SCHOOLHOUSE CONNECTION
STATE POLICY: COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE #2

Data, Statistics, and Special Populations

Wednesday, May 12, 2021
2:00 PM to 3:30 PM Eastern

More info: https://schoolhouseconnection.org/policy-advocacy/state-policy/
About SchoolHouse Connection

SchoolHouse Connection works to **overcome homelessness through education**. We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

- Website
- **Facebook Group**
- Newsletter
- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships
Community of Practice Overview

- State policy advocacy training
- Relationship building amongst state and local stakeholders
- May Session: Data, Research, and the Needs of Special Populations

Future Sessions
  - **July**: Best Practices in State Advocacy
  - **September**: Best Practices in Local Advocacy
  - **November**: End of Year Review

- Regular breakout sessions will be a key part of our community
Welcome!

CoP Facebook Group

ARP Overview
Center for American Progress

SchoolHouseConnection
State Policy: Community of Practice #2
Data, Statistics, and Special Populations
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Jboya Lake
Senior Policy Analyst, Poverty to Prosperity

Lisette Partelow
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty to Prosperity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➔ Homelessness, Housing</td>
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<td>➔ Criminalization of poverty</td>
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<td>➔ Modernizing the safetynet</td>
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<td>➔ CTC, EITC, tax credits</td>
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<td>➔ SNAP, child &amp; family nutrition</td>
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<td>➔ Unemployment Insurance</td>
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<td>➔ Disability Justice Initiative</td>
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@CAPPoverty

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<th>K-12 Education</th>
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<td>➔ A quality education for every child</td>
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<td>➔ Apply a race equity lens to policy development</td>
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<td>➔ Preparing all students for college and the workforce</td>
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<td>➔ Modernizing and elevating the teaching profession</td>
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<td>➔ Dramatically increase investment in the nation’s public schools</td>
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@EdProgress
What stakeholders are asking for

Most current picture
- Recent surveys, polling
  - Internal, external
- Critical examination of pre-COVID data
- Tracking policy - what is happening, how, where

Deep dives
- Understanding context, history, impacts on equitable outcomes

External Data Sources:
- As local as possible
- As timely as possible
- Community Generated
  - Black Census Project at the Black Futures Lab
  - Research Justice Lab at the Coalition of Communities of Color (Oregon)
- State and Local
- Federal
  - Census, Agencies
  - Household Pulse Survey
**Best Practices**

**Centering**
- Racial, gender, LGBTQ, disability
- Equitable recovery, undoing past and current harms

**Listening, Leading with Community Voices**
- Consulting, reviews
- Recognizing personal positionality
  - Sometimes we hold experiences, but our experiences aren’t universal and don’t speak for all

**Uplifting**
- Partners, coalitions
- Community-led efforts - past, new, people’s budgets and community models
- Knowing when the we are overstepping

**Critical Lens**
- Data - understanding of where data came from, what it asked, what and who is missing
- Connecting to past, present, future - multigenerational approach to interpreting data and analysis
- Storytelling is data
Examples: Enumerating Homelessness

➢ Decennial Census
➢ HUD’s PIT Count
➢ School counts of students experiencing homelessness

➢ Long-term
➢ Prioritizing and intentionally using resources to build and maintain relationships

➢ Integrating issue areas
  ◦ Housing investments
  ◦ Education
  ◦ Transit, Infrastructure
  ◦ Safetynet programs
  ◦ Criminal-Legal system, reentry
  ◦ Community safety, health, and well-being
Contact

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Texas Appleseed promotes social and economic justice for all Texans by leveraging the skills and resources of volunteer lawyers and other professionals to identify practical solutions to difficult, systemic problems.
Sources of Data for Report

- Texas Education Agency (& LEAs)
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Texas Juvenile Justice Department
- Texas Network of Youth Services
- Youth Experiencing Homlessness
- Law Enforcement
- Local Mental Health Authorities
- Homeless Liaisons
- Service Providers (National & Local)

https://www.texasappleseed.org/sites/default/files/YoungAloneHomeless_FullReport_fin.pdf
Best Practices in Using Data to Advocate for Homeless Students/Youth

