

“THEY’RE LIKE THESE LITTLE BABY PRISONS”: AN EXAMINATION OF
A MEMPHIS-AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

Ryan Rosenkrantz

Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies

July 28, 2017

Advisor: Dr. Natalie Person

Introduction

In Chicago, Illinois, a high school junior who shot a paper clip with a rubber band and hit a cafeteria worker instead of the friend he was aiming at was expelled, taken to jail for seven hours, and encouraged to drop out of school. In Fairborn, Ohio, a fourteen-year-old was threatened with expulsion for sharing over-the-counter pills with a classmate. In Deer Lakes, Pennsylvania, a five-year-old was suspended for wearing a five-inch plastic axe with his firefighter costume to his class's Halloween party. In Glendale, Arizona, a seventh grader was suspended for four months for a violation of weapons policy when, inspired by the movie *October Sky*, he brought a rocket made from a potato chip canister to school. In Fort Myers, Florida, an eighteen-year-old and National Merit Scholar spent a day in jail, was suspended for five days, and missed graduation after a kitchen knife was found in the backseat of her car (Skiba & Knesting, 2001). In Memphis, Tennessee, a thirteen-year-old with special needs was expelled for using a nail file, a violation of her IEP. Why do students experience such harsh punishments for such harmless infractions?

School districts around the country, including in Memphis, continue to prioritize exclusionary discipline practices and zero-tolerance policies over the implementation of a restorative justice framework and wraparound mental health services. This paper will examine disciplinary policy, philosophies, and implementation by administrators at two parochial private, two public, and two charter Memphis-area elementary schools. It uses case study interviews with administrators in schools chosen as representative of Shelby County. The overwhelming majority of students in these schools are African American; almost all are economic disadvantaged and/or qualify for free/reduced lunch. This paper focuses on elementary schools. A student's first

experience with school as an institution is an underexplored facet of the pipeline that deserves examination, especially with high suspension rates in preschool and elementary schools.

The paper traces the origins of the terminology of the school-to-prison pipeline, then discusses the nationwide policies and practices that contribute to it, specifically zero-tolerance policies and the types of discipline that can be utilized when it is implemented. It then begins to hone in on the effects of these policies in respect to African American students. After, it explores high-stakes testing and the way that it perpetuates zero-tolerance policies. It then describes other significant contributors to the school-to-prison pipeline. Next, the paper explores the prison end of the pipeline, and then summarizes the literature for the school-to-prison pipeline in early childhood education. After, the prevalence of the school-to-prison pipeline within Memphis is explained, and then the policies of the six elementary administrators are evaluated in a case study. Using the new themes that emerged from the interviews and current interventions that are being offered in Shelby County, the paper offers suggestions for areas of improvement in both Memphis-area elementary schools and Memphis schools in general. It focuses specifically on a restorative justice framework and utilization of wraparound services. Examples of similar work being done around the country are also discussed.

This work also includes interviews with administrators that implement discipline at their schools. It has become apparent through literary research that the personal philosophy of administrators that implement policies are often overlooked in the conversation surrounding disciplinary practices and the school-to-prison pipeline. When individual disciplinarian discretion is explored, disciplinarians are never explicitly quoted.

Limitations

It is important to note the limitations of this research. To begin with, administrators at only six elementary schools were interviewed. This was due to time constraints, but future studies should devote more time to more disciplinarians. There was also little discussion of each administrator's individual interpretations of discipline and greater emphasis on collective interpretations.

Additionally, almost all the disciplinary action data was reported by Shelby County Schools (SCS). There is very little data on separate in-school and out-of-school suspensions, as well as little data on expulsions that are transferred to alternative schools. Although these data exist, they are not available to the public. Further, data for the private parochial school suspensions and expulsions are not publicly available; thus, all inferences and conclusions are based on the SCS public data on suspension and expulsion rates.

Statistics for SCS elementary schools are presented; however, K-12 schools were not included because it is impossible to determine how many students of an individual grade at a school are expelled. Some schools also had a larger population that combined what most would see as separate "elementary" and "middle" school populations.

Finally, this paper was unable to extensively explore the way that African American teachers and administrators have come to internalize the systemic and institutionalized racism present in schools. This appears to be an area that is not discussed in current literature.

School-to-Prison Pipeline

The school-to-prison pipeline is a relatively new phenomenon in educational research that describes the systematic "pushing out" of minority youth, particularly African American

males, from the school system and, either directly or indirectly, into the juvenile and criminal justice system.

Formation of the Pipeline

The exact origin of the term “school-to-prison pipeline” is not precisely known. McGrew (2016) explains that the phrase “educational pipeline” has existed since at least 1960, but it once described a successful movement of students through educational systems. “Leaky pipeline” was the term used to describe problems with subject mastery and completion rates for students since at least 1986. In 1996, a “pipeline of youth on the brink of becoming serious offenders” was a phrase used in a law journal and the first time the “pipeline” metaphor was used to in the context of the criminal justice system. McGrew (2016) reported that in 1997, Bill Ayers almost made the complete school-to-prison pipeline connection when he described the Chicago Juvenile Court as one stop on a “...straight line between failing schools and burgeoning youth jails.” The pipeline metaphor continued to slowly shift until 2003 when it was the subject of a conference entitled “Reconstructing the School to Prison Pipeline: Charting Intervention Strategies of Prevention and Support for Minority Children,” held at Northeastern University. By 2004, the term “school-to-prison pipeline” was appearing in news reports and being adopted by organizations such as the Children’s Defense Fund and the American Civil Liberties Union (McGrew, 2016).

Zero-tolerance Policies

Skiba and Knesting (2001) traced the roots of the school-to-prison pipeline to zero-tolerance policies. Zero-tolerance policies were created in the late 1980s as a solution to the War on Drugs. By the early 1990s, educators were also looking for ways to combat drugs, gangs, and weapons. California, New York, and Kentucky were the first states to replicate these zero-tolerance policies in schools and mandate expulsions for drugs, fighting, and gang related

activity. By 1993, zero-tolerance policies spread nationwide and included smoking and school disruptions. In 1994, Clinton's "Gun-Free Schools Act" turned local zero-tolerance policies into national policies when it mandated a year-long expulsion for the possession of a firearm at school and included a referral of law-violating students to the criminal or juvenile justice system. Amendments have also allowed the Gun-Free Schools Act to include any item that may be used as a weapon (Skiba & Knesting, 2001).

The application of zero-tolerance policies stems from the belief that minor crime leads to major crime, so minor offense violators should be punished before major crimes occur (Teske & Huff, 2011, p. 15). It subsequently removes any discretion regarding the severity, situation, or mitigating circumstances. Despite the popularity of these policies, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that they improve school safety or student behavior (Skiba & Knesting, 2001, p.35). Ironically, all results from these policies are negative, including increased suspensions and expulsions, elevated dropout rates, and legal issues associated with due process. These negative consequences also disproportionately affect students of color (Heitzeg, 2009, p.1). As these students spend time away from classroom instruction for minor infractions, they fall more and more behind. Eventually, they reach a point where they feel disconnected from the classroom and are essentially disenfranchised from the school system altogether. Schools choose to remove these students by transferring them to an alternative school, expelling them, or forcing them to drop out (Barbarin, 2010, p. 84).

Nationally, zero-tolerance policies have almost doubled the number of students suspended annually from school, increased police presence on school properties, and increased the use of metal detectors and search and seizure procedures. More disturbingly, these policies have set the foundation for new laws mandating the referral of children to law enforcement

agencies for in-school violations (Wald & Losen, 2003). The number of students arrested and referred to juvenile court for infractions has increased dramatically as zero-tolerance policies have criminalized minor infractions of school rules (Teske & Huff, 2011, p. 15).

A disturbing example of many of the implications of zero-tolerance policies are laid out in a detailed study of students in Texas by published by Fabelo et al. (2011) at the Council of State Governments and the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University. This study found that zero-tolerance policies created a culture within Texas that had disciplinarians dealing harsh punishments even when they were not required. Researchers tracked every student entering seventh grade in 2000, 2001, and 2002 for six years. They found that 60% were suspended or expelled at some point in middle or high school, and most these suspensions and expulsions were for offenses that did not fall under the zero-tolerance mandate in Texas. Rather, they violated the school's code of conduct, like using tobacco or being disruptive. This study also found that black youth, who only comprised 14% of the study and also 14% of the Texas public school population, were more likely to be disciplined and more likely to receive exclusionary discipline even when punishments were discretionary than students of other races. Suspensions or expulsions for discretionary offenses that did not include a weapon almost tripled a student's likelihood of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system the next academic year.

Zero-tolerance policies also ignore scientific data regarding an adolescent's developmental capacity to manage conflict. It is a scientific fact that youth are wired to partake in risk-taking behaviors (Teske & Huff, 2011, p. 15). The frontal lobe, which controls emotion, planning, and impulse control, is not completely developed until around age 25 (Sather & Shelat, n.d, para. 2). The lateral prefrontal cortex (PFC), the cover of the front part of the frontal lobe, is

responsible for mature self-regulation and develops gradually over the adolescence period (Magliano, 2015, para. 9).

Ignoring these scientific facts, schools still implement exclusionary discipline policies. Exclusionary discipline leads to feelings of school disengagement and perceptions of school as being unsupportive. As a result, students lose interest in learning. Expulsion and dropping out altogether present opportunities for these students to engage in risky behaviors by taking them out of a regular school day (Barbarin, 2010, p. 84). For African American males, research suggests that those suspended or expelled not only become academically disengaged, but increase association with deviant peers, increase negative feelings toward school personnel, and increase feelings of alienation. These deviant peers may contribute to an increase in criminal activity (Darensbourg, Perez, & Blake, 2010, p. 198). Even if a student chooses not to associate with these deviant peers, their dropout or expulsion serves as a barrier to unemployment. Often, these students turn to crime to survive (Miller & Porter, 2005).

Types of Discipline

Zero-tolerance policies typically result in students receiving one of following sanctions, known as exclusionary discipline: in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or an expulsion that requires attendance at an alternative school. Excluding a student from their traditional school environment is used to both punish the student offender and to deter other students from engaging in the same behavior. School administrators have reported that removing the child from school allows for a cooling-off period for both the student and the school staff. Other administrators admit to using expulsion and suspension to eliminate troublesome students from the educational system (Out-of-School, 2013).

In-school suspension (ISS) typically means that students are placed in a separate classroom away from peers with a separate teacher for a certain period of the school day or for a few consecutive days. In-school suspensions have increased in popularity as administrators received criticism for the out-of-school alternative (Allman & Slate, 2011, p.4). According to Stawhun, Peterson, and Fluke (2015), three models of in-school suspension programs exist: punitive, academic, and therapeutic. The main difference between these programs is the amount of adult interaction time students have while in ISS. The most common form is the punitive model created in the late 1960s. It is viewed as a kind of “jail” within the school, where students put in “time” for misbehavior. Supervision primarily consists of keeping kids quiet. This contrasts with both academic and therapeutic models, where teachers are actively engaging in helping students build new skillsets surrounding schoolwork and problem-solving behaviors.

A major concern with ISS programs is that students miss learning opportunities, class time, and collaborative group work in their isolation. In most ISS classrooms, students work independently on teacher-assigned work and are not allowed to ask questions or receive assistance. Further concerns with ISS programs involve the negative impacts of self-esteem and increased likelihood of students dropping out of school (Allman & Slate, 2011, p.4). Most research conflates the consequences of in-school suspensions with out-of-school, but the assumption is that outcomes of all suspension, regardless of their location, are related (Stawhun et al., 2015). Research conducted by Stawhun et al. (2015) has suggested that at least half (52%) of students receiving ISS have had previous office discipline referral issues, and that about a quarter (27%) have been previously suspended, calling into question the effectiveness of ISS in reducing student behavior problems. These researchers attribute the lack of success to a lack of behavior correction with minimal follow-up, likely a result from the “punitive” nature of ISS.

Local STAR Academy Principal Robert Harvey (a principal that was not used as one of the anonymous case studies but works at a school with the same demographics) has a strong critique of in-school suspensions:

I think Shelby County still sees discipline as a function of like an isolated office where suspensions, if we keep our number of suspensions down, but we do in-school suspensions... So we don't send you home, but we still isolate you in the school day... Look, we're doing a better job, because now at least we're keeping them in the building. Yeah but you've also removed them from their place of comfortability and safety. You've removed them from their social network. They now don't feel like they have the capacity to discover identity. The teacher is not left to learn how to manage multiple types of behavior. Because now what we're saying is our educators are expected to educate, quote unquote, good children, right, and if a child falls outside of the paradigm of what quote unquote good is, we'll just take them away so the educator doesn't have to deal with them. And that's foolishness. And not only is that foolish, it's completely contradistinctive to the role of public education. How do you have a public educational context which is supposed to be built on inclusivity, all participants, yet at any given moment one falls outside of that boundary, then we isolate them. (R. Harvey, personal communication, June 16, 2017)

Out-of-school suspensions (OSS) are frequently used, especially in response to zero-tolerance policies. Allman and Slate (2011) say that OSS is utilized by principals to keep a safe school environment while alerting parents to student misbehavior. They go on to say that students suspended from school are already students with poor academic achievement. These students cannot afford to be absent from school for a designated period, missing more

instruction, class time, and time building interpersonal relationships. Upon return, students often find that they missed so much instructional time that they cannot catch up. Also, suspending students removes them from the educational environment, which may expose them to further suspension-related behaviors (Allman & Slate, 2011, p.4-5) Out-of-school suspension is often viewed by the student as simply a day off from school, which does little to improve a student's problem behaviors (Stawhun, et al., 2015, p.2). Additionally, if a meeting with a parent is required, a parent also must take off work to meet with school personnel and complete paperwork. If a parent cannot take off work, their child can miss more days of school than originally required (Blitzer & Lewis, 2013, p.15-16).

Expulsion is used as a more severe consequence than ISS or OSS, as it removes students from their schools. Morrison et al. (2001) discuss the surprisingly little literature that exists about the implications of expulsion specifically. This may be because ISS and OSS come before expulsion in the discipline sequence, and the same long-term implications, as well as student characteristics, are assumed to be true for the same group of students. However, this does not ring true for students accused of violating zero-tolerance policies and who have no other disciplinary record. Cause for student expulsion can range from attendance problems, school disconnection, drugs, weapons, to chronic emotional trauma. In one study cited by Morrison et al. (2001), the only common red flag of all students expelled, including those affected only by zero-tolerance policies, is poor school performance post-expulsion.

Depending on the school district, expulsion to an alternative school can stem from a wide range of behaviors spanning from alcohol and drug offenses, fighting, to terroristic threats, to weapons possession, to violations of the school's code of conduct. Allman and Slate (2011) explore the various concerns with these schools. One is teacher training, as teachers are certified

in one area and not prepared to teach in an alternative education setting. Another is the challenge of working with these students who attend these programs. These students find themselves at alternative schools usually for chronic disruptive behavior, refusing to comply with other punishments, violence, and other behaviors. Again, teachers are not properly trained to deal with an entire classroom of these students with chronic behavior problems and who feel disenfranchised from school.

African American Youth and Zero-tolerance Policies

African American youth are disproportionately targeted by zero-tolerance policies. Findings from social psychology can also provide further insight into the extreme racial disparities in school discipline. Okonofua, Walton, and Eberhardt (2016) found that negative stereotypes surrounding minorities influence student-teacher relationships. These scholars see it as a cyclical relationship. A teacher sees a student of color and worries if the student will hinder their teaching as a “troublemaker.” To support their claim, Okonofua, Walton, and Eberhardt (2016) cite a study that found that white children were more likely to be disciplined more severely for objective offenses, like smoking or vandalism, and black children were more likely to be disciplined more severely for subjective offenses, like being disrespectful or threatening. Because of continued subjective discipline, the teacher treats students of color more harshly. This harsh treatment causes students to question their self-worth and belonging within the school and the classroom and to question their relationships with their teachers. This causes the student to become distrustful, disengaged, and have negative behaviors toward both peers and their teacher. The teacher is affirmed in their belief that the student is a troublemaker, and the cycle continues and worsens. This cycle causes many African American youth to drop out of school at

an early age. It also may be the reason that black students are almost three times more likely as white students to be suspended or expelled (Wald & Losen, 2003).

Zero-tolerance policies have also resulted in greater police presence at schools, which has contributed significantly to the criminalization of youth. Since we know minorities are disproportionately suspended and referred to court for school-related offenses (Teske and Huff, 2011, p.15), then the criminalization of youth disproportionately affects students of color more than white students. When police were placed at a school district in Georgia in 1994, the number of referrals from the school system increased approximately 1,248%. Around 90% of these referrals were infractions previously addressed by administrators. A county in Alabama experienced a similar increase when the police presence was increased in schools. During this time, school suspensions increased while graduation rates decreased. The data in both jurisdictions supported the research that increased suspensions and arrests led to higher dropout rates (Teske and Huff, 2011, p.15). A student arrested in school is twice as likely not to graduate and four times as likely if he or she appears in court (Tatter, 2016, para. 9).

High-Stakes Testing

Another factor that adds a layer to the school to prison pipeline is high-stakes testing. Bush's *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) Act of 2001 promoted the idea that standards and numbers are the true indication of learning and mastery in the classroom. The goals of this policy, and others like it, is to close the achievement gap, improve instruction, and offer educators quality professional development—all by holding teachers accountable and by subjecting students to frequent standardized tests. Teachers and students alike are evaluated by the results of these texts. The goals may be clear, but test scores show that African American students are still not receiving a quality education. Boys of color are much less likely to

participate in college prep classes, and they are often tracked into less demanding classes. This sets them up for poor scores on high-stakes tests (Barbarin, 2010), which has consequences for post-graduation plans. The National Assessment of Educational Progress scores show that the black-white achievement gap has not changed as a result of NCLB. Teachers have lost much of their autonomy, and as they “teach to the test,” students lose interest in material and become apathetic toward both school and learning (Thompson & Allen, 2012, p.219).

High-stakes testing itself further marginalizes students. Students stuck in low-performing schools are still subjected to take grade-level tests. Not only are these students playing catch-up, but now their teachers are trying to prepare them for the same tests that students at high-performing schools take. When the bar is not met, standards are again changed and become even more difficult to achieve. Students begin to feel shame at the fact that they can never meet standards, are again forced to play catch-up, and yet another vicious cycle ensues (Kearns, 2011).

Zero-tolerance Policies combined with High-Stakes Testing

Perhaps most upsetting is how zero-tolerance policies combine with high-stakes testing to push more students of color into the pipeline. The Advancement Project explores how teachers are no longer incentivized to teach. High-stakes testing forces teachers to have their students reach “proficiency.” Zero-tolerance policies promote the idea that an education is only for students who “deserve” it; everyone else must go. Since there is such a large focus on test scores, it is no longer in a teacher’s interest to help the student. If a student misbehaves or acts out, it is simply easier to remove them from the room (Test, 2010).

While this is a sad reality, it is also a believable one considering that the employment, salaries, and even pensions of these educators could be determined by the results their students (Test, 2010, p.6). Per NCLB, schools with at least 35% of the students from low-income families

are designated Title I schools. Title I schools “in need of improvement,” a title that is created from the test scores of students, receive specific consequences if they do not meet their “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) goals. Each year that AYP goals are not met, consequences for schools become more drastic. After the AYP target is not met for 4 years, the effectiveness of school staff comes into question and the job security of teachers is jeopardized (GreatSchools, n.d.).

Amrein-Beardsley (2009) studies the exclusionary discipline used to prevent students with histories of poor academic performance from taking these high-stakes tests. Not only may these students be encouraged to just stay home, but they also might be suspended or expelled before these tests are given. Low-achieving high school students might be counseled to quit or be suspended from school just before tests so that their scores will not be included in composite test score calculations.

Zero-tolerance policies and high stakes testing are the indirect linkage between school and prison. The results from standardized tests are used to retain students in a grade, but retention is the single largest predictor of student dropout (Test, 2010, p.5). A 2007 longitudinal study of Baltimore Public Schools found that 71% of students who were retained once dropped out, 80% of students who were retained more than once drop out, and 94% of those retained both in elementary and middle school dropped out (Walker, n.d., para. 3). A student who drops out of school is more than eight times as likely to be incarcerated as a high school graduate (Test, 2010, p.29).

NCLB has certainly done more harm than good, as is evident in the drop out and graduation statistics highlighted by The Achievement Project. Before NCLB was passed in 2001, of the 100 largest school districts in the country, together that serve about 40% of the nation's black, Latino, and Native American students, 68 experienced rising graduation rates. Twenty-

four had double-digit increases, while only four had double-digit drops. From 2002-2006, after the passage of NCLB, 73 of those districts experienced at least a double-digit drop in their graduation rates, and only two districts experienced a double-digit increase (Test, 2010, p.6). In 2006, the nation's graduation rate was 69%, the lowest it had been since NCLB. Black students graduated at 51%, a significant drop from 2005. In 2008, the number of people taking the GED was the highest since NCLB. New Jersey is the only state with a significant African American male population and a high school graduation rate greater than 65% (Thompson & Allen, 2012, p.219).

Wald and Losen (2003) researched those 100 largest cities further. They found that 58% or more of ninth grade students did not graduate four years later, with that number rising sharply over the past 20 years. They also reported that being retained in ninth grade increases the chances that the student will both drop out of school and be incarcerated. In one unspecified city, within a year of re-enrolling in high school, nearly two thirds of first-time ninth graders and over three fourths of repeat ninth graders who were incarcerated and returned to school will either withdraw or dropout. In another unspecified major city, most incarcerated students are ninth graders, many of whom are repeating ninth grade for the second or third time.

Space and Place

The space and place of educational buildings also contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline. Space has been proven to shape a learning environment, and what Harris and Hodge (2017) call a “militarized” prison space creates a hostile and contentious place that agitates students. Harris and Hodges argue that schools cannot nurture a comfortable learning environment if the school a student attends—the physical space and place—is built to “resemble a prison with metal detectors, scanners, barbed wire fences, armed guards, police officers,

principals with baseball hats, no natural lighting, cage-like structures that ‘fall proof’ the stairwells, bars on the windows, overcrowding, monitoring systems, and video cameras” (p.17). Schools, created in a period of mass incarceration and black criminality, were built to contribute to a larger system of institutional racism. Students are often blamed for acting out in these environments, and their families are often criticized for bad parenting. No one bothers to see the systemic and institutionalized racism present in these institutions of learning (Harris & Hodge, 2017, p.17-22).

Schools with metal detectors have a literal barrier to students’ education. They stand at the entrance of the school, and remind students of their own marginalized and stigmatized status as they walk in the door. It sometimes takes two hours for students to get through the metal detectors in the Bronx. Ironically, these metal detectors that are supposed to keep students out of trouble end up getting students into trouble when they are late to class (Harris & Hodge, 2017, p.23-25).

