

# Expulsion and Suspension Prevention Webinar Series

## Webinar 2:

**Establishing Federal, State, and Local Policies**

# Webinar Series on Expulsion and Suspension Practices in Early Learning Settings

- **Webinar 1:** Basic Research, Data Trends, and the Pillars of Prevention
- **Webinar 2: Establishing Federal, State, and Local Policies**
- **Webinar 3:** Program Quality and Professional Development: A Look at Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support Systems Through Diversity-Informed Tenets
- **Webinar 4:** Using Data Systems To Track and Reduce Expulsion and Suspension

# Today's Outline

- **HHS and ED Federal Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension in Early Learning Settings**
  - Shantel Meek PhD, Policy Advisor for Early Childhood Development, HHS
- **Colorado: State Action to Prevent and Reduce Expulsion and Suspensions**
  - Jordana Ash, LCSW, IMH-E(IV), Early Childhood Mental Health Director, Colorado Office of Early Childhood
- **Chicago Public Schools: Local Action to Prevent and Reduce Expulsion and Suspension**
  - Justina Schlund, Office of Social & Emotional Development, Chicago Public Schools
- Question & Answer Session





# **HHS and ED Federal Policy Statement**

## **Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood Settings**

**Shantel Meek, PhD**

**Policy Advisor for Early Childhood Development  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

# Why Focus on Expulsion and Suspension?

- The beginning years of any child's life are critical for building the early foundation of learning, health and wellness needed for success in school and later in life.
- Often the children most in need of intervention are the ones expelled from the system.
- Children who are expelled or suspended are as much as **10 times** more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure and grade retention, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not.
- Expulsion or suspension early in a child's education predicts expulsion or suspension in later school grades.
- Some estimates have found that rates in early education are higher than in K12 settings
- All estimates have found large racial disparities, with young boys of color being suspended and expelled at disproportionately high rates.

# Federal Policy Statement- Context

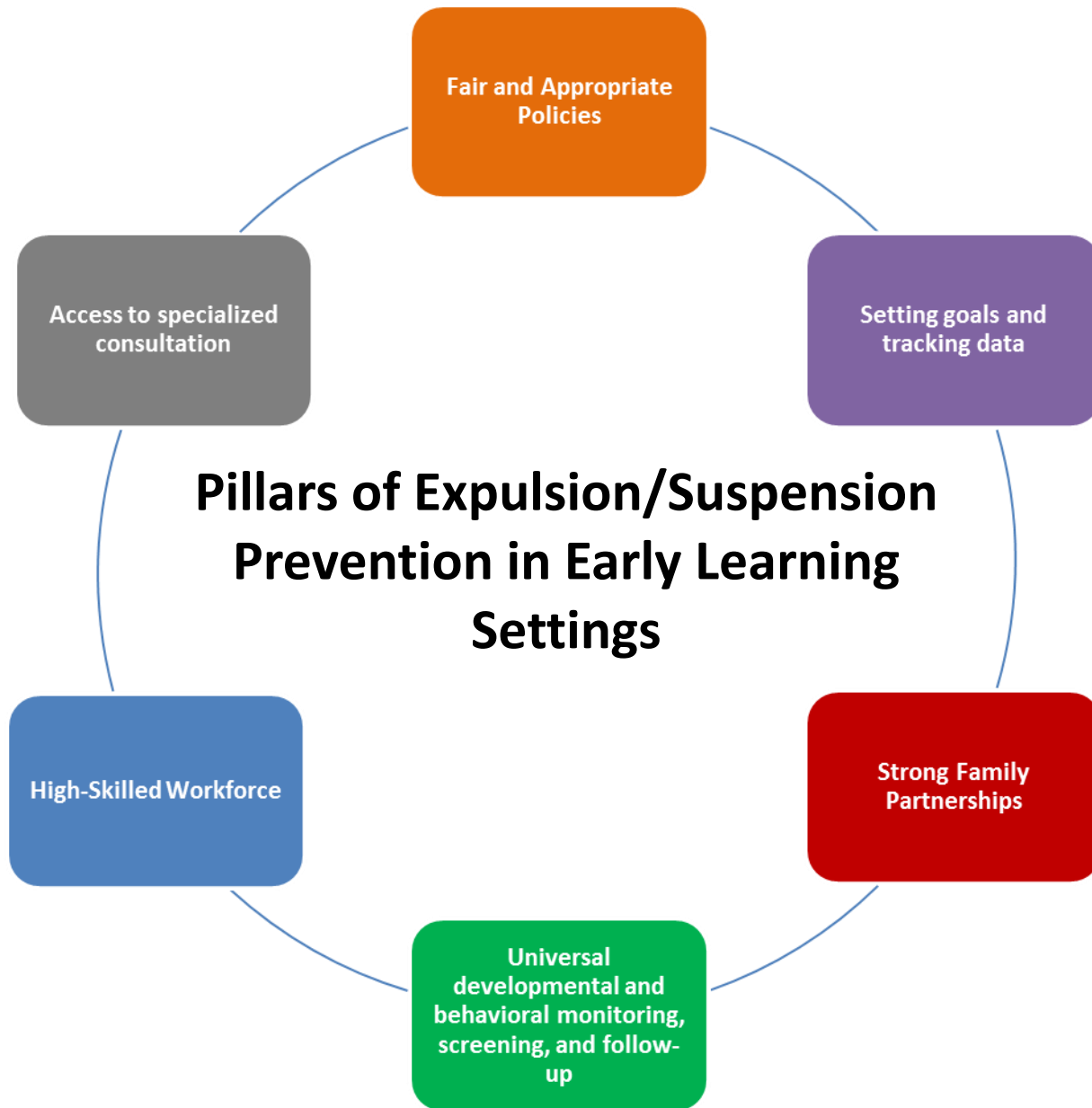
- Dr. Gilliam's landmark studies identifying high rates of expulsion in early learning settings.
- U.S. Department of ED's Office of Civil Rights data on preschool suspension released in Spring of 2014.
- My Brother's Keeper Taskforce: President's Report includes the goal of eliminating expulsion and suspension practices in early learning settings.
- Department of Education and Justice's efforts to improve school climate, including release of *Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline*.
- Advances in brain and developmental science and Administration's focus on increasing access to high-quality early learning programs.



