

When They Teach Us:

The Education of Black Children in San Diego



#WhenTheyTeachUs

**A brief for the parents of Black children
in San Diego public schools**

October 2019

Wood, Abdi, Essien, Harris III, & DeJohnette



Community College Equity Assessment Lab
Black Minds Project

DEDICATION

This brief is dedicated to the parents of Black children attending public schools in San Diego, California. We seek to provide insights for those parents and loved ones who have struggled with school systems and educators that do not believe in, care for, or invest in their children. We encourage you to continue to advocating for and loving young Black minds.



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Executive Summary

This brief highlights a number of key facts about Black children in San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD). Some of the key data points featured in this brief include:

Overall Findings

- **Black students account for 8.2% of SDUSD enrollment but only 5.4% of statewide enrollment. Between 2014/2015 and 2018/2019, Black enrollment in SDUSD dropped by 16%. This rate of decline was 3.6 times faster than White enrollment decline.**
- **Only 4.3% of SDUSD’s teachers are Black or African American. In contrast, nearly 63% of all teachers in the district are White.**
- **Black student scores for English Language Arts and Math are the lowest for any racial group. Scores for these subjects are at least 99 points lower than those for their White and Asian peers.**

Suspension Findings

- **The suspension rate for Black girls is 5.1%, which is 46% higher than the district average. The suspension rate for Black males is 10.7%. This rate is 206% higher than the district average and represents the highest suspension rate for any racial or gender group.**
- **Compared to the district average, Black males were 3.1 times more likely to receive an out-of-school suspension and 2.8 times more likely to receive an in-school suspension.**
- **Black male foster youth is the subgroup most likely to be suspended at 26%. In contrast, the district average was 13.5%.**
- **The top schools suspending Black boys are Montgomery Middle School (at 52.4%), Fletcher Elementary School (at 40%), Innovation Middle School (at 38.9%), and Millennial Tech Middle School (at 36.2%).**
- **The top school suspending Black girls is Millennial Tech Middle School, (at 37%). This school is followed by Memorial Scholars and Athletes (at 27%), Challenger Middle School (at 20%), and Knox Middle School (at 20%).**

Six Recommendations for Parents of Black Children

- **Never leave your child in an unhealthy environment, even for the sake of a “good” school. – *Andre Branch***
- **Never assume your child deserves the suspension, especially in early childhood education.**
- **Never assume your school is aware of their success data with Black children – show them*.**
- **Never allow a teacher or principal to refer to your child as a “problem” or “bad”.**
- **Never allow the school to reprimand your child without questioning what occurred and whether there were other children who did the same thing.**
- **Never assume the challenges your child faces are isolated – most likely, other parents of Black children are experiencing the same thing.**

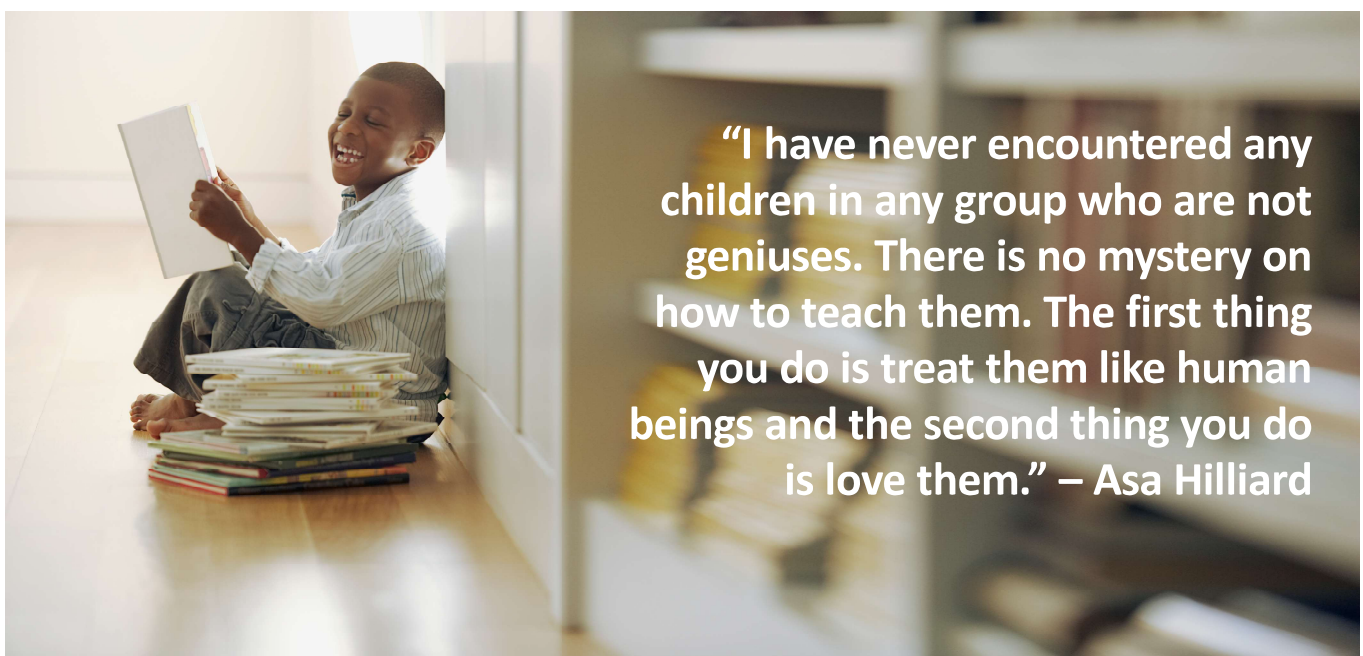


INTRODUCTION

In February of 2018, the Black Minds Project of the Community College Equity Assessment Lab (CCEAL) released a report titled, “Outside Looking In: Suspension as a Form of Exclusion in San Diego County.” This report highlighted high rates of suspensions experienced by Black children, particularly Black boys, in San Diego county. Findings demonstrated that Black males attending schools in San Diego county were suspended at a rate of 9.4% per year. This rate was found to be 3.4 times higher than the countywide suspension average. The report also highlighted high suspension rates for Black boys in Ramona City Unified (20%) and Valley Center Pauma Unified (20%), followed by Alpine Union Elementary (18.2%), Escondido Unified High (17.6%), and Escondido Unified (16.2%; Wood, Harris III, Howard, & Abdi, 2018).

While San Diego Unified was not among the top suspension districts in the county, rates for this district were noticeably higher than the statewide average. Moreover, the district was found to have the highest total suspensions of Black males in the county, an expected finding given the size of the district. Unlike the previous report, this brief has a deeper focus on San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD). The district is among the largest in the nation and serves over 10,000 Black students each year. This brief also has expanded its focus by highlighting a larger array of outcomes (e.g., suspensions, expulsions, performance), including Black girls, and providing narratives from the voices of parents of Black children. These narratives are based on recent findings from the Our Voices research project at San Diego State University (Wood & Essien, 2019).

This brief is based on data from two primary sources. The first source is the California Department of Education (CDE) DataQuest system. This is a publicly available resource that allows for targeted analyses of specific subgroups based on county-level, district-level, and school-level disaggregation. All public local education agencies in the state submit data to the State of California and these data are reported through this system. Thus, the data reported here represent what schools reported to the State of California. The second source is the Our Voices project, a narrative research project that has collected written stories from over 100 parents of Black children. Many of these parents have children who attend public schools in San Diego County, and SDUSD more specifically (Wood & Essien, 2019).



“I have never encountered any children in any group who are not geniuses. There is no mystery on how to teach them. The first thing you do is treat them like human beings and the second thing you do is love them.” – Asa Hilliard

**“We can
ill afford
to have
a throw
away
group”**

– Eboni Zamani-Gallaher



Photo by Kate_Sept2014 – Stock Photo ID: 1049060752

In May of 2019, Netflix released the miniseries “When They See Us.” This series, directed by Ava DuVernay, focused on the Central Park Five case that led to the incarceration of five young men of color. These young men, between the ages of 14 and 16, received maximum sentences for the assault of a woman who was jogging through Central Park. After serving between 6 and 13 years in prison, the men were exonerated after DNA evidence and a confession from the actual attacker were revealed (Dwyer, 2019; Mangan, 2019). The series depicted the numerous injustices that led to their wrongful conviction, harsh mistreatment in prison, and difficult re-entry back into society. Ultimately, “When They See Us” highlighted how young men of color, particularly Black males, are assumed to be guilty and therefore targeted by police.

Prior research has shown that there are many parallels between the ways Black lives are engaged by police and how Black minds are educated in schools (Ford, Harris III; & Tyson, 2011; Howard, 2013, 2016; Wood, 2019). Black students are assumed to be troublemakers, deviants, and problems. They are therefore more closely monitored for wrongdoing, singled out for punishments when their peers behave in the same way, and subjected to harsher and more prolonged punishments (Wood & Essien, 2019). Research from Gilliam (2017) has shown that educators are more likely to monitor Black children, particularly Black boys, for wrongdoing due to implicit bias. Implicit bias is “the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an implicit manner. Activated involuntarily, without awareness or intentional control. Can be either positive or negative. Everyone is susceptible” (Kirwan Institute, 2016, p. 14). Due to these biases, this report was named “When They Teach Us” to connote the direct relationship between how Black minds are viewed (through a criminalized lens) and the numerous ways this affects learning and the way they are disciplined in school settings. In short, Black children are assumed to be problems and troublemakers and are therefore targeted by the teachers and principals who are employed to serve them.

