

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Hartford, Connecticut

Series 2005-2006
Circular Letter C-6

TO: Superintendents of Schools
Regional Education Services Center Executive Directors
Special Education/Pupil Personnel Directors

FROM: Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, Commissioner of Education

DATE: September 16, 2005

SUBJECT: Special Education Focused Monitoring

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Bureau of Special Education (BSE) is entering the second year of monitoring district's performance and compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) using a system of focused monitoring. The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of this monitoring process for the upcoming year and to share the significant improvements noted in many districts' performance over the past year.

Focused monitoring is a system endorsed by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and required under the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. The system is designed to examine areas of high priority in an efficient and effective process that results in measurable change in the outcomes for students with disabilities. The limited focus on key areas of priority allows a district to maximize its resources and efforts thus increasing the probability of improved results. The system requires an annual review and analysis of each district's data on key performance indicators (KPIs), selection of a limited number of districts for more in depth analysis, and identification of a small number of districts for on-site monitoring and improvement planning. The KPIs targeted for Connecticut's monitoring for the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years were disproportionate identification of students by race/ethnicity and the education of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. For each of these indicator areas, the CSDE has identified three (3) data probes as the basis to each district's data analysis.

For the 2005-06 year, the key performance indicators and data probes are as follows:

Key Performance Indicator #1: Monitor any overrepresentation of students with disabilities, in specific disability categories, for all racial and ethnic groups, in comparison to the population of the district's general education enrollment.

Data sources used to determine overrepresentation by race/ethnicity:

Data Probe #1: District high outliers (as determined by the standard error of the sample proportion using disability counts and percents by race/ethnicity) for children/youth of all ages (3-21) receiving special education and identified in one of the following disability categories: learning disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairment, other disability and other health impairment.

Data Probe #2: District disability odds ratios by race/ethnicity for children/youth of all ages (3-21) receiving special education and identified in one of the following disability categories: learning disabled, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairment, other disability and other health impairment.

Data Probe #3: District out of school suspension rate for students with disabilities (number of students) and the difference score for out of school suspension incidence rate for students with disabilities in comparison to students with out disabilities.

Key Performance Indicator #2: Decrease the number of students in all disability categories who spend time in segregated settings as defined by 0-40 percent of their day with nondisabled peers.

Data Probe #1: District percent of all students with disabilities (K-12) who spend 0-40 percent of their time with nondisabled peers.

Data Probe #2: District mean time with nondisabled peers for students with disabilities (K-12) educated in district.

Data Probe #3: District percent of pre-k students with disabilities, except those receiving itinerant services only, who spend 0-40 percent of their time with nondisabled students.

In order to communicate each district's performance as simply as possible, the CSDE has created the enclosed "data maps." For each data probe, districts are color coded according to their performance as identified on the criteria noted on each map. The color-coding indicates the following:

- Green: Data indicates strong performance in the area identified.
- Yellow: An area of concern, requiring data verification and analysis; and
- Red: An area of significant concern requiring data verification, data analysis and potential need for monitoring and improvement planning;

Districts should review their performance for each data probe and note the trend in data for each KPI. Districts that are color coded red on two (2) or three (3) data probes will be asked by the BSE to submit data verification and analysis. A review of this data analysis by the BSE will be used to choose districts for a focused monitoring site visit. In addition, based on identification of strong performance in all areas (green), the BSE will conduct a site visit to a district with exemplary performance in all areas.

A complete description of the monitoring system can be found in *Connecticut's System of General Supervision and Focused Monitoring for Continuous Improvement for Students with Disabilities*. The manual is available on the CSDE website at www.state.ct.us/sde. A copy of the data maps for the 2004-05 school year are also on the website for comparison to the 2005-2006 maps. If you are interested in the raw data used to create the data maps, the data is contained in your district's Preliminary Strategic School Profile for Students with Disabilities – 2004-2005.

Since the publication of the data maps in Fall 2004, the CSDE has seen significant improvements in the data on all KPIs. The following summarizes the areas of improvement noted:

- Using the 03-04 data, there were 55 red districts for the K-12 students in the 0-40% time with nondisabled peer group, using the 04-05 data there are 37 Red districts.
- Using the 03-04 data, there were 50 red districts for the mean time with -nondisabled peer group of all K-12 students, educated in-district; using the 04-05 data there are 28 red districts.
- Using the 03-04 data, there were 34 red districts for the mean time with nondisabled peer group of all pre-k, non-itinerant students; using the 04-05 data there are 24 red districts.
- Using the 03-04 data, there were 18 red districts and 7 yellow districts for prek-12 overrepresentation, using 03-04 data there are 8 red districts and 14 yellow districts.
- Using the 03-04 data, there are 22 red districts for special education graduation rate, using the 04-05 data there are 10 red districts.
- Using the 04-05 data, there are 37 districts that are green for all data points for LRE and disproportionality.

The CSDE has received positive feedback from LEAs and parents after the first year of instituting these monitoring changes. If you have questions or comments regarding the monitoring system or the data maps you may contact Deborah Richards, Focused Monitoring Coordinator at (860) 713-6925 or Deborah.Richards@po.state.ct.us.

Please note that additional information regarding monitoring activities and results related to the P.J. et al. v. State of Connecticut et al. Settlement Agreement will be sent to Superintendents in a separate communication.

The CSDE congratulates all the districts who demonstrated growth over the past year and looks forward to assisting districts in the future with improving the performance of students with disabilities in Connecticut.

