

# HOW CAN YOU LOVE THE KIDS BUT HATE THE PARENTS?

A SHADOW REPORT ON THE UNFULFILLED  
PROMISES OF LAUSD SCHOOL DISCIPLINE  
REFORM IN SOUTH LA

OCTOBER 2017



# #SOUTHLAPARENTLOVE

## SOUTH LA PARENTS LEADING THE WAY FOR DIGNITY AND JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS



In 2006, CADRE convened the South LA People's Hearing to address the situation in South LA's schools: Due to the "tough-on-crime" culture within LAUSD, Black and Latino students in South LA were the targets of meteoric rises in school citations, suspensions, involuntary transfers, and expulsions.

Hundreds of South LA parents shared stories of visiting schools and feeling powerless, disregarded, and discriminated against because of language, culture, life experiences, and racial stereotypes, particularly when they pushed back on the ways in which their students were being disciplined.

It also became painfully clear to the community-at-large that anti-Black racism was at the root of this crisis and that achieving the long-term social justice goal of closing the "school-to-prison pipeline" required an immediate and decisive eradication of harsh, punitive and zero-tolerance discipline practices and policies, especially for Black children and youth.

It is our belief that South LA schools can only be transformed by being responsive to parents. Our eyes have been on the prize of schools VALUING PARENTS by:

- **Understanding parents' experiences, strengths, and challenges**

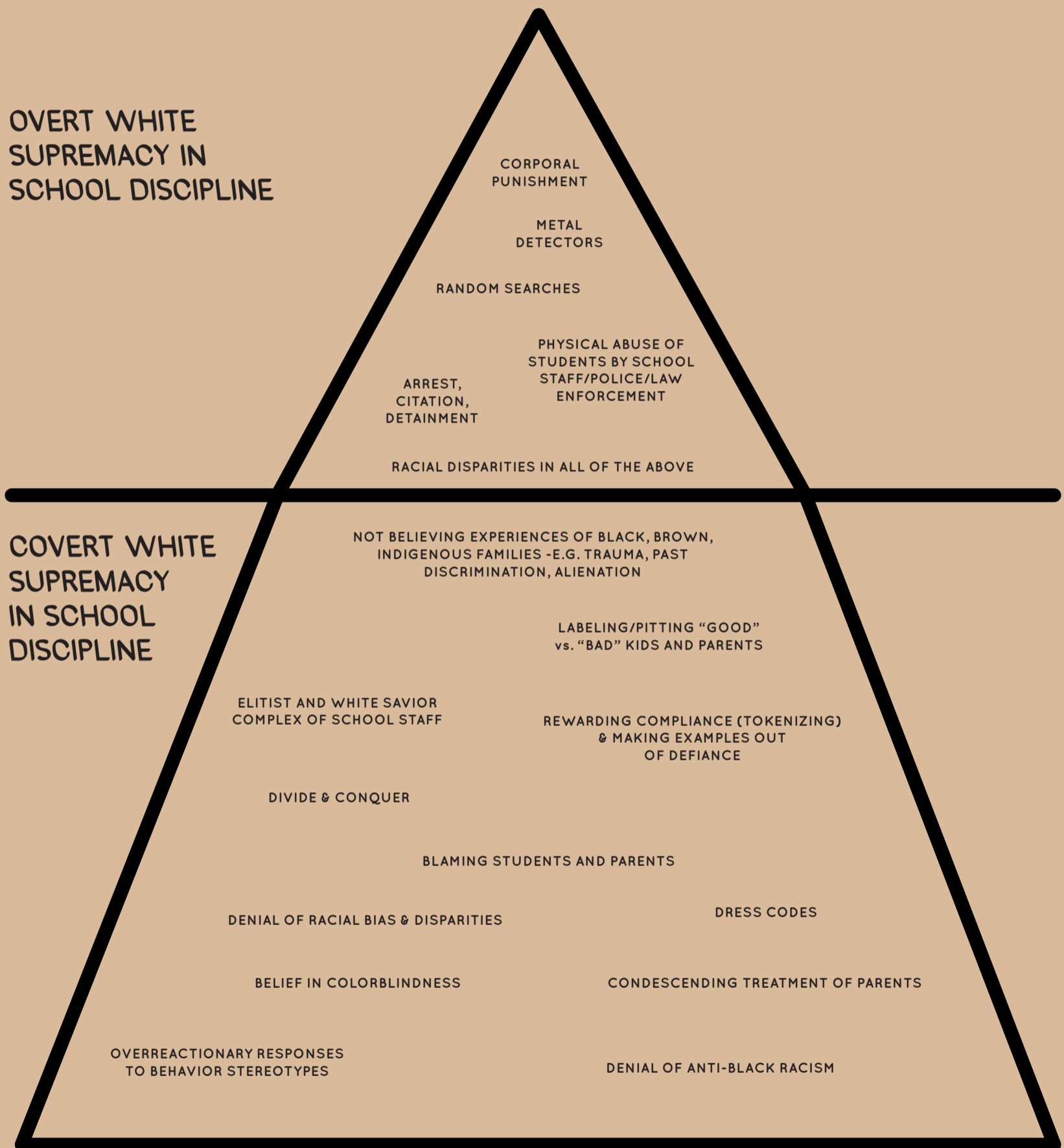
- **Building relationships with parents in order to see the humanity in families**
- **Repairing harm and pledging to do no harm in the course of school discipline**
- **Respecting parents' rights to advocate for and monitor their children's civil and human rights without retaliation, negative labeling, or pushing out of both child and parent**

With this in mind, CADRE parent leaders and allies issued a call to action and demand for LAUSD to **eliminate arbitrary, race based suspensions and expulsions** and **ensure parents' rights to participate** in all disciplinary actions and decisions related to their children.

