enrollment and Identification as Disabled*

As summarized in Figure 1 below, in 2017-18, Hispanic students made up the largest ethnic group with 6 in 10 students reporting being of Hispanic or Latino descent. The next largest groups were White students (16.8%), followed by Black/African-American students (12.2%). Finally, all the other ethnic groups (Asian, Filipino, Native American/Alaskan, Pacific Islander, multi-ethnic, and those who declined to state) combined made up 11.5% of students and are presented together as "all other."

Figure 1. Districtwide fall Norm Day K-12 enrollment by student ethnicity.

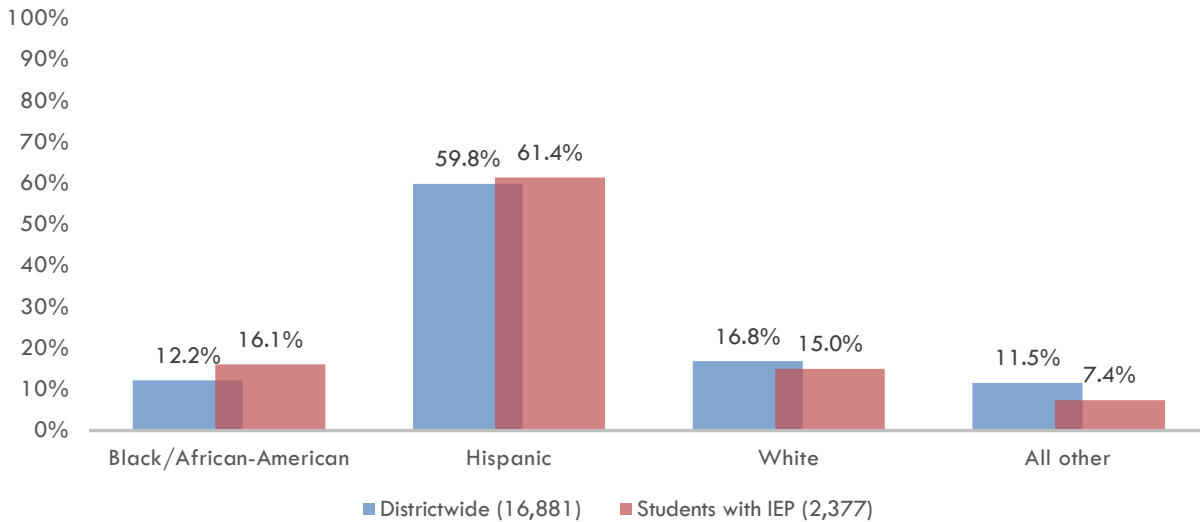


Source: Norm Day CALPADS 1.2 Fall 2017 Snapshot

Figure 2 shows the same Districtwide distribution as in Figure 1, but with the addition of the ethnic distribution of only students with disabilities. Students with disabilities, sometimes called special education students, are defined as those with an *Individualized Education Program* (IEP). Similar to the districtwide population, about 6 in 10 students with disabilities (61.4%) were Hispanic. However, the second largest ethnic group among students with disabilities were Black/African-Americans (16.1%). Compared to the Districtwide population where 12.2% of students were Black, among students with disabilities, Black students were slightly over-represented by about 4%.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/dataquest.asp>

Figure 2. Proportion of students with Individualized Education Programs by ethnicity.



Source: Norm Day CALPADS 1.2 and 1.17 Fall 2017 Snapshots

The primary disabilities represented by students with disabilities in Fall 2017 are summarized in Table 1 below by student ethnicity. Among Black and Hispanic students, about a third of students were identified with a specific learning disability which is twice the rate at which their white peers and peers of other ethnicities (16-17%). Black students were less commonly identified with speech or language impairments (12.3%) than their Hispanic and White peers (26.4% and 24%, respectively). Black students with disabilities 12% were identified as having emotional disturbance at a little over twice the rate at which their peers were identified with emotional disturbance (5%). Among White students, 23% were identified with Autism which was nearly twice that of their Black and Hispanic peers (12% and 11%, respectively).

Table 1. Counts and percentages of disability by student ethnicity.

