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K-12 Discipline Disparities in the Six Largest U.S. School Districts

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K-12 DISCIPLINE DISPARITIES IN THE SIX LARGEST U.S. SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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PURPOSE:

This fact sheet highlights K-12 school discipline disparities by race in the six largest school districts in the United States. The districts include New York City Public Schools, NY; Los Angeles Unified, CA; Chicago Public Schools, IL; (Miami) Dade County, FL; Clark County School District (CCSD), NV; and Broward County, FL. Data are compiled from the Civil Rights Data Collection¹ for the 2015-2016 academic year. Specifically, we examine the data for the discipline strategies of in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions.

ABOUT THE DATA:

The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)² is a survey required by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights; results are released every other year, with the most recent results available for the 2015-2016 school year. CRDC data represent survey responses from local public education agencies and schools, including juvenile justice facilities, charter schools, and schools serving children with disabilities. The CRDC provides data for in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, and corporal punishment. The five states included in this fact sheet have banned the use of corporal punishment; neither Florida county uses expulsion as a disciplinary strategy.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE STRATEGY DEFINITIONS:

In-School Suspension	An instance where a child is temporarily removed from their regular classroom(s) for at least half a day for disciplinary purposes. The child is placed under the direct supervision of school personnel, meaning school personnel are physically in the same location as the child during supervision.
Out-of-School Suspension	An instance where a child is temporarily removed from their regular school for at least half a day (but less than the remainder of the school year) for disciplinary purposes in another setting (such as home, behavior center, etc.). Children who are subjected to out-of-school suspensions are not provided educational services, unless provided outside of the local educational agency (home instruction, tutoring, etc.).
Expulsion	An action taken by the local educational agency (LEA) of removing a child from their regular school for disciplinary purposes. The child is not provided educational services for the remainder of the school year or longer in accordance with the LEA policy.

*Adapted from the CRDC’s FAQ/User Guide.

KEY FINDINGS:

1. In each of the 6 largest K-12 school districts in the U.S., Black students are overrepresented in school discipline, disproportionate to demographic distribution of the student population.
2. Among the 6 largest K-12 school districts in the U.S., CCSD has the least racially disparate outcomes for in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions. Los Angeles Unified and New York City Public Schools have the most racially disparate outcomes.
3. Among the 6 largest K-12 school districts in the U.S., white and Asian students are underrepresented in in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions.

