



# Alternatives and Disproportionality Strategies for Schools



THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION



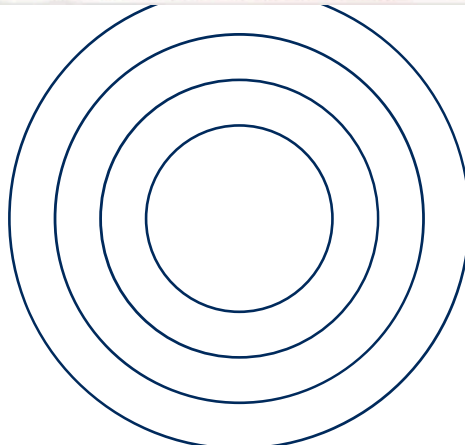
# Who we Are

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

AASA is centered on work that drives systems change and increases equity. We are committed to equity in educational opportunities and outcomes, reducing racial disparities, and aiding and assisting those youth most in-need. Our work supports superintendents and school system leaders to drive meaningful systems change by improving and redesigning the policies, practices, and structures in education.



Bryan Joffe, Director of Education and Youth Development





# AASA and School Discipline

TOOLKIT WITH CASE STUDIES, TOOLS, AND RESOURCES

*<https://www.aasa.org/resources/resource/school-discipline-dismantle-the-pre-k-to-prison-pipeline>*

AASA, the Council of State Governments' Justice Center, the Children's Defense Fund (and many other partners) began tackling the issue of the School-to-Prison pipeline together in 2012 - focusing on the overuse of OSS and expulsion and the disproportionate impact on children of color.





# School Discipline Mirrors Criminal/Juvenile Justice

USE OF OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION HAS DOUBLED FROM  
1993 WITH DISPROPORTIONATE EFFECTS (LOSEN AND SKIBA,  
2010)

VAST MAJORITY OF SUSPENSIONS ARE FOR MINOR &  
DISCRETIONARY INFRACTIONS (DEFIANCE, DISOBEDIENCE,  
DISRUPTING CLASS, TARDINESS/ATTENDANCE, AND DRESS  
CODE) (LOSEN, 2013; FABELLO ET AL., 2011).

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# Breaking School Rules

A groundbreaking longitudinal study of one million students in Texas found:

