



ST. MARY'S  
UNIVERSITY

Digital Commons at St. Mary's University

---

Honors Program Theses and Research Projects

---

Spring 1-4-2023

## Are There Consequences for Multiple Marginalized Identities? The Relationship Between Race, Disability Status, and Discipline in San Antonio K-12 Schools

Michaela Robinett

St. Mary's University, [mrobinett@mail.stmarytx.edu](mailto:mrobinett@mail.stmarytx.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.stmarytx.edu/honorsthesis>



Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), and the [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Robinett, Michaela, "Are There Consequences for Multiple Marginalized Identities? The Relationship Between Race, Disability Status, and Discipline in San Antonio K-12 Schools" (2023). *Honors Program Theses and Research Projects*. 19.

<https://commons.stmarytx.edu/honorsthesis/19>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons at St. Mary's University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Program Theses and Research Projects by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at St. Mary's University. For more information, please contact [sfowler@stmarytx.edu](mailto:sfowler@stmarytx.edu), [egoode@stmarytx.edu](mailto:egoode@stmarytx.edu).

Are There Consequences for Multiple Marginalized Identities? The Relationship Between Race,  
Disability Status, and Discipline in San Antonio K-12 Schools

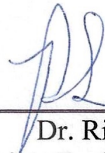
by

Michaela Robinett

HONORS THESIS

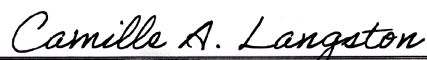
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
Graduation for the Honors Program of  
St. Mary's University  
San Antonio, Texas

Approved by:



---

Dr. Rick Sperling  
Associate Professor of Psychology



---

Dr. Camille Langston  
Director, Honors Program

December 7, 2022

### **Abstract**

Black and Latino/a/x students with disabilities experience significant marginalization that adversely affects their experiences with school discipline. The current study examined the disciplinary experiences of Black, Latinx, and White K-12 students with disabilities in 464 schools located in San Antonio, Texas, and discovered that Black and Latinx students with disabilities were overrepresented in various categories of exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusion. Black and Latinx students with disabilities were also found to have a higher risk of receiving exclusionary discipline practices, some restraints, and seclusion compared to White students with disabilities. Additionally, Black and Latinx student enrollment was found to predict an increase in students with disabilities subject to exclusionary discipline practices. The findings provide valuable information for where schools' community stakeholders should be targeting intervention to improve the educational experiences of Black and Latinx students with disabilities.

*Keywords:* school discipline, exclusion, special education, Black, Hispanic, Latinx, racial disparity, ethnic disparity, disability

## **Are There Consequences for Multiple Marginalized Identities? The Relationship Between Race, Disability Status, and Discipline in San Antonio K-12 Schools**

In the U.S. education system, educational disparities are pervasive across several marginalized groups of students (Furgione et al., 2018; Haderlein, et al., 2021; Kuchynka et al., 2022; Morris & Perry, 2016). One factor greatly contributing to the disparities in student outcomes is school discipline. Evidence suggests that school discipline experiences can impact academic achievement, student retention, and student contact with the justice system (Anderson et al., 2019; Morris & Perry, 2016; Novak, 2018). Furthermore, research suggests that such impacts are not equal across groups, with Black and Latino/a/x students and students with disabilities being disproportionately and more severely disciplined in schools (Anyon et al. 2014; Krezmien et al., 2017; Skiba et al., 2011; U.S. Department of Education [USDOE], Office for Civil Rights [OCR], 2020; USDOE, OCR, 2021).

### **Racialized Discipline**

Racial disparities in school discipline have been documented extensively for decades. A study that examined racial differences in discipline in 436 U.S. elementary and middle schools found significant racial differences in office discipline referrals and administrative actions (Skiba et al., 2011). At the elementary school level, Black students received 43% of office discipline referrals, while only accounting for 25.8% of total enrollment. Contrarily, White and Latinx students were both underrepresented in office discipline referrals. Black students were also found to be 2.19 times more likely to be referred to school offices for discipline issues as compared to White students. Latinx students were less likely to be referred to school offices for discipline issues as compared to White students. At the middle school level, Black students received 41.7% of office discipline referrals, while only accounting for 21.9% of total enrollment. Again, White

