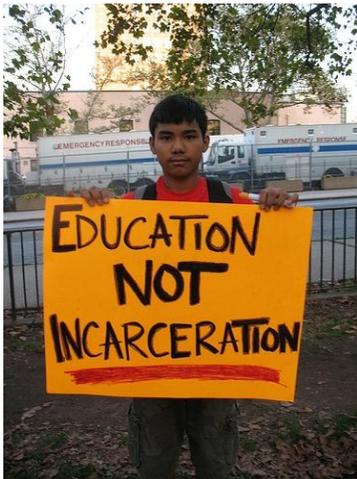




DIGNITY IN SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN

WWW.DIGNITYINSCHOOLS.ORG | INFO@DIGNITYINSCHOOLS.ORG



Our nation's "dropout crisis" is in reality a "pushout crisis"

WHAT IS THE DIGNITY IN SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN (DSC)?

A coalition of 70 organizations from 20 states made up of students, parents, educators, and advocates working to:

- End school pushout and stop student suspensions and arrests, and
- Implement positive approaches to school discipline, like restorative practices and School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS).

WHAT IS SCHOOL PUSHOUT?

Over 3 million young people are suspended out of school each year.

- Suspensions, expulsions and arrests do not improve safety. Instead they increase the chances that students will fall behind and drop out, and create harmful learning environments for everyone.
- Students of color, students with disabilities, LGBTQ students and other marginalized communities are targeted the most by these policies, resulting in millions of young people being pushed out of school and into poverty, unemployment and prison.

PITTSBURGH, PA

- Pittsburgh schools have the 5th highest (of the 500 districts) out-of-school suspension rates in the state of Pennsylvania. During the 2011-2012 school year, Pittsburgh schools issued 58 suspensions for every 100 students.
- In 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, "disorderly conduct" incidents comprised more than half of all incidents reported by the Pittsburgh district to state education officials, a rate that is three times higher than the state average.

Some students are targeted more by punitive discipline than others

- Black students in Pittsburgh, PA experience the highest rate of out-of-school suspension. More than four of every 10 Black students (42%) were suspended at least once during the 2009-2010 school year. They were two and a half times more likely to be suspended than white students.

PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE UNDERMINES THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

- In a study of nearly one million Texas public school students, students who were suspended or expelled were **twice as likely to repeat a grade**. In that same study, **10 percent of students with at least one disciplinary contact dropped out**, compared to 2 percent that had no disciplinary contact.

Expulsion and suspension jeopardize children's health and safety

- Problems in school are often related to issues like depression or other stresses in a student's life. But students are not receiving the professional counseling they need to address these root causes.
- Without the services of trained professionals, students with out-of-school suspensions and expulsions are far more likely to become involved in fights, use drugs and alcohol or commit crimes.

WE ARE LOSING OUR FUTURE

Pennsylvania spends \$362 per day to incarcerate a young person, but only about \$87 to educate them.

THERE ARE SOLUTIONS

WHEN SCHOOLS REPLACE PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE WITH PROVEN PRACTICES, WE ALL WIN

- ★ After implementing **School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports**, over **10,000 schools** across the country are seeing reductions in disciplinary referrals and gains in academic performance. In Los Angeles, Virgil Middle School **reduced suspensions from 300 to 50 per year**, and Garfield High School reduced suspensions from **683 to virtually none**.
- ★ Denver Public Schools revised its discipline code and implemented **Restorative Practices**. Since then, suspensions decreased by 40% and **arrests fell by 60%**.
- ★ In Clayton County, GA, where the juvenile court, law enforcement and schools worked together to create a **School Offense Protocol** to reduce arrests, the **graduation rate increased 20%**.
- ★ Baltimore City Schools **revised their discipline code** to limit the use of suspension and expulsion in 2008 and has since seen a **60% drop in suspensions**, while graduation rates increased 20%.

Cutting dropouts in half would contribute to Pennsylvania's economy

- **\$173 million** in increased spending and investments each year
- **\$383 million** in increased home sales by the midpoint in these new graduates' careers
- **1,400 new jobs** by the midpoint in these new graduates' careers
- **\$217 million** in increased gross state product by the midpoint in these new graduates' careers

For more information on school pushout and alternatives, see the forthcoming report (October 2013) from the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania, *Beyond Zero Tolerance: Discipline and Policing in Pennsylvania Public Schools*. www.aclupa.org.

