



## **Disparity Study Final Report Frequently Asked Questions**

- **What is a Disparity Study?**

A Disparity Study is an evaluation of the procurement and contracting practices of government agencies, primarily their use of small, minority and women-owned business enterprises.

- **What is the purpose of the Disparity Study?**

The purpose of the Disparity Study (Study) was to evaluate how well The School Board of Broward County's (SBBC) current programs promote equal opportunity for bidding and equitable distribution of procurement.

- **Why did the School Board conduct the Study?**

Broward County Public Schools initiated the Study to:

- Identify best practices that will help the District build a business program to stimulate the economic growth of local businesses.
- Increase the participation of small, local, minority and women-owned business enterprises in SBBC's contracts.
- Promote a sound fiduciary relationship with local businesses.
- Reinforce social responsibility toward the local business community.

- **Who conducted the Disparity Study?**

Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd., a national public policy research firm based in Oakland, California, conducted the Study. Mason Tillman reviewed the District's contract records; identified market area businesses (Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties); received membership lists from local business and trade associations; interviewed local business owners; conducted surveys; and interviewed District managers.

- **How will the Study results be used?**

Broward County Public Schools is committed to having fair and equitable distribution of procurement and contracting opportunities.

The Study represents the first phase in the District's continuous improvement initiative and will be utilized to drive improvements and strategies for increasing participation among underutilized businesses. In addition, the Study provides the District with the required legal authority to remedy disparities identified in the Study's findings. This includes the ability to establish goals in solicitations to help level the playing field in areas where disparities were found, and ensure the District's business practices reflect the community we serve.

- **What was the period analyzed for the Disparity Study?**  
The 5-year study period included July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2013.
- **What industries were studied?**  
The industries studied were professional services, contractual services, commodities, and construction.
- **How were local business owners involved in the Study?**  
Local business owners were involved by participating in a business survey, taking part in an interview, and providing membership lists from local business and trade associations.
- **What groups were analyzed in the Study?**  
The groups included:
  - African American
  - Hispanic American
  - Caucasian Female
  - Asian-American
  - Native American
  - Non-Minority
- **What did the Study reveal about the District's procurement and contracting practices?**  
The Study revealed disparity in the District's contracting practices. It showed that the District contracted with fewer firms than were available to do business, particularly small, minority, and women-owned firms.
- **What key recommendations came out of the Study?**  
To assist the District in addressing the disparities, the Study includes:
  - Administrative recommendations for pre- and post-solicitation phases aimed at eliminating the barriers that are impacting minority and women-owned businesses' access to School Board contracts and subcontractor opportunities.
  - Strategies for modifying policies, including race-gender neutral and race-gender conscious remedies.
  - Next steps to improve participation by small, minority and women-owned businesses in the District's procurement process.
- **How can people access the Disparity Study?**  
The Disparity Study Final Report is available on the Broward County Public Schools Supplier Diversity & Outreach Program website:  
<http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/supply/sdop/disparity.html>
- **Who should be contacted for additional information?**  
For more information, contact:
  - Broward County Public Schools Supplier Diversity & Outreach Program Office at 754-321-0550 or email [Supplierdiversity@browardschools.com](mailto:Supplierdiversity@browardschools.com).