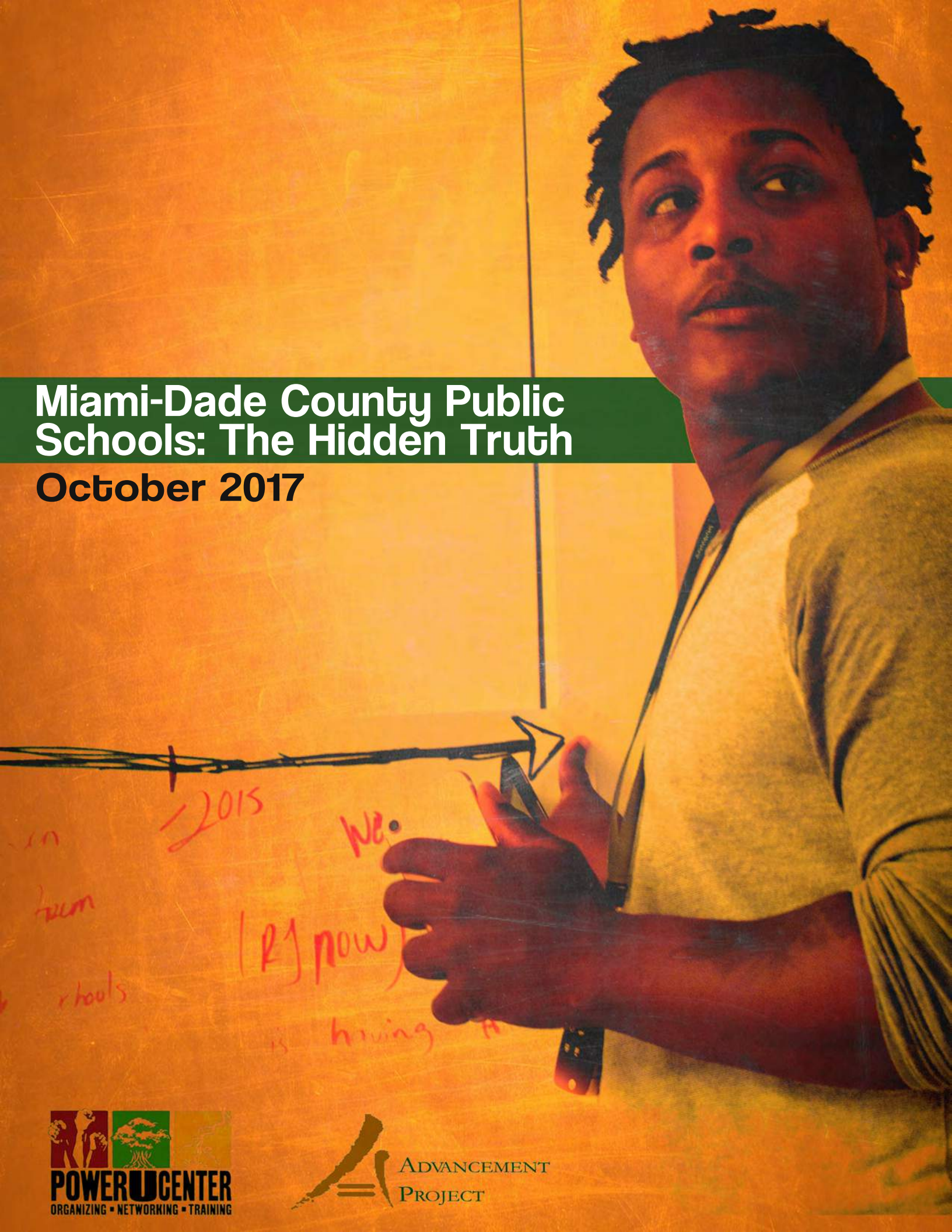


Miami-Dade County Public Schools: The Hidden Truth

October 2017



INTRODUCTION: WHY WE WROTE THIS REPORT

At the Power U Center for Social Change (Power U), we believe that people who are impacted by unjust laws and practices best understand the problems facing their communities and are best able to create solutions.

By building people power we know that we can create long-term change and that all of the members of the community can play an important part in building our shared vision. In Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS), Black youth are often ignored, pushed out, locked out and criminalized. Our goal is to see Black youth and community members cultivate and direct their power to create a more just educational system.

All youth deserve and need good schools, health-care and freedom from all kinds of violence including institutional, familial and intimate so they can develop healthy sexual subjectivities. Because of this, we know that our schools must pair restorative justice with reproductive justice, equitable school financing, health care and civil/queer/feminist/disability rights to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. We must create meaningful ways for our communities and families to engage and utilize schools, and access resources and supports.

In this report, we lay out the problems we see in our schools and also identify the solutions we believe are critical to transform our schools from toxic environments where youth are traumatized into havens where they can reach their potential and feel safe, honored and included in decision-making.

Our proposed solutions mirror the key areas MDCPS needs to address to improve school climate and create the schools our young people deserve.

Power U has been engaged in building power in Miami for 18 years. As an organization that fought and won on issues like toxic dumping and bad living conditions in Overtown, a historically Black community in Miami, the focus is now on winning just treatment of students in our schools, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation and all parts of their complex identities.

To understand how these discipline policy changes impact student treatment in school and learning environments, we felt compelled to tell a more complete story centering the voices and experiences of young people.

WORD KEYS

In an effort to make our report more accessible to the community, we have included word keys to explain and define terms for which the general public may be less familiar.

INTRODUCTION: WHY WE WROTE THIS REPORT

Using a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) approach developed with support from a doctoral student from the University of Colorado, we conducted a survey to capture how young people in MDCPS are experiencing school and provide insight about student treatment in schools and in Student Success Centers.² By pairing this data with a quantitative analysis of MDCPS' discipline data, we developed a report card, grading the district on how well it supports students.



We graded county schools based on a rubric similar to one created by the Schools of Opportunity Project out of the National Education Policy Center that assesses how well schools create opportunities to learn.³

We modified this rubric to assess how MDCPS addresses factors like creating safe and supportive school environments, using restorative and non-exclusionary approaches to discipline, addressing issues of gender and reproductive justice and being transparent and accountable to the community.

We wrote this report because we believe that we deserve excellent schools that support, respect and challenge all students, and that the discrimination and violence we face in schools as Black youth, **LGBTQIA** and heterosexual alike, is detrimental to our education. While MDCPS has done a superficial evaluation of Student Success Centers and continues disseminating

self-congratulatory messaging about their work to reduce problematic discipline, our experiences tell us the reality is different.

The research confirms our lived experiences and those of the hundreds of young people we spoke with in conducting our survey. We hope you learn from this report and are moved to take action to make sure every student in MDCPS has access to fully-funded, quality schools that support and nurture young people's whole selves.

This is our assessment of how MDCPS fails to support students and what must change to make them the schools where we all succeed.

WORD KEYS

LGBTQIA - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and Asexual

INTRODUCTION: WHY WE WROTE THIS REPORT



2007

In 2007, we created a campaign to end the school-to-prison pipeline and bring restorative justice to our schools.

2012

In 2012, the school district promised to end suspensions for low-level infractions and begin trainings on restorative justice that ended because of the lack of funding.

For years, the Power U Center for Social Change, alongside allies including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), We Count and People Acting In Community Together (PACT), worked to end school suspensions disproportionately impacting Black and Brown students.

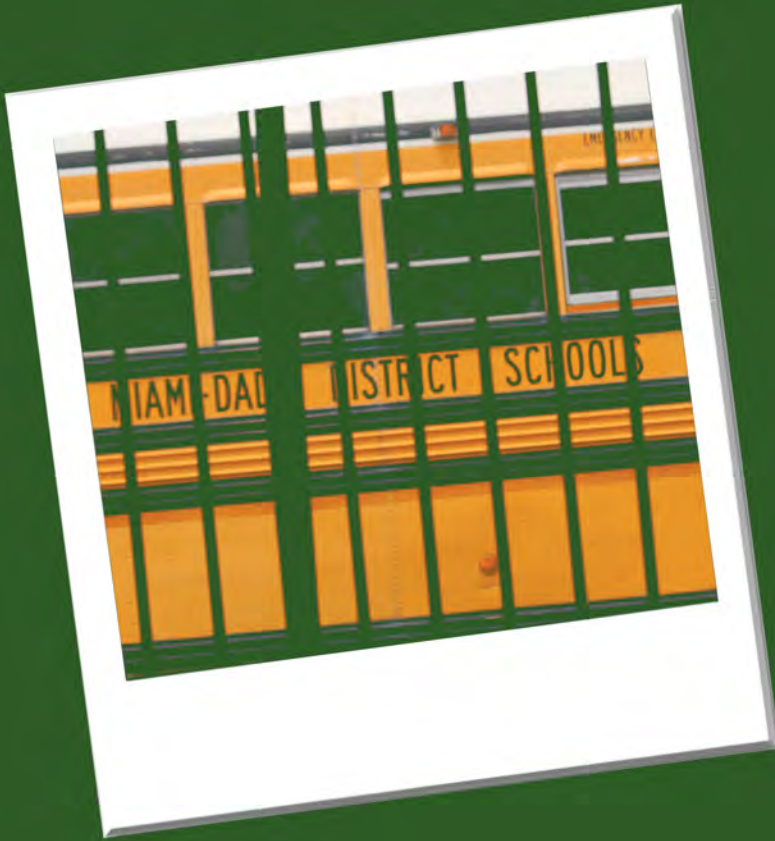
2014

While the district committed again to implement restorative justice in 2014, we still await the fulfillment of that promise. Restorative justice continues to be a cornerstone of our work today.

2015

As a result of the subsequent community pressure, MDCPS announced in 2015 that it would end the practice of out-of-school suspensions and create Student Success Centers. Miami-Dade County Public Schools inaccurately coin Student Success Centers as “safe havens where students with serious behavioral issues are temporarily removed from their home schools and receive homework assistance and behavioral counseling before returning to their regular school.”¹ In reality, Student Success Centers are little more than warehouses for students who have been removed from school. Students report that they are not receiving services and are still, in effect, being suspended from their educational programs.

BACKGROUND



The school-to-prison pipeline is the result of policies and practices that directly and indirectly push young people out of school and into the criminal justice system. We begin by sharing over a decade of research on school climate and the school-to-prison pipeline showing that zero-tolerance policies create schools that fail our Black students. The research backs up what we at Power U know to be true through everyday lived experience.

