

## ***Tackling Disproportionality!***

Dr. David E. Kirkland, Executive Director, NYU Metro Center  
Dr. Patrick Jean-Pierre, TAC-D Director

Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the  
Transformation of Schools

Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality

<http://education.nyu.edu/metrocenter/>

212-998-5100



**His name was Derrick Todd.**

# Derrick's Song

## *“U Turn”*

1. U turn
2. left b Hind
3. Legs sprawl ing on top of Black back
4. Mountains
5. Rivers that Run Deep
6. Like Sheba's Queens and she Loves
7. Open pours
8. inside empty cups that run over
9. hope like Escalades
10. that phaint in Darkness
11. that phreeze in Night
12. that phick in morning, morning
13. Uprising
14. Lite skin white men
15. Blues is my brothers
16. Black is my Berry
17. Sweet is my juice
18. So U turn back to me
19. I re turn back to U
20. I die daily 4 U

# Derrick's Song

## *“U Turn”*

1. ~~U~~ turn
2. left b-Hind
3. Legs **sprawl ing** on top of Black back (**broken English; use correctly**)
4. Mountains
5. Rivers that Run Deep
6. Like Sheba's Queens and she Loves
7. Open pours (**You mean pores**)
8. inside empty cups that run over
9. hope like Escalades
10. that phaint in Darkness
11. that phreeze in Night
12. that phick in morning, morning
13. Uprising
14. Lite skin white men (**sp-light**)
15. Blues is my brothers
16. Black is my Berry
17. Sweet is my juice
18. So **U** turn back to me
19. I re turn back to **U**
20. I die daily **4 U** (**lazy, you need to spell out**)

“Man, I quit school because it wasn’t nothing there for me. They kept kicking me out. I got suspended all the time . . . about a couple dozen times. I don’t care. They tried to say I was crazy, put me special education. Not that there is anything wrong with it, but I’m not special ed. They just didn’t know . . . or think that I knew all my stuff. It was just different than theirs. The stuff they want me to know is boring; it don’t relate to my life. That, and I feel like they had labeled me from day 1. That’s why I don’t do school.”

(Excerpt from Interview with Derrick Todd, 06/21/2011)

# The Loss of Derrick and The Loss of Hope

# Hopelessness

## Stages of Despondence (Bolland, 2003):

- **Depression**
  - The teachers remarks on his paper hurt him.
  - About 60% of students deal with depression.
- **Social Disengagement**
  - Derrick never wrote again in class.
- **Violent behavior**
  - He got into frequent fights.
- **Fatalism**
  - He died too soon.

*On May 8, 2013, Derrick Todd was murdered during an attempted home invasion.*



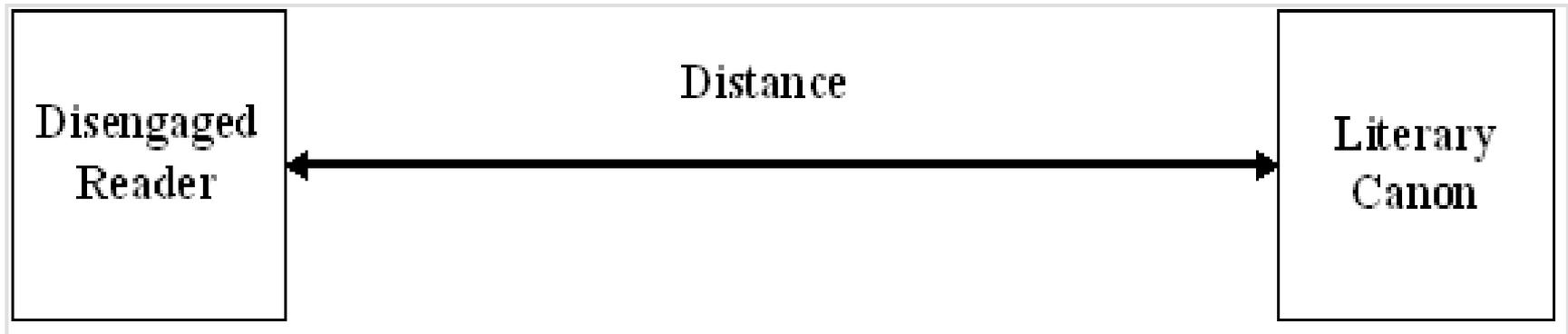
# The Power of Culture in Classrooms

- Culture can be used (and is used) as a sociopolitical currency for the exchange of values, beliefs, dispositions, etc. (Smitherman, 2006). It is also an essential part of who we are (Anzaldua, 1983).
- In schools, some cultures are valued more than others; therefore, certain individuals are perceived to have greater worth in society than others (Fairclough, 2006; van Dijk, 2005).
- The value of culture is constantly shifting, amended in ways that privilege some and disadvantage others (Fairclough, 2006).

# The Consequences of a Lack of Cultural Competence

- Hegemony
  - The success of the dominant way in projecting values, dispositions, interests sometimes irrelevant to the masses that legitimizes failure for some (cf. Apple, 1981; Gramsci, 1973).
- Multiple Forms of Failure (i.e., Displacement ideologies)
  - **Silencings**, fears and hatreds of self/others, feelings of inferiority and disenfranchisement (Kirkland, 2013).
- Benign Ideologies
  - Deficit Theories (Purcell-Gates, 2004).

# The Deficit Perspective & Culturally Irrelevant Pedagogy



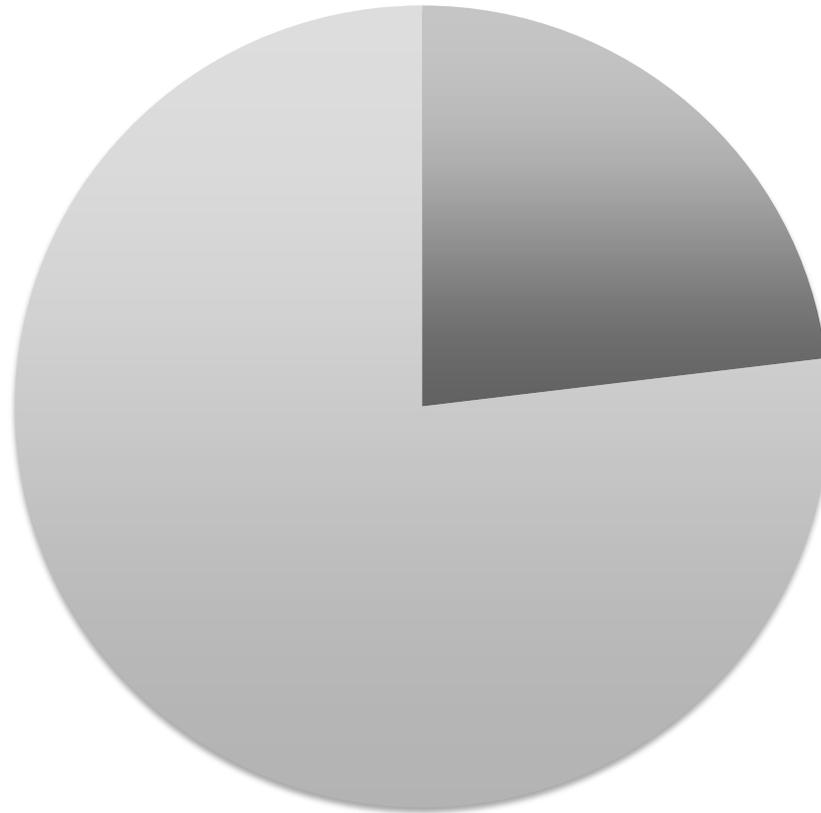
Model adopted from Kirkland, 2007



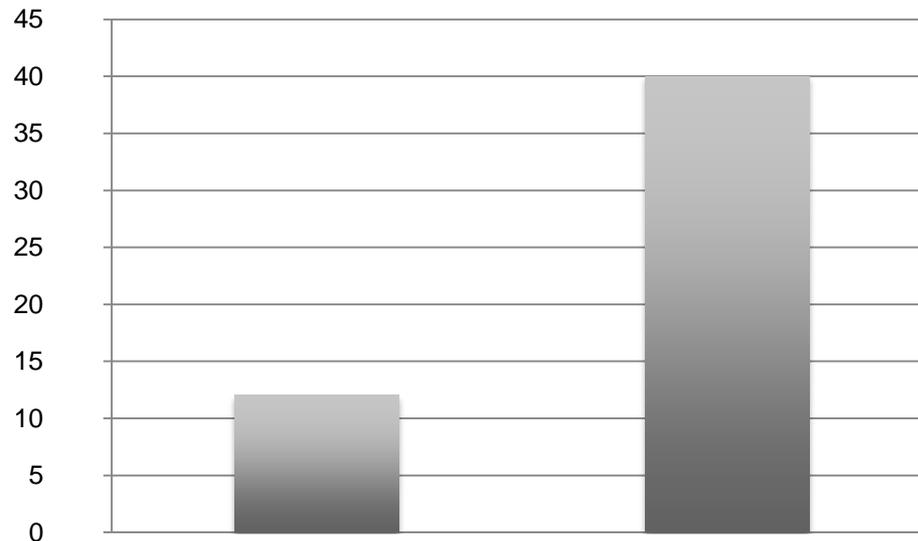
The work of TAC-D is to support districts, school leaders, and teachers in asking a different set of difficult questions:

**Why not Disengaged  
“Texts”?**

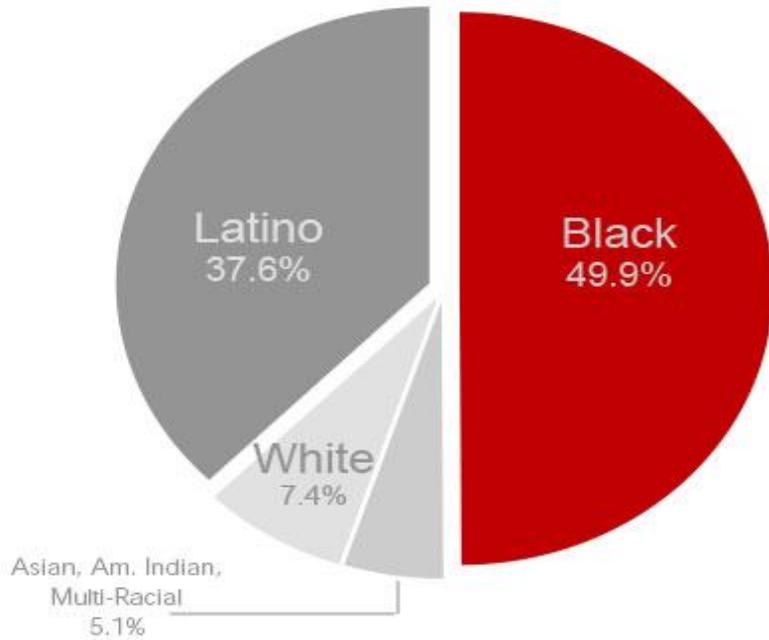
Nearly **70%** of low-income youth of color **read below grade level**, compared with **27%** of White youth (NAEP, 2015).



