

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

In Maricopa County, too many students are missing the opportunity for a quality education.

#Demand2Learn is working to eliminate practices that push children out of classrooms.

When it comes to accessing a quality education, **not all students are treated equally.**

Lacking resources and training, some schools have adopted harsh disciplinary policies such as “zero tolerance” and other exclusionary practices that push students out of school: asking them to voluntarily withdraw, suspending them, expelling them, or referring them to law enforcement for minor offenses. Not only have these extreme policies proven to be harmful to children, they also disproportionately affect children of color, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities.

**8 TIMES
MORE LIKELY**

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS in charter high schools are **8 TIMES MORE LIKELY** than their white peers to receive out-of-school suspensions.

**6 TIMES
MORE LIKELY**

LATINO STUDENTS in charter high schools are **6 TIMES MORE LIKELY** than their white peers to receive out-of-school suspensions.

**18 TIMES
MORE LIKELY**

In some district schools close to tribal communities, **NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS** are up to **18 TIMES MORE LIKELY** than their white peers to be suspended.

**TWICE AS
LIKELY**

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES in elementary and middle schools are **TWICE AS LIKELY** as students without disabilities to receive in-school suspensions.



HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

WHAT'S THE ACLU DOING TO FIX IT?

The **#Demand2Learn** campaign is focused on eliminating practices that disproportionately push children out of school. We're partnering with school leaders to develop model schools that are committed to increasing student retention by 2020.

Meanwhile, we're working with families, providing them with training and organizing opportunities to advocate for reforms that will help children stay in school. We're also demanding changes at the state level, including better reporting and transparency about school disciplinary practices.

We want anyone who cares about public education in Arizona to help with our work.

For more information, please contact us at demand2learn@acluaz.org or visit www.demand2learnaz.org.

1 Maya* enrolled her son in a high-performing charter school.



From the beginning, children made discriminatory comments about her son, who is black. He ignored the comments, motivated to stay at the school because of its strong academics.

3

One day, Maya got a call from the school telling her that her son's hair distracted other students. They told her to cut it, otherwise he wasn't allowed to attend school.



After a conversation with her son, they decided they'd braid it.

5

But the school said that the braids were distracting too. The school changed its handbook to make braided hair on boys an offense.



6

Maya and her son were hurt and confused, but they still wanted to stay at the school. So Maya shaved her son's head.



7

Maya's son continued to be singled out by the school so Maya decided to take him out, and now he's homeschooled. His withdrawal was unfair, the result of racial bias that must be remedied.



AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN LIKE MAYA'S SON ARE 8x MORE LIKELY TO BE TARGETED WITH EXCLUSIONARY PRACTICES IN CHARTER HIGH SCHOOLS.

School administrators are increasingly taking extreme disciplinary steps for minor infractions like dress code violations and behavioral transgressions, such as defiance and classroom disturbance. Discretionary punishment for minor offenses is what often leads to disparities in discipline rates for children of color.

This is why something as simple as hair can lead to a student being pushed out of school.

* Name changed to protect privacy.