



**Office of Inspector General  
County of Los Angeles**

**REPORT BACK ON IMPROVING SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY (ITEM  
NO. 20, AGENDA OF JUNE 28, 2022)**

On June 28, 2022, in the Improving School Climate and Safety Board of Supervisor's (Board) motion, the Board directed the Inspector General, in consultation with the Sheriff, County Counsel and other relevant County Departments, to analyze School Resource Deputy (SRD) contacts with students in the school districts contracting with the County for SRD services to determine if racial disparities exist in student contacts, arrests, suspensions and expulsions similar to what was discussed in the Inspector General's report *Allegations of Racial Disparities in Contacts with High School Youth by the Sheriff's Department's Lancaster Station* (Racial Disparity Report).

To accomplish the objectives set forth in the Board motion, the Office of Inspector General analyzed two sets of data:

- (1) SRD student contact data from the Sheriff's Department's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and
- (2) Discipline and demographic data from the California Department of Education for all schools in school districts under contract with the Sheriff's Department for SRD services.

For purposes of comparison, the schools reviewed in this report were separated into two groups:

The first group consisted of 76 schools from 15 school districts staffed by 33 SRDs from 11 patrol stations and are referred to as the “Schools Outside of Lancaster,” and

The second group consisted of 40 schools in 3 school districts staffed by 18 SRDs from the Lancaster Station and are referred to as the “Lancaster Schools.”

During the 2019/2020 school year, the Sheriff's Department provided SRD services to 116 schools in 18 school districts with deputies from 12 patrol stations. The schools consisted of elementary, middle, high schools, a continuation school and one adult school.

Office of Inspector General staff reviewed 15,640 CAD system entries by Sheriff's Department staff for the 2019-2020 school year. And filtered this data set to identify **812 school contacts with students by SRDs.**

SRDs contacted children as young as **5 and 7** years of age. There were 21 contacts with elementary school children (ages 5 through 11), 166 contacts of middle school aged students (ages 11 through 14), and 625 contacts of high school aged students (ages 13 through 19).

There were only **2 instances** out of a documented 812 school contacts in which SRDs indicated they referred a student to a diversion program.

