Disciplinary Procedures in Mississippi's Public Schools: A Look at What Educators Have to Say Mississippi Department of Education Conference on Chronic Absenteeism

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# What is Mississippi KIDS COUNT?

Leading resource for comprehensive information on Mississippi's children and serves as a catalyst for improving outcomes for children, families, and communities.

Part of a **national network** of state-based advocates supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Housed at Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center.

### https://kidscount.ssrc.msstate.edu

### What services do we provide and how can we help you?

- KIDS COUNT Data Center: provides an interactive resource with the best available data and statistics on the educational, social, economic and physical well-being of children.
- KIDS COUNT Data Book: published annually with a ranking of states on 16 key measures of child well-being.
- Mississippi KIDS COUNT Fact Book: published in February annually
- Downloadable Infographics and Maps
- Policy Briefs/Surveys: focused on specific issues of importance to our state





# Following the Data Policy Grants

Awarded by AECF July 2014 – 2018

Specific Focus on Chronic Absence

Began with district-level data and awareness campaign

Data use agreement with MDE in 2015 allowed student-level data

Survey conducted in 2017 with attendance officers

Solid partnership with MDE Office of School Attendance Enforcement

#### https://msdataproject.com/

**Education Suspended:** The Consequences of School Suspension on Student Dropout

Suspension is an exclusionary discipline practice which has often become a preferred strategy for addressing unwanted Suspension is an escularonary discipline practice which has ontain become a preferror strategy for addressing unwerted behavior in many schools, especially with the introduction of zero tolerance discipline policies in the mid-90%. Despite such behavior in the address which shows that expressions are advance to particular tensory to be used to be a considered behavior and the supervision of the supervision behavior in many schoots, especially with the introduction of zero tolerance discipline policies in the mild-905.: Despite such transfs, there is no evidence which shows that suspensions are effective in reducing unwanted behavior.<sup>23</sup> Rather, research has the supervision of t uends, mere is no evidence enich snows that suspensions are effective in reducing unwanted benavior.⇒ Rather, research has shown that suspension is associated with negative outcomes such as lower academic achievement and higher risk of dropot.⇒ encern that euspension is associated with negative outcomes such as lower academic achievement and nigher rais or proport."" The negative effects of suspension are especially relevant in Mississipi which consistently ranks among the lowest of US states for advectional advances it is used when out it once advant one member (no state of loads where tradement is Missission) The negative effects of suspension are especially relevant in Mississippi which consistently ranks among the lowest of US state in educational outcomes.<sup>6</sup> During the 2014-2015 school year, nearly a quarter (23,5%) of high school freahmen in Mississippi while school scalared a suspension way one the bulkest school are since to 4 to 5 bulk on the expression of exponent In educational outcomes." Ouring the 2014-2010 school year, nearly a quarter (23.5%) of high school freehmen in Massesippi public schools received a suspension; this was the highest rate of any grade, K-12.7 What are the consequences of suspending subserver structures and the train train school concern?

students at various points in their high school careers?