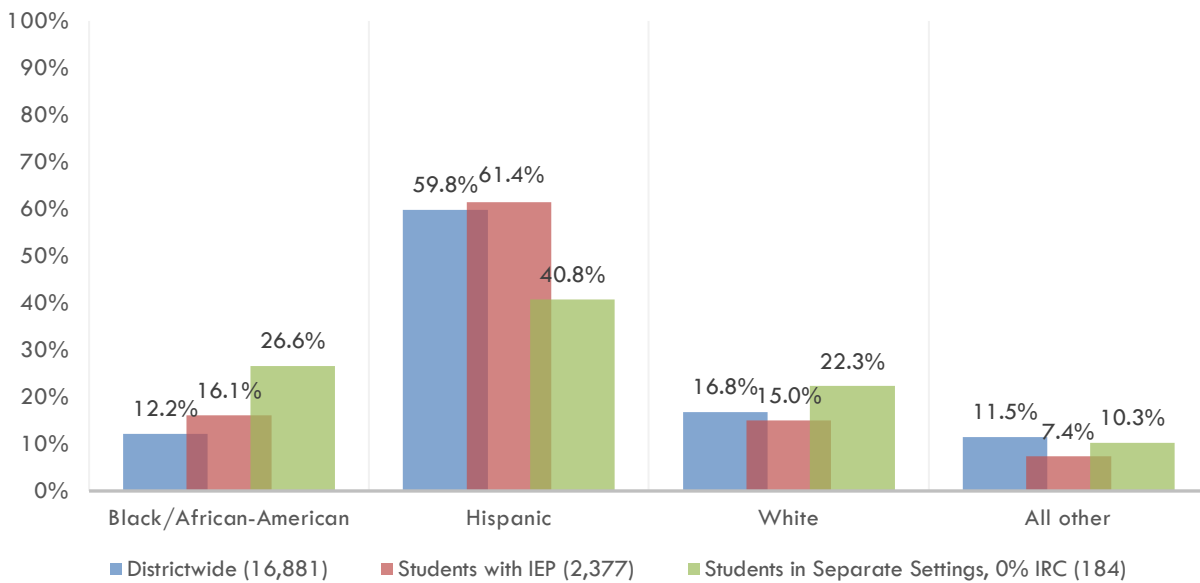
Disability Category (Sorted by most common for Black/African-Am group)	Black/African		Hispanic		White		All Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Specific learning disability (SLD)	136	32.2%	518	34.0%	66	17.2%	34	16.0%
Other health impairment (OHI)	93	22.0%	204	13.4%	77	20.1%	18	8.5%
Speech or language impairment (SLI)	52	12.3%	402	26.4%	92	24.0%	63	29.6%
Autism (AUT)	52	12.3%	171	11.2%	90	23.4%	63	29.6%
Emotional disturbance (ED)	51	12.1%	82	5.4%	20	5.2%	11	5.2%
Intellectual Disability (ID)	24	5.7%	99	6.5%	21	5.5%	13	6.1%
Multiple disabilities (MD)	5	1.2%	14	0.9%	4	1.0%	1	0.5%
Hard of hearing (HH)	4	0.9%	15	1.0%	3	0.8%	3	1.4%
Orthopedic impairment (OI)	3	0.7%	14	0.9%	7	1.8%	2	0.9%
Visual impairment (VI)	2	0.5%	2	0.1%	3	0.8%	0	0%
Traumatic brain injury (TBI)	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%
Deafness (DEAF)/Hearing impairment (HI)	0	0%	1	0.1%	0	0%	3	1.4%
Established medical disability (EMD)	0	0%	1	0.1%	1	0.3%	1	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1524</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Norm Day CALPADS 1.2 Fall 2017 Snapshot

Consistent with the goal to provide an inclusive public education to children with disabilities, we examine the ethnic distribution of students in separate settings to determine whether students of any ethnic background are disproportionately educated in a separate setting.

Figure 3 below builds further on Figure 2 by adding the ethnic distribution for students in *separate settings*. In this report, students in *separate settings*, are defined as those whose IEPs provided for 0% of the student’s education to be alongside their general education peers in a regular classroom. Compared to the proportions among all students with disabilities (with IEPs), Black and White students in separate settings are over-represented by about 10% and 7%, respectively. The disparity for black students is greater when comparing the districtwide population where 1 in 10 students in the PUSD is Black to the population of students with disabilities in separate settings where 1 in 4 students is Black. By contrast, Hispanic students are under-represented among students in separate settings by about 20% compared to population of students with IEPs as a whole.