In response to a successful organizing campaign, LAUSD in 2007 became the first district in the nation to adopt a comprehensive school discipline reform policy based on the principles of School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) – unbiased, non-discriminatory, developmentally appropriate, and affirming practices for fostering positive behavioral change and keeping students in school.

**Now, on the 10th anniversary of LAUSD's adoption of SWPBIS, South LA parents are back again with our analysis, our perspective, and our side of the story. This is our shadow report.**

# OVERT AND COVERT WHITE SUPREMACY IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE



Sources: Adapted from Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence (2005), "Building a Multi-Ethnic, Inclusive & Antiracist Organization-Tools for Liberation Packet for Anti-Racist Activists, Allies, & Critical Thinkers"

# THE HUMAN RIGHT TO EDUCATION

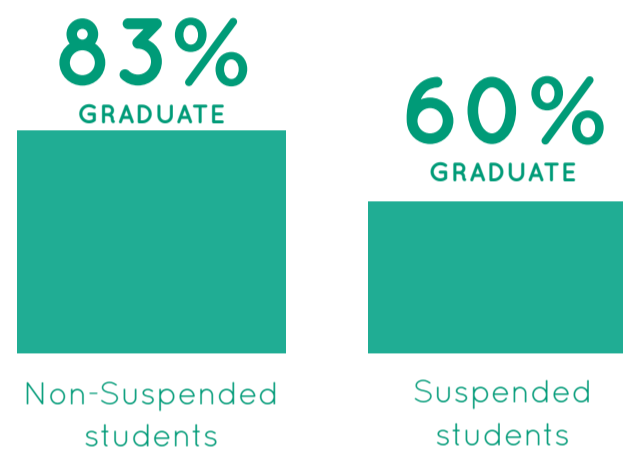
## THE STRUGGLE FOR DIGNITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE IN SOUTH LA SCHOOLS

Just a little over a decade ago in the 2005-06 school year, LAUSD schools logged nearly 73,000 suspensions in just one year, with some schools logging nearly 1,000 suspensions each (LAUSD). “Zero tolerance” suspensions were being applied to a wide range of student behaviors, often micro behaviors that schools believed needed to be punished before they escalated, much like the “broken windows” approach in law enforcement.

Most of these behaviors fell into the “willful defiance” category in the California Education Code, one that had no definition. “Willful defiance” was the cited reason for thousands of suspensions and racial bias led to extreme racial disparities in suspensions. In 2005-06, a South LA high school had 926 suspensions, 505 of which were for “willful defiance.” (CDE Dataquest). LAUSD at the time did not provide any overarching guidance to schools on how to discipline fairly, age-appropriately, based on child development, and without racial, gender, or transphobic bias.

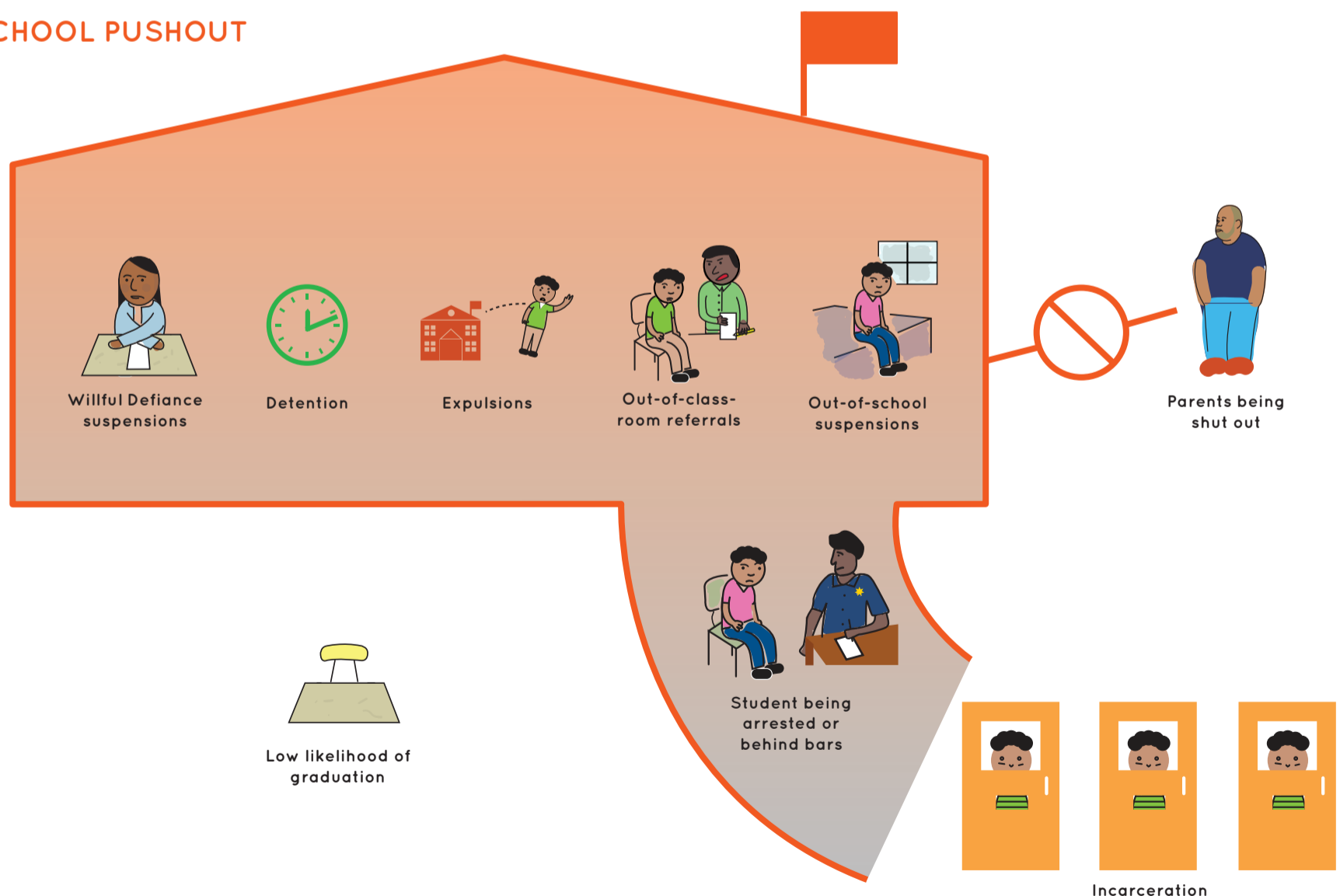
Each suspension in school triples the likelihood of a student not finishing high school. Disengagement from school and a structured environment raises the chances of contact with law enforcement where the racial biases continue, creating the “school to prison pipeline.”