The overzealous use of suspensions, expulsions and school-based arrests create an entry point for young people to enter the criminal justice system.⁴ The overuse of harsh discipline falls most heavily on Black youth who are disciplined at rates much higher than their white peers.⁵ Black students make up 18 percent of the U.S. student population according to the U.S. Department of Education, but constitute 42 percent of referrals to law enforcement, 35 percent of school-related arrests and 39 percent of student expulsions.⁶

Furthermore, Black students are more likely than their white peers to be disciplined for reasons that are highly open to subjective interpretation such as 'disobedience' and 'defiance.'⁷ Two students may act out in class in a similar manner – by speaking out of turn and telling a joke. School staff can respond in a range of ways, including ignoring the behavior, redirecting the student, or labeling the behavior as defiance and removing that student from class.

Research tells us that race plays a big role in determining what response teachers will choose. Teachers and other school staff have racial biases and disproportionately use harsh discipline practices to regulate the behavior of students of color.⁸

Zero-tolerance policies drive a negative school climate.

School climate, which is based on shared beliefs, attitudes and values between everyone at the school, shapes what behaviors are acceptable in a school. When students have negative perceptions of the school climate, they tend to be less engaged, more truant, more likely to drop out and have issues with delinquency and bullying.⁹ In fact, many students attribute responsibility for misbehavior in the classroom to teachers' competency.¹⁰ Classrooms with teachers that use more punitive and aggressive discipline strategies tend to also have more students who act out.¹¹

Students' perceptions of school climate also impacts how they perform academically. Discrimination and discipline styles can have far reaching consequences for students, for the school as a whole and for the community beyond the school walls. Perhaps not surprisingly, non-white students tend to have less favorable perceptions of school environments.¹² Supportive measures like restorative justice and having caring adults in a school have shown to reduce suspensions and arrests, and improve school climate.¹³

Jonathan is a rising junior at Miami Edison Senior High School. His experience being suspended out-of-school in 2016 exemplifies the way

in which the inconsistent application of discipline codes strain student-teacher relationships and create distrust.

Distrust is a Two-Way Street between Students and Administrators

"Last year I was suspended out-of-school for two days for talking back to my teacher. I came in the classroom with my phone out and he was like, 'Put it away.' I said, 'Why are you telling me to put it away today when you never have a problem with it [before]?"

When Jonathan continued to inquire why the teacher had never previously enforced the rule, he was escorted by school security to the vice principal's office.

"My vice principal told me that I was suspended for two days."

After his suspension, Jonathan returned to the classroom and reflected on the lack of support from school administrators.

"I mean you can't really go talk to an administrator about things like this. They respond to you with things like, 'I don't think I'm going to believe you on this.' It was my friend that...talked to me and he helped me understand [how to deal with the situation]."

In school, Jonathan has also witnessed the normalization of sexual harassment and assault.

"I know a few people who have been sexually assaulted. It happens so often, like boys touching on girls without consent that sometimes they see it as something that's normal now. People just laugh it off now. The girls think that it is something that's right now. They think that they can't do anything to stop the boys."

The lack of action by school administration has created a culture in which sexual harassment and assault are permissible and routine.

"Sometimes it is the girls touching the boys without consent and the boys thinks it's normal too. We're not taught anything about sex. It's like a taboo topic."

RACE, DISCIPLINE AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Zero-tolerance policies and police presence in schools have been the primary way Miami-Dade County Public Schools attempt to deter crime and create environments that the school administration considers safe.

- While MDCPS has taken a step in the right direction by removing zero tolerance language from the Code of Student Conduct and announced the supposed end of out-of-school suspensions, a harsh and exclusionary approach continues to set the tone.

- The call to end all out-of-school suspensions by MDCPS indicates recognition that punishment-based solutions fall short of meeting the needs of students and schools.

**We urge
MDCPS to
implement real
solutions.**

GENDER AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

The experience of Black **femmes**, **transgender** students and **gender non-conforming (TGNC)** students is often overlooked in discussions of the school-to-prison pipeline and school climate.

While much dialogue and work around ending the school-to-prison pipeline has focused on the experiences of Black boys, the experiences Black femmes and TGNC students indicate that they are harmed and pushed out of school in unique ways. A 2017 report by the National Women's Law Center found that Black girls are over 5.5 times more likely to be suspended from school than white girls.¹⁴ Black girls in schools and communities are harmed by intersecting forms of oppression that devalue their academic work, subject them to harsh forms of discipline and leave them vulnerable to interpersonal violence and sexual harassment.¹⁵

Black femmes are also impacted by how their identity is interpreted at school and feel they often must choose between being "good" and being "ghetto." When choosing the latter, they are frequently disciplined for nonconformance with gendered stereotypes.¹⁶ When Black femmes express themselves differently than societal expectations of **cis-gendered** white girls, they are frequently labeled as nonconforming and treated as if they're criminal.¹⁷ Being assertive, however is also how Black femmes survive and thrive in the face of the combined effects of racism, sexism and classism,¹⁸ and is related to academic success.¹⁹

While the behavior of young Black femmes shows their leadership and critical thinking skills,²⁰ teachers are more likely to perceive Black female students as disruptive and as less attentive than other female students.²¹ Regardless of behavior, girls of color and especially Black girls are disciplined more harshly.²²

LGBTQIA students also are discriminated against and harassed by law enforcement officials based on their sexuality.²³ Overall, adults perceive Black femme students as less innocent and more adult than their white peers.²⁴ Adults often perceive Black femme students as older than white girls of the same age, in less need of nurturing than white girls, in less need of protection than white girls, in less need of support and comfort than white girls, more independent, having more knowledge about adult topics; and knowing more about sex than white girls.²⁵ These findings explain why Black femmes are frequently the subject of harsh discipline, arrest and sexual violence.

Young Black women and girls experience violence in their communities and schools, and must regularly resist unwanted sexual advances and other forms of violence.²⁶ Nationwide, nearly 1 in 3 girls has experienced sexual assault or other violence.²⁷ Black femmes and TGNC youth deal with sexual harassment and assaults from school staff as well as disparaging remarks about their sexuality and gender presentation.²⁸ This violence occurs as they simultaneously attend underfunded schools that fail to provide quality sex education.²⁹

In Miami-Dade County Public Schools, systematic disinvestment in students along with the racialized and gendered violence that Black femmes and TGNC young people confront, are a disgrace to the District.

WORD KEY

Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC) - Students whose gender presentation doesn't easily fall into categories of male and female, or who don't identify with the gender that they were assigned at birth.

Cis-gendered - A person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

Femme - We use the word femme in this report to talk about people who identify as feminine, female, girls, young women, and transgender female.

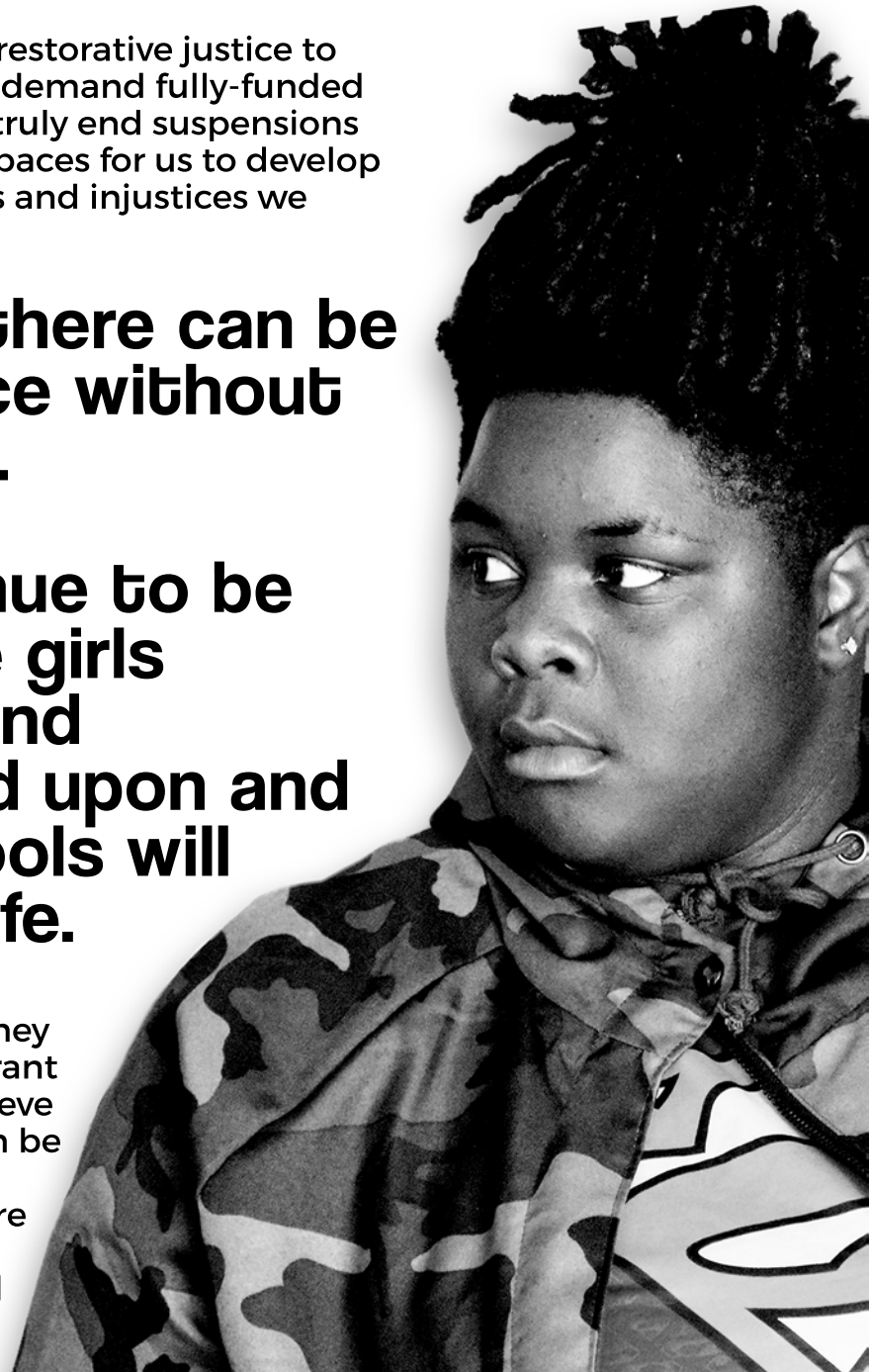
Power U demands an end to the school-to-prison pipeline and the creation of schools that fully support us.

We have campaigned for years to bring restorative justice to Miami-Dade County Public Schools. We demand fully-funded restorative justice programs in order to truly end suspensions and school-based arrests, and provide spaces for us to develop solutions to the root causes of the issues and injustices we experience in our schools.

We also know that there can be no restorative justice without reproductive justice.

If our schools continue to be environments where girls bodies, sexualities and identities are preyed upon and objectified, our schools will continue to be unsafe.