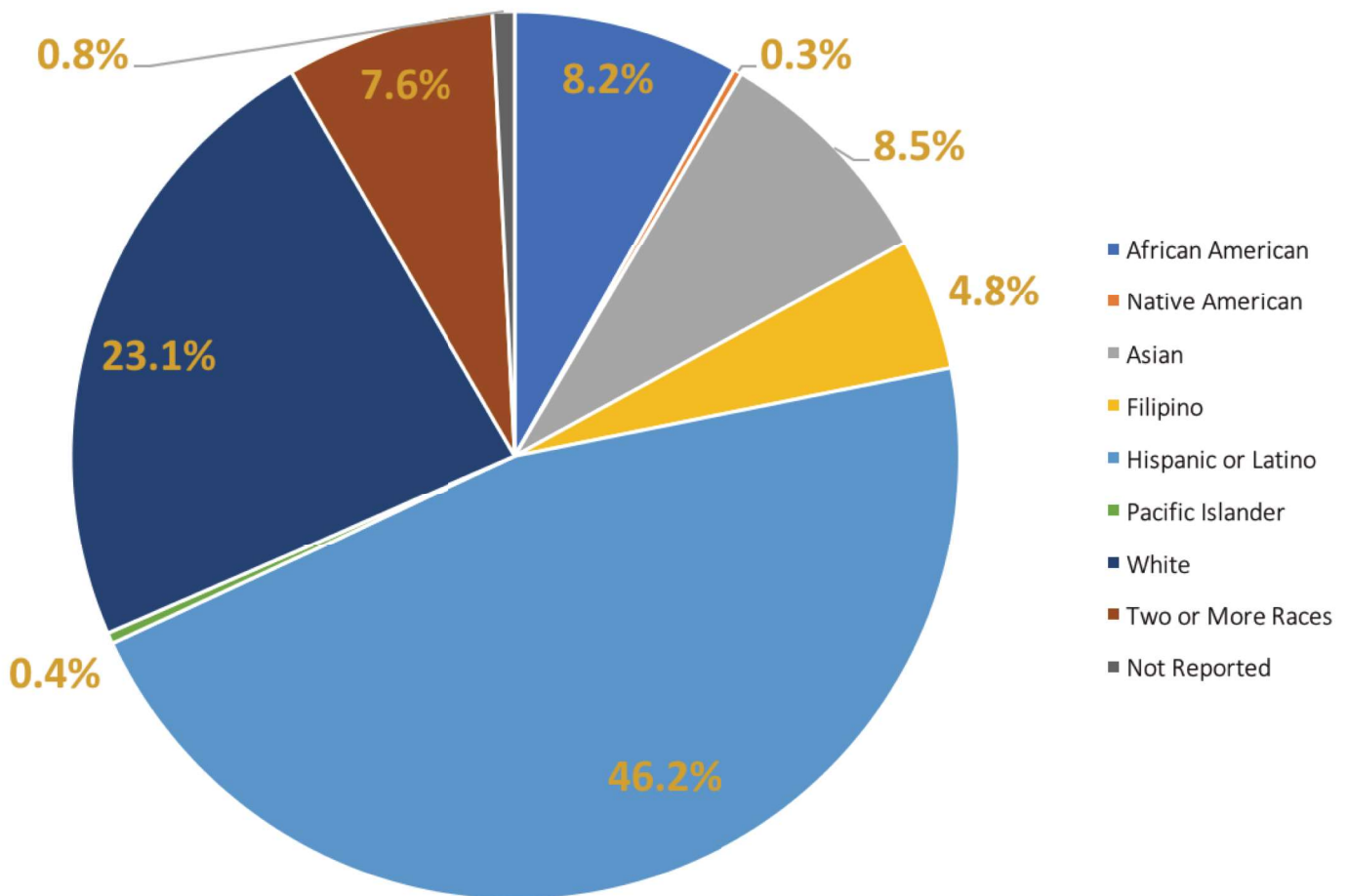


Community College Equity Assessment Lab
Black Minds Project

Background Context

In the 2018-2019 academic year, there were 124,105 students enrolled in SDUSD. Of these students, 10,156 were of African American or Black descent. The largest group of students enrolled in the district were Latino/a at 46.2% and White at 23.1%. Given this, Black students account for 8.2% of SDUSD enrollment but only 5.4% of statewide enrollment. Thus, despite popular conceptions, Black students are more represented in SDUSD than they are statewide.

Figure 1. Enrollment in SDUSD by Race, 2018-2019



There are declining enrollments across SDUSD. For example, in 2014-2015 there were 129,779 students served by the district. Data from 2018-2019 demonstrate that 124,105 students are now served by the district. This represents a loss of 5,674 students and a decrease of enrollment by 4.37%. In contrast, in 2014-2015, Black students accounted for 12,085 students in the district yet only 10,156 in 2018-2019. This represents a loss of 1,929 Black students. Put differently, there was a 16% drop in Black enrollment during this timeframe. This rate of enrollment decline is 3.6 times greater than that of White student enrollment-and this is being experienced more acutely by Black students, their families, and their communities. Given this, there is a need to explore whether recent news highlighting enhanced success in the district is a function of actual success, or a at least partially attributable to a precipitous decline in the enrollment of students who have been historically underserved by the district.



Background Context

Enrollment Decreases in SDUSD from 14/15 to 18/19

4.4%

decrease in White student enrollment in SDUSD

16%

decrease in Black student enrollment in SDUSD

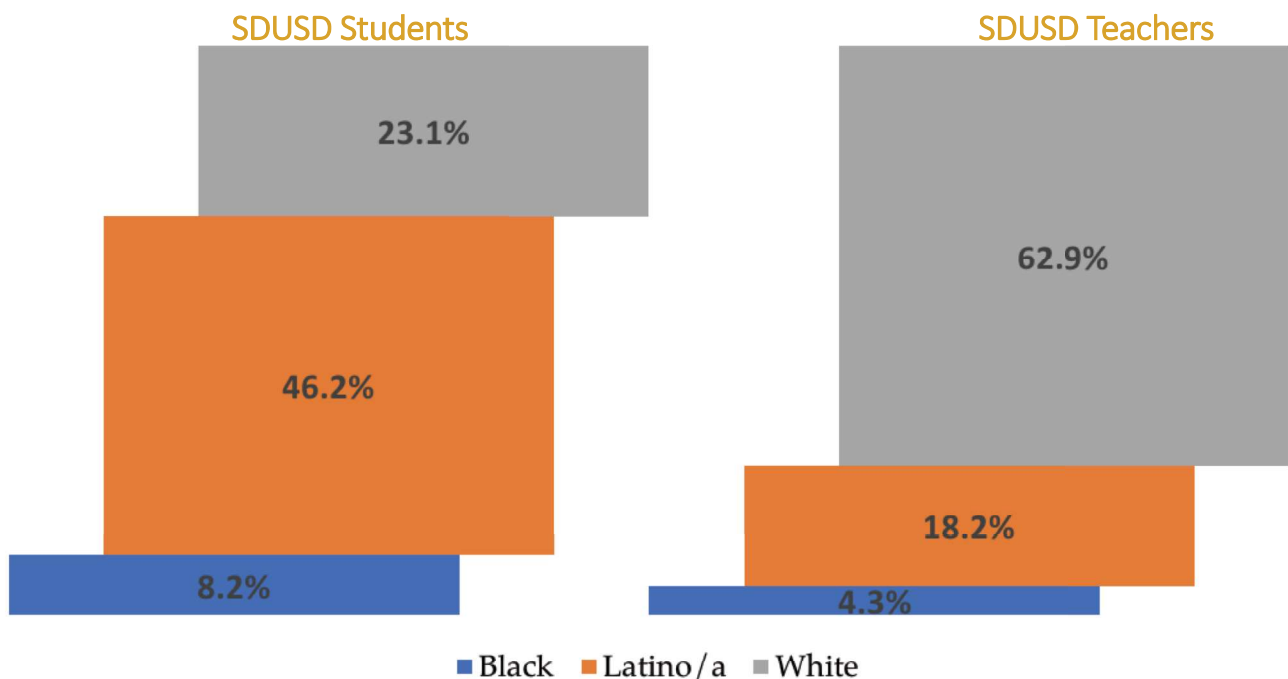
3.6

times faster enrollment decline for Black students

#WhenTheyTeachUs

Among many challenges facing Black students in SDUSD, one is the lack of representation of Black teachers. For instance, Black students account for 8.2% of the enrollment in SDUSD; however, only 4.3% of teachers are Black or African American. In contrast, nearly 63% of all teachers in the district are White, a high percentage given that White students only account for 23.1% of district enrollment. Given this, Black children are more likely to be taught by individuals who do not possess an understanding of their lived sociocultural experiences, families, or communities.

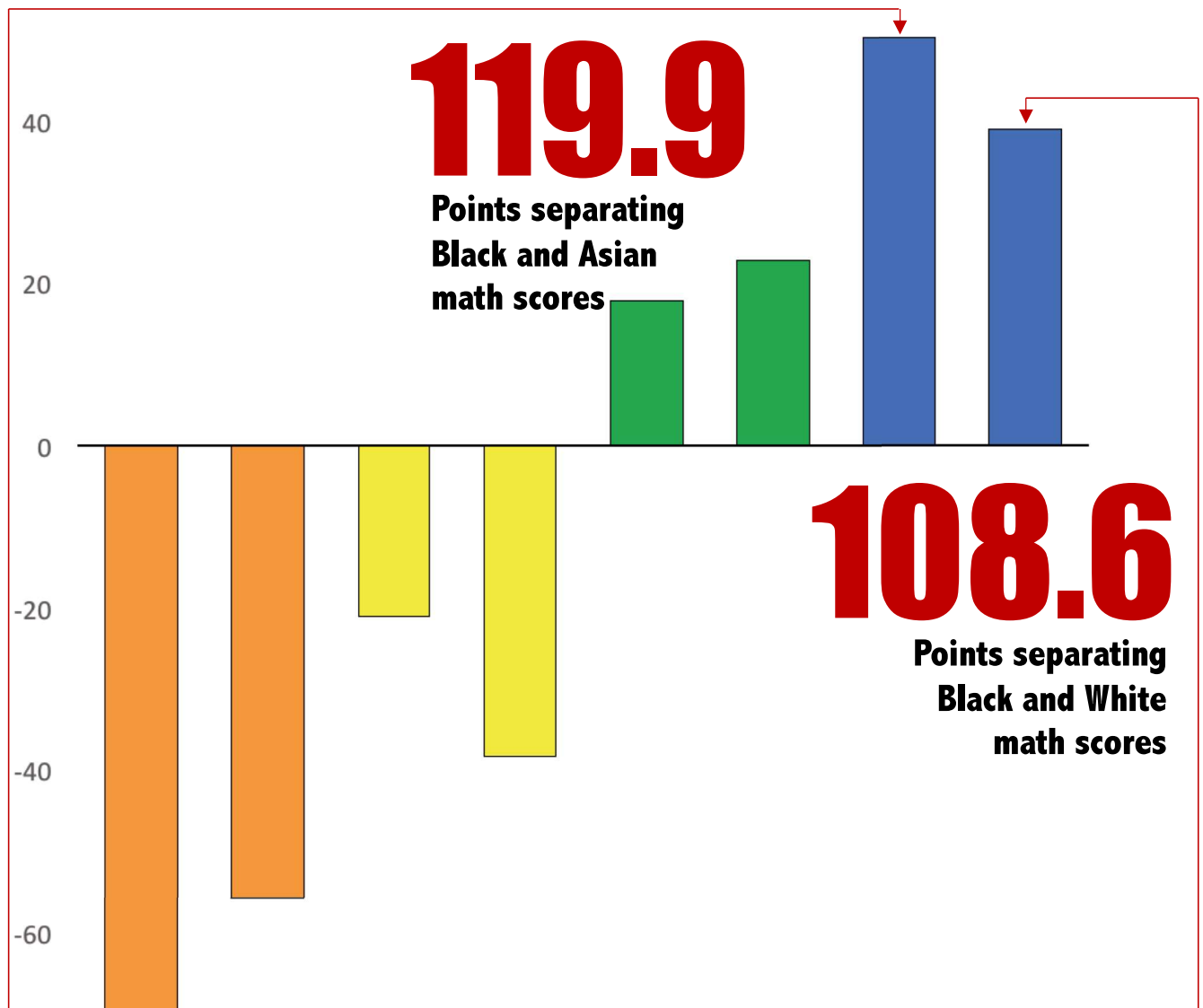
Figure 2. Enrollment of Students and Representation of Teachers by Race in SDUSD, 2018-2019



Background Context

The state measures student performance in math using a variety of indicators. One indicator is the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBSA). This assessment is completed each year by students in Grades 3-8 and in Grades 11. The results for this test are scored using a color-coded system from red (being the lowest) to blue (being the highest). No racial groups were scored red; however, the lowest scores for any racial group was for Black students, followed by Latino/a students. They are marked in orange. The scores for Black students are 69.6 points below the expected standard, while scores for White and Asian students were 39 and 50.3 points above the standard, respectively given this, there is a 119.9 and 108.6 point gap between Black students and their Asian and White peers, respectively, on math assessment scores in the district. These are large equity gaps in need of urgent attention, intervention, and accountability by the district.

