

# Who is suspended or expelled and why?

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## **Black students, Native American students, and other students of color are disproportionately likely to be suspended or expelled.**

Black boys and girls have higher suspension rates than any of their peers. Nationally, eighteen percent (18%) of black boys and 10% of black girls receive an out-of-school suspension, compared with five and two percent of white boys and girls respectively.<sup>1</sup> The same is true in Washington. African American students in Washington are more than twice as likely as their white peers to be suspended or expelled.<sup>2</sup>

Native American, Pacific Islander, and Hispanic/Latino students are also more likely than their white peers to be suspended and expelled in Washington State.<sup>3</sup>

Racial disparities in out-of-school suspensions start early; nationally black children represent 19% of preschool enrollment, but 47% of the preschool children suspended one or more times. White children represent 41% of preschoolers, but only 28% of those receiving on or more out-of-school suspensions.<sup>4</sup>

## **Students with disabilities are disproportionately likely to be suspended and expelled.**

Across the nation, students with special needs are more likely to be suspended than their peers, and to be suspended repeatedly. This disparity grows as students progress through grades. For students with disabilities, the risk for suspension at the elementary school level is 4.1%. This rises to 19.3% at the secondary level.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, in Washington State, students with special needs are over 2.3 times as likely as students without special needs to be suspended and expelled.<sup>6</sup>

Nationally, the rates of suspension and expulsion are higher for Black students with disabilities than for white students.<sup>7</sup>

## **LGBTQ students are disproportionately suspended and expelled.**

Emerging data show that LGBTQ students also experience disproportionate exclusionary school discipline compared to their heterosexual peers.<sup>8</sup>

## **The majority of school suspensions are for minor misbehavior.**

The majority of school suspensions in Washington involve relatively minor incidents that do not threaten school safety, such as disruptive conduct or failure to cooperate, or other behavior that does not involve drugs, weapons, or violence.<sup>9</sup>

## Endnotes

- 1 US Department of Education. Office of Civil Rights. *2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection First Look. Civil Rights Data Collection*. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 Aug. 2016. <<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>>.
- 2 Rowe, Claudia. "Race Dramatically Skews Discipline, Even in Elementary School." *The Seattle Times* 23 June 2015: n. pag. *Education Lab*. 18 Mar. 2016. Web. 10 Aug. 2016. <<http://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/race-dramatically-skews-discipline-even-in-elementary-school/>>.
- 3 Mosehauer, Katie, Nicole McGrath, Jeannie Nist, and Karen Pillar. *Reclaiming Students*. Rep. Washington Appleseed and TeamChild, 2012. Web. 10 Aug. 2016.
- 4 US Department of Education. Office of Civil Rights. *2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection First Look. Civil Rights Data Collection*. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 Aug. 2016. <<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>>.
- 5 Losen, Daniel J., Cheri Hodson, Jongyeon Ee, and Tia E. Martinez. *Civil Rights Project. Disturbing Inequities: Exploring the Relationship between Racial Disparities in Special Education Identification and Discipline*. University of California: The Center for Civil Rights Remedies, n.d. Web. 10 Aug. 2016. <<https://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/state-reports/disturbing-inequities-exploring-the-relationship-between-racial-disparities-in-special-education-identification-and-discipline/losen-et-al-disturbing-inequities-2014.pdf>>.
- 6 Rowe, Claudia. "Race Dramatically Skews Discipline, Even in Elementary School." *The Seattle Times* 23 June 2015: n. pag. *Education Lab*. 18 Mar. 2016. Web. 10 Aug. 2016. <<http://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/race-dramatically-skews-discipline-even-in-elementary-school/>>. (With some calculations using the numbers in the article, it is possible to discover that 3.2% of students without disabilities are suspended or expelled compared to 7.4% of students with disabilities.)
- 7 US Department of Education. Office of Civil Rights. *2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection First Look. Civil Rights Data Collection*. N.p., 2016. Web. 10 Aug. 2016. <<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>>.
- 8 Arredondo, Mariella, Chrystal Gray, Stephen Russell, Russell Skiba, and Shannon Snapp. *Documenting Disparities for LGBT Students. Rep. Discipline Disparities Series*, The Equity Project, Indiana University, Mar. 2016. Web. <<http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SOGI-Brief-Final.pdf>>.
- 9 Skiba, Russell J., Reece L. Peterson, and Tara Williams. "Office Referrals and Suspension: Disciplinary Intervention in Middle Schools." *Education and Treatment of Children* 20 (1997): 295-315. Print.