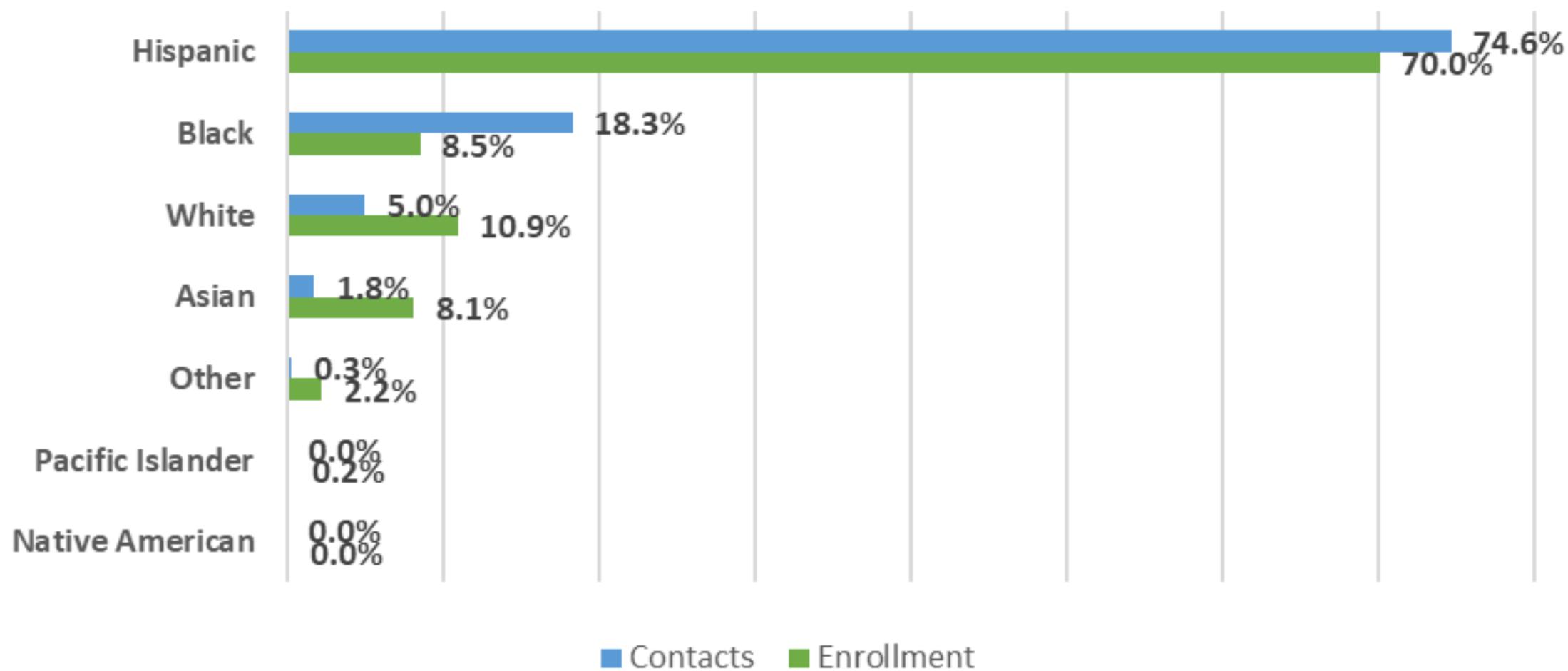
# FINDINGS

In the Schools **Outside of Lancaster**, SRDs contacted Black and Hispanic students more than any other racial group. Moreover, **Black and Hispanic students were contacted at a rate disproportionately higher** in comparison to their respective percentage of school enrollment.

