



TRANSFORMING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Thanks to advocacy efforts across the state, the Washington State Legislature passed ESSB 5946 during the 2013 legislative session, making vital improvements to the framework of school discipline. The new law limits the duration of exclusions to a maximum of one school year, requires that emergency expulsions are ended or converted within 10 school days, establishes a framework for reengaging excluded students, and makes important data about school discipline available to the public.

However, there is more work to do to ensure that the full benefit of the law extends to all students. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has proposed new rules to implement the law. However, we believe that this proposal should be strengthened in order to reduce the disparate impact of school discipline and improve outcomes for students. We believe that the final rules must:

- Ensure that the law applies to all students, even those who were suspended or expelled prior to the law going into effect;
- Require reengagement meetings for all students and provide clearer guidance to school districts about the mandatory components of reengagement plans, and the rights of families to access student information prior to both reengagement meetings and the establishment of a reengagement plan;
- Promote reduced reliance on exclusionary discipline and encourage a focus on social and emotional learning, restorative practices, and the cultivation of a positive school climate.

Making these changes to strengthen the rules is important for a number of reasons.

1. Student behavior should never result in the permanent loss of access to education. We believe that all excluded students should have the opportunity to reengage with the educational system. Unless changes are made to the proposed rules, many students will be left in limbo with no legal protection that provides them a path back to class. The state's data on school discipline clearly shows that, year after year, students of color and students with special needs have been excluded far more often than their peers. Without a rule that applies the new law retroactively, students whose lives have already been adversely affected by the disparate impact of student discipline will have no path back to public education, creating a permanent opportunity gap for these students.

2. Reengagement meetings and plans are critical tools for students and families that help improve the chances of students returning to school.

Without required reengagement meetings and more clarity about the development of reengagement plans, families have few clearly-defined rights when advocating for their children and little chance of reducing the length of exclusions or transitioning students back to academic success upon their return to school. Including provisions in the new rules that require these reengagement meetings and plans will better address student behavior and more appropriately plan for their future success. In turn, this will reduce some of the most negative impacts of exclusionary discipline, such as drop out and push out.

3. Alternative approaches are more effective in address student behavior.

Research from education and psychology professionals across the country, along with local data on repeat exclusion rates, suggests that school discipline does not result in changes to student behavior. However, emerging research shows incorporating restorative practices into school environments and helping students develop the social and emotional skills to cope with adversity can reduce the types of behavioral incidents that result in exclusion. Recent federal guidance from the Department of Education recommends modifying discipline practices to reflect these new approaches. The current rulemaking process is a perfect opportunity for OSPI to provide leadership to school districts across the state in this new approach.

Your comments can help make these improvements a reality for Washington students. OSPI's rulemaking process includes a public comment period that extends from now until Monday, May 5, 2014. Everyone who is concerned about transforming school discipline is encouraged to contribute to the conversation and help achieve a final set of rules that live up to legislative intent and help create the best outcomes for kids.

Washington Appleseed has prepared an analysis of school discipline in selected school districts based on preliminary data provided by OSPI. Our hope is that this tool will help highlight the ongoing disproportionate impacts of school discipline and help communities across the state craft comments to support changes to the proposed rules.

To submit comments, simply draft a letter or email addressed to Jess Lewis with your thoughts on the proposed rules and suggestions for making them stronger. Comments must be submitted by noon on May 5, 2014.

Email:
Jess.Lewis@k12.wa.us

Mail:
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Attn: Jess Lewis
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504

For more information on the rulemaking process or for additional advocacy tools, please visit this resource shop compiled by our partners at the League of Education Voters:
<http://educationvoters.org/school-discipline-rules>.

