

RACCE

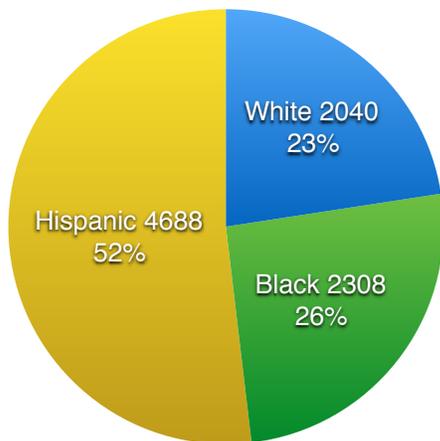
Waterbury Public Schools Discipline
Data Briefs 2013-15

3 YEAR MALE STUDENT DISCIPLINE TRENDS:

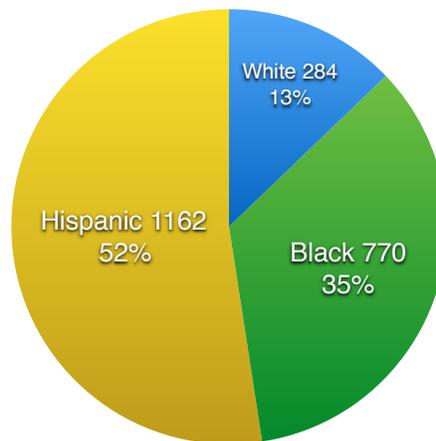
WATERBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS' PERSISTENT DISPARITIES SHOULD RAISE QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

RADICAL ADVOCATES for CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION-R.A.C.C.E.

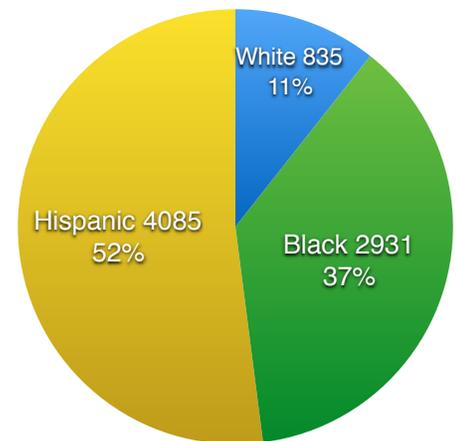
**Male Student Population
3-year Average**



**Individual Males Suspended
3-year Average**



**Male Student Suspensions
3-year Average**



Our primary objective is to practice a composite advocacy that brings about a positive linear social impact. Promoting legislative or policy measures that ensure improved practices will allow the most underserved and underrepresented students to have the benefit of protections that more privileged students already have. Unveiling the data starts the process of changing school professional practices. This process must result in substantial changes to the policies currently in place.

Over the past year R.A.C.C.E has made an attempt to understand the principles that are guiding the Waterbury Public Schools' (WPS) policies and practices for disciplining its students. It's partially unclear to us what those guiding principles are. We can see that teachers and administrators use office referrals as one of the primary devices to manage student behavior and ultimately school climate. Nationally, and as we confirmed by looking at the WPS, this type of practice results in disparate results for non-white students. Waterbury Public Schools have decreased total suspension numbers but non-white students are being suspended at increasingly higher rates than their white counterparts.