Table 1. Math Performance for Students in SDUSD, 2018/2019



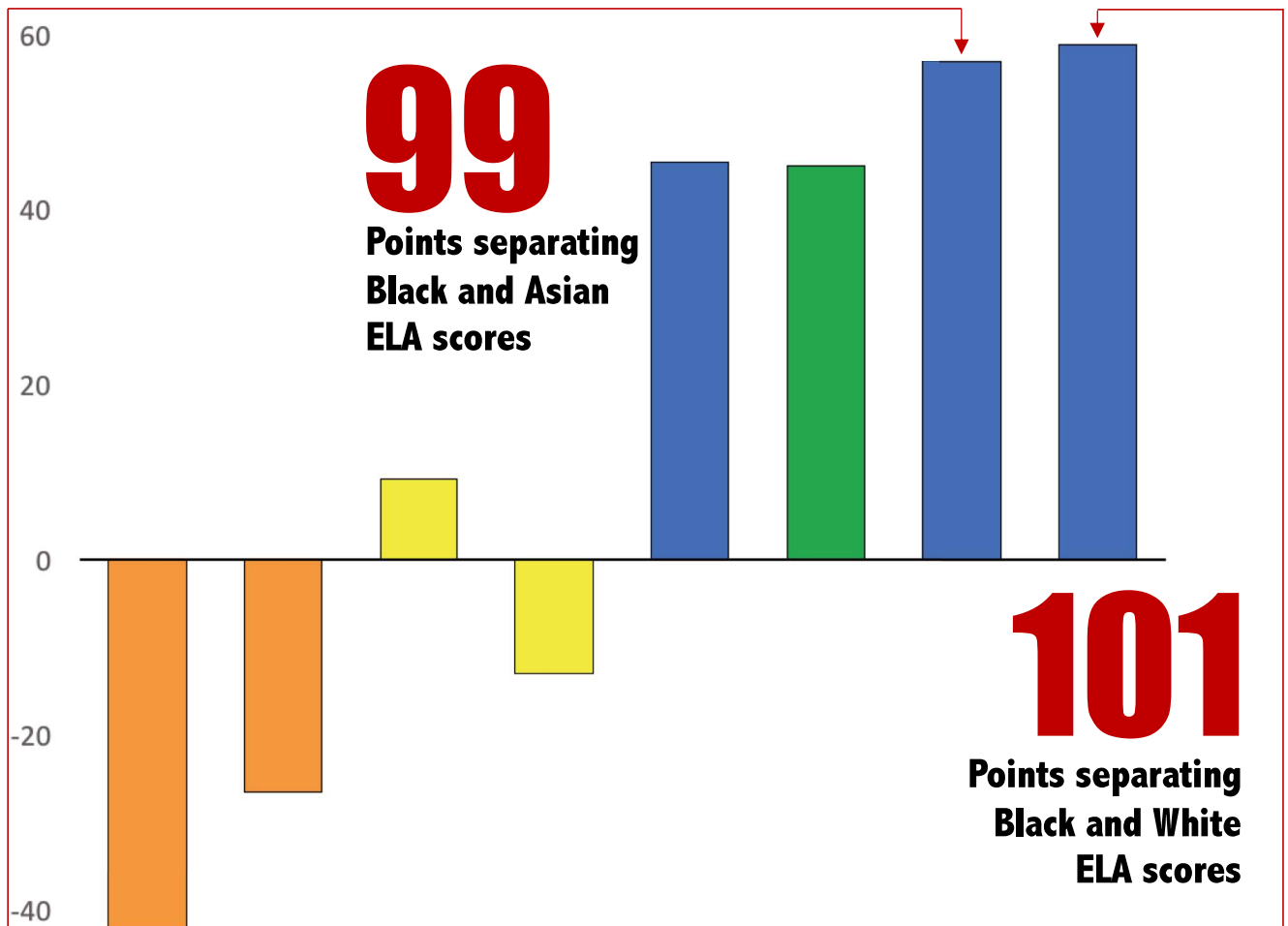
	Black	Latino/a	Native American	Pacific Islander	Filipino/a	Multi-Ethnic	Asian	White
Math Scores	-69.6	-55.8	-20.9	-38.3	17.9	22.8	50.3	39



Background Context

As with math, the state measures student performance in English Language Arts (ELA) using the SBSA. ELA scores were the lowest for Black children in SDUSD, at 42.2 points below standard. This was followed by Latino/a students at 26.5 points below standard. Both of these scores were rated by the state as “orange.” In contrast, scores for White, Asian, and Filipino/a were “blue” and are markedly higher than their Black peers. The differences in English Language Arts performance are highly alarming, given that ELA (particularly reading and writing) serve as a foundational subjects that influence a child’s ability to perform in all other subject areas (e.g., math, science, social studies). Thus, success in these fields affects success in all other fields.

Table 2. English Language Arts Performance for Students in SDUSD, 2018/2019



	Black	Latino/a	Native American	Pacific Islander	Filipino/a	Multi-Ethnic	Asian	White
■ ELA Scores	-42.2	-26.5	9.1	-13	45.3	44.8	56.9	58.8



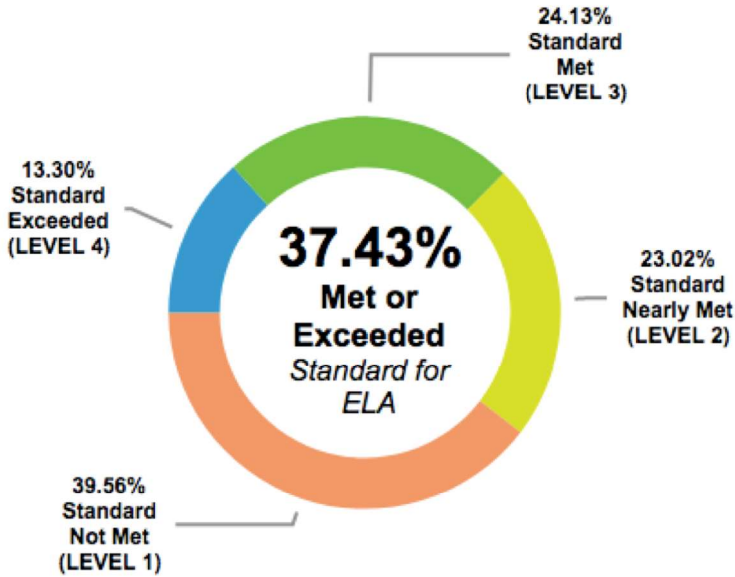
Background Context

Success Rates Between Black and White Students in SDUSD

Black Students

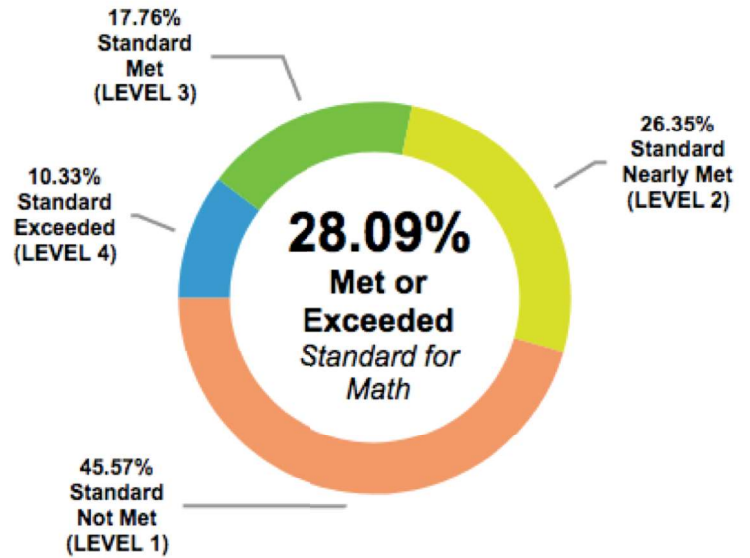
ELA

Percent of students within each achievement level



Mathematics

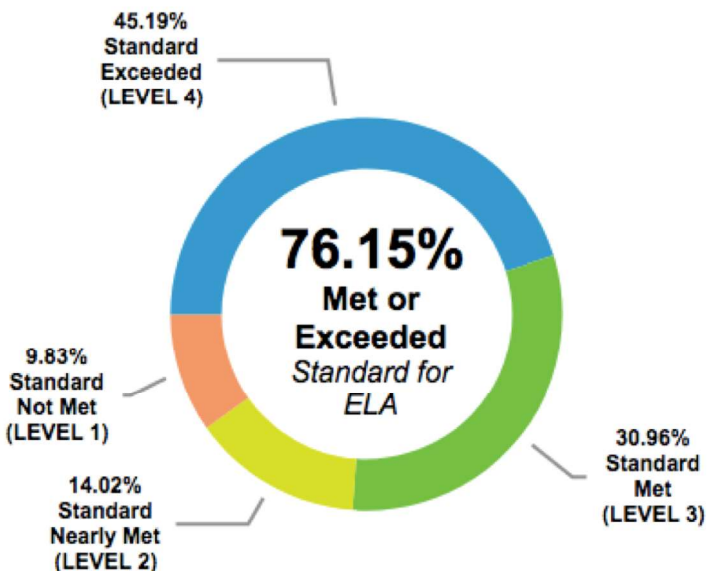
Percent of students within each achievement level



White Students

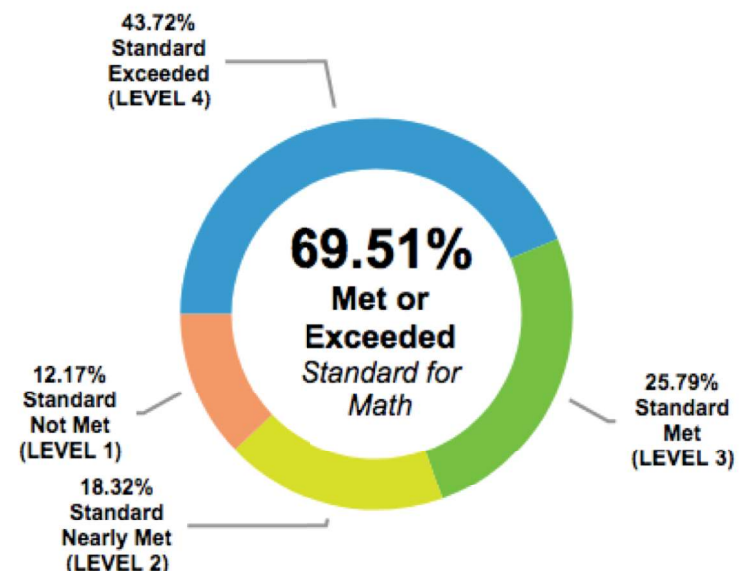
ELA

Percent of students within each achievement level



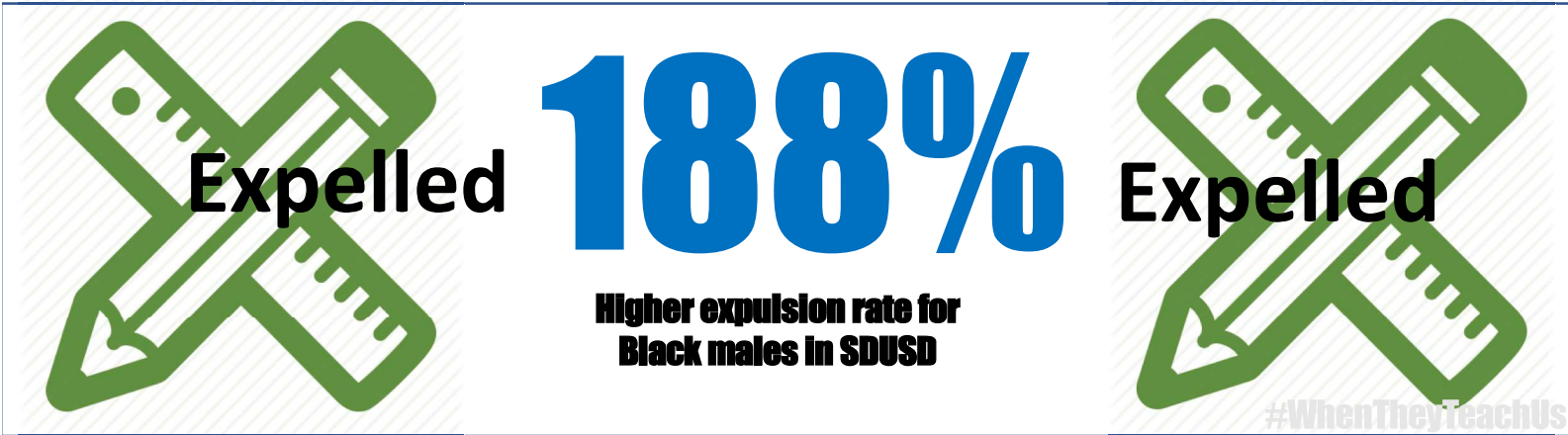
Mathematics

Percent of students within each achievement level



Background Context

In SDUSD, .08% of students were expelled in the 2017-2018 academic year. This represents 109 students overall who were subject to expulsions. While the expulsion rate for Black girls was .09%, the expulsion rate for Black boys was markedly higher at .23%. This rate is 188% higher than the district average. Overall, there were 21 total expulsions of Black students during the 2017-2018 academic year.



