

# ESSA

## Boot Camp



**July 28-29, 2016**

Hyatt Regency Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois

# SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

## An Overview



**Denise Marshall**

Executive Director

Council of Parent Attorneys and  
Advocates, Inc.



**Liz King**

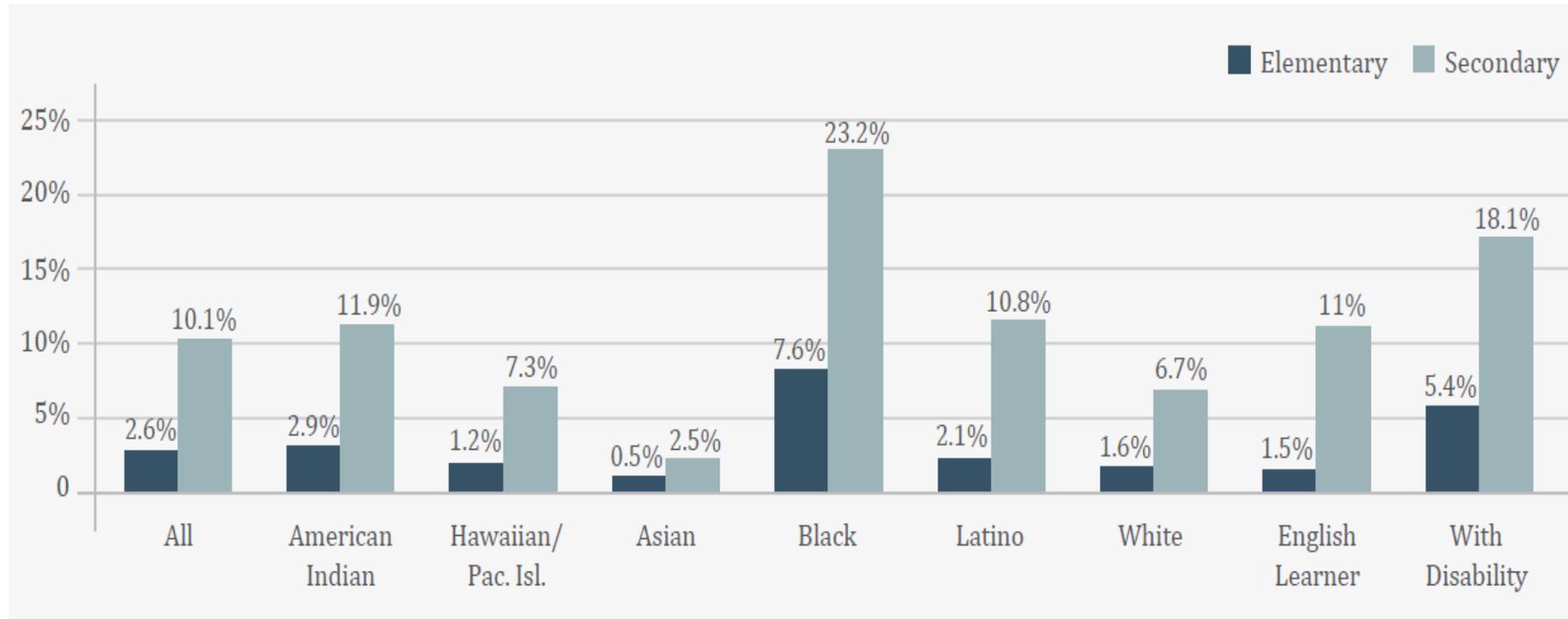
Director of Education Policy

The Leadership Conference  
Education Fund

# School Discipline and Student Success

- Being suspended places kids at risk for myriad consequences, both academic and not.
- Students of color – especially African American students – are more likely to be suspended/expelled than their peers 1:6 African American Students vs. 1:20 White Students.
  - Disciplined more harshly for the same offenses.
  - More likely to be disciplined for discretionary offenses, like disobedience.
- Students with Disabilities suspended twice the rate of peers without disabilities.

# Stark Disparities



Source: *Are We Closing the School Discipline Gap?* by the Civil Rights Project available at [civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/are-we-closing-the-school-discipline-gap](http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/are-we-closing-the-school-discipline-gap)

# Suspensions Not for Violent Behavior

- Only three percent of disciplinary actions were for conduct mandated by state law for suspension expulsions.

The remainder of actions were made at the discretion of school officials.

*Council of State Governments Justice Center, Breaking Schools Rules (2011)*

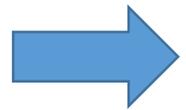
# School Discipline and Student Success

- Results in significant loss of instructional time, which impedes academic growth and can negatively impact academic performance.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are 3 times as likely to be in contact with juvenile justice following year.
- Youth are more likely to be arrested on days they are suspended from school.
- 10% of students who are suspended or expelled between 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade drop out.
- School to prison pipeline, failure to graduate affects later life outcomes.