Figure 3. Proportion of disabled students in separate settings by ethnicity.



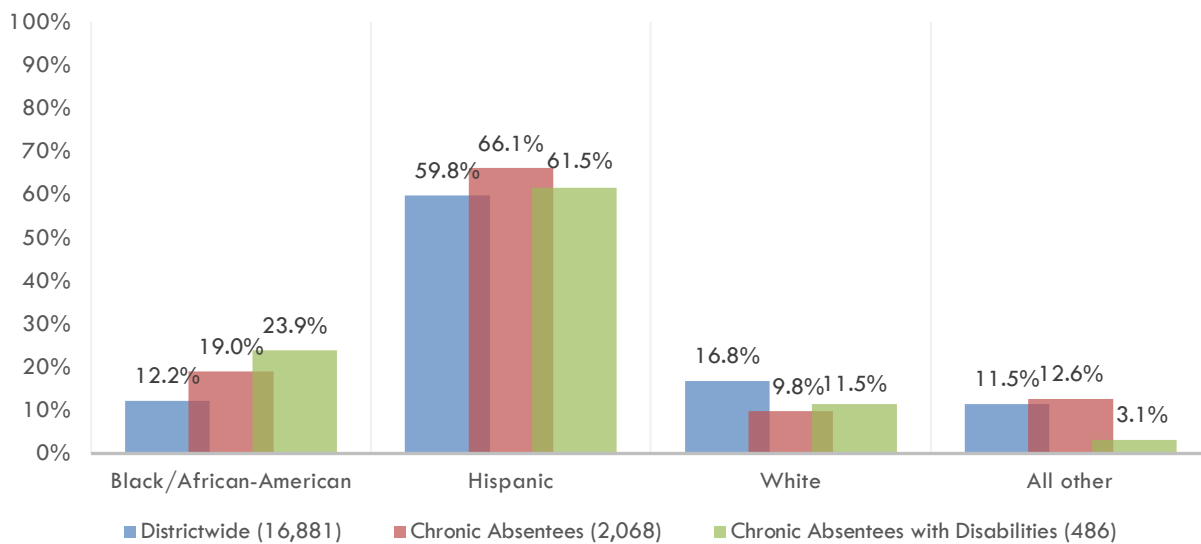
Source: CASEMIS December 2017 Data

### Chronic Absenteeism (Attendance)

Figure 4 compares the districtwide population, chronic absentee students, and chronic absentees with disabilities (i.e. with an IEP) by ethnicity. Chronic absentees are those students who missed 10% or more of their enrolled days.

Compared to the districtwide population where roughly 7 in 10 students was a student of color (Black or Hispanic), students of color were over-represented by about 15% among chronically absent students (85%). While Hispanic students were over-represented by about 6% among chronic absentees compared to the districtwide population, they were not over-represented among chronic absentees with disabilities. Black/African-American students were over-represented by about 7% among chronic absentees where 19% of chronically absent students was black; they were over-represented by about 12% among chronic absentees with disabilities (24%).

Figure 4. Proportions of Chronic absentees and chronic absentees with disabilities by ethnicity.



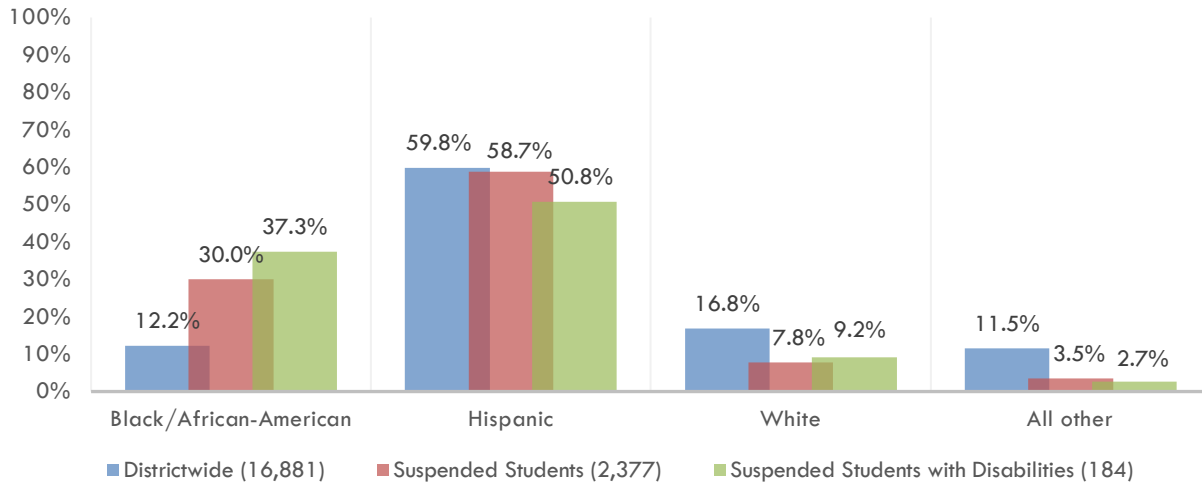
Source: CDE DataQuest 2017-18 Chronic Absenteeism Report