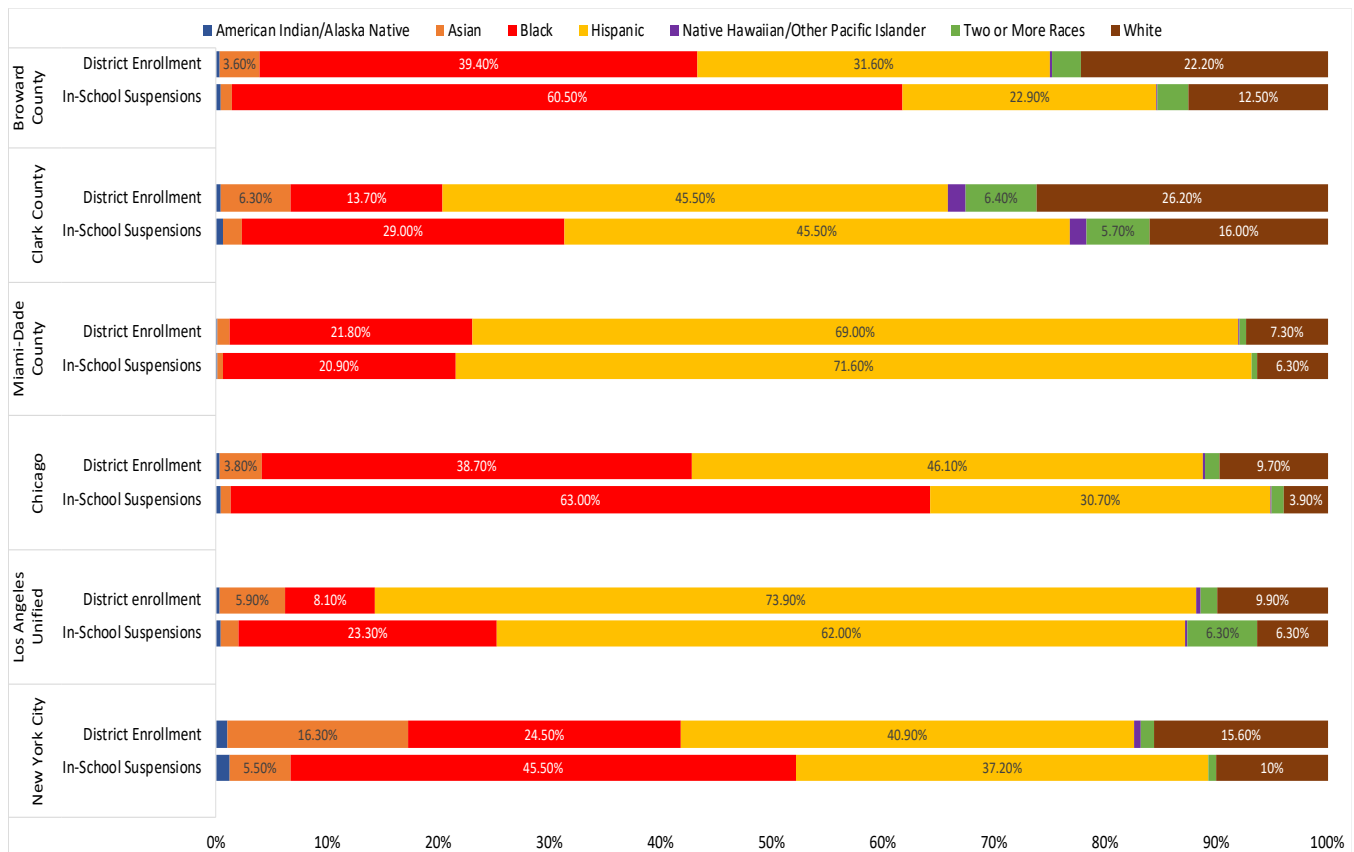
¹ See Department of Education, “Civil Rights Data Collection,” 2020, <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/>

² Ibid

Figure 1 shows student enrollment for the six largest school districts in the nation by student race for the 2015-2016 academic year. Each race is represented by a particular color as shown in the key and remains consistent among all figures. Figure 1 also illustrates the percentage of in-school suspensions for the same academic year by race.

In each of the 6 largest school districts in the U.S., Black students (represented by the red segment of the bar chart) are overrepresented in the number of in-school suspensions, disproportionate to demographic distribution of the student population. For example, in Chicago Public Schools, Black students make up just 38.7% of the student population, but represent 63.0% of all in-school suspensions.

Figure 1: District Comparison of In-School Suspensions by Race, 2015-2016 school year



