School Discipline In the Eyes of Superintendents

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School Discipline in Context

• Breaking School Rules Report
  – Showed 31% of students suspended repeated the grade
  – Uncovered racial disproportionality and high school-to-school and district-to-district variance

• US DoE Federal Guidance

• Reform efforts aimed at Positive School Climate, PBIS, Restorative Justice, Eliminating Disproportionality and more ...
AASA Response to the Swirl

- AASA sought and received funding from the Atlantic Philanthropies, in partnership with CDF, to:
  - Work with selected districts on discipline policies, codes of conduct, research and resources
  - To convene supts around the issues of improving school discipline policy and practice
  - Survey a broad spectrum of supts to learn more about the what, why, and how of current school discipline policy and practice
48% of superintendents revised their district’s code of conduct within the past year; 36% revised their code between 1-3 years ago.

Principals (96%) and district leaders (93%) are the most likely stakeholders involved in updating the district’s code.

Community leaders (20%), clinicians (12%) and child welfare entities (7%) least likely to provide input.

Majority of respondents (75%) indicated that their code reflects the district’s “discipline philosophy” and believe the frequency with which they suspend students out of school is the “right amount.”

Twenty percent of respondents stated that their district’s code is in need of revision to reflect greater tiered supports and reduce out-of-school suspension and expulsion.
42% believe the primary goal of OSS is to maintain safety and order in the school building;

20% said that the goal is to provide consequences for student misbehavior that communicates to students, parents and teachers that the school is taking an issue seriously

Another 20% said that the main function of OSS is to remove students from a setting where they are disrupting the learning of others

12% indicated it is to change student behavior and discourage future misbehavior.
Purpose and Consequences of OSS: Misalignment

- 85% of superintendents believe there are positive consequences to using OSS.
- While 42% of superintendents think the primary purpose of OSS is to maintain safety and order in the building, only 24% believe the most positive consequence of using OSS is that it supports school staff in maintaining an orderly environment.
- While 30% of superintendents believe that the most positive effect of using OSS is that it changes the disciplined student’s behavior for the better or deters other students from similar behavior, only 12% of respondents believe that the primary purpose of OSS is to modify student behavior and prevent future misbehavior.
- While 20% of respondents believe the primary purpose of OSS is to remove students from disrupting the learning of others, 32% think the most significant positive effect of employing OSS is that it maintains or improves school climate by removing the worst offenders.
Supports and Rights of Students Suspended Out of School

- Three-quarters of districts provide students with academic, mental or ancillary support services when they are suspended.
- 82% indicated the district almost always or always ensures that suspended students are able to make up work and receive full credit during their exclusion from school and 50% provided suspended students with access to tutoring or other academic assistance.
- 37% ensure re-entry plans are crafted for OSS students.
- 74% always or almost always give students an opportunity to appeal their suspension or expulsion.
- 94% of respondents said that parents and districts are always or almost always notified.
Meting out Discipline

- 40% of respondents indicated that insubordination, defiance or failure to obey or respect teachers and staff accounted for the bulk of district suspensions.
- 30% indicated that fighting infractions lead to the greatest number of OSS rates.
- 12% said that drugs, alcohol or substance abuse issues are the primary trigger for OSS.
- 11% indicated that bullying and harassment are the top infractions leading to OSS.
- 1% of districts indicated that truancy is responsible for the most OSS.
Improving School Discipline Rates and District Prioritization of School Discipline Reform

- When asked to rate the importance of reducing the use of out-of-school suspension and/or expulsion to the district’s leadership agenda, 50% of superintendents responded it was “important” or “very important” to them.
- When asked what would have the greatest effect in reducing school suspension, #1 response was parental involvement; #2 was character education, social-emotional learning and conflict resolution with students.
- 16% believe more teen courts/restorative justice programs would have the greatest effect on OSS rates.
- 2% of superintendents said changing policy at the district level would have the greatest effect in reducing school discipline.
Outside Partners

- 65% of districts partners with individuals or organizations outside the school to improve school discipline policy
- 84% of respondents indicate that they partner with local police/law enforcement
- 75% work with, health and mental health agencies
- 65% partner with social service agencies
- 58% partner with local judges/juvenile court staff
Stakeholder Opposition to School Discipline Reforms

- Teachers and principals are perceived to be the most opposed to OSS limits
- Supes expect almost 75% of teachers to oppose OSS limits
- 51% think parents are inclined to support or would support OSS limits, and 54% said students would be supportive or relatively supportive
- 42% think community leaders would be neutral
- No consensus on whether school boards would support discipline reforms
Knowledge and review of discipline data

• 11% of superintendents believe a greater focus on data would improve school discipline rates.
• 38% of districts share discipline data with school principals on a weekly basis.
• A little more than half share data with teachers and 70% share data with boards.
• 15% of respondents report that the school district discipline data is not shared with any of the following groups: teachers, parents/guardians, students, school boards or community leaders.
Disproportionality

- 19% of superintendents determined that special education students are disproportionately disciplined or suspended
- 22% found that students of color are disproportionately disciplined or suspended
- 40% concluded that male students were disproportionately suspended
- 40% of superintendents found that individual classrooms/teachers have higher referrals
- 22% ascertained that individual schools within the district have disproportionately higher rates of suspension and expulsion
Challenges and Opportunities

• We are challenged by issues of policy (local and state-level) and practice (at the classroom, building, and district-level).