and Latinx students were underrepresented in office discipline referrals. Black students were found to be 3.79 times more likely to be referred to school offices for discipline issues as compared to White students. Although underrepresented, Latinx students were found to be 1.71 times more likely to be referred to school offices for discipline issues as compared to White students. When examining administrative consequences, Black and Latinx students were found to receive harsher, more punitive consequences than White students. At both the elementary and middle school levels, Black and Latinx students were more likely than White students to receive out-of-school suspension and expulsion. The results suggest that Black and Latinx students are not only more likely to be referred to school offices for discipline issues, but once Black and Latinx students are referred, more severe punitive action is taken against them compared to White students.

### **Disability Status and Discipline**

Disparities in discipline have also been long documented among students receiving special education services in schools. A study examined the effect of disability status on office discipline referrals and discipline consequences received in K-12 schools in the Denver public school system (Anyon et al., 2014). The study found that students receiving special education services were 1.49 times more likely than students not receiving special education services to receive an office discipline referral. Additionally, students designated as seriously emotionally disabled were 4.3 times more likely than students not designated as emotionally disabled to receive an office discipline referral. Both students receiving special education services and students designated as seriously emotionally disabled also had increased likelihoods of receiving an out-of-school suspension. Students receiving special education services were 1.17 times more likely than students not receiving special education services to receive an out-of-school

suspension, and students designated as seriously emotionally disabled were 2.48 times more likely than students not designated as emotionally disabled to receive an out-of-school suspension. These results suggest that students with disabilities, with variation across different disability types, have an increased likelihood of contact with the school discipline process and an increased likelihood of receiving exclusionary discipline practices, like out-of-school suspension.

### **The Intersection of Race and Disability Status**

Examining the intersection of race and disability status as it relates to school discipline leads to more alarming disparities. National statistics reveal that Black and Latinx students with disabilities experience exclusionary discipline practices at higher rates than White students with and without disabilities and Black and Latinx students without disabilities, with extreme disparities apparent for Black students with disabilities.

The most recent of the U.S. Department of Education's survey regarding civil rights in public schools, revealed that Black K-12 students served under IDEA only accounted for 2.3% of total enrollment but received 6.2% of in-school suspensions, 8.8% of out-of-school suspensions, 8.4% of students referred to law enforcement, and 9.1% of students who had school related arrests (USDOE, OCR, 2021). Additionally, the survey revealed that Black and Latinx students served under IDEA were disproportionately overrepresented in methods of restraint and seclusion (USDOE, OCR, 2020). Black students accounted for 18% of the total students enrolled who were being served under IDEA, yet Black students represented 26% of physical restraints, 34% of mechanical restraints, and 22% of seclusions. Latinx students were also slightly overrepresented in mechanical restraints (27% of total enrollment and 28% of mechanical restraints). Research suggests that physical restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion may have harmful and potentially traumatizing effects on the individuals subjected to these methods

(Bonner et al., 2002; Cusack et al., 2018; Guzmán-Parra et al., 2019, Whitecross et al., 2013).

These results indicate that Black and Latinx students with disabilities are disproportionately at risk for a plethora of harmful school practices.

Using a national sample of 94,781 K-12 schools, a study found that Black students with an individualized education plans (IEP) were at a substantial risk to receive exclusionary discipline practices when compared to other student groups (Gage et al., 2019). Black students with IEPs were found to have the overall highest percentages of receiving exclusionary discipline. Black students with IEPs received 16.1% of all in-school suspensions, 23.0% of all out-of-school suspensions, and 1% of expulsions. The only other group that came close to these percentages were Native American students with IEPs. All other racial groups both with and without IEPs were substantially lower than Black students with IEPs. The study found that compared to White students with IEPs, Black students with IEPs were 2.60 times more likely to receive an in-school suspension, 2.50 times more likely to receive an out-of-school suspension, and 3.91 times more likely to receive an expulsion. Compared to Latinx students with IEPs, Black students were still more likely to receive exclusionary discipline. Results indicate that Black students with IEPs are at a significantly greater risk for receiving exclusionary discipline practices. Additionally, results suggest that there are differences among minority students with disabilities' experience with discipline, as Latinx students with disabilities were more likely than White students with disabilities to receive exclusionary discipline practices, yet Black students with disabilities were most likely of all.

