Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline

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Why We Want To Fix School Discipline

• California 2011-2012
  – 709,596 total suspensions (up to 5 days for each suspension)
  – 9,553 expelled students
  – 366,629 students suspended
  – 1 in 20 students suspended

• Disproportionate discipline
  African-American students
  6.5% of total enrollment, 19% of suspensions

Suspensions and Expulsions Make Matters Worse

• High rates of out-of-school suspensions correlate with lower achievement scores, even after controlling for race and poverty.
• Suspended or expelled students
  – 6 times more likely to repeat a grade
  – 5 times more likely to dropout
  – 3 times more likely to have contact with juvenile justice system
• Two decades of research: suspension for low-level offenses – doesn’t improve behavior, or school climate and sends youth to an unsupervised vacation
The Pipeline....

- School exclusions make it far more likely that a student will have contact with the juvenile justice system.

- One arrest doubles a young person's chance of not finishing high school.

- If a student appears in court, the likelihood of not finishing high school nearly quadruples.


Arrest and Referrals to Law Enforcement

- Nationally, over 70% of students arrested for school-related offenses or referred to law enforcement are Latino or African-American.

(DOE, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2012)

Why Does This Matter?

Because This...  ...Is being replaced by this!
Alternatives: Win-Win Education Solution & Required by California Law

- Keep schools safe while holding students accountable
- Increase academic achievement for the entire school
- Increase school funding because attendance rates increase
- Result in greater teacher stability
- Improve overall school climate and satisfaction

“OTHER MEANS OF CORRECTION” & LCFF/LCAP

- Suspension, including supervised suspension, can only be imposed when all other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct, or if the student has committed a “zero tolerance offense” (defined further below), or presents a danger to people. Cal. Ed. Code § 48900.5

- State Priority Area: School Climate!
Teacher Cecily Ina, Rosa Parks Elementary (in San Francisco)

“The climate here is much better [with Restorative Practices]. There is a lot less screaming and fighting from the kids. I also see a lot fewer ‘frequent fliers.’ I think that the students feel like their voices are being heard so they are less angry and likely to act out.”

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How We Can Fix School Discipline
Toolkits – Step by Step Guide

• What is happening with school discipline?
  – Who does it impact?
  – What can you do about it?
  – Toolkits:
    • For parents and students
    • For educators
    • For community leaders

1. Explain The Problem

• What are the problems with school discipline in my school?
• Which students are affected?
• How do these issues affect the communities surrounding schools?
• What state and federal laws govern school discipline?
2. Craft a Solution: Read Real Stories of Improved School Climate and Student Behavior
   • Pioneer High School: SWPBIS
     – reduced suspensions by 65%
     – raised overall API by 48 points.
   • Garfield High School: SWPBIS
     – 683 to 1; API up!
   • Rosa Parks Elementary: Restorative Practices
     – 40 to 5

3. Bust the Barrier: Funding
   • Funding sources
   • Moving away from exclusionary discipline increases school funding:
     – Pioneer High School generated nearly $100,000 of savings through increased ADA as attendance went up and suspensions went down!
     – Teacher stability also increased!
3. BE A LEADER for change.

- Sample documents help you get started.
- Tools can be cut and pasted into a word processing program

4. MONITOR progress.
5. CONTACT helpful leaders and experts in your area.

- Ask for help!
  - School and Community Leaders and Experts
  - Public Counsel
  - Partners
- Free resources, training materials, and funding sources!
- Share best practices.
- Grow and build the network.

Let's Fix School Discipline Series: Webinar Topics

- Using data to guide your new approaches
- Mental health services and fixing school discipline
- Demystifying Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices
- Funding sources to fix school discipline, federal, state and private
- Addressing Implicit Bias & Disproportionality
- Creating action plans and monitoring mechanisms for implementing alternatives

Next Steps: Let's Fix School Discipline!

- Technical assistance/onsite and telephone support: contact Sarah Omojola
  - somojola@publiccounsel.org
  - Phone: 510.529.3472
- Visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org and add your contact information to our list so we can notify you about upcoming webinars, important developments, and more opportunities to fix school discipline.
  - Weigh in with your questions, comments and ideas on our blog.
  - Share your stories, strategies, and best practices with us for inclusion in the toolkits.