Make It Make Sense!

What Data Tell Us About the School-to-Prison Pipeline

Children First
IDRA
Transforming Education
Presenters

Dr. Bricio Vasquez
IDRA Education Data Scientist

Terrence Wilson
IDRA Regional Policy &
Community Engagement Director
Stop the Bad; Do the Good — Hurting and Excluding Students Feeds the School-to-Prison Pipeline

by Morgan Crone, J.D.

I have written on school discipline and policing issues for more than a decade as an attorney representing young people in schools and courts. As an advocate supporting local campaigns and as a collaborator in state and national politics, I have seen how some people in positions to influence the school-to-prison pipeline often frame the solution as “Stop the Bad; Do the Good.”

I admit that may seem crassly simplistic, particularly for an issue that so profoundly impacts the lives of and limits opportunities for so many young people. But I use this hurtling precisely because the broad experiences, data, and academic research on school discipline and policing are clear and obvious — what we need to do and what we need to stop doing — is vital to our nation’s health and well-being for all students.

Stopping the Bad

What exactly happens to students out of school and within the school-to-prison pipeline? The term school-to-prison pipeline describes systemic use of punitive discipline practices that result in missed classroom time and increase the likelihood of justice system involvement and their prescriptive punitive (and punishing) behavior by teachers and administrators.

Much of the “bad” is very clear, albeit deeply entrenched. In many schools, policies and practices reinforce the school-to-prison pipeline: suspended or expelled students, students with higher rates of discipline, and other punitive approaches. Students committed to and choose schools with higher rates of discipline in the school and within school suspensions, cumulative punishment, alternative school placements, and other punitive approaches.

Studies confirm that many students and parents have complained about the use of punishment and exclusionary discipline in schools. (Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2019). They suffer academically, socially, psychologically, and sometimes physically. They feel cast aside, excluded from their classroom communities, and may struggle to catch up with the learning and socialization time they missed (IDRA, 2020). School closures during the pandemic have shown us how social and academic isolation negatively impact students.

Exclusionary discipline policies and practices both reflect and perpetuate systemic biases and maybe the need to have an alternative in place in order to stop doing something bad is a hang-up that only adults have.
Do Out-of-School Suspensions Lead to Lower Graduation Rates?

https://idra.news/SubscribeMe
The data story

Graduation Trends

Discipline Trends

https://idra.news/SubscribeMe
Data

 Aggregate District (local education agency) Data
 2017-18 Civil Rights Data Collection
 2017-18 Texas Education Agency Completion data
 Public Schools Only
 Charter Schools and Charter Districts Excluded
 Only school districts with complete data
 342 school districts out of 1,204
Method

Ordinary Least Squares Regression to predict the rate of high school completion.

Key predictor variable % Out-of-School Suspensions
Outcome variable % high school non-completion

log transformation of key variables

Control variables
  % Black Students
  % White Students
  % Hispanic Students
  % Other Students
  % Economically Disadvantaged
Descriptives

The median school district percentage of out-of-school suspensions was 2.1%

The median school district percentage of high school non-completion was 1.7%
Association Between Out-of-School Suspensions and High School Non-Completion For Texas School Districts.
Results

- A significant, positive relationship exists between district rates of out-of-school suspensions and district rates of high school non-completion.
- A 1% increase in district rate of out-of-school suspension is associated with a 1.4% increase in high school non-completion, controlling for race/ethnicity and economically disadvantaged.
- Additionally, a 1% increase in the percent of Latino student and Other student enrollments were associated with 1.4% and 1.1% increases in high school noncompletion, respectively.
Limitations

- The sample size does not reflect the entire state (28% of all LEA's in Texas).
- Analysis lacks essential control variables due to missingness.
Other Data Sources by IDRA
All students deserve safe and welcoming schools that do not use harmful discipline and school police to punish young people.

- Do your own research
- Raise the age at both ends
- Invest in Restorative & Supportive Practices
- Organize, Strategize, Mobilize in your school, district, and state
Upcoming Webinars

How Calculus Access and Funding Inequity Limits College Readiness
October 20, 2021 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

https://idra.news/SymposiumRegister
Upcoming Webinars

Free Webinar October 27

In the Red ~
Drawing the Line on Digital Redlining Practices

featuring...
Michelle Vega, IDRA Chief Technology Officer
Christina Quintanilla-Muñoz, IDRA Research Analyst
Thomas Marshall, IDRA Policy Communications Strategist

October 27, 2021 • 11:30 am to 12:30 pm CT

https://idra.news/WebinarInTheRed
Upcoming Webinars

10/20 - 1PM ET

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE + (DE)SEGREGATION

Moderated by: Olatunde Johnson

Kristin Henning
Jason Nance
Matt Kautz

a cross-movement conversation

Register: https://discipline_ncsd.eventbrite.com
Intercultural Development Research Association
Celina Moreno, J.D., President & CEO
5815 Callaghan Road, Suite 101
San Antonio, Texas 78228
210-444-1710 • contact@idra.org

www.idra.org

www.facebook.com/IDRAed

Subscribe to our email newsletter:
https://idra.news/Subscribe

Text to join our email list!
Text JOINIDRAEMAIL
To 22828 to get started

Achieving equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools
that prepare all students to access and succeed in college