



ChangeLab Solutions

Law & policy innovation for the common good.

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800.843.9166 or support@readytalk.com



Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Through Transforming the School Climate

changelabsolutions.org/the-series

September 18, 2018



Welcome to the Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Series

A virtual space for exploring the topic of health equity

- ✓ **Episode 1: Health Equity** (April)
Building healthy, equitable communities through equitable laws and policies
- ✓ **Episode 2: Healthy Children & Families** (May)
Building healthy, equitable communities through supports for working families
- ✓ **Episode 3: Food Systems** (June)
Building healthy, equitable communities through a just food system
- ✓ **Episode 4: Built Environment** (August)
Building healthy, equitable communities through comprehensive long-range planning

Episode 5: Schools (September)
Building healthy, equitable communities through transforming the school climate

Bonus Training: Preemption (October)
Preemption, public health, and equity - the search for local solutions

Episode 6: Community Pillar (October)
Building healthy, equitable communities through community-driven solutions



What you can expect from our episodes:



Blog Post

Creating Safe and Supportive Schools: 5 Promising Areas for Policy Change



Webinar

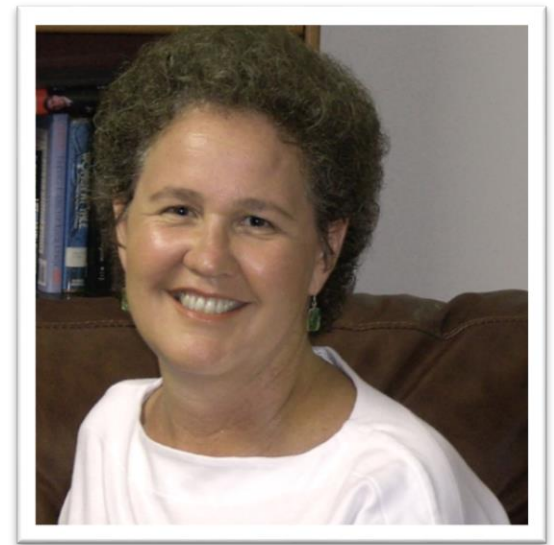
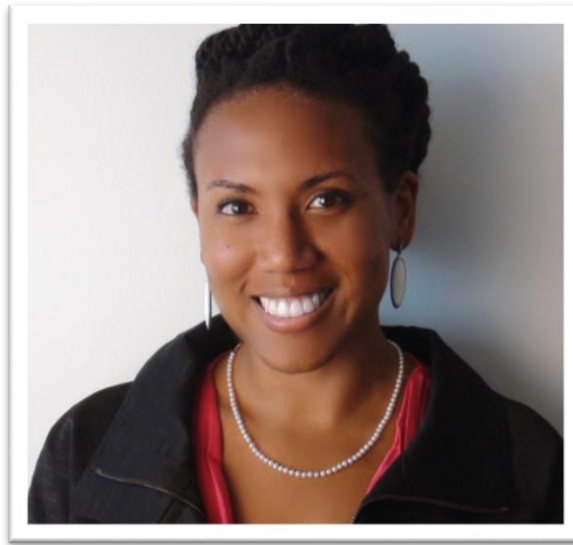
Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Through Transforming the School Climate



Expert Panel

Continued Conversation About Schools
(September 20)

Welcome!



Cesar De La
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Policy Analyst

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Kristen
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Child Trends

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Disclaimer

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ChangeLab Solutions is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization that educates and informs the public through objective, non-partisan analysis, study, and/or research. The primary purpose of this discussion is to address legal and/or policy options to improve public health. There is no intent to reflect a view on specific legislation.

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AGENDA



- Why should we pay attention to school discipline?
- How is school discipline related to health?
- How can we use alternative approaches to ESD to help more children thrive?
- How do we improve school climate to support student success?



Why should we pay attention to school discipline?



Kristen Harper, Ed.M.

*Director for Policy
Development*

Walkthrough...



- **Part I:** Harms associated with suspension and expulsion
- **Part II:** Prevalence of school discipline practice & gaps by subgroup
- **Part III:** Federal and state policy efforts to address discipline



PART I:

Harms
associated with
suspension and
expulsion

Why pay attention to exclusionary discipline?



Harms at **student level:**

- Increased likelihood of dropout (*Losen & Martinez, 2013*)
- Increased likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system (*Fabelo et al., 2011*)
- Reduced likelihood of postsecondary enrollment (*Balfanz et al 2015*)

Harms at **school level:**

- Weak evidence of suspensions preventing future misbehavior (*Massar et al, 2015*)
- Greater use of suspension associated with less safety, poor student-student relationships (*Steinberg, Allensworth, & Johnson, 2011*)

Three seminal pieces of research...


BREAKING SCHOOLS' RULES:

*A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates
to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement*

- 54% of students studied received at least one suspension or expulsion between 7th and 12th grade
- Black students were 31% more likely to face discipline than white and Hispanic students (with statistical controls)
- Students suspended or expelled were at greater risk of dropout or grade retention
- Students suspended or expelled were 3x as likely to experience juvenile justice contact within the following year (with statistical controls)

Three seminal pieces of research...

Educational and Criminal Justice Outcomes 12 Years After School Suspension

Youth & Society
1-33
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DOI: 10.1177/0044118X17752208
journals.sagepub.com/home/yas


Janet Rosenbaum¹ 

Abstract

A third of U.S. students are suspended over a K-12 school career. Suspended youth have worse adult outcomes than nonsuspended students, but these outcomes could be due to selection bias: that is, suspended youth may have had worse outcomes even without suspension. This study compares the educational and criminal justice outcomes of 480 youth suspended for the first time with those of 1,193 matched nonsuspended youth from a nationally representative sample. Prior to suspension, the suspended and nonsuspended youth did not differ on 60 pre-suspension variables including students' self-reported delinquency and risk behaviors, parents' reports of socioeconomic status, and administrators' reports of school disciplinary policies. Twelve years after suspension (ages 25-32), suspended youth were less likely than matched nonsuspended youth to have earned bachelor's degrees or high school diplomas, and were more likely to have been arrested and on probation, suggesting that suspension rather than selection bias explains negative outcomes.

5 years after suspension:

- Likelihood of receiving HS diploma decreases by 8%
- Likelihood of arrest increase by 40%
- Among black youth, 94% less likely to receive a BA

12 years after suspension:

- Likelihood of BA decreases by 24%
- Likelihood of arrest increases by 30%
- Likelihood of 2 or more arrests increase by 51%
- Likelihood of experiencing prison increases by 23%

Three seminal pieces of research...

Rethinking Universal Suspension for Severe Student Behavior

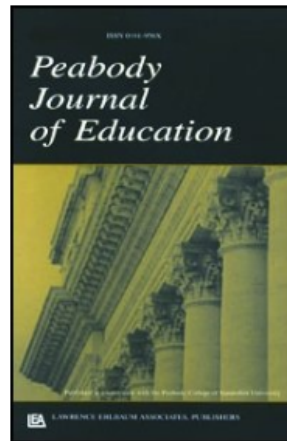
Research Report
February 1, 2018

[Link to article: Here](#)

Driven by a combination of concern for historically high suspension rates and substantial disproportionalities in suspension use, a recent wave of education reforms encourages schools to reduce their use of suspensions for student behavior management. Both academic and political discourse has focused on the extensive use of suspension for relatively minor behavioral infractions, with an implicit assumption or explicit articulation that suspension could still be used for severe infractions. This paper tests that assumption, providing evidence that reductions in suspensions for severe infractions may produce positive impacts without harming school safety.