The overarching problem with the prison-like space and design of schools is a consistent reminder to poor communities of color of their place in society. Racialized spaces that are marked by poorly maintained government property, poor policing, and liquor stores located closer and more frequently than grocery stores, all create an atmosphere that adds to the oppression of marginalized groups. Add to that, a mother, father, or another family member who is in prison due to mass incarceration. Add to that, a child who must steal food to survive. These out-of-school realities are not accounted for when viewing misbehavior and disciplining youth inside school walls (Harris & Hodge, p.23-24).

Space becomes a problem when too many students are in one classroom. Calling it the “academic Amistad,” STAR Principal Robert Harvey says:

How do you not expect discipline issues to happen when [students] are stuffed like sardines in a room that was built [to hold] 25, and one teacher who is expected, with mentality and with due diligence, to educate all of [them] and keep [them] safe? (R. Harvey, personal communication, June 16, 2017)

Multiple studies have concluded that reductions in class size increase student achievement. A study in Tennessee during the late 1980s found that reducing a class size from 22 students to 15 students increased student learning by about three additional months of schooling when compared to students that were not in reduced classes four years later. Studies of class size in Texas and Israel found similar benefits. However, it only seems that very large class-size reductions, 7-10 fewer students per class, can have long-term improvements to student achievement and other meaningful outcomes. This effect is best when introduced in early grades to students from poor communities (Whitehurst & Chingos, 2017). Additionally, there are several disadvantages to large class sizes: it can reduce the amount of peer interaction, increase disruptive behavior, reduce the amount of time a teacher can spend with individual students, reduce the material a teacher can cover, eliminate methods of assessment, and reduce the learning as a teacher is forced to modify teaching methods to accommodate a large classroom (Ehrenberg et al., 2001).

Special Education, Foster Care, and Poverty

Black students are overrepresented both in special education and the foster care system. In the 1980s, African American youth made up 16% of the school population, but 38% of students classified as intellectually disabled. Almost forty years later, black students make up 17% of school populations and 33% of those deemed intellectually disabled (Togut, 2011, p.180). Boys of color are almost twice as likely to be designated as having an emotional problem

and 1.3 times as likely to have a learning disability compared to other gender and ethnic groups (Barbarin, 2010, p. 81). Youth of color are also more likely than whites to be placed into foster care. 50% of children in the foster care system are black or Latino. Shortly after turning 18 and being released from the foster care system, 25% will be incarcerated 50% will be unemployed (Amurao, 2013). Treating these children as though they are not welcome in public spaces, while ignoring the complexities of their home lives, explains why poor students of color make up most of the private prison population.

Flores (2014) explores the way that poverty is associated with poor educational outcomes. Poor children are at a greater risk for physical and mental problems than their wealthier peers, and minority children comprise the majority of impoverished children. Christle, Jolivette, and Nelson (2005) found that poverty becomes a powerfully negative factor for achievement as children age. However, poverty alone cannot explain these outcomes. Darenbourg, Perez, and Blake (2010) found that even when socio-economic status is controlled, African American males are still disproportionately disciplined. Christle, Jolivette, and Nelson (2005) also found that school-level characteristics, policies, and practices may either exacerbate or mitigate the risks for the jail time among youth.

African Americans in Prison

As African American youth are criminalized within schools by zero-tolerance policies, they are then funneled into the criminal justice system. Nationwide, 68% of prisoners did not graduate from high school (Harlow, 2013, para. 2). Blacks and Latinos make up 61% of the prison population but only 30% of the total population. One out of three African American males will be incarcerated in his lifetime (Amaurao, 2013). The 2010 Bureau of Justice Statistics data indicated that African American men are imprisoned at a rate that is seven times that of white

men, and African American women are imprisoned at three times the rate of white women (Jones, 2014, p. 18).

Alexander (2012) writes extensively about the plight of African Americans in the criminal justice system. She says that there are almost a third more African American men in prison and jail than in universities or colleges. More black men are in jail today than were enslaved in 1850. More African American men were disenfranchised due to felony convictions in 2004 than in 1870, the year the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified to protect the right to vote for all. The United States imprisons more of its black population than South Africa did during apartheid. On December 31, 2013, almost 3% of all black male U.S. residents were imprisoned, compared to 0.5% of all white males (Carson, 2014, p.2).

Statistics are just as poor for African American youth, particularly males. This minority group accounts for 10% of all youth but 60% of incarcerated youth under 18. White male youth are incarcerated at a rate of 8.5 per thousand, while African American male youth are incarcerated at 48.3 per thousand. In 2007, approximately 815,000 20-50-year-old African American males were in U.S. jail cells (Barbarin, 2010, p. 81). One out of every 59 white men between the ages 25 and 29 years are incarcerated (1.7%) compared to 1 out of every 9 African American men (11.1%) (Jones, 2014, p. 18).

Cradle-to-Prison Pipeline

The plight of African Americans in the criminal justice system has resulted in new terminology, the “cradle-to-prison pipeline,” meaning that African American men are destined to be imprisoned from birth (Cradle, n.d., para. 3). As scholars become concerned with young children of color, a truly underexplored facet of the pipeline emerges. There is little data on the

pipeline when children of color are first exposed to school, specifically pre-Kindergarten and early elementary school.

Third grade is rumored to be an age of interest to private prison owners, particularly their literacy scores (Cooter & Cooter, 2004, para. 14). Harris and Hodge (2017) write about a mother, Keisha, listening as her third-grade son recalled test questions about his future goals, socioeconomic status, and geographic location. Eventually, Keisha realized that this “test” was an information-gathering survey on Black and Latino/a youth in her son’s third grade class. As she dug further, she found that it was a test conducted for private prisons to build and design future prisons based on minority responses at her son’s school. She would later find that her son’s white, more affluent peers were not tested (Harris & Hodge, 2017).

While the connection between prison beds and 3rd grade literacy level has never been completely proven, it may as well be true. Sparks (2011) writes that a student who cannot read at grade level proficiency by 3rd grade is four times less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who does read proficiently by that time. If that student is also impoverished, he or she is 13 times less likely to graduate on time than his or her wealthier peer. An analysis of reading scores and graduation rates of almost 4,000 students completed by sociologist Donald Hernandez found that 88% of students who struggled with reading in elementary school did not receive a high school diploma. This makes low reading skills, in this study, an even stronger predictor than spending at least a year in poverty, which affected 70% of students who did not graduate. In fact, 89% of students in poverty who did read on level graduated on time, statistically no different from the students who never experienced poverty but did struggle with reading at an early age (Sparks, 2011).

Private prisons are also believed to have an interest in preschools. Of the 600,000 4-year-old African American males growing up in the U.S. in 2008, prisons are planning to house 28,134 of them by 2029. African American men are so prominent in the correctional system that the number of 4-year old males is being used to estimate the number of people who will be incarcerated 15-20 years in the future (Barbarin, 2010, p. 81) According to the Civil Rights Data Collection on school discipline, black preschool children are 3.6 times as likely to receive a suspension versus their white peers. Black preschool children also represent 19% of preschool enrollment, but 47% of preschool children receiving one or more suspensions. Black males are 19% of preschool enrollment, but 45% of male expulsions. Likewise, black females are 20% of preschool enrollment but 54% of female expulsions (Civil Rights Data, n.d.). Nearly seven of every thousand preschoolers are expelled from state-funded preschool programs--three times the rate of expulsions in grades K-12 (Heitzeg, 2009, p.13). These children are suspended for everything from toileting issues to temper tantrums (Anderson, 2015, para. 2).

The suspension and expulsion of young children, especially preschool-age, has profound consequences on how these students view school as an institution and how they are subsequently treated by teachers and school personnel in later grades. School becomes a threatening, unwelcoming place rather than a place where they form their first positive relationships with those outside of their immediate family. Research has shown that when young students are expelled from school, they are much more likely to experience further discipline in their academic career, fail or drop out of high school, feel disconnected from school, and be incarcerated later in life. Strong early childhood education can improve outcomes for all children, even marginalized, if they can remain in the classroom (Adamu & Hogan, 2015, para. 2).

The seemingly poor performance of African American students in school, particularly males, could be preventable if issues were addressed when the students first enter school. Many African American males are born into a range of individual, family, and community trauma that put them on a path filled with adverse academic and social outcomes. Problems seen in high school begin with inadequate skill sets that were visible in early schooling, specifically literacy and language deficits. Barbarin (2010) extensively explores African American boys and their first contact with public school. African American boys often enter their first school with a completely different set of skills than their white peers. They are typically unable to recognize letters and their respective sounds, less knowledgeable of primary colors, and unable to write their own names. Many students enter kindergarten already reading and writing, and it is not uncommon to see African American boys who have not yet held a pencil. These differentiations in learning levels are not met well by schools, and these students begin to feel overwhelmed by these problems as they continue to grow. As African American boys continue throughout school, these educational disparities only worsen. As a result, African American boys are consistently underrepresented among the highest achievers and overrepresented among the lowest achievers (Barbarin, 2010, p. 82).

Walking in Memphis

Shelby County Schools is one of America's largest school districts. With 207 schools, Shelby County schools serves 111,500 students that are 75.7% African American and 82.4% economically disadvantaged. Shelby County Schools serves 5,100 pre-K students, 93,000 K-12, and 13,400 students at charter schools. Of its employees, 61% are African American (Shelby County Schools by the numbers, 2016). Shelby County Schools serves the second poorest metropolitan area with a population of at least 1 million. Before 2016, Memphis was the poorest.

Now, an estimated 18.4% of the area's 1.3 million residents are living in poverty. Childhood poverty is at 28.8%, the highest of the largest 53 metropolitan areas in the country (Charlier, 2016).

As a school system, more than half of Shelby County Schools students in grades 3-8 did not score "on track/ proficient" for any subject on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) at the completion of the 2014-2015 school year. For high school students at the completion of that same school year, 93.2% were below the proficient status for Algebra I, 89.4% were below for Algebra II, 65.5% for Biology I, 83.6% for English I, 75.3% for English II, 84% for English III, 84.9% for U.S. History, 80.1% for Chemistry, and 91.5% for Geometry (State Report Card, 2017). Students with more discipline infractions scored lower on 2014 End-of-Course test scores (McKinney & Green, 2016, p.21).

Relatedly, 18,100 students had out-of-school suspensions during the 2015-2016 school year. 16,828 of these students were students of color, compared to 434 whites. The number of expulsions reported total 671, with 622 of these being students of color and 21 being white. This means that for every white student suspended or expelled, more than 38 African American students were suspended and 29 African American students were expelled. During the 2014-2015 school year, 19,962 suspensions of students of color added to the 21,481-student total. 837 African American students contributed to the 890-recorded expulsion total. Whites only accounted for 555 suspensions and 30 expulsions. For every white student suspended, almost 36 black students were suspended. For every white student expelled, almost 28 black students were expelled (State Report Card, 2017). It should be noted that Shelby County Schools does not report ISS data by race in the State Report Card (J. Lotz, personal communication, July 7, 2017).

While African American students comprise 75% of total Shelby County School enrollment, they were 85.7% of students with referrals experiencing state-reported consequences. As a reference point, white students are 1.76% of enrollment and 0.2% of students with referrals experiencing state-reported consequences (McKinney & Green, 2017, p. 20). Shelby County Schools leads the state of Tennessee as the district with the highest percentage of black students who are expelled (21.9%) and the highest percentage of students who are expelled overall (0.8%) (Tatter, 2016). More than 40% of all black Memphis middle and high school students were suspended at least once during the 2011-2012 school year. The Center for Civil Rights Remedies calls this an “alarmingly high” rate (Burnette, 2015, para. 1).

For Shelby County, according to 2015-2016 data, disruptive behavior and rules violations lead the list of the top 10 disciplinary offenses by consequence. This would make sense, as these punishments are the “subjective” punishments that disproportionately affect students of color. For disruptive behavior, 4,039 students received ISS, 6,034 students received OSS, 104 were remanded to an alternative school, 46 were expelled, and 6,793 had a progressive, localized punishment. For rules violation, 2,654 students received ISS, 4,258 students received OSS, 62 were remanded to an alternative school, 37 were expelled, and 9,911 received a progressive, localized punishment (McKinney & Green, 2017, p.13).

Expulsions in Shelby County Schools are not reported as such if a student is transferred to an alternative school. Students are offered alternative school placement when they are “long term suspended” (11-365 days). If this offer is accepted, this is called a remand; if students decline, they are out of the school district for the length of their expulsion (N. McKinney, personal communication, July 25, 2017). During the 2016-2017 school year, Shelby County

Schools had eight alternative schools housing 1,511 students, 1,452 of which were African American (see “Appendix C” for alternative school enrollment information).

At these eight alternative schools this past school year, 143 students experienced in-school-suspension, 304 were suspended out-of-school, 48 were expelled, and 74 were remanded. 143 elementary-aged students (K-3) are in alternative schools, with 42 forms of disciplinary sanctions: 12 ISS, 27 OSS, 1 expulsion, and 2 remands (see “Appendix D”). It is unclear how students enrolled at alternative schools can be remanded or expelled, but this is how the data is coded nonetheless. These alternative schools also have a demographic of students that are at least 90.4% of African American, and at least 73.4% economically disadvantaged, with most being above 90%. However, these demographics are not connected to discipline statistics. These data are also charted in “Appendix C.”

Between the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, 115 public elementary schools have operated in Shelby County (note that schools with a K-12 population and alternative school elementary populations were not included in this count). In elementary schools alone, which is the primary focus of this paper, 56,937 students were enrolled in 2015-2016, and 67,035 were enrolled in 2014-2015. The average number of elementary students economically disadvantaged was 68.2% for 2015-2016 and 85.9% for 2014-2015 (note a change in the definition of “economically disadvantaged” between school years). These elementary schools are also predominately 78.5% African American (see “Appendix A” for complete elementary enrollment and discipline information).

According to SCS Student Discipline Taskforce findings from the 2015-2016 school year, 791 elementary-aged students were disciplined with ISS, 3,703 had OSS, 191 were remanded to alternative schools, and 57 were expelled to alternative schools (McKinney &

Green, 2017, p.19). According to the 2015-2016 Shelby County Report Card, OSS was issued 4,597 times to African American elementary students out of 4,879 (included were some middle school students as age is not specified on the report card for schools with a K-8 population, see “Appendix A.”). In the 2014-2015 school year, according to Student Discipline Taskforce, ISS was issued to 1,372 times, OSS (0-10 days) was issued 9,388 times, 93 students were expelled, and 216 were remanded to alternative schools (McKinney & Green, 2016, p.27). According to the 2014-2015 Shelby County Report Card, they were issued 5,318 times to African American elementary students out of 5,681 suspensions (included were some middle school students as age is not specified on the report card for schools with a K-8 population, see “Appendix A.”) For some of these schools, race of students disciplined was not provided and therefore, not included in the count.

For elementary schools in the Achievement School District, a district not directly connected to Shelby County Schools but still serving the same population, 96% of students are African American and 98.3% are economically disadvantaged (according to the 2014-2015 definition). No expulsions were recorded during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. In the 2014-2015 school year, 546 of 553 OSS were for African American students. The following school year, 763 of 783 OSS were for African American students. The increase in suspensions may be due to an increase in elementary students from 3,974 for the 2014-2015 school year to 4,693 the next. These data are also charted in “Appendix B.”

The prison system in Memphis reflects the same racial disparities as the school system. The Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County (JCMSC) releases statistics regarding racial demographics and contact with the juvenile justice system. Of all juveniles taken into custody, 86.234% are African American. (This is almost the exact same percentage as the number of

black students receiving discipline with state-reported consequences: 85.7% (McKinney & Green, 2017)). Similarly, juveniles of color represent 92.256% of juveniles admitted to detention, 91.223% of charges filed, 93.296% of cases resulting in delinquent findings, 94.272% of juveniles on probation, and 93.294% of minors transferred to adult court. African American juveniles are over four times more likely to be referred to Juvenile Court than white juveniles. They are also more than two times more likely to have cases involving “secure detention,” or prison time. Additionally, while the number of cases transferred to adult court has decreased 76% since 2009, 43 African Americans were transferred to adult court in 2015 compared to 4 whites (Dashboard, 2017). Whites who have their cases handled in suburban courts are more likely to see their cases handled with expunged records, dismissed cases, and community service (Commercial, 2011, para. 3). Also in 2015, 11,122 total cases involving children, including delinquency, unruly/runaway, and dependent/neglected, were seen in the courts with 968 children admitted to the Juvenile Court System (Annual Report, 2015, p.6). As of May 2017, 23 minors were being tried as adults at Jail East and over 74 minors were being held in the Shelby County Juvenile Court detention center (Watts, 2017, para. 3).

Fretland (2017) recently wrote an article about the Shelby County Juvenile Court and its controversy since 2012. That year, the Department of Justice released a report that found the court discriminated against African American children, had unsafe confinement conditions, and failed to provide due process. A study just released on July 1, 2017, reports that many of the issues that the DOJ originally found are still present. While this study acknowledges that the court has made progress, black youth are still treated poorly and differently, and minority children are seen at a disproportionate rate. The study says that race still impacts decision-making even after the severity of the crime is considered. While the Juvenile Court has had a

reduction in the number of court referrals, detention, and transfers to adult court, the report reads, “the ownership and efforts of the part of the Juvenile Court have yet to yield significant changes and greater equity in the handling of...black youth” (Fretland, 2017, para. 6). Fewer youth are seen in Juvenile Court, but the racial gap is not closing and has either stayed the same or increased, especially regarding referrals, secure detention and petition, or the non-judicial outcome (Fretland, 2017, para.8).

This July finding comes after Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell, Sheriff Bill Odham, and Juvenile Court Judge Dan Michael sent a letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions asking him to remove the federal judicial oversight of the Shelby County Juvenile Courts. Not only did they propose a press conference to celebrate the success of the courts, but the three wrote that incredible reform was achieved through hours and millions of dollars of work that paved the way for other juvenile courts in the country (Fretland, 2017, para. 10).

Contextualizing the School-to-Prison Pipeline in Memphis

Methods

Administrators at six elementary schools in Shelby County were interviewed: two public, two private parochial, and two charter. These administrators were chosen as a representative sample of the schools in Shelby County: predominately students of color and low SES students (qualified for free/reduced lunch and a large percentage of students economically disadvantaged). Five of the six administrators signed consent forms allowing me to record them with the promise of anonymity, while one did not wish to be recorded. My interviews followed Mariam’s “semi-standardized” approach to interviews. I created specific questions surrounding school and personal disciplinary philosophies, but also left room for the administrator’s own

input and information they wanted to provide for elaboration, stories, and individual school context.

After transcribing the interviews and removing all personalized data, I compared my results using Glaser and Strauss’s constant-comparative method. Through reading the transcripts, I have identified themes to build relationships and present shared ideas from the interviews. My analysis, therefore, revolved around these coded themes and framed my discussion surrounding the elementary pipeline.

Below is a chart that gives some demographics and basic information for each administrator.

“Appendix E” gives each administrator’s answer to questions that specifically pertained to the school-to-prison pipeline.

Administrator 1	Administrator 2	Administrator 3	Administrator 4	Administrator 5	Administrator 6
Private School	Private School	Charter School	Charter School	Public School	Public School
Graduate of a prestigious private liberal arts college where they obtained their teaching certification	BS in education from a Mississippi University, certified to teach gifted	certified in teaching from an Ivy League institution	teaching certification, masters program, and doctoral degree from a Memphis university	engineering major, later went back to school for education at a Memphis university	bachelors/ certification from a Memphis university, one masters from a Mississippi university, another masters from a Memphis university, a doctorate from a Mississippi university

NOTE: Administrator 2’s responses come from handwritten notes, not audio recordings.

Making Connections to Literature

The interviews from the administrators reflect much of the literature cited in this paper. All administrators acknowledged the complexities involved with the community they serve: poor, African American students. Administrators 1 and 6 voiced specific concerns about males of color. Administrator 1 stated that parents of boys often come in to talk about the statistics surrounding exclusionary discipline in an effort to prevent their children from incarceration. Administrator 6 said that they have become “partial” to the males and that males have been handcuffed and arrested at their school. Administrators 1, 3, 4, and 5 discussed a hesitancy to give out-of-school suspensions. While Administrators 1, 3, and 4, said this hesitancy existed because of the literature surrounding suspension and expulsion rates, Administrator 5 said the hesitancy existed because Shelby County Schools monitors them and forces change in schools that have too many. Administrator 4 spoke extensively about poverty and how a lack of literacy results in students falling behind in school and becoming “more attractive to negative influences.” Administrator 1 was the only administrator to acknowledge a contribution to the school-to-prison pipeline by answering “Yes” when asked if they did. Administrators 4, 5, and 6 believed that the school-to-prison pipeline existed and was something to be mindful of, but they did not see themselves or their schools contributing. Administrators 2 and 3 were skeptical of the presence of the pipeline and did not see themselves or their schools contributing.

New Themes

From these conversations, four new themes emerge that warrant discussion in this paper.

Teacher Frustration

Several administrators explained that many disciplinary referrals stemmed from teachers simply getting frustrated with children and wanting them out the classroom. Administrator 1 says

that some teachers, especially newer ones, have trouble “being able to self-regulate [their] own emotions, and that’s really challenging when [they’re] starting out in the craft, and so when they get frustrated, they will send kids out sooner than they probably need to be sent out.”

Administrator 2 says that the reason she sees referrals is due to the “frustration of having to repeatedly correct students. They say, ‘I don’t know what to do.’” Administrator 5 says that although their school has a three-penalty policy before a referral:

Sometimes they do skip the 3, depending on what it is. It’s really minor things, to be honest. It’s just like “I’m tired of dealing with this child... I don’t want to deal with this. He doesn’t have a pencil, he goes to [you].” Why? Give him a pencil... Or send them down because they’re talking. Were they saying cuss words or something? “No, they were just talking.” Oh, ok.

Likewise, Administrator 6 says:

[The teachers] take all of the behaviors personal... so I have steps that the teachers have to go through, or they should go through, before a child even reaches the office. But sometimes, I say 60% of the time, those steps are not taken, and it’s just out of my room and into the office because of the behavior.

Several administrators also discussed the importance of teachers handling the discipline within the classroom, which is difficult with a frustrated teacher. Administrator 1 says:

For my experienced and most talented teachers, very rarely do I have kids that are in my office besides those nonnegotiables because they feel it is important to handle the discipline on their own to create that sense of community and accountability within the classroom. I think most talented teachers would agree that if you send kids out of the classroom too often that it undermines your authority as a teacher.

Administrator 4 says, “If teachers defer everything to leadership, then they lose their power.” Administrator 6 says:

I have one teacher whose classroom culture is wonderful, but she does everything that’s asked of her to minimize the discipline. You know, she has a good relationship with the parents, the students respect her to the upmost, she doesn’t blow up everything... but I have some teachers no matter what you put in front of them in writing, I’m not gonna do this, I want this child out of my class.

