



**REVISED**

**REPORT OF THE POLICY AND EQUITY COMMITTEE**

The Policy and Equity Committee met on Friday, May 20, 2022, at 9:00 AM at the Cincinnati Public Schools Education Center, 2651 Burnet Avenue, 45219 in LaunchED Room 110.

The public viewed the meeting via Video Conference. Attendees: 7

**ATTENDEES**

Policy and Equity Committee Members

Chairperson Mike Moroski, *absent*; Eve Bolton, *Acting Committee Chair*; Kareem Moncree-Moffett, Ph.D.

Board Member

Ben Lindy, Board President

Administration

Kathy Crable, Executive Secretary; Angela Cook-Frazier, Principal; Jeremy Gollihue, Chief Information Officer; Dan Hoying, General Counsel; Wayne Lane, Hearing Officer; Thomas Miller, Administrator, Cincinnati Digital Academy/Virtual; Eric Rozier, Principal, Cincinnati Digital Academy/Virtual

Community Members

Ruth Debono, Bella Gordo – Young Activists Coalition; Donita Parrish – Cincinnati Parents Group; Jennifer Milani – YWCA Cincinnati

**Young Activists Coalition (YAC): Student Restorative Practices and Student Safety**

The YAC is a coalition that is fighting to *Fix Our Schools* in order to end the school-to-prison pipeline and expand student support resources in Cincinnati Public Schools.

The Coalition is composed of a spectrum of organizations, faith groups, students, youth, families, and community members, works in singular pursuit to make Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) safe and healthy learning environments where all CPS youth and families feel supported.

The YAC shared key information and data concerning current student safety practices at CPS that they feel are harming students. They also shared information about suggested solutions that they envision as necessary to enable CPS students to thrive in positive and healthy learning environments.

The YAC presented the following information to the Committee:

- The well-documented dangers of the school-to-prison pipeline and how CPS' current practices feed it by disproportionately targeting students of color and students with disabilities for suspensions, referrals, and school-based arrests

- The CPS student experience and how it has been harmed by current CPS approaches to school safety (e.g. classroom removal, alternative placements and expulsion, law enforcement referral)
- The CPS family experience and how it has been harmed by current CPS approaches to school safety
- The benefits of restorative justice practices as an approach to school safety, including evidence of successes from other districts
- Model Policies reimagining approaches to CPS School Safety for the CPS Board to consider

The YAC updated the Committee on the following topics contained in their presentation.

1. The Issue: Exclusionary Discipline
  - CPS School-to-Prison Pipeline by the Numbers
2. Community Perceptions: The Current System Doesn't Work
  - Conducted a representative survey of CPS parents and young alumni in April 2022.
3. A Solution: Expanding Restorative Practices

A copy of the full presentation is attached.

Donita Parish, President of the Cincinnati Parents Group, updated the Committee on some parents' perspective and reported that low income students and students with past trauma are most likely to see school discipline.

She also reported that there is a movement in Cincinnati to have the right resources to address problems. She stated that there will be a pilot with the Cincinnati Police Department's 911 services that will have mental health providers respond to 911 calls that are not violent.

Jennifer Milani of the YWCA of Cincinnati updated the Committee on Restorative Practices. She reported that Restorative Practices will decrease discipline rates.

She also recommended that CPS collaborate with YWCA to institute a restorative justice pilot program for staff training at a small number of schools and fund student mental health and social-emotional learning for support staff district-wide.

The YAC asked the following from the District:

1. Address root issues of racial inequity and exclusionary discipline disparities in CPS
  - Pass a policy to fund and expand social-emotional learning, restorative practices, and youth mentorship programs.
2. Dissolve the contract between CPS and CPD
  - Write clear intervention guidelines for mandatory police actions.
3. Prioritize student mental health in the budget
  - Pass a policy to prioritize funding for social workers, counselors, and psychologists.

Committee member Moffett reported that she supports some of what is being asked by the YAC. She is also in favor of Restorative Practices. She also stated that the Superintendent would need to "drive" the request.

She stated that she has spoken with Superintendent Wright about getting more student data regarding information that was shared by the YAC.