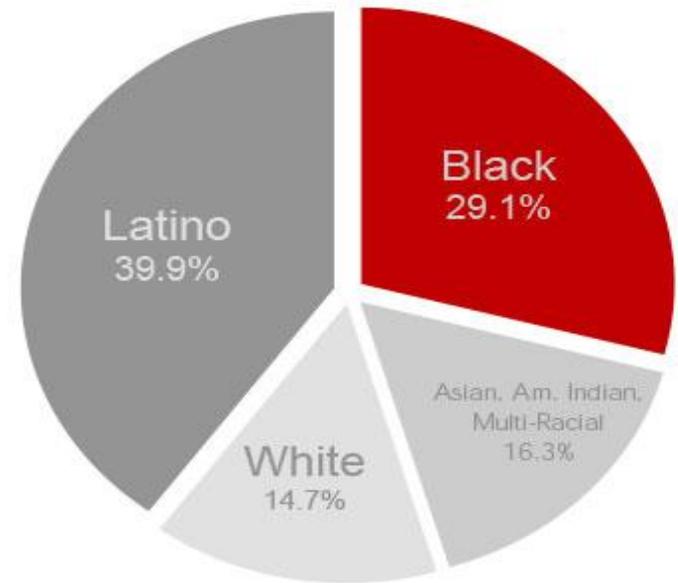
Approximately **12%** of low-income youth of color *test proficiently* in reading compared to **40%** of other American youth (NAEP, 2011).



**Student Suspensions**  
New York City, 2010-11



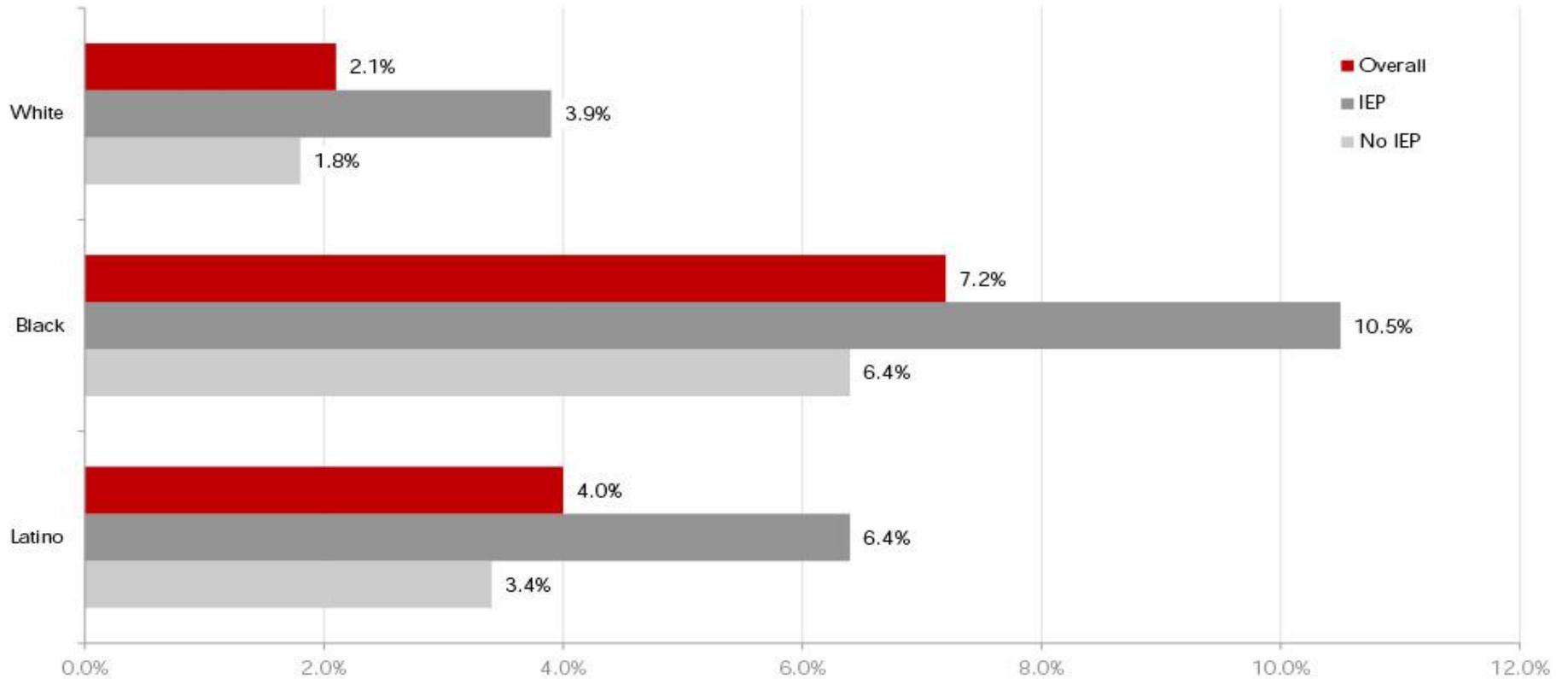
**Student Enrollment**  
New York City, 2010-11



Source: IBO data provided to the NYCLU

## Student Suspension Rates by Race and IEP Status

New York City, 2010-11



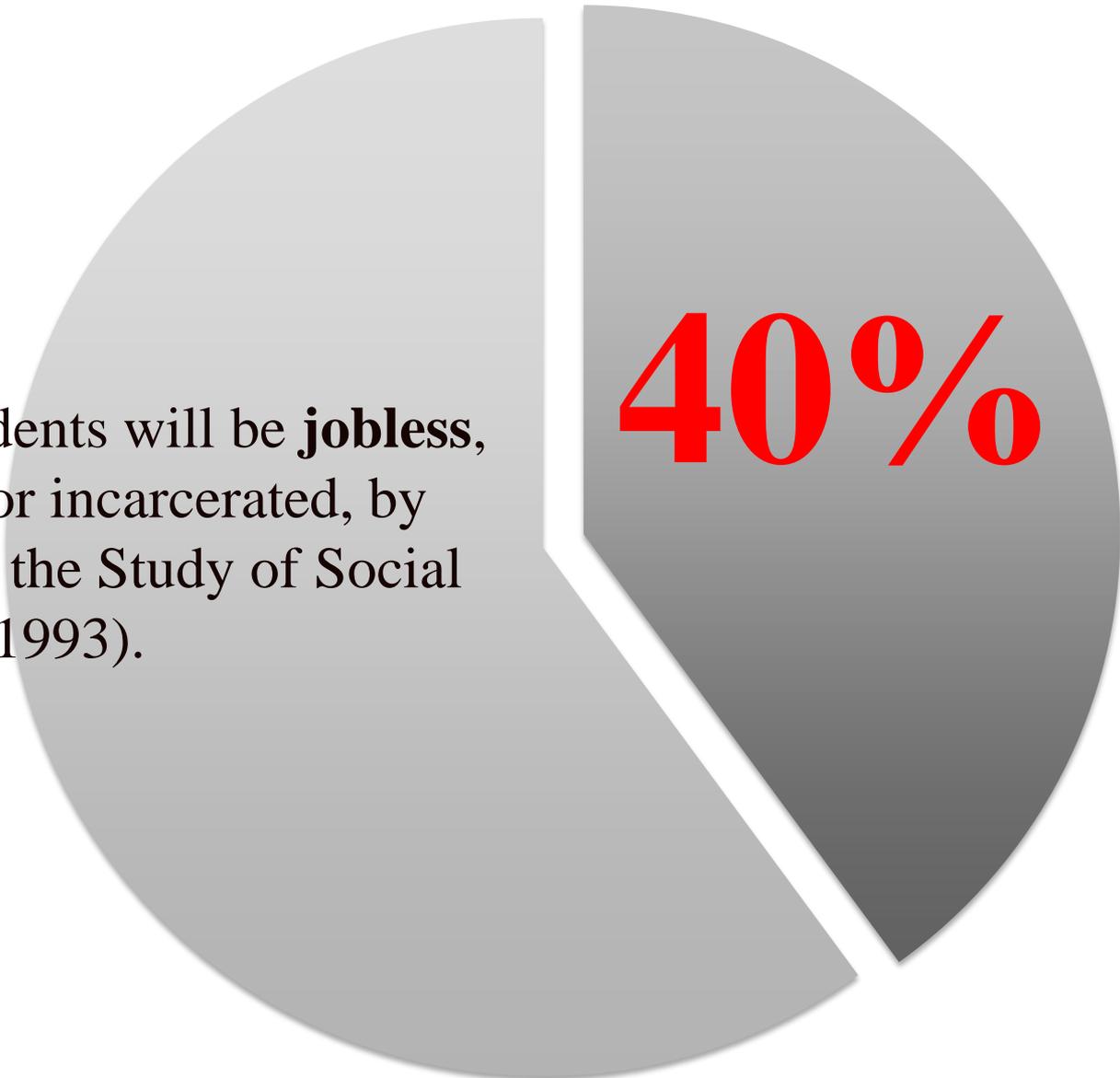
Source: IBO data provided to the NYCLU



# Lingering Consequences

Inzlicht, M., Tullett, A. M., Legault, L., & Kang, S. K. (2011). Lingering effects: Stereotype threat hurts more than you think. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 5(1), 227-256.