### Discipline and Suspension

In order to examine whether students are disproportionately experiencing the disciplinary outcome suspension by student ethnicity, we use unduplicated data where each student was only counted once even if s/he was suspended multiple times. Therefore, in figure 5 below, alongside the Districtwide ethnic breakdown, we compare students who were suspended one or more times during the year, and students with disabilities who were suspended one or more times during the year.

Black/African-American students, who represent roughly 1 in 10 students Districtwide, were over-represented at a rate of 3 in 10 among students who were suspended during the 2017-18 school year (30%). Among student with IEPs they were further over-represented, such that nearly 4 in 10 students with a disability (37%) who was suspended during the school year was Black.

Figure 5. Proportions of suspended students and suspended students with disabilities by ethnicity.



Source: CDE DataQuest 2017-18 Suspension Rate Report

In table 2 reports the incidents for which students were suspended by incident type and by the ethnicity of the student. The percentages reflect the proportion of suspensions resulting from each incident type. For example, of the 546 incidents for which a Black/African-American student was suspended, about half (50.5%), were for physical aggression. While for each ethnic group, physical aggression was the most common type of incident for which students were suspended. It made up a larger proportion of the total incidents for which Black students were suspended (50.5%) than Hispanic students (42.4%) or White students (34.6%). Incidents involving the use of obscenity or profanity made up a slightly larger proportion of incidents for which White students were suspended (19%) than their Black (9.9%) and Hispanic (12.5%) peers.

Table 2. Counts of all incidents resulting in suspension/expulsion by student ethnicity (duplicated by student).

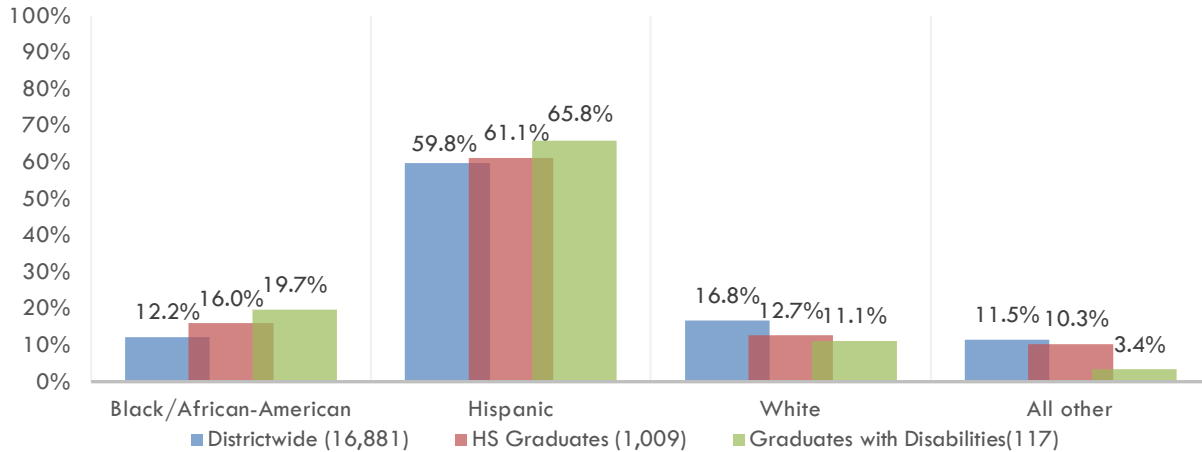
Incident (Sorted by most common for Black/African-Am group)	Black/African		Hispanic		White		All Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Physical Aggression	276	50.5%	394	42.4%	53	34.6%	32	47.8%
Harassment/Intimidation	72	13.2%	102	11.0%	17	11.1%	10	14.9%
Obscenity/Profanity	54	9.9%	116	12.5%	29	19.0%	11	16.4%
Bullying	32	5.9%	69	7.4%	13	8.5%	2	3.0%
Theft	28	5.1%	31	3.3%	8	5.2%	1	1.5%
Controlled Substance	27	4.9%	108	11.6%	14	9.2%	5	7.5%
Vandalism	26	4.8%	57	6.1%	6	3.9%	2	3.0%
Sexual Misconduct	18	3.3%	21	2.3%	1	0.7%	1	1.5%
Weapon	12	2.2%	22	2.4%	7	4.6%	2	3.0%
Tobacco	1	0.2%	10	1.1%	5	3.3%	1	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: CALPADS 7.5 Discipline Incidents Report End-of-Year Snapshot

