SEARAC

WHAT IS DATA DISAGGREGATION?

What does data disaggregation mean?

Data disaggregation means *breaking down large data categories into more specific sub-categories*. When data are broken down and disaggregated by ethnic groups, they can show the unique differences among groups and reveal significant disparities. For Southeast Asian Americans (SEAAs), measures of educational attainment like high school graduation rates, or health indicators like insured rates and the prevalence of certain diseases, reveal challenges that uniquely impact SEAA students, elders, and community members. With this information, we can better identify which communities need better support.
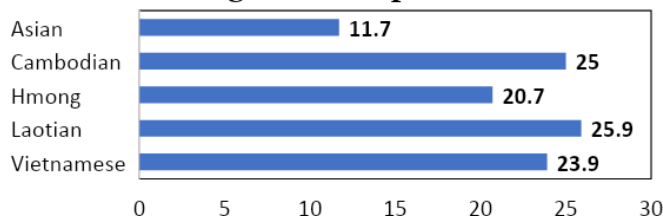
Why do we need race and ethnicity data?

Race data are essential for

- planning and funding government programs;
- evaluating programs and policies to make sure they serve all communities equitably; and
- preventing discrimination.

Without data on race, policymakers cannot make sound, data-driven decisions to allocate resources equitably to meet the needs of all people.
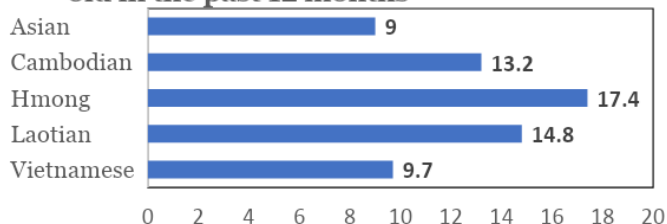

Percentage of adults age 25 and older without a high school diploma

Asian	11.7
Cambodian	25
Hmong	20.7
Laotian	25.9
Vietnamese	23.9

What's the problem with current data collection and reporting?

Federal agencies, like the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services, are required to report racial and ethnic data in at least these categories: Hispanic/Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White.[1] However, Asian Americans and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) are tremendously diverse. The US Census Bureau reports data annually on at least 22 distinct, self-identified AANHPI groups, each with unique linguistic, cultural, and historical differences.[2]

Poverty rates of children under 18 years old in the past 12 months

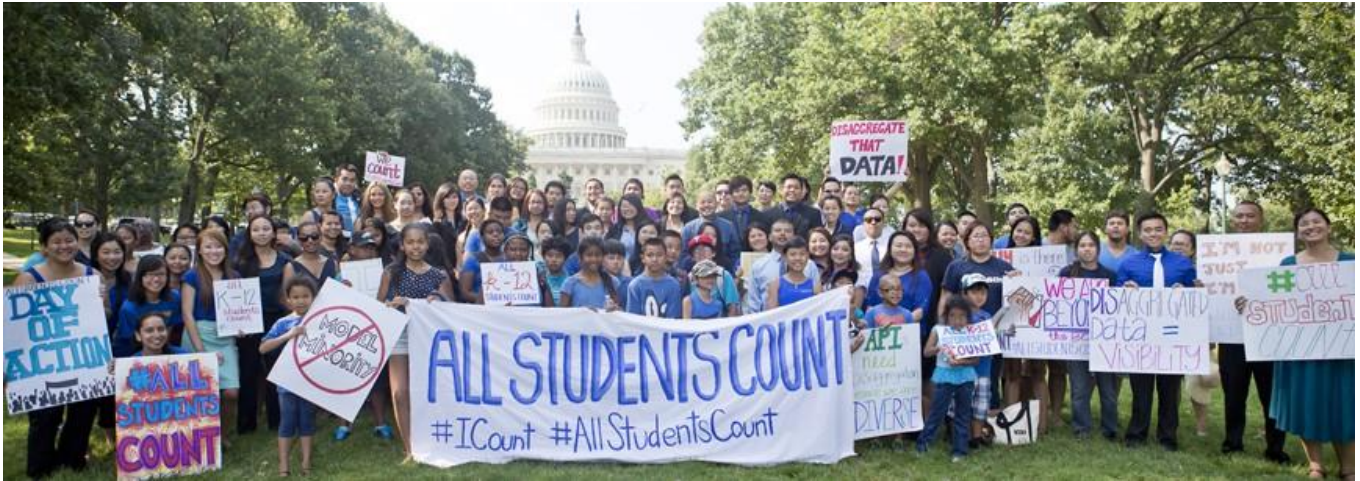|	
Asian	9
Cambodian	13.2
Hmong	17.4
Laotian	14.8
Vietnamese	9.7

When government agencies report only averaged aggregate data under the "Asian" category, they conceal significant differences and inequities among the many distinct AANHPI groups. For SEAAs, the mass collective trauma from war, genocide, displacement, and the stressors associated with relocation — like English language difficulties and cultural conflicts — affect health

Office of Management and Budget. (1997). *Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*. Retrieved from https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-1997-10-30/pdf/97-28653.pdf

[2] US Census Bureau / 2019 American Community Survey.

and socioeconomic outcomes.

What can local and state policymakers do to support data disaggregation?

Begin collecting and reporting on disaggregated student data

At a minimum, local education agencies should collect, analyze, and report disaggregate AANHPI data based on reported census race and ethnic categories. For Southeast Asian Americans, this means, collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Vietnamese students.

Local changes set precedent for other actions to happen across the country and provide other institutions with knowledge on the feasibility and effectiveness of data disaggregation. Local data collection of detailed AANHPI groups can help the creation and implementation of policies that benefit local populations when federal efforts are too broad to support small, local communities. These changes can also further encourage federal policymakers to call for national changes, if they can see real life examples of multiple entities that are effectively disaggregating data and using that data to serve communities' needs.

Seek federal resources, partnerships, and cost-sharing or cost- effective ways to implement data disaggregation.

Federal grant programs, such as the Race to the Top challenge, the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program, and the D2 program, have allowed funds to be used to pursue data disaggregation practices and policies. In addition to pursuing federal assistance through such programs, state and local agencies can also form partnerships with private companies to update data systems. In California, agreements between California State University and University of California provide examples of cost-sharing across institutions to develop data disaggregation systems that serve multiple campuses.