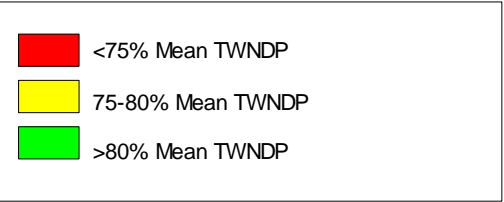
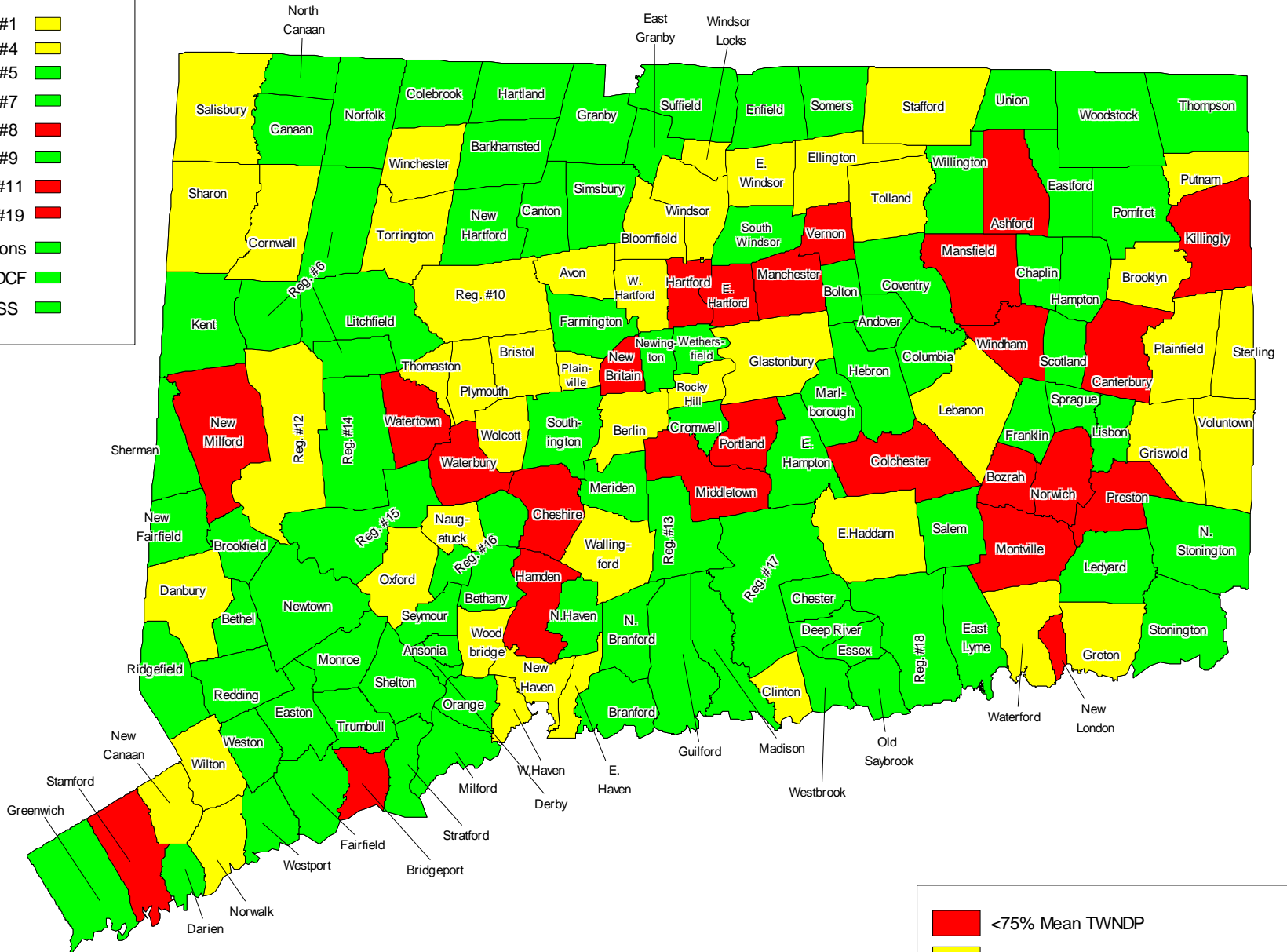
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enclosure

INDICATOR	Relative Standing on LRE Goals of the PJ et. al. v. State of Connecticut Settlement Agreement	Mean TWNDP for In-District K-12 Students with Disabilities	Mean TWNDP for Pre-K Students with Disabilities (Excluding Students Receiving Itinerant Services)	Percent of all K-12 Students With Disabilities who Spend 0-40% of the Day with Non-disabled Peers	Overrepresentation of Students with Disabilities by Race/Ethnicity	District Graduation Rate for Students with Disabilities	Percent of Pre-K Students with Disabilities who Spend 0-40% of the Day with Non-disabled Peers (Excluding Students Receiving Itinerant Services)	Out of School Suspension for Students with Disabilities
Year of Data	2004-05	2004-05	2004-05	2004-05	2003-04	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04
Student Population Represented	K-12	K-12	Pre-K	K-12	Pre-K-12	High School Students	Pre-K	Pre-K-12
	<u>Below State Figure on:</u> Home School and Percent in Regular Class OR Any 3 Goals	Mean TWNDP less than 75%	Mean TWNDP less than 50%	Greater than 16% spending 0-40% Time with Nondisabled Peers	Statistically significant overrepresentation in 3-4 areas of disability	Graduation rate for SWD less than 50%	Difference greater than 35%	High out of school suspension incidence difference score OR High out of school suspension rate for students with disabilities
	<u>Below State Figure on:</u> Home School OR Percent in Regular Class OR Any 2 Goals	Mean TWNDP 75%-80%	Mean TWNDP 50%-80%	10%-16% spending 0-40% Time with Nondisabled Peers	High odds ratio or statistically significant overrepresentation in 1-2 areas of disability	Graduation rate for SWD 50%-70%	Difference 35.0% - 20%	High out of school suspension incidence rate OR High 10+ days suspension rate for students with disabilities
	<u>Above State Figure on:</u> Home School, Percent in Regular Class, Mean and Median TWNDP OR All LRE Goals	Mean TWNDP greater than 80%	Mean TWNDP greater than 80%	Less than 10% spending 0-40% Time with Nondisabled Peers	No high odds ratio or statistically significant overrepresentation	Graduation rate for SWD greater than 70%	Difference less than 20%	No high rates or difference scores for students with disabilities
			No preschool students or only itinerant preschool students			Not a high school diploma granting district	No preschool students or only itinerant preschool students	