### The impact of suspensions on graduation rates



Source: “The Hidden Costs of California’s Harsh Discipline and the Localized Economic Benefits From Suspending Fewer High School Students” Rumberger & Losen; The Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the UCLA Civil Rights Project (2017).

### SCHOOL PUSHOUT



# DIGNITY AND HUMANITY DENIED

TWO CASE STUDIES BASED ON ACTUAL, REAL-LIFE STORIES COLLECTED FROM SOUTH LA PARENTS

What the schools didn't know and didn't try to find out

## DAMON'S STORY



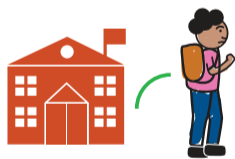
**Damon** is in the **6th grade**. Damon's mother **Kim** has been working hard to get Damon into therapy and any other supportive services for the last year, but she often feels that she is running around to different appointments without any positive results for her son.

Damon has been **struggling** since his **father** was **murdered** a year ago.

One week Kim receives a few **automated phone messages** from school that Damon had been **absent** for his classes after lunch. At first she thinks this must be a mistake, but after the third time it happens she goes to school to talk to an attendance counselor. The counselor explains that Damon has gotten in a few fights with another student and has been in the dean's office after lunch. Kim asks for help in identifying appropriate services and the counselor tells her they could schedule a meeting in a few weeks to look at options.



The next week Kim receives a call from the Dean that Damon has been **suspended** for two days because he got into a more serious fight with the same student.



When Kim picks up Damon, Damon explains that the **school police interviewed him** after the fight. The school police didn't arrest Damon or pursue a case, but now Damon tells Kim that he **doesn't want to go to school** because he's **afraid** he'll get **arrested**.



## EVELYN'S STORY



**Evelyn** is in the **4th grade**. She is generally very quiet in class and avoids participating or speaking during class discussions.

The school is unaware that Evelyn's family recently **became homeless**. Evelyn feels depressed with all of the stress that her family is going through but **doesn't feel comfortable talking about it with anyone at school**.



A few weeks into the school year Mr. Smith, Evelyn's teacher, notices that Evelyn **hadn't participated** in class at all.

One time when he calls on her, she doesn't have her notebook. He warns her that he wants all students prepared to learn. The next week, Evelyn has her head down in class several days out of the week. Mr. Smith asks Evelyn if she is sick and she says that she is fine. Mr. Smith asks her to please sit up and participate in class. The next week it happens again.



The following week Evelyn has her head down again in class and Mr. Smith asks her to participate. She tells him to leave her alone and puts her head back down. Mr. Smith tells Evelyn that she has been given several warnings and issues a teacher **suspension for willful defiance**.



**Q: What could have happened differently?**

# THE PROMISE OF SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT (SWPBIS)

When LAUSD adopted the Discipline Foundation Policy in 2007, the District's stated goal was to "establish a framework for developing, refining and implementing a culture of discipline conducive to learning." The School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) framework provides a systematic and evidence-based three-tiered approach for improving school relationships, student behavior, and learning outcomes:

**Tier 1** interventions are school-wide policies and practices focused on preventing student behaviors that trigger staff responses that push students out of school.