We believe Black girls should have the agency to love all components of who they are, particularly the components that grant them the ability to give life. We also believe that if we are intentional, Black boys can be allies standing alongside Black girls in creating a safe environment for all, where consent and honor are normalized and destructive behavior is challenged by all youth and adults in the school.



OUR PLATFORM AT A GLANCE

The following changes would transform our schools from toxic environments where youth are traumatized into safe havens where young people can reach their potential, feel safe, honored and are included in decision-making.

1

Invest in Lifting Us Up, Divest From Pushing Us Out

- Redirect \$2.3 million of MDCPS police and security budget from policing, security and surveillance towards counselors, staff training and human development curriculum
- Create meaningful mechanisms for students and parents to participate in the budget process to set reinvestment priorities

2

Implement Reproductive Justice in Our Schools

- Implement comprehensive sex education
- Ensure effective prevention and intervention policies and practices are in place to end sexual violence like harassment and assault in schools
- Give young parents and pregnant students the choice and the resources they need to complete their education at their home school

3

Implement Restorative Justice and End Exclusionary discipline

- Implement the “whole school approach” to restorative justice across MDCPS
- End out-of-school suspensions
- Keep students in class and address any issues in school

4 Tell the Truth about Discipline in our Schools

- Increase reporting to track “silent push out”
- Provide accurate data reporting on use of Student Success Centers
- Collect records and report honestly about effectiveness of discipline initiatives in reducing recidivism and addressing underlying issues
- Hold staff and school administration, including the superintendent and school board, accountable for their actions and inactions

We are presenting MDCPS with grades that reflect how well the school district creates safe and welcoming schools for all young people. These grades are based on: student survey results, in-depth interviews with students, and a collective data analysis and grading process based on a rubric that measures MDCPS progress in creating schools that meet our demands.³⁰ We have divided our findings and the grade into four main sections. These sections have informed and are aligned with our demands for what we believe are the necessary components of a just and safe Miami-Dade County Public School system. Each section begins by explaining our vision for the schools we believe all students deserve. We then share the grades earned by MDCPS, detailing first the practices and policies required to receive an 'A' grade. We then share data, insights and stories from MDCPS students that support those grades.

Methodology

To better understand what is happening in our schools we surveyed students across the District. We conducted two separate surveys, collecting the experiences of 648 students in total. The first survey assessed how students felt they were supported and disciplined in the schools, what their experiences were with the Student Success Centers and how schools addressed issues of racial, sexual and gender equity. The second survey was similar to the MDCPS School Climate Survey and was targeted at 3 schools in particular: John Ferguson High, Miami Northwestern High and Miami Edison High School. This targeted survey was designed to compare students' assessments of the climates in a school with more socioeconomically privileged students at John Ferguson, with those of disadvantaged youth from Miami Northwestern and Miami Edison.

Information about the schools' demographic, staffing and discipline data is below, as reported to the Office of Civil Rights in 2013.³¹ Key indicators of successful and equitable schools including access to: rigorous coursework, qualified staff and supports (like school-based counselors) are highlighted. School discipline racial disparities are also included. These factors are critical to understanding the negative and traumatizing experiences that young people have in school every day. To inform our platform, we also worked in collaboration with the Black Girls Matter MIA Coalition to host leadership development workshops where we listened to the experience of Black girls throughout the county. Over a 6-month period we also hosted separate co-ed listening circles and conducted in-depth interviews with youth to gain insight into their personal school experiences.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Below is a snapshot of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, John Ferguson High, Miami Northwestern High, and Miami Edison High.

Baseline Data on Selected Schools

School Year 2013-2014³²

table 1

School	Miami Northwestern High	Miami Edison High	John A. Ferguson High	Whole District
Total Enrollment	1,635	889	4,233	356,718
Demographics:				
% White	0.4%	0.4%	7.2%	7.7%
% Black	91.6%	84.5%	2.1%	23.1%
% Latino	7.6%	14.6%	88.2%	67.3%
% Asian	0.2%	0.2%	2.1%	1.2%
Economic Indicators:				
% eligible for free-or-reduced price meals	86.5%	88.6%	60.6%	74.1%

Table 1 shows that, as compared to the district as a whole, Miami Northwestern and Miami Edison serve a higher percentage of students of color and a higher percentage of students who are part of low-income families.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Below is a snapshot of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, John Ferguson High, Miami Northwestern High, and Miami Edison High.

Access to Quality Education, Staffing and Support

School Year 2013-2014³³

TABLE 2

School	Miami Northwestern High	Miami Edison High	John A. Ferguson High	Whole District
#teachers (Full Time Equivalent)	98	62	182	19,865
#students per counselor (FTE)	327	296	529	564
Teachers in their 1st year of teaching	45.9%	43.6%	6.0%	11.7%
% of students taking at least one AP course	12%	13%	23%	
Advanced Placement classes offered	13	10	23	

Table 2 looks at the equity in educational opportunities offered at all three schools. District-wide, Miami-Dade is failing to provide the appropriate number of counselors to meet the American School Counselor Association's recommended ratio of 1 counselor per every 250 students.³⁴ Students at Miami Northwestern and Miami Edison have less opportunities to access Advanced Placement (AP) classes and fewer students take at least one AP course at those schools. These schools also have a much higher concentration of inexperienced teachers compared to the district as a whole and to John Ferguson High.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Below is a snapshot of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, John Ferguson High, Miami Northwestern High, and Miami Edison High.

Out-of-School Suspensions

School Year 2013-2014³⁵

Table 3

School	Miami Northwestern High	Miami Edison High	John A. Ferguson High	Whole District
Total % of students receiving out-of-school suspensions	12.7%	12.7%	5.4%	4.2%

Table 3

The data in Table 3 shows us that in the 2013-2014 school year, MDCPS used out-of-school suspensions frequently, and Miami Northwestern and Miami Edison high schools' suspension rate was three times the district-wide suspension rate. The burden of those suspensions fell disproportionately on students of color. Black students made up 46 percent of all out-of-school suspensions despite only representing 23.1 percent of the population. District-wide, 1 out of every 11 Black students received an out-of-school suspension and Black students were three times more likely to receive out-of-school suspensions than their white peers.

- At John Ferguson High School, 1 out of every 8 Black students was suspended compared with 1 out of every 20 White students
- At Miami Northwestern, 1 out of every 8 Black students was suspended, compared with no white students who were suspended
- At Miami Edison, 1 out of every 7 Black students was suspended, compared with 1 out of every 18 white students

OUR DEMANDS: OUR REPORT CARD GRADES

Invest in Lifting Us Up, Divest From Pushing Us Out

How we invest our money matters because it reflects what we value and has an enormous impact on the future. Because of this, we believe that investing in programs, support, and resources that build us up as full human beings are necessary for both restorative and reproductive justice in our schools. Gender and racial justice require equitable distribution of resources as well as programs, training and policies that reverse the sexist, racist, ableist and homophobic ways our schools have operated for too long.

We deserve schools that are distinguished by safe, welcoming school environments and that have minimal or reduced instances of bullying, harassment, or discrimination. We envision schools with an "A" grade in this category as schools that have full funding to ensure that clear policies, systems and practices are in place and equitably enacted, instances are promptly and effectively addressed, and schools actively embrace students' cultural backgrounds and celebrate the ways students express themselves.

Supportive Schools

	Miami Northwestern	Miami Edison	John A. Ferguson	Entire District
Grade	F	F	C	F

Youth Voices "Counselors only come to you when you're in trouble."

"Teachers feel they will get paid regardless."

"They don't respect us but want us to respect them. Works both ways."

INVEST IN LIFTING US UP, DIVEST FROM PUSHING US OUT

Budget Data

MDCPS' budget is not transparent. While we do not know the total cost of policing and security in our schools. We do know that MDCPS invests at least \$22 million, in practices that criminalize and pushout students. The proposed 2017-2018 budget allocates \$22,931,014 for police and district security and \$372,070,000 for custodial and security services.³⁶ The budget does not specify what percentage of "custodial/security" spending is made for security services alone.³⁷ This amount is at least six times more than the District has invested in addressing the overuse and discriminatory use of harsh discipline. MDCPS invested just \$3.2 million to design and implement a plan to rethink school discipline.³⁸


Of the \$22,119,168 budgeted for police and security, \$19,726,368 covers the salaries of 220 employees in the Police & District Security Bureau.³⁹ That's an average salary of \$89,665 for each police and security employee hired. The Miami-Dade Public School District has more staff dedicated to locking students up than staff with skills and training to support students and address student needs. During the 2016-2017 school year, the District reported employing 14 social workers and 460 counselors. In contrast, during that same year the District employed 906 security officers and 164 police officers.⁴⁰ This likely includes the 229 employees under the Police & District Security Bureau and guards and police hired under other parts of the District's budget.

TABLE 4 MDCPS Police & Security Budget

Police District Security Budget	School Year 2015-16 ⁴¹	School Year 2016-17 ⁴²	Proposed School Year 2017-18 ⁴³
Employee Count	220	229	220
Total Salary, Overtime & Non Salary Costs	\$20,240,672	\$22,119,168	\$22,931,014

The problem is growing. As **Table 4** shows, the amount the District spends on school police and security has increased from the 2015-16 school year to the proposed 2017-18 school year school budget. From 2015-2016 to 2017-18, the District increased its spending for police and district security by \$2,690,342. This money could, and should be allocated towards creating restorative and reproductive justice programs.