Mean Time with Nondisabled Peers for In-District K-12 Students with Disabilities (2004-05; K-12 Data)

Secondary Only or
Stawe ide School Districts

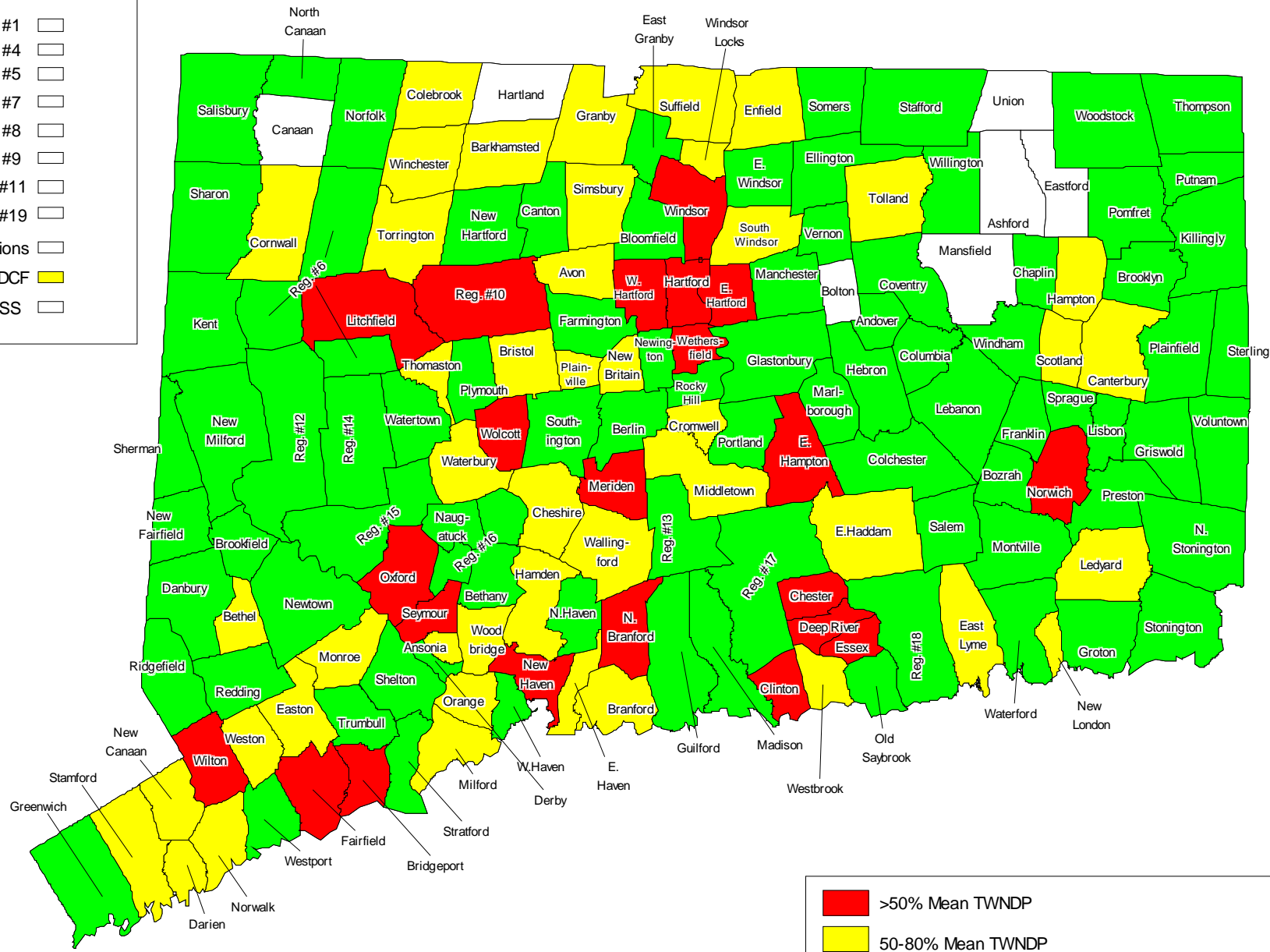
- Region #1
- Region #4
- Region #5
- Region #7
- Region #8
- Region #9
- Region #11
- Region #19
- Corrections
- DCF
- CTHSS