Over **40%** of such students will be **jobless**, either unemployed or incarcerated, by 2020 (The Center for the Study of Social Policy, 1993).



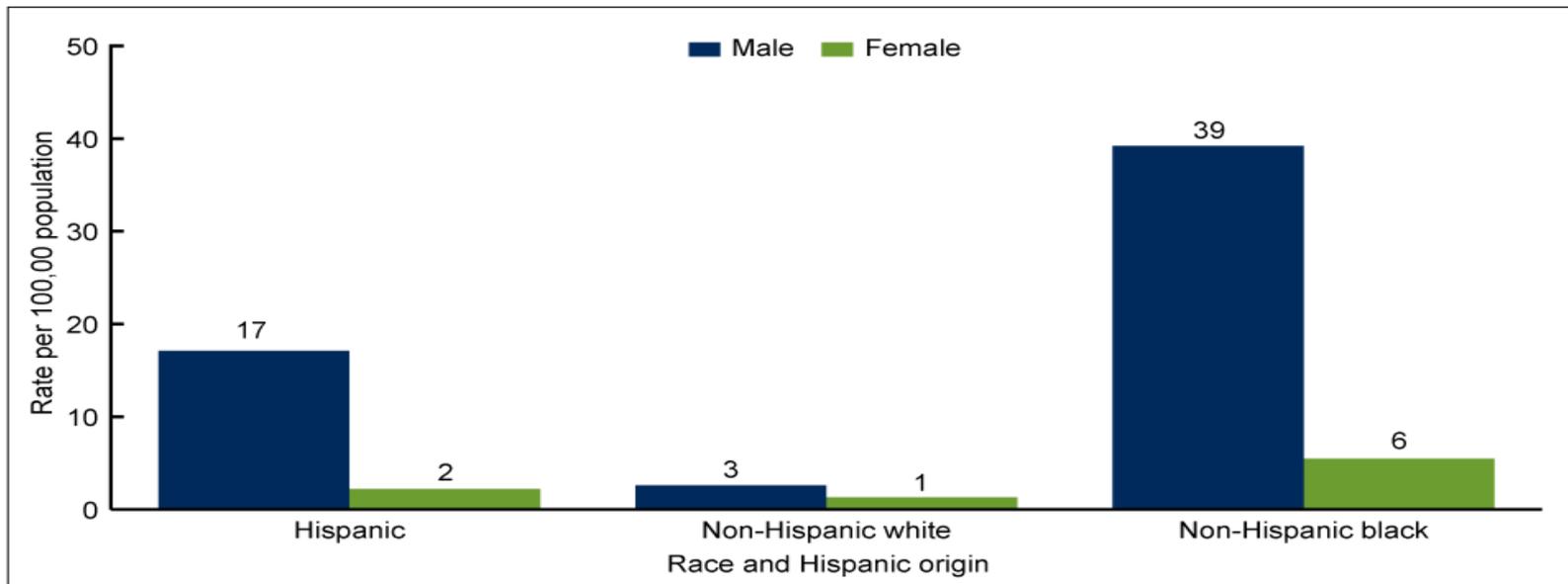
A pie chart with a dark gray slice representing 40% of the total. The slice is exploded from the rest of the chart. The text '40%' is written in large red font over the slice.

Category	Percentage
Jobless (unemployed or incarcerated)	40%
Employed	60%

For particularly vulnerable populations, such as young Black men, the consequences are dire.

Young Black men (ages 10-14) have shown the largest increase in **suicide** rates since 1980 compared to other youth groups by sex and ethnicity, increasing **180%** (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2004).

Figure 4. Homicide rates, teenagers 12–19 years, by race, Hispanic origin, and sex: United States, 1999–2006



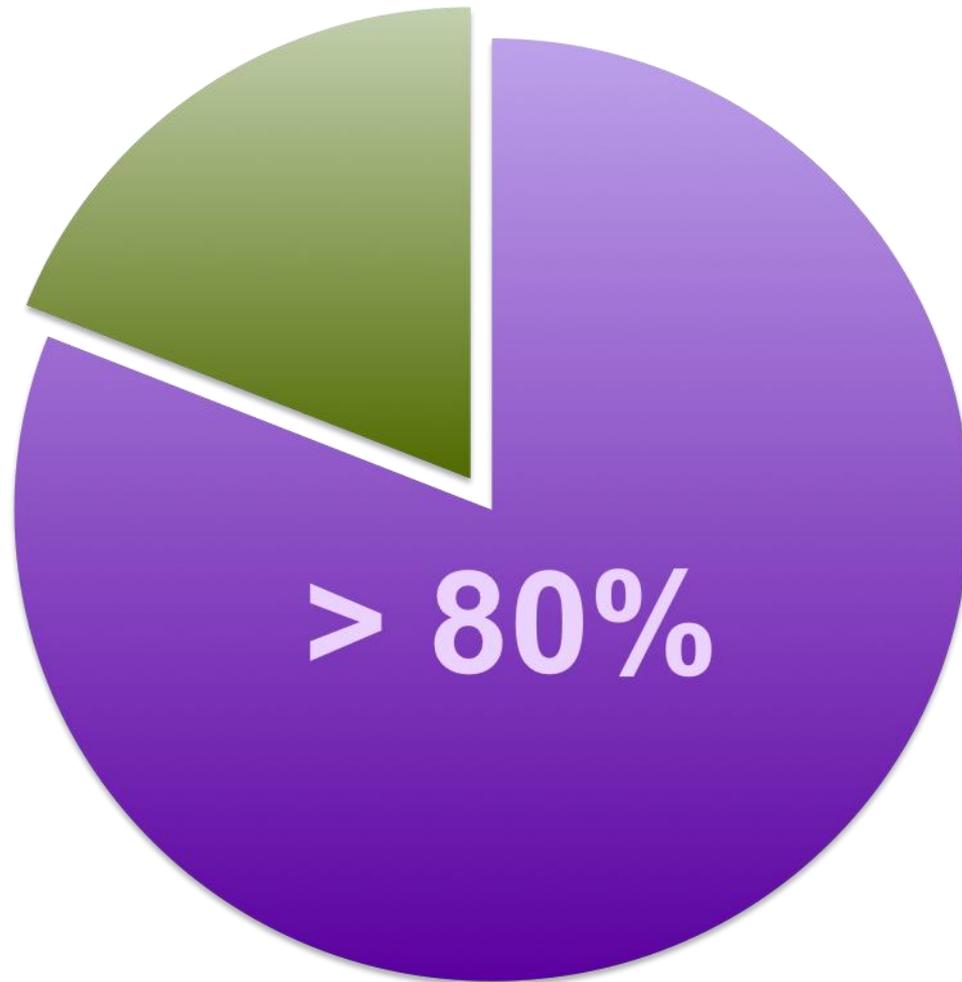
SOURCE: National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

- Among 15-19 year old Black males, suicide rates (since 1980) have increased by **80%** (Poussaint & Alexander, 2000).
- Black male are **twice as likely** to die before the age of 45 as a White male (Roper, 1991; Spivak, Prothrow-Stith, & Hausman, 1988).

# A Wicked Problem

“As opposed to the tame or ‘benign’ problems of physical science and engineering, in which mission, method, and markers of success are clear, *wicked problems* are those in which it is ‘the very formulation of the problem that is problematic . . . [because] the formulation itself involves a choice of interpretation that is already linked to a preferred solution” (Blanco, 1994, p. 22).”

“The disproportionate representation of poor, working class, and racial, ethnic, and linguistic minority students in special education has been a **wicked problem** since the inception of special education in the early 20th century (see Lazerson, 1983; Sarason & Doris, 1979).”



**By some estimates, greater than 80% of learning deals with things beyond cognition—beyond mental ability and skill capacity, (hence the mind).**



# Culturally Relevant Education

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American educational research journal*, 32(3), 465-491.

