

# **Kicked Out! Unfair and Unequal Student Discipline in Vermont's Public Schools**

## **Fact Sheet**

### ***Reforming School Discipline Laws: Why and How***

#### **Why Reform School Discipline Laws:**

- Short-term Negative Effects on Excluded Children
  - Missing valuable educational time
  - Parents missing work, losing jobs
  - Children left at home unsupervised
  - Children receiving Free Lunch left without meals
  - Only teaches students that school is not for them
- Short-term Costs to Schools and Communities
  - Schools with more suspensions are less safe and have lower achievement
  - Wasted resources: school budgets do not change when student is excluded for long periods of time
  - Unsupervised children excluded from school are more likely to get into trouble in the community, compromise community safety, and require law enforcement resources
- Long-term Negative Effects on Excluded Children
  - More likely to drop out
  - More likely to end up in the juvenile justice system
  - More likely to be incarcerated
  - More likely to be in poverty as adults
- Long-term Costs to Vermont's Communities, Economy, and Budget
  - Communities less safe, productive, and fiscally sound
  - Cost to VT's economy – \$120K – 240K per dropout
  - VT cost per juvenile detainee – \$30K – 40K per year
  - VT cost per inmate - \$50K - 60K per year

#### **Kicked Out! Report Findings**

- Finding 1: Vermont Public School Students were Suspended for More Than 8,000 Days in 2011-2012
- Finding 2: Students with Learning Disabilities (on IEPs) were Nearly 3 Times More Likely to be Suspended
- Finding 3: Black/African-American and Abenaki Students were 2-3 Times More Likely to be Suspended
- Finding 4: The Use of Exclusionary and Punitive Discipline Varies Widely Across Vermont
- Finding 5: Valuable Data on Vermont's School Discipline Actions is Largely Unavailable, but is Necessary to Understand What Works

#### **Kicked Out! Report Recommendations**

- Recommendation 1: Vermont Must Limit Disciplinary Exclusion and its Collateral Effects
- Recommendation 2: Allow Students to Continue Learning During Suspension, Provide the Necessary Resources
- Recommendation 3: Ensure and Upgrade Students' Constitutional and Civil Rights
- Recommendation 4: Find Positive Examples by Ensuring Accurate and Timely Reporting of Discipline Data

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