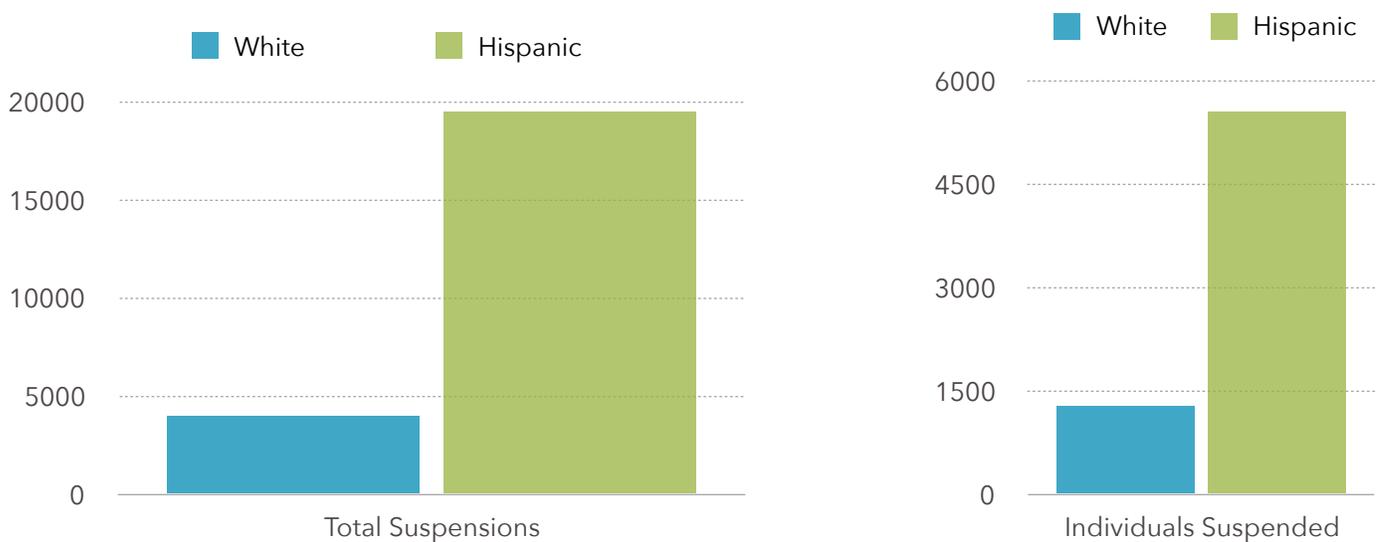
Over the last few months we have engaged a process that brings us beyond the numbers and allows to unveil the WPS discipline trends for its male students. We analyzed similar data for WPS female students last year. The results for male students were similarly problematic.

- Over the last three years Black male students were suspended at a rate of 3.5 to 1 to their white counterparts (8792 vs. 2504).
- Over the last three years individual lack male students were suspended at a 2.7 to 1 ratio to their white counterparts.
- Over the last three years 29% of all Black male students were suspended while only 7.2% of all white male students were suspended.
- These data also confirm that Black male students are exposed to a 1.4 disparate impact rate for discipline sanctions over their white counterparts.

Hispanic Student Discipline Rates

Hispanic male and female students experience greater amounts of suspensions. When considering that the population of Hispanic students more than doubles white students and Black students these might be easily understood by difference in population. However going beyond the basic analysis of population ratios we see these troubling trends.

- Over the last three years Hispanic students were suspended at a rate of 4.9 to 1 (19,560 vs. 3976) while only having a 2.3 to 1 population ratio.
- Over the last three years individual Hispanic students suspended at least once totaled 5546 vs. 1289 for their white counterparts.
- Over the last three years of 20% all Hispanic students were suspended vs. only 7.5% of all white students.



Female Student Discipline Rates

In our previous attempt to understand the WPS discipline trends we examined female student discipline data for the three previous school years (2013-2015). What we found was deeply concerning. Please go to our website to view the Black Girls Summit report. RACCE.NET

- Over the last three years Black female students were suspended at a rate of 3.5 to 1 to their white counterparts.
- Over the last three years Black female individuals were suspended at a 3.2 to 1 ratio to their white counterparts.
- Over the last three years 21% of all Black females were suspended while only 8% of White female students were suspended.
- These data also confirm Black female students are exposed to a 1.5 disparate impact rate for discipline sanctions.

BLACK GIRLS SUMMIT: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS ON WATERBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISCIPLINE DISPARITIES

RADICAL ADVOCATES for CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION-R.A.C.C.E.

Waterbury’s female students of color are at greater risk of being suspended in school than their white counterparts, thereby, accelerating the school to prison pipeline for girls of color. In light of this we urge the Superintendent, and BOE to form a special task force. This task force would examine and identify which discipline policies are administered properly, those that work to increase or decrease instructional time, and those policies that need to be supported or rescinded. Specifically, this task force should include principals, teachers, social workers, school psychologists, police and parents. R.A.C.C.E. would be a willing volunteer, as a participant and/or facilitator.