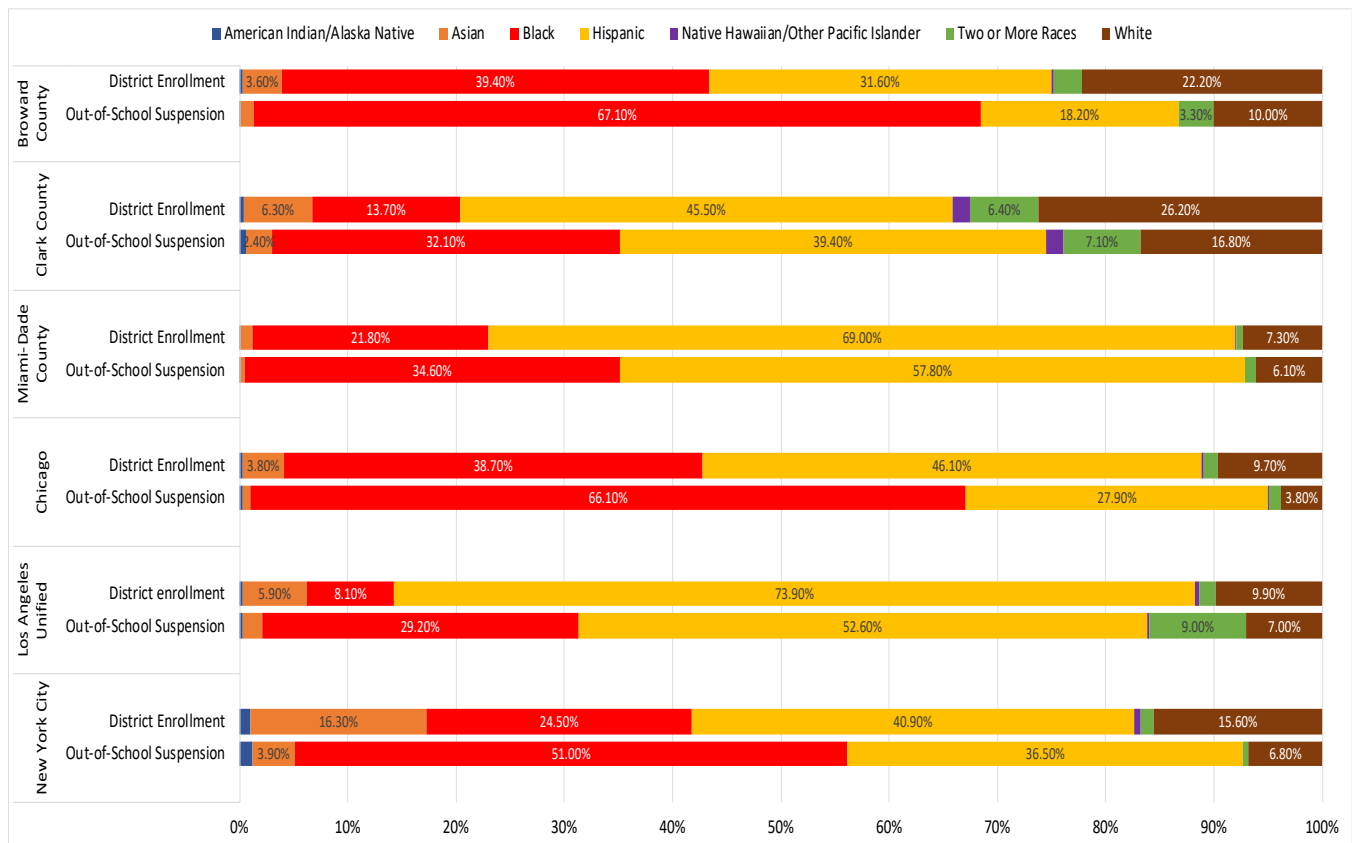
* Adapted from the CRDC's School & District Search for each of the six school districts included.³

³ CRDC School & District Search

Figure 2 includes the enrollment of the six largest school districts in the nation by student race for the 2015-2016 academic year. In addition to the enrollment data of the districts, the percentage of out-of-school suspensions for the same academic year is included for comparison.

In each of the 6 largest school districts in the U.S., Black students (represented by the red segment of the bar chart) are overrepresented in out-of-school suspensions, disproportionate to demographic distribution of the student population. For example, in Broward County, Black students make up just 39.40% of the student population, but represent 67.10% of all out-of-school suspensions.