Findings about the experiences of Latinx students both with and without disabilities regarding school discipline have been mixed. However, one study of a national sample of 94,781 K-12 schools found that Latinx students, when compared to White students, were significantly

more likely to receive exclusionary discipline practices (Gage et al., 2021). Regarding students with disabilities, the study found that compared to White students with disabilities, Latinx students with disabilities were 1.69 times more likely to receive an in-school suspension, 1.67 times more likely to receive an out-of-school suspension, and 2.76 more likely to be expelled. However, when compared to Black students with disabilities, Latinx students with disabilities were found to be less likely to receive exclusionary discipline practices. These results indicate that Latinx students with (and without) disabilities are subjected to exclusionary discipline practices at higher rates than their White counterparts. Additionally, these results reiterate the differences between marginalized racial and ethnic groups in this scenario, as again Black students with disabilities are subject to more risk than Latinx students with disabilities.

### **Racial Threat Theory in Schools**

Previous research has shown that an increase in a school's non-White student population increases the school's overall exclusionary discipline practices and policies (Anderson & Ritter, 2017; Anyon et al., 2014; Morris & Perry, 2016). Some researchers explain this phenomenon using racial threat theory (Edwards, 2016; Rocque & Paternoster, 2013; Welch & Payne, 2018). Racial threat theory states that as the presence of Black individuals increase in a particular sector, White individuals and groups will take steps to protect their social standing and power. (Blalock, 1967). When applied to school disciplinary practices and policies, racial threat theory explains the connection between 1) a school's increase in overall exclusionary discipline practices and policies and 2) a school's increasing minority student population, as school-related personnel perceive the large minority student population as a threat.

A study of 45 elementary schools in the mid-Atlantic region of the U.S., found that Black students disproportionately received the majority of office discipline referrals and attempted to



explain this finding in part by using school level characteristics (Rocque & Paternoster, 2013). The study tested several school level characteristics to see what effected the mean number of office discipline referrals, while controlling for student behavior among other student level and teacher level characteristics. The study found that out of all the school level characteristics tested, only having a high percentage of Black students increased the mean number of office discipline referrals. Because the study controlled for the behavior of students, this suggests that simply having a large population of Black students increases office discipline referrals for all students.

A study of 221 U.S. public schools found that an increase in the percent of minority students enrolled correlated to an increase in exclusionary discipline practices (Welch & Payne, 2012). The study found that the percent of schools' minority students was significantly and positively correlated with rates of exclusionary discipline. For every 1% increase in Black student population there was an increase in the likelihood of schools expelling a student by a factor of 1.04. For every 1% increase in Latinx student population there was an increase in the likelihood of schools expelling a student by a factor of 1.03. For every 1% increase in Black student population there was an increase in the likelihood of schools suspending a student by a factor of 1.03. This increase in likelihood of suspension did not occur for an increase in Latinx students. These findings support the racial threat theory, as an increase in minority student population correlated to an increase in exclusionary discipline practices. Additionally, results suggest that the racial threat theory might be more pronounced for Black students than Latinx students.

In addition to the discipline practices school personnel use with students, the official policies that schools enact are also representative of racial threat theory. A study that examined discipline polices in a national sample of 2,560 K-12 schools found that schools with higher

percentages of Latinx students had more exclusionary discipline policies in place than schools with lower percentages of Latinx students (Welch & Payne, 2018). The study found that the percentage of Latinx students was significantly and negatively correlated to mild disciplinary policies. The study determined that for each 1% increase in Latinx student population, the likelihood of the schools having probation policies and privilege loss policies (mild disciplinary policies) decreased by a factor of .6 and .24 respectively. Additionally, the study found that the percentage of Latinx student population was significantly and positively correlated with out-of-school suspension policies. The study determined that for each 1% increase in Latinx student population, the likelihood of the schools having out-of-school suspension policies increased by a factor of 1.273. These results highlight the increased likelihood of exclusionary policies when there is an increase in Latinx student population, supporting racial threat theory with a special attention to Latinx populations.

