

## Weighted & Alternate Risk Ratios

### Weighted Risk Ratio

A weighted risk ratio method is used for districts in which there are at least 10 students in the racial/ethnic group and at least 10 students in the comparison group enrolled.

When applied to overall special education eligibility within a district, the weighted risk ratio answers the question, "How many times greater is a specific racial/ethnic group's risk of being identified as eligible for special education and related services in comparison with all other racial/ethnic groups *in the district?*" When applied to eligibility by disability category within a district, the weighted risk ratio answers the question, "How many times greater is a specific racial/ethnic group's risk of being identified as eligible for special education and related services for a particular disability category in comparison with all other racial/ethnic groups *in the district?*"

A weighted risk ratio adjusts for district variability in the racial/ethnic composition of the comparison group. Because the weighted formula accounts for variance in the size of ethnic groups in each district, it allows comparison of risk ratios across districts and allows ISBE to rank districts when deciding how to target technical assistance.

### Alternate Risk Ratio

The alternate risk ratio method is used for districts in which there are at least 10 students in the racial/ethnic group but fewer than 10 students in the comparison group enrolled.

When applied to overall special education eligibility within a district, the alternate risk ratio answers the question, "How many times greater is a specific racial/ethnic group's risk of being identified as eligible for special education and related services in comparison with all other racial/ethnic groups *in the state?*" When applied to eligibility by disability category within a district, the alternate risk ratio answers the question, "How many times greater is a specific racial/ethnic group's risk of being identified as eligible for special education and related services for a particular disability category in comparison with all other racial/ethnic groups *in the state?*"

In comparison to the weighted risk ratio, an alternate risk ratio yields similar risk information but, because of the small size of the district's comparison group, compares district risk against the risk for all other racial/ethnic groups in the state.