R.A.C.C.E. believes it is important to highlight the statistical illusion that reducing overall suspensions would lead to a reduction in the disparate disciplinary rates of female students of color.

We know this isn’t true. It is our belief that the reduction in the number of overall suspensions is not a reliable metric for determining whether or not our district’s policies and practices are in fact culturally competent and student centric.

R.A.C.C.E. believes the paradigm that places discipline over academic achievement is a primary reason for achievement gaps, graduation rate disparities, low-levels of school connectedness and the over-disciplining of students of color, especially girls of color in Waterbury’s public schools.

In an attempt to explain the unique circumstances that girls of color face we highlighted a report *Black Girls Matter*, produced by the *African American Policy Forum*. From this report we gained an understanding that poverty, interpersonal violence, sexual assault, pregnancy and the burdensome trend of parenting responsibilities for both Hispanic and Black female students is at higher levels than their white counterparts. Combining this with a paradigm of discipline over academic achievement, girls of color feel heightened levels of vulnerability through the phenomena of being pushed-out and over-policed. This creates a continuum of suspensions and more vulnerability for female students of color in Waterbury.

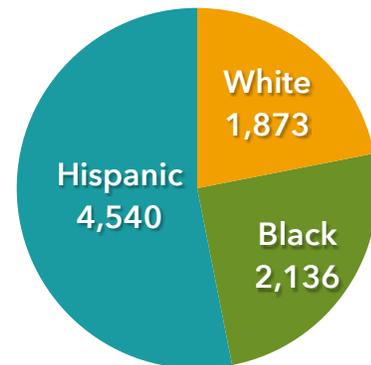
Waterbury’s school district will be required by law to provide cultural competency training for its school professionals in 2015. We urge the B.O.E., the Superintendent and her staff to pursue training that doesn’t just meet federal or state standards. Rather, we suggest designing and implementing long-term, progressive, and tailored professional development to meet the very specific needs of the diverse student body. Waterbury can be an innovator and leader in this area.

If school professionals don’t understand how their socio-cultural identity fits into societal power dynamics, then they can never truly be educators who are cross-cultural. It is only when school professionals understand how implicit and explicit bias works to control all of their core duties as educators that they will be able make judgments about discipline and academic achievement through a lens of equity, fairness, and justice.

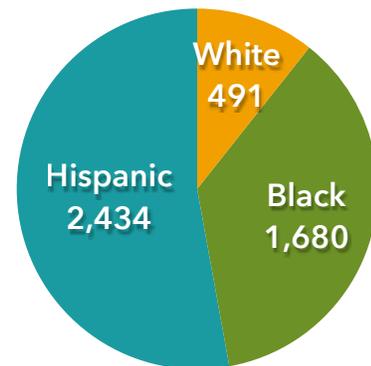
Finally our Black Girls Summit panelists and attendees recommended the following:

- ◆ Increase the amount of student controlled and designed after school programs.
- ◆ Training of all staff on culturally competency and implicit bias.
- ◆ More timely distribution of (dis)aggregated data.
- ◆ More accountability for school professionals as it relates to these discipline disparities.

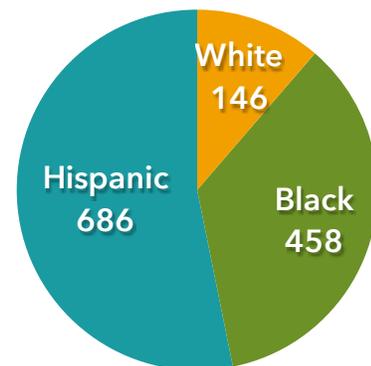
Female Student Population
3 -year Average



Female Student Suspensions
3-year Average



Individual Females Suspended
3-year Average



*All data was collected from Waterbury School District’s ED 166 files sent to C.S.D.E.