Discipline Inconsistency

There is much inconsistency surrounding the implementation discipline, even in schools of the same type that are believed to follow the same discipline policy. In terms of written policy for addressing discipline, Administrators 1 and 2, the parochial private, had “engagement plans” for day-to-day issues, but much of the more severe punishments were only suggestions left “to the principal’s discretion”; Administrators 3 and 4 could create their own discipline policies as charter schools; and Administrators 5 and 6 relied upon the District Code of Conduct Policy located in the Shelby County Schools Handbook as they are public schools. All Administrators, except Administrators 2 and 3, discussed the presence of “non-negotiables” or zero-tolerance policies in their schools. Administrator 3 had a unique approach to discipline at their charter school that did not include out-of-school suspensions or expulsions. Administrator 4 noted the presence of district policies but viewed them as a flexible reference point rather than the end-all-be-all at their charter school. Public school Administrators 5 and 6 explain that they never make exceptions to district policy. Administrators 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 all spoke about having students complete a reflection, in the form of a written activity, a conversation, or both. There is a strong inconsistency in the implementation of discipline across these schools, and oftentimes within schools. All administrators use at least one form of exclusionary discipline, but all at different frequencies.

As a private parochial school administrator, Administrator 1 said they:

very rarely give out-of-school suspensions mostly because... the student is sitting at home watching TV which is kind of nice. So for most of the cases, I will do an in-school suspension. The only case in which I would do an out of school suspension is when I am trying to get some sort of a buy-in from the parent that I haven’t felt yet and try to stress to the parent how serious what [their] child did is. If I have parents that are not appreciating the severity of what the kid did, sometimes an out-of-school suspension can be effective for younger kids because they have to stay home with their kid and that is

punishing the parent, too. If a child has 2 or 3 in school suspensions, I have a behavior plan, I meet with a parent, and we go from there.

Administrator 2, also a private parochial administrator, prefers in-school suspensions, but says that students must be supervised to know they are working. Once the student is back in class, Administrator 2 believes the in-school suspension was successful. Administrator 2 also sees an out-of-school suspension as education for everyone as by shaming the student out of school. Administrator 2 says that an out-of-school suspension is difficult because a good teacher feels a sense of guilt for the suspended student. Administrator 2 has not expelled or suspended in their short stint at their current school, but in the past, Administrator 2 has “asked several students to go home” who never returned. Administrator 2 also requires that, “Students have a book or study sheet in line for the bathroom. No talking; cuts down on discipline problems. We have specific rules for hallway, bathroom, outside, how you walk, red zones where you don’t talk.”

As a charter school administrator, Administrator 3 works with a no suspension or expulsion policy:

That aligns closely to my beliefs that every single kid deserves a really great education. Also with the research that says out of school suspensions aren’t beneficial for both the individual and the classroom as a whole. I think it also aligns back to our belief that good teaching trumps all else. Regardless of the consequences, if we are not really good at teaching nothing else matters.

While having no out-of-school suspensions or expulsions, Administrator 3 has two versions of in-school-suspension at their charter school, the reset room and alternate placement.

Administrator 3 says:

Students will sit in there and do the work for the class or they’ll sit silently or they’ll do a reflection activity or something like that. Our goal is that they’re there for 15/20 minutes and then they go right back in class. Sometimes that doesn’t happen. There are some students that spend the whole day in there. If they’re in there and still struggling in the reset room, then they will sometimes be referred to me. And from there, we’ll do some

alternate placement stuff. So, alternate placement, instead of being in their 3rd grade environment, they'll spend a day in the kindergarten environment with the work from the [3rd] grade. Clearly not good as being in class. It can only be at their independent level.

Administrator 3 is quick to put those students in those alternative environments, saying:

We remove students from rooms quicker. Our bar for staying in a classroom is much higher... [Students] often feel like they get sent out of rooms for what they would consider little stuff. And that's different from other schools that say "Classroom teacher, you deal with everything except violent behavior." And nothing else gets sent out...I would say we are probably definitely at the classroom level closer to a no excuses model. But as far as the keeping our kids with our higher-level punishments we are unique in the sense that we approach this work.

Administrator 3 also believes strongly in exceptions to stated policy, stating that:

Every condition prompts us to deviate from the established. Every single student is unique and requires--just like as every time you're teaching something you have to differentiate to meet the needs of all students, same thing goes for discipline. What works for one doesn't work for another one.

Because of this belief, Administrator 3 not only has variations of ISS but also variations of what happens in the reset room, saying that a student may sit out of class with Administrator 3 on the computer or sit in the reset room with hands folded. Administrator 3 explains, "That's because of the nature of the things we are working on."

Also a charter school administrator, Administrator 4 says that:

Suspension is never our go-to. With that not being our go-to, that [the Shelby County] Code of Conduct cannot assist right there. Cause that's not our go-to. Our go-to is gonna be how to keep you in school. How to keep you, because [suspension] is more work on us. So, I want to keep you here. So, the code of conduct is there if I need it... [There are] some phenomenal schools in the district... But I will tell you this. I'm almost sure that a lot of the phenomenal ones are breaking rules. And that's why they're phenomenal. I know some of them do, and that's why they're phenomenal...So all of this about following the rules why it's so great. No, they're breaking the rules. That's why they're so great.

Administrator 4 discusses their transition to charter school after leaving the public-school system, saying, "If I were to go back now [to public school], as more of a veteran, I would probably break a lot of rules. I know what's best for kids now. I'd probably get in trouble but it'd

be okay.” Administrator 4 also has an extensive reward system in the form of a mini-society. As a part of this society, students may lose all or part of their “paycheck.” This may be in place of or in addition to some form of exclusionary discipline, depending on the student and the severity of the behavior. This misbehavior could mean leaving their workplace unattended, such as a “firefighter leaving the fire station to hang out with his friends.”

As a public-school administrator, Administrator 5 has a system of “write-up” forms, in which three must be completed before a referral. However, as previously stated, teacher frustration may cause only one “write-up” before a referral to administration. Once the student is with Administrator 5:

We contact the parent, then I may send them back to class or I let them sit here and think about it. Sometimes I have them do the discipline essay about why they did what they did. Then we’ll contact the parent and ask the parent to come up to the school. Then after that, if that doesn’t work, [we’ll] sometimes refer them to ISS. It just depends on their infraction, or they’ll go straight to the out-of-school suspension.

Administrator 5 also stated that out-of-school suspensions are not given often “because the district monitors that. If you have too many, the district says you need to do some other progressive discipline things.” Administrator 5 has not experienced any exceptions to stated policy. When asked if this was ever difficult, Administrator 5 remembered:

A little girl [with] an IEP--special needs student--brought a finger nail file. She was just filing her nails, but she can’t have that, because of her IEP and her condition. So, we had to expel her. Cause that’s the policy. Cause it was seen as a weapon. She was 13.

When Administrator 5 was asked if they could deviate from the District Code of Conduct, even if they wanted to, Administrator 5 said, “Not really, no.”

Also a public-school administrator, Administrator 6 also has a set of disciplinary steps:

The first step, when a teacher has a problem with the student, is a verbal warning. And then, if that’s not successful, then they have to reach out to the parents and ask for a parent conference. If that’s not successful, then they’ll do what we call a counselor referral. A counselor referral is a form that they have to fill out that states the infraction,

states what did you do as a result of the infraction, and then it has three questions on the back of it for the teacher saying what were you doing while this was happening. So once they fill out the counselor referral, they have one student, not the student that was causing the infraction, but they'll have a student to take that referral down to the counselor's office. And so the counselor gets the referral, she gets the referral, and then she will go and pull the student out. If it is a zero-tolerance behavior, the counselor then gets on the phone and calls the parent with the child in there and talks to the parent about the behavior. Then we document what the parent said, based on what the behavior was, and we give a copy to the teacher and we keep a copy ourselves. Once a student gets 3 of those counselor referrals, and if it's an in-school infraction, they get an in-school suspension. That's an automatic in school suspension because our goal here is to make sure that the students can stay in school if at all possible for them to stay in school. So, once they get three of those, and then we assign them in school suspension, and that's how that goes.

For zero-tolerance infractions, Administrator 6 refers to the District Code of Conduct:

I automatically pull this book out. Now this is my little Bible, I have several of them here. And I'll sit down, and I'll tell the student—they know about these books—and I say everything in this book tells us what we need to do. And I say based on, and I show this to them, based on what you did, these are my choices. And so, then I go from there. Most of the time I've had to expel, this year, I've expelled three students, and all of them have been upheld. Which is a good thing, that means that we are doing things in the right order. Because documentation is the key. That's how we determine whether it's in-house or out-of-school. Now out-of-school suspensions, of course, are those zero-tolerance that are in here, in this book, that says no ISS you go straight to OSS or it's an expulsion. So, I base all my decisions based off of this book.

Administrator 6 also would make no exceptions to this stated policy. Their only qualm is that some of the policies are not severe enough:

I would say that [the policies are] a little lenient... cause even in this book here, some of the severe behaviors, the first step, well I wouldn't say severe, I would say behaviors I would consider severe, the first step is to have a parent-teacher conference when I think that maybe it should have been just a little more difficult, well not difficult, something else should have been done but it's just a parent-teacher conference. So, the policies in here, some of them you're telling me, the child did this at school, the first thing I have to do is kind of give a warning. For example, threatening body harm to school personnel. The first act is an in-school suspension. But you know, you have a 5th grader telling you he's gonna kill you when you get out of school... to me, that kinda like, let's look at this, let's look at this again.

Administrator 6's example of threatening body harm introduces a larger issue of the mental health of the students they serve. Administrator 6 is not the only person that believes that

Shelby County Schools needs to “look at this again” and dive deeper into the mental and emotional well-being of students.

Mental Health

The Shelby County Schools Mental Health Center (SCSMHC) was founded in 1969 to provide school-based treatment and support to students with behavioral and emotional difficulties. The first of its kind in the nation, SCSMHC employs more than 70 mental health professionals as well as offers school-based services (SCS Mental Health Center, n.d.). Despite the existence of this facility, four of the six administrators expressed the need for better mental health services in Memphis. When acknowledging the fact that their role naturally contributed to the school-to-prison pipeline, Administrator 1 spoke extensively about the lack of mental health resources within Shelby County:

You have children that have exceptional social or emotional needs, sometimes trauma related, and our city does not have the mental health resources to properly serve children, especially children at risk. The cost of getting a child diagnosed with any kind of learning disability is between \$1,000-\$2,000. And if you're thinking of a parent that is single-parent kind of family, that's just completely unreasonable. Especially my English-language learning children, there are not enough mental health professionals who speak Spanish. One time I accompanied a family to a mental health appointment for a young Spanish-speaking girl. I am bilingual, fortunately, so I was able to understand what was going on in the meeting. But it was very clear to me very quickly that this mental health professional was not qualified, talented, wasn't going to be of help to this child. So, I talked to the parents afterward and she said, “Well there are no other options.” So, I sort of looked into it, and she was kinda right. There aren't very many options. So I look at, especially with my older kids, because they're the ones where the problems tend to get bigger and more serious than little kids, and occasionally it gets to a point where they can't be in our school environment anymore because the problems begin to be so large and I think very seriously about where are they going next. What's down the road for them? And the fact that I can't get that child counseling that they so desperately need weighs very heavily on me.

Administrator 3 believes:

It doesn't make sense to suspend or expel elementary aged kids at all. But, to do that effectively, the wraparound services that are needed are a lot. So, that's social workers, counselors, etc. We [believe], the royal we, other people that I associate with and talk

about this stuff, that [if] there were no alternative schools, that [if] the entire budget that was used for alternative schools was then put back in schools in the form of social workers, counselors, etc., that we would be able to have no expulsions and suspensions.

Administrator 4 spoke about the complexities in integrating mental health support when they worked in public school, but how much easier that process was in a private school:

I can go to sleep every night...because now I have access to resources. I have the power to go find them. The power to go get them. The power to leave my building at 2:00 in the afternoon, go drive and go –inaudible—and go bring back. I have more power. Because the red tape is gone. You're able to create partnerships and bring in stakeholders and you're able to hold parents more accountable. Literally, I go get them. Whatever you need. Mental health professionals. For example, I had a child, kindergarten child, whose momma abandoned her. And the child had a lot of issues, and the momma said you'll be fine, you'll be okay. And she was-- your mom was gone. So she had a lot of issues in kindergarten and was crying. You know starting to push kids a little bit. We'd talk to her a little bit her about that and she was like, "Where's my mom? Where's my mom?" I sat down and talked to her about [how] my mom abandoned me for a little bit of time and we were able to work through all that. I was able to call a friend of mine and partner them with an organization that would help them. Sent mom to the organization. They helped her with some sessions outside of her home. In a school, I would have had to call a social worker, call this person, set up a meeting for next week, and what has been ... it's just ugh... I needed it right then that day. So I did go get it right then that day. And by the afternoon, they were getting the help they needed. Just like that. And I'm not faulting the district, you have a big, big district. You got big, big people. In this mom and pop place situation, I can go get it. So that's what I mean by... sometimes... Now, I'm not saying all charters are like that. But at my small mom and pop one, we can do that. You know, all that red tape, this meeting that meeting, we don't have time for all that. This child is crying right now in my office right now. I need you to come right now. So that's what I mean by that so. And I'm saying it could've been around then, but I wasn't exposed to the knowledge of it. Being at a charter makes you go seek the knowledge. Because you're on your own. When those mind gates open, you begin to think of all kinds of solutions.

Administrator 5 talked about how they wanted an interventionist, saying:

I would love for us to be able to have an interventionist to do what I just did. That's wasting my time. And the teacher shouldn't have to pull a student out to have that kind of conversation or something like... so if we have another person, and that's all that you do. You pull them out, and have 4 or 5 boys, and you say, "Ok, if he looked at you? So, what? You be confident." You know, all that kind of stuff. A self-esteem boost.

The lack of attention paid to mental health may stem from the stigma associated with mental health across the nation. STAR Academy principal Robert Harvey adds his insight:

I think that, for example, if a student is violent by mental capacity, and they are igniting fights on a regular basis in a given space, I do think that student needs behavior transformation, but I'm not convinced that's an alternative school as much as it is genuine mental health help. And so I think...there is a silent unspoken in Shelby County and in public school systems across the country around mental health. Nobody wants to touch mental health. So we will go from classroom behavior issues to suspensions, alternative schools, behavior issues, but no one wants to talk about the prevalence of genuine mental health issues, depression or bipolar disorder or diagnosed schizophrenia as early as 3rd and 4th grade. And I think until we have a conversation around mental health, especially mental health in urban communities because I think real issue that goes untouched in large part because of the stigmas that are attached to mental health disorders, particularly among communities of color, but in many ways that is the water under the bridge that nobody is discussing. We have this bridge of child x has a behavior issue, answer y, suspension, alternative school, expulsion. But all the stuff underneath the surface, some real intersectional issues between economic and mental health disparities. (R. Harvey, personal communication, June 16, 2017)

Lack of Awareness

Even though they are situated in a context with a strong school-to-prison pipeline, there is a strong lack of awareness of a building-level contribution to the pipeline. Only one of six administrators, Administrator 1, admitted their contribution to the pipeline:

I think unfortunately, occasionally I do feel myself being a part of that. And I don't mean to be. I don't think anybody means to be. But you have children that have exceptional social or emotional needs, sometimes trauma related, and our city does not have the mental health resources to properly serve children, especially children at risk.

Administrators 2, 3, and 6 did not seem knowledgeable about the pipeline enough to refer to it correctly by name. Administrator 2 asked, "Contributing to the...?" and then proceeded to explain how they were not contributing. Administrator 3 questioned if there was a "direct path that says hey when you graduate here, you'll go right to jail" and thought it was more that, "We are not properly preparing students." Administrator 3 later referred to the pipeline as the "prison-to-school pipeline or whatever." Similarly, Administrator 6 referred to the pipeline as, "prison-to-pipeline."

Resources and Organizations for Youth in Memphis

These aforementioned themes should not promote the idea that work is not being done to combat the school-to-prison pipeline in Memphis.

School House Adjustment Program Enterprise

In July 2007, Memphis City Schools received grand funding to implement the School House Adjustment Program Enterprise (SHAPE), a joint effort between Shelby County Schools and Shelby County Juvenile Court to reduce the number of minors referred to Juvenile Court for minor offenses. The SHAPE curriculum is referred to as an “aggression replacement” training that focuses on social skills, anger-control, and moral reasoning. Students stay in the program for six weeks as an alternative for students that have committed the following minor offenses: assault (non-serious injuries), disorderly conduct, criminal trespassing, gambling, possession of marijuana, vandalism under \$500, theft under \$500, possession of drug paraphernalia, or possession of alcohol (S.H.A.P.E., 2014). If a student has had any felony convictions or pending charges; previous violent misdemeanors; any pending charges of simple assault, criminal trespassing, or disorderly conduct; or any misdemeanors in the year prior to the program, they are ineligible (Memphis, n.d.).

SHAPE is intended to give students quick access to the help they need, while also preventing the students from creating a juvenile record. It is believed that these youths will be deterred from continued negative behavior that would lead them into the juvenile court system (S.H.A.P.E. Program, n.d.). SHAPE site coordinators at each school assign alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as community service, restitution, and/or counseling (S.H.A.P.E. Program, n.d.). Site coordinators also work with the Memphis Police Department to document participation, including attendance, discipline, and academic performance in the afterschool anti-drug and anti-violence classes. If the student completes the program, they avoid charges in the

juvenile justice system. If they fail, they may be summoned to court (Memphis School House Adjustment Program Enterprise, n.d.). Additionally, this program exists only for students who have committed minor offenses at 21 of Shelby County's 207 schools (Annual Report, 2015).

The University of Memphis evaluated the SHAPE Program for the 2008-2009 school year and the 2009-2010 school year. For both years at the participating schools, they found that transports to Shelby County Juvenile Detention dropped by 29.4% and 17.7% respectively. However, there was no evidence of change in school performance, behavior, or attendance for both years (Memphis School House Adjustment Program Enterprise, n.d.).

Hope Academy

The Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County Schools also began a "structured education program" for youth in prisons in 2010. Known as "Hope Academy," the program provides six hours of classroom instruction in English, math, science, social studies, and life skills. It also features an hour of physical education and a computer lab with software able to connect detained youth to their regular classroom curriculum (Annual Report, 2015). Students ages 12-17 spent an average of 21 days at Hope Academy before their case was completed in juvenile court. Hope Academy works with students charged with aggravated assaults, rapes, and homicides, but the most common problem is truancy. The goal is to change both aptitudes and attitudes toward school in less than a month. After Hope Academy, teens either go to a state run permanent detention facility or back home (Scurlock, 2013). In 2012, the Hope Academy Mentor Program (HAMP) was launched with the goal of monitoring youth as they reenter the Shelby County school system (Annual Report, 2015). The Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County Annual Report says that Hope Academy has been successful in greatly reducing recidivism among its students, but does not provide any quantifiable statistics as the program

continues to see students. As matter of fact, the 2015 Annual Report description of Hope Academy is almost identical to the description in the 2012 Annual Report.

Incarcerated Youth Speaking out for Change

Incarcerated Youth Speaking out for Change (IYSOC) is a partnership with BRIDGES USA and the Shelby County Sheriff's Office to empower youth in the juvenile justice system to develop solutions to deter juvenile crime and reduce recidivism. As of May, they have been addressing the suspension problem and racial gap within schools. IYSOC members spoke at Youth Ignite Memphis and made suggestions on how to improve the city, including more one-on-one time with students, elimination of suspensions for minor infractions, making classes more engaging, and increased community involvement with incarcerated youth (Watts, 2017). Since the program was founded in 2015 (What is IYSOC?, n.d.), the participants have spoken to almost 5,000 stakeholders and high school students (Perry, 2016, para. 7). All the participants in IYSOC are being tried as adults (What is IYSOC?, n.d.). As IYSOC was founded only two years ago, it has not been fully examined, but its founders were selected by the National Juvenile Justice Network and Just City to receive the 2016 "Advocate Award" for Leadership in Juvenile Justice Reform (Perry, 2016, para. 6).

Work to Do

The SHAPE, Hope Academy, and IYSOC programs provide glimmers of hope for Shelby County students, but there is still more work to be done. SHAPE only exists for 21 schools in Shelby County, none of which are elementary schools. As the University of Memphis findings explain, SHAPE is reducing referrals but doing nothing to improve students' school performance, behavior, or attendance—factors proven to contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. Likewise, Hope Academy and IYSOC are reminding students of the importance of

school, but it is oftentimes too little too late, as these are students already finding themselves in trouble with the Shelby County courts.

Student Discipline Taskforce

Natalie McKinney and Alisha Green (2016) have presented the findings of the Shelby County Schools Student Discipline Taskforce. The Student Discipline Taskforce was created to identify discipline needs, evaluate current options, and make future recommendations. The Taskforce was comprised of both “internal stakeholders” (students, parents, teachers, administrators, school staff, etc.) and “external stakeholders” from the community (p.2). The group met for 8-9 months during the 2015-2016 school year. Meanwhile, the Shelby County Policy Office researched information and hosted Taskforce meetings and stakeholder group meetings with even more parents, teachers, and students. The Taskforce completed their comprehensive internal evaluations, paying important attention to the national context that they were working in: that research shows stringent disciplinary practices later lead to negative academic and life outcomes and the disproportionate implementation of student discipline toward marginalized groups (p.2). The group came up with four overarching recommendations for policy modifications in Shelby County: “support the tenets of a student discipline philosophy for Shelby County Schools, define the student discipline framework and programs, refine the student discipline implementation process, and revise policies” (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.5).

More specifically, the Taskforce found several improvements that should be made to the current discipline work force of the district including:

greater access to resources; more regular communication on discipline within the district and to parents/the community; holistic, coordinated, and high-level student

discipline/behavior training; intentional and strategic implementation of the discipline process of district; and categorization, monitoring, evaluation, and alignment of discipline programs/strategies. (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.5)

The common themes from stakeholders were:

stakeholder accountability; strong family and school/district relationships that include rich and early parent involvement in the student behavior and discipline process; supports to teachers and schools for academic and discipline services; clearly-defined and consistently-implemented district-wide discipline structure and programs; logical discipline that is age, grade, and developmentally appropriate; systemic discipline decisions to ensure good instruction for ALL students; and revised infractions and consequences. (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.5)

This mirrors many of the themes seen in this paper from the interviews with administrators, including parental/community involvement, access to resources, implementation of discipline dependent on student age and development, and a clearly defined discipline structure. The Taskforce wants to highlight that there is currently no system in place regarding the student discipline process and implementation, and the Taskforce also recommends that more support be given to teachers in the forms of professional development (focusing on sensitivity and conflict management training) and “district-level resources...to ensure that unreasonable disproportionality and/or disparate impact with student discipline is avoided” (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.11). If implemented correctly, the Taskforce recommendations may help to alleviate the major themes of teacher frustration and discipline inconsistency through their dialogue with teachers and restructuring of the framework.

