

Correcting the Disparity

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Correcting the Disparity in Public Schools

- Research verifies that there is a disparity in disciplinary actions that are taken between children of minority status and white children
 - The disparity has a greater effect on African American Children
- Exclusionary punishments, such as expulsions and suspensions, do not correct behavioral Issues
- Exclusionary Punishments continue a “School to Prison Pipeline”
 - Children who are expelled/suspended are more likely to drop out of school, more likely to become a part of the juvenile justice system, and more likely to become a part of the criminal justice system.

Correcting the Disparity in Public Schools

OVERVIEW

- Goals
- Actions
 - Options to take in correcting the disparity
- Funding
- Road Blocks

Correcting the Disparity in Public Schools

- GOALS:
 - Meet the Oregon Department of Education strategic plan's goal #4
 - School districts need to be given the programs and tools to address the problems
 - School districts need support on how to implement the programs effectively
 - There needs to be a method of assessment implemented to measure the success of the programs
 - Have to address concerns of the stakeholders
 - Need support for funding the programs

Goals

Oregon Department of Education Strategic Plan Summary 2013-2015

Goal #4

“ODE meaningfully engages parents, stakeholders,
and the larger community to
help make Oregon’s schools
the best in the country.”

Oregon Department of Education Strategic Plan

- Goal #4 Objectives

1. “Prioritize building and maintaining partnerships with historically underserved communities.”
 - A. Ensure ODE’s advisory groups are necessary, and if they are, make them more diverse.
 - B. Expand the number of partnerships we have with non-profits that do work with communities of color and ensure there is a strategic process for working with those non-profits.

Oregon Department of Education Strategic Plan

- Goal #4 Objectives

- 2. “Provide clear and timely information to customers and stakeholders.”

- A. Develop Next Generation School & District report card.

- B. Improve ODE’s website.

- C. Improve the quality of all ODE meetings, trainings, & presentations for the field.

- D. Update, improve, and disseminate ODE’s Yellow Pages 2.0.

- E. Create and execute agency-wide plan to improve timeliness, availability of information, and expertise (as evaluated by annual Customer Service survey).

Oregon Department of Education Strategic Plan

- Goal #4 Objectives

- 3. “Proactively inform and engage the Legislature.”

- A. Management Team continues to build key relationships with legislators.

- B. Develop and share expert opinions with the Legislature (in partnership with Governor’s office and OEIB).

Oregon Department of Education Strategic Plan

- Goal #4 Objectives

4. “Proactively and strategically work with relevant state agencies to deliver services to support students’ and families’ overall well-being, so schools can attend to students’ educational needs.”

- A. Identify areas of overlap with DHS, OHA, and OYA, then make a plan to partner in order deliver services in a more integrated way.

Goals

“Prioritize building and maintaining partnerships with historically underserved communities.”

- Increase Cultural Awareness:
 - Teach Students and Community that culture is an ASSET
 - Markisha Smith: Education Equity - Education Program Specialist
 - Have school events that include the community
 - Parkrose School District: March 20th 2014 - African American Parent Night
 - Have workshops that address implicit bias
 - Portland public schools use “Courageous Conversations” training to discuss the impact of race in schools

Goals

“Proactively and strategically work with relevant state agencies to deliver services to support students’ and families’ overall well-being, so schools can attend to students’ educational needs.”

- Portland Parent Union
 - Founded by Sheila Warren:
 - Connects parents to resources and support
 - Creates positive institutional changes
 - Increases cultural awareness and healing
 - Oregon Youth Authority
 - Education is funded by ODE
 - Health Care: Many juvenile offenders receive their first medical and dental care when they go to OYA
 - Long Term Care and Treatment Education Programs
 - ODE contracts with local educational agencies to provide these students with education programs.

Goals

“Proactively inform and engage the Legislature.”

- HB 2192 Passed both House and Senate unanimously in 2013.
 - Limits the use of expulsions,
 - requires adoption of written policies for managing students who threaten violence or harm,
 - and requires a student handbook/code of conduct establishing and enforcing discipline, suspension, and expulsion policies
- Legislative Concept: Limit Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion in Pre K-Grade Five Public School
 - Mark McKechnie
- Legislative Concept to Support Positive School Discipline Practices and Reduce Disparities and the Use of Exclusionary Discipline in Oregon Schools
 - Mark McKechnie

Actions

Packages of Options:

- Explain HB 2192 changes to ORS 339.250 to school districts and administrators
- Train faculty with restorative justice methods of disciplinary action
- Promote counseling in Public Schools
- Have faculty cultural awareness trainings
- Increase community participation with schools
- Gain funding for trainings, programs, and community outreach
- Have equity training in Oregon graduate schools for education
- Install a method of assessment