# Federal Policy Statement Purposes

- Raise awareness;
- Provide recommendations to early childhood programs and States;
- Highlight early childhood workforce competencies and evidence-based interventions and approaches;
- Identify free resources to support States, programs, teachers, and providers; and
- Identify free resources to support families in fostering young children's development, social-emotional and behavioral health, and relationships.

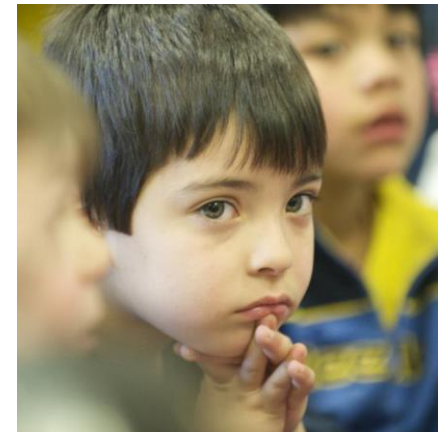






# Recommendations to Early Childhood Programs

- **Develop preventive guidance and discipline practices**
  - Social-emotional and behavioral health promotion practices
  - Developmentally appropriate discipline and intervention procedures, including specific guidance on what to do when a child demonstrates a challenging behavior
  - Practices and procedures should be used as learning opportunities to guide children's behavioral development
  - Developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations
  - Clearly communicated to all staff, families, and partners
  - Implemented without bias or discrimination



# Recommendations to Early Childhood Programs

- **Develop expulsion and suspension policies:**
  - Establish policies that eliminate or severely limit expulsion, suspension, or other exclusionary discipline;
  - Exclusionary measures should be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications;
  - Appropriate transitions if the need arises;
  - Additional procedural safeguards for children with disabilities
  - Ensure that policies developed and implemented in accordance with applicable State and Federal statutes.

# Recommendations to Early Childhood Programs

- **Access TA in workforce development to build capacity in:**
  - Promoting children's social-emotional and behavioral health;
  - Appropriately addressing challenging behavior;
  - Forming supportive , nurturing relationships with children;
  - Developmental and behavioral screenings and follow-up;
  - Collaborating with community-based service providers;
  - Forming strong relationships with parents and families;
  - Having a strong understanding of culture and diversity;
  - Employing self-reflective strategies to correct all biases;
  - Eliminating all discriminatory discipline practices.
- **Access to specialized support from consultants**
- **Promote teacher and staff wellness**



# Recommendations to Early Childhood Programs

- **Set Goals and Analyze Data to Assess Progress:** programs should set their own goals, monitor their data to assess progress, and modify their practices and investments, as needed, to reach their goals.
- Several types of data can be useful in assessing progress, depending on the specific goal
- Example goals include:
  - Provide professional development on social-emotional and behavioral health to all staff in one year; ensure that 50% of teachers have access to specialists or consultants in two years; ensure that all lead teachers have access to specialists or consultants in three years.
  - Reduce the number of total suspensions and expulsions program-wide by 50% in one year; eliminate all expulsions and suspensions, with exceptions only in extraordinary cases, in two years.