Figure 2: District Comparison of Out-of-School Suspensions by Race, 2015-2016 School Year



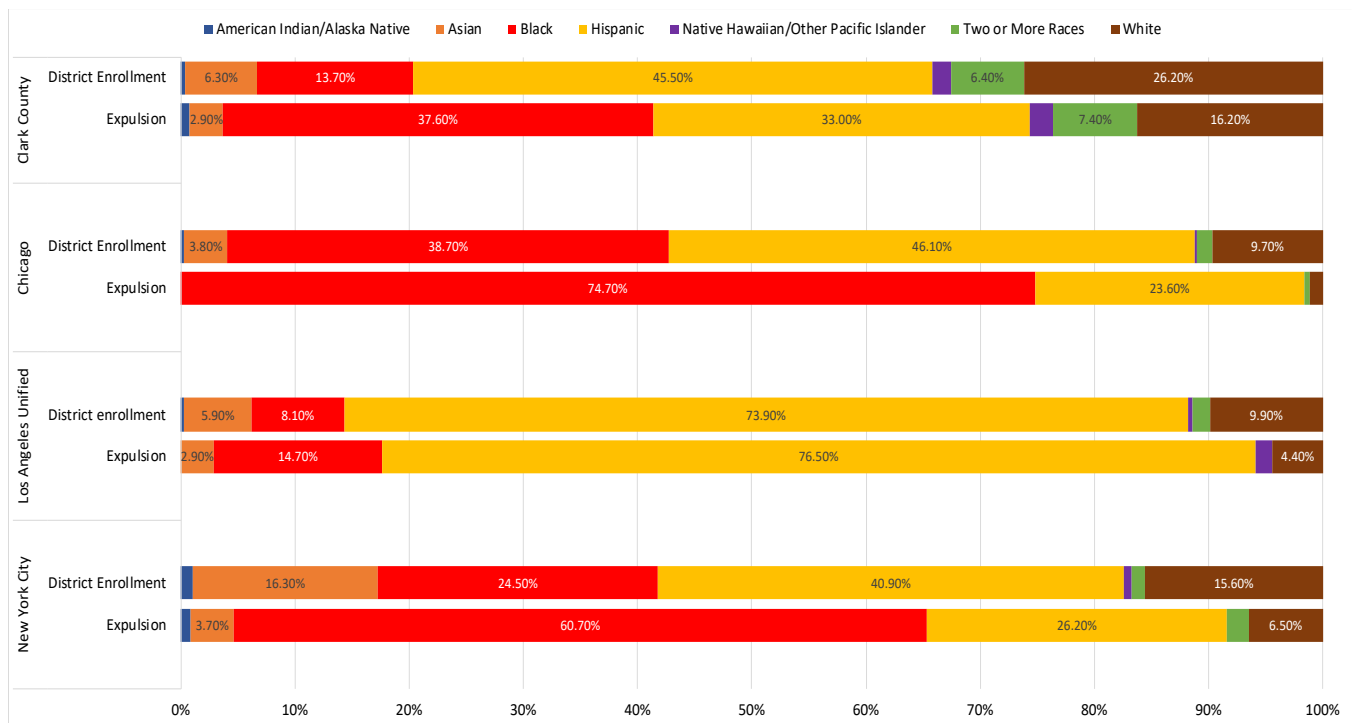
*Adapted from the CRDC's School & District Search for each of the six school districts included.⁴

⁴ Ibid.

Figure 3 includes the enrollment of the six largest school districts in the nation by student race for the 2015-2016 academic year. In addition to the enrollment data of the districts, the percentage of expulsions for the same academic year is included for comparison. It is important to note that Florida does not allow expulsions in their public education institutions, so Miami-Dade and Broward County are not included in this figure.

In each of the 6 largest school districts in the U.S., Black students (represented by the red segment of the bar chart) are overrepresented in expulsions, disproportionate to demographic distribution of the student population. For example, in New York City Public Schools, Black students make up 24.50% of the student population, but represent 60.70% of all expulsions.

Figure 3: District Comparison of Expulsions by Race, 2015-2016 School Year



* Adapted from the CRDC's School & District Search for each of the six school districts included.⁵

⁵ Ibid.