Mean Time with Nondisabled Peers of Pre-K Students with Disabilities Excluding Students Receiving Itinerant Services (2004-05; Pre-K Data)

Secondary Only or
Stawe ide School Districts

- Region #1
- Region #4
- Region #5
- Region #7
- Region #8
- Region #9
- Region #11
- Region #19
- Corrections
- DCF
- CTHSS

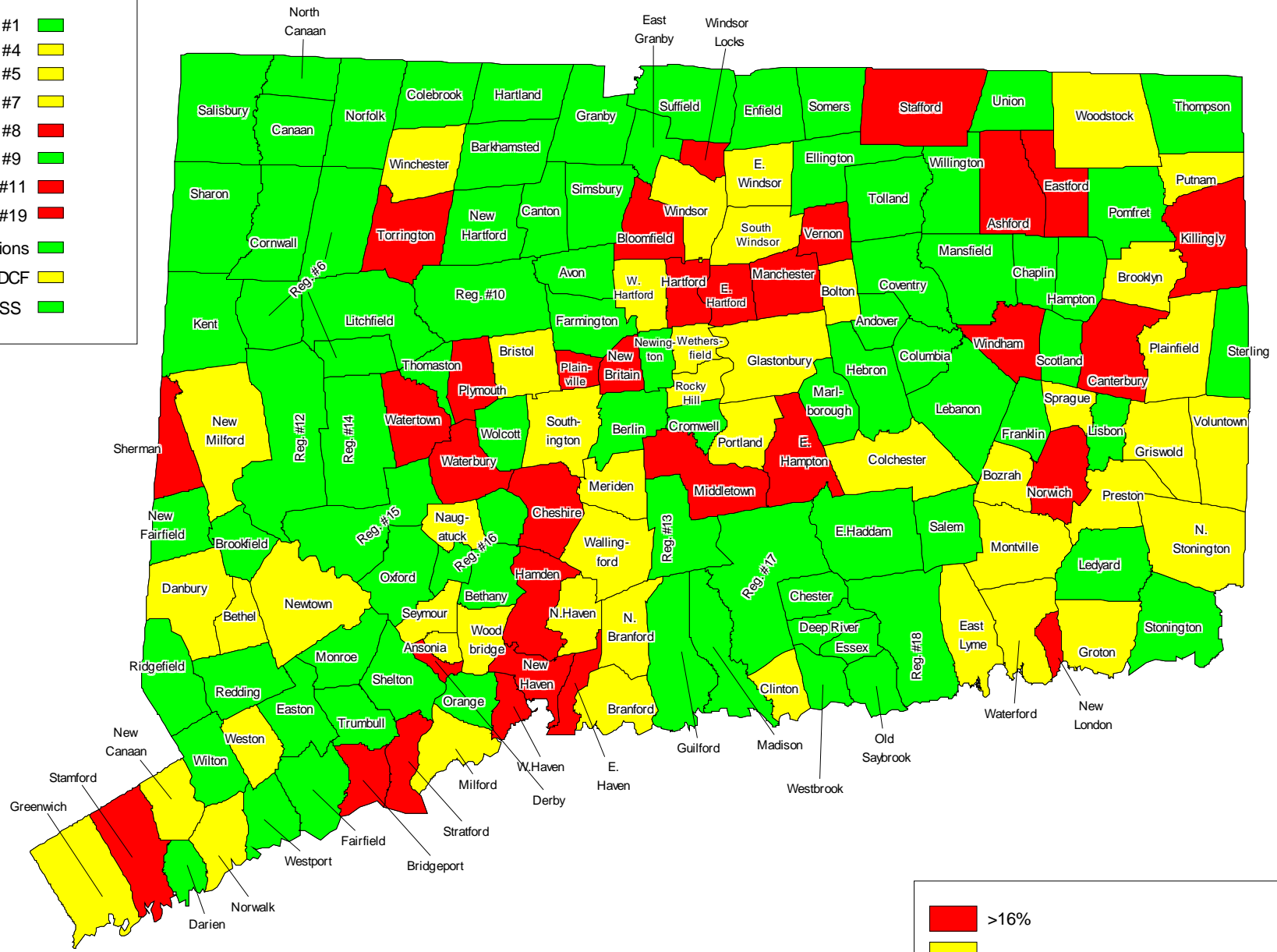


- >50% Mean TWNDP
- 50-80% Mean TWNDP
- >80% Mean TWNDP
- No Pre-K Students or Only Itinerant Pre-K Students

Percent of K-12 Students with Disabilities Spending 0-40% Time with Nondisabled Peers (2004-05; K-12 Data)

Secondary Only or
Stawe ide School Districts

- Region #1 ■
- Region #4 ■
- Region #5 ■
- Region #7 ■
- Region #8 ■
- Region #9 ■
- Region #11 ■
- Region #19 ■
- Corrections ■
- DCF ■
- CTHSS ■