Using data from high schools in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), 2007–2014, we examine how declines in school reliance on suspensions for severe infractions are associated with changes in academic performance, attendance, and student reports of school climate for all students in the school. Recognizing the substantial methodological difficulty in obtaining impact estimates, we exploit a series of official and unofficial policy-induced changes to suspension practice, using school and student fixed effects models with extensive controls to reduce potential sources of bias in the estimates.

We find the reduction in out-of-school suspension for severe infractions was associated with small but statistically significant increases in student test scores, consequential attendance improvements (beyond the impact of fewer days suspended), and heterogeneity in changes to students' perceptions of school safety. Test score impacts are concentrated in racially diverse schools and those with low baseline suspension use. Attendance impacts are driven by schools predominantly serving African American students (which also had the highest baseline suspension rates); these schools also had large, significant improvements in perceptions of school climate.



“Reduction in out-of-school suspension for severe infractions was associated with small but statistically significant increases in student test scores... consequential attendance improvement...”



PART II:

Prevalence of
school discipline
practice & gaps
by subgroup

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) website. On the left is a vertical navigation menu with options: HOME, SCHOOL & DISTRICT SEARCH, DETAILED DATA TABLES, DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS, SPECIAL REPORTS, STATE AND NATIONAL ESTIMATIONS, and 2015-16 FIRST LOOK REPORT. The main content area features the CRDC logo (Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights) and the text "WIDE-RANGING EDUCATION ACCESS AND EQUITY DATA COLLECTED FROM OUR NATION'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS". Below this are two main sections: "School and District Search" with a house icon and a description "View a summary of selected facts about a school or district as well as tables and graphs of reported data", and "Detailed Data Tables" with a magnifying glass icon and a description "Explore and analyze data across schools or districts". On the right, a "DID YOU KNOW?" box lists data included: Enrollment, Demographics, Preschool, Math & Science Courses, and Advanced Placement.

The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)

- Universal: Contains data on every public school and school district in the nation
- Biennial: Universal data available for 2011-2012, 2013-2014, 2015-2016 school years
- School discipline data can often be cross-tabulated by race, gender, disability status
- Communities can search for their school or school district on <https://ocrdata.ed.gov>

What We Know from the 2015-2016 CRDC

NEW RELEASE FOR 2018



U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights

2015-16 CIVIL RIGHTS DATA COLLECTION SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY

DATA HIGHLIGHTS ON SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY IN OUR NATION'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

What's the 2015-16 Civil Rights Data Collection?

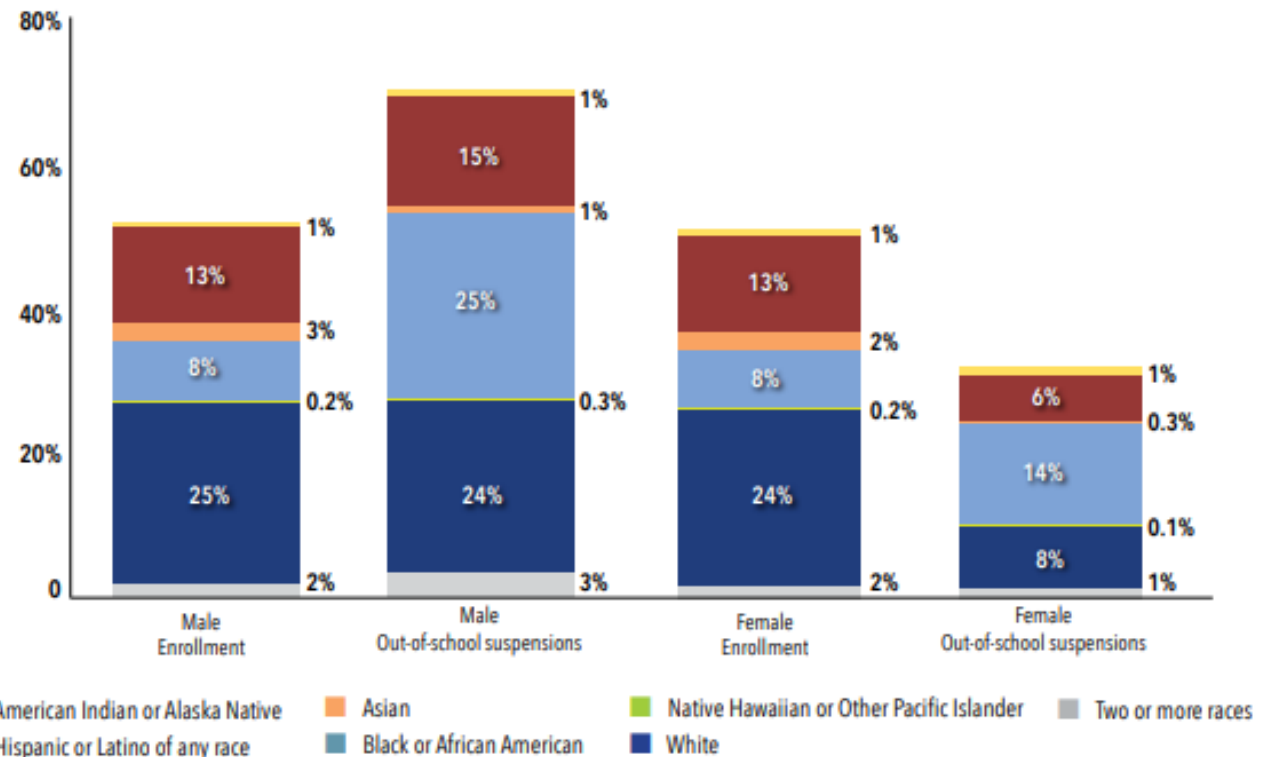
The 2015-16 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) is a survey of all public schools and school districts in the United States. The CRDC measures student access to courses, programs, staff, and resources that impact education equity and opportunity for students. The CRDC has long provided critical information used by the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights in its enforcement and monitoring activities.

What We Know from the 2015-2016 CRDC

In 2015-2016, 2.7 million of K-12 students received at least one OSS

Wide, persistent disparities by race for black male and female students

FIGURE 13: Percentage distribution of students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions, by race and sex



NOTE: Data may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

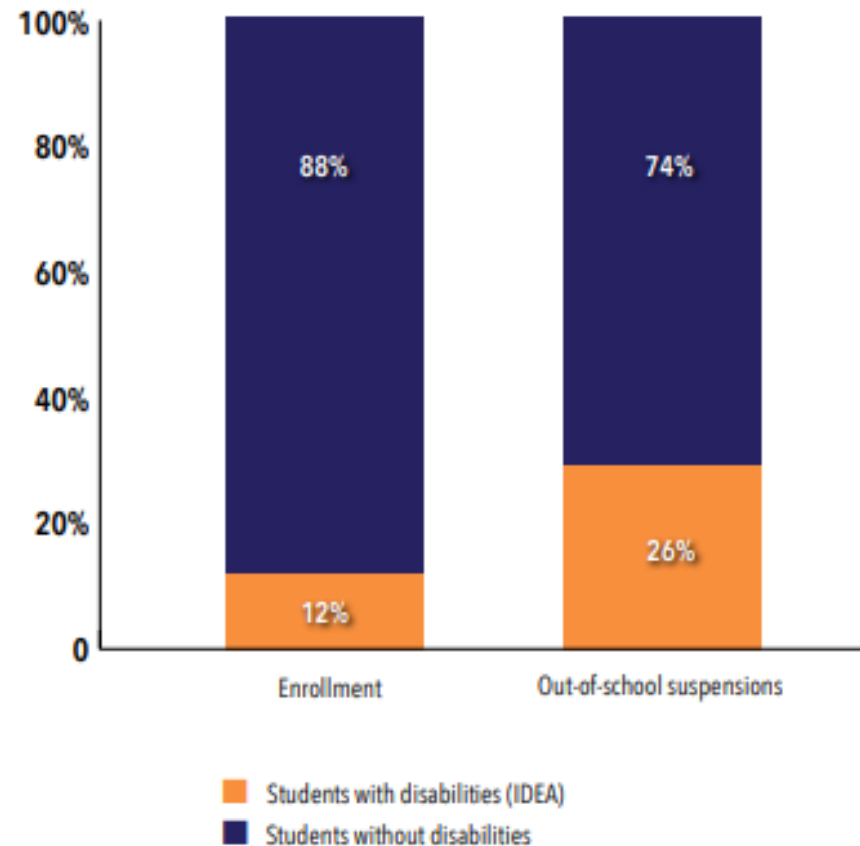
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2015-16.

