

**TASK FORCE ON BLACK AND LATINO YOUNG MEN
AND BOYS**

COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Task Force on Black and Latino Young Men and Boys

2025-2026

Task Force Goal

To assist urban public-school systems in improving academic outcomes of Black and Latino young men and boys by supporting the implementation of evidence-based strategies to educate students from different racial, cultural, national, and linguistic backgrounds.

To improve the learning environment and school climate in urban schools by addressing the implicit and explicit bias that hinders the progress of Black and Latino young men and boys.

To improve the social, emotional, and cultural competency of educators through professional learning opportunities that foster a deeper understanding of the support systems needed to ensure academic and life-long success for Black and Latino young men and boys.

To keep data and establish protocols to monitor the progress of Black and Latino young men and boys in our member districts.

Task Force Chair

Alex Marrero, Denver Superintendent

Task Force Members

Darryl Willie, Duval County School Board

Margo Bellamy, Anchorage School Board

TASK FORCE MEETING



Council of the Great City Schools

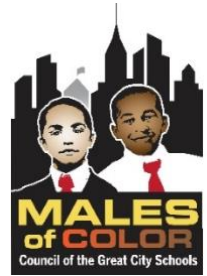
THE NATION'S VOICE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

Black and Latino Young Men and Boys Task Force Meeting

March 22, 2025

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Meeting Agenda



I. Introduction of Task Force Chair and Members

- Dr. Alex Marrero, Superintendent, Denver Public Schools, Taskforce Chair
- Dr. Kyla Johnson-Trammel, Superintendent, Oakland Unified School District
- Darryl Willie, Board Member, Duval County Public Schools
- Margo Bellamy, Board Member, Anchorage School District

II. Understanding School Discipline Disparities: An Examination of In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions in Urban School Districts

The school discipline dilemma is an educational problem afflicting urban school districts nationwide. In this presentation, Dr. Richard O. Welsh, founding director of The School Discipline Lab and author of *Suspended Futures*, will use district-level national data to compare the prevalence of and disparities in out-of-school suspensions (OSS) and in-school suspensions (ISS) across the Council of the Great City Schools and other categories of urban districts. Based on the results of the research brief, Dr. Welsh will offer six priorities for urban school district and school leaders as they address disparities in students' disciplinary outcomes.

- **Dr. Richard O. Welsh**, Associate Professor of Education and Public Policy, Vanderbilt University

III. Baltimore City Public Schools' Efforts to Improve Disciplinary Outcomes

This presentation will explore how Baltimore City Public Schools is addressing the challenges that districts across the country are facing around discipline data. The presenter will highlight how the district implements innovative, collaborative initiatives to foster safer, more supportive environments for teaching and learning while actively monitoring and working to improve disciplinary outcomes.

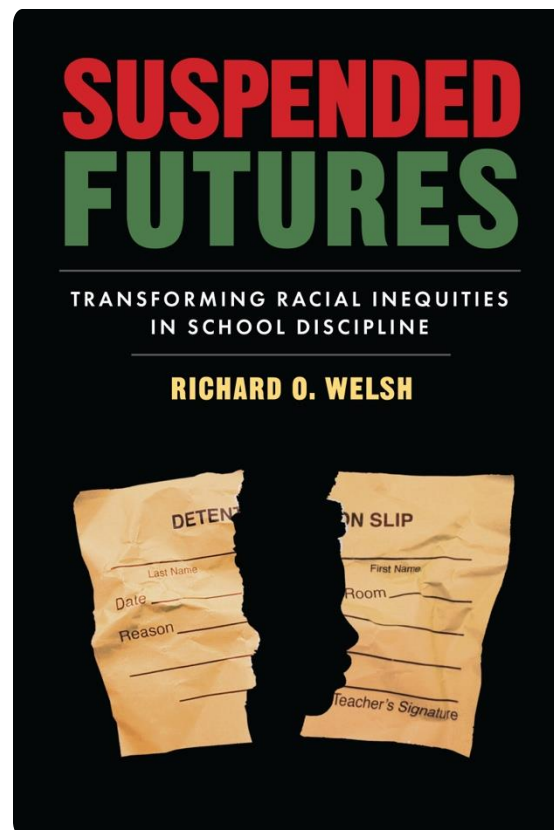
- **Sonya Goodwyn**, Executive Director-Whole Child Services & Supports, Baltimore City Public Schools

