

INTRODUCTION

- State and Federal prisons in the United States continue to face overcrowding
- Education plays a major role in the prevention of crime, and low education levels are related to high prison entry rates.
- On a state level, every 1-year increase in the average educational attainment of a state decreases crime by 11% or more (Lochner and Moretti, 2004)
- School suspensions have a positive relationship with deviance and criminality (Cuellar and Markowitz, 2015)
- This study investigates the relationship between capital (social and financial), school performance, and juvenile delinquency per measure of suspension/expulsion rates in Connecticut’s Traditional Public High Schools

BACKGROUND OF THEORY

- Social Control Theory** (Hirschi 1969)
- The theory describes how emotional affiliation with an institution can lead to a decrease in criminalistic or deviant behavior
 - The lens examines the pillars of attachment, belief, commitment, and involvement and can describe how education decreases deviance and delinquency
- Theories of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
- Affirming identity is about trying to create a representative and welcoming environment, decreasing the likelihood of criminal activity
 - This emotional affiliation ties to Social Control Theory

DATA AND METHODS

- Dataset comes from EdSight, Connecticut’s public source for education data.
 - Statewide, population data of all schools, refined to public, non-specialized schools serving exclusively grades 9-12
- **Dependent Variables:** Accountability Index Percentage (a data metric predicting future student success through twelve benchmarks); Chronic Absenteeism Rates (missing >10% of days); Suspension/Expulsion Rates (percentage of students receiving at least one ISS, OSS, or EXP)
- **Independent Variables:** Educator Diversity Percentages; Total School Expenditures; Free or Reduced Lunch Eligibility (% of students eligible)
- **Analytic Technique:** Descriptive statistics to assess patterns of high school characteristics (e.g., percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch); linear multivariable models to estimate the three dependent variables separately; graphs of adjusted predictions of absenteeism, suspension rates, and accountability based on variables of interest.

Table 2. Beta Coefficients (Standard Error) Between Variables Studied. *From EdSight, Connecticut Non-Specialized Public High Schools, 2022-23.*

Variables	Rate of Chronic Absenteeism	Rate of Suspension and/or Expulsion	Accountability Index Points (Percentage)
% students eligible for free/reduced lunch	.380*** (.042)	.286*** (.023)	-.435*** (.026)
% Identifying as Educators of Color	.320*** (.092)	-.182*** (.051)	-.038 (.057)
Natural Log (ln) of Total Expenditures	-2.593* (1.321)	.088 (.763)	.366 (.817)
Sample Size	n=127	n=124	n=127
R ² values	0.7251	0.6509	0.8480

*denotes significance at the p<.10 level
**denotes significance at the p<.05 level
***denotes significance at the p<.01 level

RESULTS

- Percent of students eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL%) and Educator Diversity Percentage (EdDiv%) are both positively correlated with Absenteeism; Total Expenditures (TE) has a high practical significance demonstrating a negative correlation with absenteeism
- FRL% is positively correlated with Suspension/Expulsion Rates; EdDiv% is negatively correlated with Suspension/Expulsion Rates. Total Expenditures has no practical or statistical significance
- FRL% is negatively correlated with Accountability Index Points Percentage (AI%). EdDiv% and Total Expenditures have no practice or statistical significance.