### **Hypotheses**

The present study examined the differences in exclusionary discipline practices experienced by Black, Latinx, and White students with disabilities in San Antonio K-12 schools. Based on previous research indicating that racial and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in office discipline referrals and exclusionary discipline practices (Anyon et al., 2014; Skiba et al., 2011; USDOE, OCR, 2021), students with disabilities are overrepresented in exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusions (Anyon et al., 2014; Krezmien et al., 2017; USDOE, OCR, 2020), and students who are both a racial or ethnic minority and have a disability are at an increased risk for exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusions (Gage et al., 2019; Gage et al., 2021; USDOE, OCR, 2020; USDOE, OCR, 2021), the current study expected that Black and Latinx students with disabilities would 1) be overrepresented in

exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusion 2) have a higher likelihood of receiving exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusion compared to White students with disabilities. It is also probable that Black students with disabilities will have higher rates of overrepresentation and higher likelihoods of receiving exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusion compared to Latinx students with disabilities. Additionally, because of the support previous research has shown for racial threat theory (Rocque & Paternoster, 2013; Welch & Payne, 2012; Welch & Payne, 2018), the current study expected that Black and Latinx student enrollment would predict an increase in students with disabilities subject to exclusionary discipline practices.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The current study utilized school discipline data from the U.S. Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection survey (CRDC). The CRDC is used to collect data on a wide variety of student-related issues including discipline. School participation in the Civil Rights Data Collection survey (CRDC) is mandatory. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2017-2018 school year is the most recent data available and is what was analyzed in the present study. A total of 495 schools in San Antonio, Texas reported data to the CRDC. Thirty-one schools were removed from the sample due to not having any students with disabilities at the time of data collection; therefore, the final sample included 464 schools. The majority of the schools sampled were elementary schools (53.66%), followed equally by middle schools (16.16%) and high schools (16.16%). The remaining schools were a mixture across age levels. From the public schools sampled, 16.16% were charter schools, 3.23% were alternative schools, and 1.08% were juvenile justice schools. The majority of students were federally designated as "Hispanic"

(Latinx)<sup>1</sup> (73.28%), followed by White students (15.02%) and then Black students (6.86%). Small percentages of students were designated as Asian (2.27%), multiracial (2.20%), or American Indian or Alaskan Native (0.21%). Latinx students with disabilities accounted for 6.93% of the sample, while White and Black students accounted for 1.34% and 0.80% respectively.

## **Measures**

### ***Exclusionary Discipline***

Exclusionary discipline is being operationally defined as forms of disciplinary consequences that cause the student to be excluded from the student's typical educational environment (APA, n.d.). To assess exclusionary discipline practices, the present study will examine the number of students with disabilities in the sample, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, that experienced in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, transference to an alternative school, school related arrest, and referral to law enforcement. The CRDC differentiates between one out-of-school suspension and more than one out-of-school suspension, as well as expulsions with educational services, expulsions without educational services, and expulsions under zero tolerance policies; however, these categories are combined into "out-of-school suspension" and "expulsions" for the present study.

### ***Restraints and Seclusion***

A restraint(s) is being operationally defined as the restriction of a student's body due to a behavior or behaviors they are displaying. Restraints are intended to be implemented in situations of immediate danger for the student or others. Restraints may be physical, in which a person restrains the student, or mechanical, in which equipment is used to restrain the student

---

<sup>1</sup> Although "Hispanic" is used by the CRDC, the present study will use "Latino/a/x".

(USDOE, 2012). Seclusion is being defined as the confinement of a student in a space from which they are prevented from leaving. During this time, the student is alone. (USDOE, 2012).

To measure restraints and seclusions, the present study will examine the number of students with disabilities in the sample, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, that experienced physical restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion.

### ***Black And Latinx Student Enrollment***

The present study examined the total enrollment and percentage of Black and Latinx students enrolled at individual schools.

### **Procedure**

The publicly available CRDC data search function was specified to only yield data from the 2017-2018 school year from San Antonio, Texas schools. Data from all school's reports entitled "Enrollment Data", "Students with Disabilities, by Disability Category", and "Discipline and Disability" were compiled and coded, disregarding schools that had no students with disabilities enrolled. Once all data were compiled, demographic analysis, risk ratio analysis, and regression analysis was conducted.