The Taskforce also writes about providing a “strategic and holistic discipline training at all organizational levels” (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.10). To implement this, the Taskforce says that Shelby County Schools must:

determine who gets trained and how; reduce the size of training sessions; ensure on-going training across departments at the school level to ensure policies are enforced consistently; include treatment of student behavior outcomes in principal’s evaluations; identify a dedicated department responsible for training, provide ongoing professional development for teachers and leaders to ensure that disproportionate discipline is avoided; create professional development to promote teacher and leader support and buy-in; and outline available resources. (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.10)

If implemented, these modifications may help to alleviate the major theme of a lack of awareness. School discipline training may be an opportunity to teach educators of their role in the school-to-prison pipeline.

Finally, the Taskforce explores “academic options for students who are excluded from class or school” (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.13). For discipline with minimal exclusion (ISS or lower), the Taskforce recommends structured opportunities and content for ISS that require make-up work that equates to meaningful instruction; in-class instruction from qualified teachers; a behavior management component; access to real-time online instruction; and an ISS syllabus. For OSS, the Taskforce recommends an exploration of the use of “itinerate academic instructors,” like homebound instructors; access to real-time online instruction; and places for instruction outside of school where content is provided in person or online. For remands, the Taskforce recommends a continuation of alternative schools, considering transportation, parent preference, and cost to the district (McKinney and Green, 2016, p.13).

The final suggestion from the Taskforce outlines modifications to current exclusionary discipline rather than addressing meaningful change to disciplinary procedures. It looks as though the Taskforce would rather modify the current discipline structure rather than switch to a disciplinary structure that focuses on mental health and acknowledges the complexities of the communities that Shelby County Schools serves. Additionally, the continuation of alternative schools means that students with severe emotional and behavioral issues will not only have those issues not properly addressed, but also will be sent to a school away from their friends and relocated to an unfamiliar setting.

While some findings from the Student Discipline Taskforce seem promising, and others are gloomier, it is yet to be seen if the recommendations will be implemented. The Taskforce is choosing to attack discipline issues in so many directions that it is possible that it may overwhelm implementers. The Taskforce calls on numerous departments to implement their recommendations, and staff in these departments are likely already busy with their work and may be unable to devote the time required for successful restructuring. As the Student Discipline Taskforce noted, funding is also an issue, specifically to implement a restorative justice strategy (McKinney & Green, 2016, p.9). A concern about funding may be part of the reason that the Taskforce is providing alternative forms of exclusionary discipline. However, nowhere in the report is this alluded to, or is there mention of wraparound services and mental health treatment over exclusionary discipline.

Just Care Family Network: Wraparound Services

Even if the Taskforce can tackle teacher frustration, discipline inconsistency, and the lack of awareness, this still leaves the issue of mental health left unaddressed. While the Taskforce

does mention that restorative justice should be the strategy of a PBIS framework, it does not itself explore the state of mental health services within Shelby County Schools.

Wraparound is a philosophy of care that is used to create constructive relationships and networks of support for children with emotional and behavioral disabilities and their families. It is “community based, culturally relevant, individualized, strength based, and family centered” (Wraparound, n.d.). The point of wraparound services is to be comprehensive and address multiple areas in the home, school, community, and greater environment: basic needs; safety; and social, emotional, educational, spiritual, and cultural needs. All wraparound programs are unconditional, meaning that if students are not seeing results, the wraparound team regroup to find other means of support. Each plan is made for a specific student. Students cannot fail; only plans fail (Wraparound, n.d.).

Just Care Family Network (2014) is a federally funded program utilizing High Fidelity Wraparound for children with mental health needs between the ages of 5 and 19 in Shelby County. Just Care Family Network promotes a coordination of resources including the juvenile justice system, the school system, and the department of child services. Just Care works with families to help students improve school performance, reduce parental stress, and help save money. Just Care also supports IEP and 504 meetings at Shelby County Schools, community mental health center visits, department of child services meetings, and Juvenile Court meetings and hearings.

Aside from support at these IEP and 504 meetings at SCS, it is unclear how integrated these wraparound services are for students. Nowhere does Shelby County Schools or Just Care Family Network express an immediate connection to one another. Not one of the six administrators mentioned utilizing these services when they expressed a need for mental health

services. Additionally, this seems to be the only organization providing support for parents who need access to services. This is problematic considering the extreme trauma present in poor communities of color.

Wraparound Milwaukee provides services for children referred from the juvenile court system. Since it has been around since 1996, the program has had positive outcomes. Over the past 20 years: use of residential treatment decreased 60%; inpatient psychiatric hospitalization dropped 80%; average cost of care per child dropped from \$5,000 per month to \$3,300; average Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) (an emotional functioning assessment) scores decreased from 74 (high) to 56 (moderate) 6 months later and then to 48 one year after enrollment in the program; and 50% or more reduction in recidivism rates (Systems of Care, 2005).

Restorative Justice: Who's Doing It Right

According to restorativejustice.org, restorative justice repairs harm caused by crime by setting meetings with victims, offenders, and community members with an emphasis on accountability and making amends (What is Restorative Justice?, n.d.). The restorative justice method is extremely useful in poor communities of color, where emotional and behavioral issues cannot be simply solved just from school or home interventions. Rather, a variety of resources must be identifiable, accessible, and easily utilized.

Oakland's restorative justice website explains that the modern criminal justice system is intended to "strike back" on a victim's behalf. "Pain, suffering, isolation, deprivation, even death are often viewed as the only way to make right the wrong, the only way to pay back the debt, and the only way to rebalance the scales" (Restorative Justice, n.d.). The website explains that restorative justice is meant to challenge these notions. Instead of asking, "What law was broken?"

Who broke it? What punishment is warranted?” restorative justice asks, “Who was harmed? What are the needs and responsibilities of all affected? How do affected parties together address needs and repair harm?” (Restorative Justice, n.d.).

A product of the Centre for Justice & Reconciliation from Prison Fellowship International, restorative justice practices exist in over 40 countries (What is Restorative Justice?, n.d.). One country, New Zealand, has a juvenile justice system that adopted a nation-wide, family-focused restorative approach. Since its implementation, juvenile incarceration is almost completely obsolete for crimes other than homicides. With 70% of youth participants having no further contacts with the justice system, youth detention facilities are being shut down (Restorative Justice, n.d.).

Like wraparound services, a restorative justice framework can be applied to serve multiple agencies, including the justice system, schools, families, and communities. In the United States, a Sonoma County diversion program implementing restorative justice has a 10% reoffender rate, 90% completion plan rates, and an over 90% victim satisfaction rating. In San Bruno County, an adult restorative justice program showed a decrease in violent re-offense by 82.6%. A 2007 University of Wisconsin study found that Barron County’s restorative justice program, which includes in-school programming, led to significant declines in youth violence, arrests, crime, and recidivism. Five years after the program began, violent juvenile offenses decreased about 49% and overall juvenile arrests decreased about 45% (Restorative Justice, n.d.).

It has even been proven possible for a school to take the initiative to implement successful restorative justice by itself. Recognizing the trauma in poor communities of color post-Hurricane Katrina, Crocker College Prep, an elementary school in New Orleans, went from a “no excuses” discipline model, complete with students sitting up straight to walking halls in

silence, to implementing a form of restorative justice. Instead of ISS, students spend time in a room called the “wellness center” for a meditative time-out that is not punishment. If students fight, they work it out through group discussion. Students who “act up” or “shut down” get extra support instead of detention or suspension. Two full-time social workers hold one-on-one sessions with students as needed (Falk & Troeh, 2017).

Oakland has a very strong restorative justice framework in the school system. Fania Davis (2014), Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth, writes:

Zero-tolerance policies may seem like the answer to bad behavior in the heat of the moment. But they're not. This short-term fix is based on fear. It focuses only on the rule that was broken and the punishment deserved. Instead of trying to make things right, it responds to the original harm with an additional harm. It doesn't get at root causes, doesn't try to repair the damage to relationships, and fails to prevent recurrence. The apparent expediency of a punitive approach is attractive to harried teachers and school administrators. In fact, it makes our schools neither safer nor smarter, and has a disproportionately negative impact on students of color. School-based restorative justice offers a more sustainable, equitable, and respectful alternative to dealing with misbehavior, from minor infractions to violence. It can also be used as a proactive strategy to create a culture of connectivity and care where all members of the school community can thrive. (para. 3-4)

Davis goes on to offer eight steps to implementing a successful restorative justice program: assess need, engage the community and have them understand the need, hire a restorative justice coordinator, begin training school staff, school-wide implementation, institute restorative

discipline involving parents, involve students in peer restorative practices, and evaluate data quarterly. Oakland has a restorative justice program in Cole Middle School that eliminated violence and expulsions and reduced the rate of suspensions by more than 75%. A similar program was implemented in six schools in Pennsylvania—all different socioeconomic statuses and located in different geographical areas. All six schools experienced a reduction in suspensions, expulsions, disruptive behavior, reoffending violence, and discipline referrals (Restorative Justice, n.d.).

It is important to remember not to simply strip the language of “zero-tolerance” in the transition to restorative justice. When Chicago Public Schools simply changed the language to say that it “recognizes and embraces the philosophy of restorative justice,” it did not change the culture of “zero-tolerance” already prevalent. Schools still suspended and expelled students, while restorative justice measures went underutilized (High Hopes, 2012).

Since the Shelby County Schools Discipline Taskforce noted that funding was an issue, and the city of Memphis is an incredibly impoverished city, it should be emphasized that restorative justice has proven to be more cost-efficient in both criminal justice systems and schools. It also yields lower rates of recidivism, making it more cost-effective than traditional criminal justice (Furman, 2012). While this reflects the cost of restorative justice implementation in the criminal justice system, a similar story exists for schools. If schools can reprioritize all the spending on school safety into the implementation of restorative justice, they are likely to save millions of dollars. For instance, in Chicago, it is estimated that a full-scale restorative justice program would cost \$44 million, much less than the \$67 million budget of the Office of School Safety and Security (High Hopes, 2012).

Between its Safe Schools, Safety & Security, Attendance and Discipline, and Student Support (coordinated school health, guidance counselors, and PBIS) divisions, Shelby County Schools allocated more than \$20.5 million toward student safety and behavior this last fiscal year (District Budget, 2016). If funding is still an issue, even when accounting for that \$20.5 million, perhaps Shelby County Schools should look to dismantle the already problematic alternative schools and use those funds to implement a restorative justice framework. To save even more money, Shelby County Schools could search for volunteer mental health professionals. Regardless, keeping a child in school, so that he or she becomes a contributing member of society, saves taxpayer money that would have to be spent supporting a dropout (Furman, 2012). It costs \$23,144.65 to house a Tennessee prison inmate annually (Lakin, 2011). For Shelby County, servicing one of the poorest communities of color, a methodology that accounts for the complexities of the trauma within a community is truly priceless and should be appreciated and utilized.

Changes May Be Coming

With this paper shining a light on the lack of services provided for elementary students in Memphis, it is important to note that the city just opened an extremely progressive new pre-Kindergarten center in South Memphis. Porter-Leath's Early Childhood Academy opened in February 2017 to the city's poorest children. The school is truly designed for children, with rows of textured blue grooves on the walls to represent the Mississippi River and classroom windows at eyelevel for students to utilize. The building is 32,000 square feet and was developed with \$9 million in private funding to serve 220 Head Start kids, a federally funded program for the nation's poorest children (Bauman, 2017). Porter-Leath will also be providing their own wraparound services (Early Childhood Academy Opens!, 2017).

In addition to being a pre-K school, the building is also become a pre-K teacher training location, making it unlike any other preschool in Tennessee. Part of the goal is to see what practices are most effective and share those lessons to other teachers across the city in these teacher trainings. The Academy also plans to bring in speakers and experienced educators to share in these discussions (Bauman, 2017).

Memphis has a shortage of quality pre-K programs, and the Early Childhood Academy already has a waitlist of 144 families. Estimates of how many income-eligible children are in Memphis that are not enrolled in a quality program range from 2,200 to 5,000. But, with a new progressive pre-Kindergarten academy in the poorest community in the city, Memphis may be realizing the importance of those critical early childhood years on children's futures (Bauman, 2017).

Conclusion

Shelby County Schools, as well as other school systems in Memphis and around the country, has a lot of work to do to ensure the well-being of their students. The prioritization of safety through zero-tolerance policies has disproportionately pushed marginalized youth out of schools and into the juvenile and/or criminal justice system. Until major changes to policy are made, specifically the implementation of policies that acknowledge the complexities of poor communities of color (Restorative Justice), removal of exclusionary disciplinary practices, and creation of easy access to wraparound mental health resources for students, Memphis-area schools will continue to fail the children they wish to educate.

Disciplinarians and policymakers alike also need to recognize and appreciate the significance of the early childhood years when evaluating the need for discipline in schools. Young students first being introduced to school as an institution cannot be expected to behave in

ways that they not only are unfamiliar with, but that also go against the formative and free-spirited exploration of what it means to be a child.

References

- 2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection: A First Look. (2016). U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 1-13. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>
- Adamu, M., & Hogan, L. (2015, October 8). Point of Entry: The Preschool-to-Prison Pipeline. Retrieved June 13, 2017, from <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/criminal-justice/reports/2015/10/08/122867/point-of-entry/>
- Alexander, M. (2012). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press.
- Allman, K. L., & Slate, J. R. (2011). *School Discipline in Public Education: A Brief Review of Current Practices*. Manuscript submitted for publication, Connexions Project, Sam Houston University, Huntsville. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ973838.pdf>
- Amrein-Beardsley, A. (2009). The Unintended, Pernicious Consequences of "Staying the Course" on the United States' No Child Left Behind Policy. *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership*, 4(6). Retrieved from <http://journals.sfu.ca/ijepl/index.php/ijepl/article/view/199/69>
- Amurao, C. (2013.). Fact Sheet: How Bad Is the School-to-Prison Pipeline? Retrieved June 20, 2017, from <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavissmiley/tsr/education-under-arrest/school-to-prison-pipeline-fact-sheet/>
- Anderson, M. D. (2015, December 07). Why Are So Many Preschoolers Getting Suspended? Retrieved June 13, 2017, from

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/12/why-are-so-many-preschoolers-getting-suspended/418932/>

Balmert, J., & Sparling, H. (2017, February 19). How young is too young? 36,000 elementary school suspensions. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/local/2017/02/19/young-young-elementary-school-suspensions/98055246/>

Barbarin, O. A. (2010). Halting African American boys progression from pre-K to prison: What families, schools, and communities can do! *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 80(1), 81-88. doi:10.1111/j.1939-0025.2010.01009.x

Bauman, C. (2017, February 09). Memphis is about to open a major pre-K center. Advocates hope it's just the start. Retrieved July 08, 2017, from

<http://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/tn/2017/02/09/memphis-is-about-to-open-a-major-pre-k-center-advocates-hope-its-just-the-start/>

Blitzer, J. E., & Lewis, A. S. (2013). *Policy vs. Reality: Understanding Attendance in Memphis' Urban Schools* [Scholarly project]. In *Rhodes College Digital Archives*. Retrieved July 5, 2017, from <http://hdl.handle.net/10267/24065>

Burnette, D., II. (2015, February 23). Students suspended at an 'alarmingly high' rate in Memphis, report says. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from

<http://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/tn/2015/02/23/black-students-suspended-at-an-alarmingly-high-rate-in-memphis-report-says/>

Carson, E. A. (2014). Prisoners in 2013. *U.S. Department of Justice*, 1-31. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p13.pdf>

- Charlier, T. (2016, September 15). Memphis no longer nation's poorest large metro area as poverty rate falls, census figures show. Retrieved July 08, 2017, from <http://archive.commercialappeal.com/news/memphis-no-longer-nations-poorest-large-metro-area-as-poverty-rate-falls-census-figures-show-3c8fda3-393596031.html>
- Christle, C. A., Jolivette, K., & Nelson, C. M. (2005). Breaking the School to Prison Pipeline: Identifying School Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Delinquency. *Exceptionality, 13*(2), 69-88. doi:10.1207/s15327035ex1302_2
- Closing the School-to-prison Pipeline Has Been on the Memphis-Shelby County Radar for Sev. (2014, January 11). *The Commercial Appeal*. Retrieved December 07, 2016.
- Cooter, K. S., & Cooter, R. B. (2004). One size doesn't fit all: slow learners in the reading classroom. *The Reading Teacher, 57*(7), 680-684. Retrieved June 21, 2017, from http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=AONE&sw=w&issn=00340561&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE|A115407896&sid=googleScholar&linkaccess=fulltext&authCount=1&u=tela_rhodes&selfRedirect=true
- Cradle to Prison Pipeline Campaign. (n.d.). Retrieved June 12, 2017, from <http://www.childrensdefense.org/campaigns/cradle-to-prison-pipeline/>
- Darensbourg, A., Perez, E., & Blake, J. J. (2010). Overrepresentation of African American Males in Exclusionary Discipline: The Role of School-Based Mental Health Professionals in Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline. *Journal of African American Males in Education, 1*(3), 2010th ser., 196-211. Retrieved June 15, 2017, from <http://diversity.utexas.edu/aamri/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Overrepresentation-of-African-American-Males-pdf..pdf>

- Davis, F. E. (2014, September 26). 8 Tips for Schools Interested in Restorative Justice. Retrieved July 08, 2017, from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/restorative-justice-tips-for-schools-fania-davis>
- Early Childhood Academy Opens! (2017, February 10). Retrieved July 19, 2017, from <http://www.porterleath.org/news/posts/early-childhood-academy-opens>
- Ehrenberg, R. G., Brewer, D. J., Gamoran, A., & Willms, J. D. (2001). Class Size and Student Achievement. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 2(1), 1-30. doi:10.1111/1529-1006.003
- Fabelo, T., Thompson, M. D., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks, M. P., III, & Booth, E. A. (2011, July). *Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement* [Scholarly project]. In *CSG Justice Center*. Retrieved July 6, 2017, from https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Breaking_Schools_Rules_Report_Final.pdf
- Falk, M., & Troeh, E. (2017, May 30). When Schools Meet Trauma With Understanding, Not Discipline. Retrieved July 08, 2017, from <http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/05/30/524554109/when-schools-meet-trauma-with-understanding-not-discipline>
- Flores, R. (2014, October 1). Poverty and Inequality - American Psychological Association. Retrieved July 6, 2017, from <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/poverty-and-inequality.pdf>
- Fretland, K. (2017, July 7). Study: Disparate treatment of black youth continues at Shelby County Juvenile Court. Retrieved July 08, 2017, from

<http://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/courts/2017/07/07/newest-report-released-equal-protection-children-juvenile-court/460514001/>

Furman, J. M. (2012, August). *An Economic Analysis of Restorative Justice* [Scholarly project].

In *Antoniocasella.eu*. Retrieved July 8, 2017, from

http://www.antoniocasella.eu/restorative/Furman_2012.pdf

GreatSchools. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Requirements for Schools. (n.d.). Retrieved July

05, 2017, from <https://www.greatschools.org/definitions/nclb/nclb.html>

Harlow, C. (2016, July 7). Education and Correctional Populations. Retrieved June 21, 2017,

from <https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=814>

Harris, Travis T., and Daniel White Hodge. "They Got Me Trapped: Structural Inequality and

Racism in Space and Place Within Urban School System Design." *Addressing*

Environmental and Food Justice Toward Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline.

New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. 15-33. Print.

Heitzeg, N. (2009). Education or Incarceration: Zero-tolerance Policies and the School to Prison

Pipeline. *The Forum on Public Policy*, 1-21. Retrieved June 20, 2017

from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ870076.pdf>

High Hopes Campaign: Restorative Justice in Chicago Public Schools [PDF]. (2012, March).

Retrieved July 8, 2017, from [http://www.suspensionstories.com/wp-](http://www.suspensionstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/FromPolicyToStandardPractice.pdf)

[content/uploads/2012/03/FromPolicyToStandardPractice.pdf](http://www.suspensionstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/FromPolicyToStandardPractice.pdf)

Jones, D. (2014, October 1). How to End The Criminalization of Poverty [PDF]. Retrieved June

20, 2017, from [https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/poverty-and-](https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/poverty-and-inequality.pdf)

[inequality.pdf](https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/poverty-and-inequality.pdf)

Just Care Family Network. (2014, May 20). Retrieved July 8, 2017, from

<https://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/17586>

Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County, Shelby County. (2015). *Annual Report* [Press release]. Retrieved July 5, 2017, from

<https://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/26199>

Kearns, L. (2011). High-stakes Standardized Testing and Marginalized Youth: An Examination of the Impact on Those Who Fail. *Canadian Journal of Education / Revue Canadienne De L'éducation*, 34(2), 112-130. Retrieved from

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/canajeducrevucan.34.2.112>

Lakin, M. (2011, December 16). Room, board and pills: Public pays heavy price to jail addicts.

Retrieved July 09, 2017, from <http://archive.knoxnews.com/news/local/room-board-and-pills-public-pays-heavy-price-to-jail-addicts-ep-402260568-357328221.html/>

McGrew, K. (2016). The Dangers of Pipeline Thinking: How the School-To-Prison Pipeline Metaphor Squeezes Out Complexity. *Educational Theory*, 66(3), 341-367.

doi:10.1111/edth.12173

McKinney, M., & Green, A. (2017, March 18). Shelby County Schools Student Discipline Taskforce [PowerPoint Slides].

McKinney, M., & Green, A. (2016, April 25). Shelby County Schools Student Discipline Taskforce [PowerPoint Slides]. Retrieved July 29, 2017, from

<http://www.scsk12.org/policy/files/2016/Student%20Discipline%20Taskforce%20Report.pdf>

Memphis School House Adjustment Program Enterprise (SHAPE). (n.d.). Retrieved July 06,

2017, from <http://www.iacpyouth.org/ProgramDirectory/ProgramProfile.aspx?c=1799>

Miller, C., & Porter, K. E. (2005, September). Barriers to Employment for Out-of-School Youth.

Retrieved July 6, 2017, from http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_24.pdf

Morrison, G. M., Anthony, S., Storino, M. H., Cheng, J. J., Furlong, M. J., & Morrison, R. L.