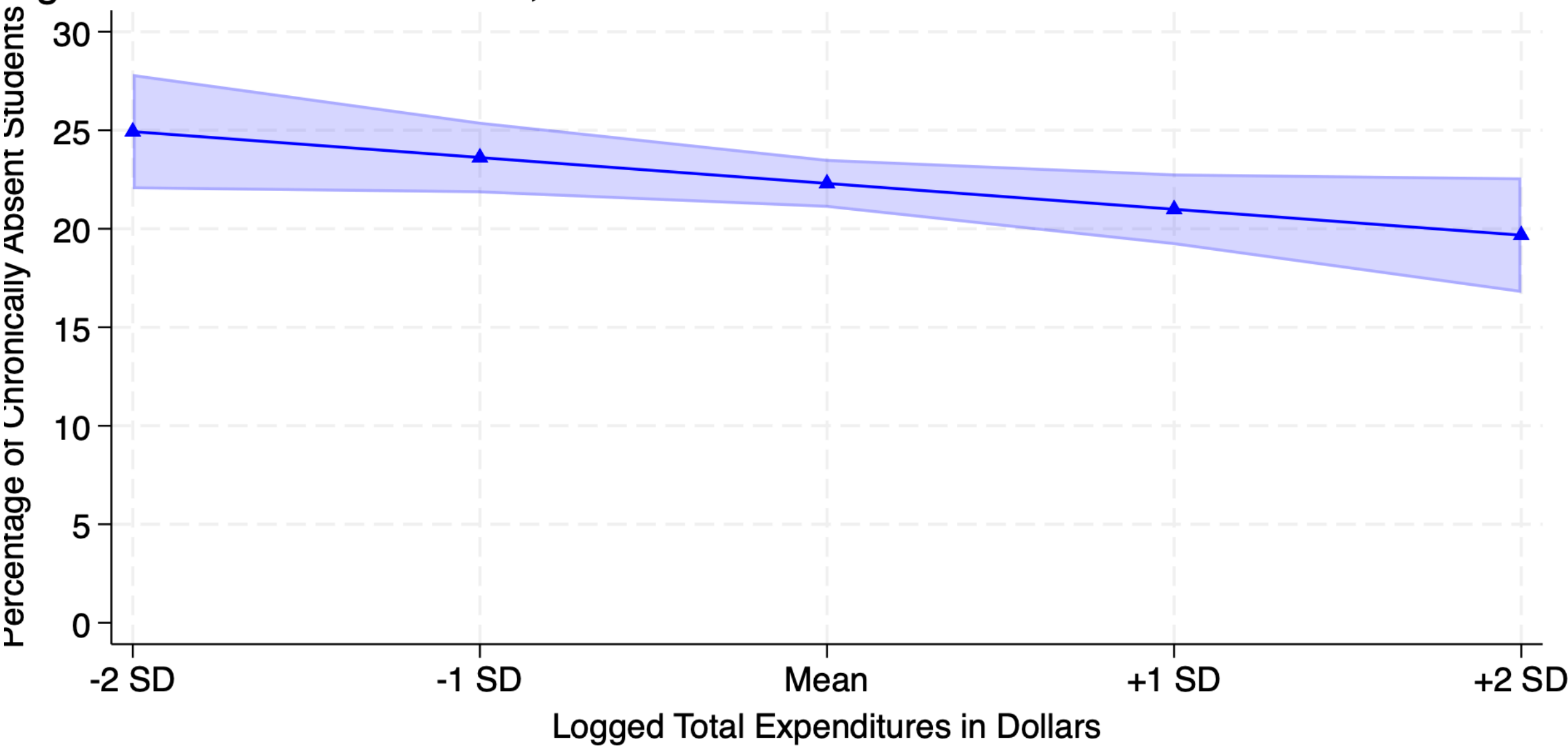
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- Schools serving poorer populations tend to underperform in various metrics
- Poorer populations have additional responsibilities (external employment; taking care of younger siblings) and as such may struggle more with absenteeism
- Increasing representation through educators allows for further emotional affiliation, reducing delinquency, represented by decrease in suspension/expulsion rates
- Investing in both financial capital through monetary means and social capital through educator representation allows schools to perform better in absenteeism and suspension/expulsion rates respectively
- More should be invested in supporting higher learning for future teachers of color to increase representation

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations for Independent and Dependent Variables. *From EdSight, Connecticut Non-Specialized Public High Schools, 2022-23.*