“Every system is perfectly designed to achieve the results that it gets” – W. Edward Deming



21 total expulsions of Black students in 2017/2018



Examining Suspensions in SDUSD

Prior research has shown that school suspensions are associated with higher levels of entry into the juvenile justice system and prison. The connection between these patterns of exclusionary discipline and prison have been termed the “school-to-prison pipeline.” This notion is supported by data demonstrate that a high percentage of prisoners were suspended during their K-12 education (Darensbourg, Perez, & Blake, 2010; Fenning & Rose, 2007; Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014).



Suspensions

Across all students, SDUSD suspended 3.5% of their students in 2017-2018. While this is higher than the countywide average of 2.8%, it is in line with the statewide average for suspensions. This rate accounts for students who were suspended at least one time. This rate does not include students who may be suspended more than once in a given academic year or those who are suspended multiple times across years. The suspension rate for Black girls is 5.1%, which is 46% higher than the district average. The suspension rate for Black males is 10.7%. This is 206% higher than the district average and represents the highest suspension rate for any racial or gender group.

Table 3. Suspension Rates for Black Students in SDUSD, 2017/2018

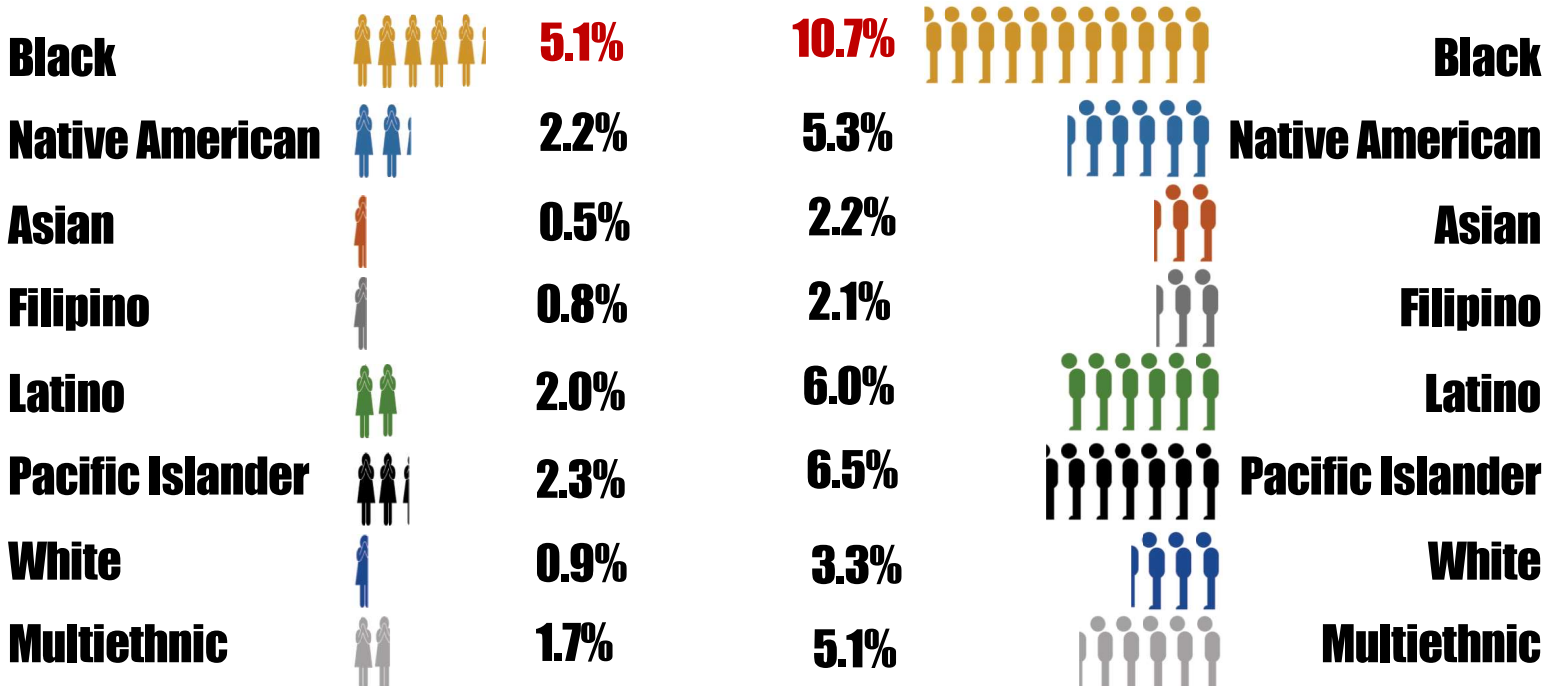
	Cumulative Enrollment	Total Suspensions	Unduplicated Count of Students Suspended	Suspension Rate	Percent of Students Suspended with One Suspension	Percent of Students Suspended Multiple Times
Black Girls	5,600	502	285	5.1%	66.7%	33.3%
Black Boys	6,006	1,145	643	10.7%	63.1%	36.9%

There were 1,145 suspensions of Black boys and 502 suspensions of Black girls in 2017-2018. This means 6.4 Black boys and 2.8 Black girls were suspended each school day. Overall, in comparison to their gender peers, Black female and male students have the highest rates of suspension in SDUSD.

SDUSD Suspension Rates

Female Students

Male Students



Suspensions

Across suspension types, Black males were overrepresented compared to their peers. This included being overrepresented in overall suspensions, in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and suspensions for defiance only. In comparison to the district average, Black males were 3.1 times more likely to receive an out-of-school suspension and 2.8 times more likely to receive an in-school suspension. They are also 3.3 times more likely to receive a suspension for defiance only. In school suspensions are a difficult category to report, as there are a number of strategies schools in California employ (both intentionally and unintentionally) that simply underreport the number of students who receive in-school suspensions. In contrast, Black females are overrepresented for overall suspensions and out-of-school suspensions yet are proportionally represented among in-school suspensions.

Table 4. Suspensions by Category for SDUSD and Black Students, 2017/2018

	District Average	Black Males	Black Females
Overall Suspension	3.5%	10.7%	5.1%
In-School Suspension	0.7%	2.0%	0.7%
Out-of-School Suspension	3.1%	9.5%	4.7%
Defiance Only	0.8%	2.6%	1.2%

3.3x

In SDUSD Black Males Are:

More likely to receive a defiance-only suspension

More likely to receive an in-school suspension

3.1x

More likely to receive an out-of-school suspension

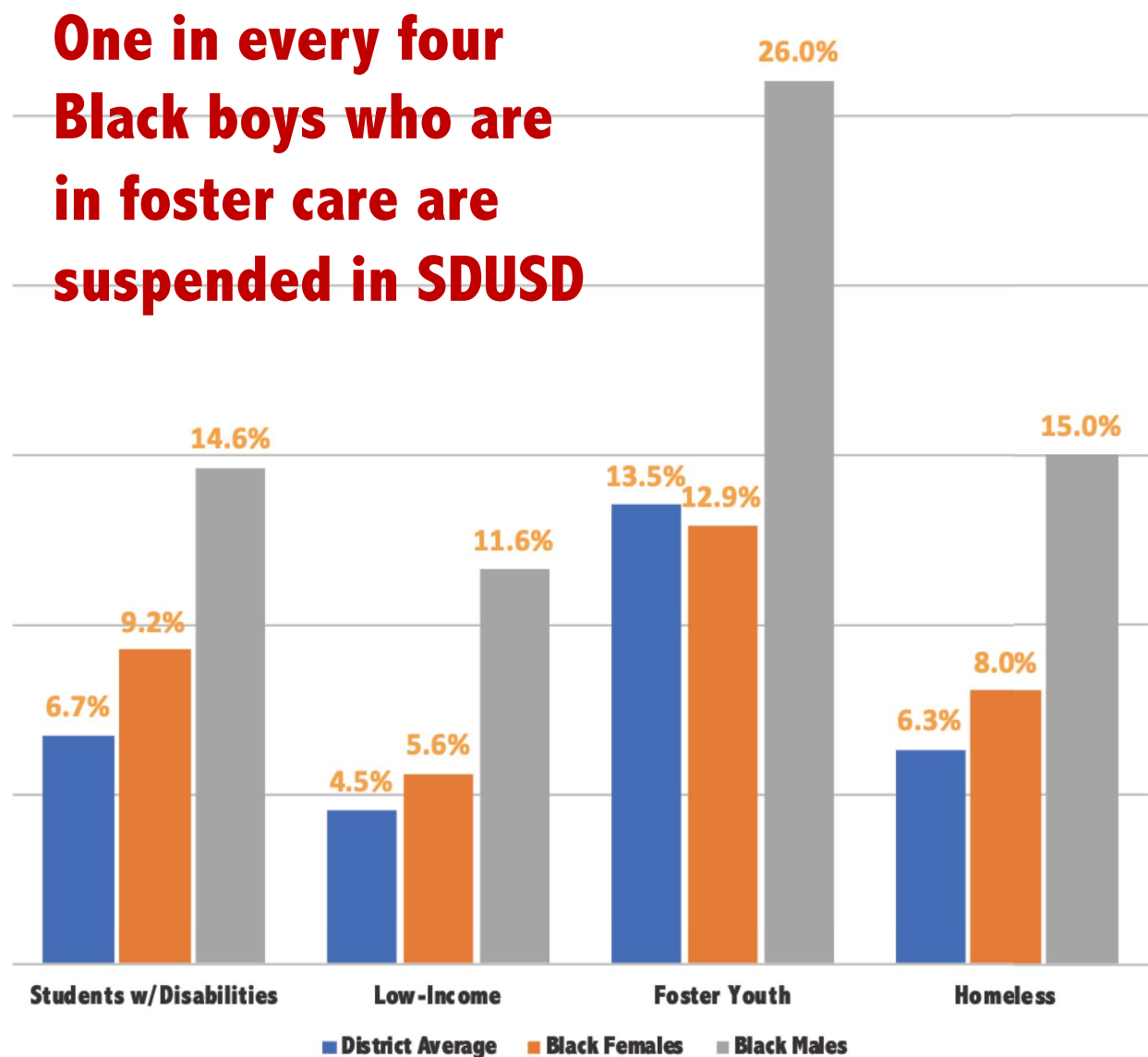
2.8x

#WhenTheyTeachUs

Suspensions

In examining data by type of population being suspended, it is evident there are differences in suspension rates by type. For example, while 4.5% of children who are low-income are suspended in SDUSD, this rate is 5.6% for Black girls and 11.6% for Black boys. Similarly, patterns for students with disabilities and students who are homeless mirror these data. In these cases, the suspension rate for the district was lower, at 6.7% for students with disabilities and 6.3% for those who are homeless. In contrast, suspension rates for Black girls are higher, at 9.2% and 8.0%, respectively, for students with disabilities and homeless students. In contrast, suspension rates for Black males in both categories are noticeably higher, at 14.6% and 15.0%. However, the highest suspension by type is for Black males who are foster youth. These students are suspended at 26%. This rate means that one in every four Black boys who are in foster care are suspended in SDUSD. Of course, these higher suspension rates for Black children overall, and Black boys in particular, demonstrate that students who are struggling the most with the greatest barriers to their success are more likely to be targeted by educators for suspension.