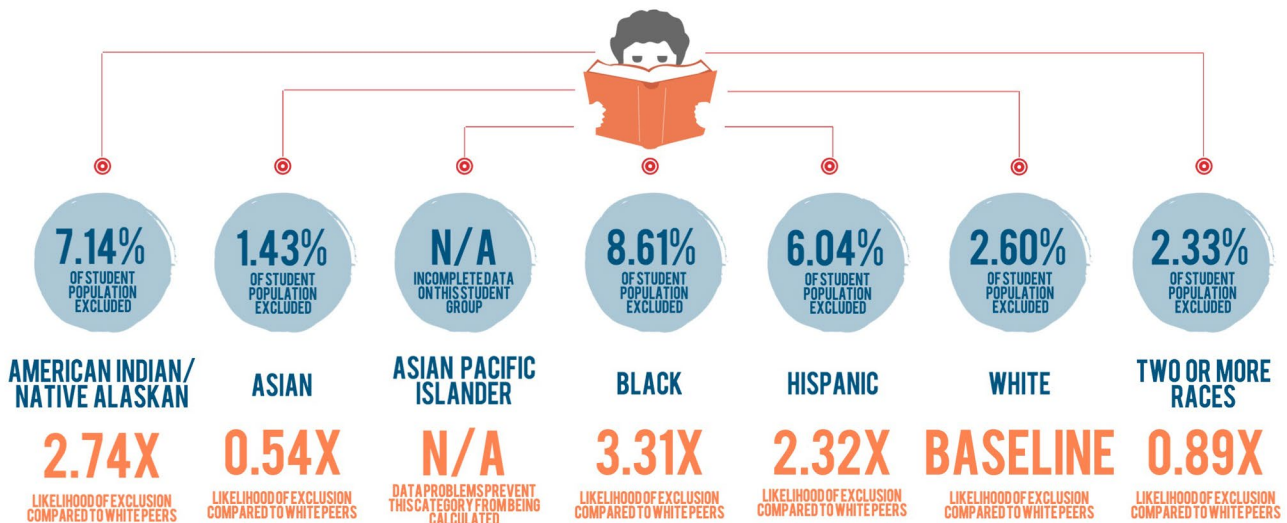
BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2012-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

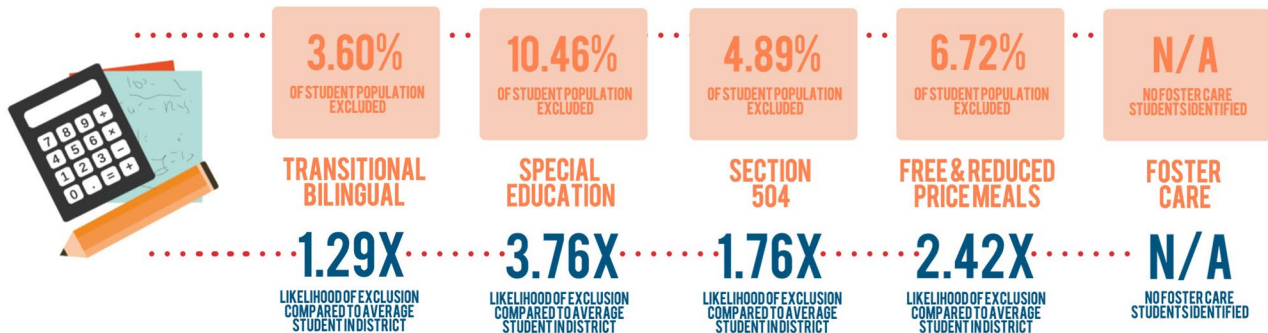
SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS



DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



1. Disciplinary incidents are primarily comprised of short-term suspensions, long-term suspensions, and expulsions. However, this number also includes a small number of additional discipline types, such as Interim Alternative Education Setting and "Other".

2. This figure does not include days missed due to expulsions. Most school districts did not track this specific information for expulsions during the 2012-2013 school year.

3. Students who are suspended or expelled are likely to experience these exclusions more than once. The repeat exclusion rate represents the average number of times disciplined students experience exclusion and can be used to help assess effectiveness of discipline interventions in deterring student behavior.

EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2013-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS