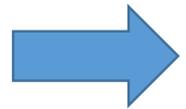
[www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/files/rethinking-school-discipline-101-why-it-matters-transcript.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/files/rethinking-school-discipline-101-why-it-matters-transcript.pdf) (2016)

[From the School Yard to the Squad Car: School Discipline, Truancy, and Arrest,](#) published in *The Journal of Youth and Adolescence* (2014)

# School Discipline and Student Success



Children belong in school.

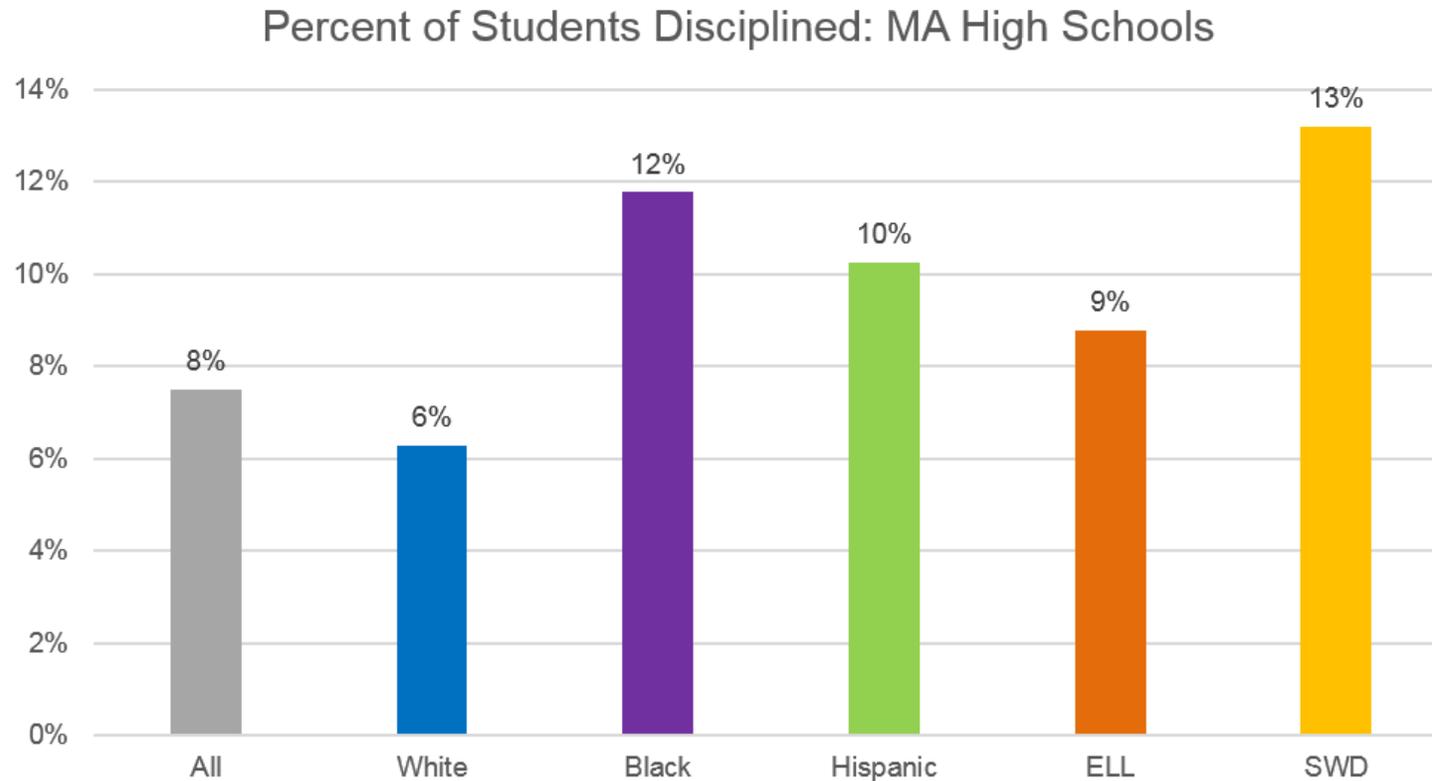


Children should be treated fairly.