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS



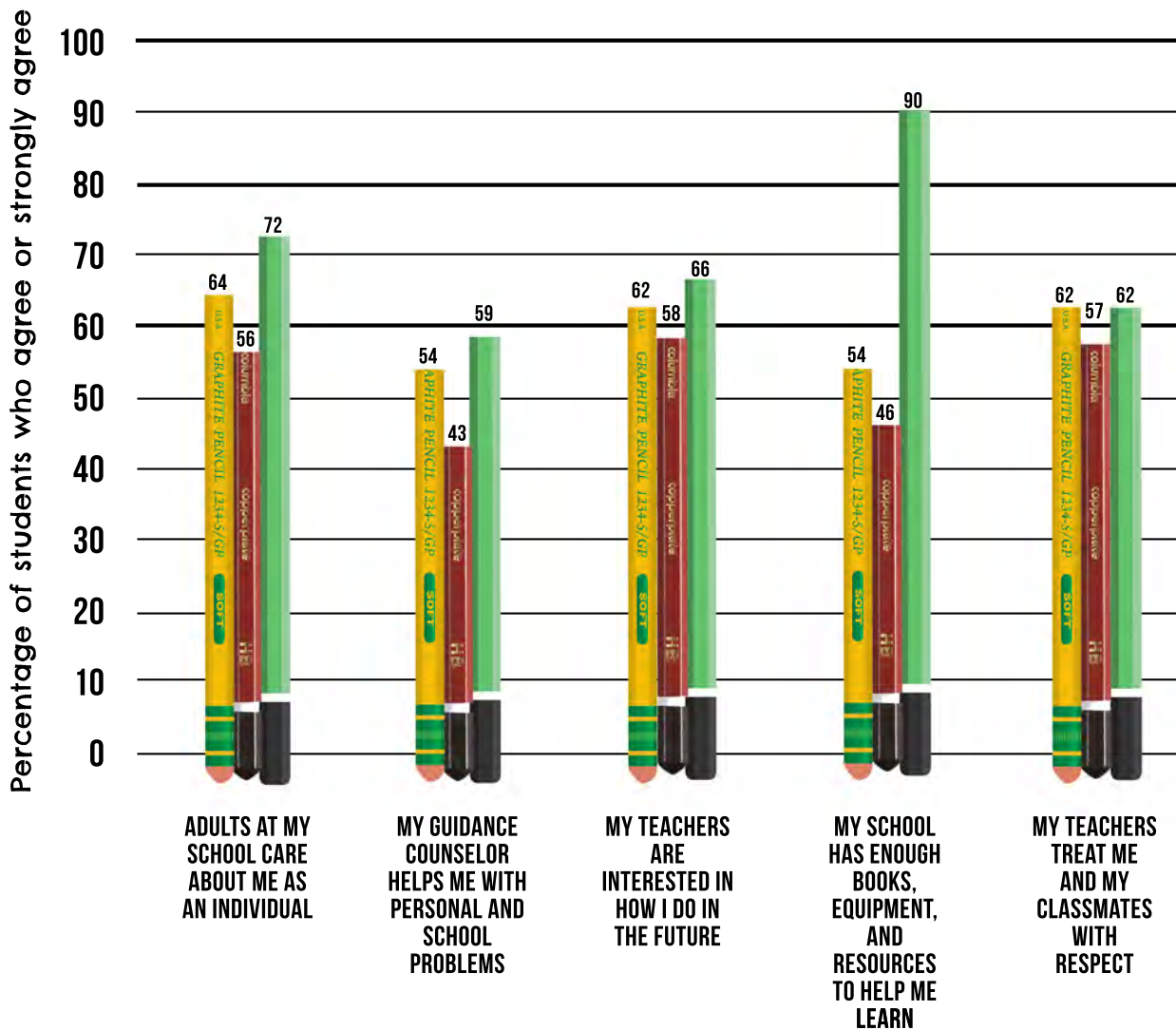
Student surveys reveal that many students do not feel supported in school. Forty percent of all students surveyed stated that they did not feel supported in schools, while 35 percent said they did not have someone looking out for them at school. In Miami Northwestern and Miami Edison Senior High School, the number of students feeling unsupported often came closer to 50 percent. In order to address these findings, schools must facilitate meaningful conversation with students that allow them to understand and implement what students need to feel supported.

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Below is a snapshot of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, John Ferguson High, Miami Northwestern High, and Miami Edison High.

Table 5

Student Perceptions of School Support



MIAMI NORTHWESTERN



MIAMI EDISON



JOHN A. FERGUSON



Students Literally Locked Out of an Education

Charlene, a rising junior at Miami Edison Senior High School, recounts her frustration with her school's misplaced priorities. She describes lockout, a school procedure that literally keeps students from attending class, with particular ire.

Each day, the school locks the entry doors to various corridors after a class period begins.

"You could be walking to class and the bell rings but the teacher [on duty] tells you, 'Mm-mmm, lockout.'

Charlene mimics the finger-wagging motion of a teacher.

"You're there [at the hallway entrance] and you cannot get inside. Even if you have a pass from your teacher saying you could go, you cannot get inside. They send you to lockout. In lockout, basically you sit down in a classroom the whole time that you're supposed to be in class and you don't really do anything at all. Total waste of time. Total waste of education."

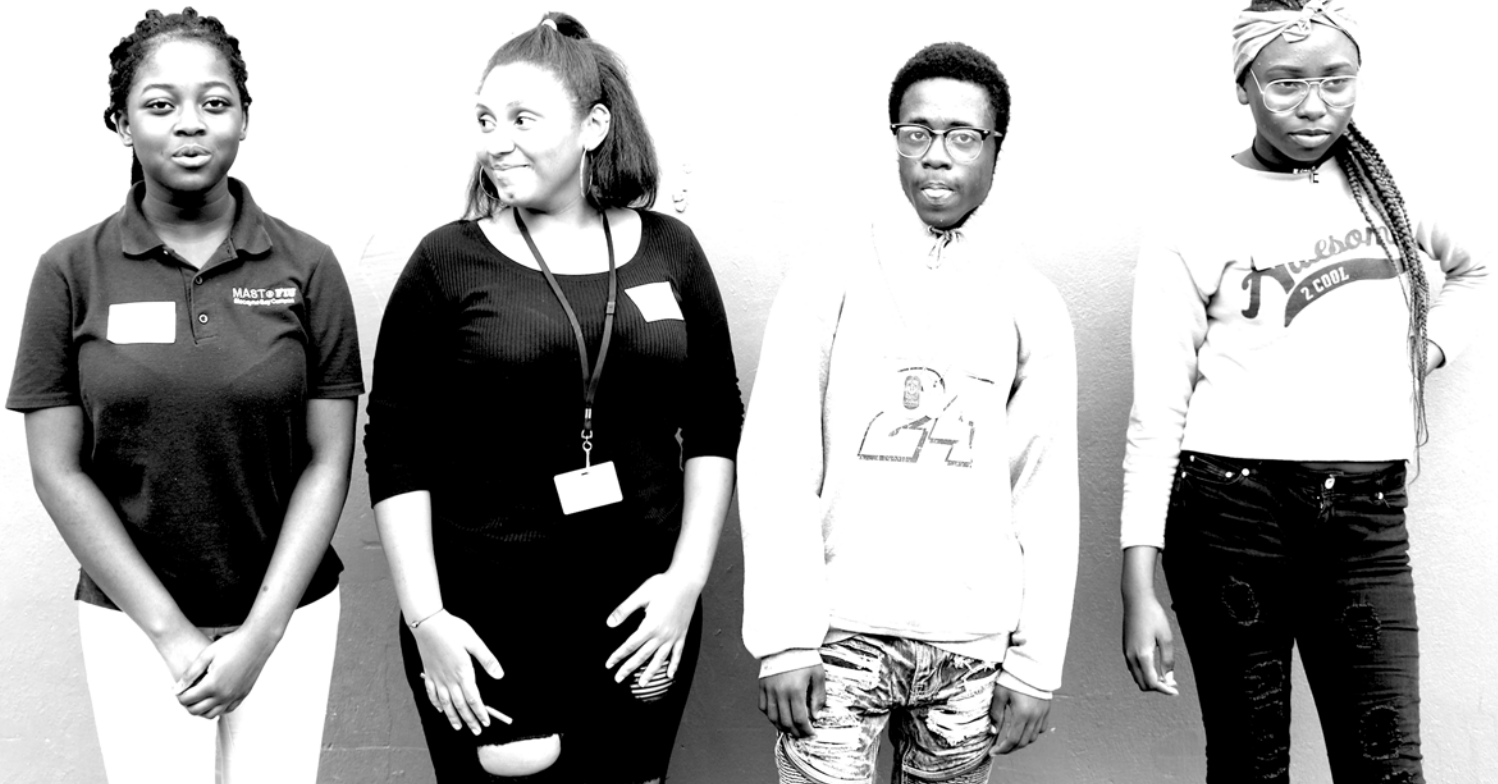
While Charlene feels her school prioritizes keeping students out of the classroom, she hates the overemphasis on testing by administration over things students really need.

"There's a lot of stuff that we need at school. [We] don't have it because all they talk about is testing. They just care about putting the stupid school grade up. They don't care about what's happening to us. They don't care if we're learning or not. But we have to pass those tests."

INVESTING IN LIFTING US UP: WHAT IS NEEDED

MDCPS must invest its resources in schools that support young people. It is critical to invest in high-quality training and staff that will help correct the years of educational neglect students have experienced and create safe schools going forward. Designating significant money towards implementing restorative justice programs across all schools would put MDCPS on a path towards creating the schools we deserve. MDCPS is wasting money on school policing and security that does not make schools safer. We recommend that MDCPS reinvest 10 percent of the money spent on police and security in restorative justice implementation.

The cost of restorative justice implementation can vary widely around the country, but we are confident that just a 10 percent reinvestment from the police budget would create substantial changes in MDCPS. In a 2013 proposal for restorative justice implementation in New York City public schools, the estimated cost of restorative justice implementation totaled about \$175,000 per year for one school. Under the cost model proposed by the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) in Buffalo, NY, full restorative justice implementation in two schools and training of administrators was estimated to cost \$100,000. A 10 percent reinvestment would cover the cost of restorative justice implementation in 10 - 20 MDCPS schools.



IMPLEMENT REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE IN OUR SCHOOLS

Students have the right to determine the environment in which they live and raise a family.

They have the birth right to exist with full bodily autonomy, access to quality affordable housing, healthy food, freedom from state violence, and the right to raise their child in a safe and healthy environment. We believe Black femmes should have the agency to love all components of who they are, including their ability to create and nurture life. We also believe that Black boys can be allies standing alongside Black femmes in creating a safe environment for all where consent and honor are normalized and destructive behavior is challenged by all youth and adults in the schools.

The bodies of Black femmes are often subject to state, community and political violence as decisions about their reproductive health and rights are made without their consent. Without proper investment in comprehensive sex education, schools are incapable of sharing with young people information they need to make decisions about parenting or equip them with the tools and resources they need to successfully raise children in safe communities. In addition, young people benefit from resources and support to address emotional and physical trauma they experience for healing, growth and politicization.⁴⁵

You cannot have restorative justice without **reproductive justice**. If students attend school where they have no access to comprehensive sex education and reproductive justice, their ability to make choices about their bodies and futures is diminished. If our schools continue to be environments where girls' bodies, sexuality and identity are preyed upon and objectified, our schools will be unsafe and propagate a culture where consent is not a question. Femmes will be left to walk a tightrope of embracing their power and facing harsh discipline, or 'behaving' and being targeted by staff and students.

An 'A' in this category would mean that we have schools that create cultures that do not condone any form of sexual, verbal or physical harassment against students, that provide education on consent and that implement clear and explicit policies to address harassment. These schools encourage autonomy for young parents and respect their decisions about their children. The schools offer extensive sex education that includes courses on LGBTQIA sexuality and address issues of consent, safety and Sexually Transmitted Infections/Sexually Transmitted Disease transmission. Finally, schools provide a safe and inclusive environment for students who identify as LGBTQIA through education on gender and sexual identity for students, staff and faculty.