## **Results**

### **Representation**

Table 1 provides statistics for the representation of Latinx, Black, and White students with disabilities across exclusionary discipline practices compared to total student enrollment. Latinx and Black students were found to be disproportionately overrepresented in all exclusionary discipline categories except for one, transference to an alternative school. While only accounting for 6.39% of total enrollment, Latinx students with disabilities accounted for 12.51% of in-school suspensions, 16.23% of out-of-school suspensions, 15.70% of expulsions, 14.72% of

school related arrests, and 15.45% of referrals to law enforcement. While only accounting for 0.80% of total enrollment, Black students with disabilities accounted for 2.55% of in-school suspensions, 3.37% of out-of-school suspensions, 3.00% of expulsions, 3.21% school related arrest, and 2.65% referral to law enforcement. Similarly, White students with disabilities were found to be disproportionately overrepresented in all exclusionary discipline categories except for two, transference to an alternative school and school related arrest. While only accounting for 1.34% of total enrollment, White students with disabilities accounted for 2.44% of in-school suspensions, 1.95% out-of-school suspensions, 2.74% expulsions, and 1.48% of referrals to law enforcement. For restraints and seclusion, Latinx, Black, and White students with disabilities were compared to total enrollment of students with disabilities (because restraints and seclusion are typically not used on students without disabilities). Latinx, Black, and White students with disabilities were overrepresented in physical restraint and mechanical restraint. While accounting for 38.49% of students with disabilities' enrollment, Latinx students accounted for 56.06% of physical restraints and 60% of mechanical restraints. While accounting for 4.43% of students with disabilities' enrollment, Black students accounted for 15.15% of physical restraints and 10% of mechanical restraints. While accounting for 7.45% of students with disabilities' enrollment, White students accounted for 22.94% of physical restraints and 30% of mechanical restraints. Only one case of seclusion was reported – which was the seclusion of a Black child with a disability.

### **Risk Ratios**

Risk ratio analyses were performed to compare the risk of Latinx and Black students with disabilities experiencing exclusionary discipline to the risk of White students with disabilities experiencing exclusionary discipline (see Table 2). Black students with disabilities were found to

be at a statistically significant higher risk for receiving in-school suspension ( $RR = 1.76, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.58, 1.95]$ ) out-of-school suspension ( $RR = 2.91, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.52, 3.36]$ ), expulsion ( $RR = 1.87, p = .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.19, 2.92]$ ), transference to an alternative school ( $RR = 2.08, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.32, 3.26]$ ), school related arrest ( $RR = 5.72, p < .001, \text{ CI } [2.11, 15.48]$ ), and referral to law enforcement ( $RR = 3.02, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.99, 4.58]$ ). Latinx students with disabilities were found to be at a statistically significant higher risk for experiencing out-of-school suspension ( $RR = 1.61, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.52, 3.36]$ ), school related arrest ( $RR = 3.02, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.22, 7.45]$ ), and referral to law enforcement ( $RR = 2.03, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.99, 4.58]$ ). Although not statistically significant, Latinx students with disabilities were also found to be more at risk for expulsion ( $RR = 1.11, p = .80, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.78, 1.58]$ ) and transference to an alternative school ( $RR = 1.06, p = .77, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.74, 1.52]$ ). Risk ratio analyses were also performed to compare the risk of Latinx and Black students with disabilities experiencing restraints and seclusion to the risk of White students with disabilities experiencing restraints and seclusion. Although not statistically significant, Black students with disabilities were found to be at a higher risk for experiencing physical restraints ( $RR = 1.11, p = .49, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.82, 1.50]$ ). As stated earlier, only one case of seclusion was reported – which was the seclusion of a Black child with a disability.

### **Regression**

A simple regression analysis was performed to investigate whether the Black and Latinx student enrollment predicted the occurrence of exclusionary discipline practices for students with disabilities across racial groups. Black and Latinx student enrollment statistically significantly predicted the occurrence of exclusionary discipline practices for students with disabilities ( $\beta = .75, p < .001$ ). Black and Latinx student enrollment explained 57% of the model variance ( $R^2 =$

.57,  $F(1,462) = 607, p < 0.001$ ). The relationship between Black and Latinx student enrollment and the occurrence of exclusionary discipline practices for students with disabilities is represented in Figure 1.

