School Discipline Alternatives

School districts around the country are using proven, developmentally appropriate disciplinary alternatives that are improving school safety, boosting student attendance, raising academic achievement, and saving taxpayer dollars.

Baltimore, MD
- Rewrote its Code of Conduct to limit the use of harsh disciplinary sanctions to when they are educationally appropriate.
- Reduced out-of-school suspensions by 45% in three years.
- Over five years, went from issuing over 26,000 suspensions to under 10,000.
- Achieved a record high graduation rate, including for Black males.
- Juvenile crime dropped across the city.

Denver, CO
- Rewrote its discipline policies with the goal of reducing the use of out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement.
- Revised the intergovernmental agreement between the school district and the police department to clarify that police officers are not to handle school disciplinary matters.
- Out-of-school suspensions have dropped by 60%, expulsions decreased 54%, and referrals to law enforcement are down 57%.
- The Superintendent cites these discipline reforms as primary causes of the district’s significant improvements in attendance and graduation rates in recent years.

Clayton County, GA
- After a dramatic rise in school referrals to juvenile court, created a school offense protocol agreement between the school district, police departments, the juvenile court, and social service agencies that was designed to limit such referrals to when they were developmentally appropriate.
- School referrals to juvenile court dropped by more than 70% between 2003 and 2010.
- Graduation rates increased by more than 20 percentage points.
- Quantitative and qualitative data indicate that schools are far safer than they were previously.

CONTACT: Jose Sanchez, (773) 583-1387 ext. 208