Dr. Moffett would also like to know what students and what schools participated in the community survey in order to expand the YAC data. She recommended YAC interview or ask students, families and communities about the information that was shared with the Committee.

In responding to Ex Officio Member Lindy, Acting Committee Chair Bolton, reported that Restorative Practices was added to the agenda at the request of Policy Committee Chair Moroski.

She also reported that the Committee is not recommending any action items in this matter.

Committee member Moffett personally requested that the Superintendent and Administration be contacted to reach out to the YAC to investigate findings of the YAC, YWCA, and the Cincinnati Parents Group and have them do a presentation to the Superintendent. The Superintendent could then bring her recommendations to the Board.

Ms. Bolton reported that the Superintendent may not be able to meet with the YWCA since they are a vendor for the District. She stated that she would encourage the Superintendent to review the history of the work that was done by past Administrations on Restorative Practices and in past advocacy efforts by YAC.

Ms. Bolton advised that she prefers the repeated phrase “school to prison pipeline” actually be referred to as “drop-out to prison pipeline.”

### **Cincinnati Digital Academy**

Eric Rozier, Principal, Cincinnati Digital Academy/Virtual, reported that in 2015 there were approximately 280 students enrolled into the Academy. During that time students were required to pick a home school.

Thomas Miller, Administrator, Cincinnati Digital Academy/Virtual, provided a history about CDA. He reported that students could participate in athletics, but had to test to get into Walnut Hills, SCPA and Clark Montessori.

There were issues with students enrolling and later finding out that it was not the best placement for them. The students then would return to the “brick and mortar” schools. Mr. Miller’s biggest concern was the truancy of students attending the brick and mortar schools and not being able to track them or knowing where they were in order to show up for school.

Mr. Rozier reported that it is possible to offer CDA statewide. He stated he is currently defining entrance and exit plans. He expressed concern about getting students tested by the State because the testing has to be done in person and sites or facilities would be needed for State testing.

Mr. Rozier reported that 1,700 students are enrolled into the CDA, and that they are struggling with expansion. He reported that approximately five to six students are enrolled into CDA on a daily basis.

In response to Ex Officio Member Lindy’s question, this topic was put on the agenda per discussions that have taken place in the past and from discussion at the April Policy and Equity Committee meeting regarding enrollment.

**ACTION:** The Committee talked about adopting a policy to help with enrollment for the CDA. General Counsel Hoying and Principal Rozier will work on a policy and provide an update at the Policy Committee meeting on June 24, 2022.

The Committee reiterated its interest in making CDA available throughout the state.

### **Student Social Media Discipline**

Wayne Lane, Due Process Hearing Officer, provided a brief overview on how social media is impacting schools.

He reported that students are posting and using social media tools such as Snapchat, direct messaging, TikTok, and sometimes Instagram to commit offenses, like fights/assaults, disorderly conduct, threats made toward staff, students and schools, pictures of weapons, fights, sexually explicit pictures or videos, harassment, bullying, intimidations that are student to student, drug offenses by using social media to make drug transactions as well as meeting places for drug activity.

Mr. Wayne updated the Committee on the Hearing process.

Assistant General Counsel Stephanie Scott will provide the Committee with sample social media policies for students.

**ACTION:** The Administration will work on a social media policy geared towards students and update the Committee at the June 24, 2022, Policy and Equity Committee meeting.

### **Policy 8600.02 – Transportation of Students**

The Committee reviewed and updated the Administration’s red-lined revisions to Policy 8600.02.

**ACTION:** The Committee will recommend approval of the policy at the Regular Business meeting on June 13, 2022.

### **Other Business**

The Committee reviewed and updated the Committee on the following policies.

Policy 3419 – Group Health Plans

Policy 4422 – Benefits for Non-Represented Staff – *Rescind*

Policy 3422 – Benefits for Non-Represented Staff – *Adopt new to Rename*

Policy 4419 – Group Health Plans – *Rescind*

Policy 4419.02 – Privacy Protections of Fully Insured Group Health Plans – *Rescind*

**ACTION:** The Committee will recommend approval of the policies at the Regular Business Meeting on June 13, 2022.

**ACTION:** The Committee will review the following policies at the June 24, 2022 Policy Committee meeting:

- Policy 4210 – Classified Employee Ethics
- Policy 5517.01 – Prohibition on Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
- Policy 9125 – Social Media for District Employees
- Policy 1411 – Whistleblower Protection
- Policy for Cincinnati Digital Academy

### **Hearing the Public**

There were no Speakers for Hearing the Public.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.

