JUST ONE out-of-school suspension in the 9th grade ***DOUBLES*** a student's risk of dropping out before graduation.

SCHOOL -TO- PRISON PIPELINE

ADVANCEMENT PROJECT

Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track

safequalityschools.org

What is the School-to-Prison Pipeline?

We are facing a crisis. Across the country, students are being suspended, expelled, shuffled off to disciplinary alternative schools, and even arrested for minor misbehavior or trivial actions like being late or violating a dress code. Instead of a trip to a counselor or a call home, students are being handcuffed and escorted from the schoolhouse to the jailhouse and courthouse. Metal detectors, armed guards, police, and barbed wire are common in our schools while libraries and counselors' offices are left empty.

Rather than having a common sense approach to discipline, too many schools are using overly harsh discipline policies and practices that are ineffective, unfair, and detrimental. Research shows that this zero tolerance approach does not work. It doesn't make schools safer. Instead, this approach lowers educational outcomes, damages relationships within schools, and diverts funding from providing high quality educational experiences. These systems of discipline and prison-like environments are not preparing young people for success; they are conditioning them for a life of incarceration. All students deserve better; they deserve safe, quality schools.

STUDENTS HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN SUSPENDED FOR...

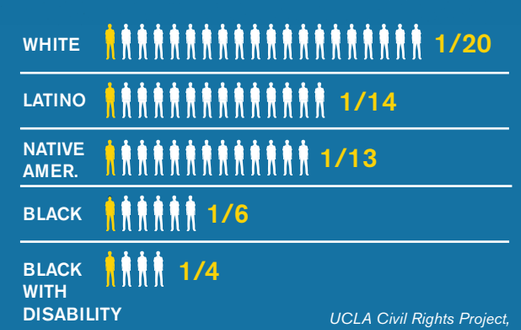
- Talking about a Hello Kitty bubble gun
- Hugging a friend
- Chewing a Pop Tart into the shape of a gun

STUDENTS HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN ARRESTED FOR...

- Kindergartener throwing a temper tantrum
- Sneaking into school for a senior prank
- Playing the *Fresh Prince* theme song on a cellphone
- Science experiment gone wrong

SUSPENSIONS, RACE & DISABILITY

Likelihood of Being Suspended at Least Once



UCLA Civil Rights Project,

Who is Caught in the Pipeline?

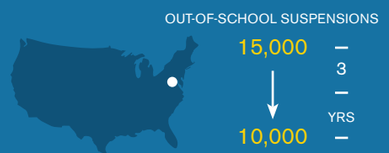
We are punishing students more often and more harshly based on who they are or what they look like. Across the country, we find students of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and students with disabilities are disproportionately subjected to harsh discipline. Significantly, research shows that race matters in discipline; racial disparities are not the result of a difference in behavior but instead due to a difference in treatment.

Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline

Efforts led by youth and parents working with school districts and other stakeholders across the country show that we can maintain safety, boost school attendance, raise academic achievement, and improve graduation rates while reducing out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests.

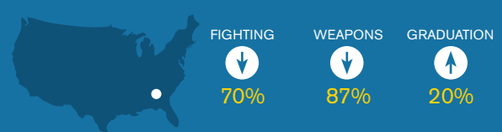
Prevention and Intervention

Baltimore City Public Schools changed its Code of Conduct to reduce out-of-school suspensions and focus more on prevention and intervention strategies. Suspensions dropped from over 15,000 to fewer than 10,000 in 3 years. In the three years since the reforms, it's estimated that students received more than 100,000 additional days of instruction. Graduation rates also soared to record highs.



Establishing Protocols

Judge Steven Teske spearheaded change in Clayton County, GA by working collaboratively with school officials, community representatives, mental health practitioners, and police to develop a protocol that prohibits students being brought into the juvenile justice system for minor offenses. Since implementing this agreement, which limits the role of police in schools, the presence of dangerous weapons on campuses has decreased by 70%, fighting offenses have decreased over 87%, and graduation rates have increased by 20%.



Common Sense Approach

In Denver Public Schools, Padres y Jóvenes Unidos worked with the school system to adopt a common sense approach to discipline. Expulsions went down by almost 50% and over a five year period, there were 2,600 fewer out-of-school suspensions. Arrests of students also decreased. School officials say the discipline reform helped lead to higher attendance and graduation rates.

How Do We Create Safe, Quality Schools For All?

- Listen to and collaborate with students and parents
- Foster meaningful relationships between students and adults in schools
- Collect, analyze, and monitor quantitative and qualitative school discipline and climate data, including by demographic subgroups
- Explicitly address racial and other disparities in discipline
- Provide training for teachers on classroom management training, implicit bias, and cultural competence
- Support and fund alternatives that keep students in school and on track academically
- Fund school-based mental health professionals and counselors, not police
- Adopt common sense discipline policies and practices that use exclusionary practices as a last resort

#school2prison