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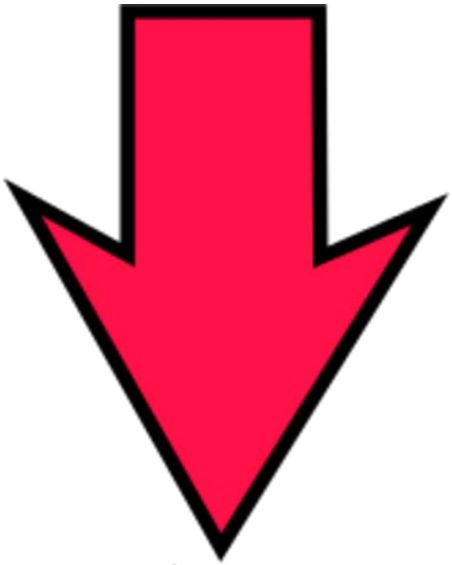
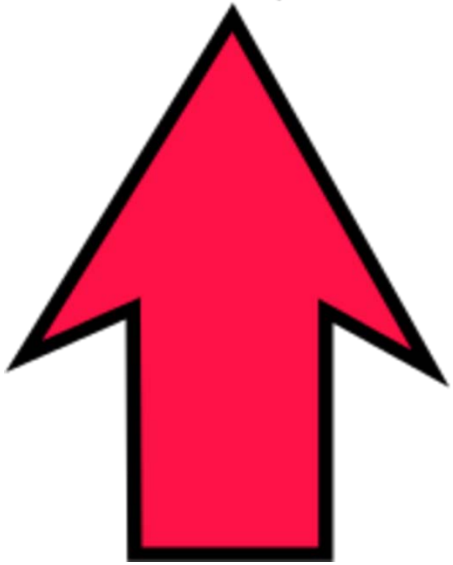
Restorative Practices and Student Discipline

Vanessa Hernandez, Youth Policy Director
ACLU of Washington

Impacts of Suspension and Expulsion



- Graduation rates
- Post-secondary education
- Test scores



- “Feedback loop”
- Culture of punishment
- Dropout
- Juvenile justice involvement

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"School to Prison Pipeline": Defined

- Policies and practices that push children out of classrooms and into the juvenile justice system.
- **Direct:**
  - school based arrest by school resource officer or
  - referral to law enforcement.
- **Indirect:**
  - exclusionary school discipline
  - and pushout.

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RACE

SPECIAL NEEDS

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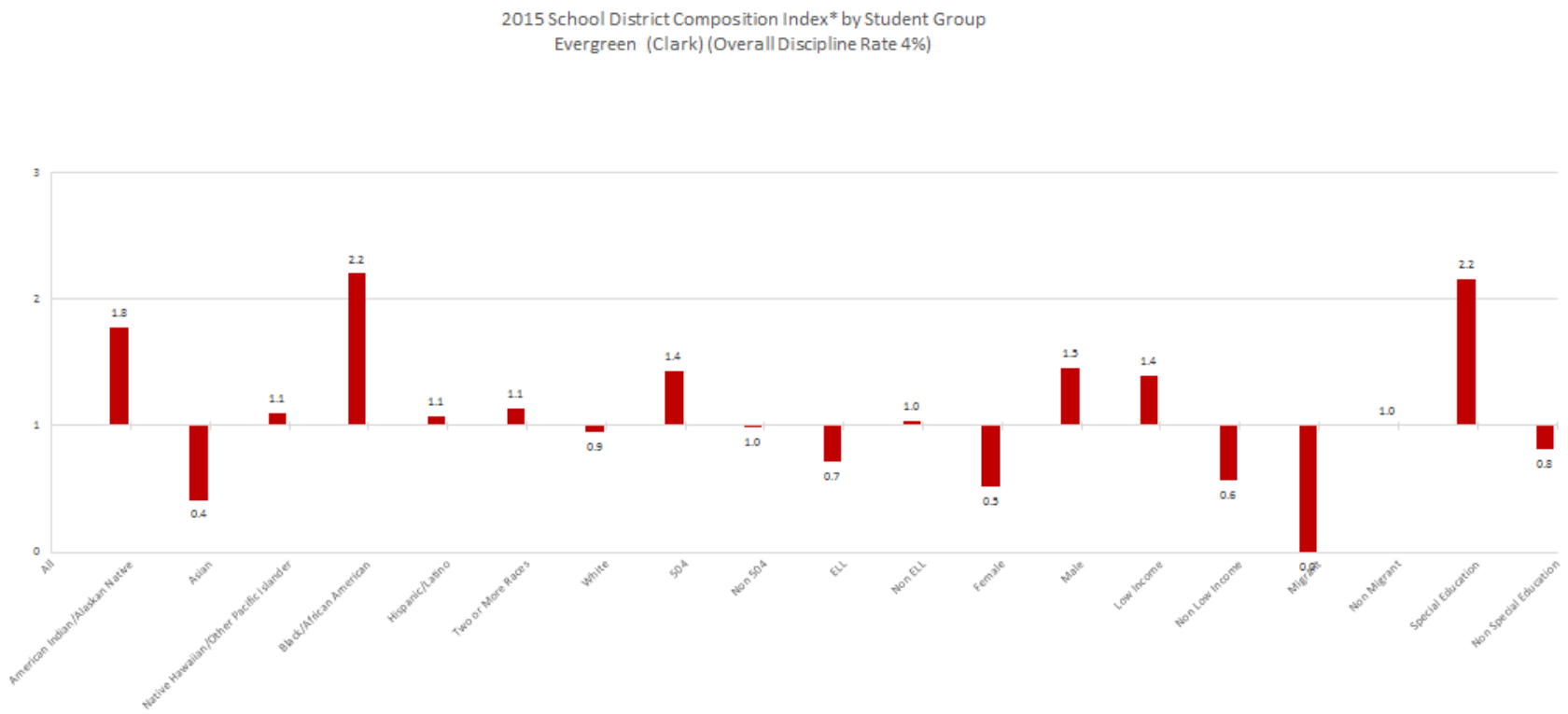
Evergreen School District