In the **Lancaster Schools**, only **Black students were contacted at a rate disproportionately higher** in comparison to their percentage of school enrollment. The **degree of disproportionality of Black student contacts was much higher in the Lancaster Schools** than what was observed in the Schools Outside of Lancaster.

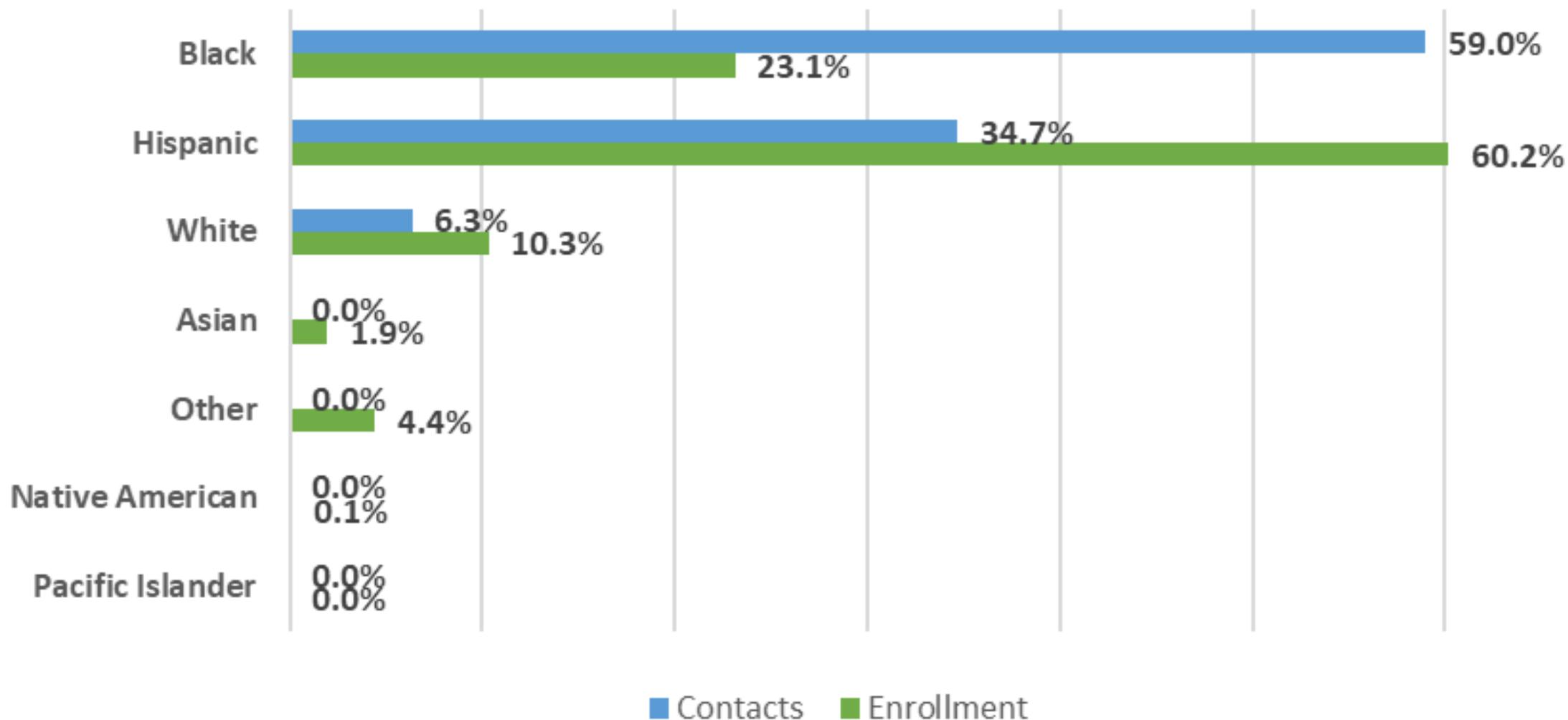
## Contacts Compared to School Demographics

