



Miami-Dade County Public Schools Disparity Study Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

1. What is a Disparity Study?

A: The study determines whether an agency, either in the past or currently, engages in discriminatory or exclusionary practices in the solicitation and award of contracts to minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs).

2. What is the purpose of a disparity study? Why is it necessary?

A: The study is necessitated in part by the 1989 U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the case of *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson*. The court decision imposed legal requirements on jurisdictions to establish a "compelling interest" to support the establishment of a minority and women business program. The results of this study will determine if a compelling interest exists for the establishment of an M/WBE program.

3. What information/data does the Disparity Consultant review in making its analysis (e.g. anecdotal, contracts, etc.)?

A: For Phase II, data analyzed for the District, where available, includes:

- Expenditures of contracts awarded to firms providing other services, non-technical services, professional and technical services, and goods;
- Subcontract dollars awarded by prime contractors and lead professional consultants on District contracts;
- Anecdotal data retrieved from focus groups, public hearings, surveys, and interviews;
- Current or past policies, procedures, and programs that govern the procurement of contracts;

4. What factors are considered in determining whether disparity exists?

A: Disparity ratios are determined by comparing the utilization *percentage* of MWBEs with their availability *percentage* in the pool of total businesses in the relevant market area. When $D=1$, there is no disparity, (*i.e.*, utilization equals availability). As D approaches zero, the implication is that utilization is disproportionately low compared to availability. As D gets larger (and greater than one), utilization becomes disproportionately higher compared to availability. Statistical tests are used to determine whether the difference between the actual value of D and 1 are statistically significant, (*i.e.*, whether it can be stated with confidence that the difference in values is not due to chance).



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5. What minority groups are being analyzed as part of the disparity study?

A: The groups included in the study are:

- Non-MWBEs (Non-Minority and Women Business Enterprises)
- African American-owned firms
- Asian American-owned firms
- Hispanic or Latino American-owned firms
- American Indian or Native American-owned firms
- Non-minority Women-owned firms

6. What is the study period being analyzed as part of the disparity study?

A. Phase I - Construction & Construction Related Professional Services:

- a. Fiscal Years July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2012

B. Phase II - Procurement (Goods/Supplies) & Professional and Other Services:

- b. Fiscal Years July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2015

7. Is the disparity study limited to specific industries (e.g. construction, procurement, etc.)?

A: The disparity study is being conducted in two phases.

- Phase I included industries in construction, and construction and design-related professional services (architecture and engineering, job order contract consultants, etc).
- Phase II will include industries in, other services, non- technical services, professional and technical services, and goods.

8. When can we expect to see the results of the disparity study?

A: The Disparity consultants anticipate that Phase II of the Study will be completed by February 2018.

9. I am a vendor and I haven't heard from the Disparity Consultant, who are they contacting and how is this determined?

A: The Consultants will be contacting firms to participate in focus groups, interviews, surveys, and public hearings. Firms are randomly selected to participate in the interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Because every firm will not be contacted, firms are encouraged to participate in the public forums to provide their experience in doing business or attempting to do business with the District or its primes.

10. What is the difference between a public hearing and a public forum? How do these differ from the information you will collect at a focus group?

A: Both the public hearing and the public forum are open to the public and are conducted to share information about the District's Disparity Study. The difference is that the public hearing will document anecdotal testimony (via



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court stenographer) from firms and/or individuals that have done business, or are interested in doing business directly with the District or indirectly through its prime contractors/lead professional consultants. The public forum does not document testimony but affords the opportunity for firms/individuals to ask questions pertaining to the disparity study.

Focus groups are small groups that facilitate discussions with randomly selected firms that have done business, or are interested in doing business with the District.

Data collected during the focus groups and the public hearings is equally important. The focus groups allows for further discussion on topics such as doing business for the District, its primes, the private sector, barriers to doing business, etc.