Costs of High School Suspensions

An analysis of 34 school supportation studies showed a significant relationship at the school level between suspensions and An anarysis of 34 service suspension studies enoyed a significant relationship at the service issue between suspensions and achievement, the higher the suspension rate, the poorer the school echievements.<sup>4</sup> The research also revealed a relationship between suspensions and extend dramatic the loader the economic rate, the block the economic term of the research also revealed as a support achievement. Une regner the suspension rate, the poor of the achievements." The research also reveared a relationarity between suspensions and school dropout, the higher the suspension rate, the higher the school dropout rate." A study of 20 between suspensions and school dropout, the higher the suspension rate, the higher this school propout rate, is auron or 20 schools with the highest dropout rates in Kentucky found a positive relationship between dropout and suspension rates and describes dramatic school as a "unambalase process" of unsurpresent is school exercised such as between and discription evolution schools with the highest dropout rates in Kentucky found a positive relationship between dropout and suspension rates and describes dropping out as a "cumulative process" of unsuccessiful school experiences such as behavior and discipline problems, and excitation failure market trans a subday "service and and "? The shutch excesses that have reduced and the t describes dropping out as a "cumulative process" or unsuccessful school experiences such as behavior and osciption pre-and academic failure, rather than a sudden "impulsive action." The study suggests that some schools may actually be in an academic failure. The study is a sudden and the second absence of the second absence description experience. and academic failure, rather than a subden "impulsive action..." The study suggests that some schools may actuary on "perpetuating a failure cycle" when they rely on suspension and other exclusionary discipline precises, which result in attidents. How for a supervised to be the perpendicular and acceleration of the subsection actions which result in attidents. Perpetuating a failure cycle: when they rely on suspension and other esclusionary discipline practices, which result in student having fewer opportunities to learn and grow socially and academically? As Missiastippi schools seek to increase graduation where and decoder decoder dates a choice economication of activate schemenical scheme could have fact seek transition benefits a scheme activity of a scheme could be a fact set of the scheme transition of activity of the scheme transition of having fewer opportunities to learn and grow socially and academically? As Misulesippi achoos seek to increase graduation rates and decrease dropout rates, a close examination of school suspension rates could be a fractise towards keeping students confident and the school because of the contract the two towards the two towards and the two towards to the two towards and the two towards to the two towards to rates and decrease dropout rates, a close examination or school suspension rates could be a rate scop someral require acues enclosed and on the path to successfully completing their high school degrees. To our knowledge there have been few if any enclosed in the path to successfully completing their high school degrees. To our knowledge there have been few if any enclosed in the path to successfully completing their high school degrees. To our knowledge there have been few if any enclosed in the path to successfully completing their high school degrees. To our knowledge there have been few if any enclosed in the path to successfully completing their high school degrees.

emonso and on one part to addressing compresing over right action ongress. To use interacting units systematic studies which have documented the effects of suspension on diopout rates in Mississippl. At the national level, a 2016 study estimated that auspensions in 10th grade alone produced more than 67,000 dropovts.<sup>9</sup>

At the national level, a 2016 study estimated that auspensions in 2010 grade sione produced more than 97,000 dropouts.<sup>2</sup> The social and economic costs of dropping out of high school are huge, due to lost wages and taxes, higher welfare costs, Prover handle and increased crimes to 2016 2017. Increased and the exercise institutional events 16/34 maps 65 travelous The social and economic costs of diopping out of high school are huge, due to lost wages and taket, nigher waterie costs, poort health, and increased crime.<sup>1</sup> In 2006/2007, Independention rates among individuals ages 16-24 were 63 times higher and the social and an experimentation of the social school and the social school an Douter neelin, and increased onme." In 2006-2007, inceronation rates among individuals ages 16-24 were 63 times higher for dropouts than among college graduates <sup>(2)</sup> The intersection of race, educational attainment, and incarceration is straining 2014 at the found a nearly 70% elevance of an &fricen &evention end water a built value distance build incorrect in built for dropouts than among college graduates.<sup>10</sup> The intersection of race, educational attainment, and incarceration is straing a 2014 study found a nearly 70% chance of an African American man without a high actional diploma being imprisoned by his most shifter to the functioner to be and remote one to be been been associated at \$1.1 billion in Second imprison a 2014 study found a nearly 70% chance of an American American man without a high achoor diploma being imprisoned by his mid-bitrise.<sup>1</sup> The long-term fiscal and social costs of these losses have been estimated at \$11 billion in facal impact in lost INIG TRITIES ... The congreen recail and social costs or trees iceses have been estimated at \$1.1 billion in hacel impact in loss. Take revenues over the infetimes of these additional disposite, and \$35 billion in social impact and costs to the larger society in Former social social expressions there are additional disposite humans from and when exercision rates. The excite tax revenues over the intermes of these additional dropouts, and \$35 bition in social impact and costs to the larger society. From a cost savings perspective, there would be substantial economic benefits from reducing suspension rates. The study estimated that many ones perspective, there would be substantial economic benefits from reducing suspension rates. From a cost samings perspective, there would be substantial economic benefits from reducing suspension rates. The study estimated that even a one percentage-point reduction in the national suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to expension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to the substantial suspension rate would reduce the substantial suspension r estimated that even a one percentage-point reduction in the national suspension rate would reduce the number of dropouts due to be used on the national social benefit of \$2.2 billion.<sup>5</sup> As the poorest state in the national coupling that the termination of ter to suspension, resulting in a facial benefit of \$993, million and a social benefit of \$2.2 billion - is the poorest sate in the nasion (ranked by median household income)<sup>11</sup> it is important to answer the question of how our zero tolerance exclusionary discipline enforce are calculated to solve different value and Ministeries<sup>12</sup> local basis feed and ended costs.