# Recommendations to States



- **Develop and Clearly Communicate Expulsion and Suspension Policies**
  - Establish statewide policies, applicable across settings, including publicly and privately funded early childhood programs, to promote children's social-emotional and behavioral health and eliminate or severely limit the use of expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices.
  - Appropriate transitions
  - These policies and procedures should be clearly communicated to all relevant parties
  - Under the reauthorized CCDBG Act, States are required to disseminate consumer education information to parents, the general public, and child care providers, which may include policies on expulsions of children receiving support under CCDF.

# Recommendations to States

- **Set Goals for Improvement and Analyze Data to Assess Progress**
  - Develop roadmaps to eliminating expulsion and suspension, informed by goals and data-driven progress monitoring.
  - Build capacity to collect and analyze statewide data.
  - Coordinate data systems across relevant systems.

# Recommendations to States

- **Invest in Workforce Preparation and Development**
  - CCDBG Act quality funds can be used to support on professional development that promotes social-emotional development and reduces challenging behavior and expulsions of young children served through CCDF.
  - Mechanisms to strengthen workforce include:
    - Statewide Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
    - State Endorsements of Infant, Early childhood and Family Mental Health Specialists
    - State Entry Level Credentials
    - Higher Education
    - Statewide Models of PBIS
    - Establishing career pathways



# Free Tools and Resources

## *Free resources for:*

***States • Programs, administrators, directors, principals, teachers, and staff  
• Families, parents, and caregivers***

- Establishing fair and developmentally appropriate policies
- Implementing statewide early childhood mental health consultation and positive behavior intervention and support frameworks
- Strengthening family-provider partnerships
- Fostering children's social-emotional and behavioral health
- Implementing universal monitoring, screening and appropriate follow-up

[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/e.cd/expulsion\\_suspension\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/e.cd/expulsion_suspension_final.pdf)