# Disrupting Disproportionality

## WHY does TAC-D do its work?

- Build the capacity of educators and school districts to engage in a school improvement process that:

Addresses  
Disproportionality  
**Beyond Compliance**

Incorporates  
**Culturally  
Responsive  
Education** into  
beliefs, policies and  
practices system-wide

Develop a **Systems  
Thinking** approach to  
resolving root causes

**Embrace  
Differences** in  
service of rejecting a  
deficit model

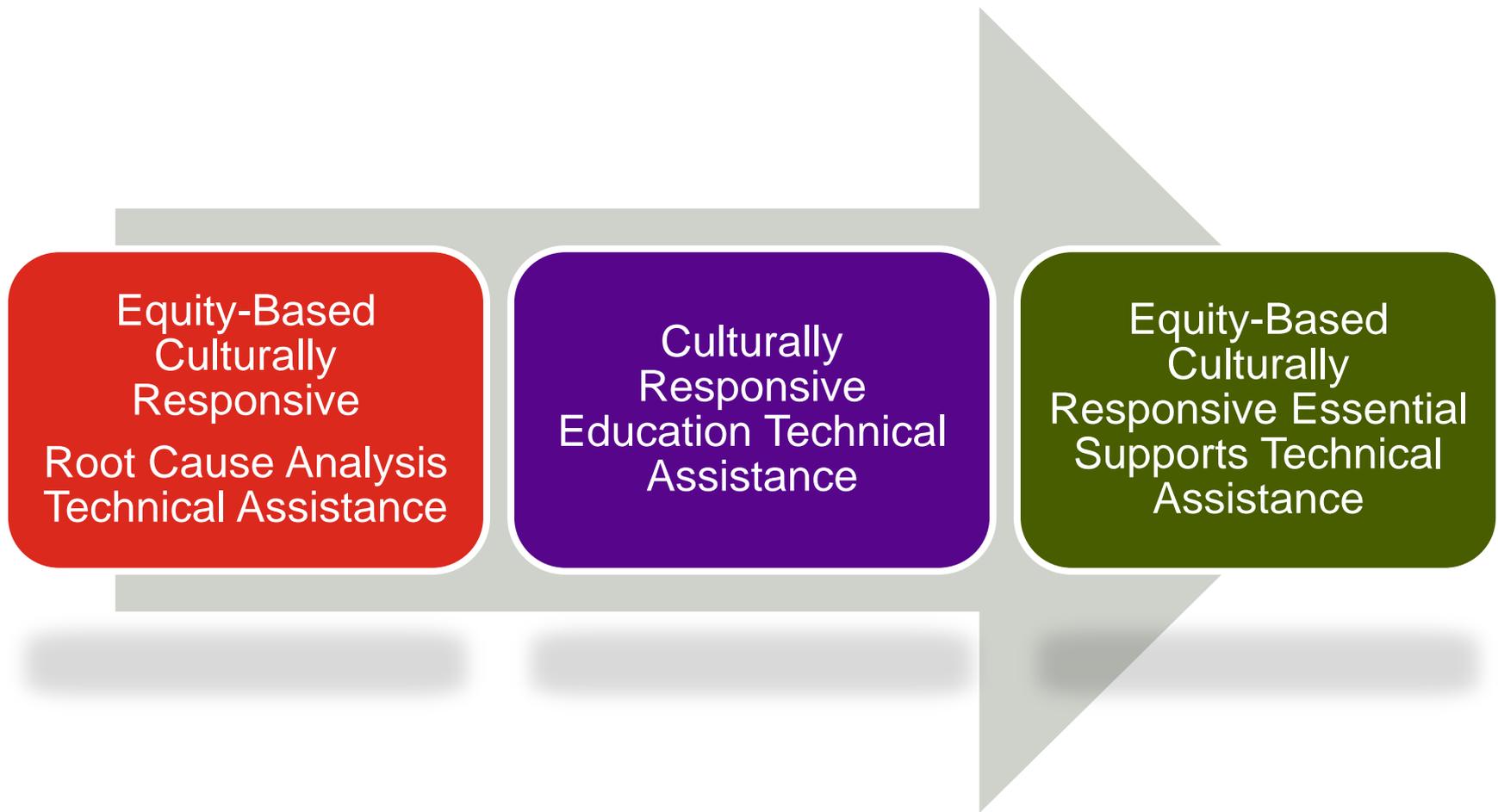
Ensures **Equitable  
Outcomes** for all  
students in school,  
home and community

# HOW TAC-D engages school districts in the work of addressing disproportionality:

- School districts will ensure:



# TAC-D 3 Step Theory of Change Process for Eliminating Disproportionality



# Culturally Responsive Seven Practice-based Toolkit

## School CRE walkthrough

Adapting district,  
school and classroom  
data systems

Classroom visits and  
implementation of CRE  
teaching strategies

Curriculum Unit  
Review/Book  
Inventory Review

Reframing Problem  
Solving  
Teams/Intervention  
Audit

Reviewing Family  
Engagement plans

Create CRE  
turnkey teams

# TAC-D Technical Assistance Process

## PHASE

1

Securing School District Support to Addressing Disproportionality  
*(5 hours)*

Develop Relationships

Explain Services

Assess Readiness

Create Plan for Phase 2

## PHASE

2

Identifying Root Causes of Disproportionality  
*(20 hours)*

Developing Culturally Responsive Mindset

Develop Quality Improvement Plan and 5-year multi-service

## PHASE

3

Provide Customized Technical Assistance and Professional Development  
*(25 hours)*

Implement QIP

Changes in Policies, Practices and Beliefs related to Disproportionality

## PHASE

4

Evaluate Changes in Practice, Procedures and Policies and prepare Sustainability Plan  
*(5 hours)*

Measure Progress based on QIP Goals

Update QIP

Develop Long-term Plan

## Before TAC-D



# After TAC-D = Culturally Responsive Lens

**Root Cause Analysis**

**Identify your Unique Problem**



**Using Data to Drive Change**

**Develop & Implement Tailored Solutions**

# TAC-D 2009-2014 Success Overtime

## School District A: 4B (TAC-D 2009-2014)

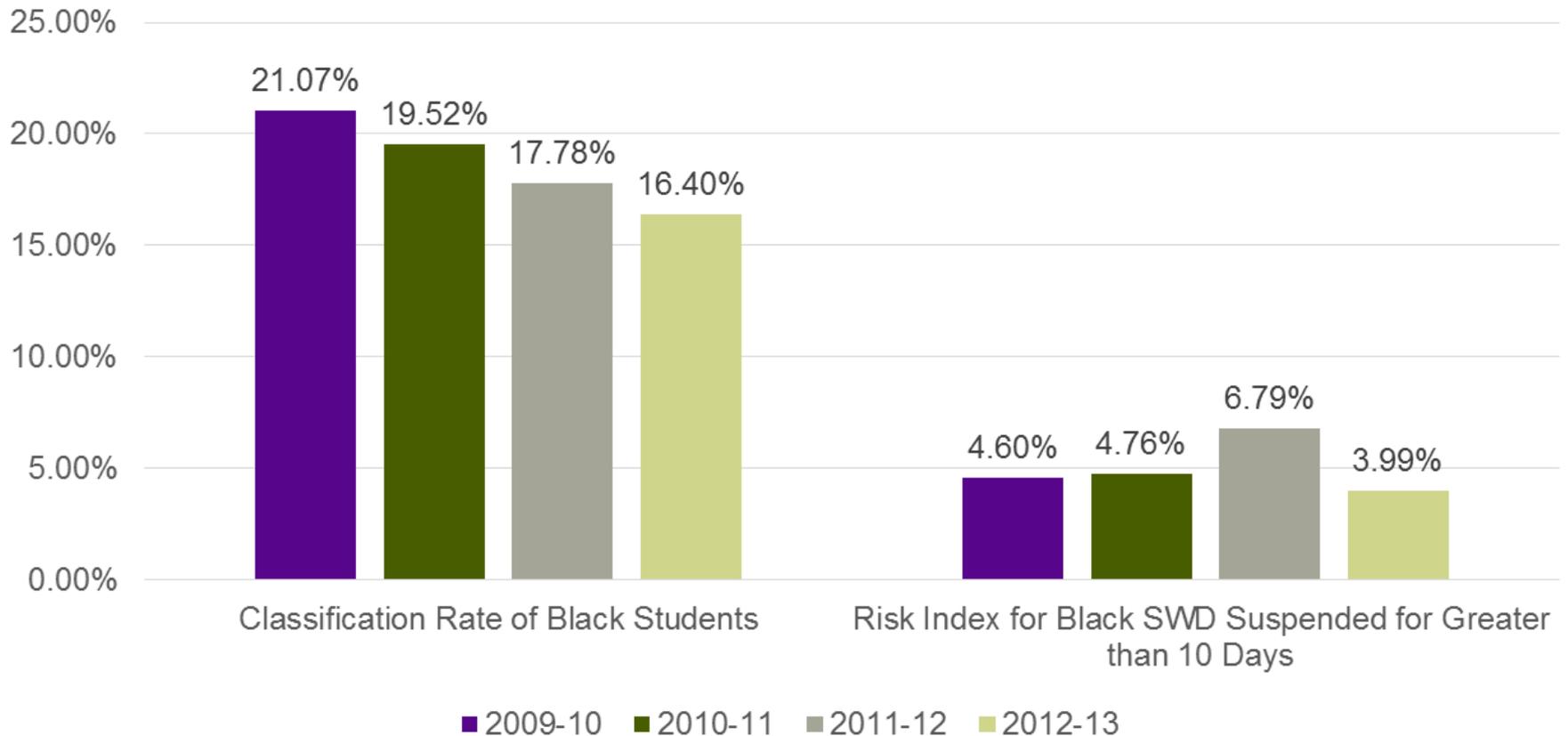
- TAC-D has worked with District A since 2009-10.
- The district was cited for indicator 4b, but decided to focus on indicator 9 (racial/ethnic disproportionality in special education classifications) due to being “at risk” in this area.
- In 2008-09, Black students comprised 61.2% of the student population in District A but comprised 63% of all students with disabilities.
- Furthermore, both **Black and White students** were **1.54 times** as likely as all other students to be classified as emotionally disturbed, and **Black students** were **1.5 times as likely to be classified with a learning disability**. **Latino students** were **1.51 times** as likely to be classified with a speech or language impairment.