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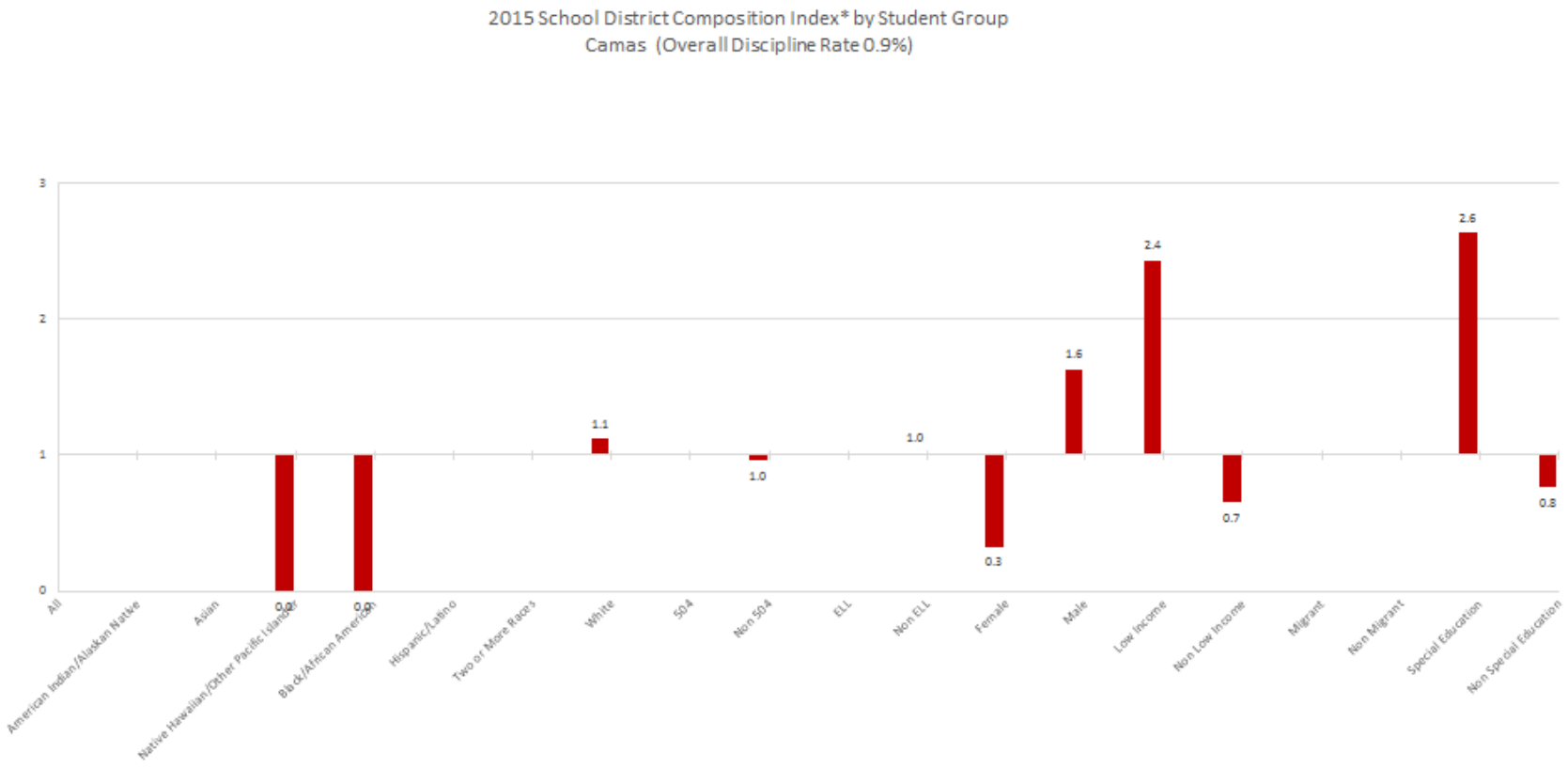
Camas School District