Actions

Explain HB 2192
changes to ORS
339.250 to school
districts and
administrators

-John A. English, JD-Oregon
Department of Education

- Replaces “weapons,” with “firearms” for mandatory expulsion (zero tolerance) to be consistent with Gun Free Schools Act (GFSA). 18 USC § 921
- Expulsions are limited to:
 - conduct posing a threat to the health/ safety of students/school employees
 - Showing that other strategies to change student conduct were ineffective; or
 - expulsion is required by law
- Requires adoption of written policies for managing students who threaten violence or harm.
- Requires districts to develop a student handbook/code of conduct defining:
 - Acceptable behavior, behavior subject to discipline and a respectful learning environment
 - Consequences that correct and promote **positive alternative behavior**

Actions

Explain HB 2192 changes to ORS 339.250 to school districts and administrators

-John A. English, JD-Oregon Department of Education

- Replaces “weapons,” with “firearms” for mandatory expulsions:
 - Superintendent RETAINS discretion to “modify the expulsion requirement for a student on a case by case basis.” 20 USC 7151(b)(1); ORS 339.250(7)(c)(A).
- Adoption of written policies includes provisions that allow administrator to adopt/implement any of the following:
 - Immediately remove students who (threaten to) injure another/ severely damage school property from classroom
 - Have students’ behavior receive immediate attention
 - Require a licensed mental health professional evaluation of students before allowing student to return the classroom
 - Removal can exceed 10 days for good cause if shown that evaluation could not be completed in that time period.

Actions

Train faculty with restorative justice methods of disciplinary action

Give faculty the time to attend trainings

- Have a teacher in-service training day
- Hire substitutes to allow teachers to leave for trainings

Facilitate attendance to trainings

- Provide a space for the trainings
- Provide transportation to trainings
- Provide food and drink during training

Explain how restorative justice will help schools

- Behavioral issues will be corrected instead of escalating
- Students education will improve because they are not missing classes due to suspensions or expulsions

Actions

Promote counseling in Public Schools

-Sam Ko, M.Ed., Lead Worker
– Educational Specialist for
JDEP, LTCT, & YCEP

-and Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

School Counselors

- Currently, schools have counselors that address academic issues, such as preparing for college, and which classes to take.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling in Schools

- Many behavioral issues can stem from undiagnosed mental illness
- Repeatedly suspending a student, or expelling them, will not address a mental illness or disability

Addressing how home-life affects behavior

- Studies show that children who are abused, have been abused, or have witnessed abuse can suffer trauma and/or post traumatic stress disorder
- Low likelihood of receiving help. High likelihood of being labeled a problem child and being expelled

Actions

Have faculty cultural awareness trainings and trainings to address teaching to a diverse student body

Treat culture as an asset, instead of only teaching to the “norm”

- Today’s students are more diverse – racially, linguistically, with special needs...
- Promote students’ acceptance of responsibility for their own learning, and collaborate with them to ensure effective learning

Integrate cultural awareness in classrooms

- Students should feel wanted at school, regardless of their background/differences
- Students should also be taught to treat culture as an asset, to increase acceptance

Address implicit biases

- Media perpetuates harmful stereotypes of African Americans, especially African American males.
- Have “Courageous Conversations” trainings

Actions

Increase community participation with schools and give families tools to help their children

Have “culture nights” where families of specific cultures can come to the school and feel more comfortable being around others who are similarly situated

Have college vocational or trade school information nights/events to stimulate an attainable goal that parents and students can aspire toward

Have programs that address preventative action with families that identify as ethnic minorities, to prevent drop out rates and criminal activity

Educate parents about restorative justice, and how their involvement is important when a child is going through the process

Actions

Gain funding for trainings, programs, and community outreach.

- Funding is needed to facilitate restorative justice and cultural awareness trainings
 - Paying the trainers
 - Paying a stipend to teachers for attending
 - Paying substitutes if needed so that the teachers can attend trainings
 - Paying for transportation
- A \$5000 The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Grant covers 4 regional trainings

Actions

Gain funding for trainings, programs, and community outreach.

- Funding is needed to facilitate health clinics in public schools
 - Giving children counseling at an early age will:
 - Address the cause of disruptive behavior, instead of expecting “one size fits all” disciplinary action to stop the behavior
 - Diagnose any mental illness or disabilities that will affect children's learning capabilities, grades, and desire to continue in school
 - Reintegrate students who are suffering trauma, or post traumatic stress disorder, before the problem escalates
 - Prevent being sent to Long Term Care residential treatment facilities
 - Prevent an outburst that causes them to be detained by juvenile detention centers

Actions

Gain funding for trainings, programs, and community outreach.