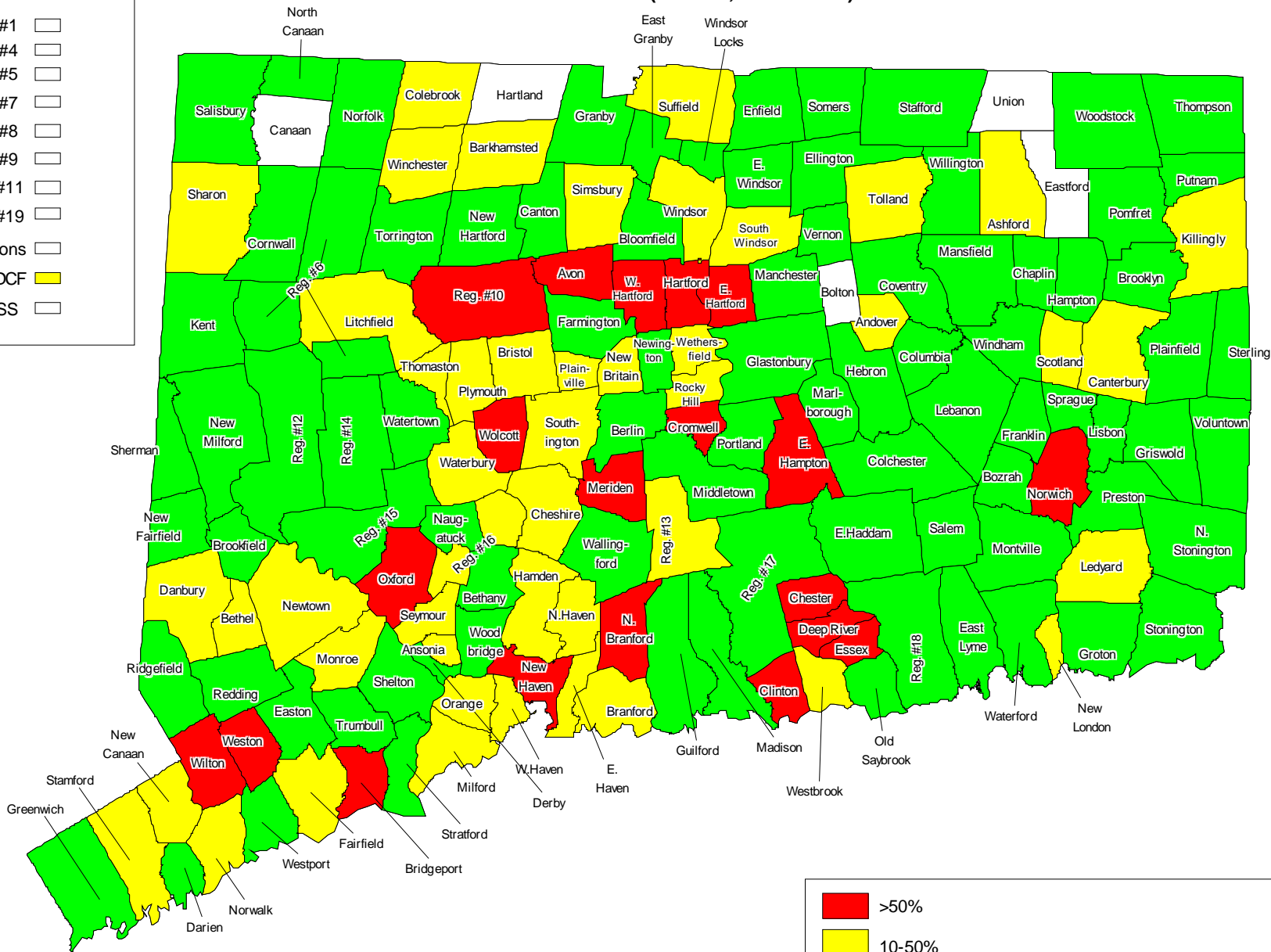


- >16%
- 10-16%
- <10%

Percent of Pre-K Students with Disabilities Spending 0-40% Time with Nondisabled Peers Excluding Students Receiving Itinerant Services (2004-05; Pre-K Data)

Secondary Only or
Stawe ide School Districts

- Region #1
- Region #4
- Region #5
- Region #7
- Region #8
- Region #9
- Region #11
- Region #19
- Corrections
- DCF
- CTHSS