### **Discussion**

Based on previous research indicating that racial and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in office discipline referrals and exclusionary discipline practices (Anyon et al., 2014; Skiba et al., 2011; USDOE, OCR, 2021), students with disabilities are overrepresented in exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusions (Anyon et al., 2014; Krezmien et al., 2017; USDOE, OCR, 2021), and students who are both a racial or ethnic minority and have a disability are at an increased risk for exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusions (Gage et al., 2019; Gage et al., 2021; USDOE, OCR, 2020; USDOE, OCR, 2021), the current study expected that Black and Latinx students with disabilities would 1) be overrepresented in exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusion and 2) have a higher likelihood of receiving exclusionary discipline practices, restraints, and seclusion compared to White students with disabilities. Black and Latinx students with disabilities were found to be overrepresented in all but one category of exclusionary discipline practices, mechanical restraints, and physical restraints. However, only Black students with disabilities were (over)represented in seclusion – as the only case reported involved a Black student with a disability. Unexpectedly, White students with disabilities were also overrepresented in most exclusionary discipline categories, mechanical restraints, and physical restraints. While these results indicate that White students with disabilities may also be suffering from exclusionary discipline, it is also important to note the differences in representation. The only category in which White students were underrepresented with Black and Latinx students overrepresented was school related arrest.



Similarly, for referral to law enforcement, both Black and Latinx students with disabilities were overrepresented at twice their rate of enrollment while students with disabilities were only overrepresented by 0.14%. These results imply that Black and Latinx students with disabilities are encountering law enforcement as a school disciplinary measure in a way that White students with disabilities are not. Black and Latinx students with disabilities may be at an increased risk for being funneled into the school-to-prison pipeline, facing long-term and life altering consequences for school behavior, and suffering negative life outcomes. Supporting the second hypothesis, compared to White students with disabilities Black students with disabilities were found to be more at risk for all forms of exclusionary discipline, physical restraint, and seclusion. Compared to White students with disabilities, Latinx students with disabilities were also found to be more at risk for all but one category of exclusionary discipline (in-school-suspension), although Latinx students with disabilities had less risk for physical restraint compared to White students with disabilities. White students with disabilities had the highest risk for mechanical restraint. Although Black, Latinx, and White students with disabilities are all suffering from exclusionary discipline, Black and Latinx students with disabilities face increased risk for all and almost all exclusionary discipline practices respectively. Additionally, these results showcase racial disparities between Black and Latinx students with disabilities, as Black students with disabilities were significantly more likely to experience all forms of exclusionary discipline, which was not the case for Latinx students with disabilities.

Additionally, because of the support previous research has shown for racial threat theory (Rocque & Paternoster, 2013; Welch & Payne, 2012; Welch & Payne, 2018), the current study expected that Black and Latinx student enrollment would predict an increase in students with disabilities subject to exclusionary discipline practices. Black and Latinx student enrollment was

found to significantly predict the occurrence of exclusionary discipline practices for students with disabilities. Additionally, Black and Latinx student enrollment explained a significant percentage of the model variance. These results indicate that Black and Latinx student enrollment uniquely effects the occurrence of exclusionary discipline practices for students with disabilities. The increased presence of Black and Latinx students may cause more punitive and exclusionary disciplinary policies and practices to be carried out, which may result in disparate impact on another vulnerable student population, students with disabilities.

The present study was limited by the unavailability of more recent and relevant data. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CRDC data collection was paused; therefore, the most recent data available were from the 2017-2018 school year. The study was also limited in that CRDC data is aggregated across schools, without the possibility to examine data at the student level.

Furthermore, the study was limited in the fact that data were not drawn directly from the individual schools and communities in San Antonio. Because of this, the study lacks invaluable voices of the individuals most effected by the phenomena discussed. Future research should focus on discipline following the COVID-19 pandemic, as there is suspected to be an increase in school misbehavior and therefore disciplinary action. Future research should also collect student level data as well as showcase the experiences within those effected – which can both be done by partnering with the school communities as part of the research process. Future research should also continue examining the unique experiences of Latinx students with disabilities, as Latinx students and especially Latinx students with disabilities are often left out of the literature.

