

THE *every student counts* ALLIANCE

Who are we?

The Every Student Counts Alliance is a group of advocates, parents, and community leaders seeking to reform school discipline in Spokane. We share information and ideas, collaborate to identify solutions, and work collectively to elevate our voice.

Organizational members include Team Child, the Spokane NAACP, the ACLU of Washington, The Arc of Spokane, the Northwest Justice Project, The Northwest Autism Center, the Spokane Regional Health District and Passages Family Support.



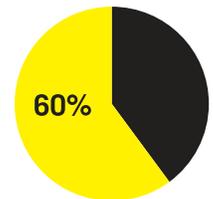
Why focus on student discipline?

Students who are suspended from school are much less likely to graduate and more likely to be involved in the juvenile justice system. Suspension is also an ineffective way to address student misbehavior: it fails to teach students new skills or address underlying issues that contribute to behavior incidents.



In the 2015-2016 school year, Spokane Public Schools suspended and expelled students at a rate **1.5 times** the state average.

The majority of students suspended (**60%**) were removed from school for disruptive conduct, failure to cooperate, or other behaviors that do not involve drugs, violence, theft, harassment, or threats.



3X The impact falls disproportionately on students of color and students with disabilities, who are as much as **2 to 3 times** as likely to be suspended as their peers. This contributes to inequities in our school system.

What's the solution?

The Every Student Counts Alliance is committed to school discipline practices that:

- Promote positive and restorative response to student behavior that keep students in school;
- Provide resources and professional development for teachers, administrators, and school staff;
- Eliminate disparities in discipline of students of color and students with disabilities;
- Prevent criminalizing student misbehavior in school;
- Facilitate intercultural communication, cultural competence, and understanding of implicit bias;
- Ensure parent and community engagement in shaping school district policy.



How have we made progress?

Due to advocacy by the Every Student Counts Alliance, Superintendent Dr. Shelley Redinger signed a resolution in June 2016 recognizing the overuse of suspension and expulsion in Spokane Public Schools and committing the district to a 2 year reform initiative.

Over the past year, with the involvement of members of the Every Student Counts Alliance, the District has:



- Convened a workgroup facilitated by district and community members to develop a comprehensive plan for implementing and supporting lasting change to school discipline practices
- Revised its discipline policies and procedures
- Created policies on school police, including required training, a complaint process, and protocols to limit arrest of students for low-level behavior
- Expanded its training of staff and teachers.

As a result, discipline and student arrest rates have decreased in Spokane Public Schools, although more work needs to be done to fully implement solutions and monitor progress.

How can I get involved?

Parents, students, and other community advocates can get involved by:

- Join our Facebook Group for updates and information. Search for “Every Student Counts.”
- Check out our website at www.aclu-wa.org/everystudentcounts
- Participate in strategy sessions and information sharing. We have weekly check-in calls and regular events. For more information, contact Vanessa Hernandez, Youth Policy Director for the ACLU of Washington, at vhernandez@aclu-wa.org
- Share your story! For more information, email spokanediscipline@aclu-wa.org