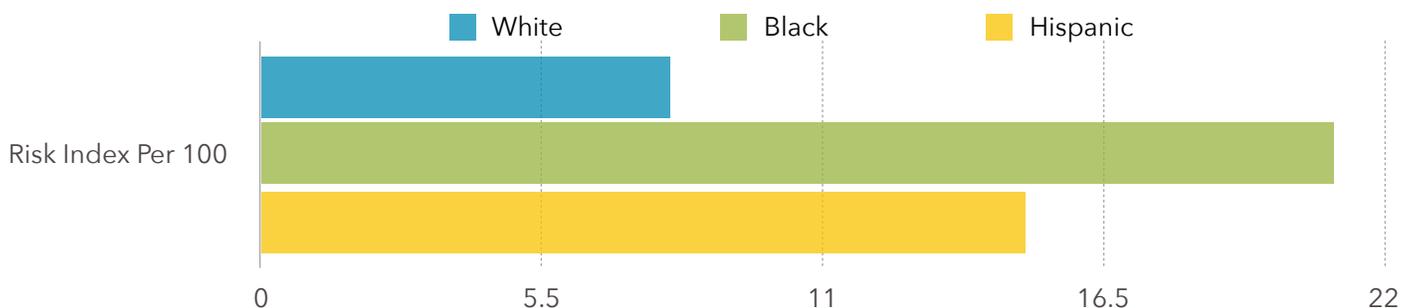
Black Female Students 2012-2015

- ◆ Over the last 3 years Black female students were suspended at a rate of 3.5 to 1 (5041 vs. 1472), while having a 1.1 to 1 population ratio.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years Black female individuals were responsible for suspensions that equaled 1375 vs. 437 for white females. A 3.2 to 1 ratio.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years 21% of all Black females were suspended while only 8% of White female students were suspended. This equates to a 2.6 times greater Risk Index for Black female students.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years, even though population numbers have **decreased** along with suspension totals, Black female students have seen an intensification of their suspensions. Risk Ratios increased from 2.6 to 1 to 3 to 1.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years 35% of all female suspensions were given to Black females while Black females only accounted for 24% of the female population. This equates to a 1.5 disparate impact rate.

Hispanic Female Students 2012-2015

- ◆ Over the last 3 years Hispanic female students were suspended at a rate of 5.0 to 1 (7303 vs. 1472), while only having a 2.4 to 1 population ratio.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years Hispanic female individuals were responsible for suspensions that equaled 2058 vs. 437 for white females. A 4.7 to 1 ratio.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years 15% of all Hispanic females were suspended while only 8% of White female students were suspended. This equates to a 1.95 times greater Risk Index for Hispanic female students.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years, as population numbers have steadily increased by 10 % for Hispanic females, so have their suspension totals. Hispanic female students have also experienced an increase of their risk to being suspended. Their Risk Ratio has grown from 1.9 to 2.2 a 17%.
- ◆ Over the last 3 years 51% of all female suspensions were given to Hispanic females while Hispanic females accounted for 53% of the female population.

*All data was collected from Waterbury School District's ED 166 files sent to C.S.D.E.



RADICAL ADVOCATES FOR CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION

OUR MISSION IS TO CHALLENGE SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION BY ADVOCATING FOR CULTURALLY COMPETENT EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES.

In the 2014-15 school year the Waterbury Public Schools experienced a 27% increase in student arrests. The 2014-15 school year was a pivotal year for the Waterbury Public Schools. Despite entering into a memorandum of understanding with the Waterbury Police Department that was supposed to guarantee a graduated response model was to be adhered to-arrests went up. Arrests went up despite promoting there would be a greater reliance on restorative justice models, which were to use local juvenile review boards as a strategy to avoid placing our students into the school-to-prison pipeline. The 2014-15 arrest total was 334 up from 263 in 2013-14.