# Outcome Data: Classification and Risk Data

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Change since first year of TACD work (2009-10)
Classification of Black Students (All Categories)	21.07%	19.52%	17.78%	16.40%	<b>-22.2%</b>
Relative Risk of Black Students Being Classified (All Categories)	<b>1.24</b>	<b>1.24</b>	<b>1.24</b>	1.15	<b>-7.3%</b>
Risk Index for Black SWD suspended for greater than 10 days (out of school)	<u><b>4.60%</b></u>	<u><b>4.76%</b></u>	<u><b>6.79%</b></u>	3.99%	<b>-13.3%</b>

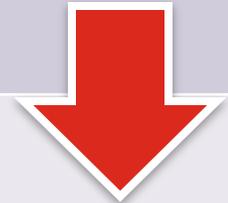
# Outcome Data: Classification and Risk Data

Classification rate data:  $r = -0.9991$ ,  $p = 0.000$  (very strong correlation that is statistically significant)

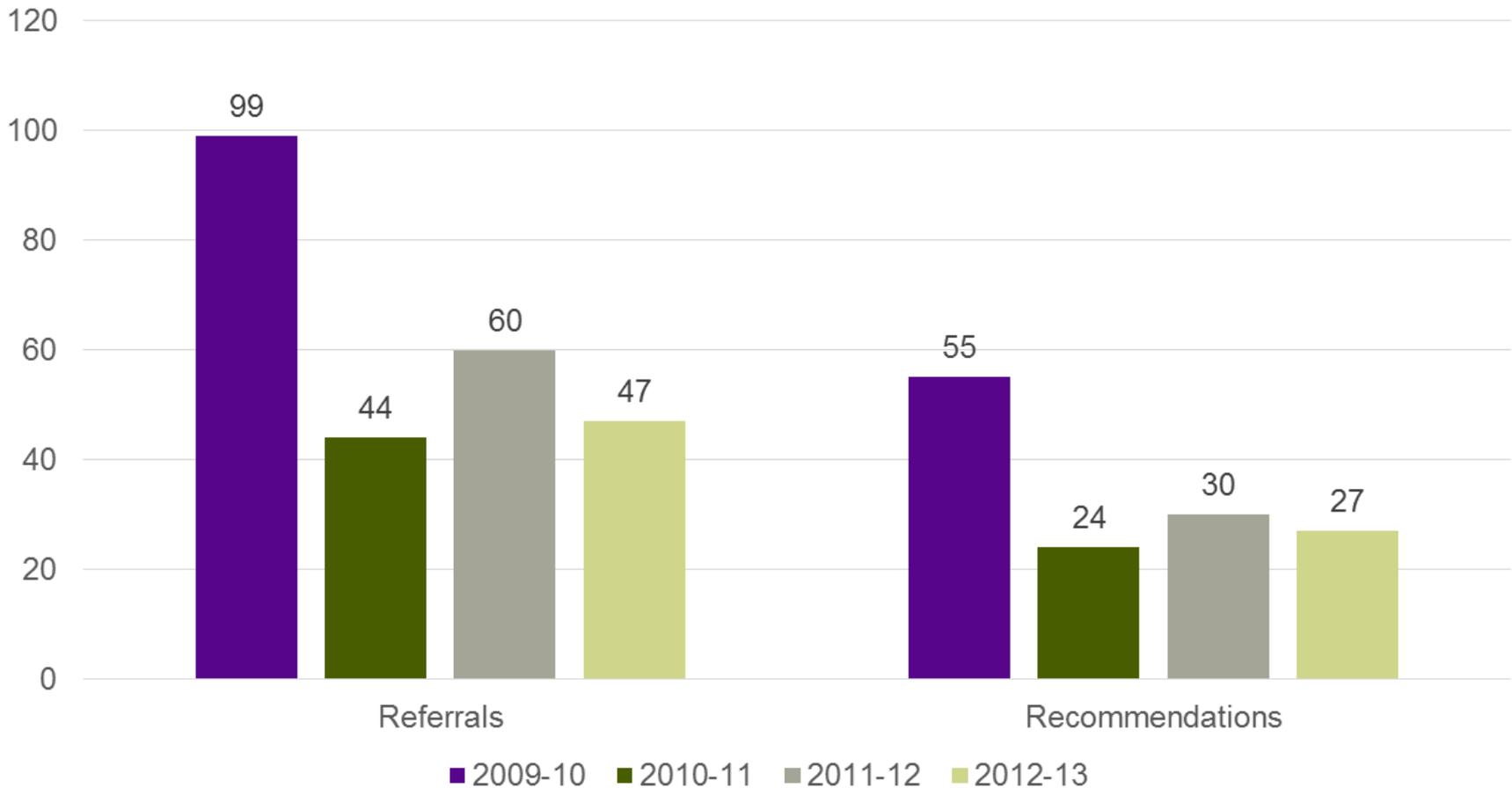


# CSE Referrals and Recommendations–All Students

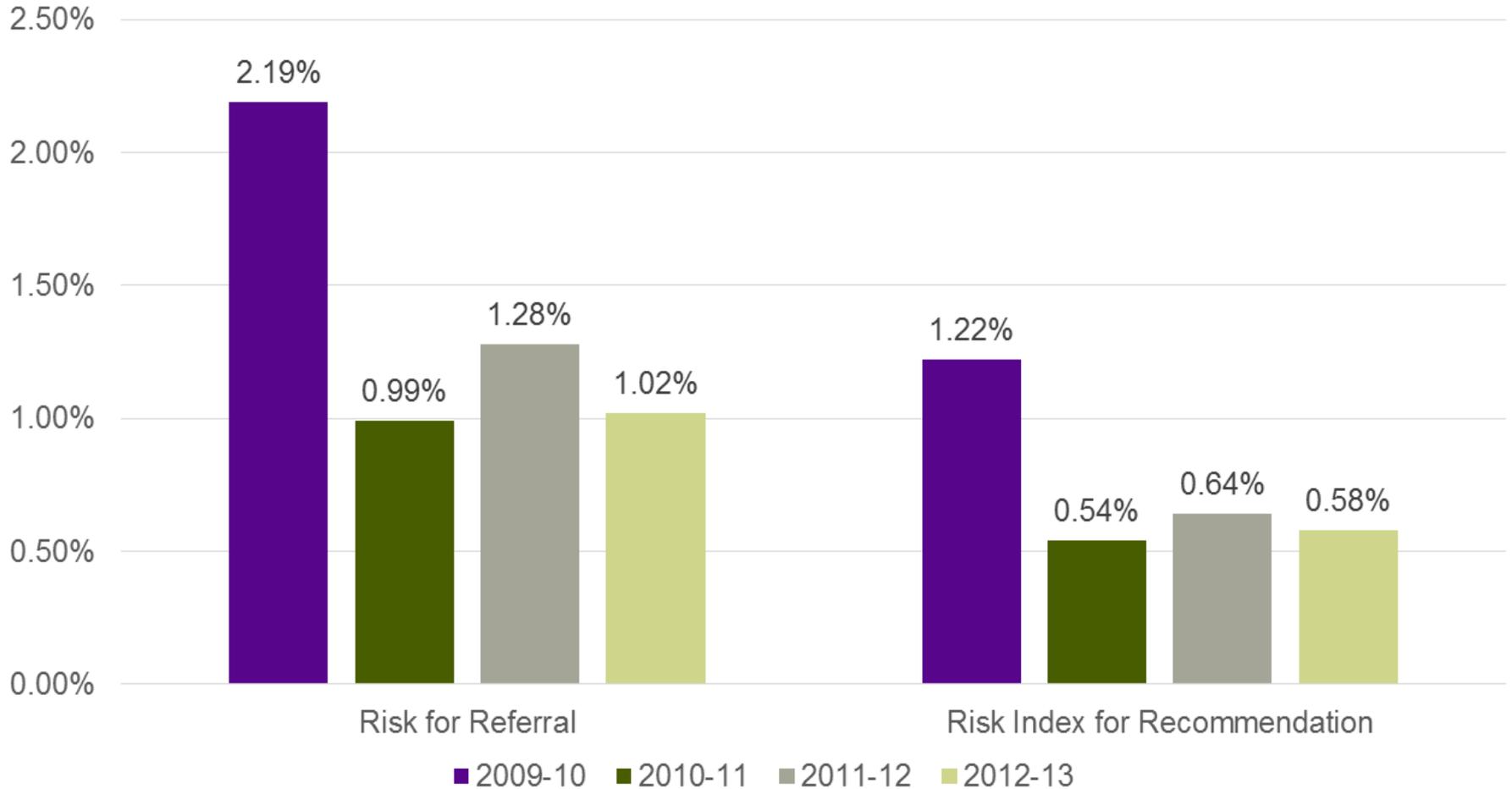
	All Students				Change
	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	
Enrollment	4526	4467	4692	4616	2.0%
Referral	99	44	60	47	-52.5%
Recommendations	55	24	30	27	-50.9%
Recommendation Rate	55.56%	54.55%	50.0%	57.45%	<b>3.4%</b>
Risk for Referral	2.19%	.99%	1.28%	1.02%	-53.4%
Risk Index for Recommendation	1.22%	.54%	.64%	.58%	-52.5%



# CSE Referrals and Recommendations - All Students



# CSE Referral and Recommendation Rates - All Students



# NYS District Progress (TAC-D 2009-2014)

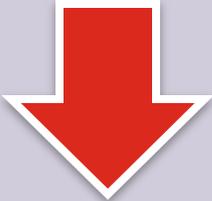
YES	NO	MIXED	UNDETERMINED
11 out of 30	7 out of 30	3 out of 30	9 out of 30
36.7%	23.3%	10%	30%
District-wide engagement with TA support	Lack of a Systemic approach to TA	Less than 1 year of TA support	Lack of district-wide engagement & fidelity with TA support
Two years or more of TA support	Less than one year of TA support	Lack of continuity and follow-up on TA supports	Resistance to research-based protocols and curriculums aligned with TA support
Used 55 hours or more of TA support	Leadership is not committed to an equity vision		Too many competing services
	Lack of ownership and limited time provided to implement TA support		District resistance to acknowledging racial factors, and only focused on poverty

# TAC-D 2014-2019 Current Success

## School District B: Discrepancy 4A (TAC-D 2014-2019)

- TAC-D has worked with District A since 2014-15.
- The district was cited for indicator 4A.
- In 2013-14, **1,477** students compromised the **3,243** total offenses.
- White students compromise **22%** of the student population in the district. White students compromised **9%** of all offenses.
- Black students compromise **52%** of the student population in the district. Black students compromised **73%** of all incidents.
- Latino students compromise **15%** of the student population in the district. Latino students compromised **16%** of all incidents.