WORD KEY

Reproductive Justice - Reproductive Justice is the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities. - Sister Song⁴⁴

IMPLEMENT REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE IN OUR SCHOOLS

Reproductive Justice Grades

	Miami Northwestern High	Miami Edison High	John A. Ferguson High	Whole District
Grades	F	F	F	F
Youth Voices	“We are giving the whole district an F or D because there are teachers out here doing wrong to students and can take advantage of them.”			
	“I give my school an F because a teacher was feeling on these girls and my school didn’t do anything.”			
	“F - because the district doesn’t have a pilot program that helps and guides students. The district just talks.”			
	“D - the staff doesn’t check on students. They just address the situation to see what happened and drop the situation.”			
	“F - because they not doing nothing about it. They just ignore it.”			

Reproductive Justice Data

The results of our survey suggest that students, particularly students in schools that have majority Black student bodies and are lower-income, do not feel that their schools are engaging students in comprehensive sex education, supporting young parents, or creating climates that prevent sexual harassment and violence. According to data gathered by the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System in 2015, 38.4 percent of teens are sexually active in Miami-Dade County. MDCPS does not provide adequate sexual education to students in our schools.⁴⁶ MDCPS' official position is that abstinence is the only acceptable behavior. Educators are instructed not to take a stand on the use of contraceptives or discuss and inform students about all of their options if they become pregnant.⁴⁷ A statewide survey in Florida found that "sex education was not accessible to all students, was most often afforded little time, occurred late in the students' academic career, had little to no uniformity in terms of what was being taught and who was teaching it, had no standards in terms of training or quality assurance and may not adequately address the realistic needs of students."⁴⁸

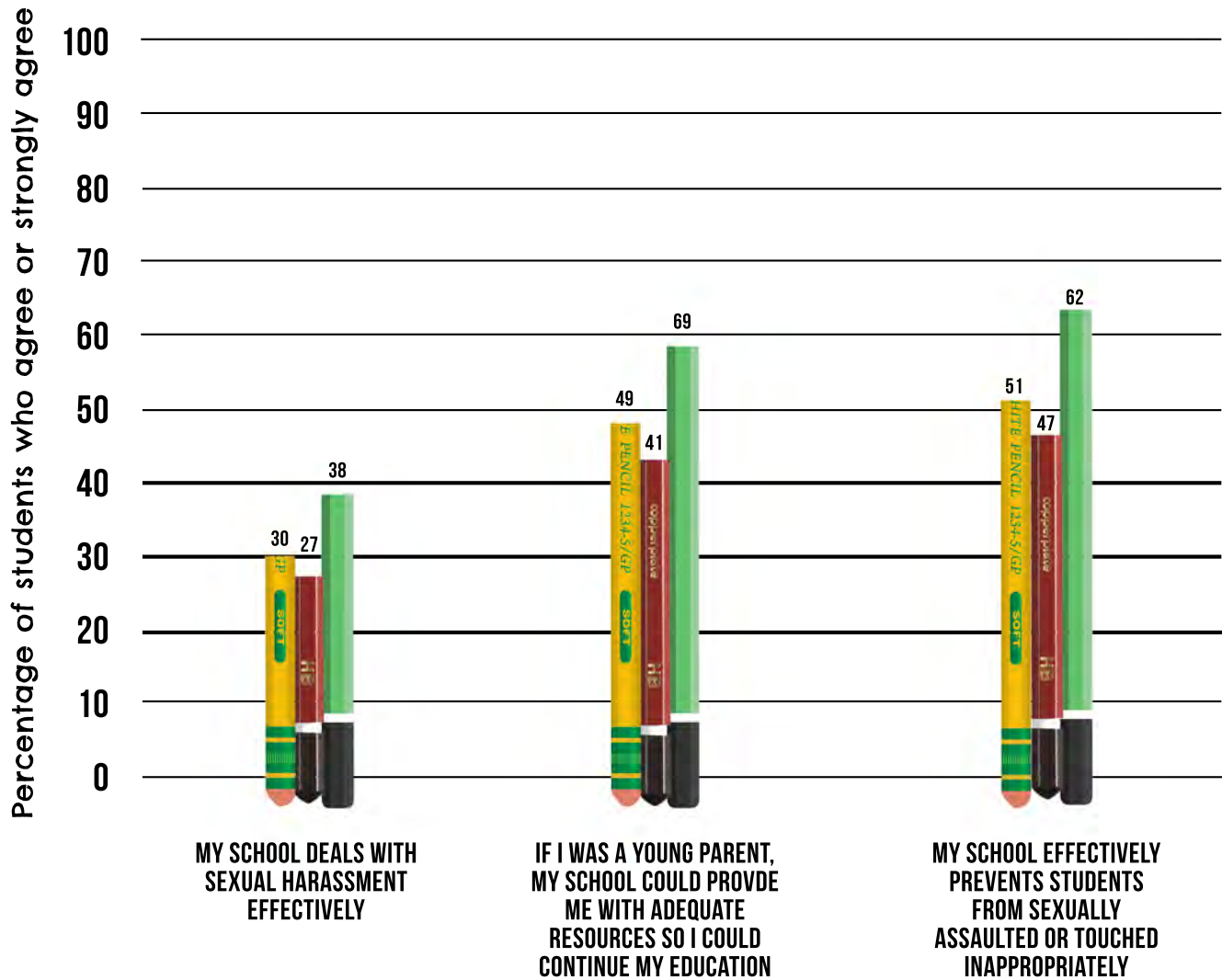
Student Survey Results

MDCPS does not provide adequate supports and resources to students so they are able to navigate crucial social services that they are in need of as young parents. Over the past three years, Power U, with allies, has learned about the lack of reproductive justice in our schools and advocated for better policies to support femmes in our school system. We have also engaged in providing specialized spaces for femmes of color to express their needs, receive support, and build community together. At the Continuing Opportunities For Purposeful Education (COPE) Center North for example, we have partnered with community organizations where we lead Black Mamas circles to educate young parents about their reproductive rights and assess their needs. These circles have provided MDCPS students with a safety network of committed social workers,

doulas, midwives and community organizers - all things that the school system is not providing. Sexual harassment and violence are also part of the experience of Black femmes in MDCPS. Black femmes are sexually harassed and assaulted at schools by security guards who are purportedly there to make them feel safe. Jasmine (pseudonym) would hear teachers tell other female students that they were "going to be whores" because of how they dressed. She experienced regular sexual harassment from security guards. She shared that there was "one security guard if he saw you by yourself he'd tap you on your butt. I snatched the broom from him and hit him and I got written up."

Table 6

Student Perceptions of Reproductive Climate



MIAMI NORTHWESTERN



MIAMI EDISON



JOHN A. FERGUSON



Black Girls are Vulnerable to Sexual Abuse in School

Kimberly, a 10th grader at Miami Edison Senior High School, retells a story of sexual abuse exemplifying how Black girls are vulnerable on campus, even at the hands of adults.

“We had this teacher/coach. He had intercourse with a student in 10th grade and that's kind of wild. This year, everyone found out and he was arrested. A security guard was fired because she knew about it and didn't tell. [The student] still attends our school.”

When questioned about the adequacy of the school's response, Kimberly conveyed her disillusionment and distrust of the school's administration. “They [the administration] mostly tried to cover it up. Tried to make it seem like it never happened, but it was blasted all over social media.”

The incident, among other issues, has eroded Kimberly's trust in the adults who work in her school building.

“I don't trust the people who work in my school, not at all. If one teacher could do that with a student, then imagine what the rest of them would probably be doing.”

Intrusive policing practices have not improved Kimberly's feeling of safety.

“I don't [feel safe at school]. We get random checks I'd say, every month. Like the other day we were testing and we had a random check where police brought a dog and they had like two guns each. There was no point.”

No drugs or weapons were found in the classroom.

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE: WHAT IS NEEDED

In February 2017, the Black Girls Matter MIA Coalition, which Power U helped to create, launched a series of Black Girls Matter circles where Black femme students shared their experiences with school pushout, criminalization, hetero-patriarchy, sexism and misogyny in schools and communities. On May 18, 2017, the Black Girls Matter Coalition co-hosted a Black Girls MIA Leadership Summit where young girls shared ideas on how to create safe and inclusive schools where they can thrive and reach their full potential.⁴⁹ Some of those ideas include:

- **More programs that create safe spaces for Black girls to share their stories like Black Girls Matter Circles**
- **Restorative justice in schools, allowing students and teachers to resolve conflict and address harm without law enforcement**
- **Birth justice for young parents including access to breastfeeding, midwifery and doula support, in schools, communities, and at home in order to thrive and be successful.**

We believe that in order for students to feel supported and make more informed decisions, MDCPS must ensure that they effectively implement sexual education curriculum across all middle schools and high schools. While we know that comprehensive sex education is not the end goal, it is an important step for working towards a school system that begins to have resources Black femmes need. We demand that MDCPS implement the aforementioned solutions, rooted in real reproductive justice so that young people are supported to reach their full potential.



IMPLEMENT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND END EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE

Restorative justice is an approach to addressing issues in schools that seeks to repair harms caused, engage stakeholders and make changes so that future harms do not occur.

When implemented as a whole school approach, teachers, students, school staff and administrators are regularly trained and supported as they practice and improve the restorative justice practices and techniques. Schools that have implemented such strategies have seen drastic reductions in suspensions and school-based arrests, and improvements in school climate and relationships between teachers, administrators and students. Because restorative justice seeks to determine the underlying and root causes of issues that arise in schools, it can be a much more effective way of healing relationships and restoring well-being in a school than punitive measures that force children to miss valuable learning time, make them feel disposable and deteriorate relationships and trust.

Punitive measures contribute to school pushout and students feeling disrespected in schools. We believe that when restorative measures are well-implemented in a school, it can help keep young people in schools feeling valued, trusted and respected by caring adults who want them to learn, grow and succeed.

In order to receive an “A” in this category, the school/district will have fully implemented and continue to fund restorative, non-exclusionary approaches to discipline that create a healthy school climate, with minimal use of Student Success Centers or other types of removals. It will also demonstrate a commitment to not use silent forms of pushout, display no racial disparities in discipline and possess a healthy school culture.



IMPLEMENT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND END EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE

Discipline Practices Grades

	Miami Northwestern High	Miami Edison High	John A. Ferguson High	Whole District
Grades	F	F	F	F
Youth Voices	“The teachers are not trained in RJ and are quick to write referrals.”			
	“Teachers tend to kick students out too fast and the principal listens to the teacher more than the students.”			