(2001). School expulsion as a process and an event: Before and after effects on children at risk for school discipline. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2001(92), 45-71.

doi:10.1002/yd.23320019205

Okonofua, J. A., Walton, G. M., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2016). A Vicious Cycle. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 11(3), 381-398. doi:10.1177/1745691616635592

Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion. (2013). *Pediatrics*, 131(3). doi:10.1542/peds.2012-3932

Perry, E. (2016, July 22). In Memphis, Youth Who Have Moved Through the School-to-Prison Pipeline Are Helping to Change It. Retrieved July 10, 2017, from

<https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/bridge-builders-memphis-just-city-juvenile-justice-network-award>

Restorative Justice. (n.d.). Retrieved July 08, 2017, from <http://rjoyoakland.org/restorative-justice/>

Sather, R., RN, & Shelat, A. (n.d.). Understanding the Teen Brain. Retrieved July 05, 2017, from

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/content.aspx?ContentTypeID=1&ContentID=3051>

SCS Mental Health Center. (n.d.). Retrieved July 19, 2017, from

<http://www.scsk12.org/exceptional/mental.php?PID=1027>

Scurlock, S. (2013, April 04). Juvenile Court School Offers “HOPE”. Retrieved July 06, 2017,

from <http://wreg.com/2013/04/04/juvenile-court-school-offers-hope/>

- S.H.A.P.E. Program. (n.d.). Retrieved June 27, 2017, from <http://www.scsk12.org/shape/>
- S.H.A.P.E. School House Adjustment Program Enterprise. (2014). Retrieved July 6, 2017, from http://www.scsk12.org/shape/files/2014/SCS_Shape_Brochure_2014.pdf?PID=685
- Shelby County Board of Education, Shelby County Finance Office. (2016, August 1). *District Budget: Fiscal Year 2016-2017* [Press release]. Retrieved July 8, 2017, from http://www.scsk12.org/finance/files/2016/FY17_DISTRICT_BUDGET_FINAL_101416.pdf
- Shelby County's Juvenile Court Dashboard. (2017). Retrieved June 19, 2017, from <https://dashboard.shelbycountyttn.gov/relative-rate-index>
- Shelby County Schools by the Numbers 2016-2017. (2016). Retrieved June 28, 2017, from <http://www.scsk12.org/about/>
- Skiba, R. J., & Knesting, K. (2001). Zero-tolerance, zero evidence: An analysis of school disciplinary practice. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2001(92), 17-43.
doi:10.1002/yd.23320019204
- Sparks, S. D. (2011, April 08). Study: Third Grade Reading Predicts Later High School Graduation. Retrieved July 06, 2017, from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2011/04/the_disquieting_side_effect_of.html
- Spinks, S. (2002, January 31). One Reason Teens Respond Differently to the World: Immature Brain Circuitry. Retrieved July 05, 2017, from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/work/onereason.html>
- State Report Card. (n.d.). Retrieved June 28, 2017, from <https://www.tn.gov/education/topic/report-card>

- Stawhun, J., Peterson, R. L., Fluke, S., & Cathcart, A. (2015, March). *In-School Suspension* [PDF]. Lincoln: University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Retrieved June 15, 2017, from <http://k12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/In-School%20Suspension%2011-10-15%20.pdf>
- Systems of Care Place Children & Families First. (2005). *The Advocate: Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth*, 15(1), 1-8. Retrieved July 8, 2017, from <https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/tccy/attachments/adv0501.pdf>
- Tatter, G. (2016, October 25). More Black Students, and Memphis Students, Suspended in Tennessee Schools. Retrieved June 13, 2017, from <https://www.memphisdailynews.com/news/2016/oct/31/tennessee-students-more-likely-to-be-suspended-if-theyre-black-boys-or-live-in-memphis//print>
- Teske, S. C., & Huff, J. B. (2011). The Court's Role in Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline. *Juvenile and Family Justice Today*, (Winter), 14-17. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from [http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/Today Winter 2011Feature \(2\).pdf](http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/Today%20Winter%202011%20Feature%20(2).pdf)
- Test, Punish and Push Out: How Zero-tolerance and High-Stakes Testing Funnel Youth Into The School. (2010, March). Retrieved June 15, 2017, from <http://www.advancementproject.org/resources/entry/test-punish-and-push-out-how-zero-tolerance-and-high-stakes-testing-funnel>
- Thompson, G. L., & Allen, T. G. (2012). Four Effects of the High-Stakes Testing Movement on African American K-12 Students. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 81(3), 218-227. doi:10.7709/jnegroeducation.81.3.0218
- Togut, T. D. (2011). The Gestalt of the School-to-Prison Pipeline: The Duality of Overrepresentation of Minorities in Special Education and Racial Disparity in School

Discipline on Minorities. *Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law*, 20(1), 163-181.

Retrieved June 15, 2017, from

<http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1553&context=jgsp>
[1](#)

Quinlan, C. (2016, June 07). New Data Shows The School-To-Prison Pipeline Starts As Early As Preschool. Retrieved June 20, 2017, from <https://thinkprogress.org/new-data-shows-the-school-to-prison-pipeline-starts-as-early-as-preschool-80fc1c3e85be>

Wald, J., & Losen, D. J. (2003). Defining and redirecting a school-to-prison pipeline. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2003(99), 9-15. doi:10.1002/yd.51

Watts, M. (2017, May 19). Burr is Building a Prison-to-Opportunity Pipeline. Retrieved July 10, 2017, from <https://www.memphisdailynews.com/news/2017/may/19/burr-is-building-a-prison-to-opportunity-pipeline/>

What is IYSOC? (n.d.). Retrieved July 10, 2017, from

<http://incarceratedyouth.weebly.com/what-is-iysoc.html>

What is Restorative Justice? (n.d.). Retrieved July 10, 2017, from <http://restorativejustice.org/-sthash.GQKDyrEX.dpbs>

Wraparound. (n.d.). Retrieved July 20, 2017, from <https://www.pbis.org/school/tertiary-level/wraparound>

Whitehurst, G. J., & Chingos, M. M. (2017, May 10). Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy | Brookings Institution. Retrieved July 09, 2017, from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/class-size-what-research-says-and-what-it-means-for-state-policy/>

School	% African American (2015-2016)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2014-2015)	African American Suspensions	Total Suspensions (2014-2015)	Total # of students (2014-2015)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2015-2016)	African American Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total # of students (2015-2016)
A.B. Hill Elementary (PreK-5)	99.7%	96.8%	0	78	78	285	90.9%	0	121	121	370
Alcy Elementary (K-5)	98.8%	98.4%	0	72	72	304	88.1%	0	17	17	247
Alton Elementary (PreK-5)	96.9%	98.5%	0	14	14	339	86.9%	0	13	13	323
Arrow Academy of Excellence (K-3)	88.9%	98.3%	0	0	0	58	56.8%	0	0	0	81
Aurora Collegiate Academy (K only)	43.5%	93.7%	0	0	0	175	61.5%	0	0	0	200
Balmoral Ridgeway Elementary (K-5)	88.3%	75.5%	0	12	13	330	43.2%	0	race not specified	11	317
Barret's Chapel School (K-8)	49.6%	58.1%	0	71	85	659	38.4%	0	81	95	653
Belle Forest Community School (PreK-5)	84.9%	76.7%	0	48	50	1,153	70.0%	0	13	42	1,192
Berclair Elementary (PreK-5)	19.4%	96.3%	0	race not specified	21	616	66.4%	0	24	14	593
Bethel Grove Elementary (PreK-5)	97.9%	95.8%	0	29	29	308	83.4%	0	24	24	291
Brewster Elementary (PreK-5)	75.7%	95.9%	0	87	92	484	75.0%	0	36	39	428
Brookmeade Elementary	96.2% (2014-2015)	98.7%	0	48	48	316	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Brownsville Elementary (K-5)	83.7%	94.7%	0	57	60	588	62.4%	0	52	52	545
Bruce Elementary (PreK-5)	76.4%	94.7%	0	32	34	339	69.5%	0	30	32	348
Caldwell-Guthrie Elementary (PreK-5)	100.0%	99.8%	0	73	73	531	86.2%	0	60	60	516
Campus School (1-6)	22.0%	17.0%	0	0	0	329	8.2%	0	0	0	328
Carnes Elementary (PreK-5)	94.9%	98.8%	0	31	32	262	79.6%	0	38	38	273
Charjean Elementary (K-5)	61.6%	99.3%	0	34	35	407	88.6%	0	0	0	362
Cherokee Elementary (PreK4-5)	95.4%	88.6%	0	48	48	517	85.8%	0	38	40	548
Chimneyrock Elementary School (PreK-5)	67.2%	70.3%	0	43	51	836	35.6%	0	44	50	790
Circles of Success Learning Academy (K-5)	98.3%	82.5%	0	0	0	245	74.2%	0	0	0	233
Cordova Elementary (PreK-5)	62.9%	63.1%	0	24	39	678	30.5%	0	13	16	665
Cromwell Elementary (K-5)	82.7%	90.2%	0	69	71	511	77.7%	0	70	70	573

School	% African American (2015-2016)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2014-2015)	African American Suspensions	Total Suspensions (2014-2015)	Total # of students (2014-2015)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2015-2016)	African American Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total # of students (2015-2016)
Crump Elementary (PreK-5)	74.6%	99.7%	0	119	127	775	70.4%	0	77	80	701
Cummings School (PreK-8)	99.4%	99.1%	0	50	51	577	83.9%	0	76	76	528
Delano Elementary (K-5)	97.3%	92.1%	0	18	19	242	70.1%	0	14	14	221
Denver Elementary (PreK-5)	94.5% (2014-2015)	98.8%	0	97	100	596	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dexter Elementary School (PreK-4)	60.9%	65.1%	0	0	0	764	44.1%	0	0	0	808
Double Tree Elementary (PreK-5)	98.8%	88.2%	0	29	29	364	57.6%	0	0	0	324
Douglass Elementary/Middle (PreK-8)	96.6%	97.3%	0	120	121	486	84.5%	0	86	87	412
Downtown Elementary (PreK-5)	94.2%	78.4%	0	95	98	590	56.0%	0	66	69	567
DuBois Elementary School of Arts and Technology (K-5)	98.2%	79.8%	0	48	48	322	79.9%	0	29	29	279
DuBois Elementary School of Entrepreneurship (K-5)	92.5%	58.5%	0	0	0	240	49.2%	0	29	29	266
Dunbar Elementary (PreK-5)	98.5%	98.7%	0	39	39	310	85.1%	0	28	28	330
E. E. Jeter Elementary (K-8)	28.5%	55.9%	0	0	0	333	34.5%	0	0	0	351
Egypt Elementary (PreK-5)	63.1%	95.2%	0	34	34	630	80.3%	0	17	17	578
Evans Elementary (PreK-5)	65.0%	95.1%	0	12	14	448	76.6%	0	0	0	480
Fairley Elementary (PreK-5)	98.5%	98.5%	0	162	162	527	85.5%	0	176	178	524
Florida-Kansas Elementary (PreK-5)	100% (2014-2015)	94.0%	0	101	101	266	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ford Road Elementary (PreK-5)	98.9%	N/A	0	99	101	643	84.5%	0	65	66	613
Fox Meadows Elementary (PreK-5)	85.8%	87.9%	0	136	142	700	70.2%	0	103	111	628
Gardenview Elementary (PreK-5)	98.2%	96.9%	0	58	58	384	80.5%	0	29	29	381
Germanshire Elementary School (PreK-5)	84.9%	85.5%	0	43	45	776	56.7%	0	48	49	820
Germantown Elementary (K-5)	20.4%	45.9%	0	race not specified	10	643	29.8%	0	15	18	651

School	% African American (2015-2016)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2014-2015)	African American Suspensions	Total Suspensions (2014-2015)	Total # of students (2014-2015)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2015-2016)	African American Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total # of students (2015-2016)
Getwell Elementary School (PreK-5)	81.4%	N/A	0	34	34	436	83.6%	0	22	23	429
Goodlett Elementary (PreK-5)	60.9%	97.6%	0	49	58	495	75.6%	0	39	44	493
Grahamwood Elementary (PreK-6)	26.6%	57.4%	0	race not specified	21	1,025	42.9%	0	11	26	1033
Granville T. Woods Academy of Innovation Charter School (K-8)	93.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	58.5%	0	0	0	319
Hamilton Elementary (PreK-5)	92.2%	98.0%	0	77	77	560	88.8%	0	27	27	512
Hawkins Mill Elementary (PreK-5)	97.3%	97.4%	0	49	49	346	85.5%	0	39	39	336
Hickory Ridge Elementary School (K-5)	65.7%	94.5%	0	71	75	865	75.6%	0	66	71	851
Highland Oaks Elementary (PreK-5)	84.2%	69.1%	0	70	72	1,033	50.2%	0	84	88	928
Holmes Road Elementary School (PreK-5)	97.9%	91.9%	0	48	48	595	70.5%	0	59	59	632
Idlewild Elementary (K-5)	67.8%	53.3%	0	12	15	471	30.1%	0	14	17	479
Jackson Elementary (K-5)	27.2%	99.3%	0	0	0	401	80.9%	0	race not specified	10	371
John. P. Freeman Optional School (K-8)	99.5%	67.7%	0	11	11	538	38.1%	0	20	20	548
Kate Bond Elementary School (PreK-5)	29.7%	85.2%	0	15	40	1,072	39.5%	0	18	32	1,105
Keystone Elementary (PreK-5)	95.3%	97.4%	0	84	85	462	80.1%	0	61	62	426
Kingsbury Elementary (PreK-6)	23.2%	99.7%	0	0	0	625	73.5%	0	race not specified	15	628
KIPP Memphis Collegiate Elementary (K-1)	96.7%	92.4%	0	34	35	353	79.8%	0	86	89	491
Knight Road Elementary (PreK-5)	46.5%	97.7%	0	23	23	516	82.5%	0	21	22	538
Larose Elementary (PreK-5)	97.8%	96.1%	0	72	72	409	89.3%	0	89	91	414
Leadership Preparatory Charter School (K-1)	84.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	66.7%	0	0	0	78
Levi Elementary (PreK-5)	99.8%	99.2%	0	86	86	478	85.7%	0	81	81	536

School	% African American (2015-2016)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2014-2015)	African American Suspensions	Total Suspensions (2014-2015)	Total # of students (2014-2015)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2015-2016)	African American Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total # of students (2015-2016)
Lowrance Elementary School (K-8)	81.2%	71.1%	0	52	55	892	44.0%	0	64	65	858
Lucie E. Campbell Elementary School (PreK-5)	96.1%	99.5%	0	92	93	369	82.7%	0	179	179	566
Lucy Elementary (PreK-5)	73.7%	91.1%	0	48	61	539	65.5%	0	44	47	487
Macon-Hall Elementary (PreK-5)	63.8%	54.8%	0	10	10	1,156	26.4%	0	0	0	1,158
Magnolia Elementary (PreK-5)	99.0%	N/A	0	48	48	300	86.3%	0	24	24	287
Manor Lake Elementary (PreK-5)	96.6%	87.8%	0	42	42	344	85.8%	0	36	36	322
Memphis Business Academy Elementary School (K-3)	78.1%	95.1%	0	12	13	265	73.1%	0	24	27	334
Memphis College Preparatory School (K-3)	97.8%	89.2%	0	35	36	288	70.3%	0	63	64	316
Moving Ahead School of Scholars Learning Academy (K-3)	100.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	82.8%	0	0	0	58
Newberry Elementary (K-5)	85.5%	99.5%	0	27	29	430	71.6%	0	13	13	394
Northaven Elementary School (PreK4-8)	91.3%	97.4%	0	41	41	491	83.9%	0	19	20	320
Oak Forest (K-5)	84.2%	70.6%	0	31	35	545	56.0%	0	35	36	550
Oakhaven Elementary (PreK-5)	80.2%	89.2%	0	86	89	620	75.8%	0	104	104	641
Oakshire Elementary (PreK-5)	98.9%	98.8%	0	16	16	504	75.1%	0	30	30	458
Omni Prep Academy-North Point Lower School (K-3)	75.8%	90.5%	0	0	0	200	68.3%	0	0	0	186
Peabody Elementary (PreK-5)	77.9%	72.7%	0	37	39	407	54.3%	0	37	39	393
Power Center Academy Elementary School (K-5)	90.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	62.4%	0	0	0	229
Promise Academy(K-5)	94.4%	97.5%	0	99	99	483	72.0%	0	57	58	425
Rainshaven Elementary (PreK-5)	98.9%	98.3%	0	75	76	470	80.2%	0	60	60	460
Raleigh-Bartlett Meadows School (PreK-5)	88.2%	89.0%	0	57	62	449	74.1%	0	37	39	465

School	% African American (2015-2016)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2014-2015)	African American Suspensions	Total Suspensions (2014-2015)	Total # of students (2014-2015)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2015-2016)	African American Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total # of students (2015-2016)
Richland Elementary (PreK-5)	22.7%	21.8%	0	race not spec	13	822	14.4%	0	0	0	802
Riverview School (K-8)	99.3%	94.0%	0	173	174	350	88.8%	10 black	299	301	564
Riverwood Elementary (PreK-5)	58.8%	61.6%	0	29	37	1,141	29.1%	0	35	41	1,056
Robert R. Church Elementary School (PreK-5)	99.2%	99.1%	0	74	74	741	80.5%	0	53	53	656
Ross Elementary (PreK-5)	82.3%	80.7%	0	138	146	10,004	70.0%	0	122	127	894
Rozelle Elementary (K-5)	97.5%	72.7%	0	61	62	278	67.5%	0	24	25	277
Scenic Hills Elementary (PreK-5)	96.9%	96.3%	0	33	33	350	82.0%	0	19	19	355
Sea Isle Elementary (PreK-5)	54.5%	57.3%	0	race not spec	12	515	41.1%	0	10	11	514
Shady Grove Elementary (PreK-5)	51.2%	84.6%	0	26	29	450	53.1%	0	12	14	420
Sharpe Elementary (PreK-5)	69.0%	94.9%	0	23	23	514	80.8%	0	17	18	490
Sheffield Elementary (PreK-5)	68.7%	98.6%	0	30	31	581	80.2%	0	11	12	670
Shelby Oaks Elementary (PreK-5)	70.6%	90.0%	0	31	43	912	62.5%	0	22	25	862
Sherwood Elementary (PreK-5)	80.0%	94.2%	0	79	88	713	77.0%	0	69	74	711
Snowden School (PreK-8)	72.2%	59.0%	0	138	148	1,529	47.9%	0	172	183	1,499
South Park Elementary (PreK-5)	43.4%	98.1%	0	60	70	648	78.6%	0	36	58	606
Southern Avenue Charter School of Academic Excellence Creative Arts (K-5)	97.0%	93.5%	0	14	14	372	69.7%	0	47	48	436
Southwind Elementary (PreK3-5)	83.7%	74.7%	0	28	29	888	46.8%	0	17	17	842
Spring Hill Elementary (PreK-5)	96.3%	94.5%	0	99	102	261	83.3%	0	68	71	162
Springdale Elementary (PreK-5)	99.0%	92.9%	0	38	38	295	89.9%	0	49	49	297
Star Academy (K-5)	96.6%	62.4%	0	11	11	234	63.8%	0	10	10	235
Treadwell Elementary (K-5)	59.4%	86.7%	0	92	114	727	83.3%	0	32	44	694

School	% African American (2015-2016)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2014-2015)	African American Suspensions	Total Suspensions (2014-2015)	Total # of students (2014-2015)	% Economically Disadvantaged	Expulsions (2015-2016)	African American Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total # of students (2015-2016)
Vision Preparatory Charter School (K-5)	100.0%	90.2%	0	0	0	102	83.0%	0	0	0	158
Vollentine Elementary (PreK-5)	94.7%	97.9%	0	41	42	291	86.5%	0	43	44	246
Wells Station Elementary (PreK-5)	12.6%	99.2%	0	race not specified	12	771	74.9%	0	0	0	752
Westside Elementary (PreK-5)	84.6%	N/A	0	54	58	319	85.2%	0	65	69	350
White Station Elementary (PreK-5)	50.6%	64.8%	0	16	25	657	35.8%	0	17	29	635
Whitehaven Elementary STEM School (PreK-5)	96.4%	94.9%	0	99	99	535	69.0%	0	31	31	507
Willow Oaks Elementary (K-5)	59.3%	85.6%	0	22	24	693	72.9%	0	24	29	691
Winchester Elementary (PreK-5)	85.2%	86.5%	0	95	98	496	85.2%	0	90	96	614
Winridge Elementary (K-5)	87.6%	99.2%	0	141	143	528	76.9%	0	108	110	550

Appendix B: Achievement School District

School-to-Prison Pipeline 72

School	% African American (2015-2016)	% Economically Disadvantaged (2014-2015)	Expulsions (2014-2015)	African American Suspensions (2014-2015)	Suspensions (2014-2015)	Total # of students (2014-2015)	% Economically Disadvantaged (2015-2016)	Expulsions (2015-2016)	African American Suspensions (2015-2016)	Suspensions (2015-2016)	Total # of students (2015-2016)
Aspire Coleman(K-5/PreK-6)	96.5%	N/A	0	57	58	393	82.8%	0	39	41	479
Aspire Hanley #1 (PreK-6/ K-7)	99.1%	99.7%	0	108	108	400	86.7%	0	91	91	432
Aspire Hanley #2 (PreK-6/ (PreK-5)	98.0%	99.7%	0	78	79	390	90.4%	0	44	45	391
Cornerstone Prep- Lester Campus (PreK-5)	95.1%	98.2%	0	26	26	489	75.2%	0	116	119	594
Corning Achievement Elementary (PreK-5)	96.7%	98.7%	0	41	41	312	90.5%	0	67	69	275
Frayser Achievement Elementary (PreK-5)	98.8%	N/A	0	54	55	336	86.5%	0	94	95	331
Freedom Preparatory Academy Charter Elementary School (K-1/ PreK-5)	90.2%	99.4%	0	13	14	180	78.0%	0	86	88	593
Georgian Hills Achievement Elementary School (PreK-5)	94.4%	99.7%	0	30	31	358	83.8%	0	102	106	338
KIPP Memphis Academy (K-1/ K-3)	97.8%	93.4%	0	0	0	229	80.6%	0	0	0	368
Klondike Preparatory Academy (K-5)	97.6%	97.3%	0	81	83	300	27.3%	0	15	16	250
Promise Academy-Spring Hill (PreK-1/ PreK-2)	93.3%	97.2%	0	0	0	141	11.1%	0	0	0	208
Whitney Achievement Elementary School (PreK-5)	94.2%	99.8%	0	58	58	446	88.8%	0	109	113	434