- Schools need resources to pay faculty members who host family nights and culture nights, and to pay for the materials, promotion and refreshments at the events
- Teachers are already extremely busy creating lesson plans and supervising after-school/club activities.
 - There needs to be funding for support staff so that teachers can make time for these events
- Important for families and students to make connections with teachers and faculty in an informal setting

Actions

Have equity training
in Oregon graduate
schools for education

- Instead of only training teachers “After-the fact” and once they are already working, have equity training be a part of the curriculum for students majoring in education
- To become a teacher in Oregon, it is already a minimum requirement to have a bachelors degree and complete a state-approved teacher preparation program
- The cost of Equity training could be absorbed in the cost of tuition

Actions

Install a Method of Assessment

- Stakeholders need tangible numbers to show how preventative methods are working in public schools
 - Track the number of students that are suspended or expelled
 - Their ethnicity
 - Preventative actions taken before suspension/expulsion
 - What they were suspended/expelled for
 - The recidivism rates
 - Compare numbers from before preventative actions were implemented to after implementation
 - Track students grades and graduation rates
 - Categorize by ethnicity as well
 - Track the amount of students that were given counseling and received correct mental health diagnosis
 - Have surveys for students and parents

FUNDING

It costs \$10,000 a year to keep a child in school

Every student that finishes high school, stays out of prison, and can get a job will save the state money on prison costs and welfare costs

It costs \$30,000 a year to keep a child in juvenile detention centers

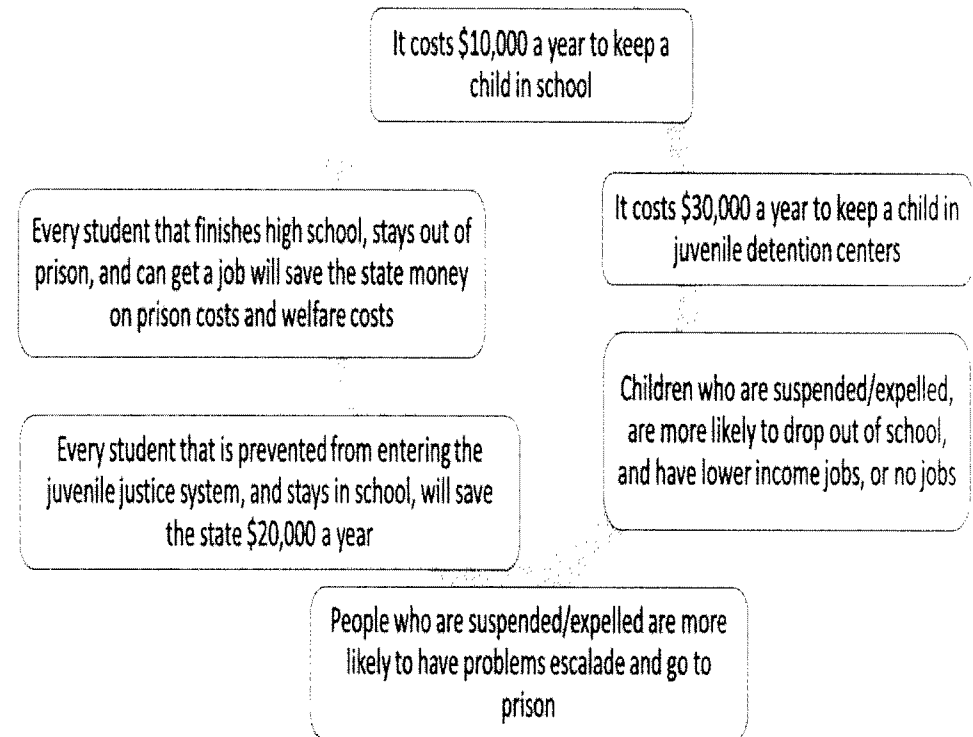
Every student that is prevented from entering the juvenile justice system, and stays in school, will save the state \$20,000 a year

Children who are suspended/expelled, are more likely to drop out of school, and have lower income jobs, or no jobs

People who are suspended/expelled are more likely to have behavioural problems escalate and go to prison