### **Policy and Equity Committee**

Mike Moroski, Chair, *absent*

### **Staff Liaisons**

Dan Hoying, General Counsel

Eve Bolton  
Kareem Moncree-Moffett, Ph.D.

# Fixing Our Schools

A Proposal for Racially Equitable Discipline and Culture Reform in  
CPS



CPS Policy and Equity Committee  
May 20, 2022

## Speakers:

Bella Gordo, Young Activists Coalition  
Ruth Debono, Young Activists Coalition  
Donita Parrish, Cincinnati Parents Group  
Jennifer Milani, YWCA Cincinnati

## Who we are

The Fix our Schools Coalition is an alliance fighting to end the school-to-prison pipeline and expand student support resources in Cincinnati Public Schools.

### Members:

Young Activists Coalition, ACLU of Ohio, Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, Cincinnati Parents Group, Cincinnati Socialists, Cincinnati Tenants Union, Intercommunity Justice and Peace Coalition, YWCA Cincinnati, students, youth, families, and community members

## Three Topics

- 1** The Issue: Exclusionary Discipline
- 2** Community Perceptions: The Current System Doesn't Work
- 3** A Solution: Expanding Restorative Practices

## The Issue: Exclusionary Discipline

- Exclusionary Discipline unnecessarily removes students from learning
  - Thousands are suspended or expelled by CPS
  - ~400 are arrested or cited by CPD
  - Most are non-violent offenses
- Results in disparate discipline and gaps in support for marginalized students
  - Black students
  - Students with disabilities
  - Low-income students
  - Students with past trauma or housing insecurity



## CPS School-to-Prison Pipeline by the Numbers

SY 2021-22 YTD Exclusionary Consequences by Race			
	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Rate of Disparity</i>
<b>Total Population Share (Control)</b>	23.4%	61.6%	1.00
<b>Alternative Learning Center</b>	7.8%	82.0%	10.51
<b>Alternative Placement Center+</b>	4.3%	89.3%	20.77
<b>Emergency Removal</b>	6.2%	85.7%	5.25
<b>Expelled with instruction</b>	2.4%	92.9%	14.80
<b>Expulsion</b>	4.2%	88.3%	8.00
<b>Out-of-School Suspension</b>	5.5%	86.3%	5.96
<b>Promise Center/A2E*</b>	2.7%	92.0%	34.07
<b>Promise Center/A2S*</b>	5.6%	88.2%	15.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>84.8%</b>	<b>14.39</b>

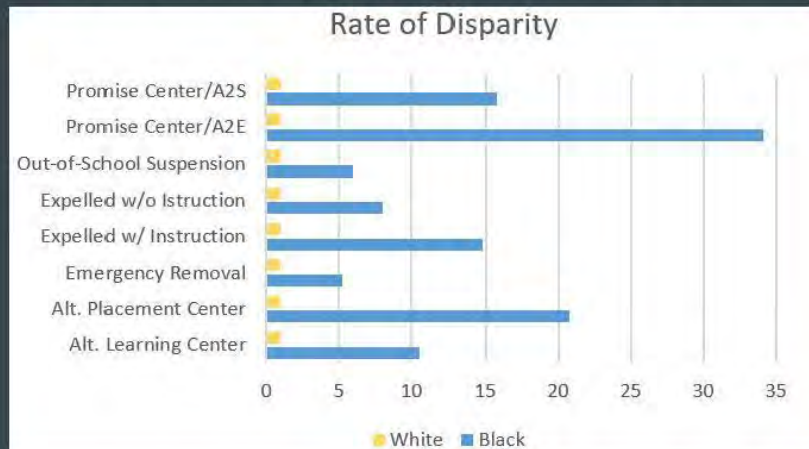
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## CPS School-to-Prison Pipeline by the Numbers

Student-to-Staff Ratios (per 1,000 students)			
Support Staff Type	Current	Recommended	Total Needed
<b>Counselors</b>	1.7	4	+86
<b>Social Workers</b>	1.1	4	+107
<b>Nurses</b>	0.4	1.3	+32.5
<b>Security and Police</b>	3.4	None	-124

Source: US Dept. of Ed., Civil Rights Data Collection.