### Schools Outside of Lancaster



# Contacts Compared to School Demographics

Lancaster Schools



In the five school districts with the highest number of SRD student contacts, Black students were disproportionately contacted in four of the five school districts.

**Five School Districts with Greatest Percentage of  
Disproportionate Deputy Contacts**

<b>School District</b>	<b>Station</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Contacts</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Antelope Valley Union High	Lancaster	Lancaster Schools	Black	60.4%	17.8%	42.6%
Paramount Unified	Lakewood	Outside of Lancaster	Black	27.9%	7.7%	20.3%
Lancaster Elementary	Lancaster	Lancaster Schools	Black	59.4%	30.3%	29.1%
Rowland Unified	Industry/Walnut	Outside of Lancaster	Hispanic	88.2%	65.6%	22.6%
			Black	5.9%	1.2%	4.7%
ABC Unified	Cerritos/Lakewood	Outside of Lancaster	Hispanic	75.8%	47.6%	28.2%
			White	15.2%	6.3%	8.8%

**In the Schools Outside of Lancaster, Black and Hispanic students were subject to arrest and citation at a disproportionately higher rate** in comparison to their respective percentage of enrollment.

**In the Lancaster Schools, only Black students were disproportionately arrested and cited.** The level of disproportionality in arrests and citations of Black students in Lancaster Schools was three-and-a-half times greater than the disparity observed in the Schools Outside of Lancaster.

**In one school district serviced by Lancaster Station SRDs, Black students were arrested more than 86% of the time they were contacted by an SRD.**

Arrest and Citation Percentages						
School Districts	Race	Contacts	Arrests	Citations	Arrests & Citations	Arrest & Citation %
<b>OUTSIDE LANCASTER</b>	Black	62	3	55	58	93.5%
	Hispanic	253	51	173	224	88.5%
	Asian	6	5	0	5	83.3%
	White	17	2	7	9	52.9%
	Other	1	0	1	1	100.0%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>339</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>297</b>	

### Arrest and Citation Percentages

School Districts	Race	Contacts	Arrests	Citations	Arrests & Citations	Arrest & Citation %
<b>LANCASTER SCHOOLS</b>	Black	279	214	16	230	82.4%
	White	30	21	2	23	76.7%
	Hispanic	164	78	41	119	72.6%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>473</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>372</b>	

The issue of disproportionate arrests is even more pronounced in the **Antelope Valley Union High School District** – one of the three school districts serviced by SRDs from the Lancaster Station. **The Antelope Valley Union High School District alone accounted for 93.9% (294 of 313) of all the arrests made by SRDs in the Lancaster Schools.** Black students were arrested 86.5% of the time during contacts with SRDs in the Antelope Valley Union High School District.