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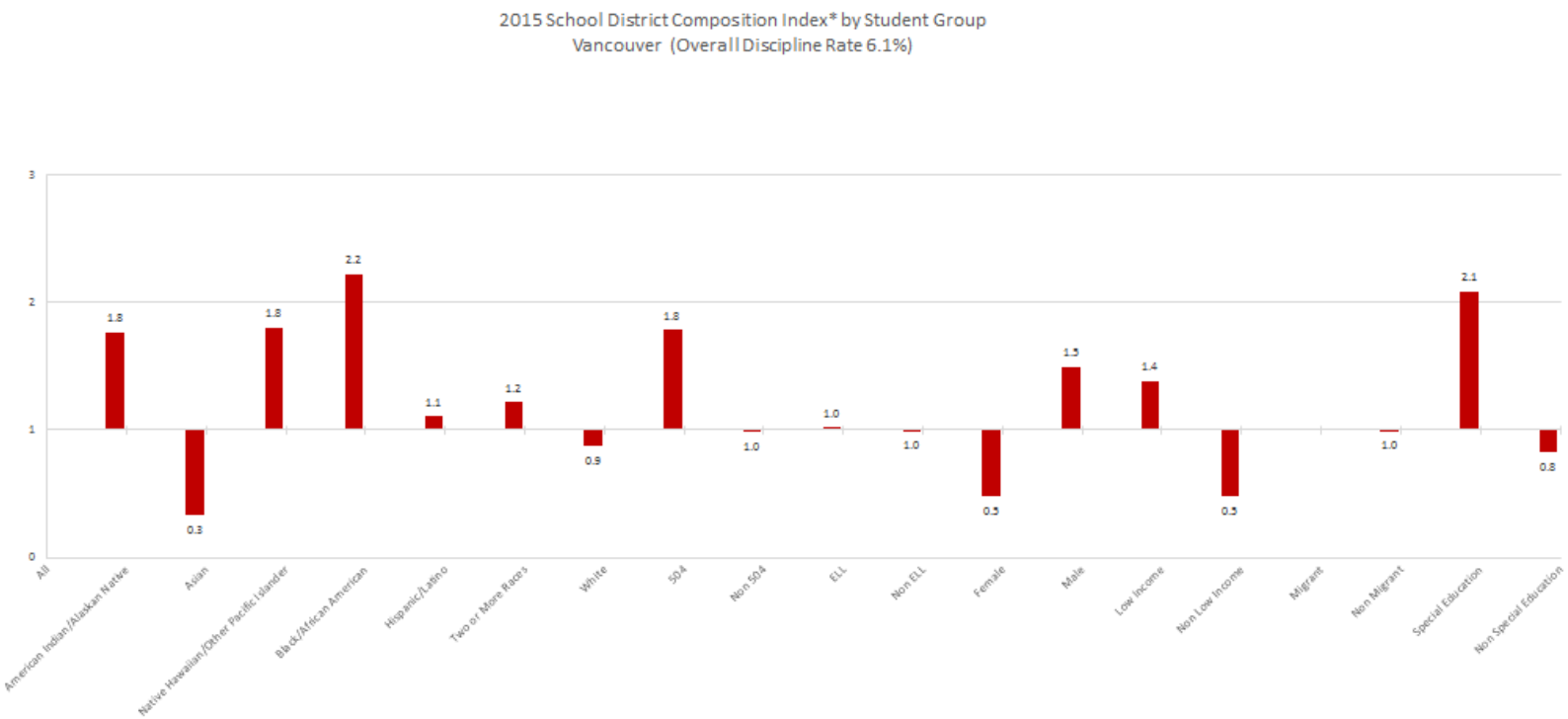
Vancouver School District



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WHAT ARE RESTORATIVE PRACTICES?

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Defined

- "Restorative Justice is a worldview, rooted in indigenous principles, and a theory of justice that emphasizes bringing together everyone affected by wrongdoing to address their **needs** and **responsibilities** and to **heal** the harm as much as possible."