trained by median nousenod moother- it is important to answer are growing or in new our cero polices are related to school dropout rates and Mississippi's long-term facal and social costs. This brief is the second in a series on school suspension. The previous brief in this series, Education Suspended. An Overview of Status Researching to Researching to Status Relation Provide Provide Status Control that control to the subject control of each This time is the second in a series on school suspension. The previous ther in this series, Education Suspended, in Overview of Student Suspensions in Mississippi's Public Schools (February 2017), found that compared to the national average of 6% Mississipping and a trademic set of attrademic compared and and attrademic second and previous second and the source of a second

or student suspensions in massissippi s Yubic Schools (Hebruary 2017), found that compared to the national average of 9%. Mississippi had a higher rate of students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions (OSS) during the 2013-2014 school environment of the school enviro Mississippt had a higher rate of students receiving one or more out-or-school suspensions (USS) during the 2013-2014 school year. Approximately 42,100 Mississippt students (K-12) or 8,3% of all public school students, were given one or more out-or-school and approximately students (K-12) or 8,3% of all public school students, were given one or more out-oryear." Approximately 42.100 Misaissippi students (K-12) or 8.3% or all public school students, were given one or more out 62 school suspensions. When disease and the school students (12.7% OS5 rate) school suspensions, when disaggregiting data from the 2014-2016 school suspension as White students (4.0% OSS rate). Nationally, were over three times as likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspension as White students (4.0% OSS rate). Nationally, by disadvecting and the time and likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspension as white students (4.0% OSS rate). Nationally, by disadvecting and the time and school one school out-of-school suspension as white students (4.0% OSS rate). Nationally, the time and the students are exception to be school out-of-school suspension as white students (4.0% OSS rate). Nationally, the school of the students are exception to be school out-of-school support of the school out-of-school out-of-sch vers over three times as likely to receive one or more out-of-echoic suppension as which students (4.0% USS rate). National studies show that Black students are more likely to be suspended for infractions which are determined subjectively by the determine handle cush as insubjectively write induced interactions increasing events trade and trade and write under an in-Abdies show that Black students are more likely to be suspended for intractions which are determined subjectively by the referring teacher such as insubordination, willful defance, disrepect, excessive noise, threat, and lottering while White students which has been determined to response the to official and the objectively determined (Abanese Leadon and Leadon and Contracts). referring teacher such as insucordination, will denance, parespect, excessive noise, preas, and somming while write source tend to be referred for suspension due to offenses which can be objectively determined (obscene language, leaving without parentiation and mendation) (3)

This brief follows up on this previous effort and summarizes information on the consequences of suspension on dropout, and onlines realize security states. The manages of this extracted is to obtained where data drives devices exclude to be a This brief follows up on this previous erfort and summarizes information on the consequences of suspension on dropout, an outlines policy considerations. The purpose of this policy brief is to advance data driven decision-making in promoting best marrier provide and soft values for oblideen and familiae in Mineralized. permission, smoking, and vandalism).14

outimes poincy considerations. The purpose or this poincy oner is to advance data practice models and educational policies for children and families in Massissippi.





Suspension Rates (OSS and ISS) by Grade (2014-2015)



Suspension Rates by Race (2014-2015)



Please share – does your district use a variety of corrective strategies that do NOT remove children from valuable instruction time?





Risk of Dropout by Number and Type of Suspension, 2014

"A Suspension can be life altering. It is the number-one predictor - more than poverty – of whether children will drop out of school, and walk down a road that includes greater likelihood of unemployment, reliance on social-welfare programs, and imprisonment."