FUNDING

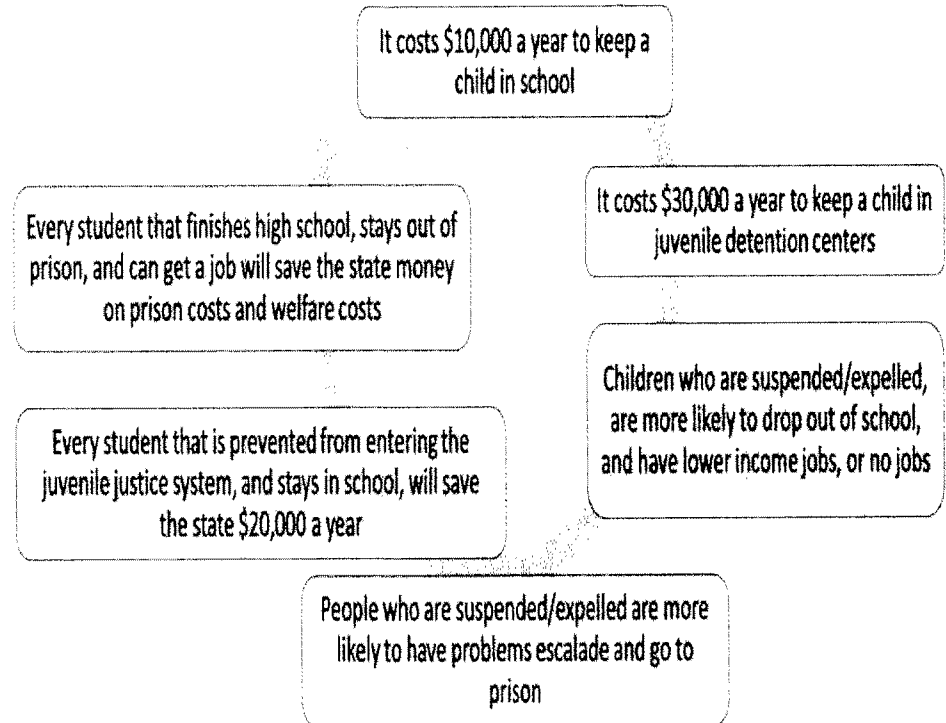
- *Oregon Youth Authority's 2013-2015 cost for managing and treating closed custody youth offenders is budgeted at: \$263 dollars per day
 - 2013-2015 legislative approved budget: \$329.9 million
- Oregon's Adult Corrections system spends about \$90 a day per inmate
 - Reflecting a difference in methods for housing/ supervising / treatment / other services for adult vs. juvenile offenders



FUNDING

Budget should be re-allocated to preventative action:

- Decrease Disparity in Disciplinary actions
- Reduce crime rates
- Reduce drop-out rates
- Improve communities
- Decrease poverty cycle
- Reduce cost to society for housing offenders



Road Blocks

- Zero tolerance policies
- High Stakes Testing
- Districts or Administrators
- Parents
- Victims' Rights Organizations

Road Blocks

Zero Tolerance Policies

- Zero tolerance was meant to address the threat of firearms at school
- Zero tolerance is often applied to a number non-violent offenses.
- Zero tolerance is disproportionately administered, and have a greater consequence on students of color

Road Blocks

High Stakes Testing

- Use of standardized tests to measure success of a school, and impose sanctions if they do not meet an objective goal
- Underperforming students are “pushed out” of school, so that schools can “meet” the objective goal.
- Underperforming students tend to be minority students
 - More likely to be lower income/poverty
 - More likely to have health problems, or be in unstable environments

Road Blocks

Districts and Administrators

- Districts and Administrators feel as if they are being blamed for the existence of the “school to prison pipeline”
- And that they are being given the task of fixing all of the societal/home problems that a child carries with them to school
- There are too many budget cuts to make time for trainings
- Teachers already feel over-worked and do not have time to have a “mediation-circle” if they need to plan the next day’s lesson, and meet an objective bar set by standardized tests

Road Blocks

Parents

- Parents want school districts and administrators to be tough on crime.
- They do not want their children going to school with someone who may have weapon on them
- They do not want their children going to school with someone who may be a bad influence
- Although the administrators have discretion in disciplinary action, parents can pressure for harsher punishments.

Road Blocks

Victims' Rights Organizations

- People who have been a victim feel more restored when a punishment is harsher
- Victims are not likely to see justice if their attacker is given counseling
- Victims are usually endure an unsettled feeling, even after the event is over
 - Uneasiness/wariness
 - Anxiety / fear
 - truama

Eliminating Road Blocks

- Need to explain why zero-tolerance policies
 - Do not correct the behavioral problem
 - Promote anti-social behavior, drop-out rates, and disparity in disciplinary action
- Show how high stakes testing creates incentive to “push-out” underperforming students, who are mostly of minority status
- Explain to districts and administrators that the cost of preventative/restorative justice and counseling is a revenue neutral policy
- Explain to parents and Victims’ rights organizations that preventative actions do not eliminate “tough on crime” policies
 - Counseling and restorative justice prevents many students from becoming criminals, and lowers the amount of crime
 - The people that preventative actions did not work for, are more likely the people that should be involved and handled in the criminal process.

Summation

- Preventative actions reduce the disparity in disciplinary action
 - Restorative justice, counseling, mental health evaluations, cultural awareness
- Re-allocating revenue toward restorative justice programs is a revenue neutral policy
 - Oregon would save money by reducing costs of the juvenile justice system, criminal justice system, and of welfare.
- Community safety is increased; crime is decreased
 - The people that end up in the criminal justice system are more likely the people that need to be handled in the criminal justice system
- Classrooms and school environments are improved