

Teaching Kids a Lesson Means Keeping Them in School

HB 2192

Oregon's zero tolerance policies have created a "school-to-prison pipeline," where the use of *exclusionary discipline*—out-of-school suspension and expulsion—funnels students, especially *students of color* and *students with disabilities*, away from mainstream educational environments and toward the juvenile and criminal justice system, and results in lower educational attainment.

Zero Tolerance Policies Make Schools and Communities Less Safe: Pushing students out of school often leads to worse behavior. Strict discipline fails to make schools safer and may make them less safe. When students are excluded from a structured environment, they have more time and opportunity to get into trouble.ⁱ

A Vicious Cycle -- Exclusionary Discipline Exacerbates the Achievement Gap: Once students are excluded from school they will fall behind and struggle to complete graduation requirements.ⁱⁱ Academic struggles contribute to further behavior problems.

Exclusionary Discipline Disproportionately Affects Disabled Students and Students of Color: Children of color and children with disabilities are more likely than their white or non-disabled peers to be subjected to more frequent and more severe punishments.^{iii iv}

Exclusionary Discipline Harms Youth and Our Communities:

- ✓ Oregon 2011 data shows: Compared to their numbers among the student population, *African American youth were twice as likely to be suspended or expelled*. Native American youth were 1.6 times as likely, and Hispanic youth were 1.2 times as likely to be disciplined.^v
- ✓ Only 40 percent of students disciplined 11 times or more graduated from high school during the study period, and 31 percent of students disciplined one or more times repeated their grade at least once.^{vi}
- ✓ Students who have been suspended are *78% more likely to drop out of school*.^{vii}
- ✓ If half of Oregon's 11,800 dropouts from the class of 2010 had earned a high school diploma, there would be \$40 million dollars in increased earnings and \$3.1 million in increased state tax revenue.^{viii}
- ✓ Among youth admitted to the Oregon Youth Authority in 2011, only 15% had no history of expulsion. Forty-four percent (44%) had been *expelled four or more times*.^{ix}

"A student who's habitually misbehaving or acting out is a sign of a child who needs more attention, not less. To prevent crime most effectively, we must identify students who are heading down the wrong path and get them back on track, without unnecessarily disrupting their academic learning."

-- **Sacramento Police Chief Rick Braziel**, on the report released by Fight Crime, Invest in Kids, California: ***Classmates not Cellmates: Effective School Discipline Cuts Crime and Improves Student Success***

What HB 2192 does:

1. Recognizes that *school is the safest place for students* to be during the day.
2. Promotes behavior and discipline practices which are already used in more than 60% of Oregon schools and which have been shown to be effective in keeping schools safe while keeping more students learning.
3. Encourages schools to reduce the use of suspension and expulsion in order to keep more struggling students in school where *they can learn the academic and social skills* they are often lacking.
4. *Increases the discretion and authority of school administrators* to assess school safety and employ a broad range of discipline and other interventions that promote both safety and learning.
5. Repeals ineffective and confusing “zero tolerance” policies that have led to inconsistent and inappropriate discipline for tens of thousands of students.
6. *Disrupts the “school-to-prison pipeline”* by reducing the use of school exclusion, which has increased the risk of some students to enter the justice system.
7. Will help reduce the high rates of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities and students of color.
8. Maintains Oregon’s compliance with federal law.



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ⁱ NAACP, Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline. (Jan. 2011)

http://www.naacpldf.org/files/publications/Dismantling_the_School_to_Prison_Pipeline.pdf

ⁱⁱ Gregory, A., Skiba, R. J.,. The Achievement Gap and the Discipline Gap: Two Sides of the Same Coin? (2010)

http://web.multco.us/sites/default/files/ccfc/documents/the_achievement_gap_and_the_discipline_gap.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ ACLU of Oregon, ACLU Report: Oregon’s School-to-Prison Pipeline (Oct. 2010), p. 1. http://www.aclu-or.org/sites/default/files/ACLU_STPP_FINAL.pdf

^{iv} Civil Rights Data Collection, March 2011 Report

^v ODE Report Cards, Race & Ethnicity Comparison Grouped Bar Graph (2011).

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/apps/Navigation/Navigation.Web/default.aspx#/Discipline>

^{vi} Justice Center, Majority of Texas Middle and High School Students Suspended or Expelled: Repeated Suspensions Predict Later Involvement in Juvenile Justice System (July 2011). <http://justicecenter.csg.org/resources/juveniles>

^{vii} Lee, T., et. al., High Suspension Schools and Dropout Rates for Black and White Students (2011). *Education and Treatment of Children*, Vol. 34, No. 2

^{viii} Alliance for Excellent Education (Spring 2011). <http://all4ed.org/econ>

^{ix} OYA – History of Expulsions and Suspensions, OYA Risk Needs Assessment – January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011, Juvenile and DOC Commitments – All Youth