--- Fania Davis, social justice activist and civil rights attorney

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Assumptions or Values

Retributive

- Teacher's job is to teach subject matter.
- Students behavior is designed to disrupt class.
- Punishment increases the likelihood of responsible behavior.
- Consistency comes when the same behavior leads to the same punishment

Restorative

- Teacher develops whole child skills.
- Student behavior is attempt to meet needs.
- Safe, caring school communities and relationships teach responsible behavior.
- Consistency comes when the same process is used to address behavior.

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Restorative Practices

- What happened?
- Who was harmed?
- What are the needs and responsibilities of everyone impacted?
- How do we address those needs?
- How do all impacted come together to heal harm?

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Potential Elements of Restorative Schools

- Flexible policies
- Consistent language/modeling
  - Clear teaching/modeling of behavior expectations.
  - "Affective" statements.
  - Consistent use of questions that focus on relationships
- Restorative circles or conferences, student voice
- Student supports

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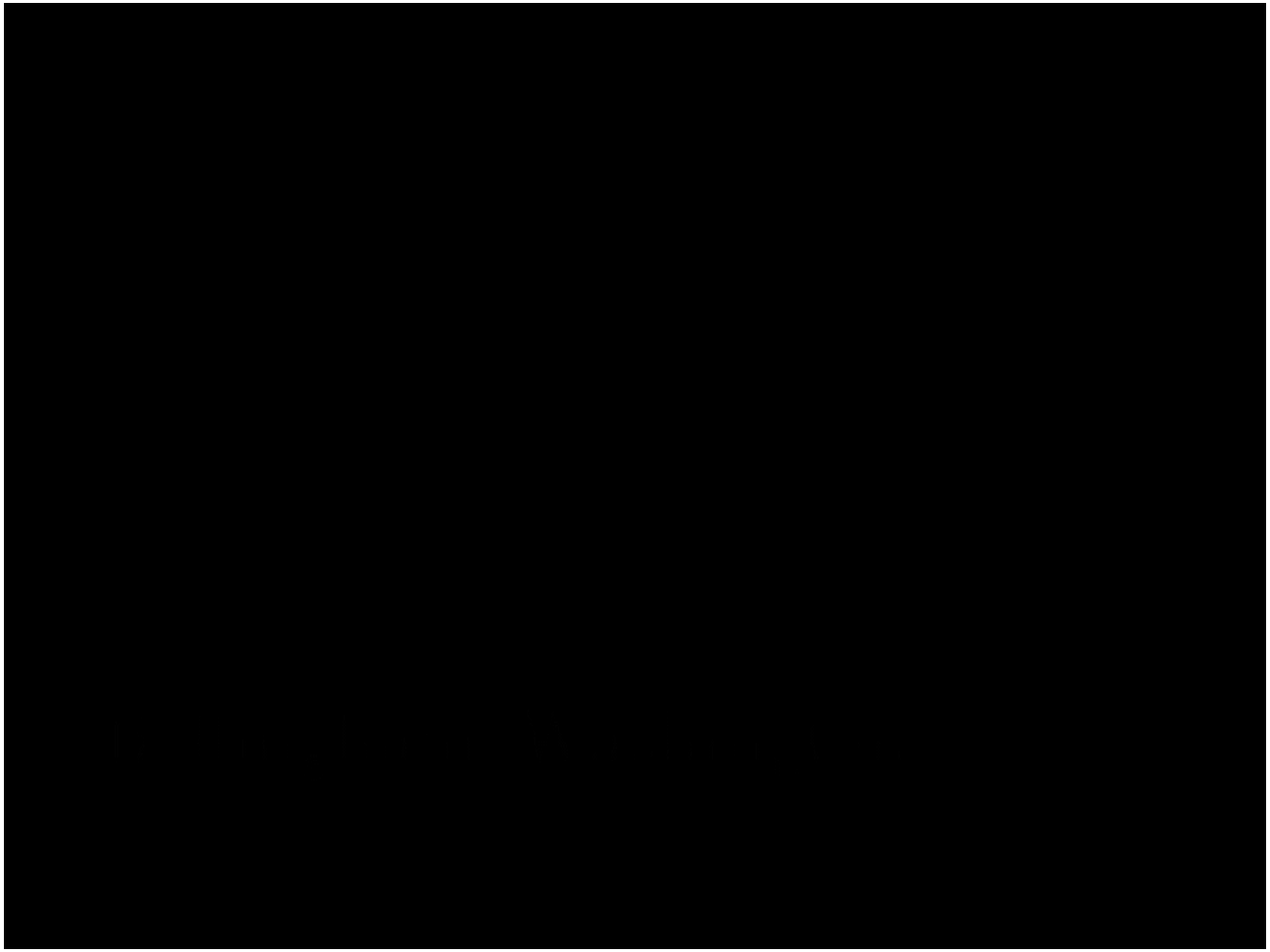
What are the outcomes?



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Community Advocacy

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Questions?

Comments?

Brilliant Ideas?

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