2,047

DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS¹

1,213

INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DISCIPLINED

5,763.5

DAYS OF SCHOOL MISSED²

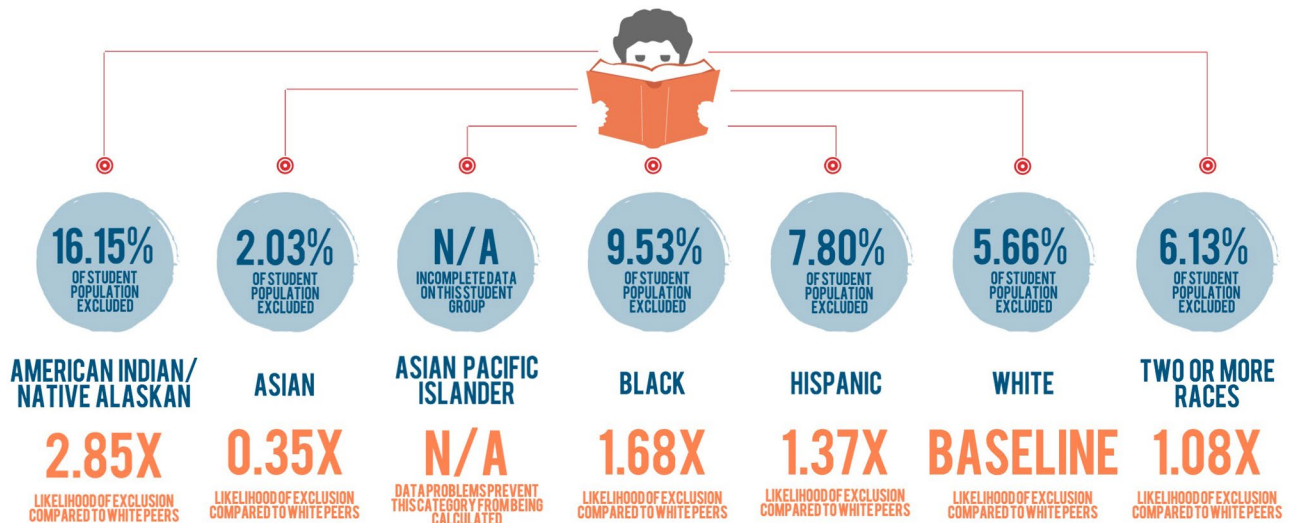
5.85%

PERCENT OF THE STUDENT BODY THAT EXPERIENCED AN EXCLUSION

1.69

REPEAT EXCLUSION RATE³

DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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FEDERAL WAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2013-2014 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS

2,787
DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS¹

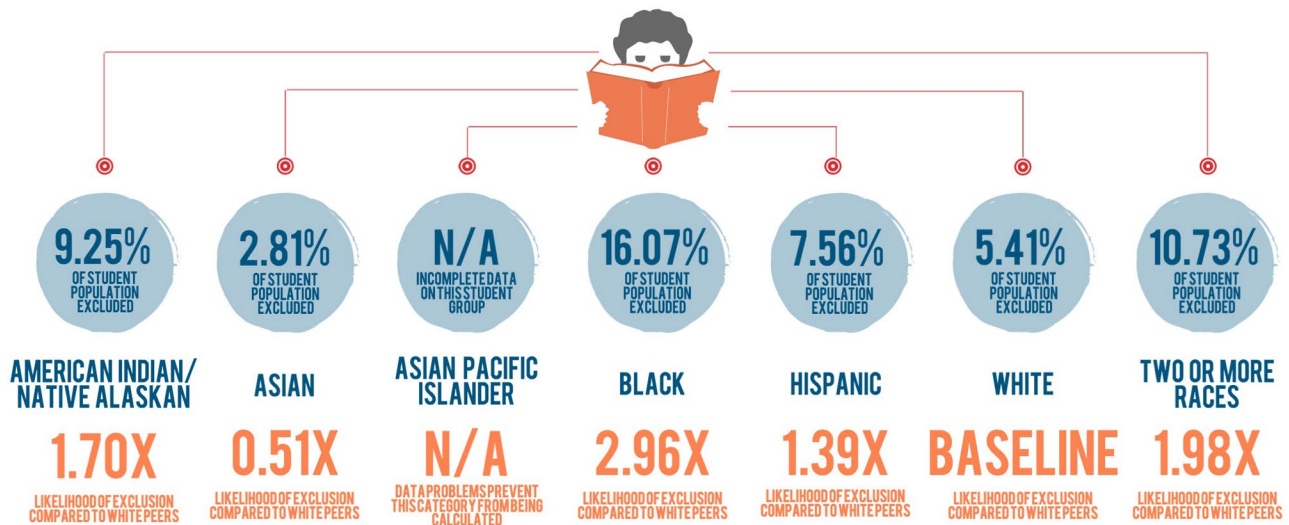
1,683
INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DISCIPLINED

42,480
DAYS OF SCHOOL MISSED²

7.57%
PERCENT OF THE STUDENT BODY THAT EXPERIENCED AN EXCLUSION

1.66
REPEAT EXCLUSION RATE³

DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



1. Disciplinary incidents are primarily comprised of short-term suspensions, long-term suspensions, and expulsions. However, this number also includes a small number of additional discipline types, such as Interim Alternative Education Setting and "Other".