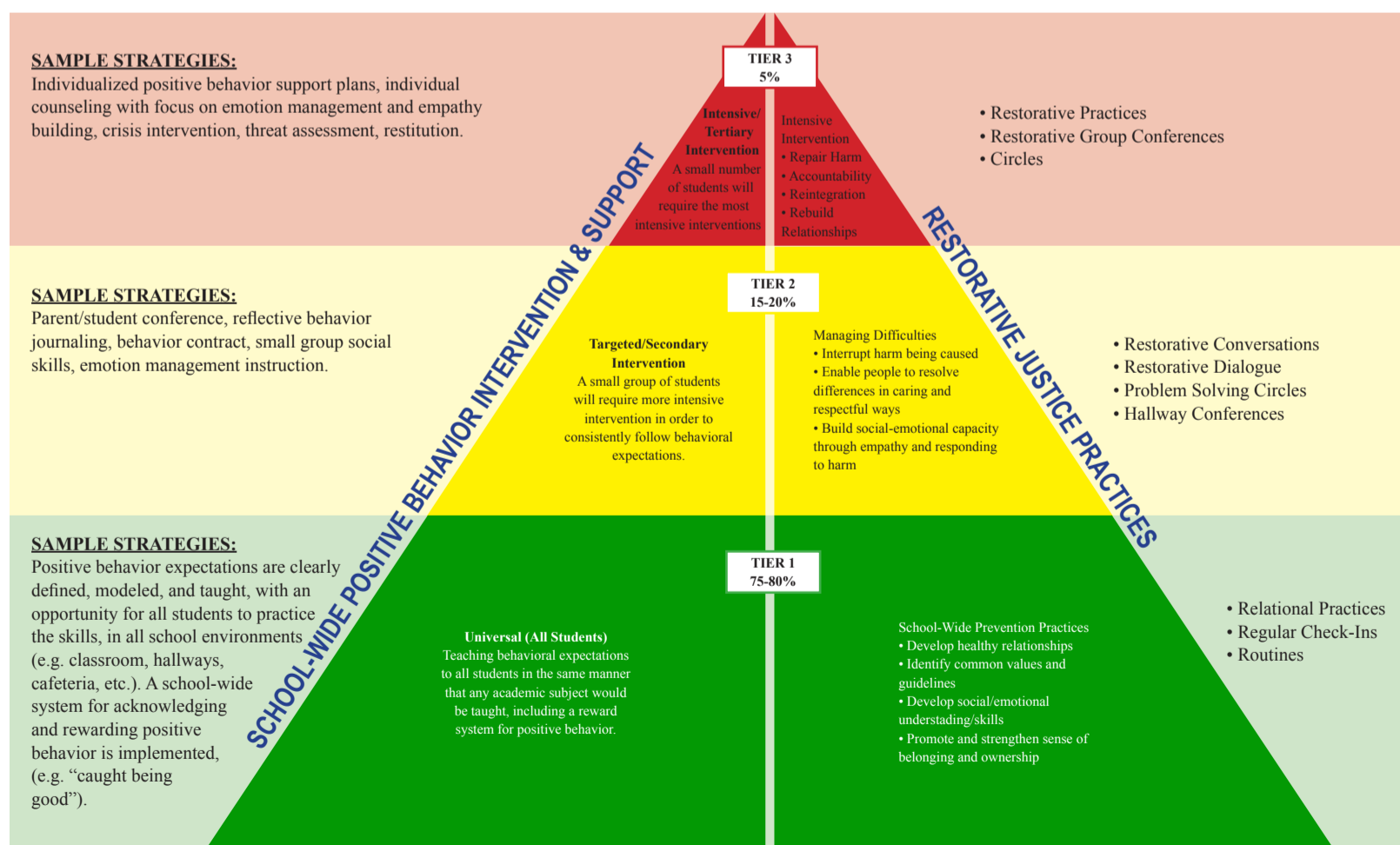
**Tier 2** interventions are focused on groups of students who need additional academic and social support and are designed to address the root causes of behavior and replace punitive responses to those behaviors that push students out of school.

**Tier 3** interventions are tailored for students who need more individualized and intensive academic and social supports, and are designed to help staff respond positively to and address complex student challenges and behaviors that could result in social and educational exclusion -- and school pushout.