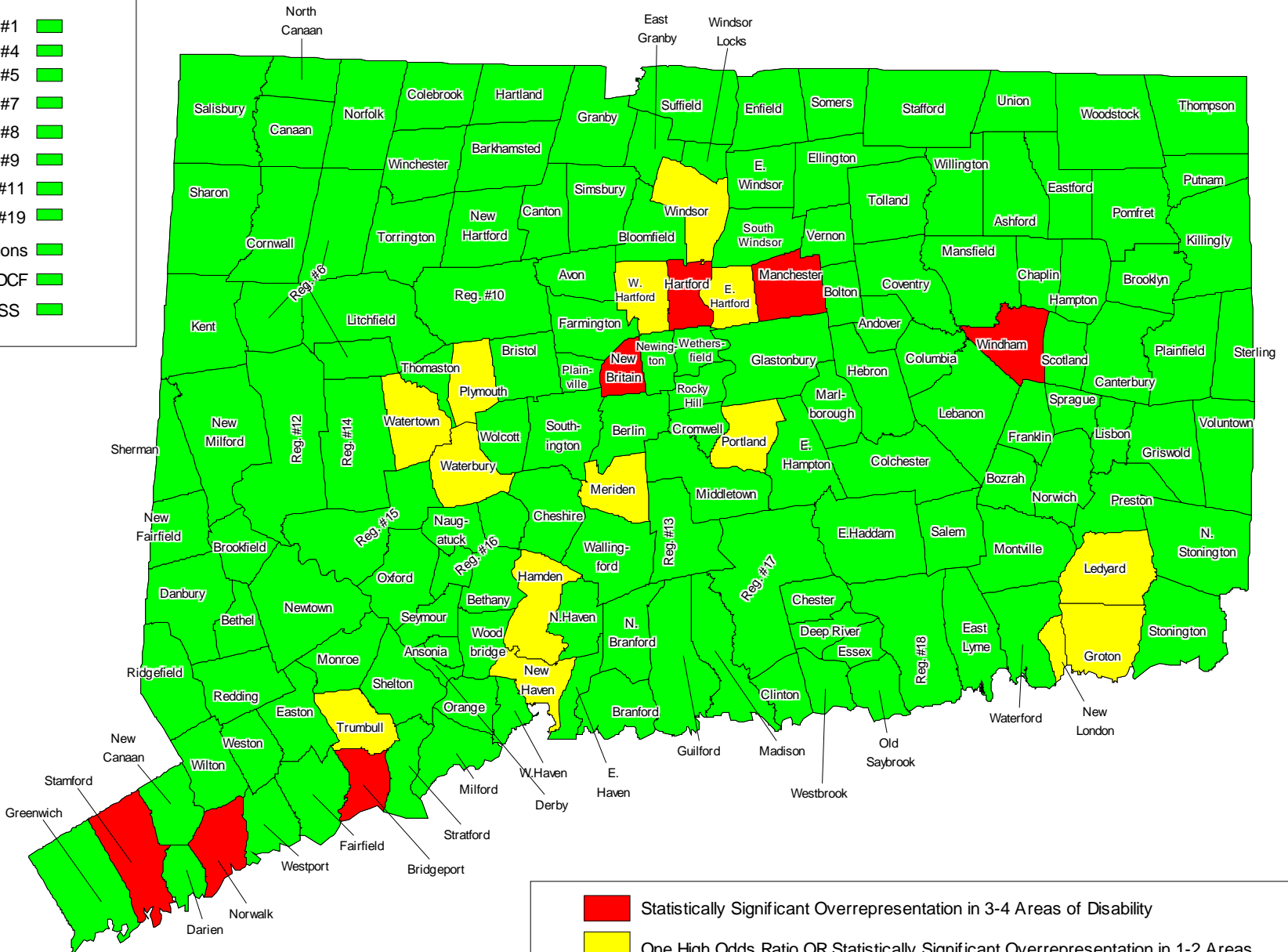


- >50%
- 10-50%
- <10%
- No Pre-K Students or Only Itinerant Pre-K Students

Overrepresentation of Students with Disabilities by Race/Ethnicity (2003-04; Pre-K-12 Data)

Secondary Only or
Stawetide School Districts

- Region #1
- Region #4
- Region #5
- Region #7
- Region #8
- Region #9
- Region #11
- Region #19
- Corrections
- DCF
- CTHSS