# School District B: Discrepancy 4a Data

Year 1	Year 2	Percent Change
<p><b>SWD= 3.7%</b></p> <p><b>Black= 4.757%</b></p>	<p>SWD= 3.3%</p> <p>Black= 3.9560%</p>	<p><b>Decrease in All Categories</b></p> <p>SWD= -10.8%</p> <p>Black= -16.8%</p> 

## District Provided Data: District B

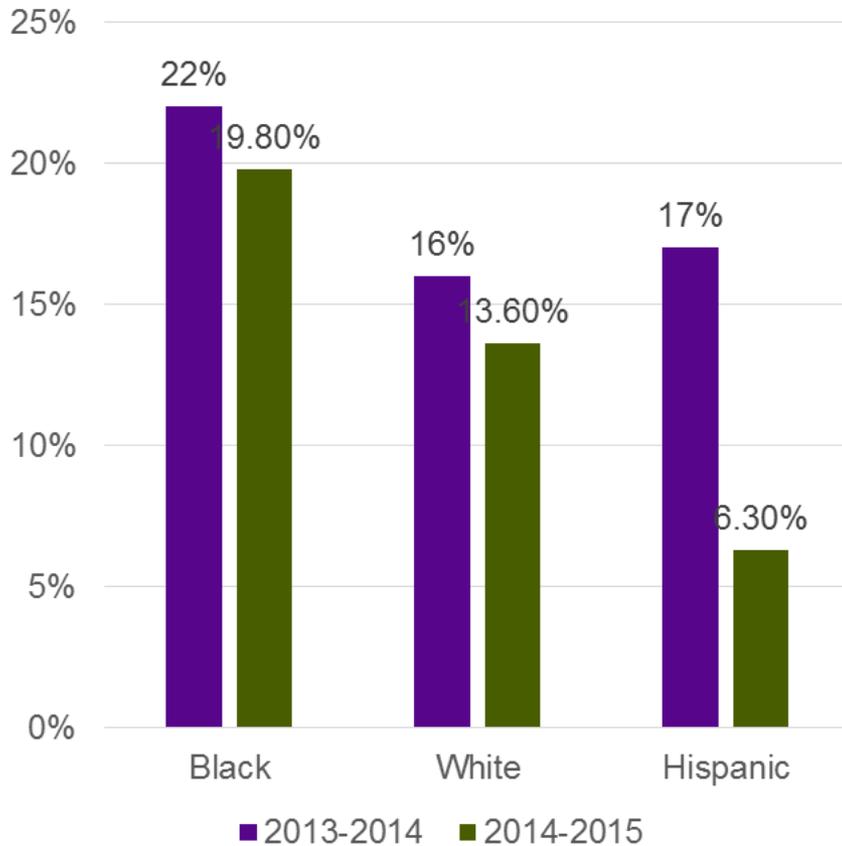
Race	2013-2014 Referral Rates	2014-2015 Referral Rates	Percent Change
Black	22%	19.8%	-10%
White	16%	13.6%	-15%
Hispanic	17%	6.3%	-62.9%

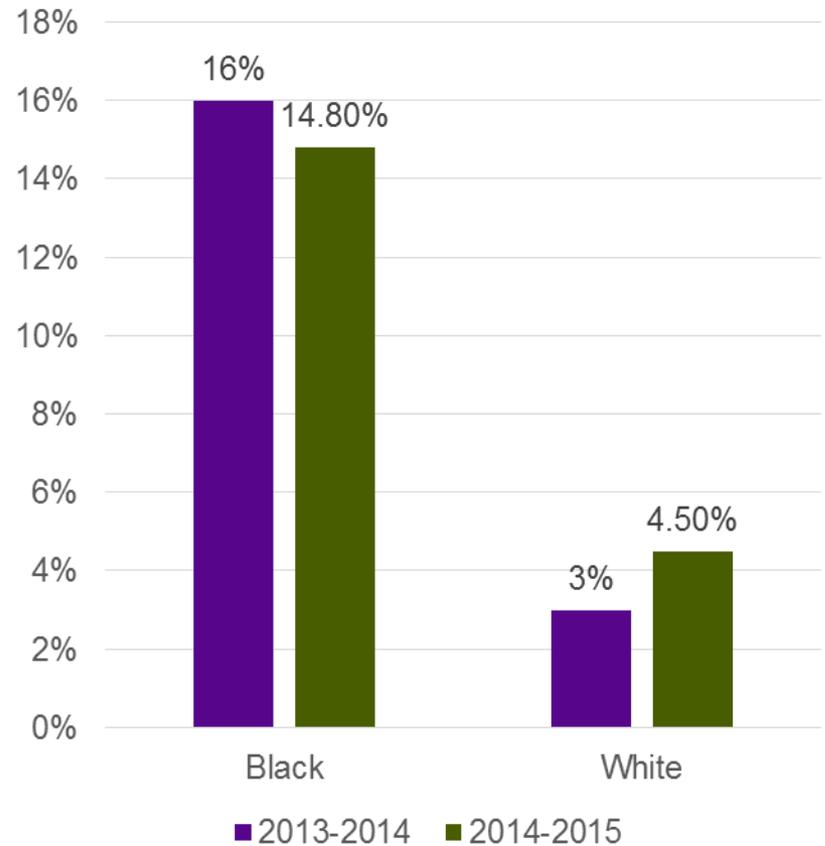
Race	2013-2014 Suspension Rate (OSS)	2014-2015 Suspension Rate (OSS)	Percent Change
Black	16%	14.8%	-7.5%
White	3%	4.5%	50%

# Referral and Suspension Rates

## Referral Rates



## Suspension Rates (OSS)



## School District C: Discrepancy 4A/B (TAC-D 2014-2019)

- TAC-D has worked with District A since 2014-15.
- The district was cited for indicator 4A/B.
- In 2013-14, **5,945** students comprised the **29,886** total offenses.
- White students comprise **24%** of the student population in the district. White students comprised **17%** of all offenses.
- Black students comprise **50%** of the student population in the district. Black students comprised **64%** of all incidents.
- Latino students comprise **13%** of the student population in the district. Latino students comprised **13%** of all incidents.
- American Indian students comprise **1%** of the student population in the district. American Indian students comprised **2%** of all incidents.

# District C: Discrepancy 4A/B

Year 1	Year 2	Percent Change
		<b>Decrease in All Categories</b>
SWD= 4.7%	SWD= 4.4%	SWD= -6.38%
Black= 6.1305%	Black= 5.637%	Black= -8.05%
Hispanic= 3.8536%	Hispanic= 3.663%	Hispanic= -4.95%
Multi= 5.0000%	Multi= 4.8611%	Multi= -2.78%



# District Provided Data: District C

Race	2013-2014 Referral Rates	2014-2015 Referral Rates	Percent Change
Black	35%	30.2%	-13.7%
White	20%	34.2%	71%

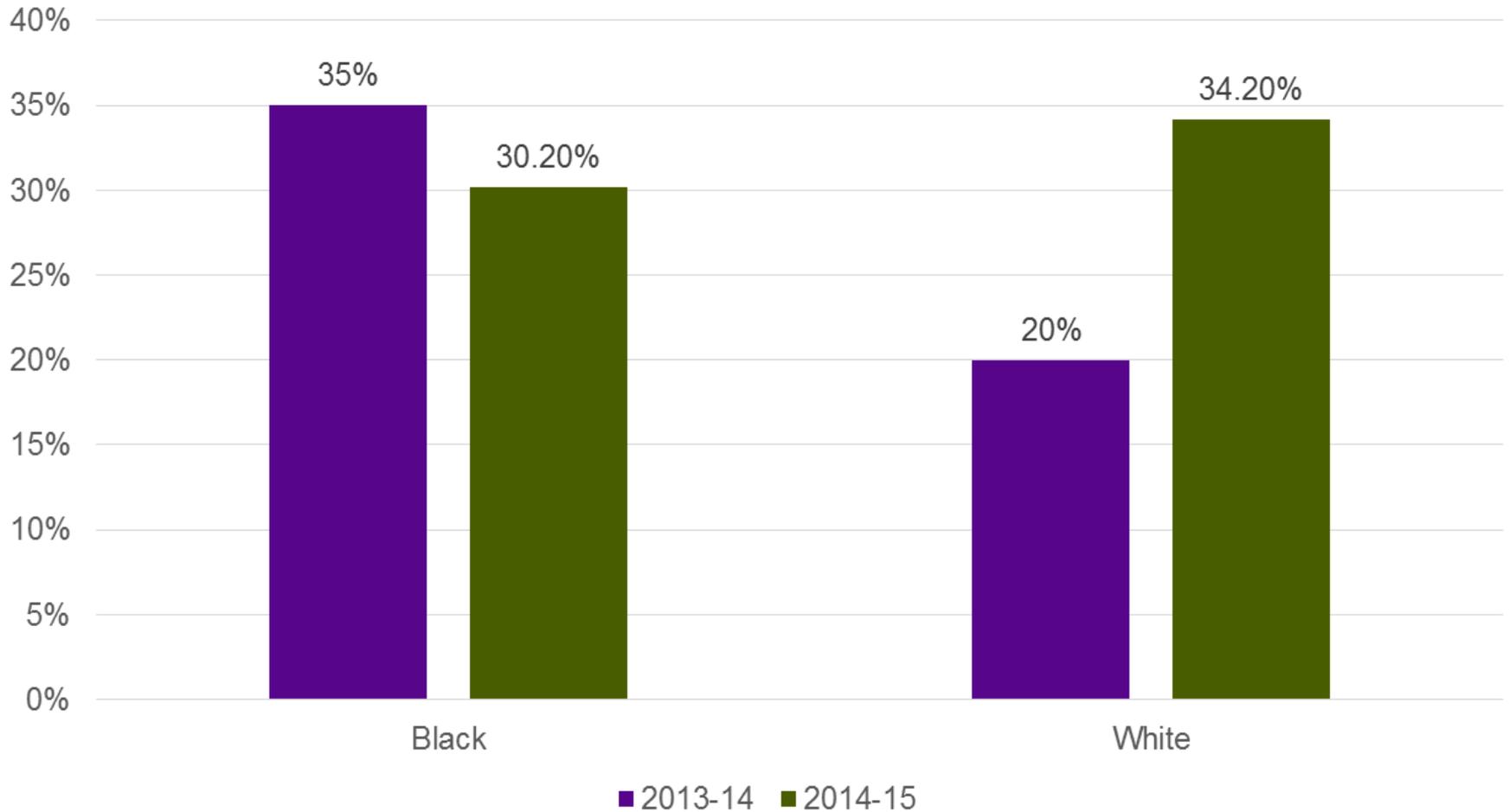
  

Race	2013-2014 Suspension Rate (OSS)	2014-2015 Suspension Rate (OSS)	Percent Change
Black	21%	11%	-47.6%
White	11%	6%	-45.5%