Appendix C: 16-17 Alternative School Enrollment

School-to-Prison Pipeline 73

ILD Zone	School Type	School Name	Grade	Gender	# Overall	# Asian	# Black	# Hispanic	# Native American	# Pacific Islander	# White	# Multi-Race	# ED	# DC	# LEP	# SWD	% Asian	% Black	% Hispanic	% Native American	% Pacific Islander	% White	% Multi-Race	% ED	% DC	% LEP	% SWD	
14		Adolescent Parenting Program			88		86	2		1	1	3	85	76	1	10		97.7	2.3	1.1	1.1	1.1	3.4	96.6	86.4	1.1	11.4	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle			285		280	3	1		2	1	276	245	2	51		98.2	1.1	0.4		0.7	0.4	96.8	86.0	0.7	17.9	
14		G.W. Carver College & Career Academy			237		233	3	4		1	4	225	191	2	54		98.3	1.3	1.7		0.4	1.7	94.9	80.6	0.8	22.8	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle			205	1	190	10	3		1	7	192	171	6	61	0.5	92.7	4.9	1.5	0.5	3.4	3.4	93.7	83.4	2.9	29.8	
14		Hope Academy			79		73	2			4		58	53	1	29		92.4	2.5			5.1		73.4	67.1	1.3	36.7	
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle			199		198	1	1			1	190	167	14			99.5	0.5	0.5			0.5	95.5	83.9		7.0	
14		Northeast Prep Academy			230	1	208	10		1	14	4	213	166	3	56	0.4	90.4	4.3		0.4	6.1	1.7	92.6	72.2	1.3	24.3	
14		Northwest Prep Academy			188	1	184	3	3	1	2	6	173	150	31		0.5	97.9	1.6	1.6	0.5	1.1	3.2	92.0	79.8		16.5	
14		Adolescent Parenting Program		F	88		86	2	1	1	1	3	85	76	1	10		97.7	2.3	1.1	1.1	1.1	3.4	96.6	86.4	1.1	11.4	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		F	60		60						60	49		9		100.0						100.0	81.7		15.0	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		M	225		220	3	1		2	1	216	196	2	42		97.8	1.3	0.4		0.9	0.4	96.0	87.1	0.9	18.7	
14		G.W. Carver College & Career Academy		F	58		58		1			1	55	49		6		100.0		1.7			1.7	94.8	84.5		10.3	
14		G.W. Carver College & Career Academy		M	179		175	3	3		1	3	170	142	2	48		97.8	1.7	1.7		0.6	1.7	95.0	79.3	1.1	26.8	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		F	44		43	1		1		1	40	35	1	8		97.7	2.3		2.3		2.3	90.9	79.5	2.3	18.2	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		M	161	1	147	9	3		7	6	152	136	5	53	0.6	91.3	5.6	1.9		4.3	3.7	94.4	84.5	3.1	32.9	
14		Hope Academy		F	9		7				2		5	5		3		77.8				22.2		55.6	55.6		33.3	
14		Hope Academy		M	70		66	2			2		53	48	1	26		94.3	2.9			2.9		75.7	68.6	1.4	37.1	
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		F	118		118						110	101		8		100.0						93.2	85.6		6.8	
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		M	81		80	1	1			1	80	66		6		98.8	1.2	1.2			1.2	98.8	81.5		7.4	
14		Northeast Prep Academy		F	59		54	2		1	5	3	56	45		12		91.5	3.4		1.7	8.5	5.1	94.9	76.3		20.3	
14		Northeast Prep Academy		M	171	1	154	8			9	1	157	121	3	44	0.6	90.1	4.7			5.3	0.6	91.8	70.8	1.8	25.7	
14		Northwest Prep Academy		F	76		74	2	2	1	1	4	70	62		8		97.4	2.6	2.6	1.3	1.3	5.3	92.1	81.6		10.5	
14		Northwest Prep Academy		M	112	1	110	1	1		1	2	103	88		23	0.9	98.2	0.9	0.9		0.9	1.8	92.0	78.6		20.5	
14		Adolescent Parenting Program		07	4		4						4	4		1		100.0						100.0	100.0		25.0	
14		Adolescent Parenting Program		08	7		6	1					7	7	1			85.7	14.3					100.0	100.0	14.3		
14		Adolescent Parenting Program		09	27		27		1			1	24	22		4		100.0			3.7		3.7	88.9	81.5		14.8	
14		Adolescent Parenting Program		10	25		24	1		1	1	2	25	22		4		96.0	4.0		4.0	4.0	8.0	100.0	88.0		16.0	
14		Adolescent Parenting Program		11	18		18						18	15				100.0						100.0	83.3			
14		Adolescent Parenting Program		12	7		7						7	6		1		100.0						100.0	85.7		14.3	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		KK	6		6						5	3				100.0						83.3	50.0			
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		01	13		12	1					13	13		1		92.3	7.7					100.0	100.0		7.7	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		02	14		13				1		13	10		2		92.9				7.1		92.9	71.4		14.3	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		03	24		24						23	22		5		100.0						95.8	91.7		20.8	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		04	34		34						33	26		5		100.0						97.1	76.5		14.7	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		05	33		33		1			1	33	32		4		100.0		3.0			3.0	100.0	97.0		12.1	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		06	32		31	1					32	29	1	4		96.9	3.1					100.0	90.6	3.1	12.5	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		07	57		56				1		55	49		9		98.2				1.8		96.5	86.0		15.8	
14		Airways Success Elementary-Middle		08	72		71	1					69	61	1	21		98.6	1.4					95.8	84.7	1.4	29.2	
14		G.W. Carver College & Career Academy		09	106		103	2	1		1	1	103	89	2	24		97.2	1.9	0.9		0.9	0.9	97.2	84.0	1.9	22.6	
14		G.W. Carver College & Career Academy		10	71		71		3			3	68	54		20		100.0		4.2			4.2	95.8	76.1		28.2	
14		G.W. Carver College & Career Academy		11	48		47	1					43	38		8		97.9	2.1					89.6	79.2		16.7	
14		G.W. Carver College & Career Academy		12	12		12						11	10		2		100.0						91.7	83.3		16.7	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		KK	7		7						5	5		4		100.0						71.4	71.4		57.1	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		01	7		7						7	7		2		100.0						100.0	100.0		28.6	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		02	8		7	1					8	6		5		87.5	12.5					100.0	75.0		62.5	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		03	10		10						10	10		4		100.0						100.0	100.0		40.0	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		04	26	1	24			1		2	2	25	20		8	3.8	92.3		3.8		7.7	7.7	96.2	76.9		30.8
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		05	26		26				2	2	24	22	1	8		100.0					7.7	7.7	92.3	84.6	3.8	30.8
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		06	24		22	1	1		1	1	22	22	1	8		91.7	4.2	4.2		4.2	4.2	91.7	91.7	4.2	33.3	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		07	46		42	3			1	1	44	40	3	14		91.3	6.5			2.2		95.7	87.0	6.5	30.4	
14		Gordon Achievement Academy Elementary-Middle		08	51		45	5	1	1	1	2	47	39	1	8		88.2	9.8	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.9	92.2	76.5	2.0	15.7	
14		Hope Academy		06	2		2						2	2		1		100.0						100.0	100.0		50.0	
14		Hope Academy		07	2		2						2	1				100.0						100.0	50.0			
14		Hope Academy		08	9		8				1		6	6		1		88.9				11.1		66.7	66.7		11.1	
14		Hope Academy		09	30		27	2			1		22	21	1	11		90.0	6.7			3.3		73.3	70.0	3.3	36.7	
14		Hope Academy		10	24		22				2		17	16		11		91.7				8.3		70.8	66.7		45.8	
14		Hope Academy		11	11		11						8	6		5		100.0						72.7	54.5		45.5	
14		Hope Academy		12	1		1						1	1				100.0						100.0	100.0			
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		KK	9		8	1					8	7				88.9	11.1					88.9	77.8			
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		01	15		15		1			1	13	11				100.0		6.7			6.7	86.7	73.3			
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		02	8		8						7	5				100.0						87.5	62.5			
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		03	22		22						20	20				100.0						90.9	90.9			
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		04	13		13						13	13		2		100.0						100.0	100.0		15.4	
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		05	22		22						21	20		2		100.0						95.5	90.9		9.1	
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		06	34		34						33	27		2		100.0						97.1	79.4		5.9	
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		07	44		44						43	36		4		100.0						97.7	81.8		9.1	
14		Ida B. Wells Academy Elementary-Middle		08	32		32						32	28		4		100.0						100.0	87.5		12.5	
14		Northeast Prep Academy		09	96	1	88	3			4		91	72	2	30	1.0	91.7	3.1			4.2		94.8	75.0			

Appendix D: 16-17 Alternative School Discipline

School-to-Prison Pipeline 74

School	ISS	OSS	Expelled	Remanded	Total
Adolescent Parenting Program	2	56	7	8	73
Airways Achievement Academy ES	1	6		1	8
Airways Achievement Academy MS		11		1	12
G.W. Carver College & Career Academy	99	14	12	17	142
Gordon Achievement Academy ES		11	1	1	13
Gordon Achievement Academy MS		3	2	2	7
Ida B. Wells Academy ES	11	10			21
Ida B. Wells Academy MS	19	12		1	32
Northeast Prep Academy			11	19	30
Northwest Prep Academy	11	181	15	24	231

Question	School Type	What is the most difficult thing about your job?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	That it's a very solitary position. When you are a teacher, you have a network and a community of other colleagues who are doing similar work to you. That even though the work is really, really challenging, you have people you can go to and talk to about what's going on. You have that support system. As a principal, you are the only one in your building doing your role. And you can't confide in your colleagues the same way you would as a teacher because you're also their employer. Their boss. So you know, there's a lot of stress with the role that you just can't share with other people and that can be challenging.
Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	Parents are the most difficult part of the job. They do not value discipline plan in the handbook. For instance, their kids do not come until 9:00 (school starts at 7:30) *Pulls out handbook* "Talks about absences.... Conduct... how we deal with conduct..." 3/110 kids are [not the same religious affiliation as the] school "Try not to differentiate" They learn prayers, structure, [other religious services] "That's hard" If a child is misbehaving, I ask if they go to [service]. Most say no, but some do.
Administrator 3	Charter	Managing the business piece of it. 30 employees and all that stuff.
Administrator 4	Charter	I would say trying to ensure that we are aligned with the households that we serve. I'm being very careful not to impose our values as if they are the best thing out there as sliced bread. There are awesome parents out there, but sometimes, in school setting, there are a certain set of values that we want students to know and understand, and they may not be the established home values. And it's important to recognize that and you often see that when they're misbehaving and you call a parent up, and that parent is misbehaving too. And then you kind of understand that you're on your own with this one. And then you have to go back to that child like, okay, "Cause momma said hit back. Anybody hitting me? Hit em back." "Well, okay, I know momma said, because in this place right now, that's how we're gonna do things at this place." And when that child does do what momma and daddy said, you have to understand maybe the why behind that. Sometimes it's societal based. Many times it is. Because moms and dads have gone through... I was at a school once, and I'll speak in general to not just my current school but period, where a neighborhood was all full of gangs. Kids, straight A students went home and they were in gangs so they had to fight. Fighting was a common thing. And being tough was a common thing. Academics was not the priority, was surviving. And so we understand that, you have to understand where they're coming from. It's about understanding others. Understanding where they're coming from and what may be their values in a neighborhood because you're telling me to do all these things but when I go home, I'm the parent. Mom and Dad are working, so I'm cooking dinner. I'm getting ready for school. You wondering why my homework aren't done, well darn it I'm tired. I've been adulating since 3pm. And so you have to really understand, that's the really difficult part, when that alignment aren't always there. Everybody doesn't go home to a two parent household with dinner ready by 5:00. And a story by 8:00. That's not the reality sometimes. And so we have to understand that, and meet kids where they are. And we meet them where they are and clearly establish what are the norms that would make our school family thrive, and help you not just survive, but thrive in this place. And so it's kind of trying to marry those two, and understanding that that's a marriage that has to be made through courtship in a sense, you know? Getting to know the child. Getting the know the child's needs, likes, and wants. Getting to know the family. And never ever imposing your values like you know what's best. All we are saying is that in this place for us to thrive together, here are a set of norms that will make this place work for us. And I'm not saying when you walk out that door, you don't do what you gotta do to survive. I'm just saying this place right here, here are our norms that make school work. And being very deliberate about that.

Administrator 5	Public	Two pieces: the discipline piece, and how to keep the kids motivated. Some of them are so low and they get frustrated in class and so they act out. Then the other piece is motivating the teachers to help them look at their instruction. How can I scale it down or spiral it down/scaffold it so the students can feel some kind of accomplishment so they won't get so frustrated?
Administrator 6	Public	I would say trying to make sure everyone has everything they need to be successful. And when I say everyone, I mean the teachers, support staff, custodial staff, cafeteria staff.

Question	School Type	What is the philosophy of your school when it comes to discipline? How well does this align to your own personal conceptions of school discipline?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	<p>When I came into the role, discipline was very traditional in the sense that discipline was mostly if you do x then you get y. If you pull 4 clips, then you have 5 minutes of recess. If you pull 5 clips, you have lunch off. And there are some strengths to that, it's pretty straightforward. Everyone is doing the same thing and consistent which is good for kids. But my personal beliefs of discipline are very motivated by my spiritual background and so it's why I've always kind of believed in the idea of restorative justice. The idea of making sure that discipline is done in a way that gives long-term skills to the student to prevent future problems. So, we still have the same system in terms of clips—you know, you do this, you get that. But when students come to my office, the procedure is a little bit different. We do lots of conversations, lots of reflections, usually what I'll do is I'll give the kids, depending on their age, a reflection form, or just a piece of paper and that way they can write out what happened and sort of get it off their chest. I will read over what they wrote so I kind of have a sense going into my conversation with the kid about what this kid needs from this meeting and then we do some role play and conversations about, "Well how did you handle it? How could you have handled it differently?" That kind of thing. And then I always try to bring it back at the very end to the person that was harmed from the misbehavior, whether it's another classmate or another teacher or whomever, I make sure that I close the loop of the kid having to go to the teacher or the student and kind of make amends there. As a school, we have an "engagement plan" which is like a 5-page document that the teachers and administrator (myself) came up with together which was an agreement about how we want to handle things as a staff. My personal motto comes from a text from Shaun Cuddi who does those "7 habits of highly effective blank" so he has a program called "The Leader in Me" which a lot of schools use for discipline and one of the things that he stresses is that it's the job of an educator to make sure every child knows their worth and their potential, so I always try to enter my conversations with kids beginning with the mindset of "If I can communicate to this kid what they are worth, and their potential, then they will see that their misbehavior is not worthy of how good that kid is." So I try to approach it that way.</p>
Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	<p>*reads school mission statement*</p> <p>Take a child who lives with aunt, then gets shuffled to an uncle, you don't know, they come on scholarship, but they sign off on it</p> <p>This is the education they are going to get.</p> <p>Strong discipline and a strong direction are needed</p> <p>Come from the environment of raising themselves</p> <p>"Experience is not foreign to me"</p> <p>My single mother was mute and deaf. Could not care for me herself, we lived on the streets</p> <p>House hopped with various family members</p> <p>She would have a boyfriend. By 6-7, she had been turned in for being a bad mom (to the school)</p> <p>Court found Dad in MS. His wife, [the same religious denomination as the school], "We have to [take her]."</p> <p>"I know exactly where they come from." "Value of having discipline, having a good education, speaking well, knowing God, knowing God knows me... There's comfort in that."</p> <p>One little boy... well he wasn't a little boy. 200lbs, 6ft tall in 6th grade.</p> <p>He was "Worldly... cocky, arrogant, disrespectful, and deep within afraid,"</p>

Administrator 3	Charter	We have a no suspension/ no expulsion policy. That aligns closely to my beliefs that every single kid deserves a really great education. Also with the research that says out of school suspensions aren't beneficial for both the individual and the classroom as a whole. I think it also aligns back to our belief that good teaching trumps all else. Regardless of the consequences, if we are not really good at teaching nothing else matters. So we spend as much time as we can getting better at teaching and focusing our energy on teaching as opposed to anything else.
Administrator 4	Charter	Our philosophy has to do with our mission statement. And we believe that a social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum. So that's our philosophy that these two are equally important. That we are talking about behavior all day long, not emphasizing all the sudden we're so negative, but "I don't like the way you do this. I don't like the way you do that. What about this?" We're always acknowledging and talking about it because these are little kids. And adults forget that the speed limit sign is 70 every single day. We see it, every single day, been driving for years, and we still speed. Why are we so harsh with children when they forget what happened yesterday? We forget on lunch break. We forget every single day. We're speeding every single day. And that's an example of things we forget, but when it comes to children, you want perfection. And never forgetting. You want grace then, don't you? Then give kids grace. So our philosophy is the social curriculum being as important as the academic curriculum.
Administrator 5	Public	We believe in getting both sides of the story. We allow the students to tell their side and kind of just talk them through—What is another method you could have done, besides what you did? And I keep probing questions to find out why because they need to know why they did it so that when it happens cause it's gonna happen again probably how to handle it differently. And I give them strategies or suggestions if they don't know. And I do believe in that, that's kinda how I do at home. My daughter is six. Why did you do that? And sometimes they don't know.
Administrator 6	Public	When it comes to discipline, I think my philosophy is a little bit different from what the teachers' philosophy is. And I say that because of us being in an inner-city school. But what I have found is a lot of my teachers can't relate to that because they don't come from that type of environment. So they take all of the behaviors personal. And I try to explain to them that it's not personal, it's not about you, this is just what they're used to and we have to show them something different. And so I have steps that the teachers have to go through, or they should go through, before a child even reaches the office. But sometimes, I say 60% of the time, those steps are not taken, and it's just out of my room and into the office because of the behavior.

Question	School Type	What causes a teacher to refer disciplinary infractions to an administrator, rather than deal with the infraction within the classroom?
----------	-------------	---

Administrator 1	Private Parochial	Depends on the teacher. For an experienced teacher, the main reason why they would bring it to the office is that they don't want other kids to see that misbehavior or they feel like the behavior is so bad that there needs to be something outside of the classroom to make an impression upon either the child to make an impression upon either the child or the adult. Typically, those things would be like inappropriate language or aggression, things we consider to be nonnegotiables. For my experienced and most talented teachers, very rarely do I have kids that are in my office besides those nonnegotiables because they feel it is important to handle the discipline on their own to create that sense of community and accountability within the classroom. I think most talented teachers would agree that if you send kids out of the classroom too often that it undermines your authority as a teacher. Newer teachers, I think the reason they send kids to the office is because they don't have the skills yet to be able to deal with their problems in the classroom yet. And they also just have more problems because they do not have those preventive skills that older teachers would have. And I think too, a lot of being a teacher is being able to self-regulate your own emotions, and that's really challenging when you're starting out in the craft, and so when they get frustrated, they will send kids out sooner than they probably needed to be sent out. And I have a lot of sympathy for teachers in terms of that. It's an exhausting job, and if a teacher feels like they're gonna explode, I'd much rather them get the kid out of the room so that they don't get to that point. But a lot of it with younger teachers is that they don't know how to do it differently yet. I try to work with younger teachers. The challenging thing with classroom management is that there are definitely tips and tricks that you can learn to make yourself better, but part of it is just a presence that a teacher has or doesn't have. It's hard to coach presence. But yeah, I do with my younger teachers. I work with them at least once a week. So my teachers who are new to the building, I'm in their classroom at least once a week observing. And then every week we have a set time where I meet with them for about 30 minutes to coach them on things they should be improving in. And I try to do it with a balanced approach, with half of our coaching being about classroom culture and management and the other half being about academics. So it kind of depends on the week with what we are focusing on.
Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	Frustration of having to repeatedly correct students "I don't know what to do." Just need space, time, and reminded of discipline plan Principal reviews steps "They are not someone trying to get even or undercut you." Ask them "What time did you go to bed? Where did you sleep? Did you watch TV for a long time? Wish you could take a nap? Can't concentrate?" They respond "I don't know... my aunt's bed... yes... She won't let me put my head down." Lack of supervision, discipline, and structure
Administrator 3	Charter	It can be anything. We talk about it "when instruction has to stop." That's sort of the general rule. There isn't a... We try to avoid the 1/2/3 or whatever it is anymore. If instruction cannot continue to move forward, then should be removed.
Administrator 4	Charter	I believe that educators, schools, should just like you wanna be treated, treat kids the same way. Give, extend grace. Be fair and be firm. Extend grace. And teach them what you want them to do. We can't assume that every household has taught them all of these things. We can't tell if they have or haven't. We don't know. So what you do is, you are constantly talking about it. Engaging scenarios around it and discussing it. And just like you teach ABCs/123s, teach behavior as well.
Administrator 5	Public	Typically, we have the [write-ups]. They have to do this, fill this out 3 times before they come to us. Sometimes they do skip the 3, depending on what it is. It's really minor things, to be honest. It's just like, "I'm tired of dealing with this child." Especially end of the year, you get a lot more, "I don't want to deal with this. He doesn't have a pencil, he goes to [you]." Why? Just give him a pencil. I don't address it with teachers. I just give him a pencil and he goes back to class. Or send them down because they're talking... ok? Were they saying cuss words or something? No, they were just talking. Oh, ok. The teachers just didn't want them to talk.

Administrator 6	Public	I give the teachers a chart “office managed behavior, classroom managed behavior” and even though this chart is in there, and not having a pencil is classroom management behavior, a teacher feels as though that’s office managed behavior. And trying to get them to understand that it’s not. But, I try to look at it from their point of view. They’re looking at this child is disrupting my lesson, I can’t teach, even though they don’t have a pencil I’ve given them 3 pencils and they’ve broken the pencils, so next step is out. So, if they follow the steps, I believe, as the administrator, that they will have more success. And I say that because I have one teacher whose classroom culture is wonderful, but she does everything that’s asked of her to minimize the discipline. You know, she has a good relationship with the parents, the students respect her to the upmost, she doesn’t blow up everything, and um, she does that, but I have some teachers no matter what you put in front of them in writing, I’m not gonna do this, I want this child out of my class.
-----------------	--------	---

Question	School Type	Can you walk me through the various options for discipline you have at your school? Who decides which discipline method is appropriate (for example, an in-school suspension versus an out-of-school suspension), and what steps happens before the final decision-making? Is there a formal policy that details this information? Are there exceptions to any stated policies? What kinds of conditions would prompt you to deviate from established practice or policy?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	In terms of who decides, that’s me. We have our engagement plan which covers the day-to-day kind of things, but when it comes to those bigger infractions, violence being one of the big ones, inappropriate language or racial language, sometimes one of those, it’s sometimes case by case but we do have policies that gives the principles the right to adjudicate in a certain way. I very rarely give out of school suspensions, mostly because I do not think they serve a purpose of making the kid feel what he did. Because typically, with an out of school suspension, the student is sitting at home watching TV which is kind of nice. So for most of the cases, I will do an in school suspension. The only case in which I would do an out of school suspension is when I’m trying to get some sort of a buy-in from the parent that I haven’t felt yet and try to stress to the parent how serious what your child did is. If I have parents that are not appreciating the severity of what the kid did, sometimes an out of school suspension can be effective for younger kids because they have to stay home with their kid and that is punishing the parent, too. That does not happen often, but occasionally that is what needs to happen. If a child has 2 or 3 in school suspensions, I have a behavior plan, I meet with a parent, and we go from there.
Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	Younger grades= teacher has documentation of you 3rd grade girl: she’s bored, she’s extremely bright , I say “She’s trying to outthink you. Mother has taught her this get even thing.” Student says to principal “boy in class likes her, touching her. My teacher doesn’t know. Isn’t ‘protecting me’” The mother knew- she said to give him a hug so he’ll go away Teach your daughter to say no. “Give her a voice.” Teacher wanted to suspend girl. I said to get in touch with boy and boy’s mom. I told the mom “Take her home and love her. We corrected ourselves.” In school Suspension: gone through everything you can do. I prefer in-school But must supervise person who’s here, know that they’re working. Prefer to give work that makes them think/feel “ISS worked b/c you’re back in class” Out of school: everyone knows why kid is out. Education for everyone Good teacher feels guilt, longing --“What more could I do?” But it’s banishment. A student stole roller skates and showed it to other students Parents: She had to, they egged her on “Stealing is unacceptable. Both parents and kids need correction.” Principal goes to the class: “A student” took. That is stealing. Not okay. Thought it was funny? You’re encouraging sin. Mentally try to see whole situation, look for a bottom line/ mind-body-soul/ what happened in one sentence? what does my connection do for the student, parents, teacher, the classroom, and the whole school? In the end, when I go to bed, I answer to God. It’s not funny. Was I too hard? Too easy? “Lifelong learners”... I live by that, but people don’t use that anymore.