2. Unlike most school districts, Federal Way tracks the number of days missed due to expulsion. The result of tracking this number makes the district's total days missed due to exclusion look much higher than other districts, but it is, in actuality, a much more accurate figure and should not be seen as evidence of more egregious exclusions when compared to other districts.

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ALL ANALYSIS COMPLETED BY WASHINGTON APPLESEED. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.WAAPLESEED.ORG OR EMAIL KATIE@WAAPPLESEED.ORG.

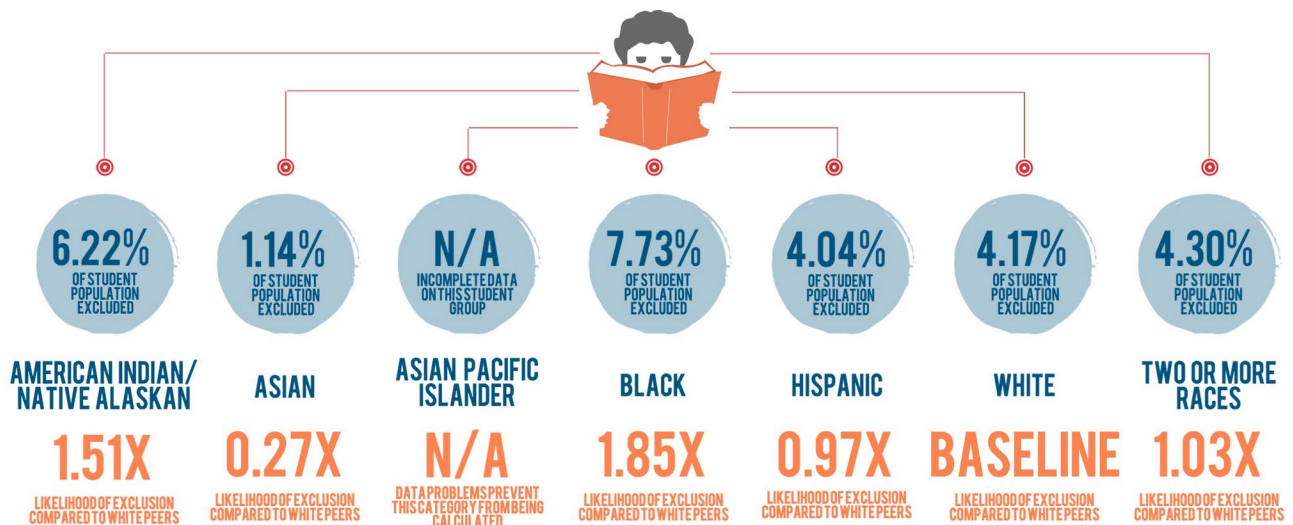
MARYSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2013-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS



DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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OLYMPIA SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2012-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS

676

DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS¹

386

INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DISCIPLINED

1,857.5

DAYS OF SCHOOL MISSED²

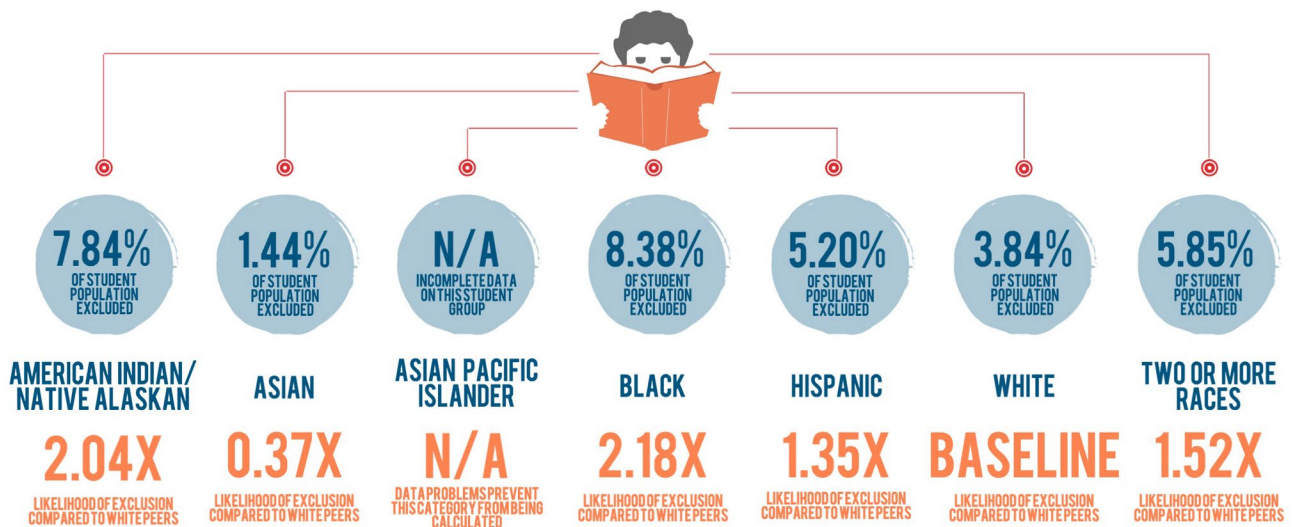
4.09%

PERCENT OF THE STUDENT BODY THAT EXPERIENCED AN EXCLUSION

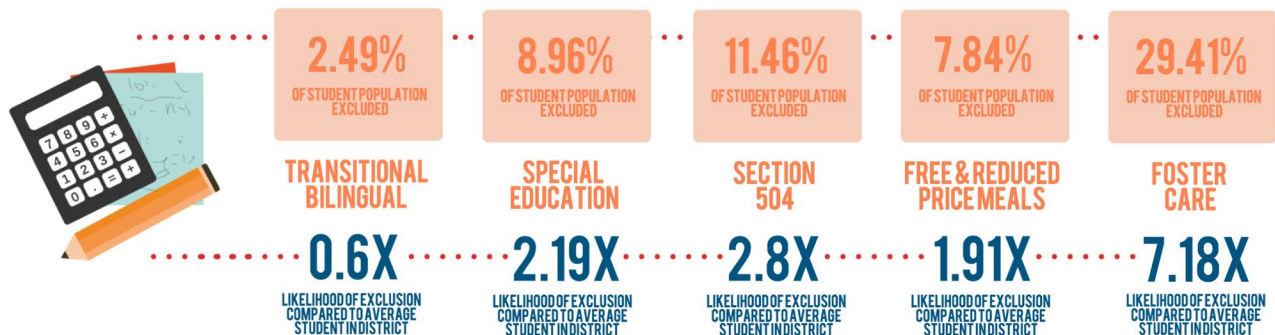
1.75

REPEAT EXCLUSION RATE³

DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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SEATTLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2012-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS

4,339

DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS¹

2,976

INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DISCIPLINED

22,141

DAYS OF SCHOOL MISSED²

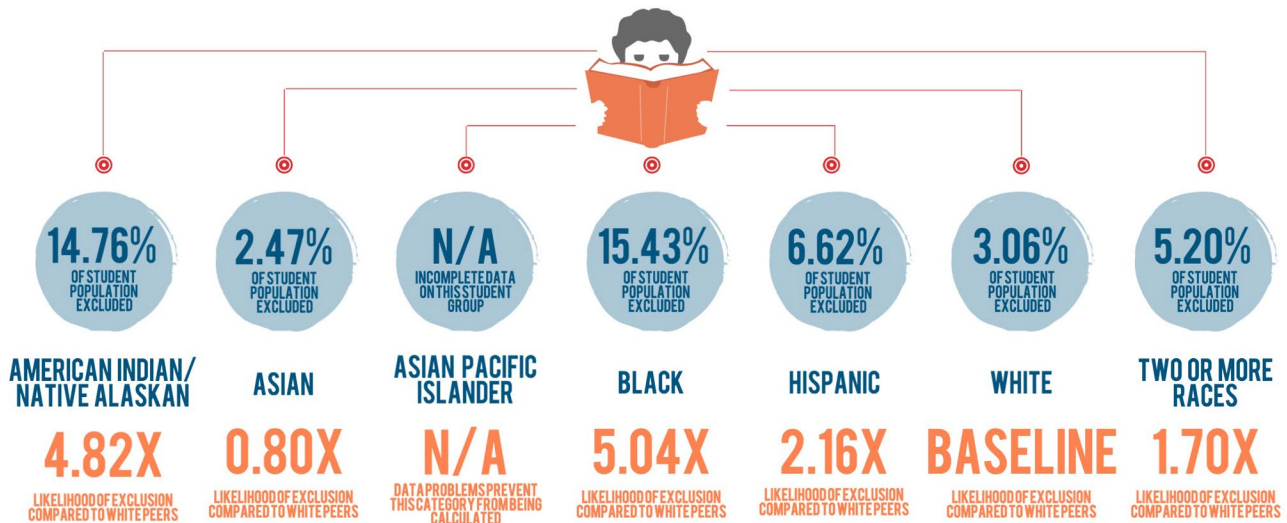
5.88%

PERCENT OF THE STUDENT BODY THAT EXPERIENCED AN EXCLUSION

1.46

REPEAT EXCLUSION RATE³

DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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SPOKANE SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2013-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS

6,728
DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS¹

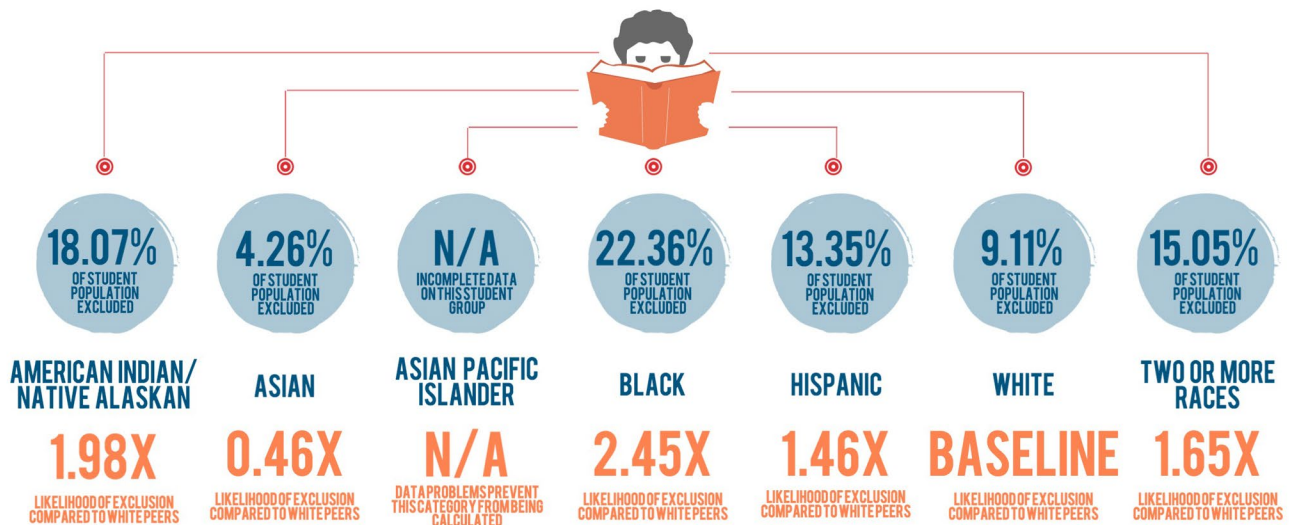
3,055
INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DISCIPLINED

21,191.3
DAYS OF SCHOOL MISSED²

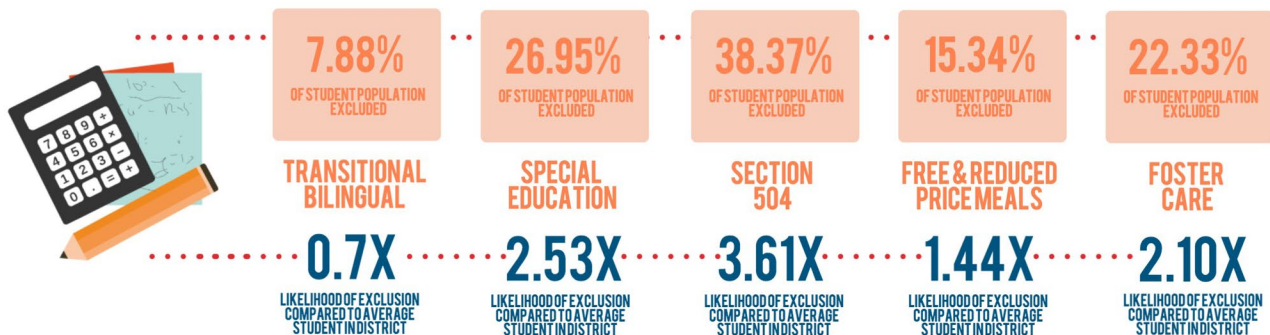
10.62%
PERCENT OF THE STUDENT BODY THAT EXPERIENCED AN EXCLUSION

2.20
REPEAT EXCLUSION RATE³

DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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TACOMA SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2013-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS

5,468

DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS¹

2,814

INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DISCIPLINED

17,360

DAYS OF SCHOOL MISSED²

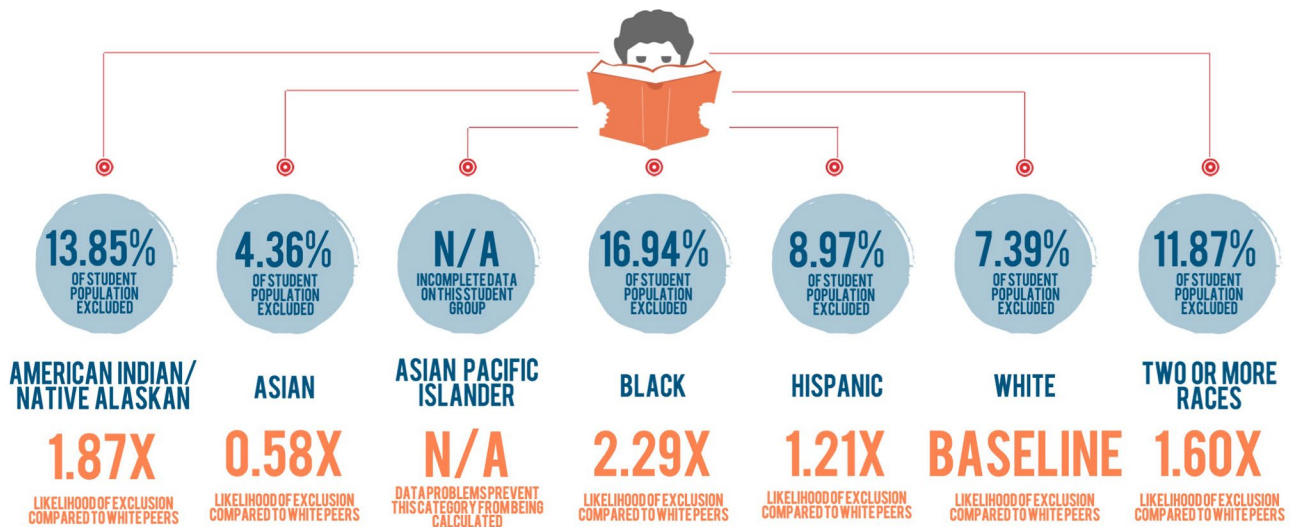
9.69%

PERCENT OF THE STUDENT BODY THAT EXPERIENCED AN EXCLUSION

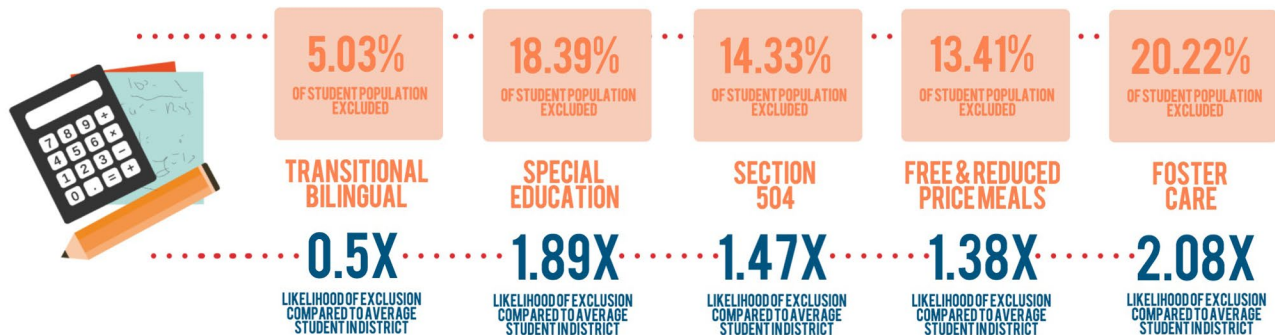
1.94

REPEAT EXCLUSION RATE³

DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



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YAKIMA SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2012-2013 PRELIMINARY DISCIPLINE DATA