Discipline Data (District-Level)

Overall, the District still relies too heavily on exclusionary discipline. Too many students are arrested in school, with arrests falling disproportionately on the shoulders of Black students. In the 2015-16 school year, there were 324 school-based arrests in Dade County.⁵⁰ Black youth represent 51 percent of school-based arrests⁵¹ and only 21.9 percent of students.⁵²

Although the District claims to have ended the practice of suspending students, out-of-school, students are still being removed from regular educational settings. This occurs in two ways. First, some schools do not follow the District’s mandate to stop suspending students, as students have reported being suspended despite District policy.

Second, the District is placing students in Student Success Centers, which involves removing them from their regular classroom and school, and placing them in an alternative setting where they receive little support and no meaningful education.

Although the District isn’t coding these removals as suspensions, we know that students are experiencing the same negative effects of removal no matter what the District calls it. Because referrals to Student Success Centers are not reported as suspensions, data for the 2015-2016 school year indicates that less than 10 students were suspended from the District is misleading.⁵³ We know this data to be summarily false through student survey data and in-depth interviews.

Restorative Justice is Not Being Implemented

Humbert 10th grader, Miami
Edison Senior High School
“I do not see restorative justice
in the schools. They [teachers]
mostly will write students up or
tell them to go get out of the
classroom and they’ll go to CSI
(in-school suspension) or go
somewhere. Restorative justice
is finding real solutions where
both sides are happy and that
does not happen at Edison.”

IMPLEMENT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND END EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE

Student Survey Results

Exclusionary and punitive measures still prevail in MDCPS, despite public claims to the contrary. In our student surveys, students in MDCPS reported that out-of-school suspensions are still occurring regularly, even though the District claims it has ended this practice. Of youth surveyed, almost eight percent said that they received an out-of-school suspension this year. Students surveyed generally felt that their schools spent more time punishing students than rewarding them, and more than half of students perceived that discipline in schools was not fair or beneficial to students.

Table 7
Does Your School Spend More Time Rewarding or Punishing Students?



Table 8
Is the discipline in your school fair?

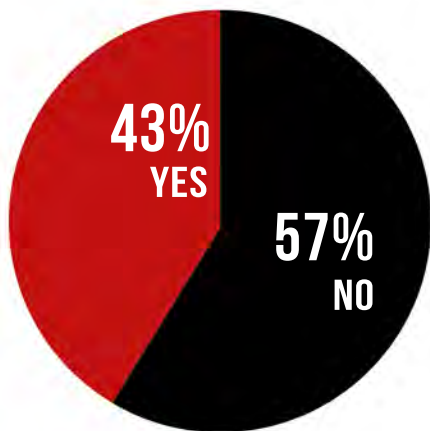
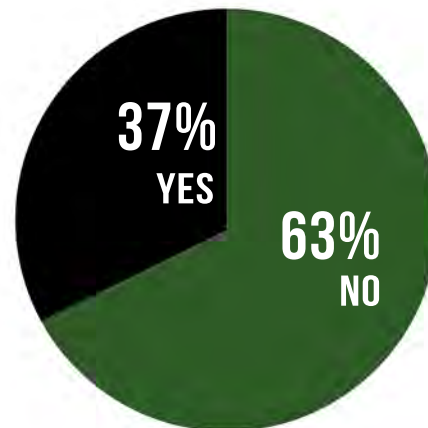


Table 9
Are the discipline strategies beneficial to students?



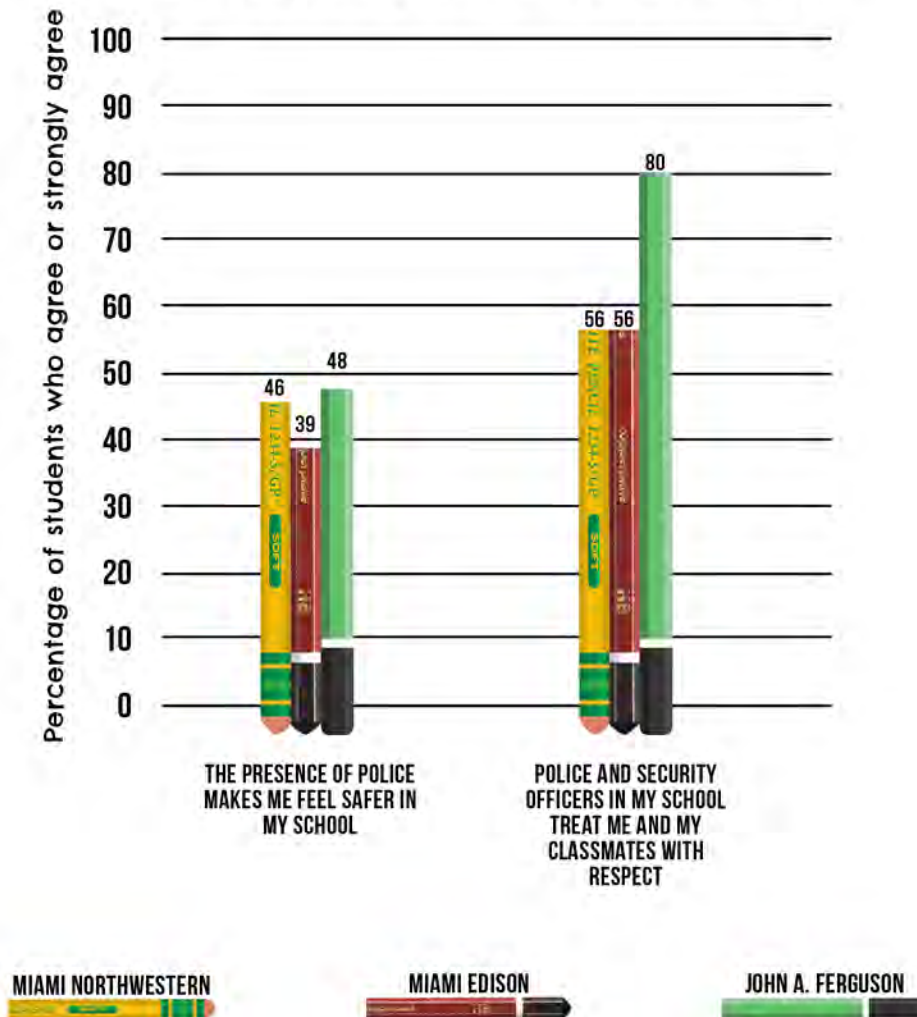
IMPLEMENT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND END EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE

Student Survey Results

The survey also gauged how students at the three schools, Miami Edison, Miami Northwestern, and John A. Ferguson felt about the presence of police in their schools. The responses from all three schools show that even in demographically different schools, the presence of police doesn't make students feel safer. Students at the more affluent, well-funded Ferguson High School, which has less Black students, responded that police and security officers treat them with respect at a significantly higher rate than students attending Miami Edison and Miami Northwestern.

Table 10

Student Perceptions of School Police & Security



Hostile School Climates

Thomas is a rising junior at iTech @ Thomas Edison Education Center. He details his frustration with the hostile climate and the way in which administrators fail to address complex issues, like bullying, that students face.

“In my school, our administrators seem very hostile to us. Like, all they do is show hostility but never try to really understand how the students feel. One of my friends got expelled from school because a student was bothering him and he took actions into his own hands and he hit the kid. They expelled him but not the other student who bothered him. They expelled him to his home school which is Miami Northwestern.”

Thomas feels the dearth of educators and administrators attempting to develop personal relationships with students also negatively impacts the school’s learning environment.

“None of our administrators, like none of the higher ups, either the assistant principal or our principal or even our counselor tries to speak to us. Like say hi to us on a [regular] basis. The only relationship with one of my teachers I really have is my math teacher. He really tries to understand us during class and he tries to move around, make his lesson plan flexible towards us. There’d be times where he’d stop his lesson and try to have a conversation with us and try to get to know us. I feel like he’s the only teacher out there really trying to like understand the students.”

Thomas hopes that students and school administration can develop closer bonds like the one he has with his math teacher in the future.