<p>Administrator 3</p>	<p>Charter</p>	<p>We have a version of In school suspension... reset room. One would argue that Arthur sitting with us here is in in school suspension at some level because he's not in his class and he's sitting here with me. Not with his peers. Any time the student is removed from the general setting you can call it an in school suspension. We think about teacher moves... all the things teachers can do to make sure the students are engaged and excited about learning... proactive is what we always think about. You want 90% of school discipline to be proactive and 10% to be retroactive. There are checks which are our color system so colors can go up and colors can go down. There is then a certain level after a certain color change that teachers are removed but again that is up to teacher discretion. Students are removed and they can go to the in school suspension room which we just call the reset room but realistically is the in school suspension room. Students will sit in there and do the work for the class or they'll sit silently or they'll do a reflection activity or something like that. Our goal is that they're there for 15/20 minutes and then they go right back in class. Sometimes that doesn't happen. There are some students that spend the whole day in there. If they're in there and still struggling in the reset room, then they will sometimes be referred to me. And from there, we'll do some alternate placement stuff. So alternate placement, instead of being in their 3rd grade environment they'll spend a day in the kindergarten environment with the work from the 4th grade. Clearly not good as being in class. It can only be at their independent level which again those I think which would be considered in school suspensions technically but really we fight to make sure often we fight parents to say I'm just gonna keep em home tomorrow, they were acting up yesterday. We fight them to say nope, we want them here every day. If you keep them home that's just the same as an afterschool suspension which doesn't have benefits. Every condition prompts us to deviate from the established. Every single student is unique and requires-- just like every time you're teaching something you have to differentiate to meet the needs of all students, same thing goes for discipline. What works for one doesn't work for another one. And so, we and that's really hard. That's hard for teachers sometimes. It's not as hard for students to wrap their heads around, but it's hard for teachers to wrap their heads around. Why does this kid... Not to use Arthur as an example so much cause he happens to sit here but why is Arthur when he sits out of class sitting with me on our iReady system as opposed to sitting in the discipline room with his hands folded? And that's because of the nature of the things we are working on with Arthur. Which is different than things we're working on with x student who's in there.</p>
------------------------	----------------	---

Administrator 4	Charter	<p>Well, I'll tell you at my current school we have decided that there is a set of classroom managed things and that are not classroom managed. If teachers defer everything to leadership, then they lose their power. So, we have certain things that are definitely sent to administration. And those are things that regard physical altercations, or excessive profanity, something like that. What's important to understand is that teacher has the power to address classroom behavior, but you must address the precursors to the behavior as well. If I find that you completely ignored things that led to the behavior, then that's another issue to deal with. A lot of behavior can be deescalated and so that's why we say and if I do get in a situation that's aggressive, tell me what happened before this. What led up to this? Oftentimes we will find that things could have been alleviated. "He was bothering me," was ignored. Or something like that. So, and that's what my team has learned. You address the things that can lead up to it and you will find that you have very few instances when it occurs. It's not perfect, but it's our system. Look at the precursors. Almost every time, that it will show you. Every now and then, the child may just rise up and look at somebody with new eyes, you know like on The Mummy, it just happens, like your mouth starts foaming and eyes are white, what happened? I'm making a joke. But every now and then, the universe takes over. But 99.9% of the time, there are precursors that those in the building saw or didn't or ignored. You have your basic nonnegotiables. No weapons. No drugs. No sexual harassment. No excessive profanity. Excessive because occasionally one little word might come out because you heard somebody say it at home. Now I'm not gonna expel a child for saying a cursing word when they stub their toe because adults say it in the real world. We gonna talk about it, but it's not an expulsion. You know, or, so that's why I say excessive profanity directed at another student for an issue. That's different than a child stubbing their toe or hitting their hand and saying a curse word. "Oh, -inaudible- just cussed, kick them out." We're not gonna do that. But, if you use profanity at another child or a teacher, in a way that you're trying to make you point, see what I'm saying, like you're cursing out somebody, and it's at that person, and that's a time for us to talk about like get more involved because this is what you've seen. Think about this to now, if you suspend only, they don't learn. You gotta have that piece in there where you talk about what in the world just happened. Whoever you heard, because you weren't born, you didn't come out the wound talking like a sailor, so where'd it come from? And then how did you know to use it in that context? So you knew that those words go best with those verbs like? How'd you know that? That wasn't -inaudible- for this morning. So you have to understand that too. When they perfectly use it, in the right context, with the right verbs and adjectives, with the right number, and then punctuate it? That's learned behavior. They're 6. That's a learned behavior that then you must at that point involve other stakeholders like your parents and figuring out this. And then not only involving your parents but in a solution oriented atmosphere and partnership, let's talk about this together. If I just expel you, then what's gonna happen then? You gonna come back and say it again. I want it to not be a revolving door.</p>
Administrator 5	Public	<p>As far as out of school suspensions, [the principal] makes that final decision. We don't give it often because the district monitors that. If you have too many, the district says you need to do some other progressive discipline things. The teacher refers a student after the 3 [write-ups] or if it's whatever, we contact the parent, then I may send them back to class or I let them sit here and think about it. Sometimes I have them do the discipline essay about why they did what they did. Then we'll contact the parent and ask the parent to come up to the school. Then after that, if that doesn't work, he'll sometimes refer them to ISS. It just depends on their infraction, or they'll go straight to the out of school suspension. We follow the district code of conduct policy. It outlines what we should do. I haven't had any exceptions. They pretty much have outlined every scenario so far. There was a little girl that has an IEP--special needs student-- and she brought a finger nail file. She was just filing her nails, but she can't have that, because of her IEP and her condition. So, we had to expel her. Cause that's the policy. Cause it was seen as a weapon. She was 13.</p>

Administrator 6	Public	<p>The first step, when a teacher has a problem with the student, is a verbal warning. And then, if that's not successful, then they have to reach out to the parents and ask for a parent conference. If that's not successful, then they'll do what we call a counselor referral. A counselor referral is a form that they have to fill out that states the infraction, states what did you do as a result of the infraction, and then it has three questions on the back of it for the teacher saying what were you doing while this was happening. So once they fill out the counselor referral, they have one student, not the student that was causing the infraction, but they'll have a student to take that referral down to the counselor's office. And so the counselor gets the referral, she gets the referral, and then she will go and pull the student out. If it is a zero tolerance behavior, the counselor then gets on the phone and calls the parent with the child in there and talks to the parent about the behavior. Then we document what the parent said, based on what the behavior was, and we give a copy to the teacher and we keep a copy ourselves. Once a student gets 3 of those counselor referrals, and if it's an in-school infraction, they get an in-school suspension. That's an automatic in school suspension because our goal here is to make sure that the students can stay in school if at all possible for them to stay in school. So, once they get three of those, and then we assign them in school suspension, and that's how that goes. Now, If it's a zero-tolerance infraction, then I automatically pull this book out. Now this is my little Bible, I have several of them here. And I'll sit down, and I'll tell the student—they know about these books—and I say everything in this book tells us what we need to do. And I say based on, and I show this to them, based on what you did, these are my choices. And so, then I go from there. Most of the time I've had to expel, this year, I've expelled three students, and all of them have been upheld. Which is a good thing, that means that we are doing things in the right order. Because documentation is the key. That's how we determine whether it's in house or out of school. Now out of school suspensions, of course, are those zero tolerance that are in here, in this book, that says no ISS you go straight to OSS or it's an expulsure. So I base all my decisions based off of this book. Those three expulsions were based off of zero-tolerance. here are no exceptions I would make with expulsions because those are pretty severe. We are not making an amendment to that, no. I would not deviate.</p>
-----------------	--------	--

Question	School Type	How integral to student learning do you believe discipline to be? Do you see disciplining students as part of teaching and learning? Pedagogy and curriculum? Something else?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	<p>I think it's huge. If you can get classroom management down, that's half the battle of being a teacher. You can't teach in a classroom that isn't safe and orderly. And not just safe in the sense of kids are sitting and doing what they're supposed to do, but also emotionally safe. They feel like the teacher cares about them, they feel like the other kids in the class care about them. One of the things that we talk with teachers about is that you can't teach a kid who is having to process so many things at the same time because they won't be able to focus on the thing you are teaching them fully. So like an example academically of that would be like a reading. If you have a child isn't a fluent reader, and can't read the words off the page, they're not going to comprehend the story because most of their cognitive power is being used just to pick up the words on the page. And so it's better in that case to read a story out loud to a kid so they can focus on the comprehension. The analog to that for discipline would be if you have a kid that's so focused on, "Do I fit in? Is the teacher mad at me? What am I supposed to be doing right now? Am I going to get in trouble today?" They're thinking all about that, and they're not thinking about the lesson at hand. So I think it's very important because how can a kid properly think about their academics if they're thinking about all of these other things. We have a motto here: our goals for every child are college and heaven because as a [parochial] school, we really think to ourselves... like my goal is not just that this kid learns math or reading, it's that they become productive, kind human beings and discipline is all about that. So it doesn't frustrate me when I have to work with discipline because I think that's just as important as the other things we do during the day. And it's really important that the kids see that they have a leader in the school who is firm and consistent with their discipline, so they know I have high expectations for them, but also is forgiving and loving and that even when they do mess up they feel like this school is still a place for them the next day. I think about that as important not only from a student outcomes perspective but also [from a religious perspective]. I'm meant to model the way that Jesus disciplined. Jesus did not discipline by saying the next day "I do not love you anymore" or "You're not welcome here anymore." It was "Go forth and stop sinning, but I love you still." So I think about that a lot.</p>

Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	<p>Discipline: good? Yes and no</p> <p>There's a boundary. There is where we are safe, correct, obedient. This is the way to act and learn. Anything outside of this is a distraction. When there are infractions, we explain why they are there to coach them back in.</p> <p>So integral to student learning</p> <p>Tutoring is 50% academics // 50% psychology</p> <p>Psych of dealing with their mind, body, spirit (Are they angry? Controlling that emotion), who they do what they do</p> <p>Like weaving discipline and academics</p> <p>Have to weave together</p> <p>Add beads where they connect</p> <p>Beads are the jewels.</p> <p>Can't just have "head stuff." They won't take it.</p> <p>Community calls for discipline when funding, basic needs, love, supervision are not met</p> <p>If not in home, in school</p>
Administrator 3	Charter	<p>Not very important. I think discipline is not the right word. Good teaching is not about discipline. Good teaching is about engagement and consistency. No, I wouldn't say discipline. That's a word thing they have. I wouldn't say that goes in any of the buckets of what good instruction is.</p>
Administrator 4	Charter	<p>Oh yes. It's its own curriculum. It's the social curriculum, in my opinion. It's its own curriculum. There's a pedagogy around that. There's a way of doing that as well. And it depends on, I guess, your school environment, your children, the parents, on the age of the kids, because the way of doing it in kindergarten, and the way I'm gonna do it in 6th, 7th, 8th grade is different but you've got that set of norms though that we've already discussed. We want self-direction. Well how do you teach a kindergartner to self-direct? You know? Or a third grader to self-direct? What does that look like? But the adults have to be very clear on what it looks like for them. Bear in mind, the adults were not all raised in the same home. So we must talk about what that looks like. It can't be well "In my room, that will never happen." But, "in my room, it can." No, we gotta build a norm right there. That's why the norms are so important, because there could be things I would never let slide in my house as a principal, never. But in my school, it might be a different norm. Because they're not my physical children. In my house, talking back doesn't even exist. My sons are 24 and 20 years old now. Uh uh, they know not to do that. But sometimes school kids, I've seen parents and their children, and they're just mouthing off. And their conversation with their Moms and Dads and they're just back and forth and I'm like, "And you're 7?" But that's a norm of their house. I would never have it in my house. But because I see that, why am I surprised that they're going back at the teacher. Like they just had a full talk with Mom and Dad, and it was like equal playing field. So, why would were they surprised, that when the teacher asked the question, they don't wanna do it, they're back and forth. She's like thinking she's at her house. No, you're at school. So you can't just jump up and ... you know. You have to talk about what we do in this place. So, we have to talk about the norms again. And as much as that might burn me up, I have to have a discussion. In my house, we've talked already. But in a schoolhouse, we have to do a lot more talk and a lot more grace extension and just a lot more learning on that. It can be tough sometimes.</p>
Administrator 5	Public	<p>I do think it's part of the learning process. Not necessarily connected to the curriculum. It's teachable moments and teaching them different strategies and how to handle, like I said, life and thinking there. I don't know if I really answered that.</p>

Administrator 6	Public	<p>Extremely important. If you do not have classroom management, learning is not occurring. That's what I try to instill in my teachers, that we have to have the discipline in order in the classroom. I mean, I had a prime example of that this year where the discipline in a classroom was totally out of control and it lasted the whole year out of control. And even through the support, even through putting this teacher in professional development, but her not changing her practices was a result of I would say 98% of that class not passing our district assessment. As a matter of fact, they regressed. That was the only class in the whole building where they had negative numbers. But the discipline was so out of control. I would say teaching and learning. More so than ever in the inner-city schools, because my experience that I've had since I've been here is there's a lack of discipline at home. So, somebody has to teach them how to do it- the proper way to behave, what to say what not to say, because it's nothing for one of my students to come in here and say a curse word. But, once you talk to them, "We don't do that here at school. Oh I'm sorry Dr. Gentry you're right." Now they won't do it around me, but if it's a teacher, this room, this classroom I was talking about, had no problem saying it, because the teacher would attack them, wouldn't pull them to the side and say "we don't do that in our classroom." They made it into a mountain when it could've "it just, we just don't do that." So that's why I say it's a part of teaching and learning. Now at my other school, I would say no, because they come from homes where there's structure, where they understand that this is what we're supposed to and what we're not supposed to do. But basically, in inner-city, I would say it's a part of teaching and learning.</p>
-----------------	--------	---

Question	School Type	Does your school's code of conduct or approach to student behavior differ from district policies? How so?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	<p>From the [religious organization we are associated with]? No, it doesn't. The [religious organization] leaves it pretty open. I think their approach is most let's put some things in our handbook in case there's a problem that comes up, we're covered, but not "Let's tell the schools what to do." So, they put a lot of lingo in their guidebooks like "to the principal's discretion" and all of these events could be grounds for suspension or expulsion, but that does not mean I'm actually going to do all of those things. It just means that if I do, I'm covered, so to speak. So, I think ours goes a step beyond what district policy would be. That's one of the nice things about working in a private school—there's not much dictated to us about what we have to do. I can't speak too strongly [about Shelby County policy] because I've never worked in Shelby County schools. But it seems like, a lot of Shelby County school policies are bandaids to a gaping wound. Like with discipline, there's so many social and emotional problems that kids come in with and there's not adequate resources to be able to sufficiently deal with the problems. And so they just hand out discipline whenever they can but there's just not really a good long-term vision to what it would look like.</p>

Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	<p>Yes, more structure, more discipline, more obedience</p> <p>Call parents in because kid is rolling eyes, headstuff (document this, parents come in 3rd time)</p> <p>Parents signed handbook—you have agreed</p> <p>Last semester perfect, this semester out of control, and we know why, it's because of "hormones" Students are testing their "dark side"</p> <p>It is ok to test dark side, let them know and bring them back in. Choices have consequences. Go to the handbook and pull out applicable phrases.</p> <p>"Wife has them for 2 weeks. Kids be themselves—no homework, responsibilities, etc. My mom and I provide structure." "So for 2 weeks you are a good dad?" "Yes" "You are a halftime Dad. A halftime good Dad. 2 weeks on/ 2 weeks off Dad. Ask yourself, is this good for my daughter?"</p> <p>"I'm very nice. I'm very kind. I hug kids. I talk them through their stuff. I have a hard fist. I say the things that need to be said. I am not afraid to offend." "The Presbyterian church has a saying, 'There is a time to comfort the afflicted and a time to afflict someone who has become too comfortable.'"</p> <p>"Seek balance, says my religious adviser."</p> <p>Young children: I hold them and lets them cry a little. Younger kids do not understand the broad world of different life experiences. They are lacking food, clothes, shelter, safety, supervision. They do not understand where they come from could be different. These are their only experiences.</p> <p>People can't do anything unless they feel accepted.</p> <p>"I try to be kind, but can't discount the fact that the student is not sitting crisscross-apple-sauce and is kicking the kid net to him"</p> <p>He is coloring on his worksheet.</p> <p>Bring them in: "What time did you go to bed? Did you have your breakfast?" The student cries. "Why are you crying. Do you want a hug? Hug all the sadness and meanness out. Why are you doing that? We'll go the long way, talk, hold hands.</p> <p>Even with the middle school kids. I am a toucher. For instance, when students bring me things and then lag around. "What are you doing lagging around? I'll give you a nuggie." It's creating rapport. Unlike when we were young, the principal had a paddle. It's not about wielding power, it's about creating good.</p> <p>I sit back, relax, and I know there are good people here. Good administration, and good teachers with objectives laid out. They are driven and want to make the administration happy.</p>
Administrator 3	Charter	<p>Yes, the obvious ones are suspensions and expulsions. We remove students from rooms quicker. Our bar for staying in a classroom is much higher. I think it works well. We've had lots of challenges. We have a lot of students who have settled in really nicely and then we have students that have not and have struggled with the new expectations thrown at them. I talked to a student today who was just talking about... and just, they often feel like they get sent out of rooms for what they would consider little stuff. And that's different from other schools that say "Classroom teacher, you deal with everything except violent behavior." And nothing else gets sent out. There's other schools that are even more, you know, more rigorous or whatever you want to call it in their expectations of students. Pencils not moving one time and you go to the Dean's office. We are somewhere on that continuum. I would say we are probably definitely at the classroom level closer to a no excuses model. But as far as the keeping our kids with our higher level punishments we are unique in the sense that we approach this work. 35 of our students have either been expelled or not asked back from previous schools. So which is from K-4, that's a ton. To get expelled or not asked back from an elementary school... yeah... but that's the school we want to be. We want to be a school that accepts and welcomes anybody.</p>
Administrator 4	Charter	<p>The policy requires you to.. there's like levels. And based on those levels, you have certain actions you can follow based on those levels. It doesn't tell you "3 of this must be this." Not that rigid. But, so, it's just there. I can say that I know it's there, you have to make it fit your school's mission and vision. And ours is one of self-direction that's inside of ours. So I'm gonna always thrive to figure out how can I get a kid back on track. We don't...suspension is never our go-to. With that not being our go-to, that code of conduct cannot assist right there. Cause that's not our go-to. Our go-to is gonna be how to keep you in school. How to keep you, because actually that's more work on us. So I want to keep you here. So the code of conduct is there if I need it, but I'm gonna do all I can to realize our vision of self-direction so that I don't ever have to use all of that stuff over there.</p>
Administrator 5	Public	No.
Administrator 6	Public	No.

Question	School Type	Is there/are there disciplinary policies that you disagree with? Within your school; district; state; or federal?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	No, I disagree with the number of suspensions and expulsions that I hear of other schools doing, especially with young children. It was surprising to me the number of children that would come from Kindergarten or First Grade and their parents would say they are coming because they keep getting suspended or expelled. And that saddens me that for 5- and 6-year old's, that's how it's being handled.
Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	
Administrator 3	Charter	Discipline policies within my school? Um... I think. Yeah I mean I really... I don't know. We've talked a lot about, as a group of leaders, how it doesn't make sense to suspend or expel elementary aged kids at all. But, to do that effectively, the wrap-around services that are needed are a lot. So, that's social workers. Counselors. Etc. And there's not... We would, the royal we, other people that I associate with and talk about this stuff, that there were no alternative schools... That the entire budget that was used for alternative schools was then put back in schools in the form of social workers, counselors, etc, that we would be able to have no expulsions and suspensions. Alternative schools are when a student gets kicked out of a school, ok so the way it actually works... When you look at expulsion numbers for districts... Those expulsion numbers are incredibly low, the reason they are low is that in Shelby County if a student gets kicked out of school and then goes to the alternative school, it is not considered an expulsion. It's called a transfer. That's how it's coded, more or less. An expulsion is when a student is kicked out and not enrolled in school. You're literally not in school at all. That happens super super rarely. Alternative schools have lots of kids. I'd be interested to see the breakdown of that.
Administrator 4	Charter	Disagree with? Um, I think they're there for a reason. I don't think I have the –inaudible– to say it just shouldn't be there. One thing that I do have a little bit of trouble with is just something that's not there. And that is corporal punishment. I hate the word, the name, corporal punishment. I think that when it was taken away, in 2005, during the early years, somewhere around that time. Those kids now, 10-12 years later, are the ones that are out of high school now or graduating. And they've never, they've always known they couldn't be paddled. And you know, that generation has gone through school and it's been a mess with behavior in many degrees. And I think that had they known it was a possibility maybe they wouldn't have been so aggressive toward—I mean I've never heard of school fights on adults and staff and school riots and kids acting –inaudible—and you can't touch me. The can't. You can't touch me is not MC Hammer. You can't touch me is what the school kids have been saying for years since that policy was put in place in Memphis City Schools. And I think we have whole generations growing up in the school system without-- the fear that nobody can touch me. It's been about 12 years. You've seen what's happened in the school system. Especially those last few years, when those kids hit high school. And I just feel like they had reason for that, and I'm sure they did. Some people just went way beyond, overboard, abused it. And I get that, and I hate... I get that. Because I'm sure it was happening. But sometimes I wish that there could be something like the threat of it. If you do this, you could get paddled. I've never had to paddle a kid because since '05 it's been the policy. But I've had parents write me a note, "You can do it. It's my child. You can threaten them with it." But I can't. They said it's okay, but I can't. Our charter school could actually put it in now because we're charter but I leave out of it. But sometimes the fear of it, that you could get it, get a whoopin, and I'm not saying aggressive, I'm not saying... just something. Just a fear of it, I think, could deter a few more things than not. So we've basically had about 12 good years or more of kids that have gone through the school system, because they were in kindergarten about that time, who have "you can't touch me" mentality. And they're in classrooms, hitting teachers back, and are fighting, with no fear of a consequence but suspension which means I get to go home and watch Netflix all day. That's my punishment? Cartoons? Hanging out with my friends? Going to the mall? Pssh, suspend me. And that should not be the case. So that's the only thing that I wish maybe was somehow adjusted. And I don't even want to call it—CP—I don't even want to call it that. Just that name doesn't quite fit what I'm talking about. That's the only name that's known that I can just pull out and say, but not CP or corporal punishment as it was known. Something else but not that extreme. Never that extreme again. But something, you know?

