

NUMBERS BRIEF #1\*

## Black Girls Face Disproportionate Discipline in Texas Schools

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Nationally, Black girls are suspended at six times the rate of White girls, according to a recent report by the African American Policy Forum (AAPF) and the Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies. Disproportionate school discipline leads to less instructional time for Black girls and increases the risk of dropping out of school.

In Texas, many of the largest school districts appear to have similar disciplinary disparities. Following the report by AAPF, discipline data on the five largest school districts in Texas were collected from the Department of Education's Civil Rights online database. The table and graph below show the number and percent of female students by race or ethnicity enrolled in each district versus the number and percent of students who had more than one out-of-school suspension in 2011, the most recent year available. In every district examined, Black girls were more likely to be suspended than their percentage in the district population would indicate. For example, in Houston, of the 99,717 reported female student enrollment, 25,074 (25%) were Black and 2654 female students had more than one out-of-school suspension. Of these suspended students, 1,469 (55%) were Black, 1,068 (40%) were Hispanic, 67 (3%) were White, and 50 (2%) were other races and ethnicities. The numbers for students with only one out-of-school suspension are similar. "Breaking Schools' Rules," a 2011 statewide study, found that Black students were more likely to receive discretionary punishment than other students controlling for other variables.

What can we do to change these numbers?

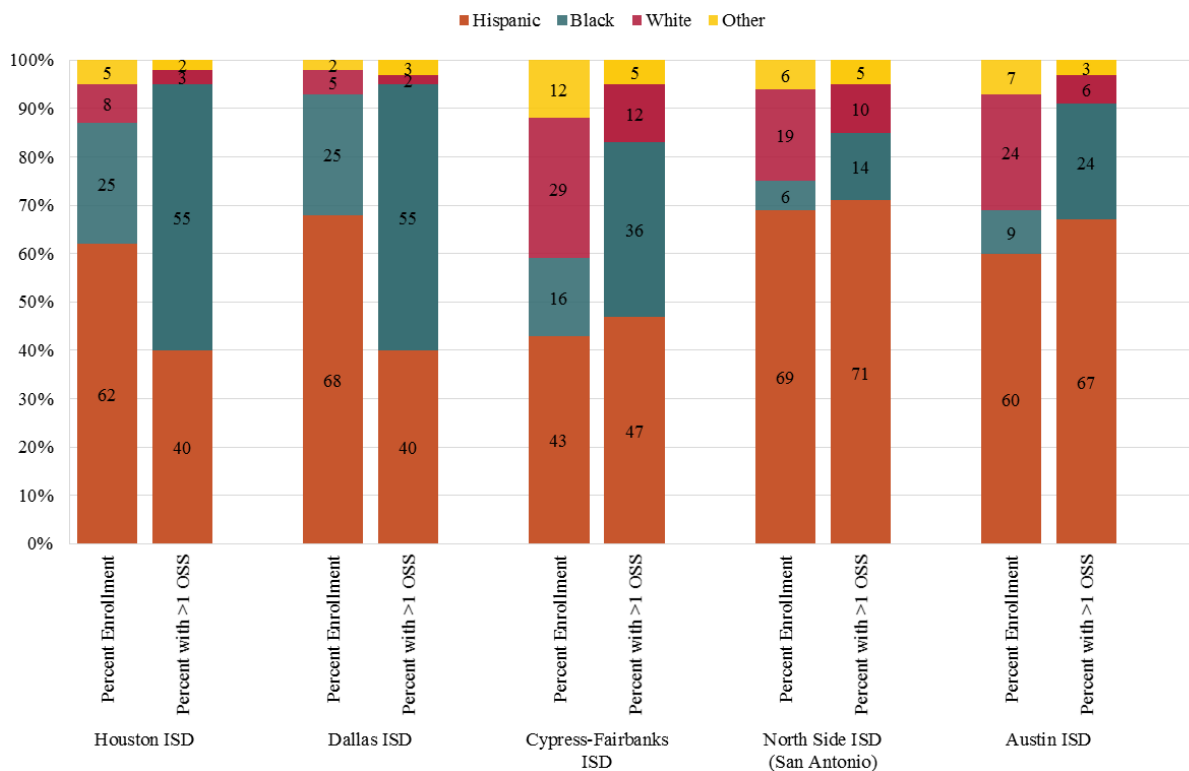
- Deflate situations by approaching Black girls with civility. Adopt proven strategies to reduce misbehavior and maintain a safe learning environment including conflict resolution, restorative practices, counseling, and structured systems of positive interventions. Amend the Texas Education Code to allow for these alternative disciplinary processes.
- Discipline policies and consequences need to be communicated clearly and often to students, staff, teachers, and parents.
- Black girls are entitled to equal opportunities in education. Often they are the victims of implicit bias by school staff. Texas school districts should work with the Center for Elimination of Disproportionality and Disparities to implement widespread training in cultural competency for teachers and administrators. Train educators and staff to apply school discipline policies in a fair and even manner.
- Districts and schools need to perform routine analysis of their discipline data and evaluate how their policies may be contributing to disparities. This is especially important for disparities that influence students' entry into the juvenile justice system.
- Data supplied for public information should continue to include information that is disaggregated by race, gender, and disability status to allow for identification of disproportionalities and disparities across groups.

\*This brief is the first in a series that focuses on data, statistics, and relevant facts as they relate to Blacks, African Americans, and other people of color in Texas and the nation.

Number of females enrolled and number of females with more than one out-of-school suspension (OSS) by race for the five largest school districts in Texas

	Number of females enrolled					Number of females with more than one out-of-school suspension (OSS)				
	Houston ISD	Dallas ISD	Cypress-Fairbanks ISD	Northside ISD	Austin ISD	Houston ISD	Dallas ISD	Cypress-Fairbanks ISD	Northside ISD	Austin ISD
Hispanic	62000	52944	22639	33213	25360	1068	471	750	499	355
Black	25074	18994	8551	2859	3824	1469	658	575	101	126
White	8097	3614	15445	9204	10259	67	29	192	73	30
Other	4546	1820	5790	3064	2601	50	30	73	34	22
Total	99717	77372	52425	48340	42044	2654	1188	1590	707	533

Percent of females enrolled compared to percent of females with more than one out-of-school suspension (OSS) by race for the five largest school districts in Texas



NOTE: "Other" includes Asian, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and those who identify with more than one race. Race/ethnicity names are those used in the Office of Civil Rights database.

Data used in this report can be found at <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/>. More information on "Black Girls Matter: Pushed out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected" can be found at <http://www.aapf.org/> and "Breaking Schools' Rules" can be found at <http://csgjusticecenter.org/youth/breaking-schools-rules-report/>.