IV. Q&A

CGCS Staff:

Tonya Harris, Director of Communications

Akisha Osei Sarfo, Director of Research



Understanding School Discipline Disparities:

An Examination of In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions Across Urban School Districts

Richard O. Welsh

Associate Professor of Education and Public Policy,
Vanderbilt University

Blaise B. Joseph

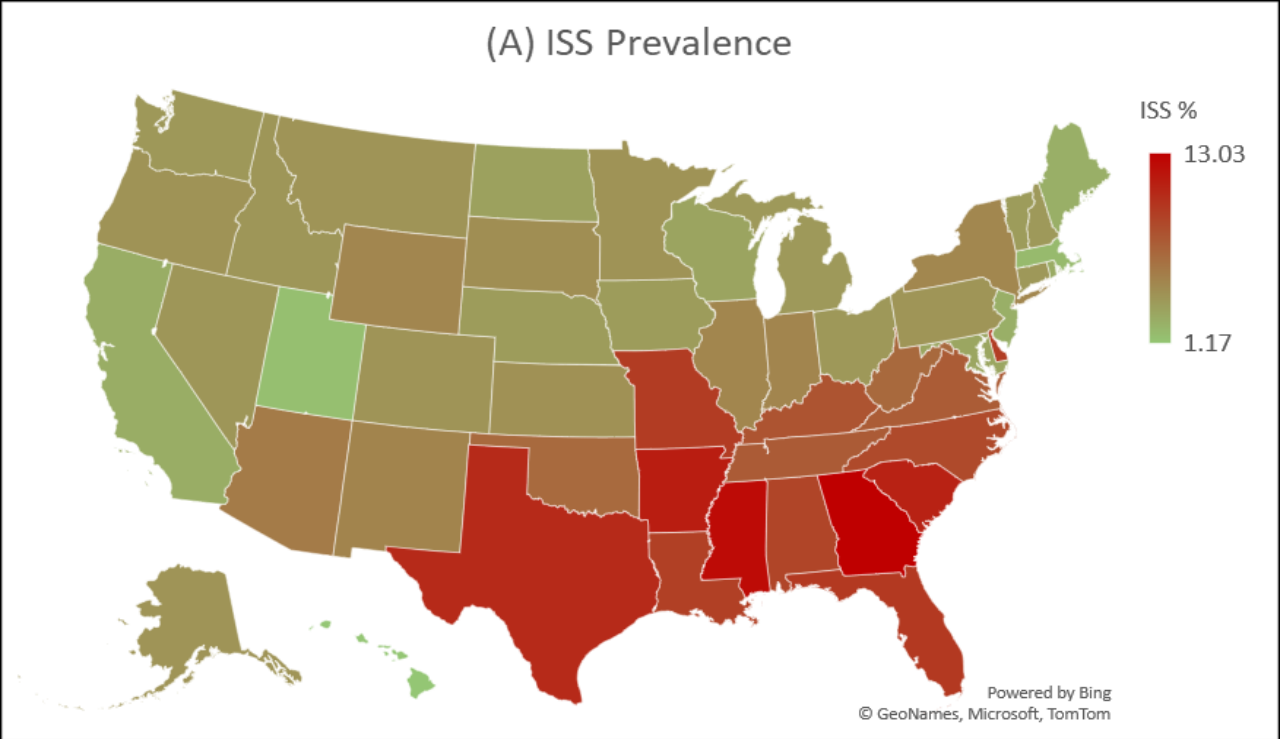
Akisha Osei Sarfo

Roadmap

- Outlining the school discipline crisis
- Delving deeper into suspensions in urban school districts
 - The prevalence of in-school suspensions (ISS) and out-of-school suspensions (OSS)
 - Disparities in suspensions
- Reverse engineering success in school discipline (Inclusive Disciplinary Districts)
- School discipline priorities for urban districts