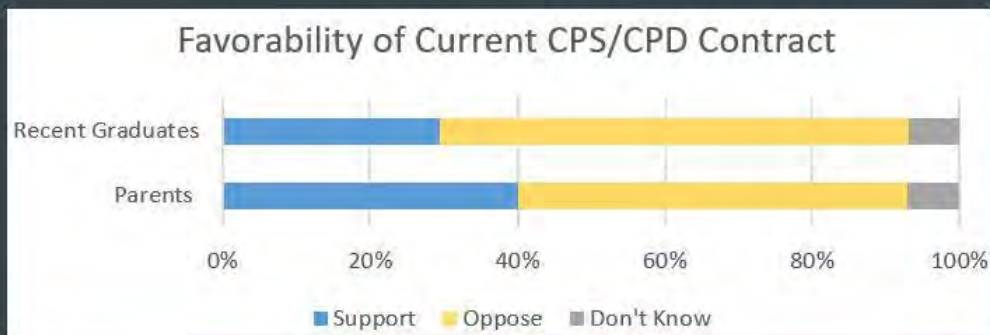
Students are more likely to interact with security and police than licensed mental health and youth support staff.

## Community View: Current System Doesn't Work



- We conducted a representative survey of CPS parents & young alumni in April 2022.
- Most respondents ranked educational resources for students as the most pressing need, and police and security as the least pressing.
  - Specific support for Social-Emotional Learning among other educational resources

## Community View: Current System Doesn't Work



Most respondents do not support the contract with CPD in its current form



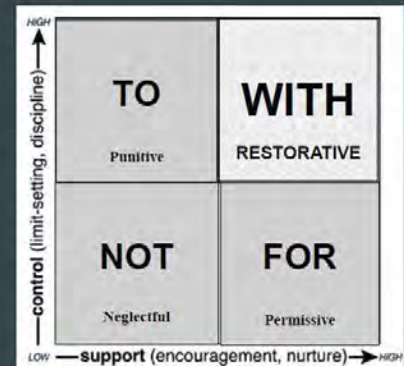
## The Parent Perspective: Donita Parrish

- Parent of 2 CPS Students
- Serves as a Guardian Ad Litem
  - Low Income students and students with past trauma are most likely to see school discipline



## A Solution: Expanding Restorative Practices

- The **fundamental hypothesis** of restorative practices is that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things **with** them, rather than **to** them or **for** them.
  - Students who feel connected to their community are less likely to cause harm.
  - Research shows that implementation of RP will decrease overall discipline but the disparity between BIPOC and White students will not go away without addressing it directly.
- The addition of implicit bias and equity training allows educators to examine their interactions with students on a different level. Only by becoming aware of our biases can we start to address them.



## Restorative Practices: CPS and NWLSD

- **Our Partnership with NWLSD:**
  - Restorative practices work with an emphasis on implicit bias component
  - Discipline decreased, but still working on equity
  - DEI team engaged in work to purposefully address inequities
- **Current/Past Trainings with CPS:**
  - Most Promise Center and ALC staff have received some training
  - RP works more effectively when all members of the community speak the same language



### **We recommend that CPS:**

Collaborate with YWCA to institute a restorative justice pilot program for staff training at a small number of schools  
Fund student mental health and social-emotional learning support staff district-wide

## Our Asks

1. **Address root issues of racial inequity and exclusionary discipline disparities in CPS**
  - Pass a policy to fund and expand Social-Emotional Learning, restorative practices, and youth mentorship programs.
2. **Dissolve the contract between CPS and CPD**
  - Write clear intervention guidelines for mandatory police actions.
3. **Prioritize student mental health in the budget**
  - Pass a policy to prioritize funding for social workers, counselors, & psychologists.

# Contact Information

## **Young Activists Coalition**

Bella Gordo, President  
Erin Derico, Vice President  
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## **YWCA Cincinnati**

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