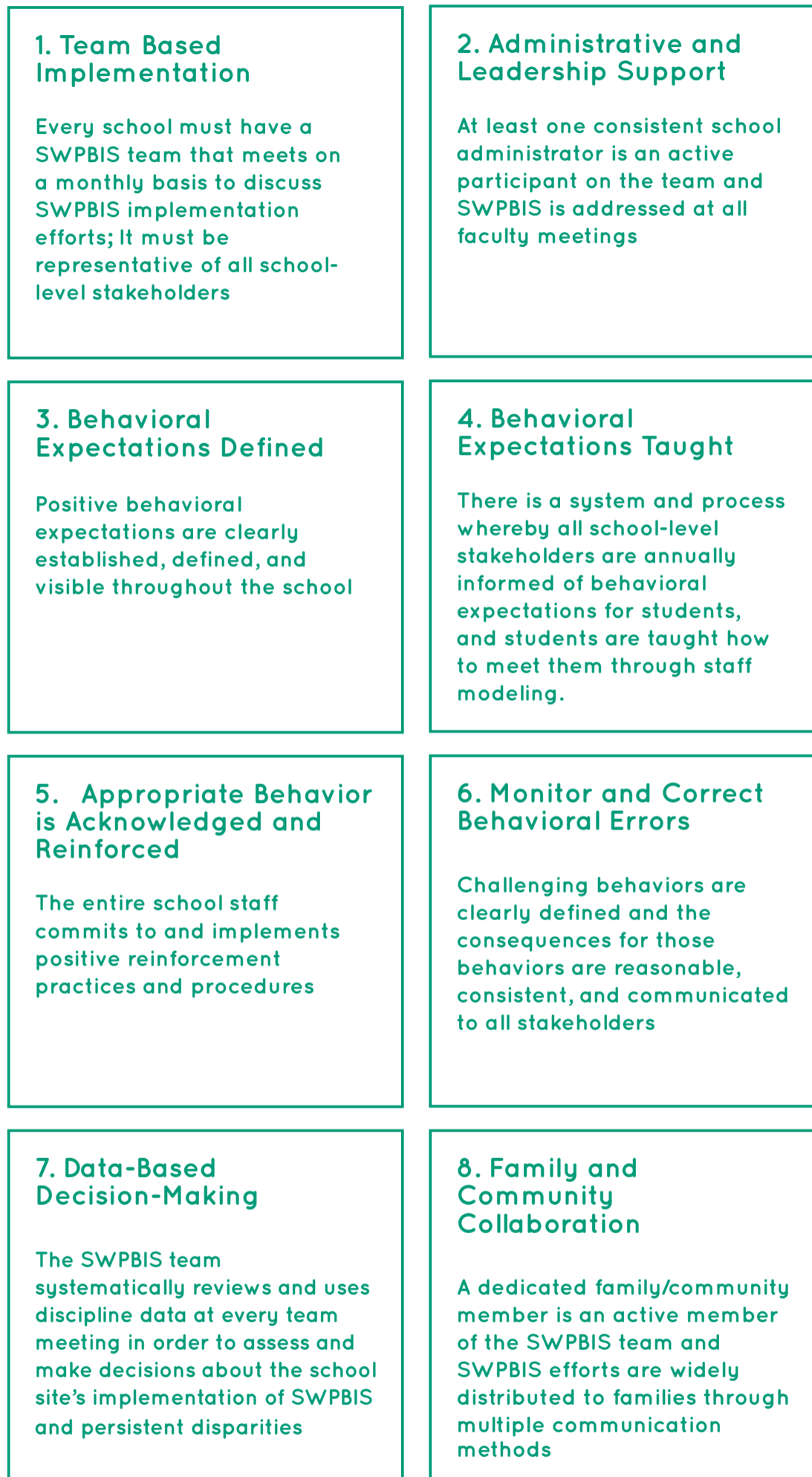
The SWPBIS framework is an "operating system" for the entire school that institutionalizes preventative practices, proactive and appropriate interventions, and the least amount of exclusion possible in order to keep students in school and learning for as long as possible. SWPBIS creates accountability for school discipline outcomes and addresses lingering areas of a school's policies, procedures, and practices that need to be improved in order to support student behavior positively and without discrimination. SWPBIS is more than posting school rules and rewarding "good" behavior.

SWPBIS lifts up the root causes of inequity — looking at who is being disciplined and why, and preventing patterns of discrimination in school discipline.

## LAUSD'S 3-TIERED APPROACH



## EIGHT ESSENTIAL PILLARS OF SWPBIS:



These pillars of SWPBIS implementation provide a universal school-wide reframe for schools to treat South LA parents and students with respect when resolving discipline and behavior matters, while also utilizing proactive alternatives to suspension and other harsh discipline practices that push students out of school.

More importantly, Black and Latino parents envision SWPBIS as a move away from reactionary adult responses to their children's behavior that are based on rash judgments and stereotypes, towards a more humanizing and inclusionary approach to discipline.

# DEFERRED DIGNITY AND UNREALIZED PROMISES: MOBILIZING FOR A SCHOOL CLIMATE BILL OF RIGHTS

Five years after SWPBIS was adopted, CADRE parent leaders found that the District still had more to do to live up to its commitment to institutionalize systemic changes in discipline policies and practices in South LA Schools.

In spite of initial decreases in suspensions, expulsions, and opportunity transfers, parents still found evidence of illegal classroom removals and “off-the-book” suspensions (particularly for Black students) and noted that nearly half (46%) of schools had no

parent involvement on the SWPBIS Team. CADRE parent leaders and allies from the Brothers, Sons, Selves (BSS) Coalition mobilized to demand more District accountability for eradicating the on-campus criminalization of students and eliminating racial disparities in discipline -- and crafted the School Climate Bill of Rights to outline stronger measures for achieving those goals. Passed by the Board of Education in May 2013, the School Climate Bill of Rights established a set of rights for all LAUSD students, summarized below:

## SCHOOL CLIMATE BILL OF RIGHTS



**Alternatives to Suspensions:** Schools should come up with discipline practices that don't remove students from the classroom and learning environment. Removing students from school should be an action of last resort.

**Disruption/Willful Defiance:** Students cannot be removed from school for willful defiance. This includes minor things like wearing a hat or forgetting a notebook.

**Reduce The Presence and Involvement of Law Enforcement In School Disciplinary Matters:** All students have the right to have school disciplinary issues handled by school administrators. In South LA schools in particular, police are called to get involved in minor issues—like showing up late or disrupting class. Involving the police unnecessarily results in students getting tickets, records, and having to go to court. Disciplinary issues on campus should be initially handled by administrators and campus personnel—not the police.

**Restorative Justice:** Restorative justice approaches will be used in all schools as an alternative to traditional school discipline and as an intervention consistent with School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support strategies.