What We Know from the 2015-2016 CRDC

Wide, persistent disparities by disability for children served under IDEA

Historically, male children of color with disabilities have been at highest risk

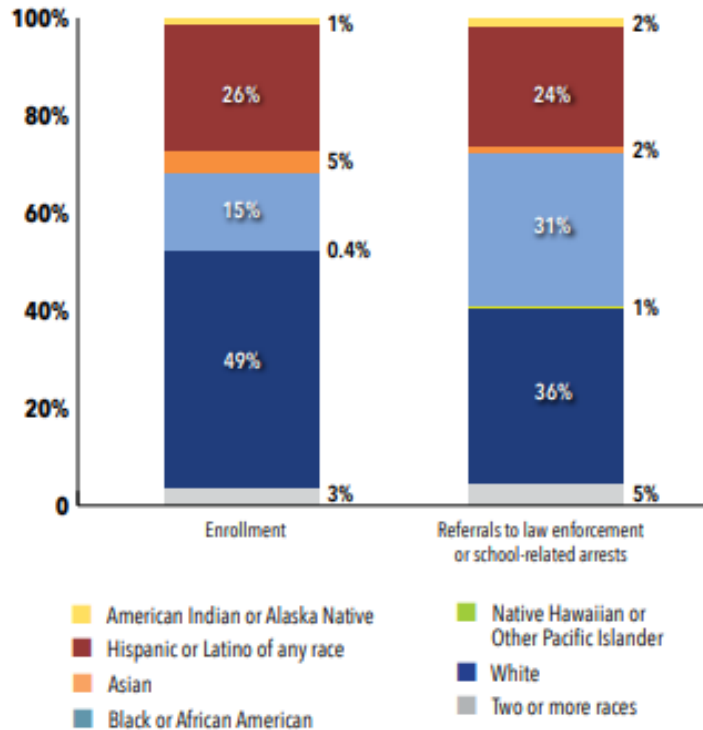
FIGURE 14: Percentage distribution of students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions, by disability (IDEA)



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2015-16.

What We Know from the 2015-2016 CRDC

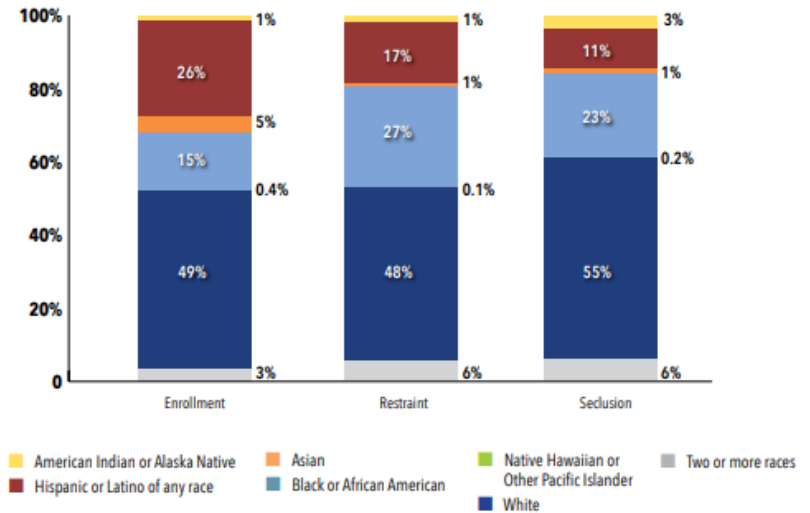
FIGURE 2: Percentage distribution of students referred to law enforcement or subjected to school-related arrests, by race



NOTE: Data may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2015-16.

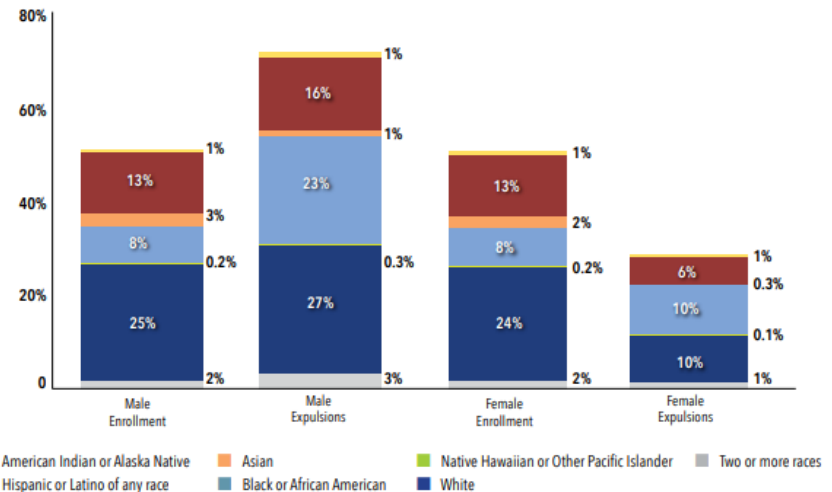
FIGURE 11: Percentage distribution of students subjected to restraint or seclusion, by race



NOTE: Data may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2015-16.

FIGURE 15: Percentage distribution of students receiving expulsions, by race and sex