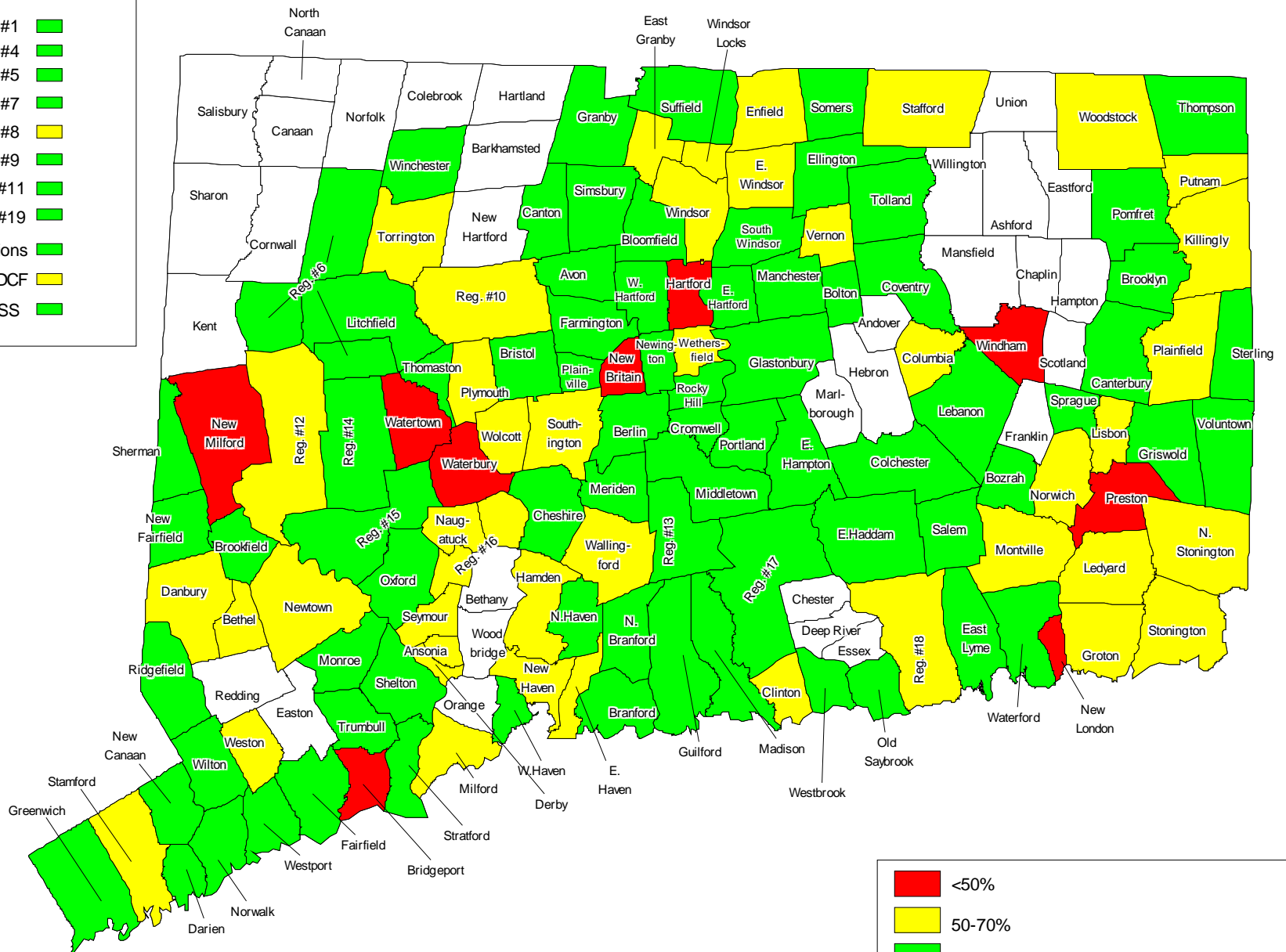


- Statistically Significant Overrepresentation in 3-4 Areas of Disability
- One High Odds Ratio OR Statistically Significant Overrepresentation in 1-2 Areas
- No High Odds Ratio and No Area of Statistical Significance

District Graduation Rate for Students with Disabilities (2003-04; Grades 9-12 Data)

Secondary Only or
Stawe ide School Districts

- Region #1 ■
- Region #4 ■
- Region #5 ■
- Region #7 ■
- Region #8 ■
- Region #9 ■
- Region #11 ■
- Region #19 ■
- Corrections ■
- DCF ■
- CTHSS ■



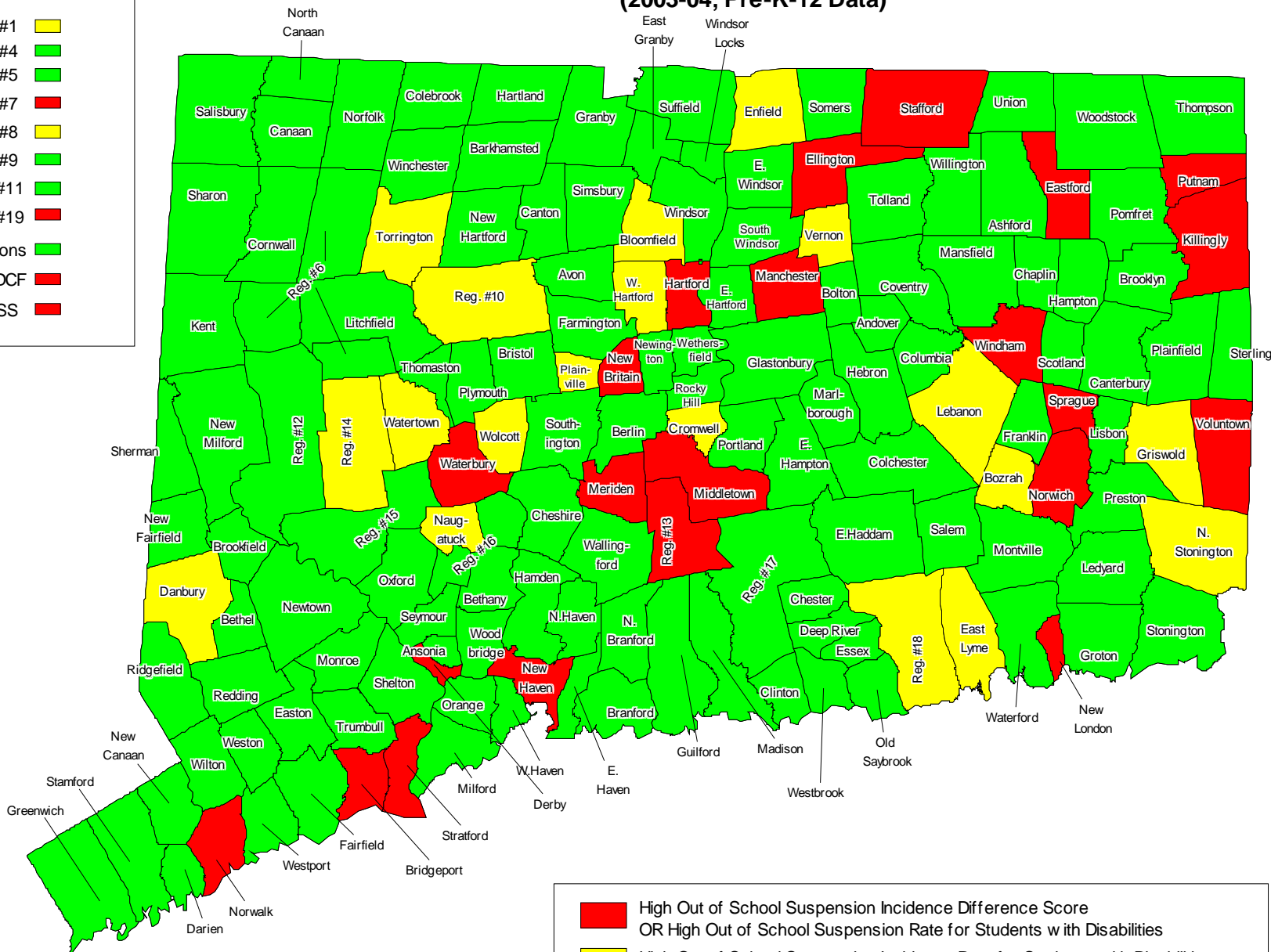
- <50%
- 50-70%
- >70%
- Not a High School Diploma Granting District