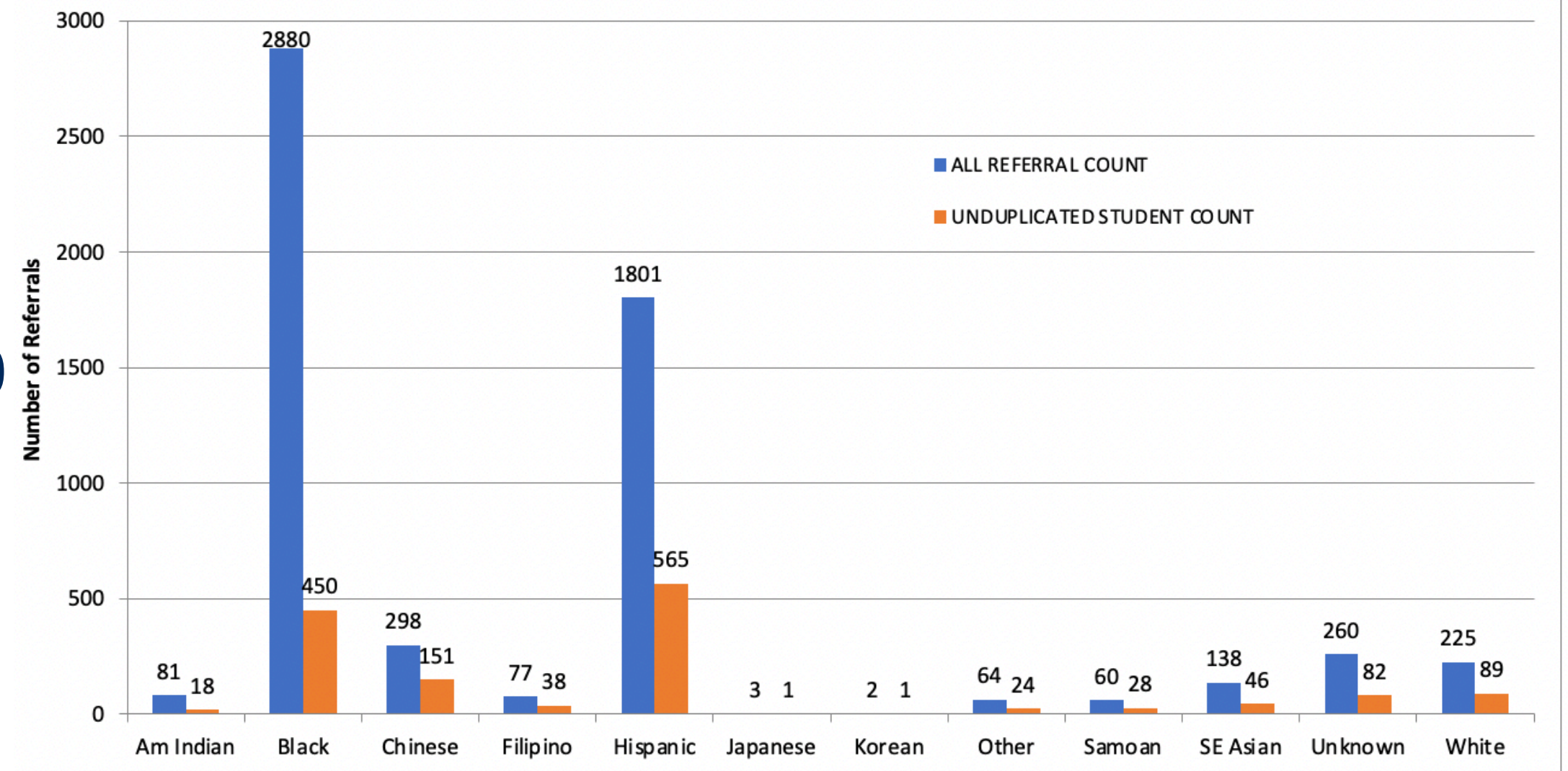
- Only 3% of suspensions were for mandatory offenses
  - 15% of students were suspended 10 or more times
  - 31% of students suspended one time repeated that grade
  - The study uncovered racial disproportionality affecting Latinx and, especially, African-American students
  - High school-to-school and district-to-district variance even when holding demographic factors constant
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# Racism and Disproportionality

Black students lost 103 days per 100 students enrolled; white peers lost 21 days per 100 students due to OSS.

\*\*From 2018  
CRDC Data

Counseling Office Referral Online System Data



Compared to white girls, Black girls had:

**4.19X**  
the risk of receiving  
out-of-school  
suspensions.

**3.99X**  
the risk of  
expulsion.

**3.66X**  
the risk of  
arrest at school.

**2.17X**  
the risk of  
restraint.

**5.34X**  
the risk of transfer  
for disciplinary  
reasons.

# Strategies for Schools and Communities

▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
FLASH - LIGHT	ALTERNATIVES	SUPPORTS	TRAINING	PREVENTION	PRACTICES
First and foremost, shining a light on current practice and outcomes is KEY.	Employ alternative disciplinary actions that keep students in-school and learning	Increase supports for students in need (academically, socially, emotionally)	Improve training for staff, particularly, around implicit bias, de-escalation techniques, and cultural competencies	Work to improve school climate and school-student relationships	PBIS, Restorative Justice, or other research-driven strategies

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# Principles

Disciplinary systems that rely heavily on suspensions and expulsions to manage student behavior produce poor outcomes and must be changed.

Every effort should be made to keep students in classrooms where they can succeed and be engaged in learning, while providing appropriate supports to educators. School should produce barriers to JJ involvement, not exacerbate issues for children and families through court involvement.

Issues related to race and the disproportionate impact of school discipline policies on distinct student populations, must be met head on.

Prevention measures should not continue to be outweighed by reactive interventions and should consider both student behaviors and adult responses. A tiered approach to interventions is needed to support every student's success and to ensure restorative steps are pursued whenever possible before more serious disciplinary actions are imposed.





# Discussion and Q and A

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