The findings presented in this study can offer valuable information for formulating next steps in improving the educational experiences for Black and Latinx students with disabilities. The knowledge that Black and Latinx students with disabilities are uniquely overrepresented in

school related arrests and referrals to law enforcement can help school community stakeholders prioritize their response to targeting this problem areas. The knowledge that Black students with disabilities are at an increased risk for physical restraints and seclusion should spark critique of the methods used to manage difficult student behavior. The knowledge that Black and Latinx students with disabilities are at an increased risk for exclusionary discipline and that Black and Latinx student enrollment increases the occurrence of exclusionary discipline for students with disabilities should result in 1) San Antonio schools reevaluating their disciplinary policies and practices with a critical perspective and 2) school community stakeholders addressing these results and advocating for the students most at risk, Black and Latinx students with disabilities.

### References

- American Psychological Association. (n.d.). The pathway from exclusionary discipline to the school to prison pipeline.  
[https://votervoice.s3.amazonaws.com/groups/apaadvocacy/attachments/APA\\_discipline-facts.pdf](https://votervoice.s3.amazonaws.com/groups/apaadvocacy/attachments/APA_discipline-facts.pdf)
- Anderson, K. P., & Ritter, G. W. (2017). Disparate use of exclusionary discipline: Evidence on inequities in school discipline from a U.S. state. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 25(49). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.25.2787>
- Anderson, K. P., Ritter, G. W., & Zamarro, G. (2019). Understanding a vicious cycle: The relationship between student discipline and student academic outcomes. *Educational Researcher*, 48(5), 251-262. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X19848720>
- Anyon, Y., Jenson, J. M., Altschul, I., Farrar, J., McQueen, J., Greer, E., Downing, B., & Simmons, J. (2014). The persistent effect of race and the promise of alternatives to suspension in school discipline outcomes. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 44, 379–386. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.06.025>
- Blalock, H. M. (1967). *Toward a theory of minority-group relations*. Wiley.
- Bonner, G., Lowe, T., Rawcliffe, D., & Wellman, N. (2002). Trauma for all: a pilot study of the subjective experience of physical restraint for mental health inpatients and staff in the UK. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 9(4), 465-473.  
<https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2850.2002.00504.x>
- Cusack, P., Cusack, F. P., McAndrew, S., McKeown, M., & Duxbury, J. (2018). An integrative review exploring the physical and psychological harm inherent in using restraint in

- mental health inpatient settings. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 27(3), 1162-1176. <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12432>
- Edwards, L. (2016). Homogeneity and inequality: School discipline inequality and the role of racial composition. *Social Forces*, 95(1), 55-75. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24754265>
- Furgione, B., Evans, K., Russell, W. B., III, & Jahani, S. (2018). Divided we test: Proficiency rate disparity based on the race, gender, and socioeconomic status of students on the Florida US History End-of-Course Assessment. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 9(3), 62-96. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/661088>
- Gage, N. A., Katsiyannis, A., Carrero, K. M., Miller, R., & Pico, D. (2021). Exploring disproportionate discipline for Latinx students with and without disabilities: A national analysis. *Behavioral Disorders*, 47(1), 3-13. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0198742920961356>
- Gage, N. A., Whitford, D. K., Katsiyannis, A., Adams, S., & Jasper, A. (2019). National analysis of the disciplinary exclusion of black students with and without disabilities. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28, 1754-1764. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-019-01407-7>
- Guzmán-Parra, J., Aguilera-Serrano, C., García-Sánchez, J. A., García-Spínola, E., Torres-Campos, D., Villagrán, J. M., ... & Mayoral-Cleries, F. (2019). Experience coercion, post-traumatic stress, and satisfaction with treatment associated with different coercive measures during psychiatric hospitalization. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 28(2), 448-456. <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12546>
- Haderlein, S. K., Saavedra, A. R., Polikoff, M. S., Silver, D., Rapaport, A., & Garland, M. (2021). Disparities in educational access in the time of COVID: Evidence from a nationally representative panel of American families. *AERA Open*, 7(1), 1-2. <http://doi.org/10.1177/23328584211041350>

