

March 15, 2017

Discipline Reform Draft

Denver Public Schools' (DPS) goal is to prepare young children to succeed in school. Suspending or expelling Early Childhood Education (ECE) through third-grade children fully contradicts the goals of our district and it creates irrevocable consequences for children. There are no short-term or long-term outcomes that benefit children when they cannot be in school to receive the needed support services due to exclusionary discipline practices.

Challenging behaviors exhibited by ECE through third-grade children must be addressed in the context of a comprehensive approach to behavior support that is designed to teach, nurture and encourage positive social behaviors. DPS' ECE through third-grade students shall not be expelled from any publicly funded community-based organization, traditional school, or public charter school except as required by statute.

If a student in ECE through third grade exhibits behavior that presents an imminent danger to the physical, emotional, or mental safety of specific students/staff, the principal in consultation with the instructional superintendent or director of social emotional learning may issue a one-day in-school or out-of-school suspension.

During the one-day out-of-school suspension, the principal or designee must develop a plan addressing the safety of students/staff. That includes developmentally-appropriate strategies for preventing future behavior incidents, restoring relationships, and addressing the student's ongoing social, emotional, and academic needs and should involve families, administrators, teachers and other auxiliary staff to provide support to children and prepare them for successful educational experiences.

Your Questions Answered:

Q: How many students were suspended or expelled in the last year?

A: In the 2015-16 school year, zero ECE through third-grade students were expelled from DPS and approximately 500 were suspended.

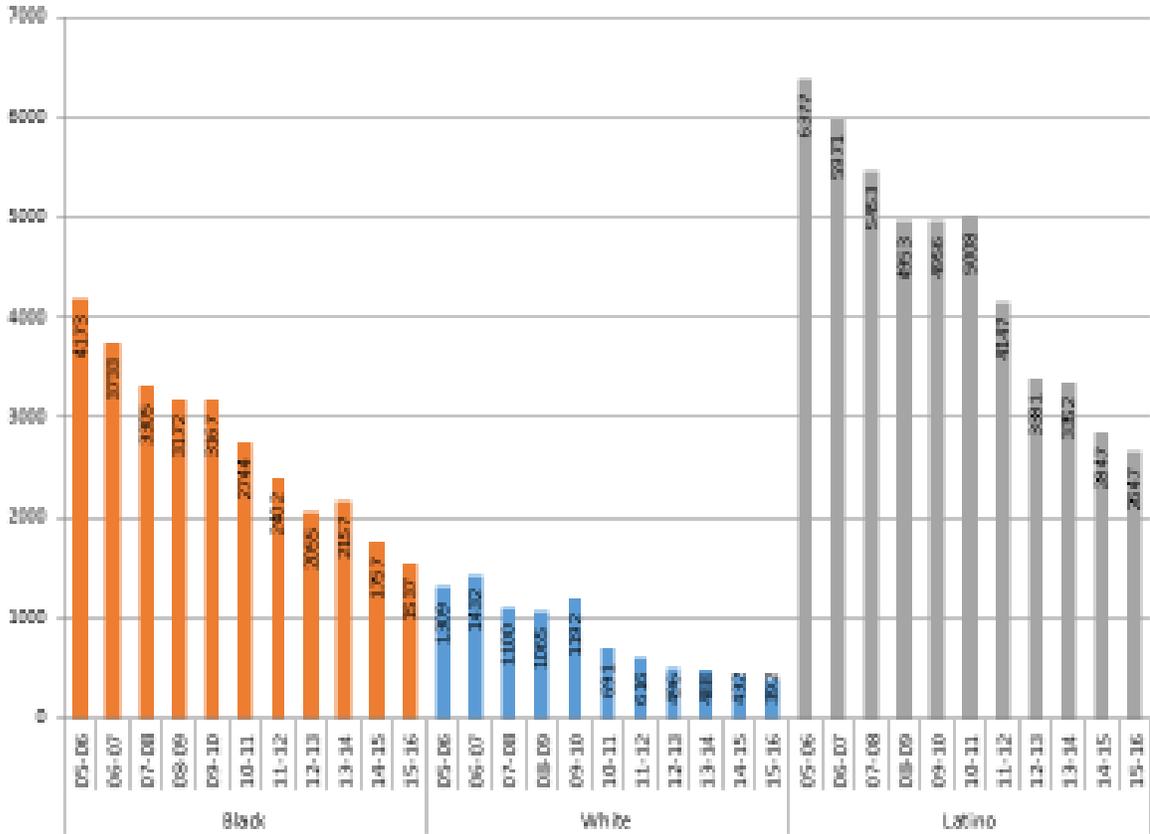
Q: How does that compare to previous years?

A: Since 2008, we have seen a 50% reduction in expulsions and out-of-school suspensions for all students.

Q: Is there an equity challenge?

A: In the 2015-16 school year, 34% of out-of-school suspensions involved Black students, 44% involved Latino students, 21% involved English Language Learners and 14% involved students with disabilities.

Out-of-School Suspensions Desegregated by Race



District Enrollment										
05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16
75018	73399	73875	75369	76340	79413	81860	84408	87382	90127	91425

Trends:

- Three year trend in out-of-school suspensions for African-American students has declined 29%
- Three year trend in out-of-school suspensions for Latino students out-of-school suspensions has declined 21%
- Despite overall declines in the use of out-of-school suspensions, the proportionate share of out-of-school suspensions for African-American students to total out-of-school suspensions has remained consistent at 33%

Q: What impact do suspension and expulsion practices have on young children?

A: Suspension and expulsion practices are incredibly harmful to young children – in 2014, the US Department of Education shared that young students who are expelled or suspended are as much as 10 times more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure and grade retention, hold negative school attitudes and face incarceration. As these practices disproportionately impact students of color, these practices further negatively impact achievement gaps between these students and families and their white counterparts.