- Use comprehensive and current data source
- Ensure data is broken out into subpopulations (i.e., disaggregate data; ex. race, location, age, rural/urban, disability, LGBTQ+)
- Qualitative data enhances and provides better understanding of quantitative data
- Humanize the Data
- Must obtain a full picture of what data means
- Making data digestible! (infographics, etc.)
Out-of-School Suspensions Harm Students Experiencing Homelessness

"Out-of-school suspensions are counterproductive. [School officials say that] we’re seeing you, and we notice that you are having problems in school, so to fix this problem ... we’re going to send you out of school. It just makes no sense." — Lyric

LYRIC’S STORY

Lyric loved school, despite all the obstacles she faced growing up. She was living in a homeless shelter by 5th grade. The city forced her and her mother out of her grandmother’s home because of her mother’s compulsive hoarding, rendering the home unsafe and uninhabitable.

She was homeless from that time in elementary school through high school. Lyric and her mom primarily stayed in shelters and sometimes spent nights in motels. Now almost 21, she works to advocate for youth who are experiencing many of the things she lived.

Lyric was physically abused by her father, who was never really present in her life. While her mother was present, her mother’s depression and physical disability left Lyric to manage her own life more often than not.

Facing hunger, no home, neglect, bullying, abuse and stress, Lyric received more than 20 suspensions over the course of her schooling — for talking back, talking too much, being tardy, and giving too much “attitude” toward her teachers. “I needed help, I was always told that I was being too loud and talking back, getting into arguments.” She also left the school campus once to escape bullies, which led to her being expelled. “I hit my breaking point and left. I walked out of the school. My principal said, ‘You need to get it together, you have to do better for yourself.’ He never asked me why, what made me leave.”

Lyric’s grades were strong, especially in English, and she loved sports and music class. But out-of-school suspensions set her back overall, particularly in math. “I struggled with math the most. When it came to math class, I was two grades behind. Even when I told them I was struggling because I didn’t know what was going on, they [teachers] thought it was an excuse.”

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION

Texas should keep students who are homeless in school by eliminating suspension as a disciplinary option, except in very serious situations, and should create incentives to graduate by eliminating barriers to higher education.

TEXAS STATISTICS

Texas students who are homeless are twice as likely to be referred to In-School Suspension, 2.5 times more likely to be suspended from school, and 5 times more likely to be referred to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program.

In the 2015-16 Texas school year, black girls received 41% (42,771 out of 108,005) of OSS actions for girls, but represented only 13% (325,883 out of 2,580,992) of the population of girls.

Black children, boys, and students with special education needs are pushed out of class at unequal rates compared to their peers.

Out-of-school suspensions are discretionary — the reasons for removal are outlined in each school district’s Student Code of Conduct, but these suspensions are not required by law.

THE IMPACT OF SUSPENSIONS ARE GREAT AND COSTLY

Missed Classroom Time

When children are removed from class, they lose important learning time.

Difficulty for Families

School removals can cause stress for families.

Ineffective Suspensions

Do not change student behavior.

Creating Mistrust

When children are excluded from class, they begin to lose faith in a system that seems to punish them and their peers randomly and without regard for the underlying cause of the behavior.

Negative School Climate & Lower Overall Academic Achievement

The use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions does not improve student achievement or overall school climate.

Costly for School Districts

When students are removed from class, school districts lose Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Funds.

Early Labeling

Students who are removed from their classrooms may feel as though they have been labeled as “bad” or “problem” children.

“I guess teachers sometimes think kids are hopeless...and that they don’t want to be in school so why try with them... You should still be trying.” — Lyric
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Senator Jen Gross & Hope Stockwell
Q&A with Senator Gross & Hope
Next Session

- Wednesday, July 8, 2021
- 2:00 - 3:30 PM (EST)
- Topic: Best Practices in State Advocacy
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