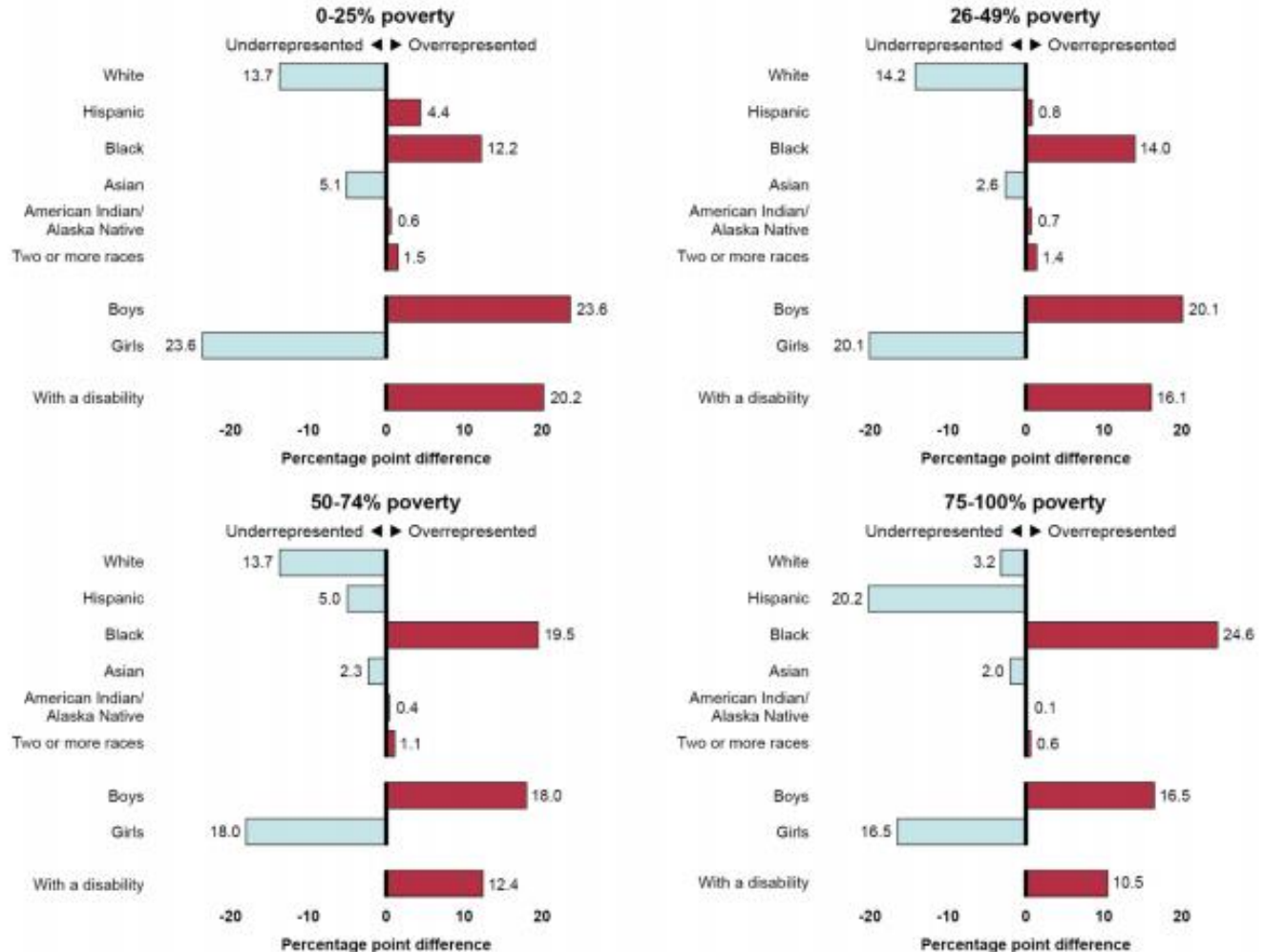
NOTE: Data may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2015-16.

What we know from the 2018 GAO Report

Figure 6: Representation of Students Suspended Out-of-School Compared to Student Population, by Level of School Poverty, School Year 2013-14

This chart shows whether each group of students was underrepresented or overrepresented among students suspended out of school based on the poverty level of the school. For example, boys were overrepresented among students suspended out of low-poverty schools by about 24 percentage points, as shown in the chart, because they made up about 51% of all students in those schools, but 75% of the students suspended out of school.



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Education, Civil Rights Data Collection and Common Core of Data. | GAO-18-258

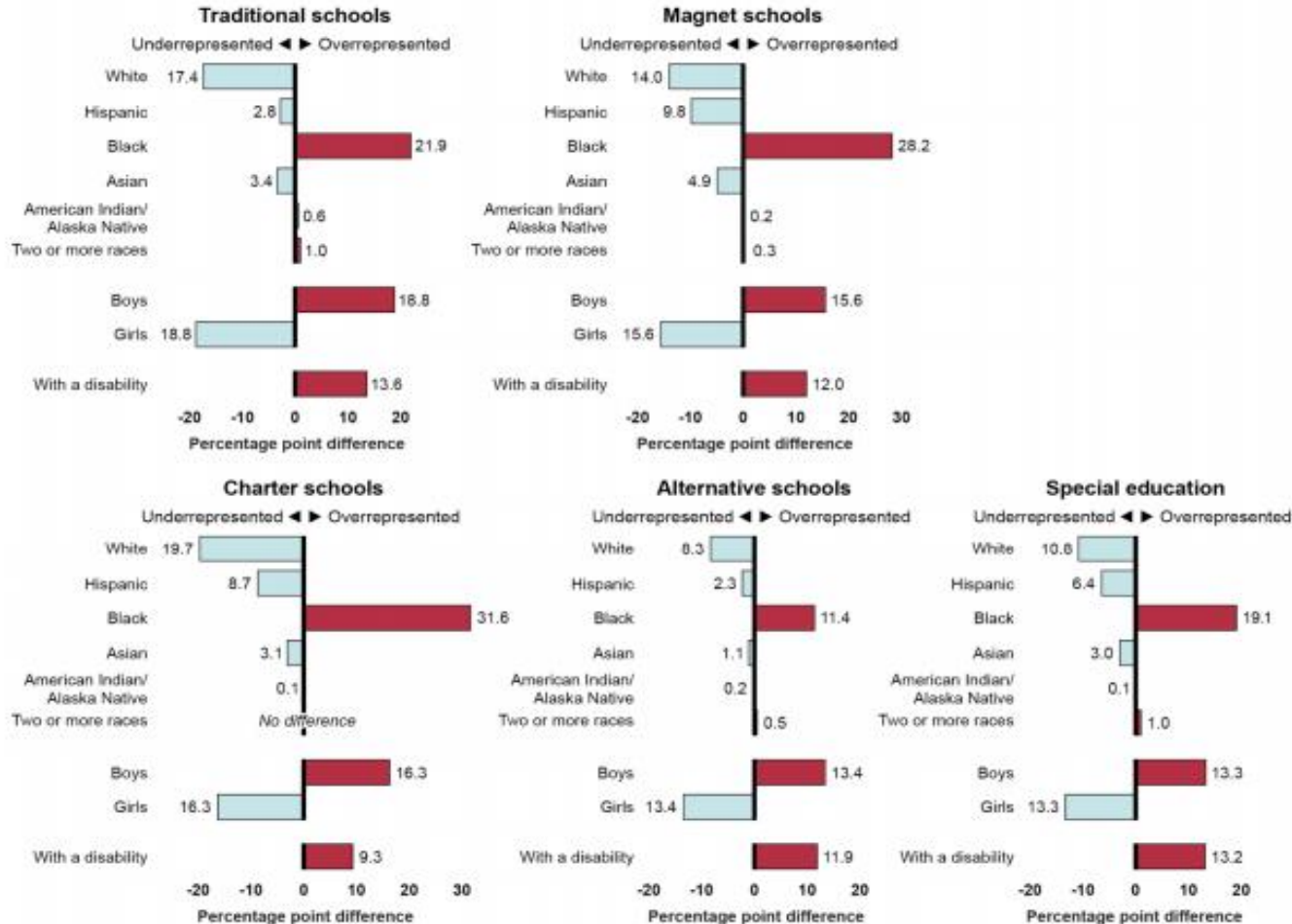
Patterns in Disciplinary Actions
 GAO's examination of the CRDC uncovered a narrative about how our schools are disciplining black students differently from all others

What we know from the 2018 GAO Report

Patterns in Disciplinary Actions
 GAO's examination of the CRDC uncovered a narrative about how our schools are disciplining black students differently from all others

Figure 7: Representation of Students Suspended Out-of-School Compared to Student Population, by School Type, School Year 2013-14

This chart shows whether each group of students was underrepresented or overrepresented among students suspended out of school based on type of public school. For example, Black students were overrepresented among students suspended out of charter schools by nearly 32 percentage points, as shown in the chart, because they made up nearly 29% of all charter school students, but about 60% of the students suspended out of those schools.



