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# Congressional Briefing Stresses Need to End Corporal Punishment of Students

## IDRA releases report: Stopping Harmful Corporal Punishment Policies in Texas

(San Antonio • July 2, 2021) In 19 states, educators are allowed to beat students as a form of discipline. “Under current federal law, not all children are guaranteed a safe classroom,” said Congressman A. Donald McEachin, who introduced the Protecting Our Students in Schools Act. IDRA co-hosted a congressional briefing this week featuring comments from the Congressman and panels of experts, including IDRA EAC-South Director Dr. Paula Johnson, who spoke about the harms of corporal punishment and the benefits of educational practices that value all students and build safer schools.

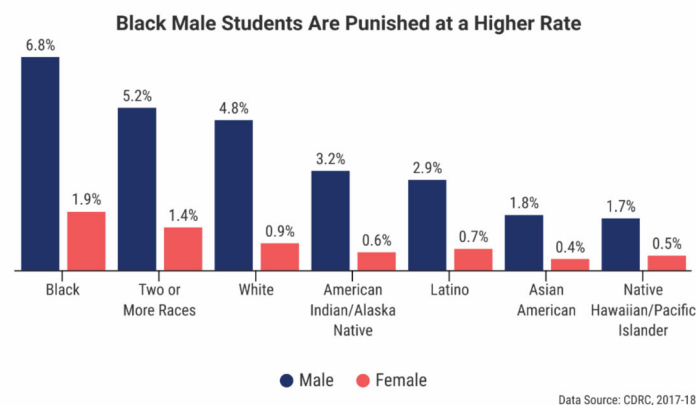
IDRA also released a new issue brief, [Stopping Harmful Corporal Punishment Policies in Texas](#), by Morgan Craven, J.D., national director of policy, advocacy and community engagement at IDRA, reporting how corporal punishment is carried out in Texas and recommendations for policymakers, school leaders and other educators.

“We know the horrific history and impacts of physical punishments against students, particularly Black students, and, in many communities, against Latino students simply for speaking Spanish,” said Ms.

Craven who spoke at a [recent press conference](#) on the introduction of the Protecting Our Students in Schools Act. “That traumatic history can impact how communities of color interact with their schools today. It is past time for corporal punishment in schools to stop.”



The Protecting Our Students in Schools Act, recently reintroduced by Representatives McEachin (D-VA) and Bonamici (D-OR) and Senator Murphy (D-CT), bans the use of corporal punishment in schools receiving federal funds and provides resources for schools and districts to implement practices that we know contribute to a learning environment designed to help students thrive. The bill will also create a grant program to incentivize states and school districts to improve school climate.



Corporal punishment has disproportionate effects on students of color and students with disabilities. For example, Black girls are three times more likely to receive corporal punishment than their peers.

“Our goal is not to replace one punishment with another. Rather, high expectations of all students, effective communication with students and families, and use of social and emotional learning supports provide opportunities for students and adults to grow through the development of social skills and problem-solving strategies.”

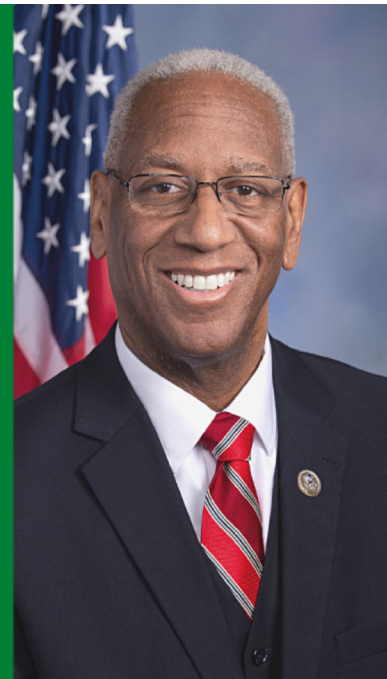
## Highlights from the Congressional Briefing on the Federal Corporal Punishment Ban

The steps must be taken to ensure that our children can learn in safe and healthy environments. That's why I am proud to introduce the Protecting Our Students in Schools Act, to prohibit corporal punishment in our nation's classrooms. In addition to banning the use of physical discipline in our schools, our bill will also create a grant program to incentivize states and school districts to improve school climate.

– U.S. Congressman A. Donald McEachin



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I would like to be very clear that our goal is not to replace one punishment with another. We must provide opportunities for students – and adults – to learn and grow through developing social skills and problem-solving strategies. The use of corporal punishment and other forms of exclusionary discipline practices negate positive intervention strategies.

– Dr. Paula Johnson, IDRA



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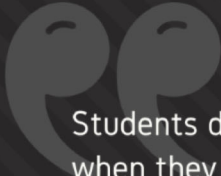




Every student deserves a learning environment that fosters growth and belonging, where they are safe and free from harm. However, such a learning environment is not possible if corporal punishment is allowable under the guise of “discipline.”

– Kayla Patrick, *The Education Trust*

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Students deserve to be safe and feel safe when they are at school so they can learn and grow without fear. I am very grateful to be working with Congressman McEachin and Senator Murphy to introduce the Protecting Our Students in School Act to finally end corporal punishment in every state.

– U.S. Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici



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Children who are paddled in school do worse on academic tests and have lower GPAs. Corporal punishment also is linked with an increase in mental health problems among children. Corporal punishment often causes children to experience physical injury and emotional trauma. Black students, boys, and children with disabilities are more likely to experience school corporal punishment than their peers.

– Dr. Elizabeth Gershoff,  
University of Texas at Austin

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