- *Several new resources and a new webpage coming soon!*





**COLORADO**

**Office of Early Childhood**

Division of Community & Family Support

# Being Ready: Colorado's path to reducing child care suspensions and expulsions

**Jordana Ash, LCSW, IMH-E (IV)<sup>®</sup>**

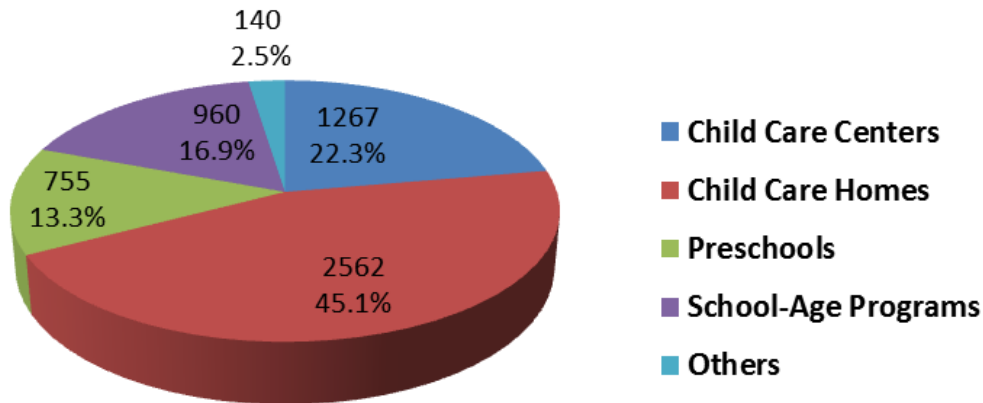
Early Childhood Mental Health Director

Office of Early Childhood

CO Department of Human Services

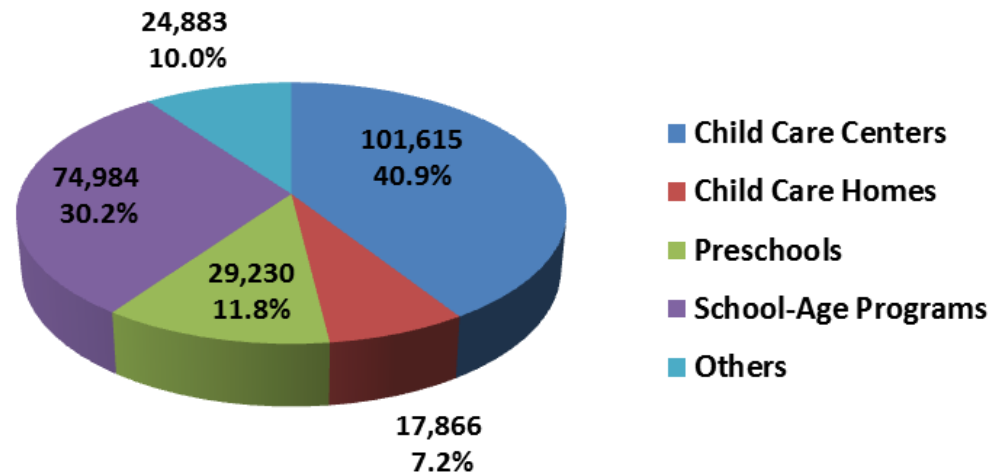
# Ready State: Colorado

## FACILITIES



Non-24 hour  
licensed facilities  
and capacity as of  
1/5/15

## CAPACITY



# Ready State: Colorado

- 2012: the creation of the Office of Early Childhood in the Dept. of Human Services to align, coordinate & improve outcomes for children birth – 8 and their families
- Many federal partnerships, including Race to the Top
- Statewide program of Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) consultants, providing 1 FTE at each of the 17 CO Community Mental Health Centers

# Getting Ready: The generic process for Child Care Rule Revisions

- Mandated by the state law under the administrative procedure act that agencies review rules every 5 years
- ✓ Convene a stakeholder work group with broad representation from providers, provider associations, child advocacy groups, other state departments, etc. for the duration of the revision process
- ✓ Draft released for public comment opportunity
- ✓ Finalization-back to stakeholder group; final recommendations are an agency decision
- ✓ Put before CDHS State Board- 3 hearings on recommendations then into Rule

# Getting Set:

## Supporting Quality Programming and Reducing Suspensions & Expulsions

- **PRIOR** to release of policy statement by Sects. Burwell & Duncan, stakeholder input suggested:
  - ✓ Aligning center & home rules- 3 of 15 clock hours of annual training must be about social and emotional development
  - ✓ Written plan of how to access mental health consultant if necessary
  - ✓ Identifying departmental-approved trainings that meet criteria for college-level courses for early childhood providers
  - ✓ Highlighting protections for children with special health care needs, including those with or at risk of developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions

# Reflecting Federal Recommendations at the State level

## *(Develop & clearly communicate prevention guidance and discipline practices)*

- Definitions that present descriptive language on expulsion, suspension, mental health consultation, mental health consultant, other coaches.
- Opportunity to articulate the guidance, positive instruction, supporting positive behavior, and discipline with **a firmly stated** goal of responding to challenging behavior and preventing suspensions, expulsions. **Consider:**
  - ✓ Relationships at the core: cultivate positive culture between children, staff and families
  - ✓ Implement teaching strategies supporting positive behavior, pro-social behavior peer interactions and promote overall social and emotional competence
  - ✓ Include ideas around individual social and emotional intervention supports for children that include understanding, developing, and implementing a team approach-center on family, staff and other specialists like mental health consultant

# Reflecting Federal Recommendations at the State level

## *(Develop and clearly communicate Expulsion and Suspensions Policies)*

- Describe how decisions are made regarding suspension, expulsion-explicitly calling out these actions
- Define notification of family when action may be taken
- Leverage the compliance role to outline steps directors need to take prior to suspension and expulsion for children with social, emotional, behavioral challenges.