The school discipline glossary

- ***Exclusionary Discipline*** = exclusion from classrooms and schools typically in the form of office discipline referrals (ODRs) or suspensions
- ***Types of Suspensions*** = (a) in-school suspensions (remove students from the classroom but they remain in the school building) and, (b) out-of-school suspensions (involve exclusion from school for a specified number of days)
- ***Prevalence*** = overall use of disciplinary consequences = proportion of unique students receiving ODR or ISS or OSS
- ***Disparities*** = disproportionate use of disciplinary consequences = comparison in the use of ODR, ISS, and OSS across student groups



The 1975 Children Defense Fund report posited that:

“Some will claim that disproportionate suspension of Black children simply reflects their disproportionate misbehavior. We reject this view. All the evidence we have seen: our survey data: our analysis of OCR data and school district suspension reports: interviews with school officials, parents, children and community groups: and review of the investigations and literature of other groups on school discipline makes plain that disproportionate suspension of Blacks reflect a pervasive school intolerance for children who are different....The fact is that many school districts treat Black children differently from White children.”

Multi-layered disparities in students' disciplinary outcomes

- Who is referred (Welsh & Little, 2018; Rodriguez & Welsh, 2022; Skiba et al., 2002)
- Who is suspended (both ISS and OSS) (Darling-Hammond & Ho, 2024; Welsh, 2022)
- Who is persistently disciplined (Welsh & Rodriguez, 2024)
- Being referred to the office for similar infractions (differential selection) (Cruz & Firestone, 2024; Legette & Anyon, 2023)
- Receiving harsher punishment for similar infractions (differential processing) (Lewis & Diamond, 2015; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Rodriguez & Welsh, 2022; Shi & Zhu, 2022; Welsh, 2021a)

Discipline disparities shapes lives and livelihoods



Student achievement (Anderson et al., 2019; Chu & Ready, 2018; Gregory et al., 2010; Lacoë & Steinberg, 2019; Noltemeyer et al., 2015; Welsh & Little 2018b)



Health (Hemez et al., 2020)



Incarceration and juvenile justice involvement (school to prison pipeline)
(Bacher-Hicks et al., 2019; Mallett, 2016; Fabelo et al., 2011)



Economic and social outcomes (Davison et al., 2022a)

The interrelation of school discipline and other educational equity phenomena

- School discipline is a cause and consequence of other equity phenomena such as chronic absenteeism and student mobility
- There are similar underlying mechanisms with other equity phenomena such as exposure to early post-secondary opportunities
 - Teacher-student relationships
 - School climate
 - Stereotypes, bias, and anti-blackness in schooling

Comparing suspensions across urban districts

- We compare the prevalence of and disparities in OSS and ISS across the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) and other categories of urban districts
- Publicly available data from the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). The CRDC dataset provides data for the 2011-12, 2013-14, 2015-16, and 2017-18 academic years
- We use Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA) community economic and social indicators
- Categorizing urban districts
 - CGCS = 78 of the nation's largest urban school districts.
 - The NCES locale code
 - "Urban-intensive" = districts with enrollments over 150,000 students
 - "Urban-emergent" = districts increasing in enrollment by 10,000 students since 2011-12