<b>Antelope Valley Union High School District</b>			
<b>Race</b>	<b>Arrests</b>	<b>Contacts</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Black	198	229	86.5%
White	20	26	76.9%
Hispanic	76	124	61.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>379</b>	

# CAD System Inaccuracies

Significant inaccuracies were found in the Sheriff's Department's CAD data system entries with respect to the reason for the student contacts – deputy **“observations”** or **“calls for service”** by school staff.

The Office of Inspector General suspects that the cause of the discrepancy between “observations” and “calls for service” is that SRDs did not properly reclassify some of the remaining “observation” entries to “calls for service.” To verify this theory, Office of Inspector General Staff reviewed the narrative sections of the CAD system entries to determine if any of the remaining “observation” entries were actually the result of “calls for service” by school staff.

A review of the narrative sections identified **at least an additional 311 (38.3%) of the 812 total student contacts should have been reclassified as “calls for service.”** In the **Schools Outside of Lancaster**, at least **77 (30.6%)** of the remaining 252 “observation” entries should have been reclassified as “call for service.” In the **Lancaster Schools**, at least **234 (58.1%)** of the remaining 403 “observation” entries should have been reclassified as “calls for service.”

**Recommendation:** The Sheriff’s Department should take steps to ensure that SRDs properly memorialize the reason for their contacts with students. Proper memorialization of the reason will improve the accuracy of the contact data in the CAD system and will also help the Sheriff’s Department track whether SRD contacts are initiated by school administrators or by the SRDs themselves.

# Discipline

Black students were disproportionately suspended and their suspension rates in SRD contract schools exceeded statewide averages.

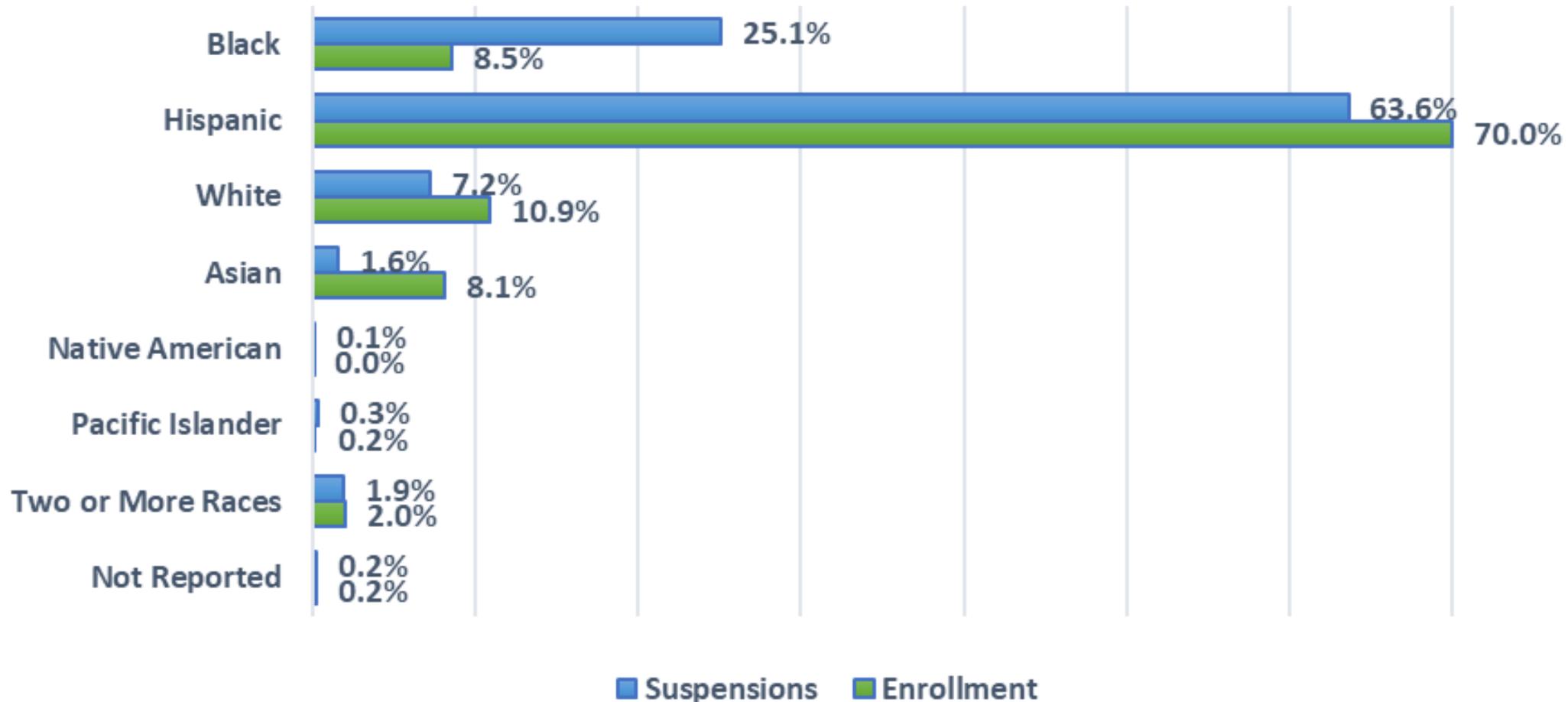
In both the Schools Outside of Lancaster and the Lancaster Schools, Black students were expelled at disproportionately higher rates than their percentage of school enrollment.