Administrator 5	Public	Not as far as policy, no. Maybe procedures. I would love for us to be able to have an interventionist to do what I just did. That's wasting my time. And the teacher shouldn't have to pull a student out to have that kind of conversation or something like... so if we have another person, and that's all that you do. You pull them out, and have 4 or 5 boys, and you say, "Ok, if he looked at you? So what? You be confident." You know, all that kind of stuff. A self-esteem boost. I would say that and then also being able to just document some of these things. Cause sometimes you don't want to put it because we are being tracked as a school. How many referrals are you getting? And you can't suspend. And you're like ok but they were doing this, and in the policy they're supposed to get an overnight, ok I'm gonna just talk to your parents. Because that gives the kid a pass, you know? And I guess it really just depends on the child. Because if it was me, I was like "I'm glad we didn't put it in. I don't want to be tracked." But if some students get a free pass, free pass, free pass, and then it's like ok now I'm gonna have to suspend you. So, you know, yeah.
Administrator 6	Public	I would say that [the policies are] a little lenient... cause even in this book here, some of the severe behaviors, the first step, well I wouldn't say severe, I would say behaviors I would consider severe, the first step is to have a parent-teacher conference when I think that maybe it should have been just a little more difficult, well not difficult, something else should have been done. But it's just a parent-teacher conference. So, the policies in here, some of them you're telling me, the child did this at school, the first thing I have to do is kind of give a warning. For example, threatening body harm to school personnel. The first act is an in school suspension. But you know, you have a 5th grader telling you he's gonna kill you when you get out of school... to me, that kinda like, let's look at this, let's look at this again. My approach does change with age. A kindergartener may hit a teacher. And yes, I mean, a little bitty fella this big. Ok yes they, but to a teacher that's major. But as an administrator, I'm like they didn't do bodily harm, yes, they were angry, but this is a five-year-old, so we have to kinda look at that. I do try to based on age. I had a first grader, 6 year old, expelled. The reason he was expelled was that he had done it continuously. We did do this right here, what it said first, but then he came back and he did it again. This was the actual hitting. After doing it several times, we had to take that to an expulsion because you can't hit the teacher. You just can't do that.

Question	School Type	Recently, there has been increased interest in research surrounding the 'school-to-prison pipeline' in urban schools. What is your take on this? Do you think it is a reality, or a farce created by academics?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	I think it's definitely a reality. It's a reality I take very seriously. We have parents who very openly talk to us about the school to prison pipeline. I have the parent of a Kindergarten child right now who came in crying because the child's father has been in prison and is going to be in prison for life and she sees a lot of the same behaviors starting at an early age for the five-year-old. The five-year-old keeps getting in trouble, and she's already thinking to herself "If I don't change things, my child is going to go to prison." And it's a five-year-old. And that's not an uncommon comment for a parent to make to me, especially with boys when they come into my office when we are having behavior meetings. I had a child last year, a first-grade child, Dad came in, we had to do an in school suspension, Dad came in and started crying and said, "I know the statistics of what happens for 6 year olds when they are suspended or expelled. If this happens to my kid, he might go to prison when he's older. You cannot suspend or expel him please." Just very powerful that parents are already at this young age thinking that way. So I think it is real. I think it is a big product of schools being too large and kids getting lost. I hope that it won't happen at our school because we have such small class sizes, every teacher knows every kid, every administrator knows every kid, we think that makes a big different to kids not getting lost. But it's real. I definitely think it's real.

<p>Administrator 2 (not recorded)</p>	<p>Private Parochial</p>	<p>Has a reality. Look at this, I love this. *reads a slogan about children in Memphis* We take them, with a minimum amount of [removed for anonymity] a month. You're agreeing to have them dressed and here on time. Clean their clothes. We feed them, educate them, say yes ma'am, no ma'am, and things we teach them hopefully they take back home. Parents do not understand boundaries and the corrections, but they agreed to it.</p> <p>"It's spelled out" --consults handbook-- We make a stable environment. They're living in one not stable.</p> <p>"We teach them management techniques": handbooks, folders, helps them to remember, organize, and learn.</p> <p>We help them "organize their lives personally and academically."</p> <p>We help them convey an appreciation for duty and citizenship.</p> <p>"What's wrong/ not working in your life? What do you want and how will you get there? It's not about haves/have nots. We have specific rules for hallway, bathroom, outside, how you walk, red zones where you don't talk. Did you do your best? No, why? You tired? You eat breakfast? Just don't want to. That's not going to work. Big people go to work, little people go to school.</p> <p>No suspensions/ expulsions at this school, but has at other</p> <p>"Funny story"</p> <p>"Lily white" little boy kept being touched by African American little boy for two days in a row. "OK show me where you are standing."</p> <p>The African-American boy touches butt. "I wanted to see what it felt like."</p> <p>I'm not going to suspend him but teachers wanted me too. I'm calling both parents in. Making sure I am protecting all the children.</p> <p>Another girl went under her stall to the next stall and would say "Show me" I talked to the parents and correct her.</p> <p>"Unnatural curiosity I could not control or protect other kids."</p> <p>Take her home and keep her home for days.</p> <p>"Momma you take care of where this is coming from"</p> <p>She switched schools.</p> <p>Pre-K students "asked to go home" often switch schools</p> <p>I don't say expelled or suspended, I just say just go home.</p> <p>"You can't play with us; you're black." So I suspended him for saying that.</p> <p>Parents tried to fight the punishment, but I used the handbook.</p> <p>Went on for 3 weeks, kid got kicked out of school for 2 days, parents switched school.</p> <p>The parent is the first educator.</p>
<p>Administrator 3</p>	<p>Charter</p>	<p>Um.... man I don't... Um... I don't... A farce created by academics? I don't know about all that. There's clearly research that suggests that... There is... Well I don't know about all that. But I will say I know that there are not enough schools doing really good work and therefore when we have more students are leaving high school without the skills, academic, social, and emotional skills that they need to be successful in college or be successful outside of college they are more likely to end up incarcerated. ... it all depends on how you define school-to-prison pipeline and what that actually... Like is there actually a direct path that says hey when you graduate here, you'll go right to jail... no... so.. the.. no... I think it's more of a... yeah... I think the nomenclature gets lost in what they're actually talking about which is the idea that if we are not properly preparing students then we are setting them up for.... There's just very few options.</p>

<p>Administrator 4</p>	<p>Charter</p>	<p>Oh it's a reality. I believe that children.. the reasons for illiteracy, that we can go into all day long. Between teachers in primary grades, maybe not having the support they need, to poverty, to a whole bunch of reasons. We can go on all day long. Reality, the fact is, here are the results. And the results are that when children are behind in school, when they're illiterate, and I mean literate as not just word callers but comprehenders of the information—all that's literacy. As well as writing it. But when they're severely behind in school, when they lack the adequate—inadible—to make good decisions in school, they're more attractive to negative influences. So, they have that part right there. And I think that also with the suspension being the go-to, in a lot of cases, you open up the door, of Pandora's Box, to another world. When suspended from school, or alternative school, or hanging out in the streets, they get a new set of friends that then can thrust them into a whole new environment of suspension-related behaviors. And then that begins the pipeline. And so you've got illiteracy, you've got behavior, you've got all of these factors, and it's not just those two that feed the pipeline. A lot of it's poverty and having to survive, all of those things feed the pipeline. But the pipeline does exist, and when they get to a point where they're in middle school and high school, they're dropping out for a variety of reasons. There's probably a high drop out rate in prisons, too. The school-to-prison pipeline... Schools should not be a pipeline for prison but toward contributing to the society. But you're only gonna be two people. Either contributing or not contributing. When you're contributing, you see better in yourself and your work, while you're there, you're staying engaged. But when you feel like you're not contributing to society, then you find other avenues. We gotta figure out how we keep kids contributing so that they don't have to be steered in another direction. Because noncontributing kids are in the pipeline. I don't know many who are contributing and loving school and doing well and engaging and following the law and following the code of conduct and all... that are going that way. Because they're on another path. But when you're not contributing, for whatever reason, then the pipeline is like, shined up and oiled for you to slide right on through it, you know?</p>
<p>Administrator 5</p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>No I think it is. I'm not gonna say I've seen it here. But I know at, even at my previous schools, certain students, no matter what they do, you're gonna put it in the system, and eventually they get expelled. So there's nothing to help intervene with that behavior because they don't know what to do. In addition to, in school it's one way. But when you leave out and go home, it's a different way in the streets. And it's inevitable. Because they'll bring it into the school, the behavior that they do outside of the school, like fighting. We tell them that's the lowest form of communication, but if they don't fight in the street, they gon die. Or they'll get whatever. You know. Something like that. So I do think it's a reality. And it's unfortunate. I wish there was some kind of middle thing to help that... But I don't know what that answer is. Sometimes children get tracked, no minor how minor. With specific children. Like oh, there's Ryan. I don't believe Ryan, Ryan probably did do it. Ok **types** Or Ryan was throwing paper. Oh ok. **types** I think teachers get a stigma, students get stigmatized. Starting in even Kindergarten. "This child is bad." Here they come. First grade, "Oh here comes that bad child." Second grade.. and it follows them. And even when they go to the next school, you know they'll go, "oh ok I heard about you." And that's not fair, because people change. Sometimes, not all the time. We just have to give them something to work with.</p>
<p>Administrator 6</p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>I think it's a reality. Within Shelby County, yes. In my school, yes. And that's why I try so hard to talk to them, especially my boys. I've actually seen my boys here placed in handcuffs. You know, and it really has just broken my heart. But how do you get through to them? And that's the part that's just really heartbreaking to me. And I try to talk to them and talk to them about their behavior and thinking about their actions. I have one student now, he's in the 6th grade now, and I found out from a police officer, two days ago that's been arrested twice. In 6th grade. And he lives right across the street over there. And he was not, you know, he was not a very outspoken child in the classroom. Very quiet. But if you said something to make him angry he may curse you, but he wasn't the type to say I'm gonna get you or anything but we talked all the time about him not having that structure at home. But he didn't have no one to lead and guide him. And that's the part I say from prison to pipeline, that's it.</p>

Question	School Type	Are there ways you see your school, or your role as an administrator, contributing to the school to prison pipeline? Why or why not?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	<p>Yes. So, I think unfortunately, occasionally I do feel myself being a part of that. And I don't mean to be. I don't think anybody means to be. But you have children that have exceptional social or emotional needs, sometimes trauma related, and our city does not have the mental health resources to properly serve children, especially children at risk. The cost of getting a child diagnosed with any kind of learning disability is between \$1,000-\$2,000. And if you're thinking of a parent that is single-parent kind of family, that's just completely unreasonable. Especially my English-language learning children, there are not enough mental health professionals who speak Spanish. One time I accompanied a family to a mental health appointment for a young Spanish-speaking girl. I am bilingual, fortunately, so I was able to understand what was going on in the meeting. But it was very clear to me very quickly that this mental health professional was not qualified, talented, wasn't going to be of help to this child. So, I talked to the parents afterward and she said, "Well there are no other options." So, I sort of looked into it, and she was kinda right. There aren't very many options. So I look at, especially with my older kids, because they're the ones where the problems tend to get bigger and more serious than little kids, and occasionally it gets to a point where they can't be in our school environment anymore because the problems begin to be so large and I think very seriously about where are they going next. What's down the road for them? And the fact that I can't get that child counseling that they so desperately need weighs very heavily on me.</p>
Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	<p>Contributing to the...?" I don't think we are.... We are trying to alleviate through a strong sense of purpose for students, family, and communities. We want to make a difference. The school system wants to make a difference.</p>
Administrator 3	Charter	<p>I hope not. Shoot, no. We want to do the opposite, of course. Our goal is every single day to provide opportunities to make sure that, you know... about investments and how we invest in our students. And we want those investments to pay off. And those investments are we invest our time, our energy, our resources to help them so to make sure that they have more options. We always talk about options. We want to make sure that every single one of our students has lots of options for when they graduate high school and when they graduate college. That means we have to make sure they are really well-prepared, and our focus is that they are well prepared academically. We are gonna make sure that all our kids are really good readers. So the start of the year, 12% of our Kindergartners were on grade level reading, and by January, 70% of them were. Yeah no, we hope we are doing the opposite.</p>

Administrator 4	Charter	<p>We have a moral responsibility as principals, schoolers, educators, all of us, to develop within our sphere of influence, within our locus of control, good citizens. That's why schools exist. That's the concept of why we exist. To develop people who can contribute to society. That's our goal. So we have a job to do in that regard. Now, are we in complete control of getting that done? No. We have many factors that are constantly working against us to get that done. But, whatever we can do in our locus of control, that we have a moral obligation to do, to do what you can, to keep, to launch kids forward. We believe that adults are the bows and kids are the arrows. That's actually in the Bible. And when you pull that arrow back, what have you put in that tension to be able to propel that kid forward so that when you launch that arrow, it can sail very far. Have you put in that tension respect, self-direction, kindness, empathy, courage, resilience, resilience, resilience, never giving up, working hard? Have you put their your love, your cared-for, you basic needs and provided-for, what have you put in that tension okay? So when you launch that arrow forward, they can fly. That's our job, to be the bows for those kids. Now, let's just say we haven't done that. Let's just say, you know, the bow is barely pulling back. They haven't had anybody supporting. Anybody encouraging. It's real weak. It's real weak. It's not strong. When you get ready to launch it, cause there's a launch day, it's called 18 years old. It's called going to high school. It's called going to middle school. It's called any school year. There are launch days that are set by society. So, on their launch day, how far will they go? Will they flip and crash dive? Will they sail forward and take their wings and be able to continue to be a thriving adult? So our moral responsibility is to be those bows for those kids. And that's actually in the Bible, that's our job. So that's kinda... So I really, my current school took that on as their vision. It just all came together like "That's our job. We are the bows and kids are the arrows. What are we doing as educators, mentors, as teachers, as therapists? All of these things that we are at school?" We do what we can, despite what's happening around us. You know, but what are we doing. Because sometimes, you know, we got that bow and arrow and it's war time. Look around us, bombs going off, people shooting, literally, I hate to say it, literally sometimes, we're in a warzone. You know we're trying to help these kids be successful, and so we're right there in a warzone and there's fire around us and we still have to launch those kids despite the bullets that are flying above their heads. We have to launch them above those things. That's our job. Do we contribute to the pipeline? No. We take from the pipeline. Yeah, we literally have designed our behavior program around rewarding great effort and great behavior, not perfection. But rewarding the effort. We have literally put within our school things to try to make school fun and engaging for kids. Are we perfect? No. But we're always trying to get there. Our goal is to literally not contribute to.</p>
Administrator 5	Public	<p>No... we try to work with them. I don't always document everything. I just don't. Like I said, I really try to talk to them. And give them something else, besides what they have done. So, I would say no. [We have] the mentoring program. [We model good behavior.] Especially with the males. So no, I would say no.</p>
Administrator 6	Public	<p>I try to instill in my students as much as I can about the choices that they're making, whether they be right or they are wrong choices. I don't have a problem telling them that at all. Very very very vocal with my young men and they'll tell you that [I am] partial to the boys here, and that is probably true because of what I've seen. So I just try to be an advocate for them to say this is not the road that you want to take.</p>

Question	School Type	Do you have any questions for me, or anything else you would like to add?
Administrator 1	Private Parochial	No, nothing I'd like to add. But I'd like to see your finalized paper.

Administrator 2 (not recorded)	Private Parochial	<p>One more story, I worked in public school for many years.</p> <p>“I was a student-teacher during white flight in 1975. I worked in an art classroom of all African Americans and 2-3 white kids. The teacher was firm, and I thought he was harsh. There was a boy that the girls did not want to sit next to. He smelled, he dressed sloppily, etc. I pulled him aside and learned he did not have running water, you know stuff like that. He was slow/sloppy so I didn’t expect much out of him. I tried to help him.”</p> <p>The teacher asked me to lunch, and then said, “Why are you being easy so on him? See how neat/clean/ smart that other kid is? He lives right next door. He has to go to a community pump. It’s about expectation. We as teachers give them experiences of more. We hold them accountable, give them more. You’re perpetuating that behavior and the black culture. Be firm. Quit doing that.”</p> <p>“I loved that man”</p>
Administrator 3	Charter	<p>I’d love to see it. Even as you’re doing your research. Especially your extensive lit review. One of the greatest things about college students is infinite time, so you get to read things I’d love to dive into. So as you are reading a bunch of stuff and writing about discipline and prison-to-school pipeline and whatever and all that stuff I’d love for you to share the stuff you’re reading so you can read and share with my staff.</p>
Administrator 4	Charter	<p>I will say, in my past, I may have contributed to it, based on my strong allegiance to policy. As a new principal back in the day, I’ve been around 17 years now going on 18 years, and an administrator since [the early 2000s], I will say that when I first started off, I was very obedient and allegiance to the policy. And I think that I had to learn that sometimes things could be different. I had the power to change some things. Be sure that you don’t break policy, but be very wise in how you implement the policy. I went by the book. Book said this, I did it. I thought I had to be so obedient to be a great principal. I was reminded that, to use wisdom, use knowledge, that this policy was created by man, too maybe they had a perspective that was different from my school and fit my kids. And I had to learn that. And sometimes our hands were tied, there were no other options. You know, you didn’t have the manpower or resources for a plan B. If they did x, y, z, this was the option that they were provided. You didn’t have any other option provided to you, this was all you had. So in those cases, you can’t help but in some type contribute to it. I had a child, for example, in an elementary school, that I had once, and he was very aggressive behavior. –inaudible- I saw him push the mom in the hallway and I said, “Oh mom, you can’t have that.” I dealt with him for that behavior but I told her, I said, “Imma deal with it because I saw it happen on campus. But when you get home you gotta deal with it too or you’re gonna lose your son. He’s pushing you this young; it’s only gonna get worse when he gets older.” Well I did what I could do within my own locus of control. Then, later on, I found out he continued on pushing her. She had to send him away, some kind of boys school. Middle school. And I often wished that I could’ve done more. I didn’t have the means to do more at that particular time, but I wished I did. I wonder did I contribute cause I didn’t go get her help myself, like I told her to go get it and showed her where it was. Should I have brought them inside the school and said sit right here... Like how much more could I have actually done? I couldn’t.. do.. I often wonder could I have done more to ensure that she followed through? But you can lead the horse to the water but you can’t make him drink, people say. But I often wished I could make horses drink. You know what I mean by that, right? Because I know it’d be great for you to use some good water right there. As an example I’m saying I’ve often wondered what more I could’ve done in a situation, and I think that I may have contributed not intentionally but that’s just the way things were. And I know for a fact that that’s why I left the school system and went to charter, because charter gave me the opportunity to be able to try some things different, and it be okay, and it wouldn’t get slapped on the wrist for trying something different. I knew that. And that’s why I did it. And that’s why I think we’re thriving now, because I learned that I could be innovative and not stick by that policy over there and it be okay. If I were to go back to the district now, again, you’ve got thousands of kids, hundreds of schools, I get it, you have to set a policy. I get it. But at the time, being a young principal, I was just being obedient. If I were to go back now, as more of a veteran, I would probably break a lot of rules. I know what’s best for kids now. I’d probably get in trouble but it’d be okay. Does that make any sense? Yeah so. Did I ever contribute? Yeah. Because I didn’t have all the options. Am I contributing now? No. And I can go to sleep every night knowing that I’m not contributing anymore. Because now I have access to resources. I have the power to go find them. The power to go get them. The power to leave my building at 2:00 in the afternoon, go drive and go –inaudible—and go bring back. I have more power. Because the red tape is gone. You’re able to create partnerships and bring in stakeholders and you’re able to hold parents more accountable. Literally, I go get them. Whatever you need. Mental health professionals. For example, I had a child, kindergarten child, whose momma abandoned her. And the child had a lot of issues, and the momma said you’ll be fine, you’ll be okay. And she was-- your mom was gone. So she had a lot of issues in kindergarten and was crying. You know starting to push kids a little bit. We’d talk to her a little bit her about that and she was like “Where’s my mom? Where’s my mom?” I sat down and talked to her about [how]</p>

		<p>my mom abandoned me for a little bit of time and we were able to work through all that. I was able to call a friend of mine and partner them with an organization that would help them. Sent mom to the organization. They helped her with some sessions outside of her home. In a school, I would have had to call a social worker, call this person, set up a meeting for next week, and what has been ... it's just ugh... I needed it right then that day. So I did go get it right then that day. And by the afternoon, they were getting the help they needed. Just like that. And I'm not faulting the district, you have a big, big district. You got big big people. In this mom and pop place situation, I can go get it. So that's what I mean by.. sometimes... Now, I'm not saying all charters are like that. But at my small mom and pop one, we can do that. You know, all that red tape, this meeting that meeting, we don't have time for all that. This child is crying right now in my office right now. I need you to come right now. So that's what I mean by that so. And I'm saying it could've been around then, but I wasn't exposed to the knowledge of it. Being at a charter makes you go seek the knowledge. Because you're on your own. When those mind gates open, you begin to think of all kinds of solutions. Because you're afraid like, what else can I do? What else can I do? It's like you're seeking to think outside the box. And I just wish that all schools would let us think like that. We're not robots. We're people. And you've got some phenomenal schools in the district. You've got some phenomenal schools. But I will tell you this. I'm almost sure that a lot of the phenomenal ones are breaking rules. And that's why they're phenomenal. I know some of them do, and that's why they're phenomenal. -inaudible- "You mean to tell me you didn't do that?" "Girl no. "I didn't have to do that? What? What? -inaudible-" So all of this about following the rules why it's so great. No, they're breaking the rules. That's why they're so great. So, there you have it.</p>
Administrator 5	Public	No. Good luck.
Administrator 6	Public	No, when I got your email I got excited because discipline is just near and dear to me and I really wish that we had something for teachers that teach in inner-city schools to know the challenges that our students face and to be more open to what we are working with and that's kinda just my concern.