Table 5. Suspension Rates for Students in SDUSD by Special Population, 2017/2018



Suspensions

Data also demonstrate that students are suspended at different rates by grade level. For example, the highest suspension rates occur in middle school, between Grades 7 and 8. At the district level, the average suspension rate for middle school is 7.1%. This rate is 11.4% for Black girls and 19.4% for Black boys. However, the single greatest area where Black children are suspended at higher rates than the district average occurs for Black boys in early childhood education (kindergarten through third grade). In this grade range, Black males are 3.8 times more likely to be suspended than their peers. Thus, while the prior analyses demonstrated that the greatest suspensions are experienced among the most vulnerable populations of Black children (e.g., foster youth, students with disabilities), the highest suspension disparities occur with the youngest and most defenseless Black children.

Figure 3. Suspension rates for students in SDUSD by grade band, 2017/2018

Grades	District Average	Black Males	Black Females
K-3	1.3%	4.9%	1.1%
4-6	3.6%	12.7%	4.3%
7-8	7.1%	19.4%	11.4%
9-12	4.3%	11.2%	7.2%

Greater likelihood of Black male suspension in SDUSD by grade level, 2017/2018

2.7 times

more likely to be suspended in 7-8

3.8 times

more likely to be suspended in K-3

2.6 times

more likely to be suspended in 9-12

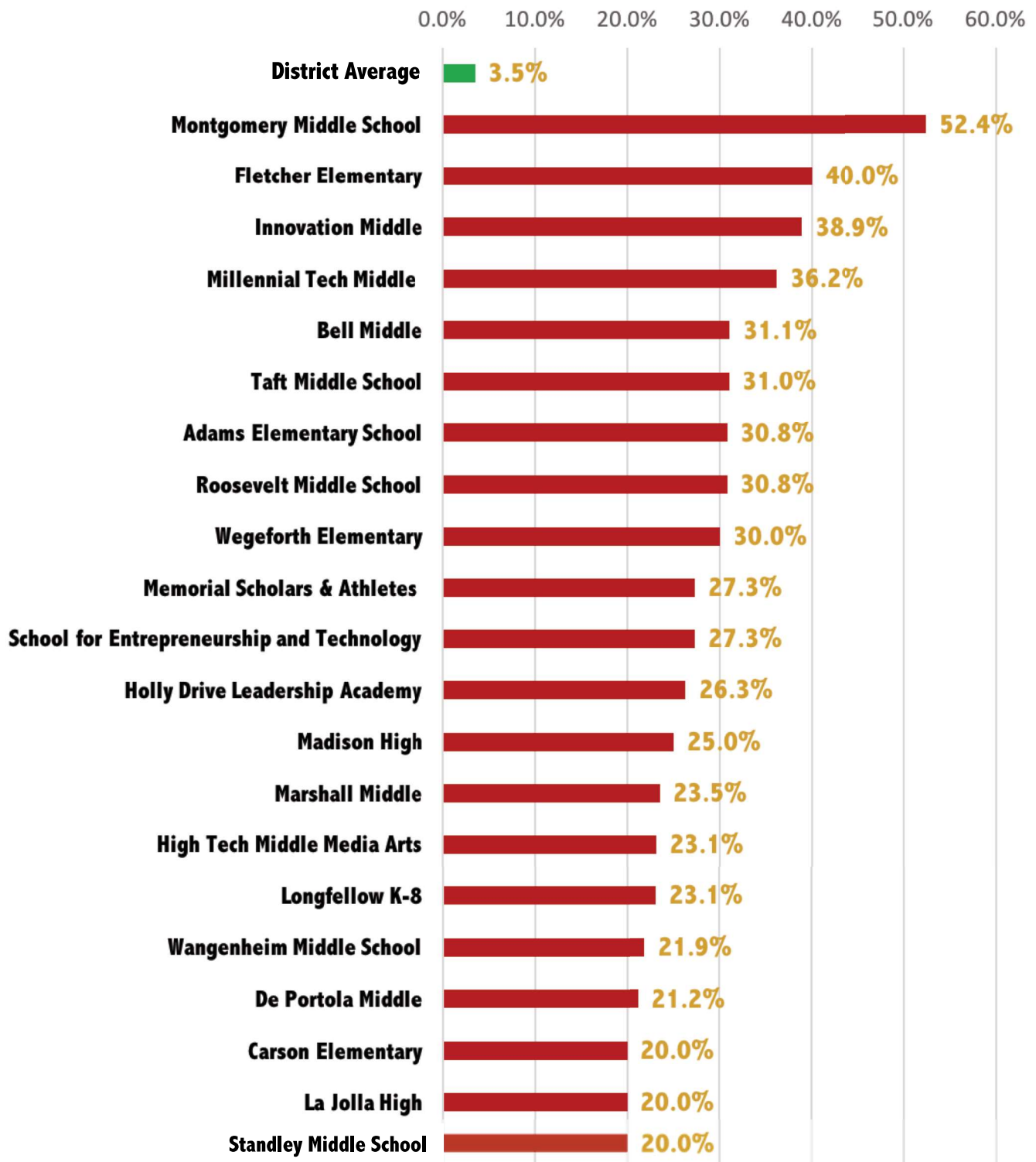
3.5 times

more likely to be suspended in 4-6

Suspensions

The top 21 schools suspending Black boys are depicted Figure 4. They include Montgomery Middle School (at 52.4%), Fletcher Elementary School (at 40%), Innovation Middle School (at 38.9%), and Millennial Tech Middle School (at 36.2%). These rates are exorbitantly higher than the district average of 3.5%.

Figure 4. Top Schools Suspending Black Boys in SDUSD, 2017/2018



“When he is disciplined, it seems harsher and more stern than his non-colored counterparts who participated in the same events. There appears to be some fear from the administration despite him being into Minecraft and in general being a very well-mannered kid. Of course they see through the lens of he's a danger because they're conditioned to believe he's a danger. An incident happened where a Caucasian kid pointed out a rainbow, and about three other kids looked. I remember the main administrator specifically naming and shaming our son.”

An incident happened where a Caucasian kid pointed out a rainbow and about three other kids looked. I remember the main administrator specifically naming and shaming our son.”



Photo by ShapeCharge Stock Photo ID: 902827434



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Suspensions

Schools with high suspension rates for Black males are listed in red in Table 6. They range from Montgomery Middle School (at 52.4%) to Standley Middle School (at 20%). In many of the schools listed, Black students represent a small part of the population. In fact, of the 21 schools listed, Black students accounted for less than 10% of the population at 14 of those schools. Interestingly, the listing includes elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

The listing also includes schools that are among those listed with high ratings on GreatSchools.Org. These schools are denoted with stars (★). Specifically, there were two schools with a rating of 7, including Wangenheim Middle School and De Portola Middle School. Three schools listed had a rating of 8, namely Standley Middle School, Longfellow K-8, and Fletcher Elementary. One school, Marshall Middle, has an elite score of 9. This suggests that even schools perceived externally to be “great” schools are not always good environments for Black children.

Table 6. Top Schools Suspending Black Males in SDUSD, 2017/2018

School	Suspension Rate	Black Enrollment	Great Schools Sum Rating
Montgomery Middle School	52.4%	8%	3/10
Fletcher Elementary	40.0%	13%	8/10 ★
Innovation Middle	38.9%	5%	4/10
Millennial Tech Middle	36.2%	25%	2/10
Bell Middle	31.1%	16%	3/10
Taft Middle School	31.0%	15%	5/10
Adams Elementary School	30.8%	9%	4/10
Roosevelt Intl. Middle School	30.8%	9%	4/10
Wegeforth Elementary	30.0%	9%	5/10
Memorial Scholars & Athletes	27.3%	4%	3/10
School for Entrepreneurship and Technology	27.3%	7%	6/10
Holly Drive Leadership Academy	26.3%	63%	3/10
Madison High	25.0%	12%	5/10
Marshall Middle	23.5%	2%	9/10 ★
High Tech Middle Media Arts	23.1%	8%	4/10
Longfellow K-8	23.1%	16%	8/10 ★
Wangenheim Middle School	21.9%	7%	7/10 ★
De Portola Middle	21.2%	7%	7/10 ★
Carson Elementary	20.0%	5%	4/10
La Jolla High	20.0%	2%	9/10 ★
Standley Middle School	20.0%	3%	8/10 ★

*This list does not include alternative schools such as Alba Community School and Riley/New Dawn that have suspension rates at 63.6% and 50.0%, respectively.

There were times he had a game. A little game boy game cartridge in his pocket. And they're really little. He had forgotten it was even in his pocket. He was waiting and pulled it out of his pocket. The teacher immediately just walked up and took it away from him. And he said, I didn't have the Gameboy with me. How was I going to play anything? It was just the cartridge, I forgot it was it in his pocket, and he said, "I just feel like they're watching me all the time." He had said at play he felt like the teacher watched him more than the other kids, and I was trying to get him to explain what that meant. "I just feel like the teacher is always there. Every time I turned around or said anything, she was just right there." It was hard for him to describe what that meant; just that she was always right there.

