

Our Feelings and Beliefs (& Research) Regarding The Potential Harm of Exclusionary Discipline Practices to Students, Teachers, and Schools.

Theme I: Exclusionary Discipline Can Create Negative Long-Term Impacts

- "They can be life-altering, in and outside of school."
- "May compound undiagnosed trauma."
- "A child's classroom, school, and after-school program may be the only safe space they have, and the only place they have to learn academically and socially. By taking them out of these spaces, they are missing out on valuable learning opportunities and these spaces no longer are safe places for them. In older youth, this can result in resorting to criminal activity and other risk behaviors, especially when taken out of after-school programming."
- "They remove students who need to be engaged and supported."
- "Exclusionary disciplinary practices stigmatize students and damage their sense of belonging within the school community."
- "Suspension often do more harm than good for students. First, suspension puts students in the streets, exposing them to potential dangers and negative influences, rather than keeping them in a structured, safe environment."
- *Aligns with:*
<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/19/09/school-discipline-linked-later-consequences#:~:text=Education%20professionals%20should%20be%20cautious,for%20the%20overall%20student%20body>.

Theme II: Exclusionary Discipline Can Results in Loss of Academic Learning

- "I believe exclusionary discipline practices, at times, contribute to academic stagnation, and even regression."
- "Students aren't learning while they are excluded."
- "Firsthand experience, is with our students who receive spec ed services, are losing valuable instruction time, continuously over time."
- "Students missing instruction."
- "Exclusionary discipline practices remove students from the tier 1 instruction that they are entitled to."
- "Suspensions, Alternative placement, expulsions."
- "Lack of learning from the incident (need instruction about the incident- if they hit someone, learn about hitting others and their impact, why we don't hit)."
- "Suspension often do more harm than good for students. First, suspension puts students in the streets, exposing them to potential dangers and negative influences, rather than keeping them in a structured, safe environment."
- "Disruption in learning the curriculum."
- *Aligns with:*
<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/school-suspensions-lead-stark-losses-instructional-time>

Theme III: Exclusionary Discipline Can Harm Relationships

- "One way they are harmful is the student is often taken out of the classroom in front of peers. This student will then be looked at differently from peers and student will miss classroom learning."
- "Exclusionary discipline practices alienate students and families from the support structures that schools provide and rob them of positive educational experiences."
- "What most teachers consider 'attention-seeking behavior' should be reconsidered as 'connection-seeking behavior' and connections cannot be made if a student(s) is always removed from the classroom."
- "Exclusionary disciplinary practices stigmatize students and damage their sense of belonging within the school community."
- "Exclusionary discipline practices removed students from the learning environment. This is harmful to building relationships and to academic progress."
- *Aligns with: Jones, E. P., Margolius, M., Rollock, M., Yan, C. T., Cole, M. L., & Zaff, J. F. (2018). Disciplined and Disconnected: How Students Experience Exclusionary Discipline in Minnesota and the Promise of Non-Exclusionary Alternatives. America's Promise Alliance.*

Theme IV: Exclusionary Discipline Can Result in Lost SEL Teaching Opportunities

- "It doesn't teach them the necessary skills needed to repair harm, fix mistakes, learn and grow."
- "Those practices don't always teach students appropriate behavior. When students are removed from class, they miss instruction, which can cause them to become behind, which then causes frustration from the student, and the behaviors continue. It becomes a cycle that would be hard to break."
- "More support should be provided on teaching replacement skills than exclusionary measures, depending on the offense."
- "They remove students who need to be engaged and supported."
- "Exclusion without instruction returns void."
- "Exclusionary practices don't teach replacement behaviors; they reinforce that engaging in those behavioral infractions result in task avoidance on a larger scale."
- *Aligns with: Nese, R. N., Nese, J. F., McCroskey, C., Meng, P., Triplett, D., & Bastable, E. (2021). Moving away from disproportionate exclusionary discipline: Developing and utilizing a continuum of preventative and instructional supports. Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth, 65(4), 301-311.*

Theme V: Exclusionary Discipline Can Damage School Climate

- "May create a poor representation of school and school culture."
- "This creates a bandaid for students and doesn't address the issue in a restorative manner."

- "Many times there is nothing restorative about these practices and there is no collaborative problem solving happening."
- "They are usually not effective, especially if there is no reinforcement at home."
- "Few ISS/suspensions may be warranted to establish certain behaviors will not be tolerated and to provide other students the space from a particular student. However, continuous separation from the class prevents the student from being exposed to and engaging in the curriculum, which leads to lower test scores, lower academic self-esteem, and even worse--increases the dropout rate."
- *Aligns with:*
<https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/NYC-Suspension-Effects-Behavioral-Academic-Outcomes-August-2021.pdf>

Theme VI: There Are Systems Concerns to Address First Before Exclusionary Discipline

- "Exclusionary practices are really a last resort- after interventions and supports have been exhausted."
- "They are usually not effective, especially if there is no reinforcement at home."
- "The reason or the subjective reasons why referrals are submitted and to teach how to remove emotion from interrupting the relationship with students."
- "What is the intended learning outcome when we impose a consequence? How do we know if the student has 'learned' skills and what do we do if they do not? These are similar questions to those posed in a PLC framework regarding subject content matter."
- *Aligns with:*
<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/15-1547%20NCSSLE%20Root%20Causes%20Guide%20FINAL02%20mb.pdf>

Theme VII: Exclusionary Discipline Has Disproportionate Impacts

- "It mirrors the disproportionate law enforcement practices in our criminal justice system."
- "Often times the students impacted most are from marginalized populations (disproportionate data)."
- *See also:* Cribb Fabersunne C, Lee SY, McBride D, Zahir A, Gallegos-Castillo A, LeWinn KZ, Morris MD. Exclusionary School Discipline and School Achievement for Middle and High School Students, by Race and Ethnicity. *JAMA Netw Open.* 2023 Oct 2;6(10):e2338989. doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.38989. PMID: 37862011; PMCID: PMC10589805.
- *Aligns with:* Leung-Gagné, M., McCombs, J., Scott, C., & Losen, D. J. (2022). *Pushed out: Trends and disparities in out-of-school suspension.* Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/235.277>