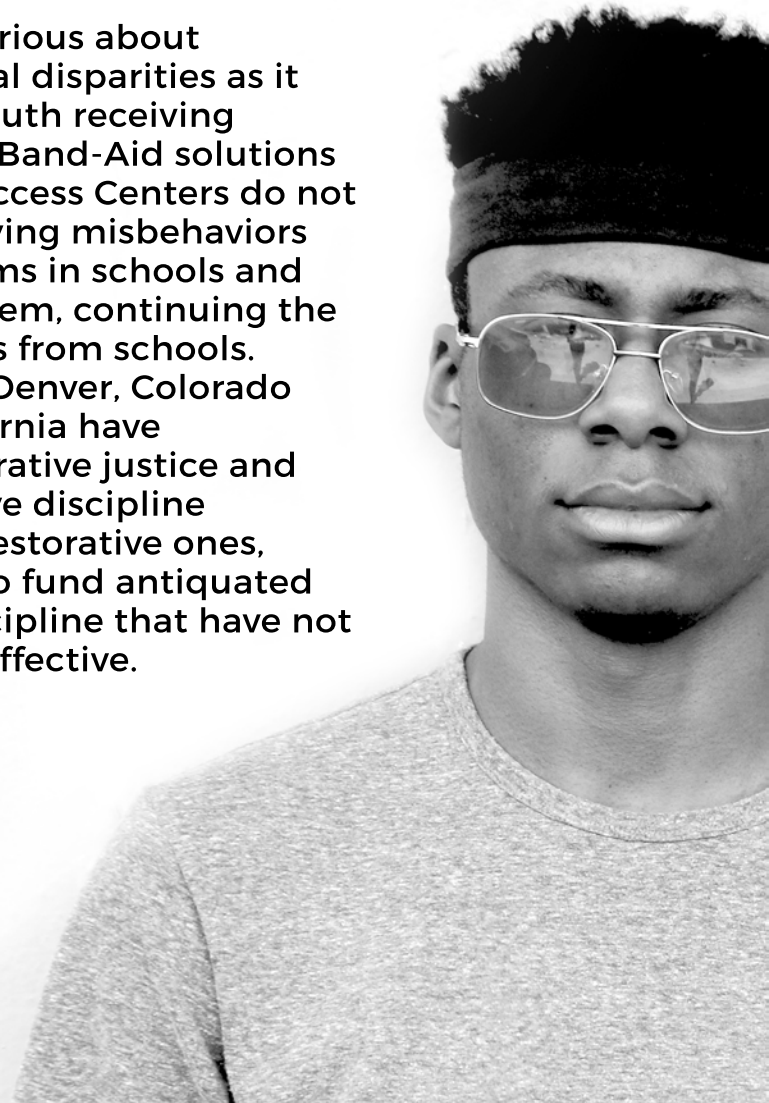
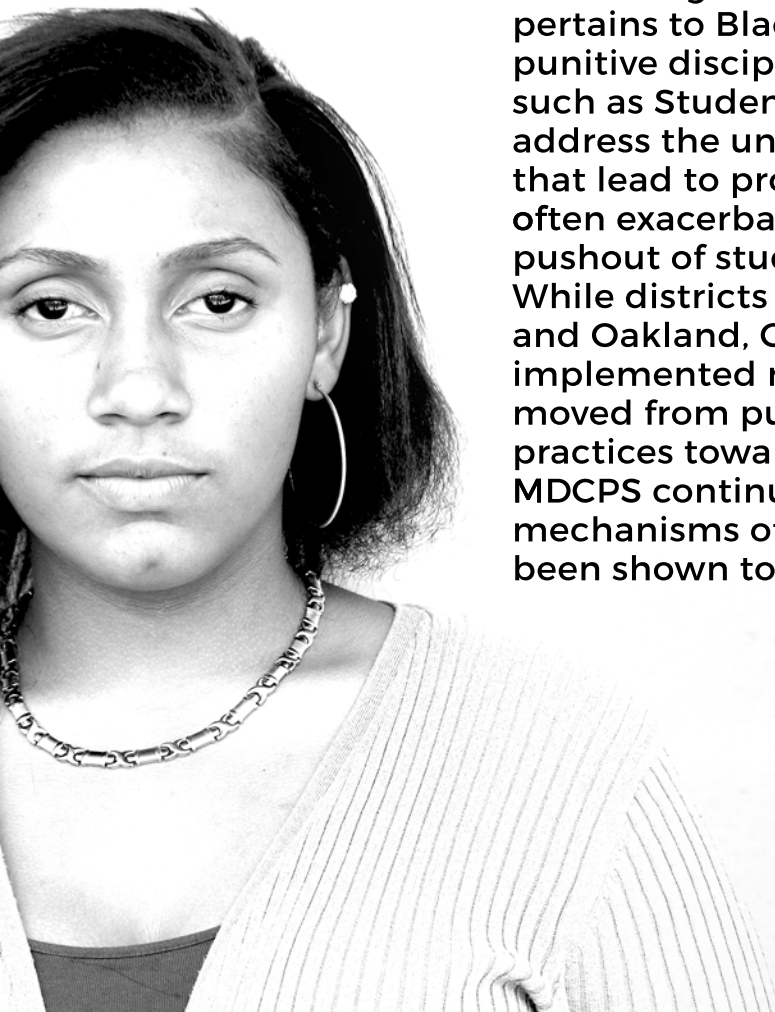
“I just want to see my teachers and our administrators being more open with us. And that our administrators come and speak to us during lunch or they come into our classes and try to communicate with us.”

Research consistently shows that school climate and teacher-student relationships impact student achievement.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: WHAT IS NEEDED

Restorative justice must be implemented in Miami-Dade County Public Schools in order to address school pushout and punitive discipline practices that do not serve the Black youth of Miami.

MDCPS must get serious about addressing the racial disparities as it pertains to Black youth receiving punitive discipline. Band-Aid solutions such as Student Success Centers do not address the underlying misbehaviors that lead to problems in schools and often exacerbate them, continuing the pushout of students from schools. While districts like Denver, Colorado and Oakland, California have implemented restorative justice and moved from punitive discipline practices towards restorative ones, MDCPS continues to fund antiquated mechanisms of discipline that have not been shown to be effective.



TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT DISCIPLINE IN OUR SCHOOLS

Over the past nine years, Power U has campaigned to pressure MDCPS to implement restorative justice in schools. Many school districts across the country have implemented it with great success, but Miami-Dade, despite promising on a number of occasions to implement a restorative justice pilot program, has yet to make this a reality. Instead of working with impacted communities to develop solutions, the District has created exclusionary Student Success Centers that remove students from schools and do not provide the support services students deserve. There is a total lack of transparency around Student Success Centers; Power U and the broader community is unable to obtain accurate and complete information about who is attending Student Success Centers, how long they are attending, or why they were referred. This is in line with how the district has handled their ineffective discipline practices thus far, as well as how they've engaged with our community.

In light of its lack of transparency and accountability, our survey has sought to shed some light on what information students have about how their schools are operating, including experiences at Student Success Centers and students' knowledge of their rights in school.

We believe that students and their families have a right to transparency and accountability from the school district.

We envision a district and schools with an "A" in this category where students understand their rights and obligations regarding student discipline and have a clear appeal process in place. Schools regularly convene the community to share data and plans to address issues in school, and solicit and incorporate community input in their planning. Data is made available to the public in formats that are clear and easy to access and understand. Students and parents are informed of their rights and encouraged and supported in asserting those rights.

TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT DISCIPLINE IN OUR SCHOOLS

Transparency and Accountability Grades

MDCPS Accountability - Entire District

Grade

F

MDCPS Student Success Centers - Entire District

Grade

F

Youth Voices

“Success Centers are not giving any kids work and that kids are getting kicked out of school.”

“F - Because there is no success there.”

“I didn’t know about Success Centers. If I get into trouble, I get sent home for a few days. They [the school] don’t call parents.”

“I have had several friends at Success Centers who have been suspended at different dates. The students have to get their own work. The school doesn’t notify parents until after 6:00pm.”

“F - Does not help students to succeed and it’s just another way to suspend.”

“School doesn’t really talk about what to do. It’s more like detention. Most students didn’t get the support they need.”

TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT DISCIPLINE IN OUR SCHOOLS

So-called Student Success Centers are part of the District's plan to address the high and disproportionate use of out-of-school suspensions that have been part of MDCPS history.⁵⁴ There are ten Student Success Center sites around the District and when a student commits an infraction that violates the code of conduct for which suspension is allowed, the school can decide to send them to a Student Success Center instead. Through this process, students are still removed from their home school environment for anywhere from one to ten days, and are potentially held at the Student Success Center longer than the original referral.⁵⁵

There is no evidence that Student Success Centers create safer and more supportive climates for students. While the District argues that Student Success Centers are working to stop out-of-school suspensions, our student surveys suggest something else. According to the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Student Success Centers Evaluation Report Year 1, around

14,000 students were suspended from school in the 2013-2014 school year,

before suspensions were supposedly banned by the District. The report indicates that in the 2015-2016 school year, close to 4,000 students were referred to Student Success Centers and no students were suspended out-of-school. (This conflicts with both other District reported data, indicating six suspensions and our survey results, which show 8 percent of students reporting having received an out-of-school suspension).

We suspect, based on our survey results, that the practice of off-the-books suspensions is far more common than the data indicates. Our survey indicates that this practice was experienced by several students. Because of the nature of off-the-book suspensions, there is no record to fully determine how common this practice is or how many students it impacts.

The District also reported that only 33 percent of students attended Student Success Centers the whole time they were supposed to, which may indicate that students are not getting the appropriate supports they need in order to be successful.⁵⁶

Student Success Centers are also not addressing racial disparities in school discipline. Of the 400 students surveyed by the District who attended Student Success Centers in 2015-2016, over 50 percent of the students were Black and nearly two-thirds were boys. Notably, only 21 percent of the student population is Black, meaning that Black students are disproportionately sent to Student Success Centers.⁵⁷

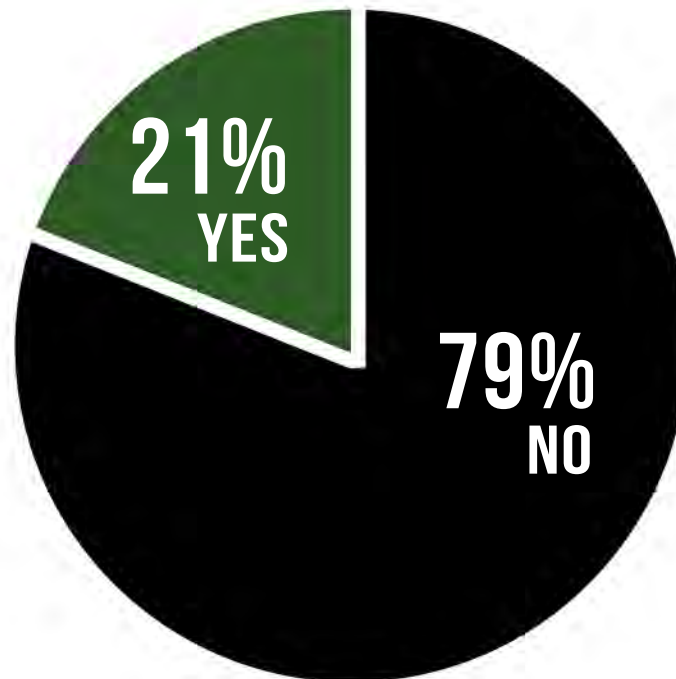
TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT DISCIPLINE IN OUR SCHOOLS

Student Survey Results

Many students perceived that Student Success Centers were ineffective and just another way for MDCPS to deny students their education. The District has not released exit surveys students completed once leaving Student Success Centers or information showing that Student Success Centers work to support students, such as students' progress when returning to schools. Our survey results suggest that young people who attend Student Success Centers report that they are not receiving the supports they need in order to be successful.

Eighty percent of students did not receive transportation to the Student Success Centers and a third of students reported that their parents were never informed that they were being placed in a Student Success Center. Almost 80 percent of students reported that they did not receive instruction at their Student Success Center.

Table 11
Did You Get Any Instruction at the Student Success Center?



In the news

February 17, 2017 – WLRN Article

Sharp Debate Over Miami-Dade Public Schools' Alternative to Suspension Program

'Student success centers' began [in 2015-2016] as a way to send students who misbehaved to a setting where they'd get academic support and access to counseling. Superintendent Alberto Carvalho has described the move to eliminate suspensions as an effort to "stop the hemorrhaging of talent and potential of troubled kids from district schools. Miami-Dade County Public Schools has responded to criticism over staffing, transportation, and attendance at the success centers by making adjustments to the program to improve communication with families and students' home schools."

These adjustments however excluded key voices and was a point of contention raised by school board member Steve Gallon during a Feb 15th meeting. "Is there a reason no middle school parents were interviewed at all?" Gallon asked. During the meeting Gallon asked pointed questions of staff who arranged the evaluation, which drew on data for hundreds of students but included interviews with only three families. Gallon subsequently proposed the creation of a task force comprised of staff, students, and parents to strengthen oversight of success centers and make recommendations to improve the program.