# Reflecting Federal Recommendations at the State level

*(Set Goals for Improvement and Analyze Data to Assess Progress)*

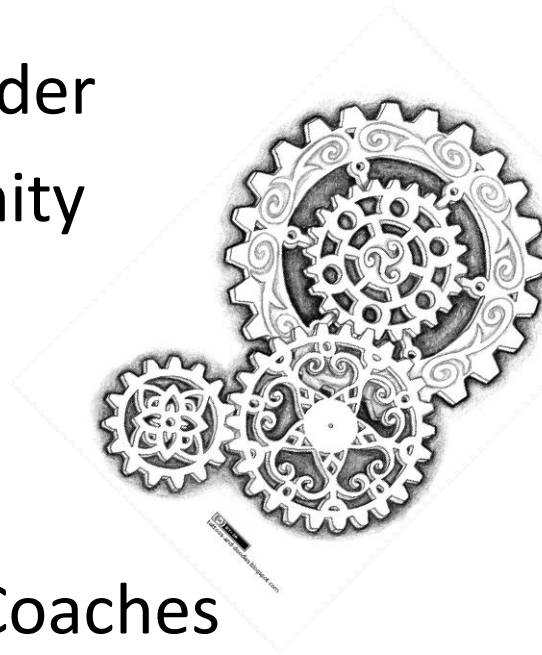
- Data system under development
  - First build for Early Intervention & ECMH
  - Quality Rating system and Professional Dev Information System
- Wrestling with best way to capture expulsion data.
  - How to collect representative data?
  - Parents-hearing from those affected
  - Find lead measures so we can work on that reduction in expulsions



# Reflecting Federal Recommendations at the State level

*(Invest in Workforce Preparation and Development)*

Provider  
Community



Mental Health  
Consultants

Quality Coaches

Higher  
Education

# Final thoughts

- Unique moment in time
- Seize opportunities to push further than you might have otherwise
- Take advantage of the growing body of practice & research knowledge about what works!



Thank You!