**Free Access To Data on School Discipline:** Although it is widely known that students of color are being unfairly impacted by school discipline policies—the data is not always easy to access. Every student and parent has a right to obtain school-wide monthly discipline, arrest, and citation data. The data should be made available to the public on a regular basis on the District website.

**Appeals To Suspensions and Grievance Process:** Parents and students have the right to disagree with and appeal a suspension, as well as the right to file a formal complaint if SWPBIS is not implemented within 60 days of a request.



## WILLFUL DEFIANCE

California Education Code Section 48900(k) is a zero-tolerance approach to discipline that previously accounted for half of out of school suspensions statewide. Even as recently as the 2014-2015 school year, willful defiance accounted for 31% of all suspensions statewide (CDE DataQuest). Prior to the adoption of the School Climate Bill of Rights, students in LAUSD could be arbitrarily suspended for wearing a hat in class, talking loudly under their breath, or passing notes in class--behaviors that were included under the nebulous and racially biased term of 'willful defiance'. Statewide and nationally, vague offenses like willful defiance have also had the most significant racial disproportionality highlighting the need for serious relationship repair in our schools.

As we've pushed for school culture and discipline reform locally, statewide and nationally, ending suspensions for vague offenses like willful defiance has created a crucial opportunity in fully implementing SWPBIS. Allied educators have shared that when they took willful defiance suspensions off the menu, it forced the hard conversation amongst staff teams about what they were doing to create respectful relationships with students as a preventative measure and what was possible if suspension was no longer an option.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

**Since the passage of the School Climate Bill of Rights, LAUSD has almost exclusively focused on Restorative Justice training and roll out with no new investment in SWPBIS training and support. CADRE sees serious potential in these practices working together to transform school culture.**

**Q: What are restorative justice practices in schools?**

A: Restorative Justice (RJ) practices use community building circles in classrooms, staff meetings, and meetings with families to build authentic relationships and community. Community building circles offer students an important chance to share their voice. When harm occurs at school, community conferences or harm circles bring all impacted parties together to create a solution to address the harm. Rather than a predetermined punishment, agreements that come out of harm circles are collaboratively created to address root causes and create a path to restoring relationships on campus.

**Q: What does RJ have to do with SWPBIS?**

A: SWPBIS provides the framework for respectful and responsible behavior and RJ helps create conditions and relationships that make meaningful SWPBIS implementation possible.

**Q: What's the difference between SWPBIS and RJ?**

A: Whereas SWPBIS is an entire "operating system" that serves as a centrally grounding discipline framework for schools with clear indicators for implementation fidelity, RJ is focused on changing relationships and building a positive school climate. Restorative Justice is an enhancement to and not a replacement for SWPBIS.

**Q: How has RJ been implemented in the District?**

A: While we know that some schools are closely tracking their community building and harm circle implementation, the District has only set forth a training calendar, not data-driven indicators for implementation.

Entering into the 2017-2018 school year:

- LAUSD has a "train the trainer" model with District staff participating in trainings with experts and then creating a staff training team that trains all schools.
- 495 schools have received training both in community building circles and repairing harm. Community building circle and other restorative dialogue trainings happen in first year of implementation and repairing harm training takes place in year two. This year, another 159 schools will begin training. Schools are able to send a small team to district trainings.

**Q: Have RJ Teacher Advisors impacted SWPBIS implementation?**

A: We reviewed our analysis of SWPBIS implementation and overlaid whether schools had an RJ Teacher Advisor to explore whether the RJ Teacher Advisor might also have some impact on SWPBIS implementation.

There was no significant difference in a school's SWPBIS implementation when it had an RJ Teacher Advisor suggesting a clear missed opportunity in integrating best practices and fully utilizing RJ Teacher Advisors to transform school climate and discipline.

18

South LA Schools that were supposed to have implemented RJ by 2017

1

School that had connected RJ practices to SWPBIS implementation

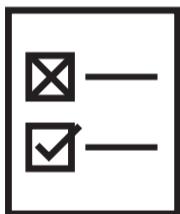
# REVISITING THE PROMISE 10-YEARS LATER

## A PARENT-LED INVESTIGATION OF SWPBIS IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH LA SCHOOLS

In preparation for the 10-Year anniversary of the adoption of School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, CADRE parent leaders engaged in rigorous inquiry to conduct a community-defined and parent-centered analysis of SWPBIS implementation in South LA. Through a series of participatory research activities that took place from June 2016-March 2017, Black and Latino parents came to the table to reflect on a decade of SWPBIS implementation in South LA schools.



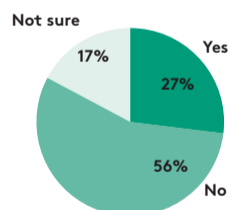
### SURVEYS



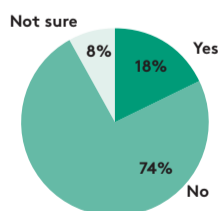
Organizers surveyed 102 parents (57% Latino and 36% African-American) with students attending LAUSD schools in South LA (62 Elementary Schools; 12 Middle Schools; 33 High Schools). The purpose of the survey was to get a

better understanding of the level of parent awareness, engagement and active participation in SWPBIS implementation at their children's school-site.

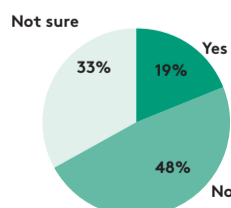
Are you aware of a SWPBIS team at your child's school?