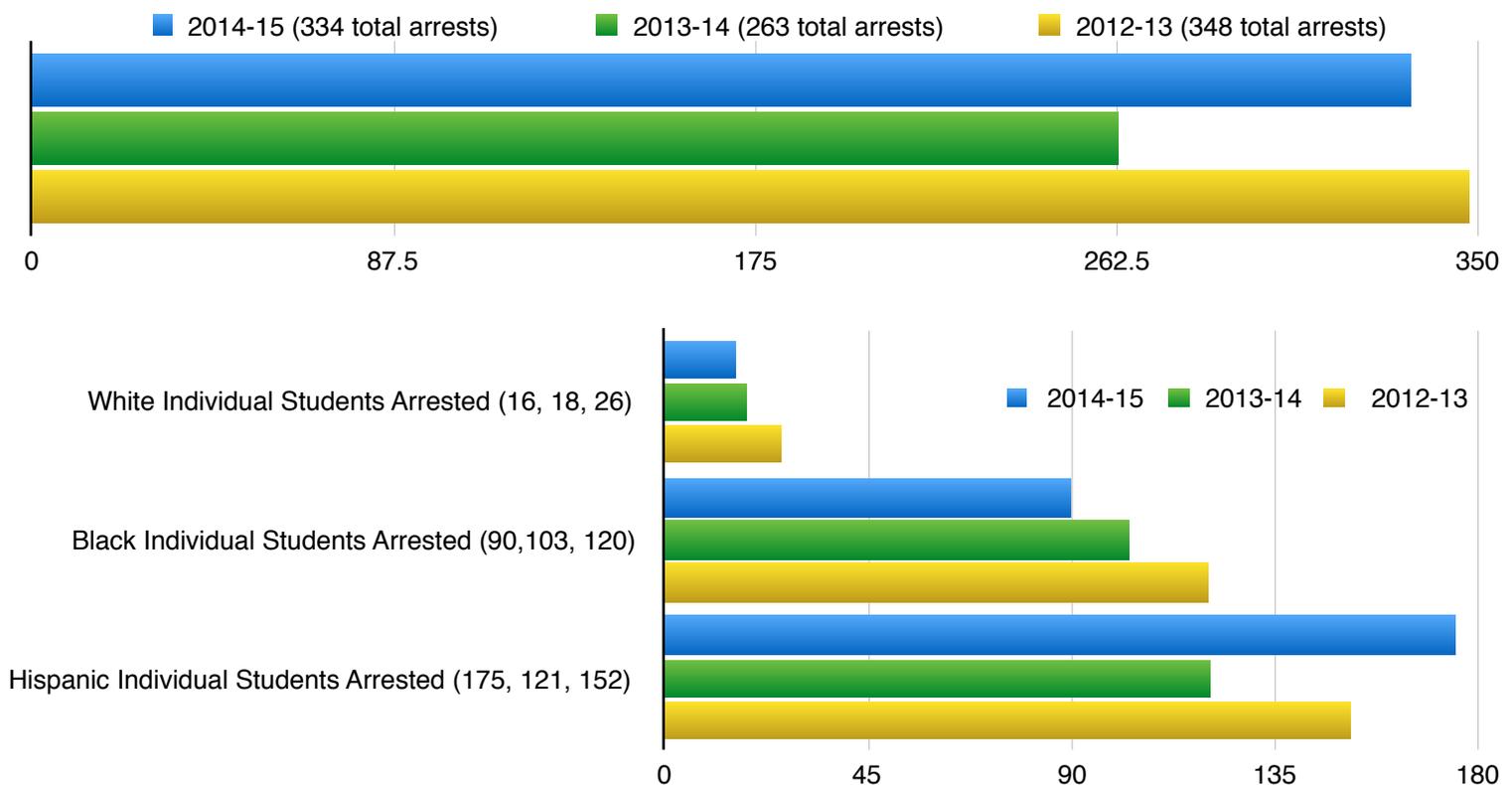
In the last three years Black students have been arrested at a rate of 5 to 1 to their White counterparts. Black and White students have a 1.2 to 1 population ratio. Hispanic students have been arrested at rate of 7.5 to 1 to their White counterparts. Hispanic and White students have a 2.2 to 1 population ratio. Waterbury Public Schools continue to place our most vulnerable students in harms way. We ask that the Waterbury Public Schools release these data sets to the public in a more timely manner; and we ask the public to continue to show up, and speak out about these educational dilemmas affecting Waterbury students.

RACCE is an educational advocacy group located in Waterbury, CT.

Please join us in our mission to challenge systems of oppression by advocating for culturally competent educational practices.

For more information about our strategies and vision for change visit our website: RACCE.NET

Data used comes from Connecticut State Department of Education ED 166 Disciplinary Offense Collection and is accurate as of 4/12/2016.