Black students were suspended and expelled at higher rates than their percentage of school enrollment. However, the degree of disproportionality observed in the Lancaster Schools was greater than what was observed in the Schools Outside of Lancaster.

- **In the Schools Outside of Lancaster, the 8.4% suspension rate for Black students was three times greater than the second highest suspension rate of 2.6% for Hispanic students.**
- **In the Lancaster Schools, the 12.5% suspension rate for Black students was four times greater than the second highest suspension rate of 3.2% for Hispanic students.**

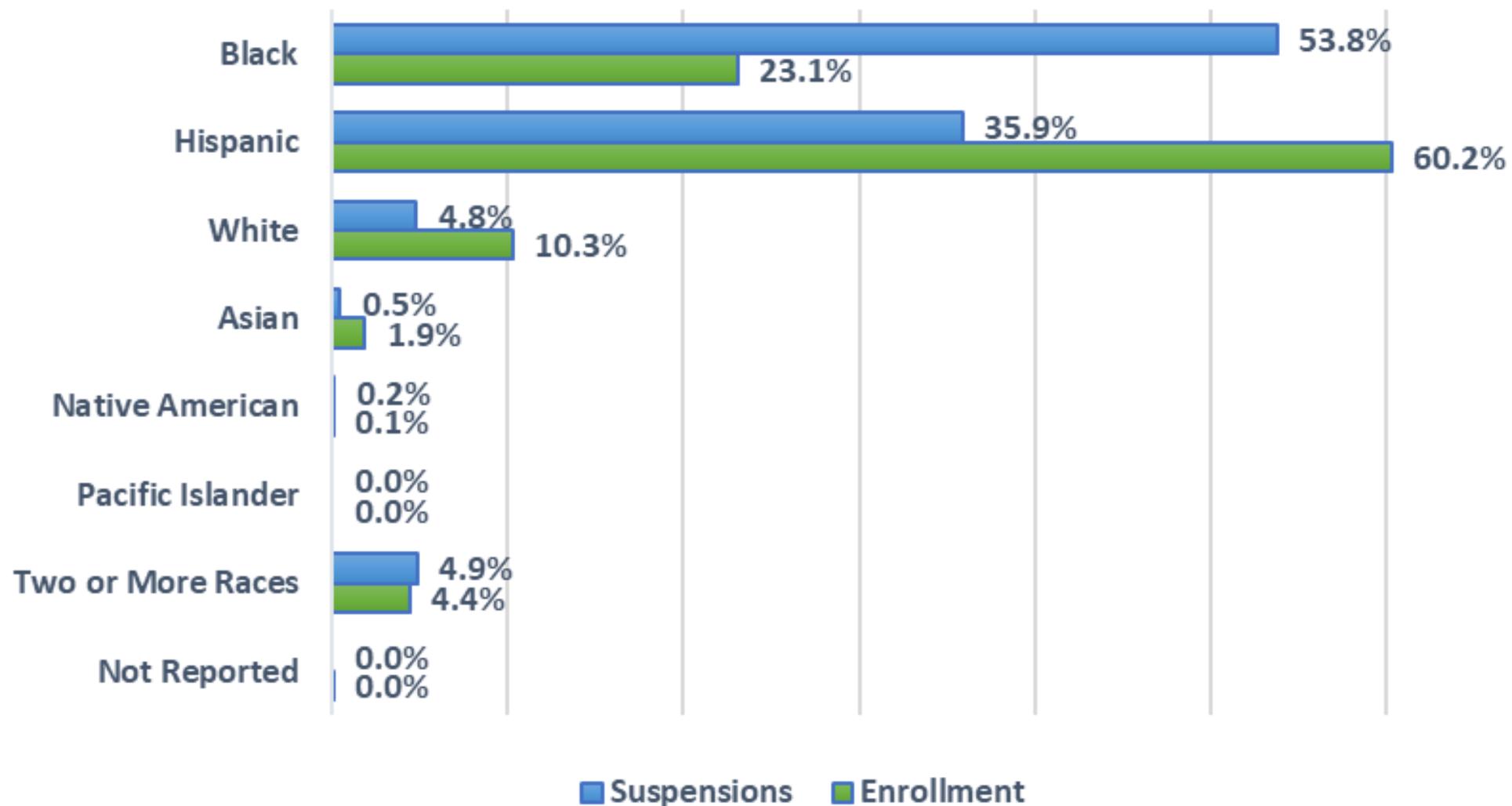
# Suspensions Compared to School Demographics