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Education, Civil Rights Data Collection. | GAO-18-258

Note: Disparities in student discipline such as those presented in this figure may support a finding of discrimination, but taken alone, do not establish whether unlawful discrimination has occurred.



PART III:

Federal and state
policy efforts to
address discipline



Federal Policy

Every Student Succeeds Act

- State and local plans must address the overuse of exclusionary discipline
- State plans must address use of discipline practices that threaten health and safety
- State report cards must include school discipline data
- States must maintain school accountability systems that include school quality

Individuals with Disabilities Act

Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act



Federal Policy

Every Student Succeeds Act

Individuals with Disabilities Act

- Schools have authority to discipline, but must conduct a “manifestation determination” if discipline exceeds 10 school days
- States must identify and intervene in districts with “significant disproportionality,” by race and ethnicity, in the discipline of children with disabilities
- Schools must provide an education program appropriate to a child’s circumstances

Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act



Federal Policy

Every Student Succeeds Act

Individuals with Disabilities Act

Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act

- Schools have an obligation to not discriminate on the basis of race in the administration of discipline
- Discrimination includes the use of facially neutral policies that have a disparate impact

State Policy

Abolishing
Zero-
Tolerance

Colorado

Illinois

Grade-level
Bans (e.g., P-
3)

Maryland

Texas

Bans for
Offense Types
(e.g., willful
defiance)

California

District of
Columbia

Bans for First
Offense

Illinois

Length
Restrictions

Illinois

Maryland



How is school discipline
related to health?



What are ACEs?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are “traumatic experiences that can have a profound effect on a child’s developing brain and body with lasting impacts on a person’s health throughout her lifespan.”



45% of all children in
the U.S. have
experienced at least
one ACE.

Prevalence of ACEs

Race or Ethnicity	% of children that have experienced at least one ACE
Black non-Hispanic	61%
Hispanic	51%
White non-Hispanic	40%
Asian non-Hispanic	23%

Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic children of other races are more likely than White children to experience 2 or more ACEs



Toxic stress is “the extreme, frequent, or extended activation of the body’s stress response without the buffering presence of a supportive adult.”



The Toll of ACEs and Toxic Stress

ACEs and a student's academic trajectory

- Chronic absenteeism
- Behavioral and learning challenges, and struggles in schools

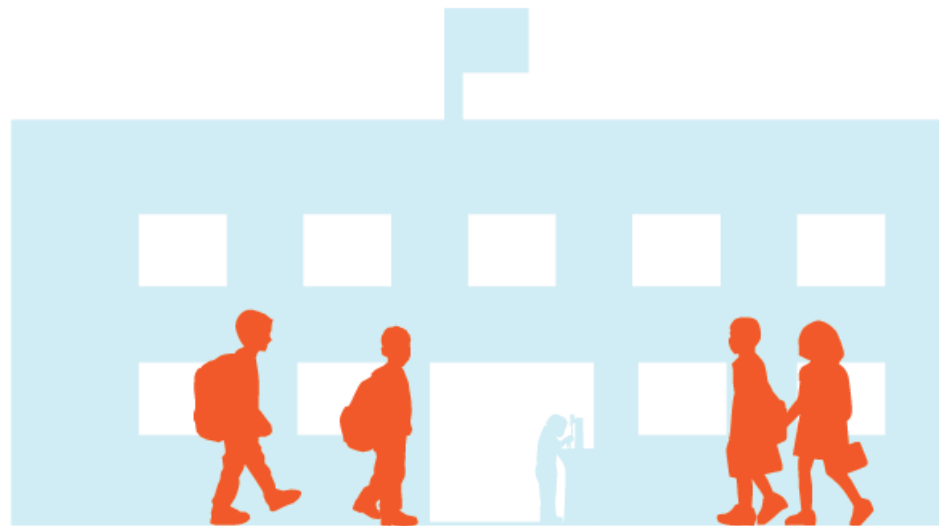
ACEs and detrimental socioeconomic outcomes

- High school non-completion and household poverty
- Periods of unemployment



ACEs, toxic stress, and health outcomes

- Increased risk of suicide attempts, sexual risk behaviors, and lifetime depressive episodes
- Disruptions of the metabolic and immune systems
- Lower life expectancy



What role do schools play?

Schools can play a critical role in mitigating the effects that ACEs and toxic stress can have on a young person's healthy development and educational success



Despite this, many schools beginning at the pre-K level, continue to suspend and expel students—particularly students of color—at alarming rates.

ESD practices
exacerbate
the effects of
ACEs and
toxic stress



Exclusionary school discipline (ESD) practices undermine **critical protective factors** that can support children's healthy development, even in the face of adversity:

- safe, stable and nurturing relationships
- safe environments
- positive academic experiences

ESD practices can transform schools into spaces that...

...have lower levels of connectivity:

- feelings of mistrust between students and teachers
- social isolation of students



School connectedness is a stabilizing force in the lives of youth

ESD practices can transform schools into spaces that...

...have a more limited understanding between families and schools

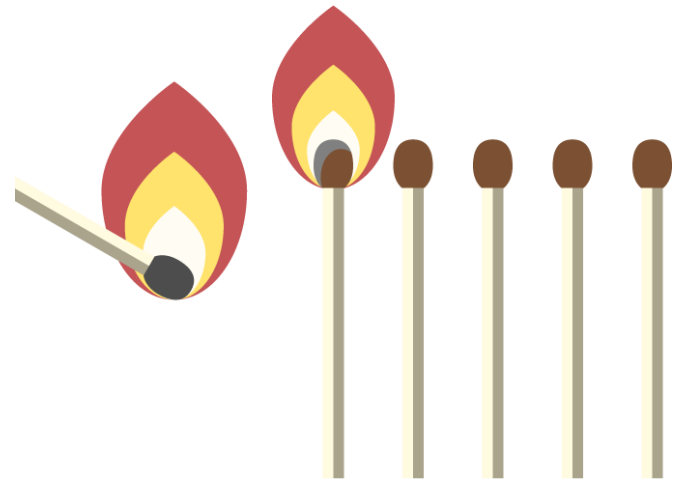
- Linked to negatives impacts on parents' views of schools as safe and accepting places



ESD practices can transform schools into spaces that...

...compound stress for students and families

- May retrigger histories of trauma for children with someone in the household who was/is incarcerated



By pushing students out and depriving them of **critical protective factors**, ESD practices exacerbate racial disparities and external stressors that threaten the health and wellbeing of developing children.

These practices undermine the traditional purpose of schools—which is to create a safe, nurturing, learning environment.