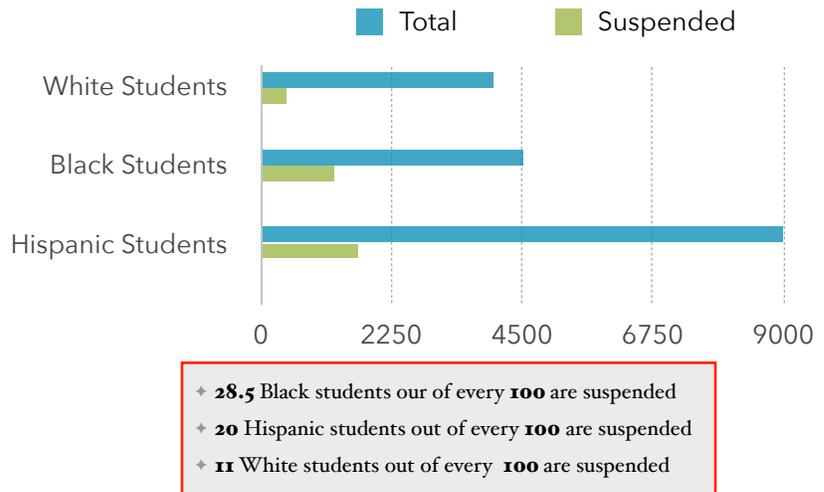


TRouBLING TRENDs WITH THE WAYS SChOOLS DEAL WITH TROUBLE

RADICAL ADVOCATES for CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION-R.A.C.C.E.

R.A.C.C.E. RECOMMENDS

- *Mandate schools institute a memorandum of agreement with police to negotiate a graduated response to discipline in schools. These agreements would delineate the roles of the school professionals and police in the disciplinary process. (Done by Police Chief Riddick and Superintendent Ouellette in conjunction with Waterbury Youth Services -04/15) We still support the implementation of Connecticut SB 6834 and all of its mandates.*
- *Require low performing school districts to develop de-escalation techniques to fit the district's current behavioral environment. Create professional development for all school staff that informs and trains them on new procedures and policies. This will prevent students from entering school discipline programs or the judicial system.*
- *Refine statistical reporting on disciplinary matters, while disaggregating all student data along racial and gender lines.*
- *Develop a set of robust protocols for school professionals, which would require them to identify useful interventions that aren't punitive in nature.*
- *Create a task force that examines and identifies which school discipline policies are currently administered properly, those that work to increase or decrease instructional time, and those policies that need to be supported or rescinded. The W.T.A., S.A.W. and our Police Chief will need to contribute for this to be successful. Specifically, this task force should also include principles, teachers, social workers, school psychologists, police and parents. **Because as we know, our current policies are not preventing but accelerating the school to prison pipeline process. R.A.C.C.E would be a willing volunteer, as a participant and/or facilitator.***



WHY RACE MATTERS?

National: The Department of Education report on Intra-gender Suspension Ratios (2011) revealed that Black boys (3x's) and Black girls (6x's) are more likely to be suspended than their white counterparts-even though whites outnumbered black students 3 to 1. The ACLU also reported that students who were suspended are 3 times more likely to be placed into juvenile justice systems. Students who get suspended are less likely to graduate, less likely to go to college, and more likely to end up in prison.

In Waterbury it Really Matters...

Waterbury: The White student and Black student population is nearly 1 to 1 and Hispanic student ratios are 2 to 1 for both Black and White students. However, Black students are 2.6 times more likely to be suspended than White. While Hispanic students are suspended at twice the rate of Whites (*CSDE 3/2015 Report*). This data suggests that either an implicit bias towards Black and Hispanic students exists and/or our school system lacks the culturally competent professionals to accommodate the diversity of the district. The National Education Association (NEA), the largest teachers union, states "racist perceptions create a stereotype that students of color are disrespectful and disruptive, which zero tolerance policies exploit." According to the NEA, the only way to prevent this phenomenon is to make sure discipline policies are "fair, non-discriminatory, and effective." We need to act now. We also believe zero-tolerance policies should be eliminated immediately for all behavioral problems except for violent ones that lead to bodily harm.