I just feel like they're watching me all the time. He had said at play he felt like the teacher watched him more than the other kids



Photo by RidoFranz Stock Photo ID: 950609918



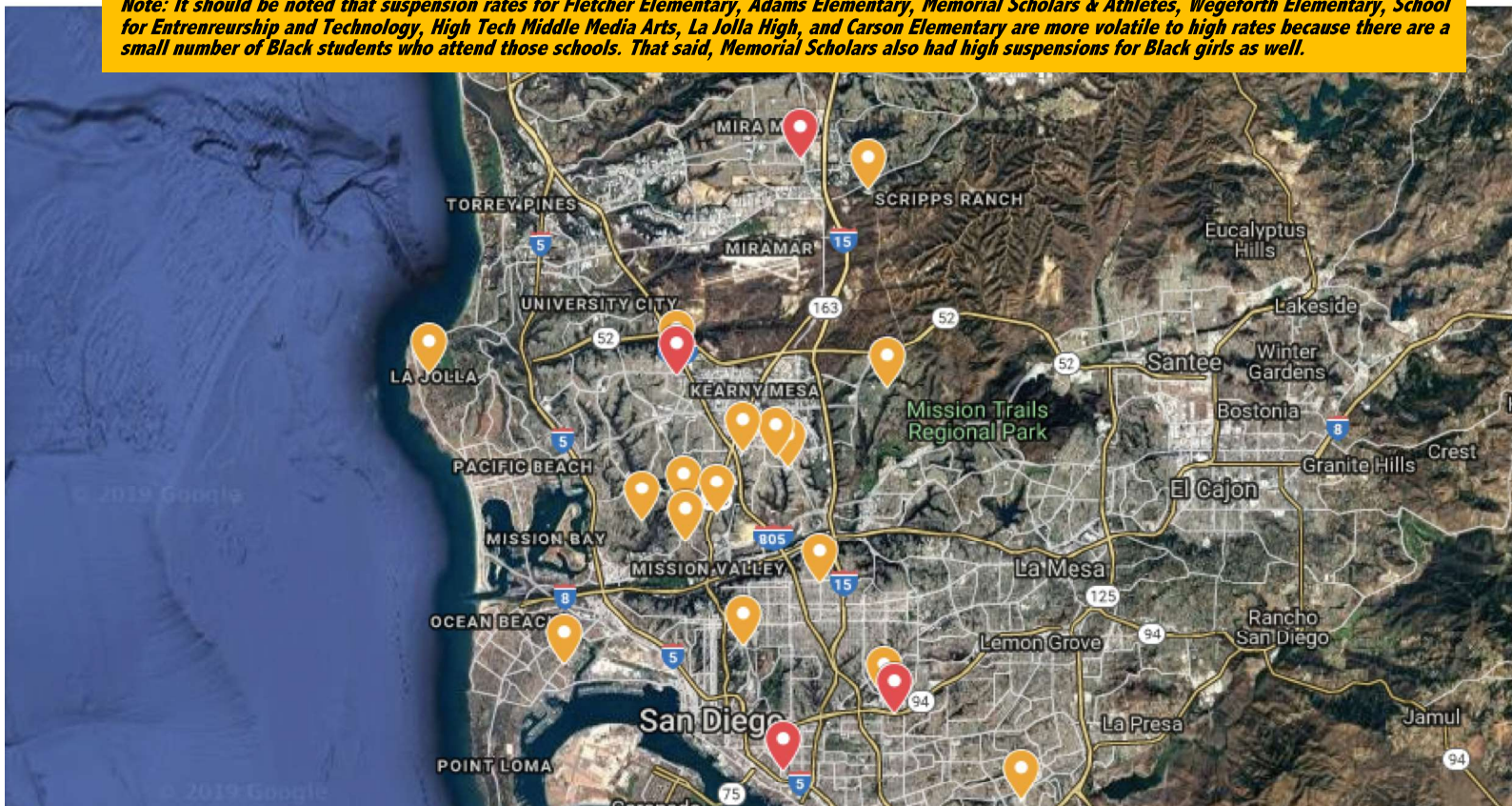
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Suspensions

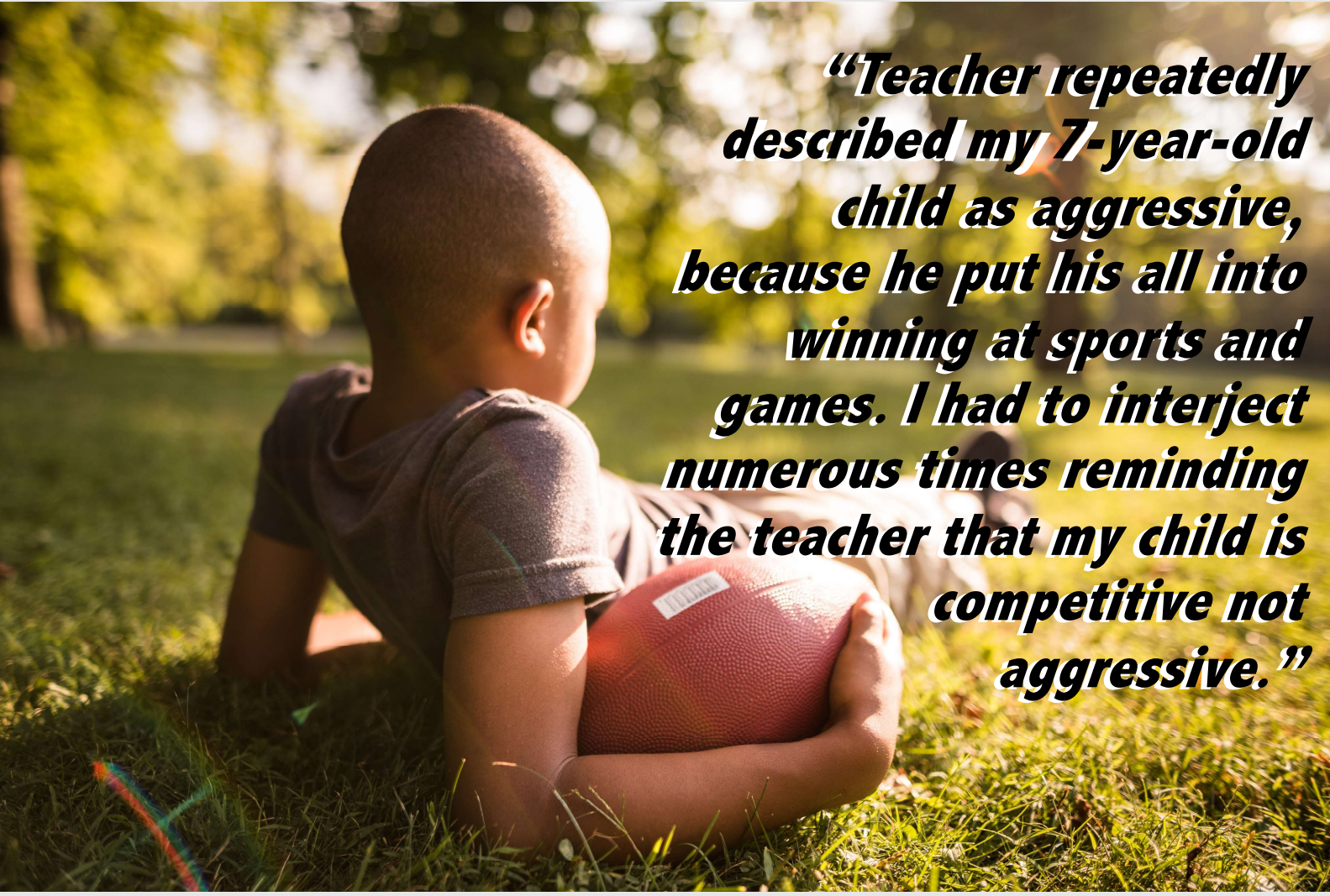
Table 7. Top Schools Suspending Black Males in SDUSD, 2017/2018

Schools	Black Male Enrollment	Total Black Male Suspension	Unduplicated Count	Suspension rate	Percent suspended once	Percent Multiple Suspensions
Montgomery Middle School	21	13	11	52.4%	82%	18%
Fletcher Elementary	10	6	4	40.0%	50%	50%
Innovation Middle	18	14	7	38.9%	43%	57%
Millennial Tech Middle	58	50	21	36.2%	57%	43%
Bell Middle	61	48	19	31.1%	47%	53%
Taft Middle School	58	41	18	31.0%	50%	50%
Roosevelt Intl. Middle School	52	45	16	30.8%	50%	50%
Adams Elementary School	13	10	4	30.8%	25%	75%
Wegeforth Elementary	10	11	3	30.0%	33%	67%
Memorial Scholars & Athletes	11	3	3	27.3%	100%	0%
School for Entr. & Technology	11	3	3	27.3%	100%	0%
Holly Drive Leadership Academy	38	16	10	26.3%	70%	30%
Madison High	68	22	17	25.0%	77%	24%
Marshall Middle	17	8	4	23.5%	50%	50%
Longfellow K-8	39	26	9	23.1%	67%	33%
High Tech Middle Media Arts	13	5	3	23.1%	33%	67%
Wangenheim Middle School	32	12	7	21.9%	71%	29%
De Portola Middle	33	12	7	21.2%	57%	43%
La Jolla High	10	2	2	20.0%	100%	0%
Standley Middle	15	3	3	20.0%	100%	0%
Carson Elementary	10	6	2	20.0%	50%	50%

Note: It should be noted that suspension rates for Fletcher Elementary, Adams Elementary, Memorial Scholars & Athletes, Wegeforth Elementary, School for Entrepreneurship and Technology, High Tech Middle Media Arts, La Jolla High, and Carson Elementary are more volatile to high rates because there are a small number of Black students who attend those schools. That said, Memorial Scholars also had high suspensions for Black girls as well.



“Teacher repeatedly described my 7-year-old child as aggressive, because he put his all into winning at sports and games. I had to interject numerous times reminding the teacher that my child is competitive not aggressive.”

A young boy with a shaved head is sitting on a grassy field, seen from the side. He is holding a red basketball with both hands. The background is a blurred green field with trees under bright sunlight.

“Teacher repeatedly described my 7-year-old child as aggressive, because he put his all into winning at sports and games. I had to interject numerous times reminding the teacher that my child is competitive not aggressive.”

Photo by FranckReporter Stock Photo ID: 865515330

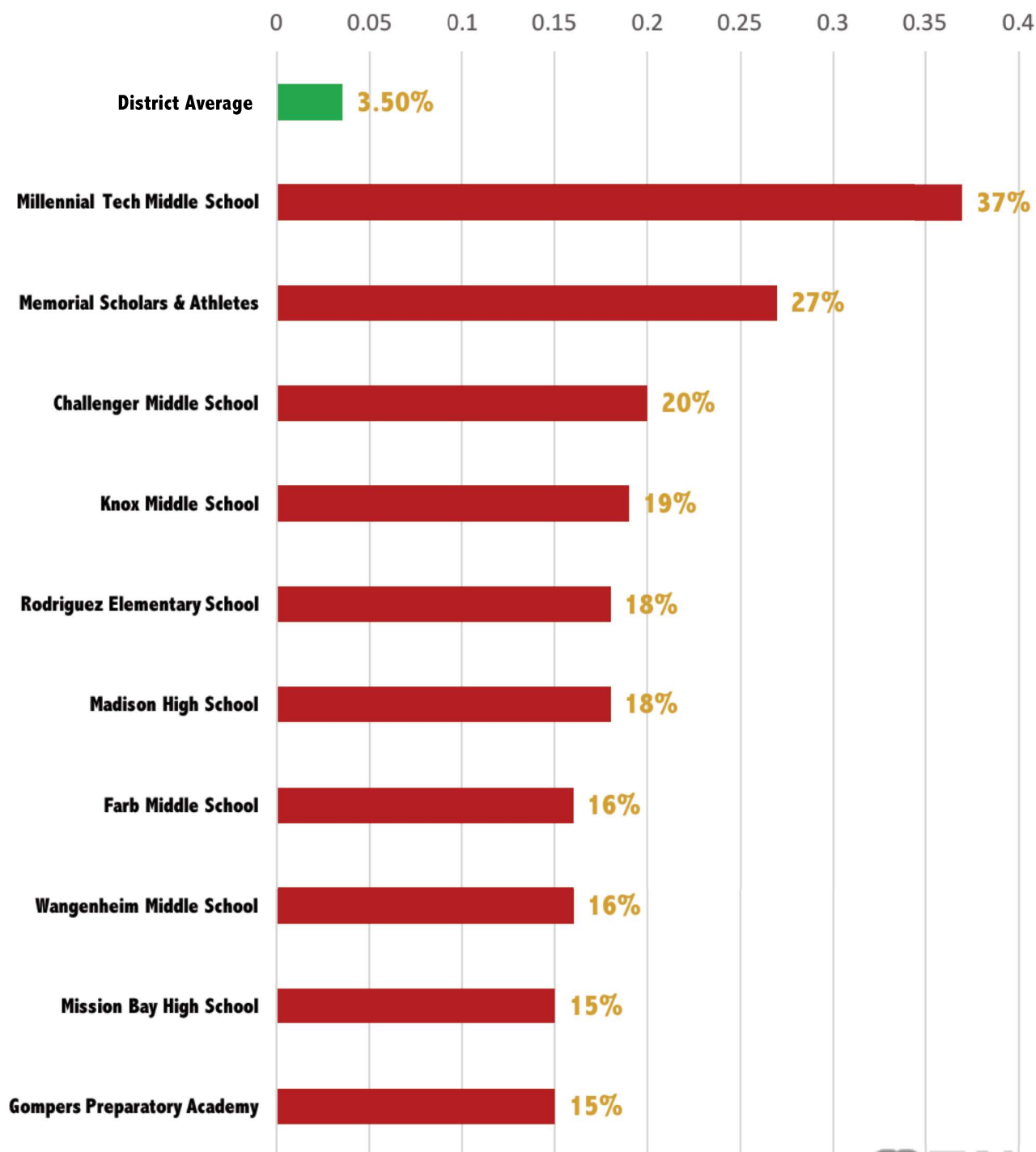


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Black Minds Project

Suspensions

The top 10 schools suspending Black girls are presented in Figure 5. The top school suspending Black girls is Millennial Tech Middle School, at (37%). The rate is 10.6 times higher than the district average. This school is followed by Memorial Scholars and Athletes (at 27%), Challenger Middle School (at 20%), and Knox Middle School (at 20%). All of the schools in the top 10 have suspension rates that far exceed the district average for all students, at (3.5%).