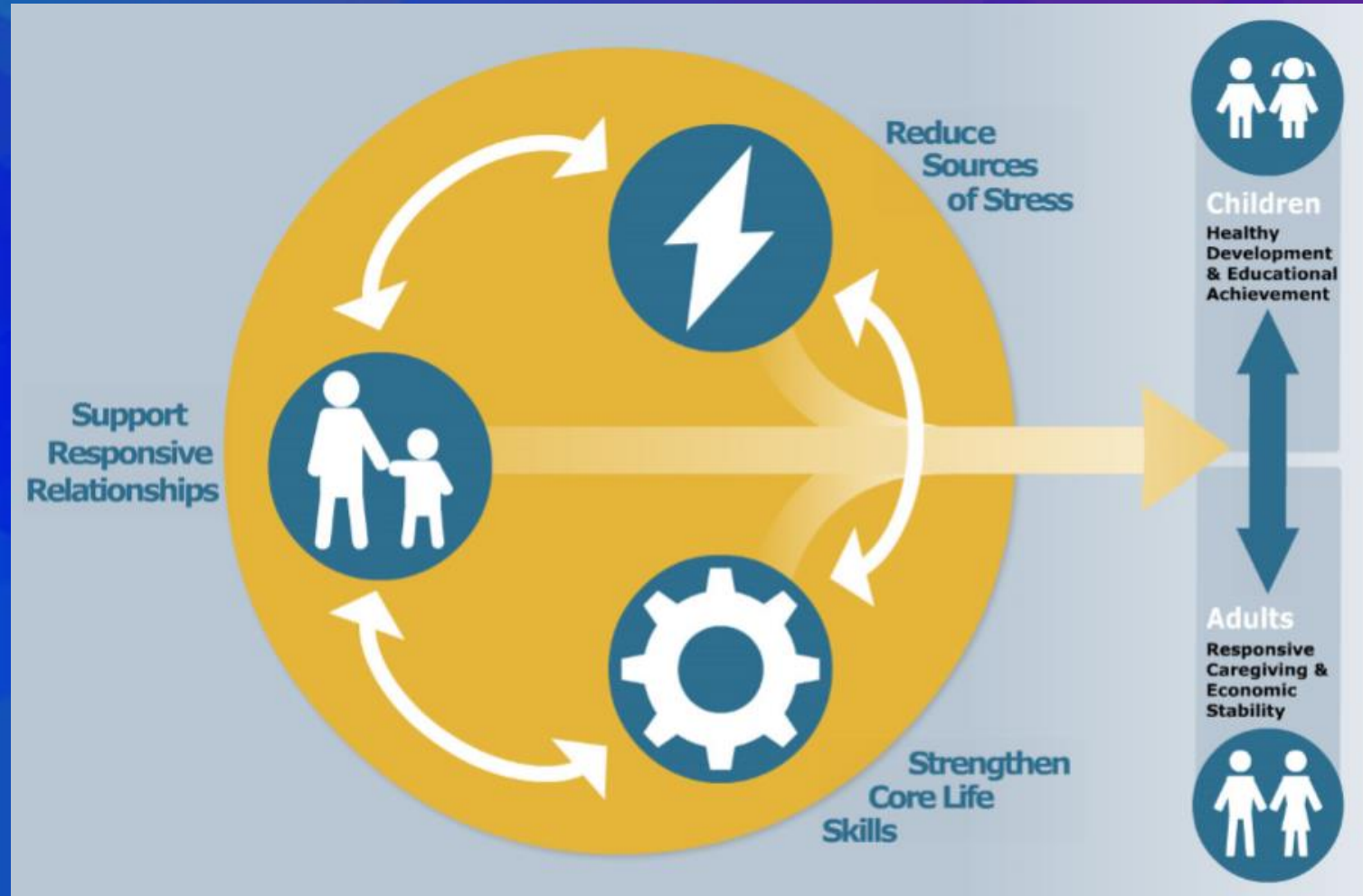


But wait! There is good news.



How can we use alternative approaches to ESD to help more children thrive?

Three Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families





Restorative alternatives that emphasize healthy development of the whole child positively reinforce each of the three design principles to cultivate healthier school environments, empower students, remove barriers to educational attainment, and equip students with the skills to thrive in and outside of the classroom



Design Principle #1: Support Responsive Relationships

Restorative justice practices:

- Foster healthy relationships in schools built on a foundation of trust, respect, and care
- Increase engagement for students and families, and improves two-way communication

Social and emotional learning:

- Leads to schools characterized by
 - a supportive culture and climate
 - positive relationships
 - deeper learning and
 - improved classroom management



Design Principle #2: Strengthen Core Life Skills

Restorative justice practices:

- Replace fear and punishment as motivators with belonging, connectedness, and a willingness to change
- Can create a school climate that develops social and emotional skills and understanding

Social and emotional learning:

- Fosters skills such as
 - self-regulation
 - executive function
 - self-efficacy and
 - empathy



Design Principle #3: Reduce Sources of Stress

Restorative justice practices:

- Can reduce suspension rates across a school district
- Contributes to the narrowing of the racial-discipline gap for Black non-Hispanic and Hispanic students

Social and emotional learning:

- Linked to reduced risk-taking and emotional distress
- Can shift race and gender disparities in school discipline



ESD practices exacerbate the effects of ACEs and toxic stress



Students at greater risk of experiencing 1 or more ACEs are being pushed out of schools at a disproportionate rate, raising health equity concerns



There is growing momentum around an alternative vision for schools, grounded in science, that mitigates the effects of ACEs and toxic stress, and supports students to reach their full potential





How do we improve school climate to support student success?

Improving School Climate to Support Student Success



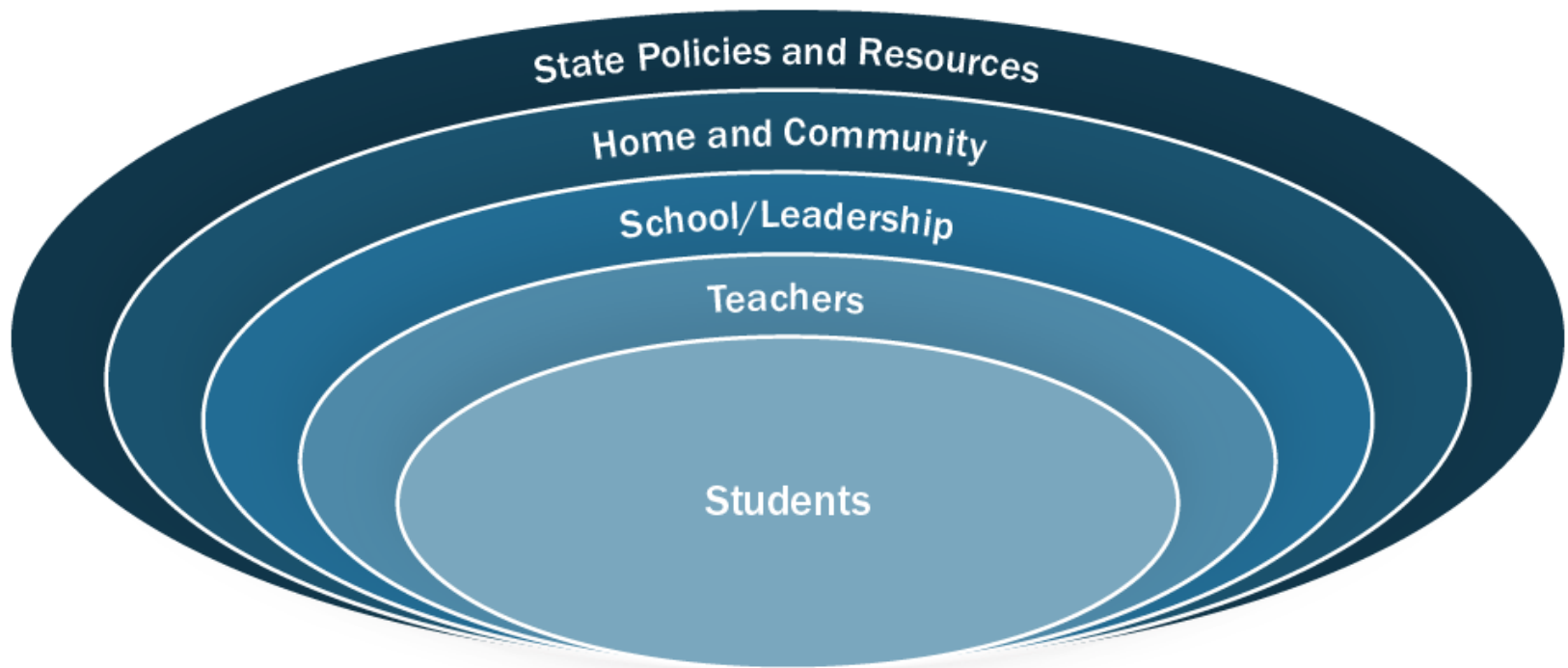
Linda Darling-Hammond



A New Focus:

Social, Emotional, & Academic Development

Figure 1
The Whole Child Ecosystem



What We Know from Science

The brain and the development of intelligences are malleable. The brain develops throughout life as a function of experiences that activate neural pathways which permit new kinds of thinking and performance. The kinds of experience matter greatly.