Madeleine Meran lost her temper in school and wound up getting suspended from North Miami Beach Senior High School. Her punishment: 10 days at a Success Center – a site set up by the Miami-Dade County School system to give kids a place to go when they misbehave instead of simply kicking them out of school. Meran, a senior at the time, went for one day. When her school work didn't show up there, she didn't see the point of going back. "It was just ridiculous," she said. "For the nine days remaining, I just stayed home." That's the very scenario Miami-Dade school leaders were trying to avoid.

A Success Center Fail

Latravia was just a 6th grader at JFK Middle School when she was sent to a District Success Center for fighting after an early release day off school grounds. Despite the fact that Latravia was not the aggressor and the incident occurred outside of school hours, administrators initially attempted to suspend her out-of-school in violation of their own discipline policy.

“The school tried to suspend me [out-of-school] for 10 days. My mom came...and she was like, ‘You’re not suspending her for 10 days.’ The vice principal was like, “I know, but when it’s reported to a school we have to do something about it.”

In 2016, Miami-Dade County Public Schools purportedly eliminated out-of-school suspensions.

After a meeting with school administration, Latravia was ultimately referred to a Student Success Center for three days. Miami-Dade County Public Schools provided no transportation to the center and none of her coursework was forwarded to her for the entirety of her referral period.

“When I walked into the success center, my mom had to sign me in. As soon as you go into the class, it’s like something on the board you’ve got to do. They [the teachers] don’t explain it. They’re just like, ‘Oh, you’ve got to read it and you’ve got to do it.’ So I did it. They said, ‘If you don’t do it, you get extra days.’ And you had to do that every day you come. It was just reading and math.” No coursework was provided for any of Latravia’s other subjects and no additional supports were provided to her once she returned to school.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY: WHAT IS NEEDED

Youth and parents must have the ability to hold school officials and staff accountable as well as defend themselves against unfair punishments. They must be notified and given the opportunities to appeal disciplinary actions. Youth and parents must become part of the decision-making process in schools to create full buy-in and trusted relationships.

Since their inception, Student Success Centers have gained a reputation among community members for their ineffectiveness – the District fails to provide adequate instruction, transportation, and uses Student Success Centers as an excuse to not fully fund more meaningful solutions like restorative justice. The lack of transparency around Student Success Centers indicates the inability and/or the undesirability of the District to share its effectiveness or lack thereof with the community. Student Success Centers were not to be used as a punitive measure to hide suspensions, which appears to be the case. Student Success Centers were not to be used as a mechanism to disrupt student education, which continues to happen. The school system and its administrators have not been held accountable and are able to pass off failure as success.

We demand that the data on Student Success Centers and their practices and effectiveness be made public to the Miami community. We demand that youth are brought to the table to evaluate and provide input on the effectiveness and future of Student Success Centers.

Conclusion

Miami Dade County Public Schools is failing at providing students with the schools that they deserve. MDCPS needs to realign its budget priorities to invest in students, implement reproductive and restorative justice, end harsh and exclusionary school discipline and commit to real transparency and accountability.

SHOUT-OUTS

Thank you to the youth in Miami-Dade Public Schools who completed surveys which contributed sustainably to this report. Shout out to the Power U youth organizers who lead the push on administering surveys to students as well as those who participated in the grading process.

Etobssie Wako for helping us further develop our reproductive justice lens.

SisterSong for their tireless work to innovate and help lead a vibrant reproductive justice movement led by powerful Black women.

CU Engage's Siomara Valladares and Ben Kirshner for helping with data analysis and the production of the report and Ben Kirshner for helping develop the youth survey.

Community Justice Project's Alana Greer who has been instrumental in helping us find data and develop the report.

All of our donors and funders for supporting our work and believing in our mission.

Alliance for Educational Justice for helping coordinate connections between youth organizers across the country.

S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective, Dream Defenders, and Miami Workers Center for co-organizing Black Girls Matter circles with us

#WeChoose campaign for tools to help us compare schools for equity.

All of the Black and Brown youth who persist everyday to realize their potential despite the barriers that our system stacks up against them.

All of the women, girls, transgender, and gender nonconforming individuals who resist patriarchy everyday simply by existing in their dignity.

To the organizations and individuals who contributed to the development of this report, your efforts have been immensely important.

APPENDIX 1: POWER U GRADING RUBRIC

Subject & Data Sources	A Exemplary progress at improving issues	B Some work remains, but substantive progress is evident	C Some evidence of progress is evident but much more is needed	D Little progress is evident	F No evidence of progress is present and no plans have been put in place
<p>RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE AT SCHOOL</p> <p>Data from: Power U Youth survey</p> <p>-MDCPS Budget</p> <p>-State Arrest Data</p>	<p>The school/district has fully implemented and funds restorative, non-exclusionary approaches to discipline that create a healthy school climate, with minimal use of Success centers, commitment to not use underground forms of pushout, no racial disparities in discipline, and a healthy school culture.</p>	<p>The school/district has made significant strides in implementing and funding restorative and non-exclusionary approaches to discipline. Policies and practices are in place and equitably enacted so that racial disparities are minimal. The underground pushout is not apparent, but the school doesn't openly communicate its opposition to such practices</p>	<p>The school has implemented non-exclusionary approaches to discipline that are grounded in a healthy school culture. There is some early evidence of implementing restorative approaches to discipline and addressing racial disparities in discipline. Some forms of underground pushout are evident but it is not a major issue.</p>	<p>The school's approach to discipline is punitive and exclusionary, and racial disparities in discipline are stark but the school is exploring alternative practices including restorative justice and begun some implementation. Underground pushout is happening regularly but the school discusses trying to end it.</p>	<p>Little to no effort has been made to make the school's disciplinary practices less punitive or exclusionary, discuss or address racial disparities or underground pushout techniques. The budget is heavily focused on punitive practices and little to no funding is directed at restorative mechanisms.</p>

APPENDIX 1: POWER U GRADING RUBRIC

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HOLISTIC STUDENT SUPPORT Student survey	<p>The school is distinguished by a safe, supportive, welcoming environment with minimal instances of bullying, harassment or discrimination. The school actively embraces the students' backgrounds.</p>	<p>The school has taken major steps to create a safe, supportive and welcoming environment. It has a program in place to reduce instances of bullying, harassment or discrimination and there is some evidence of its effectiveness. The school usually embraces students' backgrounds</p>	<p>The school makes some efforts to create a safe, supportive and welcoming school environment and has taken some steps toward it. It has begun establishing a program to reduce instances of bullying, harassment or discrimination and generally respects students' backgrounds.</p>	<p>The school makes minimal effort to create a safe, supportive welcoming school environment—to reduce instances of bullying, harassment or discrimination and to respect students' backgrounds.</p>	<p>The school has not begun planning to create a safe, supportive welcoming school environment—to reduce instances of bullying, harassment or discrimination or to respect students' backgrounds.</p>

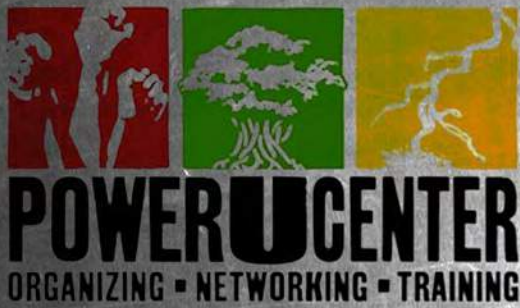
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REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE Data: survey, focus groups	<p>School creates culture that does not condone any form of sexual, verbal, or physical harassment against students through education on consent has clear and explicit policy to address any harassment. The school respects and encourages autonomy for young parents, and their decisions about their children. The school offers extensive sex education that includes courses on LGBTQIA sexuality, and addresses issues of consent, safety, STI/STD</p>	<p>School has begun to create a culture that does not condone any form of sexual, verbal, or physical harassment against students through education on consent has a clear policy to address any harassment. The school sometimes respects and encourages autonomy for young parents, and their decisions about their children. The school offers some sex education that includes courses on LGBTQIA sexuality, and/or addresses issues of consent, safety, STI/STD transmission. It attempts to provide a safe and inclusive environment for students who identify as LGBTQIA (queer) through education on gender and sexual identity for students, staff and faculty.</p>	<p>School has made some efforts to create a culture that does not condone any form of sexual, verbal, or physical harassment against students through education on consent and sometimes addresses harassment. The school sometimes respects and encourages autonomy for young parents, and their decisions about their children. The school offers some sex education that includes courses that discuss more than abstinence. It attempts to provide a safe and inclusive environment for students who identify as LGBTQIA.</p>	<p>School has some plans with minor steps towards creating a culture that does not condone sexual, verbal, or physical harassment against students through education on consent and occasionally addresses harassment. The school sometimes respects and encourages autonomy for young parents, and their decisions about their children. The school offers minimal sex education that discuss more than abstinence. It has plans to provide a safe and inclusive environment for students who identify as LGBTQIA.</p>	<p>The school has not begun planning to address these issues. Students do not feel the school creates a safe and inclusive environment for EVERY student. School does not provide resources for young parents and does not prevent and respond to any form of harassment.</p>

APPENDIX 1: POWER U GRADING RUBRIC

Subject & Data Sources	A Exemplary progress at improving issues	B Some work remains, but substantive progress is evident	C Some evidence of progress is evident but much more is needed	D Little progress is evident	F No evidence of progress is present and no plans have been put in place
<p>TRANSPARENCY & COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>Data from: -Student Survey</p> <p>-availability and accessibility of data, including public convenings and expediency of responding to data requests</p>	<p>Students and their families understand their rights and obligations regarding student discipline and a clear appeal process is in place. The school regularly convenes the community to share data and plans to address issues in the school, solicits and incorporates community input in their planning. Data is made available to the public in formats that are clear and easy to access and understand.</p>	<p>Students and their families understand some of their rights and obligations when regarding student discipline, and a clear appeal process is in place. The school usually convenes the community to share data and plans to address issues in the school and solicits feedback on the plans. Data is made available to the public in formats that are clear and accessible.</p>	<p>Students and their families are sometimes informed of their rights and obligations when regarding student discipline. The school occasionally convenes the community to share data and plans to address issues in the school. Some data is made available to the public.</p>	<p>Students and their families have to seek out information about their rights and obligations regarding student discipline. The school rarely convenes the community to share information. The public has to actively search for data</p>	<p>Students and their families are not provided information about their rights and obligations regarding student discipline. The school only convenes the community to share information in response to an issue. Data is not publicly available except upon request</p>

- ¹ Andrea Robinson, *Success Centers Under Fire*, THE MIAMI TIMES (Feb. 22, 2017), http://www.miamitimesonline.com/news/local/success-centers-under-fire/article_6c6967dc-f913-11e6-9b57-bb1872792cec.html.
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