Figure 5. Top Schools Suspending Black Females in SDUSD, 2017/2018



A young girl with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a light blue shirt and denim overalls, is sitting on the floor in a classroom. She has her right hand raised high, looking up with a hopeful expression. Other children and a teacher are partially visible in the background.

“She said that she thought my daughter was going to wind up being a trouble maker for the class”

Photo by SDI Productions– Stock Photo ID: 886934224

“It was another school year where one teacher we talked to during conference night, the teacher was saying how well our child was doing, and was surprised. I asked her why. She said that she thought my daughter was going to wind up being a trouble maker for the class. I asked her why she would think that, and she said that some of the students would misbehave sometimes, mostly from our neighborhood.”



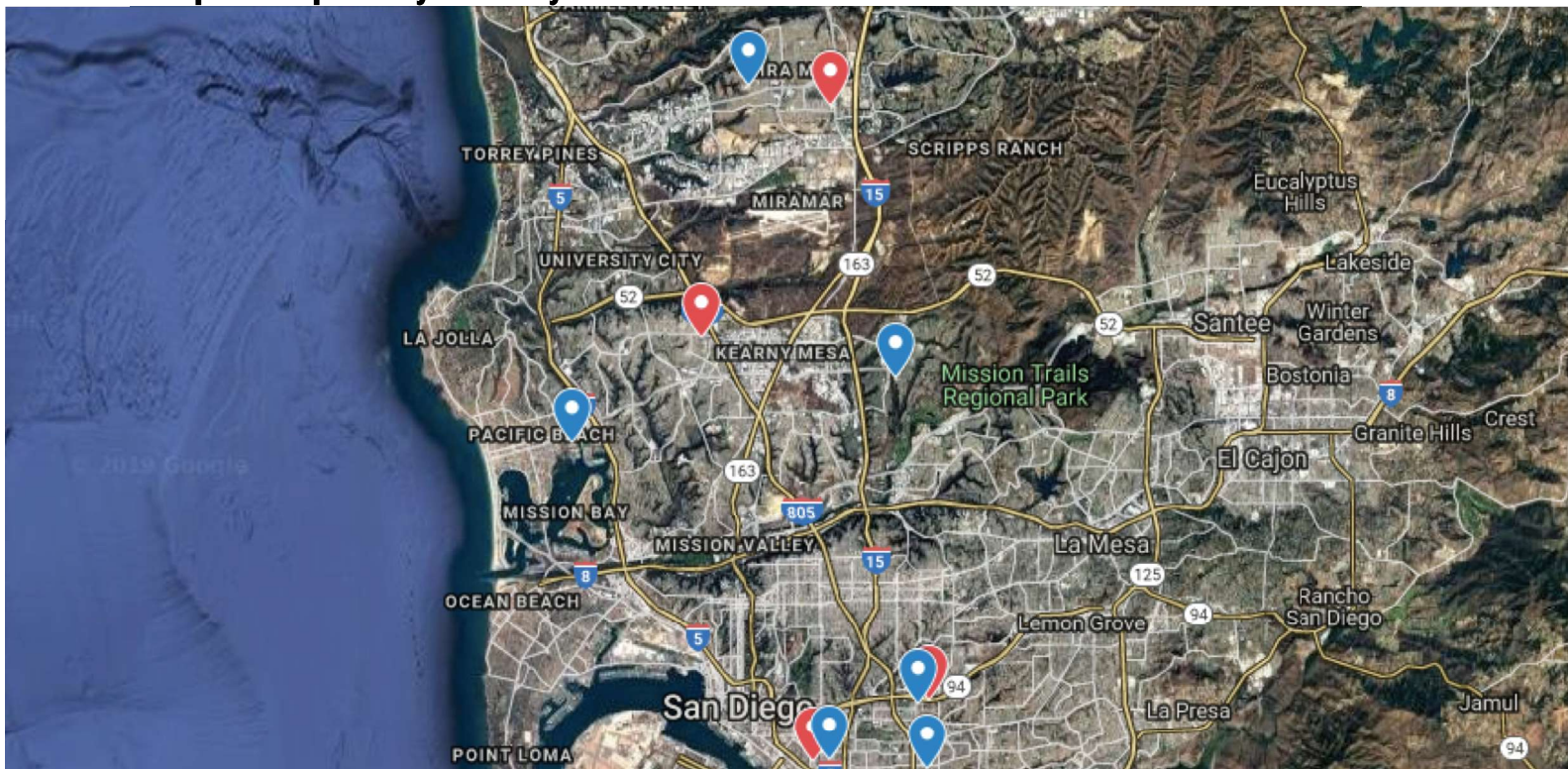
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Suspensions

Schools with high suspension rates of Black girls are spread throughout the district. Half of the schools in the top 10 were located north of the Interstate 8, while the other half were located south of the Interstate 8. Four schools were also on the top suspension list for Black boys. These schools included Millennial Tech Middle School, Madison High School, Memorial Scholars & Athletes, and Wangenheim Middle School. These schools are represented in red on the map in Table 8. Many of these schools had low Black student enrollment, ranging from 2% to a maximum of 25%. Several of the schools on the list may be considered “great” schools due to their Great Schools ratings of 7 or higher. These schools are marked with a red star. Overall, these data demonstrate that there is no single type of school that has high suspensions for Black girls. More often, they are schools with lower Black enrollment, that range in perceived quality. It should be noted that suspension rates for Memorial Scholars and Athletes and Rodriguez Elementary School is more volatile to high rates because there are a small number of Black students who attend those schools. That said, Memorial Scholars also had high suspensions for Black boys.

Table 8. Top Schools Suspending Black Females in SDUSD, 2017/2018

School	Suspension Rate	Black Enrollment	Great Schools Sum Rating
Millennial Tech Middle School	37%	25%	2/10
Memorial Scholars & Athletes	27%	4%	3/10
Challenger Middle School	20%	4%	9/10 ★
Knox Middle School	19%	12%	2/10
Rodriguez Elementary School	18%	2%	3/10
Madison High School	18%	12%	5/10
Farb Middle School	16%	8%	7/10 ★
Wangenheim Middle School	16%	7%	7/10 ★
Mission Bay High School	15%	8%	6/10
Gompers Preparatory Academy	15%	10%	4/10