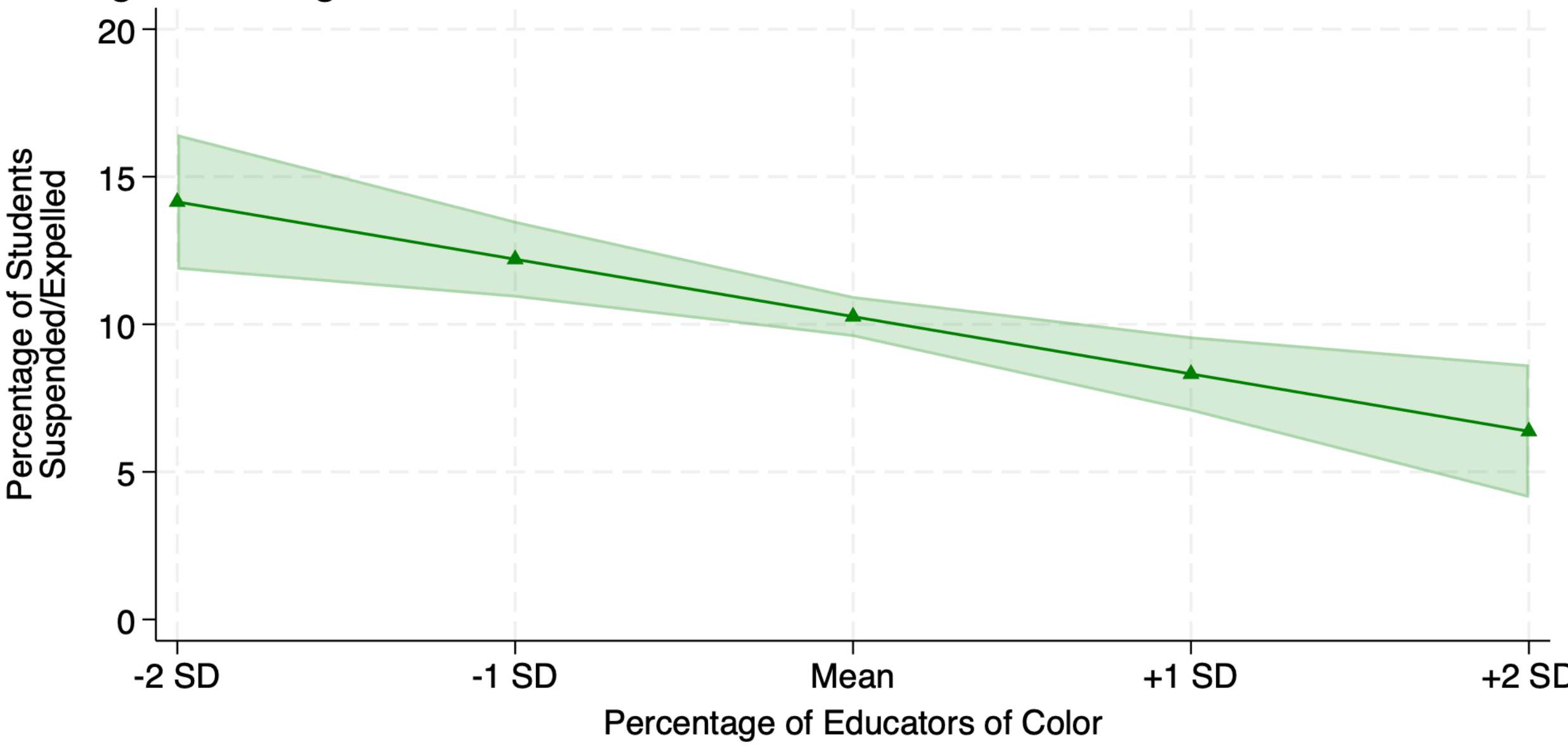
Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
% students eligible for free/reduced lunch	35.39	22.76
% Identifying as Educators of Color	9.62	10.67
Natural Log (ln) of Total Expenditures	16.46	.51
Rate of Chronic Absenteeism	22.21	13.28
Rate of Suspension and/or Expulsion	10.20	6.51
Accountability Index Points (Percentage)	72.13	11.03

Figure 1. Association between Total Expenditures and Absentism among Public High Schools in Connecticut, 2022–2023.