Have you participated in a SWPBIS team meeting at your child's school site?



Are parents aware of the process for submitting a suspension appeal?



### FOCUS GROUPS

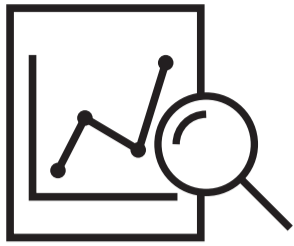
Organizers convened focus groups of Black and Latino parents in South LA to further lift up and illuminate parent voice. Focus group participants were asked to describe their perspectives and experiences on

the ways in which parents are included in the decisions about how discipline and behavior matters are handled.

**"...65% was negative when you have a meeting and if it's something serious it will be two or three of them and just one of you. It's so intimidating."**

**"I don't know how to put this in the words or terms I'm looking for but when I went there for my kids, it's like anything that's going on they look at it as all my fault..."**

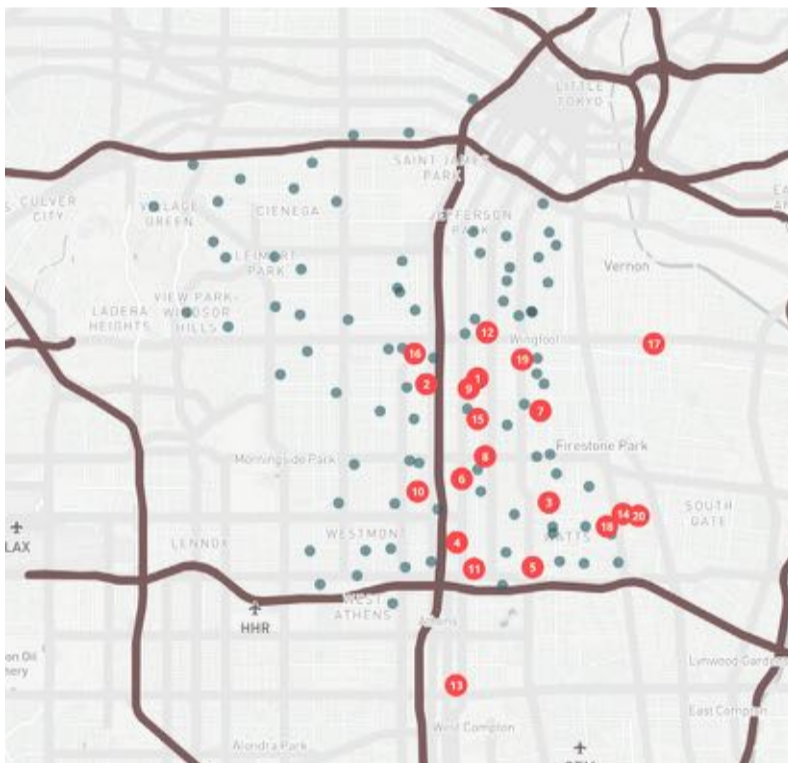
**"I think it would make all the difference if the kids saw that there was a real relationship between the parents and teachers..."**



## DISCIPLINE DATA

Review of District-Wide and CADRE 20 (schools where CADRE has done significant organizing) School Discipline Data – over the course of the SWPBIS Implementation investigation, CADRE parent leaders reviewed, analyzed and reflected on the following sets of data provided by the District:

- **Suspension data disaggregated by race, gender and school-level (elementary, middle and high school) for the 2015-2016 school year**
- **Alternatives to suspension discipline referrals at South LA schools for the period of January – December 2015**
- **Los Angeles Unified School Police Department (LASPD) Calls for Service at South LA schools for the 2015-2016 school year**
- **Implementation and utilization of Restorative Justice as an alternative to suspension in South LA schools for the 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years**



A map of the over 100 schools CADRE looked at including the CADRE 20 – schools where CADRE has significant organizing presence.

### Elementary School

1. 66th Street
2. 68th Street
3. 96th Street
4. 107th Street
5. 112th Street
6. Knox
7. Parmalee
8. South Park

### Middle School

9. Bethune
10. Bret Harte
11. Gompers
12. Los Angeles Academy
13. Markham
14. Southeast

### High School

15. Fremont
16. Augustus Hawkins
17. Huntington Park
18. Jordan
19. Rivera Learning Center
20. Southeast



## SWPBIS IMPLEMENTATION DATA

On behalf of CADRE parent leaders, Public Counsel submitted a Public Records Act Request (PRA) Relating to Discipline Foundation Policy (BUL-6231) or School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) Implementation in Local Districts South, West and Central. LAUSD was asked to provide SWPBIS Implementation Binders for 45 schools in Local District South, 37 schools in Local District West, 25 schools in Local District Central, and 4 schools in Local District East. Of the 111 schools we requested documentation from, we received documents from 108 schools.

LAUSD provided Public Counsel with SWPBIS Implementation Binders for the period covering January – December 2015. The SWPBIS Implementation Binders included what each school submitted as their documentation and evidence of SWPBIS Implementation in the following transformative areas:

### Team-Based Implementation

- Did the school-site provide evidence that the SWPBIS Team was comprised of the Principal, a General Education Teacher, a Special Education Teacher, a Classified Employee Representative, a Support Staff Representative, a Parent Representative and a Student Representative?
- Did the school-site provide evidence that the SWPBIS Implementation Team consistently meets on a monthly basis?
- Did the school-site provide evidence that SWPBIS Team meeting agendas, minutes, sign-in sheets, decisions and action steps are documented in writing?