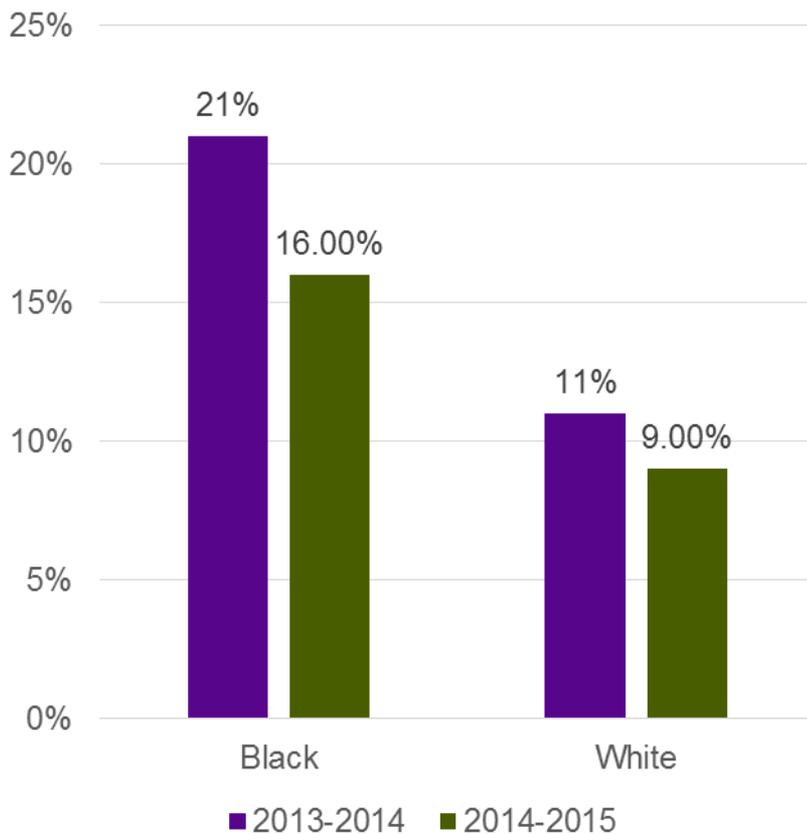
Race	2013-2014 Suspension Rate (ISS)	2014-2015 Suspension Rate (ISS)	Percent Change
Black	21%	16%	-24%
White	11%	9%	-18%

# Referral Rates

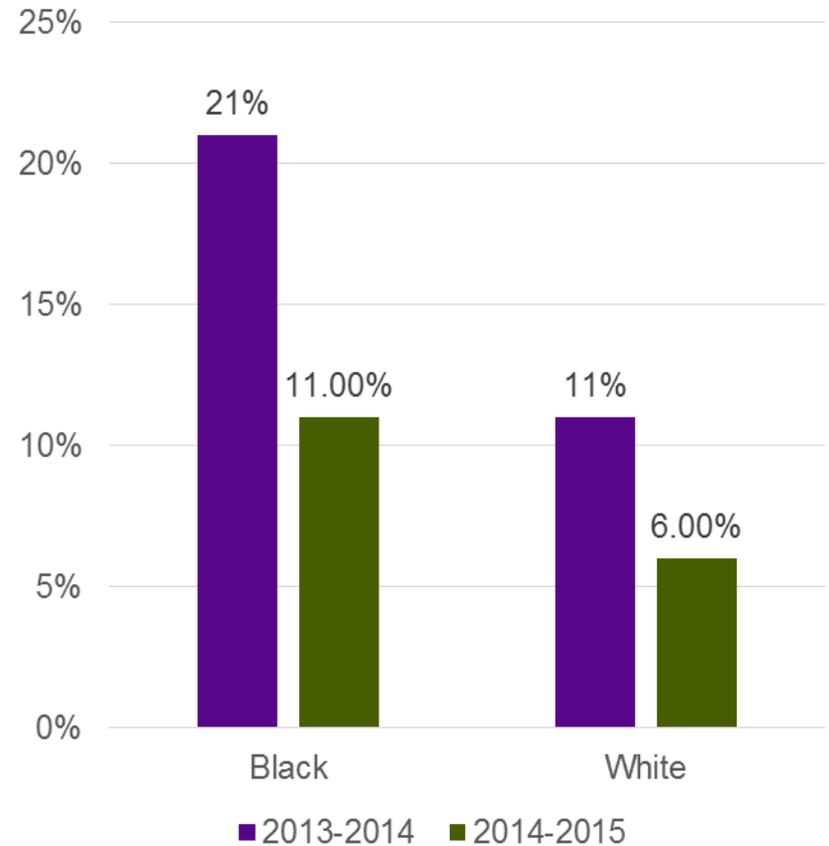


# Referral and Suspension Rates

## Suspension Rates (ISS)



## Suspension Rates (OSS)



## Food for thought...

- Using critical equity-based culturally responsive education as a framework is key for shifting mindsets
- Districts must be held accountable to execute theory of change with fidelity
- TAC-D needs greater manpower to respond to district demands
- District and building leadership is key for success
- TAC-D works well as a sustainable school improvement process and not just as a professional development program
- Districts are only promising or successful when they are willing to discuss race and have difficult conversations about beliefs, policies and practices







# TAC-D INFLUENCES CHANGE

by . . .

# #1

We move districts beyond issues access and opportunity . . .  
to explore opportunities for hope and healing.

(Ginwright, 2015)

## Building an hope and thriving environments for writing....

One of the great problems of history is that the concepts of love and power have usually been contrasted as opposites. What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive, and that love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love”



## #2

We help districts, schools, school leaders and teacher to rethink  
the basics (Dyson, 2007)  
(They are **NOT** reading, writing, and arithmetic.)

Pleasure

Play

Curiosity

Creativity

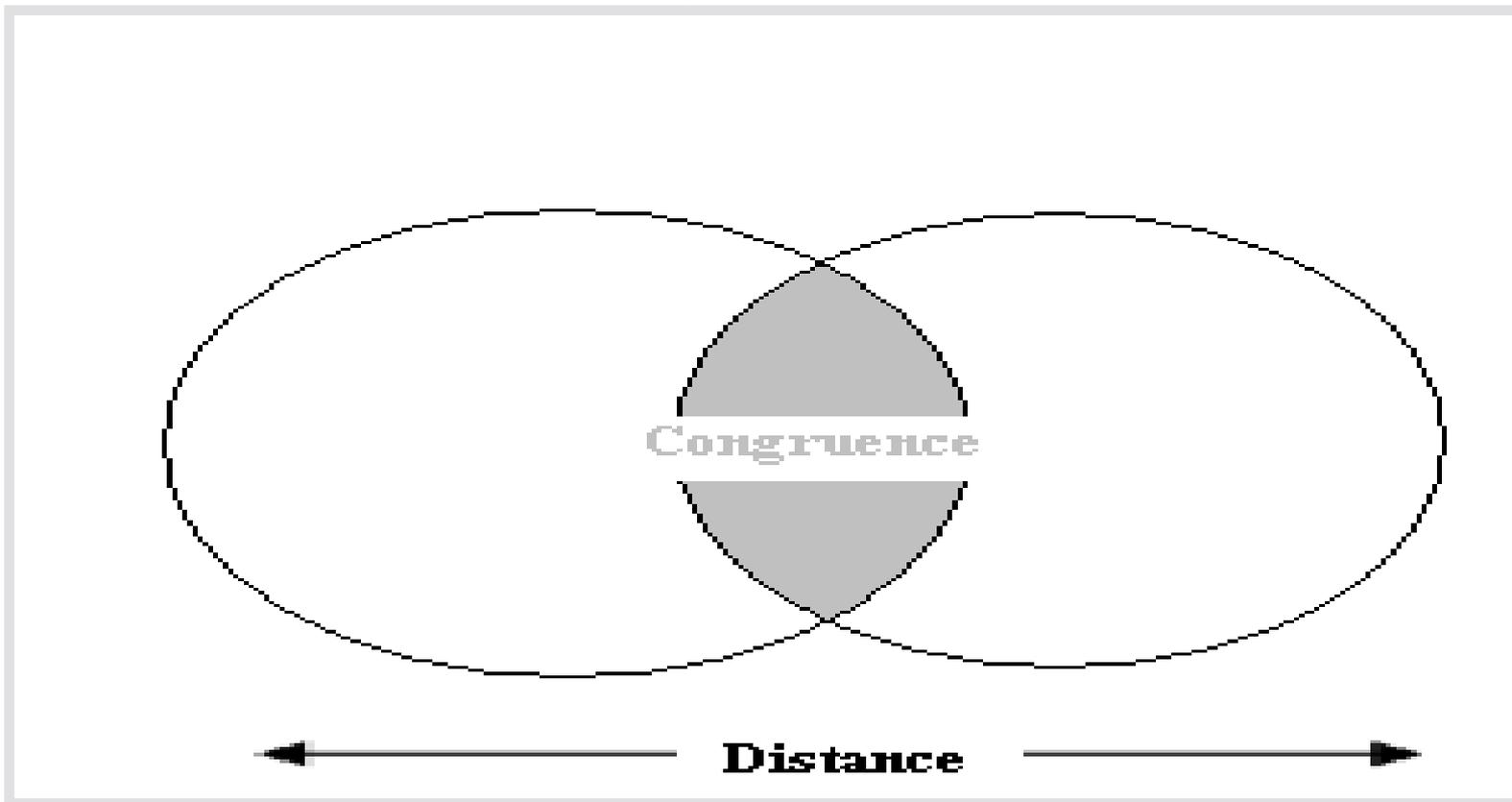
# Mindfulness And Meditation



# #3

We help districts rethink notions of place and school . . .  
(Gutierrez, 2008)

Ped•a•gog•i•cal Third Space (noun): the overlapping space between the diverse worlds of home and school. In this conceptualization, home is one space, the educational institution is a second space, and the classroom in which home and school cultures meet can be seen as a third space.