National Education Association, neaToday (Flannery 2015)

### BALANCING ACT:

Mississippi Administrators and Teachers Weigh in on Discipline Policies in Schools **BALANCING ACT:** A school district's student code of conduct serves as a contract between the student and administration outlining student A sunsa userva a student core of concurt envire as a contract between the second and administration outning source expectations that, if followed, will foster a positive learning environment. Developed under the leadership of the district expectations one, in nerverse, we loads a presserie rearing servicement, preveriped under the teacership to the district administration and adopted and enforced by the local school board, the code of conduct and student handbook explain possible ecrimination and edupted and emotions by the rocal school scard, the code or conduct and source miniators explain disciplinary actions and consequences should discretely conduct occur. When a student, violates the code, disciplinary oncoprimary accords and consequences snown ascroomy conduct occur. when a sourcers, vocase the occur, decignmeny policies are put into place to address the behavior exhibited. The methods of discipline and the degree of enforcement viry videly across the U.S. 1612 landscape and even from school to school In Missiasippi, school suspension, detention, alternative policies, alternative education, and corporal puninhment are allowable In missiamppi, school suspension, oetenoori, attentiative policies, anemative souration, and corporal parameters, are a overall under state law. Missiampi Code 37:11-65 requires local school boards to adopt their own disciplinary policies and make them available to students, parents and guardians at the beginning of the academic year On average, one out of every seven students in American public schools experiences exclusionary discipline. In achool un werege, one out on every eaven aducente in vitre teen stark serious experiences **exeruencery serior** internation suspension (ISS), out of achicol suspension (ISS), or expulsion <sup>5</sup> Expulsion and OSS remove the student, permanently or exeptension (1997), conversional exercision (1999), or explained, comparison and user remote the sourcest permanently temporarily, from the school environment. In echool suspension, in contrast, seeks to keep the student in the school sample way, non-one school environment, meanor suspension in contrast, seeks to keep the stutters in the school environment while removing them from the classroom. Though policies and best practices recommend using ISS classrooms Stratus states, write remaining criteri more una seasonarie, money i sonaria ena seas previous revea en erra searg ra "Se resintain order and estry while addressing behavioral issues without excluding students from the learning environment\*\*, students disciplined with ISS still miss instruction time with their peers. Removing a student from the regular classroom for a specified period of time. May be served in school (155) exemuting a subset from the regimer upstanding on the severity of the infraction, and the school's code of conduct. Requiring a student to report to a designated area during otherwise tree time (i.e., lunch, recess, free period, after ∧ Susper ~ A Detention ~ Physically administering discipline, usually by means of spanking or hitting  $\sim$ Corporal Punishment: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): Providing discipline plans and rewards for good behavior at the student, classroom, and school levels RESCONSIDE JUSCIONS: Seeking to builance consequences with mending the relationship between the student end the school communi-~ ..... Restorative Justice: ^ an infraction has occurred Given that decipitnary methods vary across the Mississippi public school landscape, it is important to examine how and why Unen that decipitrally monous very serves the mississippi pouse whomenessays, is a mission to warning the end of here they are being implemented in the classroom. Administrators and teachers are closely included in the process and can have only are being impremented in the classroom, naminaciations and septrats are closely involved in the process and can naw valuable inslight into ourient practices. With support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, researching at Mississippi KIOS Valuable meight neo ountent practices, with support from the write L. Galey Foundation, researching as Measardprices ODUNT, a project of the Family and Children Research Unit at Mississi pol State University a Social Science Research Center (SSRC) developed a web-based survey instrument to gather the perspectives of Mississippi K-12 public school administrators (domu) severaped a vice used survey maximient to gather the propertients of massaceppi muse point econom sommations and teachers on the types of discipline policies administered in their schools, the effectiveness of these policies, and their ana warnes on the grap is uncounter purches earnings on those earnings, we ensure the error was a share, and we subjections for alternative strategies. The total number of completed surveys was 433. Additionally, researchers conducted eveloperations for anteriorities or everyons. The state manager to complete a surveys reas 4.2.2, hadroxidwary, reasonance a surplusive telephone interviews with six school administrators (i.e., superintendents, principals, and assistant superintendents) from tereprione interviews was an school administrators (c.e., aupermandents, principles, and assistant supermanitorn around the state to obtain qualitative responses that are featured within the body of this brief. The administrators comments around the state to obtain quantative responses that are relatined within this obtay or this their the administrators, comment are reflective of their views on disciplinary procedures and may or may not correspond with the key findings from the survey.