SCHOOL DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - DISCIPLINE BASICS

3,676

DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS¹

1,941

INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DISCIPLINED

13,502

DAYS OF SCHOOL MISSED²

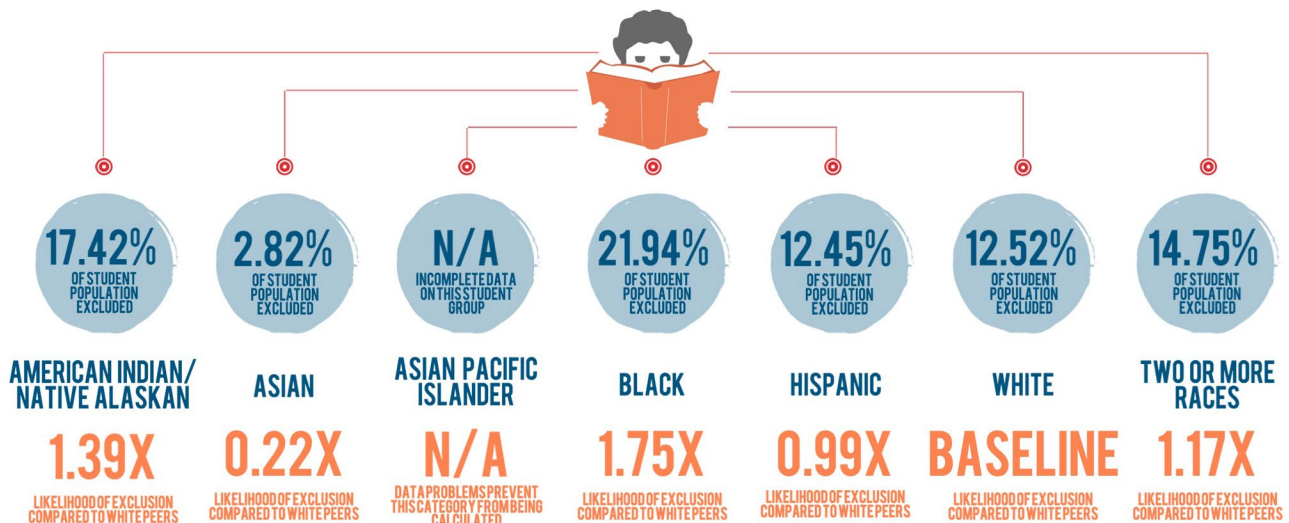
12.63%

PERCENT OF THE STUDENT BODY THAT EXPERIENCED AN EXCLUSION

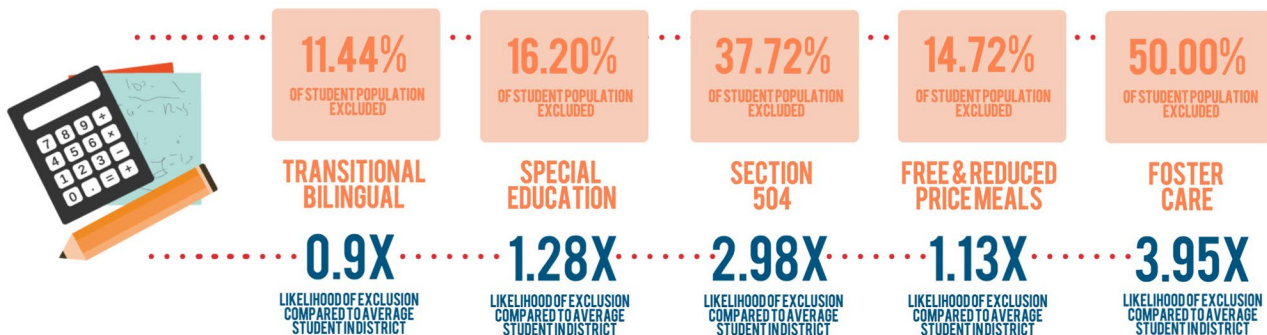
1.89

REPEAT EXCLUSION RATE³

DISCIPLINE DEMOGRAPHICS



STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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