Out of School Suspension for Students with Disabilities

Serious Offenses Only
(2003-04; Pre-K-12 Data)

Secondary Only or
 Stawie School Districts

- Region #1 ■
- Region #4 ■
- Region #5 ■
- Region #7 ■
- Region #8 ■
- Region #9 ■
- Region #11 ■
- Region #19 ■
- Corrections ■
- DCF ■
- CTHSS ■

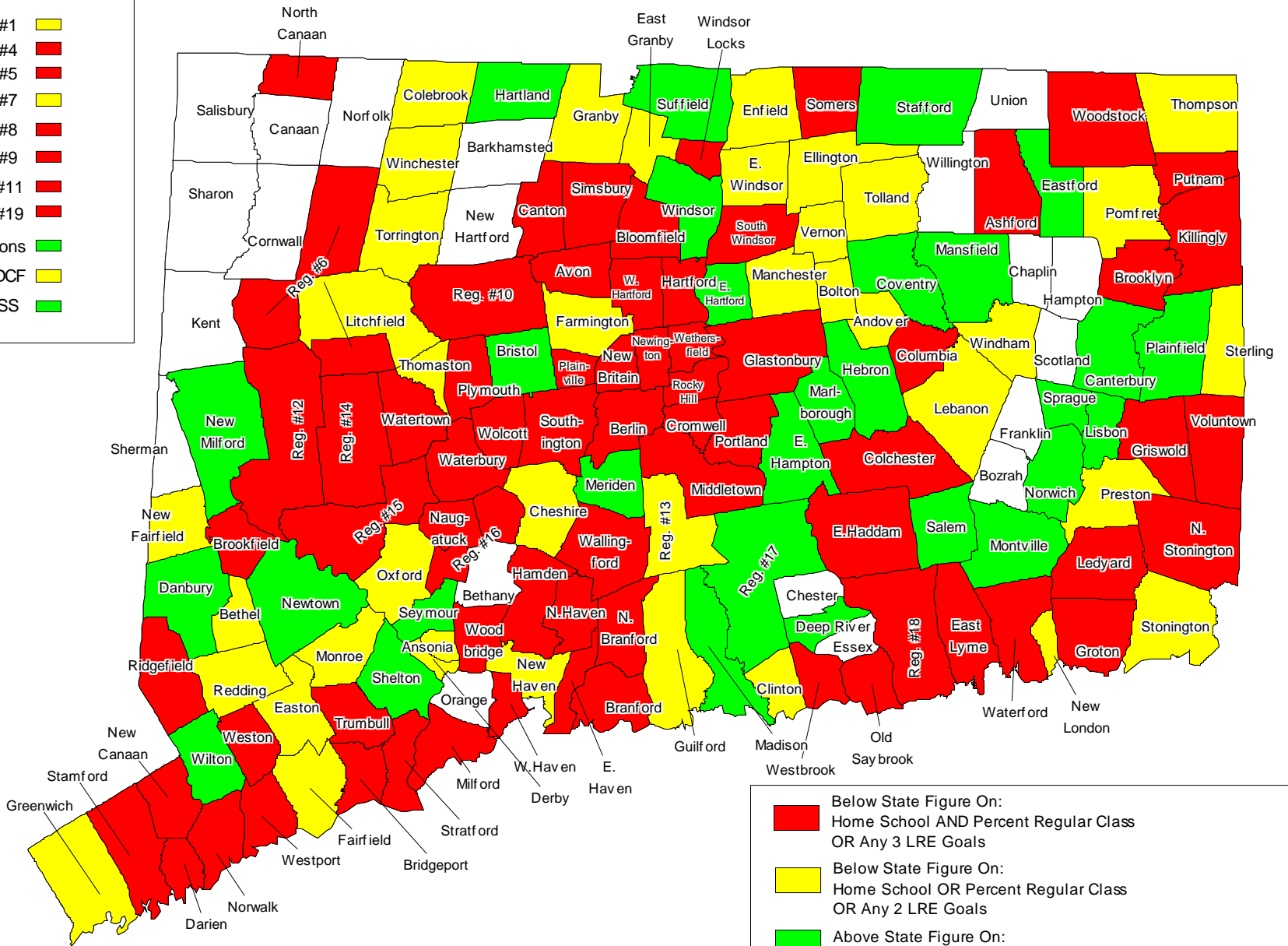


- High Out of School Suspension Incidence Difference Score
 OR High Out of School Suspension Rate for Students with Disabilities
- High Out of School Suspension Incidence Rate for Students with Disabilities
 OR High 10+ Days Suspension Rate for Students with Disabilities
- No High Rates or Difference Scores in the Above Areas

Relative Standing on Goals of the P.J. et. al. v. State of Connecticut Settlement Agreement (2004-05; K-12 Data)

Secondary Only or
Statewide School Districts

- Region #1
- Region #4
- Region #5
- Region #7
- Region #8
- Region #9
- Region #11
- Region #19
- Corrections
- DCF
- CTTHSS



- Below State Figure On:
Home School AND Percent Regular Class
OR Any 3 LRE Goals
- Below State Figure On:
Home School OR Percent Regular Class
OR Any 2 LRE Goals
- Above State Figure On:
Home School, Percent Regular Class, Mean and Median TWNDP
OR All LRE Goals
- No Students with ID