The South is the urban capital of America

- Using the NCES locale code, most urban districts are in three regions: a) West (35%), b) South (28%) and, c) Midwest (25%)
- The majority of the largest urban districts (urban-intensive) are in the South. Similarly, most of the fastest growing urban districts (urban-emergent) are concentrated in the South
- Nearly half (45%) of CGCS districts are located in the South
- Urban districts serve a greater proportion of Black, Latinx, Asian students and lower proportion of White students relative to non-urban districts
- CGCS districts have a higher proportion of Black students (25%) relative to other districts nationally and other urban categorizations (except urban emergent). CGCS districts have roughly twice the national average of Black students (13%)
- CGCS districts have a higher proportion of Latinx students (33%) relative to national average and other urban districts (except urban intensive). CGCS districts have roughly double the national average of Latinx students (17%)

Prevalence and disparities: Urban vs. non-urban districts nationwide

- Urban districts (regardless of categorization) tend to have higher ISS and OSS rates than the national average
- The largest urban districts have the highest rates (for both ISS and OSS)
- Urban districts use OSS more than ISS, but racial disparities are larger in ISS than OSS in urban districts
- Nationally and across all categorizations of urban districts, Black students have the highest rates of both ISS and OSS
- Urban districts have significantly higher Black-White ISS disparities, but significantly lower Black-White and Latinx-White OSS disparities compared to the national average

Prevalence: CGCS versus nation and other urban districts

- CGCS overall ISS rate is slightly higher than national average but lower than other urban districts
- CGCS OSS rate is significantly higher than national average (nearly double) but lower than other urban districts
- In CGCS, prior to COVID-19 (2012-2019), the Black ISS rate (11.3%) was almost twice that of the overall ISS rate (5.95%), the Latinx ISS rate (5.94%) and the White ISS rate (5.02%)
- Black ISS rate in CGCS is higher than the national average but lower than urban emergent and urban intensive districts

Disparities: CGCS versus nation and other districts

- Black-White disparities in OSS in CGCS are lower than the national average (RRR of 1.82 vs. 2.21). Similarly, Latinx-White disparities in OSS in CGCS are lower than the national average (0.98 vs. 1.15)
- In CGCS, there are greater racial disparities in ISS than OSS even though the prevalence of OSS is greater than ISS
- Black-White disparities in ISS among CGCS districts are higher than the national average and other urban categorizations
- Latinx-White disparities in ISS in CGCS are slightly higher than the national average and other urban categorizations except urban intensive districts

Trends in suspension types in CGCS

- CGCS districts use OSS more than ISS for all student racial groups
- Black students are more likely to be suspended in CGCS districts, regardless of suspension type
- In CGCS, there are greater racial disparities in ISS than OSS even though the prevalence of OSS is greater than ISS
- The 2024 Academic Key Performance Indicators report suggests a higher prevalence of OSS in CGCS districts in the aftermath of the COVID-19

Beating the school discipline odds - Inclusive Disciplinary Districts (IDD)

- There are very few urban districts that are beating the school discipline odds
- Only 9 districts in the NCES urban sample were classified as an IDD: Sunnyside Unified District (Arizona), Anaheim Union High School District (California), Santa Ana Unified School District (California), Boise School District (Idaho), Baltimore City Public Schools (Maryland), Boston Public Schools (Massachusetts), Las Cruces Public Schools (New Mexico), Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District (Texas), and Ysleta Independent School District (Texas)
- Only 4 districts in the CGCS were identified as an IDD: a) Hawaii, b) San Diego Unified School District, c) Santa Ana Unified School District, and d) Baltimore City Public Schools

Six urban school discipline priorities

- Prioritize addressing both prevalence and disparities in suspensions
- Prioritize addressing and reducing both suspension types
- Prioritize understanding school discipline policies and practices in the South
- Prioritize reducing the prevalence of both suspension types for Black students
- Prioritize identifying and learning from urban districts beating the school discipline odds
- Prioritize understanding the relationship between suspensions and chronic absenteeism

Thank you for your time and attention

I welcome all feedback, questions, or comments.

Richard Welsh

richard.welsh.1@vanderbilt.edu

The School Discipline Lab

<https://www.disciplinelab.com/>
@schooldislab

NOW AVAILABLE! *Suspended Futures: Transforming Racial Inequities in School Discipline*