# Measuring School Discipline

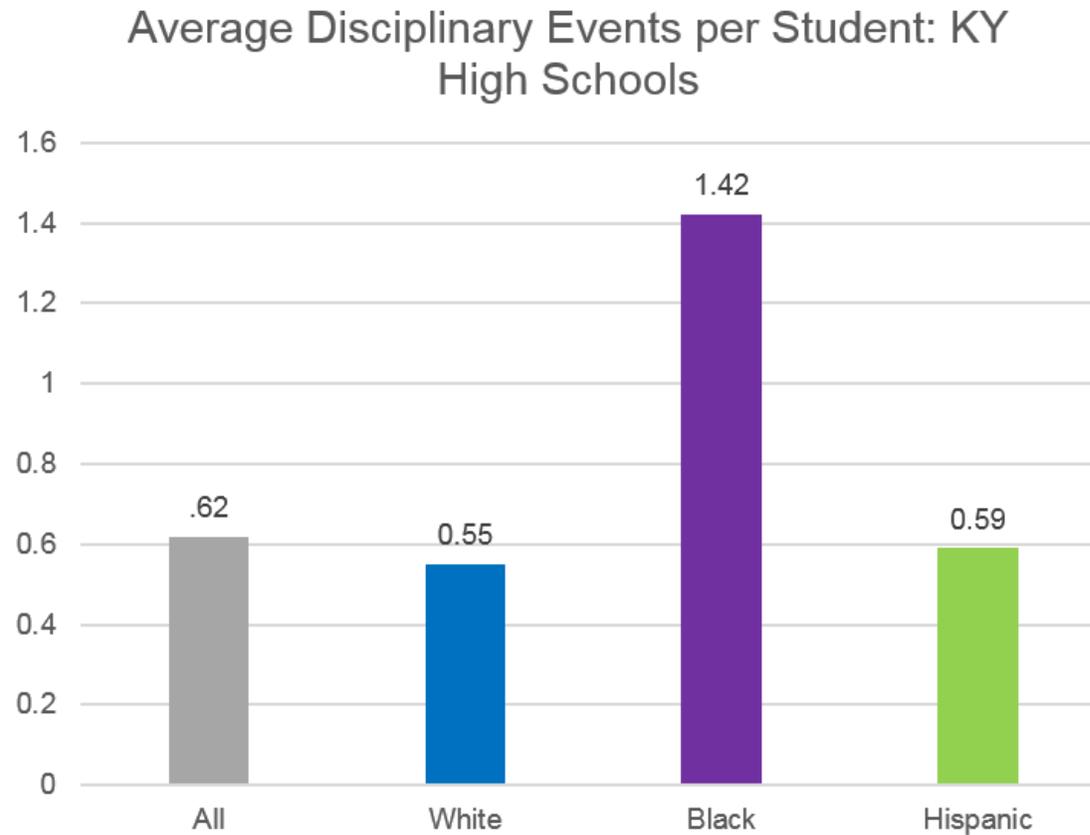
- Percentage of students disciplined
  - Examples:
    - “8% percent of all students were suspended at least once”
    - “12% percent of students with disabilities were suspended at least once”
- Number of disciplinary incidents
  - Examples:
    - “There were 0.62 suspensions per student in this school”
    - “There were 1.42 suspensions per Black student in this school”

# Measuring School Discipline



**Source:** Education Trust analysis of data from the MA Department of Education. *All results are preliminary.*

# Measuring School Discipline



**Source:** Education Trust analysis of data from the KY Department of Education. *All results are preliminary.*

# Measuring School Discipline

- Types of disciplinary incidents:
  - In school suspensions
  - Out-of-school suspensions
  - Expulsions
  - Corporal punishment
  - Referrals to law enforcement/school related arrests
  - Restraints and seclusion
- Other school climate measures:
  - Harassment and bullying

**\*\*All of these are currently required by the Civil Rights Data Collection and must be included in ESSA report cards\*\***

# Benefits and Considerations/Warnings

## Benefits

- Including discipline measures in school ratings could draw attention to exclusionary discipline practices that research shows a) negatively impact students and b) are not used equitably.
- High discipline rates identify an actionable problem: Research has identified appropriate interventions that improve school climate and reduce suspensions and expulsions.
- While schools with high proficiency and graduation rates generally have lower discipline rates, there are schools that do well on these measures, but suspend or expel high percentages of students. These schools could slip under the radar if school ratings don't take discipline rates into account.

## Considerations/Warnings

- Discipline data may be easy to game. If schools know that their ratings depend in part on their discipline rates, they may stop reporting accurate suspension and expulsion rates.
- If schools (and districts) know that reducing discipline rates will improve their school ratings, they may respond in unhelpful ways – e.g., by disallowing the use of suspension, without introducing practices such as restorative approaches or providing other teacher training.

# Questions for Advocates to Ask

- **What types of discipline actions will the state include?**
- **How will the state measure discipline rates? As a percentage of students disciplined? Or as the number of disciplinary actions?**
- **How will the state ensure that the data are accurate? Is there a process for auditing districts to verify that data are correct? What does that process involve?**
- **What supports will the state put in place to help schools address excessive and disproportionate school discipline?**

# Discussion

- Are there important considerations missing from this presentation?
- Would including school discipline measures in your state's accountability system support or hinder efforts to address exclusionary and disproportionate discipline in your state/community?
- Anything else?