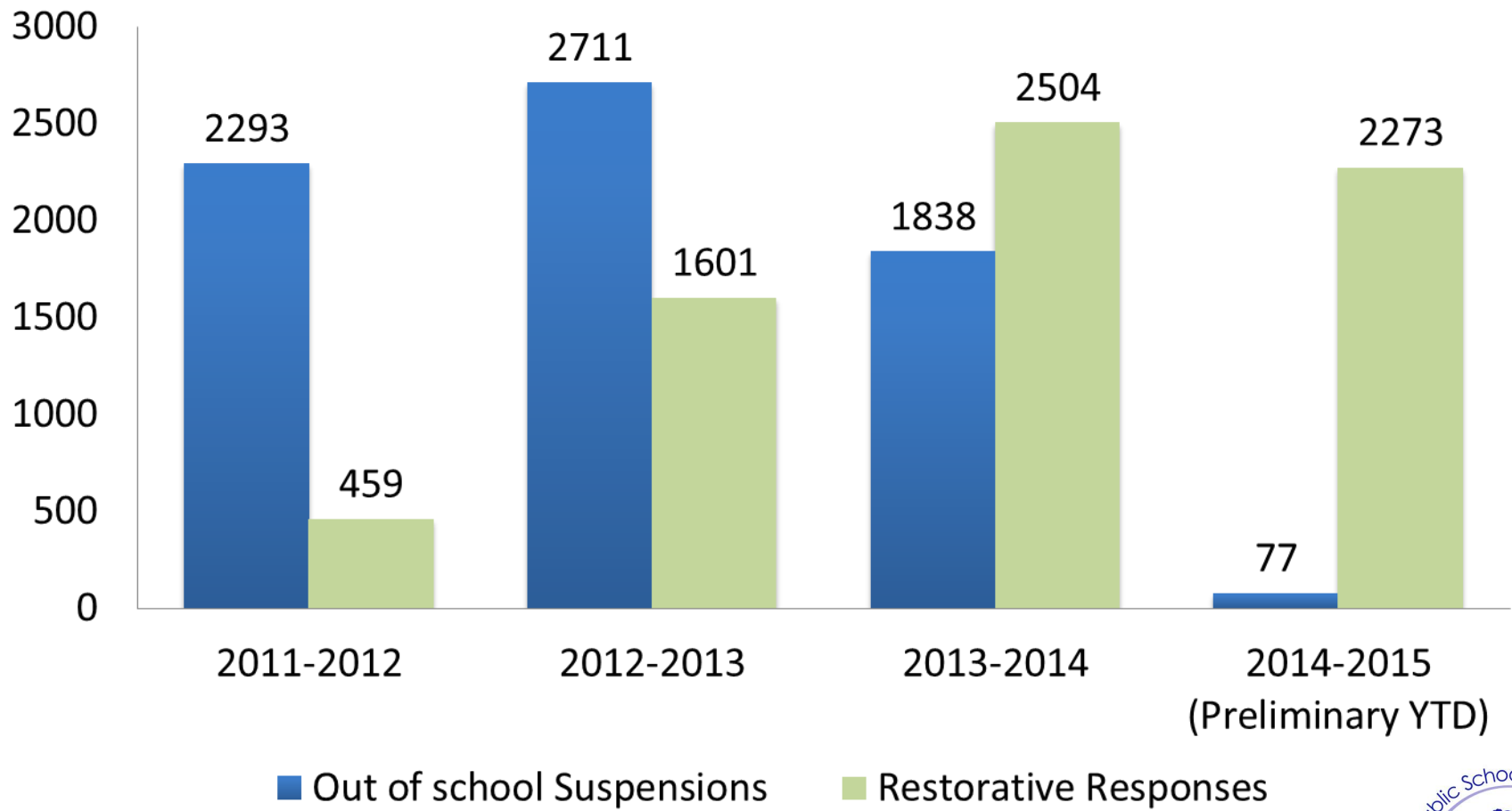
# Chicago Public Schools

## *Local Policy Example*

Justina Schlund

Office of Social & Emotional Learning

# Responses to PreK-2<sup>nd</sup> grade Behavior Incidents, SY2012-SY2015



# Background

- **2011-2013:** Expansion of preschool and full-day kindergarten leads to growing demand for behavior supports for young children
- **2012:** Policy change to remove the option to suspend PreK/K students
- **2013:** Launch of district-wide Suspensions & Expulsions Reduction Project aimed at policy change, accountability systems, resource development, professional development and collaboration
- **2014:** Passage of a new Student Code of Conduct, that places strict limits on suspension use in PreK-2<sup>nd</sup>



# Stakeholder Engagement

- District-wide committee: Social & Emotional Learning, Early Childhood Education, Safety & Security, Office of Diverse Learner Supports & Services, Law and Labor Relations
- School staff focus groups (including deans, principals, teachers, counselors, social workers, etc.)
- Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), Chicago Principals and Administrators Association (CPAA)
- Network chiefs & deputies
- Citywide collaborative
- Community forums
- Student focus groups



# Drafting a Policy

- Analysis of district behavior/suspensions data
- Review other districts' policies around young children
- Consultation with leading national experts
- Focus groups and revisions



## **SUSPENSION GUIDELINES**

Students in grades pre-kindergarten through second may NOT be assigned in-school or out-of-school suspensions. If a student in pre-kindergarten through second grade exhibits behavior that presents an imminent endangerment to the physical, emotional, or mental safety of specific students/staff, the Network Chief or designee may grant an exception and assign an emergency one-day in-school or out-of-school suspension after the student's parent/guardian has been notified. During the suspension, the principal or designee must develop a plan addressing the safety of students/staff and including strategies for preventing future behavior incidents, restoring relationships, and addressing the student's ongoing social, emotional, and academic needs.



# From Ideas to Policy

- “Hearts and Minds campaign”
- Wide-reaching communications strategy
- Presentations across district, Local School Councils and Community Action Councils
- Community partners co-presented to Board of Ed: “true collaboration”



# From Policy to Implementation

- Professional Development for all principals, summer 2014
- School Climate cohorts in 65 elementary schools
- SEL specialists in all Networks
- Small group social skills intervention (SS GRIN) for K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade students piloted in 23 schools this fall
- Second Step and PATHS universal social skills curriculum for early grades
- Early childhood resource guides and training
- District-wide Kindergarten mentoring program
- Behavioral Health Teams (intensive supports through pilot program in 44 schools)
- New district-wide Autism & Behavioral Health Team provides schools with behavior assessments and behavior plans for students with challenging behavior



# Where we go from here...

- Focus groups and reviewing Student Code of Conduct for SY2015-2016
- Behavior/suspensions data analysis
- Expanding supports for young students
- Universal practices: morning meetings in all early education classrooms
- Developing Restorative Practices model for all schools
- Identifying model SEL schools



# Major Lessons Learned

- Build *momentum*
- Data speaks volumes
- ...But allies and champions turn it up to 11!
- Resources, resources, resources



# QUESTIONS?



# Thank you!



**Webinar 3:** Program Quality and Professional Development: A Look at Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support Systems Through Diversity-Informed Tenets – **2/25/2015, 1-2:30 PM ET**

**Webinar 4:** Using Data Systems To Track and Reduce Expulsion and Suspension – **3/4/2015, 1-2 PM ET**