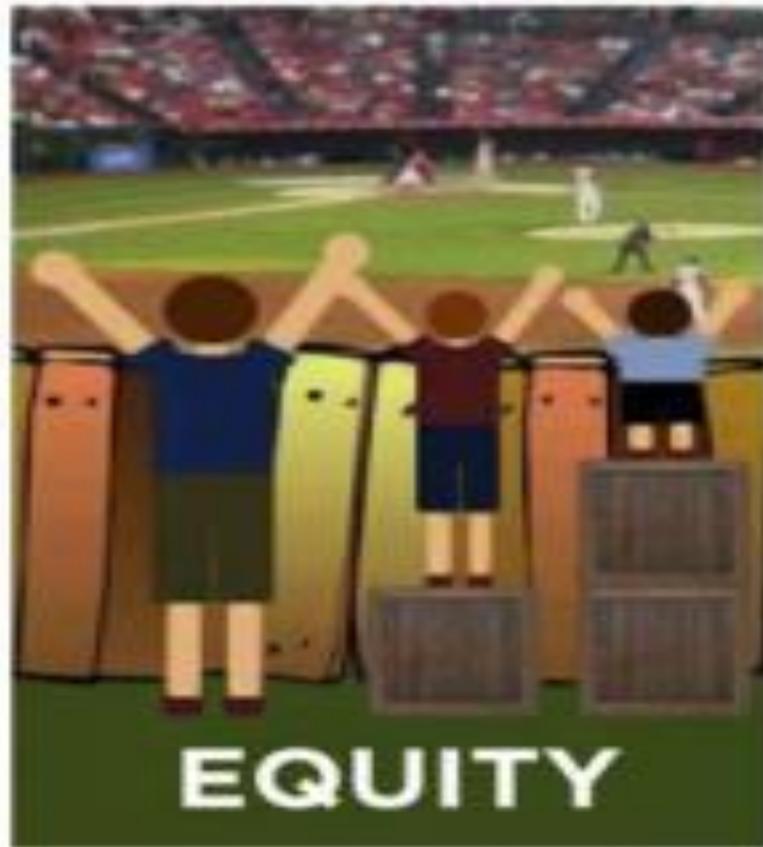
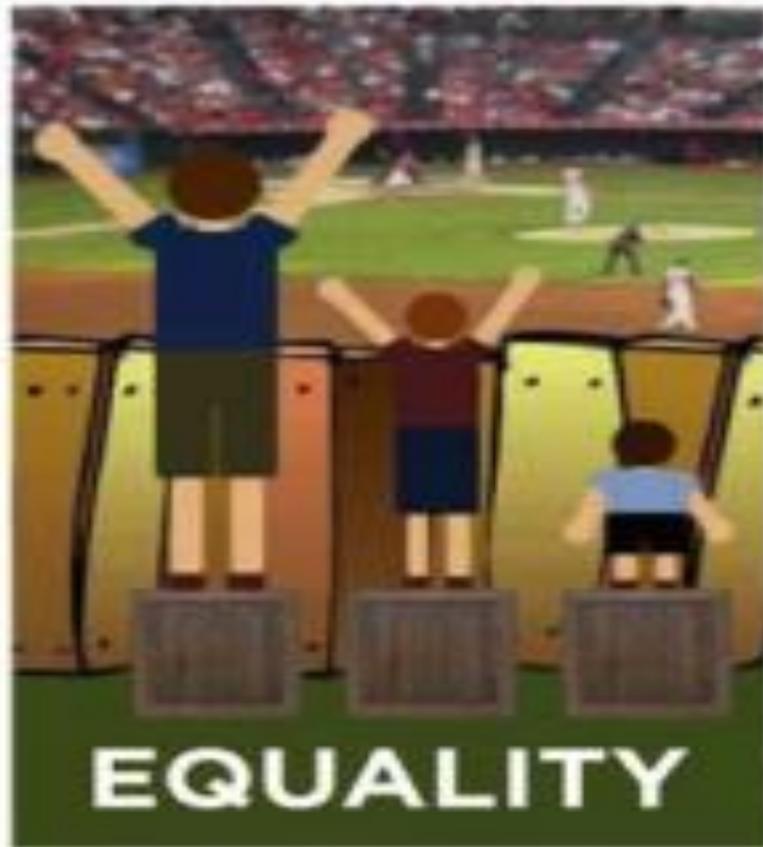


# #4

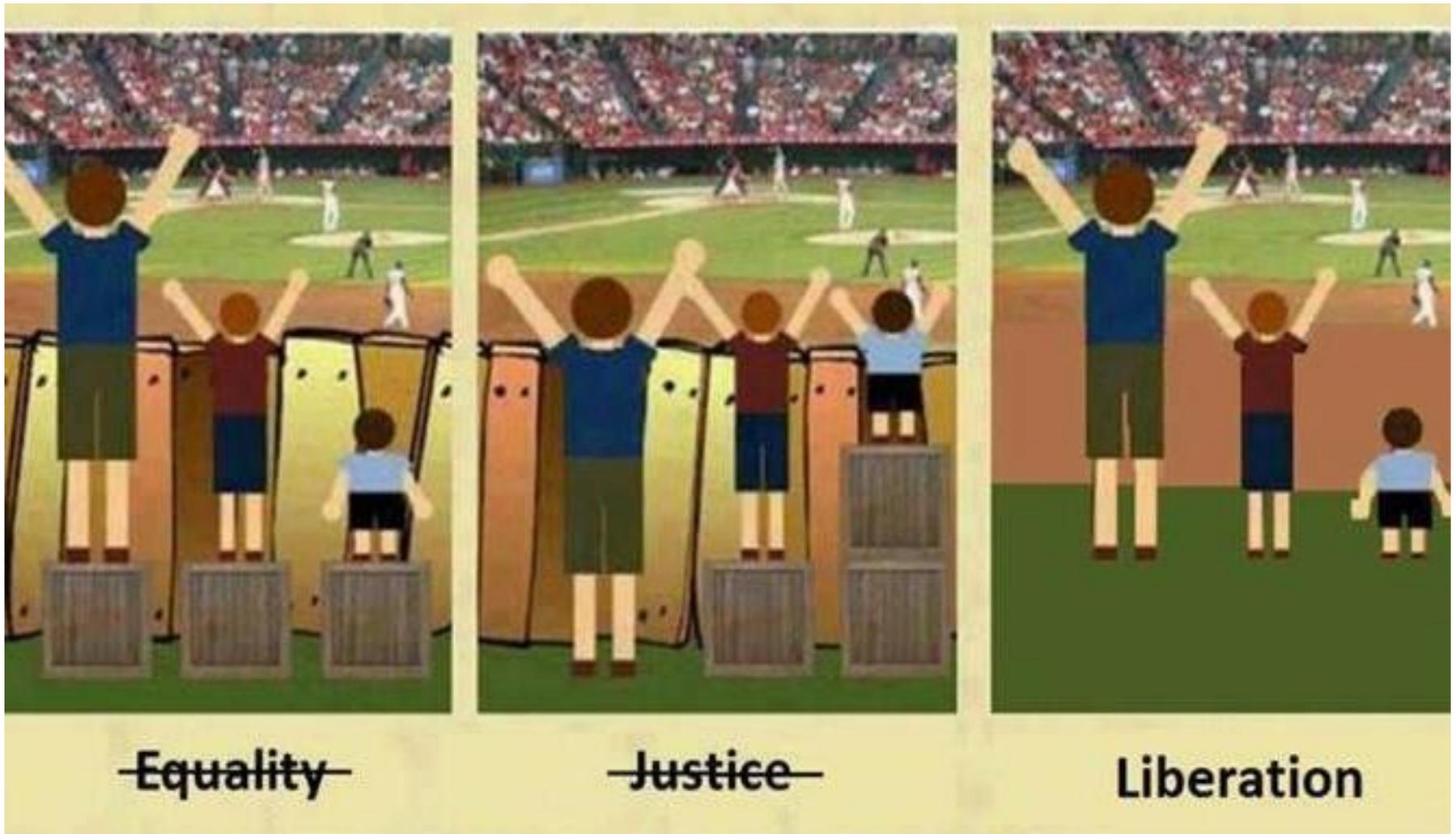
& interrogate traditional logics driving our understandings of  
inequity in education . . .  
(Fecho, 2006; Morrell, 2008)

(Instead of failing students, let's think about how you have been *failed* and can invent your own  
success.)

# We've asked: How do we move beyond current conversations...



...and inhabit a place of new possibilities...



# #5

For over a decade, we have worked like our lives depend on it . .

.

**Because too often the lives of students like Derrick Todd  
will!**

Questions, Comments, or Concerns...