• Code of Conduct Philosophy and Interpretation

• Bolstered by more and more research on what works

• Enthused by work on the ground and by empowered school leaders that are making a difference
Policy Recommendations for Supts

• Ensure that discipline policies and practices align with the philosophy of the school system and community
• Examine district data to identify areas of improvement and work with stakeholders to co-develop solutions
• Identify the purpose for which OSS and expulsion are used within the district and examine whether its use is worth the negative consequences for individual students
• Educate administrators, principals and teachers on the issues and challenges that surround ‘willful defiance’ and other vaguely defined infractions in discretionary discipline. Work to eliminate these infractions from OSS.
Policy Recommendations for Supts

- If your district employs school resource officers, ensure that they are engaged with the district code of conduct and work to minimize their presence in handling school discipline matters.
- Consider targeting professional development funds toward supporting and assisting teachers on cultural competency, school discipline, and classroom management.
- Investigate alternative practices to exclusionary discipline including in-school suspension, restorative justice, PBIS and more.
Suggestions for Advocates

• Partner with education groups at the state and federal level to pressure legislators for increased funding for positive school climate programs.

• Tell district leaders why more resources dedicated to improving school climate and discipline are important to the school community and where they can apply for the funding.

• Frame proposed changes to district discipline practices as an opportunity to improve student learning and parental engagement.

• Recognize that not all districts are alike.

• Instead of pushing for more data at the state or federal level, ask district leaders to have an annual meeting dedicated to discussing the collected discipline data with stakeholders.
SFUSD Disciplinary Practices Evolution

July 28th 2014

SFUSD Superintendent
Richard Carranza

AASA WEBINAR
Differentiated Accountability with a Whole Child/Whole School Approach

The School Quality Improvement Index – Summer 2014

Accountability Score 100%

Academic Domain 100%

High
- Performance: 33%
- Growth: 33%
- Grad Rate (HS): 33%

Middle
- Performance: 50%
- Growth: 50%

Elem.
- Performance: 50%
- Growth: 50%

Social-Emotional & Culture-Climate Factors

- Absentee Rate
- Student/Staff/Parent Culture-Climate Surveys
- Suspension/Expulsion Rate
- Social Emotional Skills
- ELL Re-designation Rate
- Special Ed Identification

Part of SQII in Fall 2014
Part of SQII Starting in Fall 2015, baseline data released in Fall 2014
Part of SQII Starting in 2015-16, Pilot data collected in 2013-14
Provide tiered levels of academic and behavior support to all students using a **Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²)** model.
Data Context

- The Good News
- The Challenges
The Good News

Suspensions continue downward trend

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<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Total Suspensions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SY 2011-2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>SY 2012-2013</td>
<td>1921</td>
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<tr>
<td>SY 2013-2014</td>
<td>1177</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Challenge: Disproportionality still manifest

Breakdown of Ethnicity as Percentage of Total Suspensions

- SY 2011-12 % of Suspensions
- SY 2012-13 % of Suspensions
- SY 2013-14 % of Suspensions

- African American: 50.7%
- Am Indian: 0.6%
- Arabic: 0.5%
- Chinese: 6.4%
- Declined: 3.5%
- Filipino: 2.7%
- Japanese: 3.0%
- Korean: 0.2%
- Multiple: 0.2%
- Other Non-White: 0.2%
- Other White: 5.1%
- Samoan: 0.0%
- Southeast Asian: 0.1%
- Spanish Surname: 29.2%
Classroom Referrals Very Disproportionate

Counseling Office Referral Online System Data 2013-14

Number of Referrals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>ALL REFERRAL COUNT</th>
<th>UNDUPLICATED STUDENT COUNT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Am Indian</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2880</td>
<td>450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<td>Filipino</td>
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<td>Japanese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE Asian</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
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The Past Two Years Have Seen a Decrease in Special Education Referrals of About 13% per Year
Behavioral RTI Ahead of Schedule

- 85 schools in BRTI
  - 18 schools left to train after 2014-2015
  - Training includes
    - Social Emotional Curriculum (SEL), Second Step PBIS
    - Good Behavior Game
    - Physiology for learning
    - Tier 2 and 3 behavior Supports
    - Intervention tracking
SSSR Resolution Key Points

- No Suspensions for Willful Defiance
- Coordinated approach for all support services
- Mandates reporting of out of class referrals and Intervention tracking.
- Integrates restorative practice, trauma awareness and PBIS into behavioral RTI
UESF – District co-sponsoring 4 hr training for all Staff over two years.

Focus on communicating competently with students
Teaching, modeling and reinforcing pro-social Skills
Behavior Action Teams (BAT)

Multidisciplinary BAT Teams
Work across disciplines and roles
Triage and build school capacity based on discipline and academic data:
Key BAT team functions:

• Individual Teacher coaching, Whole staff Development; Individual and group support. Emergency triage for extreme behaviors, Linkage to community based organizations.
BAT team members

- Positive Behavior Incentives and Supports (PBIS)
- Restorative Practice Coaches
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)
- Pupil Personnel Service Administrator (PPS)
- Administrators, Peer Resources, Child Welfare
- Attendance Liaisons, Counselors, School Health Staff
- BAT Teams Review Data
For more Information contact:

Thomas Graven
Executive Director of Pupil Services
Department SFUSD
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Question and Answer

Please enter your questions in the chat feature

If you would like to connect for more info on AASA School Discipline, please email bhoffe@aasa.org or spudelksi@aasa.org