# Methodology of Survey

Conducted in March 2018

Web-based survey developed by Mississippi KIDS COUNT

Sent to all K-12 Principals

Asked to Participate and Forward to Teachers, Interventionists, School Counselors

433 Respondents

Qualitative Phone Interviews also conducted

#### MISSISSIPPI PRINCIPALS' REPORTED USE OF DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES



#### PRINCIPAL AND TEACHER RATINGS OF DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES



### Percentage of Mississippi School Districts Allowing Use of Corporal Punishment

50% 90% 35% 10%





#### CORPORAL PUNISHMENT RATE BY DISTRICT, 2016-2017



CP Prohibited

data suppressed to protect confidentiality

Source: Public Information Request, April 2018 Mississippi Department of Education

#### DISTRICTS PROHIBITING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, BY YEAR ENACTED

District	Year Enacted
Oxford	1980
Gulfport	1991
Jackson Public	1991
Hattiesburg	1999
Canton	2004
Starkville-Oktibbeha Consolidated	2005
Ocean Springs	2006
Clinton	2012
Meridian	2012
Tupelo	2013
Moss Point	2014
Natchez-Adams	2014
Pass Christian	2014
Pascagoula-Gautier	2015
Pearl River Co.	2015
Greenville ource: District Board Policies	2018

Source: District Board Policies

"We ultimately envision corporal punishment being totally removed [from the district policies]. But we also had some pretty intense discussions. We had a student leadership team that represented schools across the district. It's amazing. Corporal punishment is ingrained in students and the culture of our area. In that conversation, we had students say, 'Yes, we need it.' And parents said, 'Yes, we need it.' It's been so much a part of it [the culture]. So we were not going to strip it all the way out, but we reduced it."

"Corporal punishment is the opposite of what we're trying to build and creates a culture of fear... We worked with administrators to identify the only times it can be used. It's a last resort for only a few infractions.... Before, it could pretty much be used at any time. We... gave a definition so parents and administrators can see what it should look like, when it should be used, who can do it—just to make sure all those lines are covered. We did reduce it greatly, with the hope that we are ultimately able to move away from it altogether."

- 66% of principals surveyed say their students can be suspended for willful disobedience or willful defiance
- 64% said they use "zero tolerance" policies
- 93% reported using a "discipline ladder" for determining the consequences of an infraction
- 68% said they have a law enforcement presence in their schools

Teachers (66%) and school interventionists, special education teachers, counselors and social workers (73%) believe they have little to no influence in setting discipline policies in their schools. "I do not like ISS and OSS because it takes away the kids from the classroom, and if they're not in the classroom, they're not learning."

"I will always believe the purpose of discipline is to change behavior, not to be mean or punitive. You have suspensions and in-school detentions. But at the end of the day, I think it matters the relationship you're building and where your community is going to." Who believes that PBIS strategies are more effective than suspension and/or corporal punishment?

**Teachers?** 

**Principals?** 

**Others:** Interventionists, Special Education Teachers, Counselors, Social Workers?

On average, **principals** rated positive behavior supports at 3.4 with 5 being the highest on the scale. Teachers and the "other" group rated it as 2.5 and 2.7 respectively

## Alternative Strategies to Suspension:

- Parents attending class with their children
- Community Service
- Restorative Justice
- Detention
- Overnight Suspension

## **Policy Considerations**

- Require school districts to track their suspension rates over time (by race, age, gender, disability status, type of infraction, and date of suspension) to better understand how suspensions contribute to chronic absenteeism.
- Provide pre-service and in-service professional development opportunities so that school staff understand culturally relevant positive classroom discipline, classroom management, and the root problems triggering misbehavior.
- Increase the use of PBIS and Social and Emotional Learning across the K-12 landscape.

## **Policy Considerations**

- Ensure that teachers, students, and parents have input when reviewing student codes of conduct and school handbook discipline policies.
- Request that MDE analyze school discipline policies (including school suspensions and corporal punishment) and consider their effects on chronic absenteeism, graduation rates, student academic achievement, and the state of Mississippi's economic well-being.

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"We have to address behavior in the same manner as we do reading and math, science and social studies. We have to know what is developmentally appropriate, and we have to do those things that help the student acquire that skill set. We weren't born with that skill set—none of us were. We've learned it by trial and error. We're hoping by being proactive and having well-developed systems of support, our staff can do the same things they need to do without as much pain as some of us had in learning those strategies."