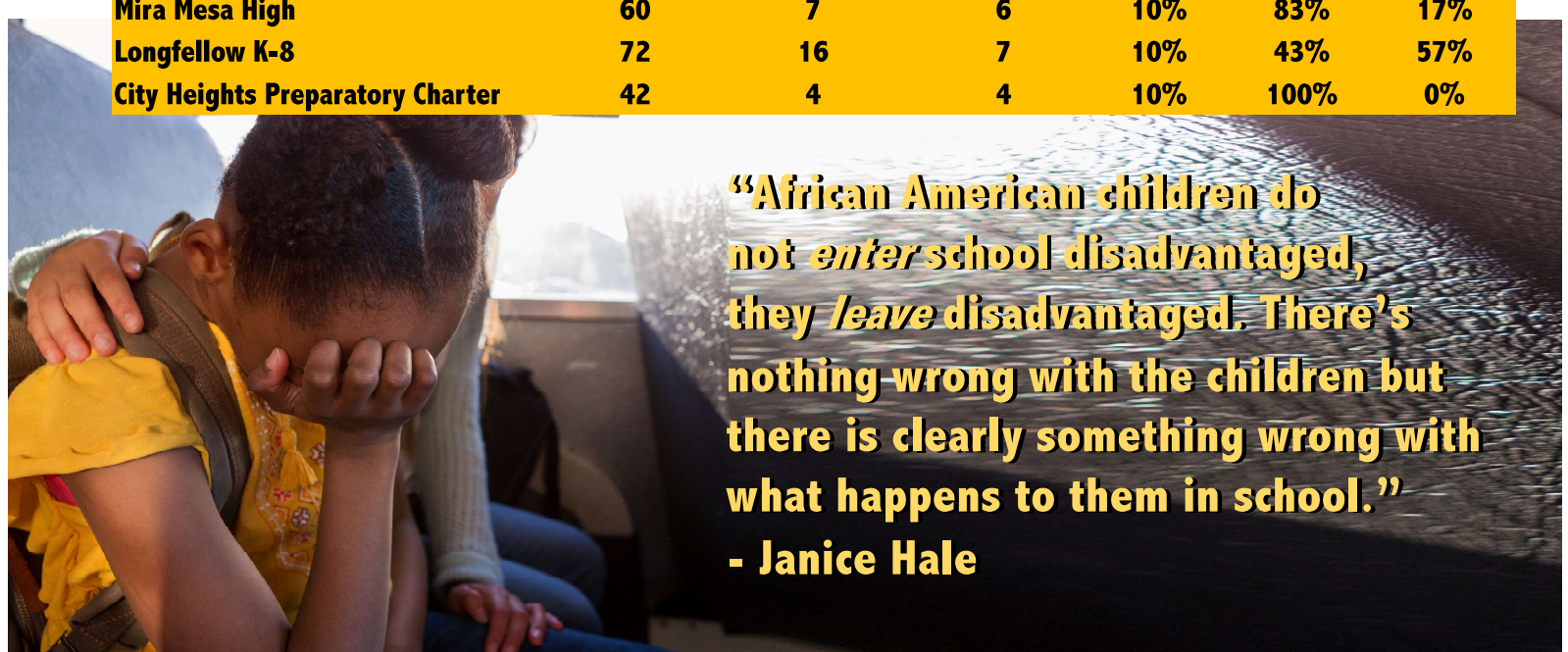
Suspensions

Table 9. Top Schools Suspending Black Females in SDUSD, 2017/2018

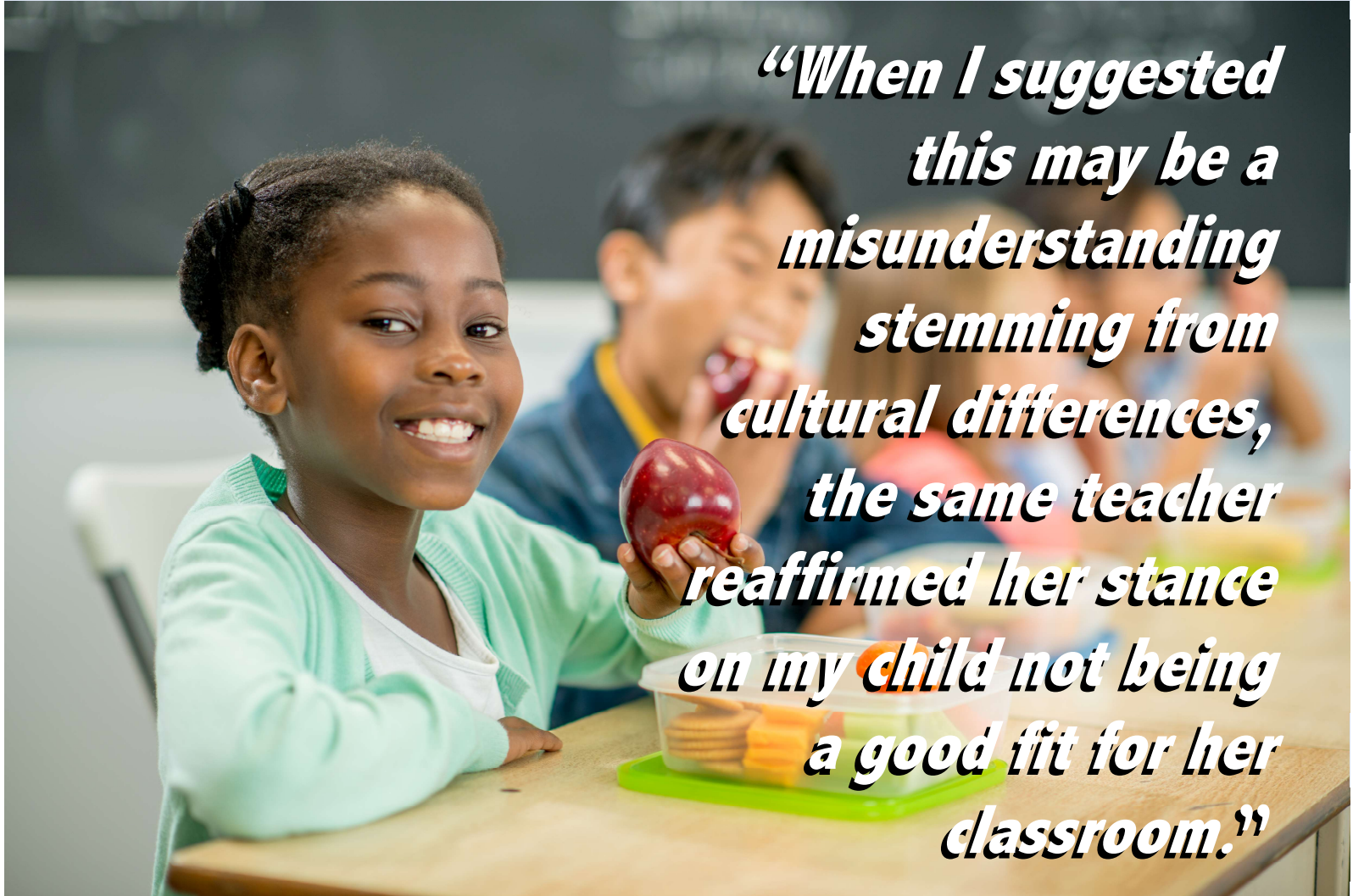
Schools	Black Female Enrollment	Total Black Female Suspension	Unduplicated Suspension Count	Suspension rate	Percent of student suspended with one suspension	Percent Suspended Multiple Times
Millennial Tech Middle	63	36	23	37%	48%	52%
Memorial Scholars & Athletes	11	3	3	27%	100%	0%
Challenger Middle	15	6	3	20%	33%	67%
Knox Middle	36	11	7	19%	71%	29%
Rodriguez Elementary	11	13	2	18%	0%	100%
Madison High	57	14	10	18%	70%	30%
Farb Middle	25	4	4	16%	100%	0%
Wangenheim Middle	32	16	5	16%	0%	100%
Mission Bay High	26	7	4	15%	75%	25%
Gompers Preparatory Academy	62	11	9	15%	78%	22%
e3 Civic High Report	22	3	3	14%	100%	0%
Mann Middle	82	18	11	13%	46%	55%
Lincoln High	143	22	19	13%	84%	16%
Audubon	30	6	4	13%	50%	50%
Washington Elementary	15	4	2	13%	0%	100%
Clark Middle School	68	15	9	13%	56%	44%
Bell Middle	46	16	6	13%	67%	33%
Creative, Performing, and Media Arts	76	40	9	12%	33%	67%
Hoover High	104	13	12	12%	92%	8%
Morse High School	130	33	15	12%	47%	53%
Point Loma High	29	5	3	10%	33%	67%
Mira Mesa High	60	7	6	10%	83%	17%
Longfellow K-8	72	16	7	10%	43%	57%
City Heights Preparatory Charter	42	4	4	10%	100%	0%

“African American children do not *enter* school disadvantaged, they *leave* disadvantaged. There’s nothing wrong with the children but there is clearly something wrong with what happens to them in school.”

- Janice Hale



“A couple of months into her third-grade year, my older daughter was accepted to an elementary school and experienced microaggressions (subtle insults) from her teacher who did not want my child in her class. The teacher called a meeting between myself, the director, and my child to suggest she should have not entered the school in her 3rd grade year because the other students had been together since the previous year and my child didn’t quite fit in with the other (predominately White and Latino) students. During my older daughters third-grade year, her teacher called another meeting between myself, the director, and my child to inform me that my child was having behavioral issues in class because, during a competition, she said another student was “as slow as molasses” and confused the other students with her rhetoric. When I suggested this may be a misunderstanding stemming from cultural differences, the same teacher reaffirmed her stance on my child not being a good fit for her classroom.”



“When I suggested this may be a misunderstanding stemming from cultural differences, the same teacher reaffirmed her stance on my child not being a good fit for her classroom.”

Photo by FatCamera – Stock Photo ID: 487705712



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Recommendations for Parents of Black Children

In addition to recommendations for educators, we would also like to extend recommendations for the parents of Black children.



Never leave your child in an unhealthy environment, even for the sake of a “good” school. – *Andre Branch*

Never assume your child deserves the suspension, especially in early childhood education.

Never assume your school is aware of their success data with Black children – show them*.

Never allow a teacher or principal to refer to your child as a “problem” or “bad”.

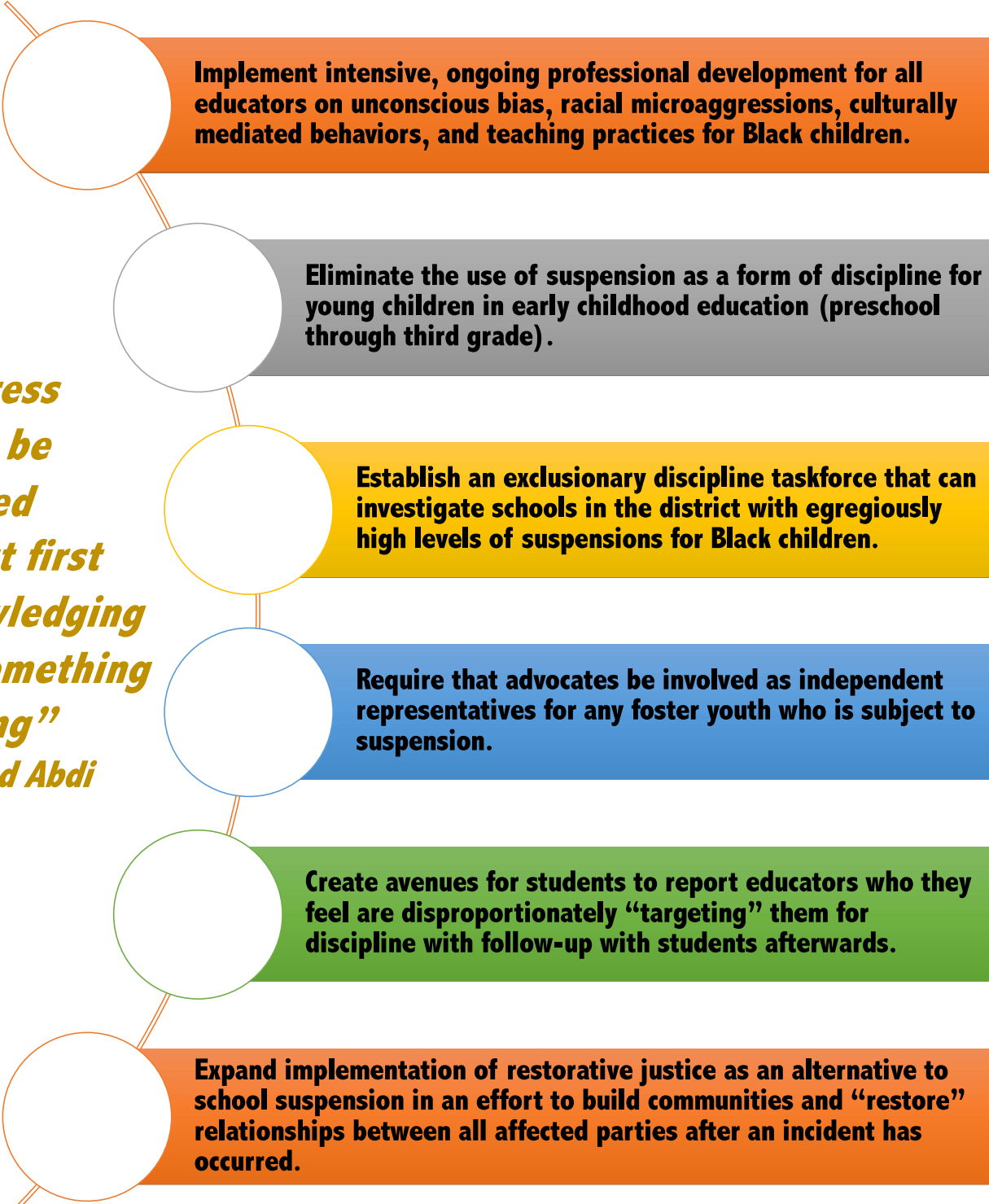
Never allow the school to reprimand your child without questioning what occurred and whether there were other children who did the same thing.

Never assume the challenges your child faces are isolated – most likely, other parents of Black children are experiencing the same thing.

**To find data on your school, go to <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/>*

Recommendations for School Educators and Systems

In accordance with our recommendations from last year's report, we extend six recommendations for SDUSD to consider in order to reduce the overrepresentation of Black children in school suspension data.



Implement intensive, ongoing professional development for all educators on unconscious bias, racial microaggressions, culturally mediated behaviors, and teaching practices for Black children.

Eliminate the use of suspension as a form of discipline for young children in early childhood education (preschool through third grade).

Establish an exclusionary discipline taskforce that can investigate schools in the district with egregiously high levels of suspensions for Black children.

Require that advocates be involved as independent representatives for any foster youth who is subject to suspension.

Create avenues for students to report educators who they feel are disproportionately “targeting” them for discipline with follow-up with students afterwards.

Expand implementation of restorative justice as an alternative to school suspension in an effort to build communities and “restore” relationships between all affected parties after an incident has occurred.

*“Progress cannot be achieved without first acknowledging that something is wrong”
Mohamed Abdi*



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