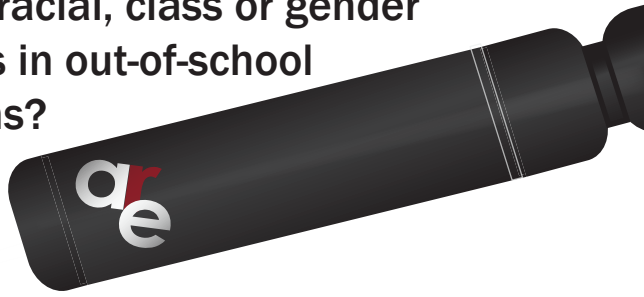




Question:

Are there racial, class or gender disparities in out-of-school suspensions?



Answer:

There are significant racial and gender disparities. However, there were no significant differences between FRL and Non-FRL students after accounting for referral reasons. While DPS out-of-school suspensions have gone down, racial disparities have worsened (Fig.1).

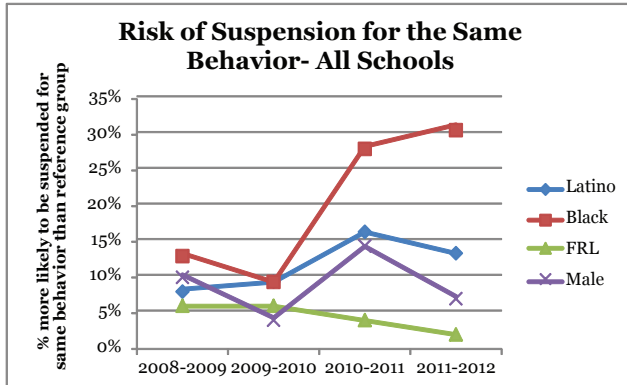


Fig 1. Highlights the disparity between reference groups (white, female, non-FRL) when ruling out factors like demographics, school, reason for referral and special education status which influence out-of-school suspensions.

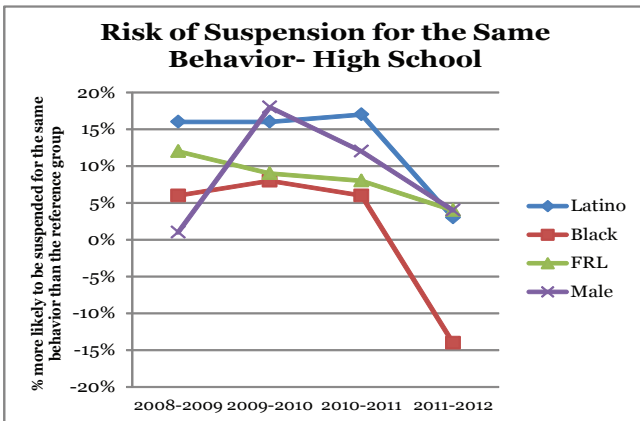


Fig 2. A closer look at the high school level.

- Black and Latino students are more likely than White students to be suspended or referred to law enforcement for the same behavior.
- Male students are significantly more likely than female students to be suspended for the same behavior.
- By the 2011-2012 school year, the effect of Free/Reduced lunch was not significant.
- Similar trends are found across Colorado.

- However, DPS **high schools** have greatly reduced the effect of race, class and gender on discipline consequences.

In 2011-2012:

- Latino, FRL and male students were not more likely to be suspended for the same behavior than White, non-FRL and Female students.
- Black students were less likely to be suspended than White students, mostly because they received in-school suspension or restorative justice approaches. This indicates change is possible and disparities in discipline are not inevitable.

Implications and Recommendations:

1. Prevention efforts in the classroom are necessary to eliminate disparities and reduce suspensions. School staff need to be trained in culturally responsive, classroom-based behavioral interventions that prevent office referrals for Black, Latino and male students in particular.
2. Evidence shows restorative approaches or in-school suspensions are effective alternatives to out-of-school suspension (Gonzalez, 2012). Additional resources (e.g., designated staff) are needed to implement these interventions widely.
3. For PD opportunities go to: <https://sites.google.com/site/dpssspd/coursecatalog/mental-health-and-assessment>. For additional information or support for your schools contact the Departments of Mental Health and Assessment services: <http://denver.co.schoolwebpages.com/education/dept/dept.php?>

*All information from Report For Padres Y Jovenes Accountability Session, Fall 2013, through a partnership between DPS Office of Student Services and University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, Lead Researcher: Dr. Yolanda Anyon.

** González, Thalia (2012). Keeping kids in schools: Restorative justice, punitive discipline, and the school to prison pipeline. *Journal of Law and Education*. 41(2):281-235.