- Secure relationships
- Rich, stimulating environments
- Back-and-forth conversation



Variability in human development is the norm. The pace and profile of each child's development is unique.

Human relationships are the essential ingredient that catalyzes development & learning.

Adversity affects development and learning -- and how schools respond matters.



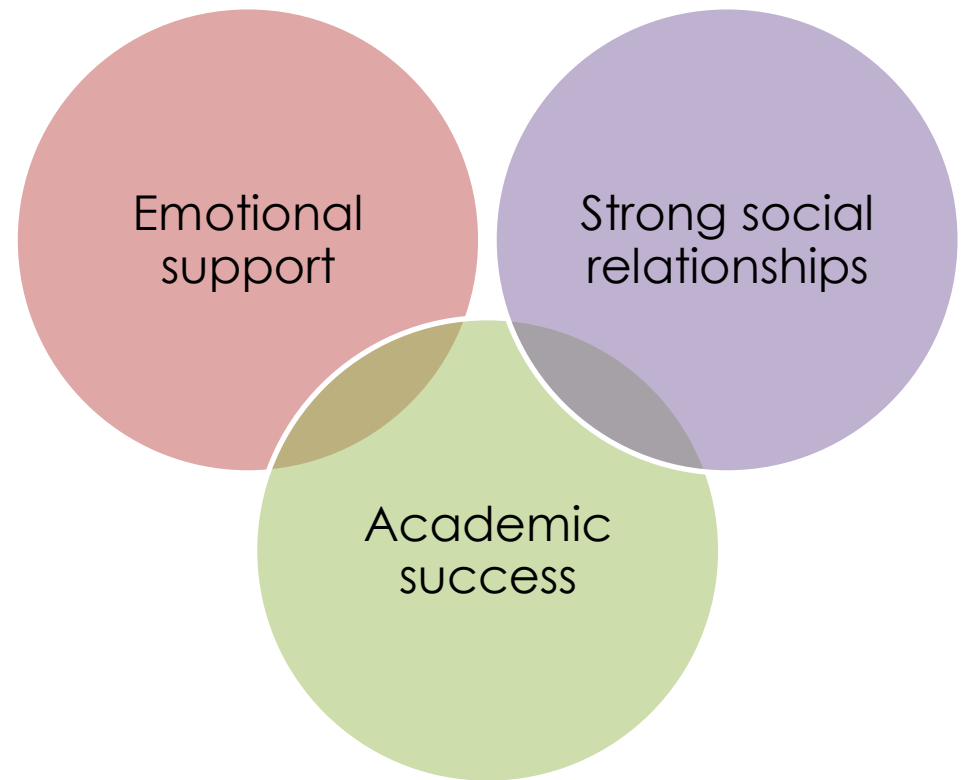
Learning is social, emotional and academic.

Children actively construct knowledge based on their experiences, relationships, and social contexts.

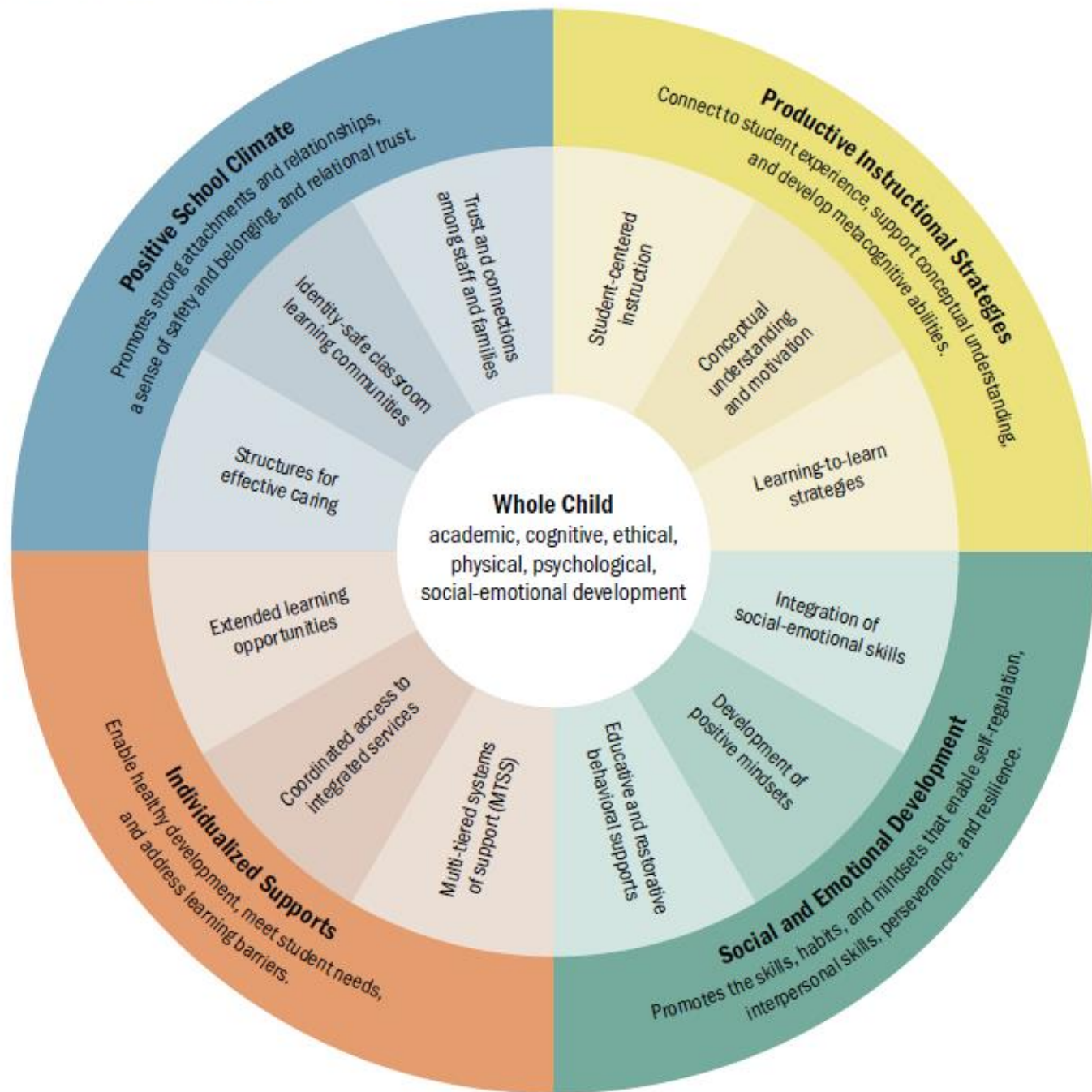


School Climate Matters

Hundreds of studies have found that a positive school climate supports stronger achievement, better behavior, more attachment, and stronger long-term outcomes for students



A Framework for Whole Education



I. Environmental conditions that support success along the developmental and learning continuum:



- Structures for effective caring
- Identity-safe classrooms that support belonging
- Relational trust among staff and families