Schools Outside of Lancaster



# Suspensions Compared to School Demographics

Lancaster Schools



# Black Students Exhibited the Highest Level of Disproportionality in Suspensions Compared to Their Percentage of Student Enrollment

Race	Outside Lancaster	Lancaster
<b>Black</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	<b>30.7%</b>
Hispanic	-6.4%	-24.3%
White	-3.8%	-5.5%
Asian	-6.6%	-1.4%

# **The Suspension Rates of Black Students in SRD Contract Schools Exceeded Statewide Averages**

In the Schools Outside of Lancaster, the suspension rates of Black and Hispanic students exceeded statewide averages. **The suspension rate of Black students exceeded the statewide average by 1.6%, followed by Hispanic students at 0.1%.** The suspension rates of White students at 1.9%, and Asian students at 0.5% were under the statewide averages for their respective groups.

Race	Outside Lancaster	Statewide	Difference
<b>Black</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
Hispanic	2.6%	2.5%	0.1%
White	1.9%	2.0%	-0.1%
Asian	0.5%	0.7%	-0.2%

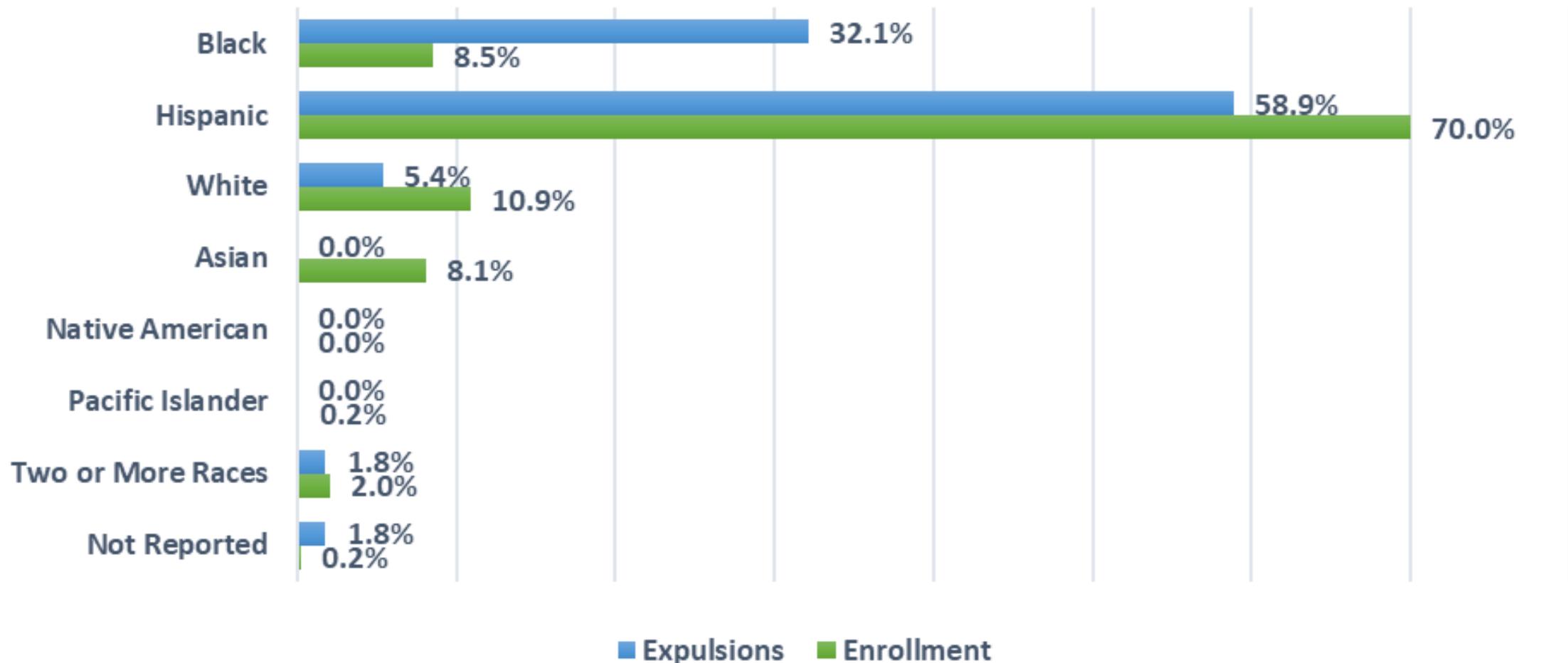
Race	Lancaster Schools	Statewide	Difference
<b>Black</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
Hispanic	3.2%	2.5%	0.7%
White	2.5%	2.0%	0.5%
Asian	1.3%	0.7%	0.6%

# Expulsions

Due to the severity of the punishment, expulsions are much less common than suspensions and are often used as a last resort. School administrators recommend expulsions to the school district's governing board, which will then decide whether to expel a student or not. The Office of Inspector General analyzed expulsion data for the **Schools Outside of Lancaster and the Lancaster Schools** and found that **Black students were expelled at disproportionately higher rates than their percentage of school enrollment.**

