

Morgan Hill Unified School District applauds the State of California's efforts to create a system based on multiple measures. That said, there are areas where the new dashboard is **in need of greater refinement** and context. There are also concerns about the potential for misuse or misinterpretation of this data, so please read on.

To the general public, such data is often viewed with the goal of ranking or judging the strength of a district's or school's educational program. The data on the dashboard is **lacking in disaggregation** such that there are virtually no controlled "apples to apples" comparisons that can be drawn from the information. For that reason, the Morgan Hill Unified School District wishes to caution the public that using this information for the purpose of informing school choice is likely to be misleading and foster misperceptions. In truth, when similar students (with socioeconomic, language fluency and parent education levels concurrently controlled), the outcomes that similar students experience at different schools are just as likely to be opposite as consistent with what rankings by such summary overview data might suggest.

For more information on the inherent dangers of school ranking by aggregate data and to see how MHUSD students are experiencing outcomes rivaling Los Gatos and Cupertino, go to:

[Misleading Dangers of using Scores for School Rankings presentation](#)

The useful purpose of this data is to help inform strategic planning through the LCAP process. To educational practitioners involved in the ongoing study of such data, the information only has use when knowing the context by which to interpret the data. For example, one area of need indicated on the state dashboard is in the suspension rate metric where three subgroups have red or orange indicators: African American, American Indian, and Pacific Islander. However, these groups are so small that in any given year the values reported will be subject to large swings. One group of 40 students moved from the highest "blue" rating to the lowest "red" rating on the basis of a single 2 student incident resulting in suspension which gave it a status and change measurement of 5%. **The state metrics need a way to control volatility** in measurement to assist the public in understanding which metrics constitute a reliable trend and warrant a response. Likewise, there is a **need for more clearly communicating statistical certainty** in measurement and how it varies greatly by student group size.

For an overview of how MHUSD is using dashboard data to inform our LCAP, go to:

[2017 LCAP Summary Overview](#)

There are also **philosophical questions involving validity** which require context. For example, by the construct of the metric, it is assumed that a zero suspension rate is the desirable status when the goal is really a safe and productive campus climate. Many would argue that a zero suspension rate could easily be achieved by simply not suspending anyone which could be counterproductive to school climate. Likewise, the district's other area of need is in graduation rate for students with disabilities. The graduation rate metric does not account for special needs students who achieve a certificate of completion or who are returning for ongoing educational services through their individual educational plans (IEPs). Counting such students against a district penalizes districts with high numbers of students with disabilities while rewarding the practice of sending special needs students out of a district where they would count in someone else's metric. MHUSD understands that some students may need more than four years to graduate if they have special needs. A five year path for graduation will affect the graduation rate metric but it will be in students interest to continue on to receive a diploma or certificate. Our district is concerned where such questions of **poor validity could incentivize practices that are not in the best interest of students**.