



## Students Not Suspects

### Suspensions and Expulsions Do Not Work

Over 5,000 children in kindergarten through second grade were suspended or expelled from Washington schools during the 2015-2016 school year.

Often, young students are suspended for behaviors that are a product of childhood trauma, or disabilities. Students of color, particularly black boys, are disproportionately suspended or expelled in the early grades.

Suspension harms young students. Young students who are expelled or suspended "are as much as 10 times more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure, be held back a grade, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not." Suspension in early grades puts children on a negative path from the very beginning of their academic careers.

Suspension and expulsion harms our community. All students attending schools with high rates of suspension and expulsion have lower levels of connection to school and academic achievement. Further, suspensions and expulsion result in billions of dollars of lost revenue and increased costs to taxpayers.

Teachers and school administrators should be prepared to respond to the social and emotional needs of each student, and provided with effective school disciplinary procedures that provide all students with a supportive school environment.

### 2018 Education Discipline Priority

Washington should pass SB 5155 to prohibit suspension and expulsion of students in kindergarten through second grade.

Instead, schools and districts should be required to develop policies and procedures for supporting students with behavioral challenges, and encouraged to invest in evidence-based approaches such as trauma-informed schools, social-emotional learning, positive behavioral supports and intervention, and restorative practices.