Cohort Graduation and UC/CSU Eligibility

Figure 6 shows the proportions of 4-year cohort students (entered grade 9 in 2013-14) who earned HS diplomas within four years (i.e. by the end of the 2017-18 school year) and the proportions of students with disabilities who earned HS diplomas by students’ ethnicity. Similar to the Districtwide population, about 60% of HS graduates were of Hispanic descent. Hispanic students were over-represented by 6% among graduates with disabilities of whom nearly 66% were Hispanic. Compared to about 12% Districtwide, Black students were slightly over-represented by about 4% among HS graduates and over-represented by nearly 8% among high school graduates with disabilities. White students were slightly under-represented by 4% among graduates compared to their nearly 17% Districtwide, and further under-represented by nearly 7% among graduates with disabilities.

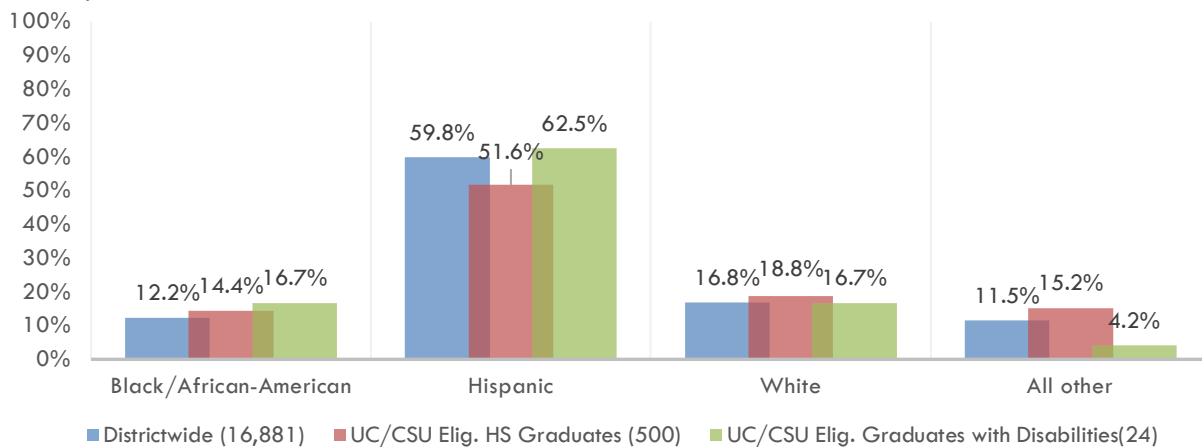
Figure 6. Proportions of high school graduates and graduates with disabilities by ethnicity.



Source: CDE DataQuest 2017-18 four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Report

Again examining outcomes by cohort, figure 7, shows the proportions of UC/CSU eligible graduates. UC/CSU eligible graduates are those who have completed the “A-G course requirements”<sup>3</sup> (completing 15 year-long courses with a grade of C or better) in order to be eligible for admission to a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) campus.

Figure 7. Proportions of UC/CSU eligible high school graduates and UC/CSU eligible graduates with disabilities by ethnicity.



Source: CDE DataQuest 2017-18 four-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Report

<sup>3</sup> <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/requirements/a-g-requirements/index.html>