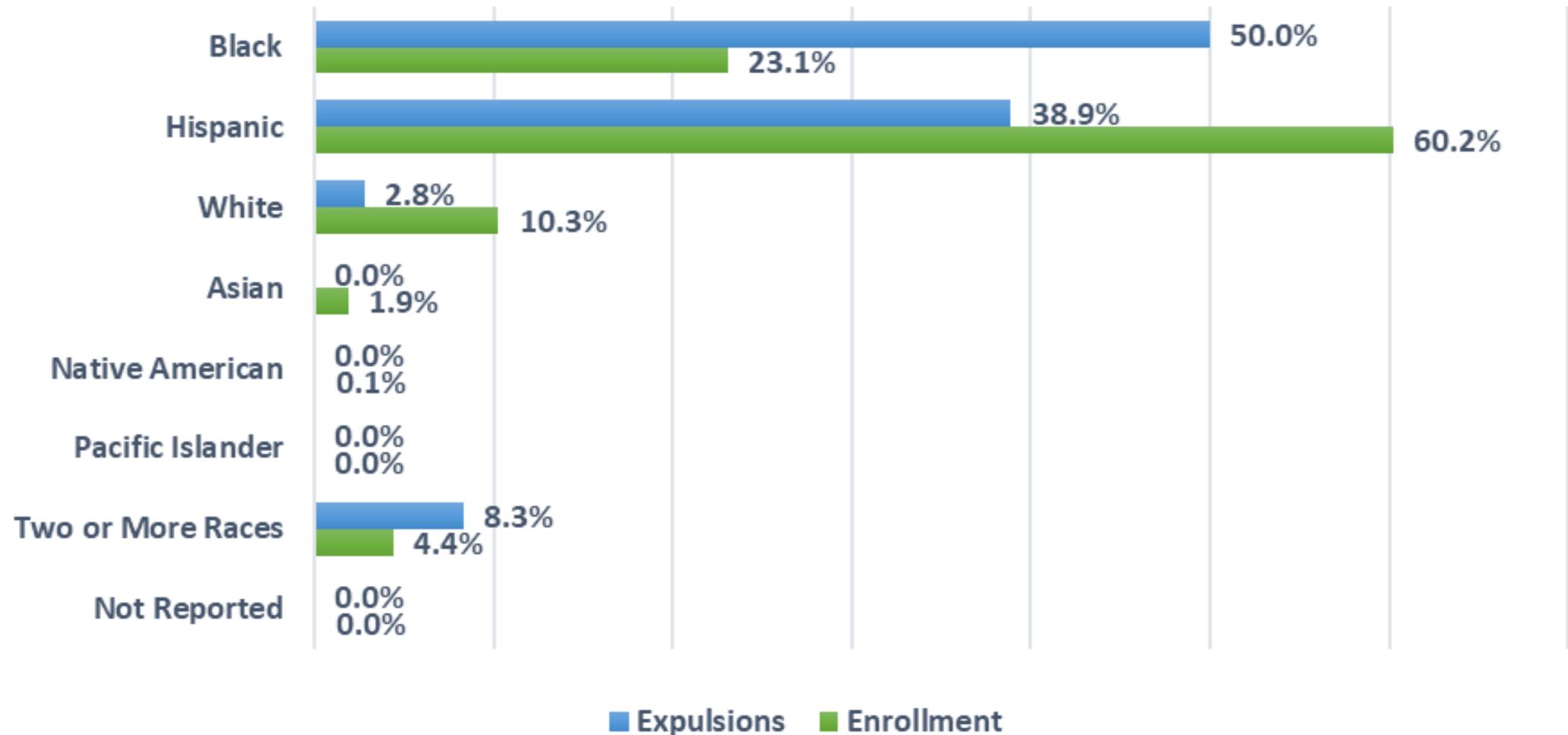
# Expulsions Compared to School Demographics

Schools Outside of Lancaster



# Expulsions Compared to School Demographics

Lancaster Schools



# School Contracts

The Office of Inspector General staff conducted a review of the contracts which the school districts entered into with the County for SRD services.

- The contracts use general boilerplate language to describe the services provided by SRDs.
- The current contracts the Sheriff's Department have with the schools **provide no specific guidance as to the types of situations for which students should be referred to SRDs, what type of services SRDs must provide when contacted, and/or how SRDs should interact with the school administrators.**

**Recommendation:** To help mitigate the negative effects of potential school-based bias in SRD referrals, the Office of Inspector General recommends that Sheriff's Department SRD contracts should include the following:

- **A clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of the SRD, the school district, and the school site, including a detailed plan outlining a process for student referrals to SRDs;**
- **The extent to which information will be shared between the school district and Sheriff's Department consistent with state and federal laws;**
- **Requirements for qualifications and training of SRDs;**
- **A system of SRD performance monitoring that is available to the public.**

**Recommendation:** In order to facilitate the preparation of these reports, **the Sheriff's Department should publish CAD system statistics on all SRD contacts with students including the data points listed in the Board's June 8, 2021,** motion entitled Strengthening Oversight of School Law Enforcement Services. The Sheriff's Department should also track and publish data on how many SRD contacts resulted in **uses-of-force** on students and the level of force used.

**Recommendation:** Los Angeles County should consider support for the passage of **California Assembly Bill 1299 (AB 1299)** requiring school resource officers to “report directly to the principal of the school while on the school campus” with certain exceptions. The bill also requires the creation of policies and procedures relating to use of school resource officers, or officers acting in this capacity, and must include the following:

(i) A prohibition on use of handcuffs on a school campus unless necessary to address a violent situation.

(ii) A prohibition on the issuance of a vehicle citation to a current pupil any person, including a pupil, operating a vehicle on a school campus.

(iii) A prohibition on the use of pepper spray on a school campus.

(iv) A prohibition on the use of a police officer, school resource officer, or any other law enforcement official acting as a school resource officer for purposes of correcting pupil behavior.