II. Support for Social and Emotional Development:



- Explicit teaching and integration of SEL:
 - Self-regulation
 - Empathy
 - Collaboration
 - Conflict resolution
 - Decision making
- Mindfulness / stress management
- Growth mindset
- Agency & resilience

III. Instructional strategies that support competence, efficacy, and motivation.



- Authentic, engageable, well-supported tasks that
 - build on students' prior knowledge & experiences
 - provide the right amount of challenge and support
 - provide feedback with opportunities for revision
 - focus on mastery and learning goals, not competition

IV. Structures that reach beyond the classroom to provide systems of academic and social support.

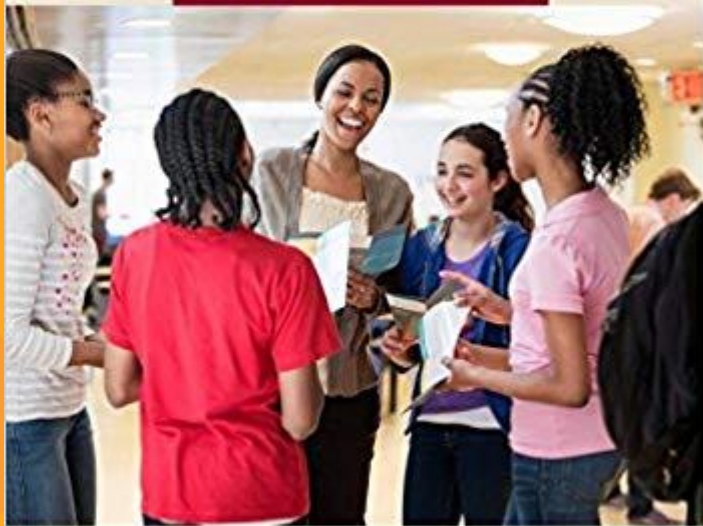


- Integrated services
- Extended learning
- Multi-tiered systems of support
- Community schools

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BE the Change

*Reinventing School
for Student Success*



LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND / NICKY RAMOS-BEBAN
REBECCA PADNOS ALTAMIRANO / MARIA E. HYLER

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Recommendations



1. Focus the System on Developmental Supports for Children



INCLUDE MEASURES OF SCHOOL CLIMATE, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS, AND SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS IN ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS.



ADOPT GUIDANCE FOR SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND COGNITIVE LEARNING THAT CLARIFIES THE COMPETENCIES STUDENTS SHOULD BE HELPED TO DEVELOP AND THE PRACTICES THAT CAN HELP THEM ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS.



REPLACE ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICIES WITH DISCIPLINE POLICIES FOCUSED ON SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE.



INCORPORATE EDUCATOR COMPETENCIES REGARDING SUPPORT FOR SEL AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES INTO LICENSING AND ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS.



PROVIDE FUNDING FOR SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEYS, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAMS, AND REVAMPED LICENSING PRACTICES TO SUPPORT THESE REFORMS.

2. Design Schools to Provide Settings for Healthy Development



Design schools for strong relationships by creating small schools & SLCs, advisory systems, teaching teams, looping teachers with students, and organizing schools with longer grade spans.



Develop schoolwide norms and supports for identity-safe, culturally responsive classrooms that teach social, emotional, and cognitive skills.



Provide integrated student supports through community school models and partnerships.



Develop multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), from universal designs for learning through academic & non-academic supports available without labelling or delay.



Provide extended learning time to ensure that students do not fall behind, from tutoring models such as Reading Recovery, to after school supports and summer enrichment.



Design outreach to families through home visits and flexibly scheduled conferences; outreach and regular positive communication.

3. Ensure Educator Learning



INVEST IN EDUCATOR WELLNESS: PREPARATION AND MENTORING THAT IMPROVE EFFICACY, MINDFULNESS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT, SEL PROGRAMS, AND SUPPORTIVE ADMINISTRATION.



DESIGN PREPARATION PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE A STRONG FOUNDATION IN PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING – AND HOW TO DESIGN SUCH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS.

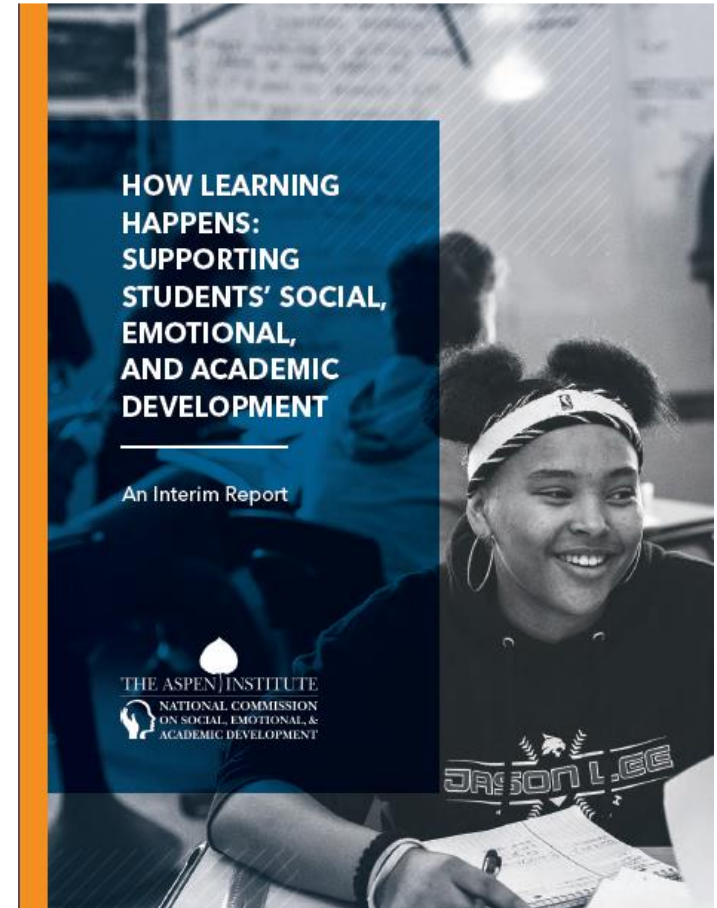


OFFER IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS THAT HELP EDUCATORS REFINE STUDENT-CENTERED PRACTICES; USE DATA ABOUT SCHOOL CLIMATE & STUDENT OUTCOMES TO IMPROVE; PROBLEM SOLVE AROUND CHILDREN'S NEEDS, AND ENGAGE IN COLLEGIAL LEARNING.



INVEST IN EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, HIGH-RETENTION THROUGH HIGH-RETENTION PATHWAYS INTO THE PROFESSION THAT DIVERSIFY THE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE, HIGH-QUALITY MENTORING, AND COLLEGIAL ENVIRONMENTS FOR PRACTICE.

Learningpolicyinstitute.org



<https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/national-commission-on-social-emotional-and-academic-development/>



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Law & policy innovation for the common good.



Thank you! Questions?

Join our expert panel for **Continued Conversation About Schools** on September 20, 12pm – 1pm PT

changelabsolutions.org/the-series



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Want more **health equity**?

Next up, bonus training! *Preemption, public health, and equity - the search for local solutions.*

- Webinar: October 16

changelabsolutions.org/the-series



ChangeLab Solutions

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Resources for changemaking:



- Educating the Whole Child: Improving School Climate to Support Student Success (Learning Policy Institute)
- Youth Policy Playbook
- Stay tuned for our *Issue Brief* and *Blueprint for Collective Action*

For these and other resources, visit us at changelabsolutions.org



Keep the conversation going

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For questions about the series, Sophia Pennella:
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