- Krezmien, M. P., Travers, J. C., & Camacho, K. (2017). Suspension rates of students with autism or intellectual disabilities in Maryland from 2004 to 2015. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 61(11), 1011-1020. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jir.12406>
- Kuchynka, S. L., Eaton A., & Rivera, L. M. (2022). Understanding and addressing gender-based inequities in STEM: Research synthesis and recommendations for U.S. K-12 education. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 16(1), 252-288. <http://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12087>
- Morris, E. W., & Perry, B. L. (2016). The punishment gap: School suspension and racial disparities in achievement. *Social Problems*, 63, 68-86. <http://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spv026>
- Novak, A. (2018). The association between experiences of exclusionary discipline and justice system contact: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 40, 73-82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2018.04.002>
- Rocque, M., & Paternoster, R. (2013). Understanding the antecedents of the “school-to-jail” link: The relationship between race and school discipline. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 101(2). <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/jclc/vol101/iss2/7>
- Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C.-G., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review*, 40(1), 85-107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2011.12087730>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2012). Restraint and seclusion: Resource document. <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/seclusion/restraints-and-seclusion-resources.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2020). *Civil rights data collection: The use of restraint and seclusion on children with disabilities in K-12 schools.*

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/restraint-and-seclusion.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2021). *An overview of exclusionary discipline practices in public schools for the 2017-18 school year.*

<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/assets/downloads/crdc-exclusionary-school-discipline.pdf>

Welch, K., & Payne, A. A. (2012). Exclusionary school punishment: The effect of racial threat on expulsion and suspension. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 10*(2), 155-171.

<http://doi.org/10.1177/1541204011423766>

Welch, K., & Payne, A. A. (2018). Latino/a student threat and school disciplinary policies and practices. *Sociology of Education, 91*(2) 91–110.

<http://doi.org/10.1177/0038040718757720>

Whitecross, F., Seary, A., & Lee, S. (2013). Measuring the impacts of seclusion on psychiatry inpatients and the effectiveness of a pilot single-session post-seclusion counselling intervention. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing, 22*(6), 512-521.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12023>

**Table 1**  
*Representation in Enrollment and Exclusionary Discipline Categories*

Group	Enrollment		In-school suspension		Out-of-school suspension		Expulsion		Transferred to alternative school		School related arrest		Referral to law enforcement	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Latinx SWD	22,599	6.39%	2,986	12.51%	2,180	16.23%	206	15.70%	186	1.43%	78	14.72%	356	15.45%
Black SWD	2,602	0.80%	609	2.55%	453	3.37%	40	3.00%	42	0.32%	17	3.21%	61	2.65%
White SWD	4,375	1.34%	583	2.44%	262	1.95%	36	2.74%	34	0.26%	5	0.94%	34	1.48%

*Note.* SWD = students with disabilities



**Table 2**

*Risk Ratios for Exclusionary Discipline Categories*

Categories	White SWD			Black SWD			Latinx SWD		
	RR	p	95% CI	RR	p	95% CI	RR	p	95% CI
In-school suspension	1.00	NA	NA	1.76	.00 ***	[1.58,1.95]	0.99	.84	[0.91,1.08]
Out-of-school suspension	1.00	NA	NA	2.91	.00 ***	[2.52,3.36]	1.61	.00***	[1.42,1.82]
Expulsion	1.00	NA	NA	1.87	.01**	[1.19,2.92]	1.11	.80	[0.78,1.58]
Transferred to alternative school	1.00	NA	NA	2.08	.00***	[1.32,3.26]	1.06	.77	[0.74,1.52]
School related arrest	1.00	NA	NA	5.72	.00***	[2.11,15.48]	3.02	.00***	[1.22,7.45]
Referral to law enforcement	1.00	NA	NA	3.02	.00***	[1.99,4.58]	2.03	.00***	[1.43,2.88]

*Note.* SWD = students with disabilities; NA = not applicable  
 \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Figure 1**

*The Relationship Between Black and Latinx Student Enrollment and the Occurrence of Exclusionary Discipline for Students with Disabilities*