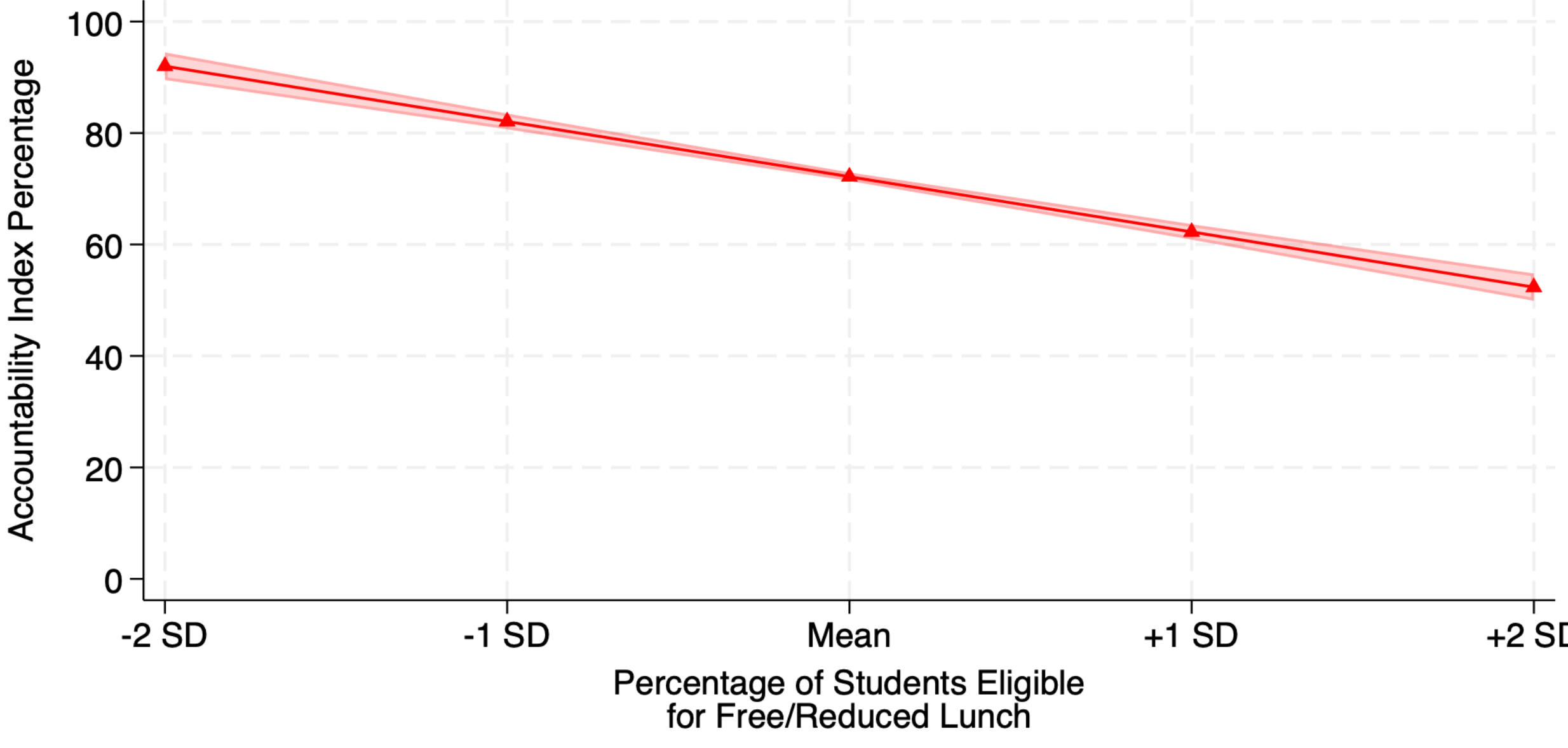
Note: Estimates account for percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch and educator diversity percentage (n=127). SD=standard deviation.

Figure 2. Association between Educator Diversity and Suspension/Expulsion Rates among Public High Schools in Connecticut, 2022–2023.



Note: Estimates account for percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch and total expenditures (n=124). SD=standard deviation.

Figure 3. Association between Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility and Accountability Index Points among Public High Schools in Connecticut, 2022–2023.



Note: Estimates account for Educator Diversity Percentage and total expenditures (n=127). SD=standard deviation.