### Data-Based Decision Making

- Did the school-site provide evidence of having a tiered disciplinary intervention plan?
- Did the school-site provide evidence that comprehensive school-level data is reviewed and discussed at every SWPBIS Implementation Team meeting?
- Did the school-site provide evidence that school-level discipline data is shared with the entire school staff on a regular basis?

### Parent and Family Collaboration

- Did the school-site provide evidence that there are designated parent representatives on the SWPBIS Implementation Team that participate on a consistent basis?
- Did the school-site provide evidence that parents are engaged in school-wide SWPBIS implementation efforts?
- Did the school-site provide evidence that SWPBIS Implementation is an agenda item at school-site parent meetings?
- Did the school-site provide evidence that SWPBIS implementation efforts are communicated to parents in a variety of ways (e.g. newsletters, robo-calls, parent center, back-to-school nights)?

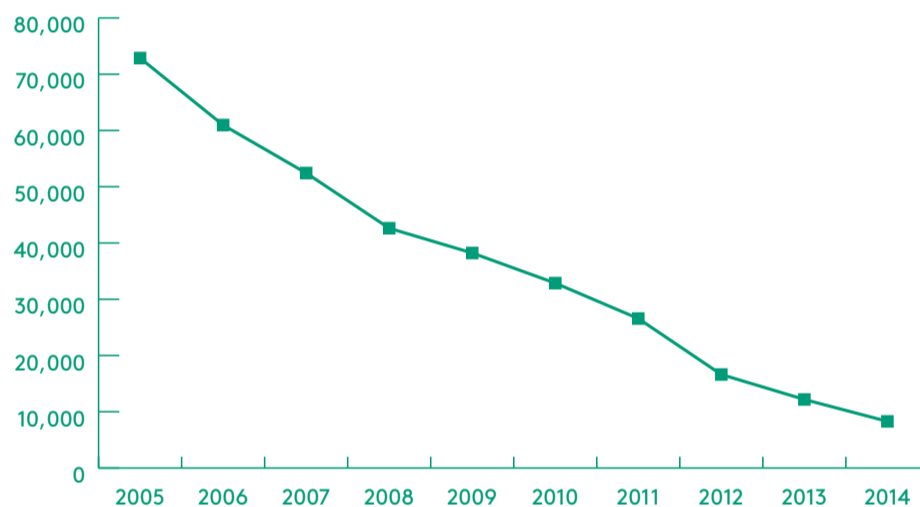
FROM PROMISE TO PERIL: A PARENT-LED INVESTIGATION OF  
SWPBIS IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH LA SCHOOLS

# FINDINGS

## Q: Has LAUSD reduced its reliance on harsh discipline practices?

### #1 One Fulfilled Promise: Since the implementation of SWPBIS, there has been a significant decrease in suspensions both District-Wide and in South LA Schools

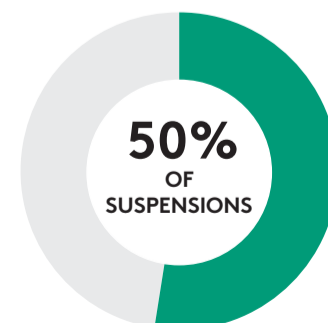
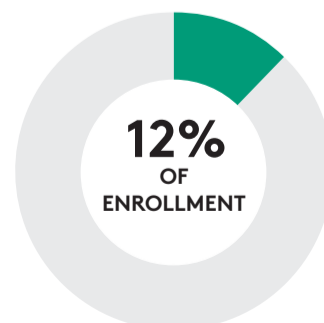
If you look at the whole district, **suspensions** have declined dramatically, from a high of nearly **73,000** in 2005 to just **8,000** in 2014.



## Q: Have racial, gendered and other discipline disparities been eliminated in South LA schools?

### #2 Black students continue to be disproportionately suspended at higher rates than their peers

At CADRE 20 schools, while **Black** students make up just **12%** of student enrollment, they represent **50%** of the students suspended.



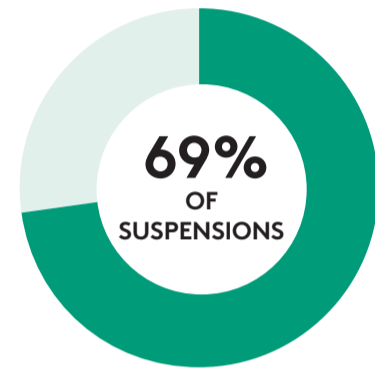
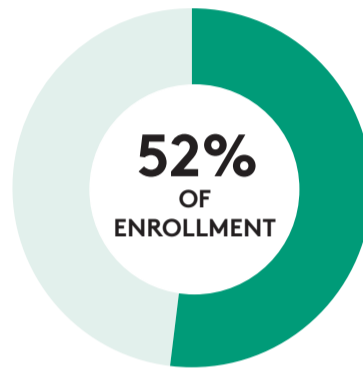
At CADRE 20 schools, **Black** students are suspended at a rate that is **7.5** times that of their white or latino peers.

7.5



### #3 Boys also continue to be disproportionately suspended at higher rates

At CADRE 20 schools, **Boys** make up just **52%** of school enrollment but **69%** of students suspended.



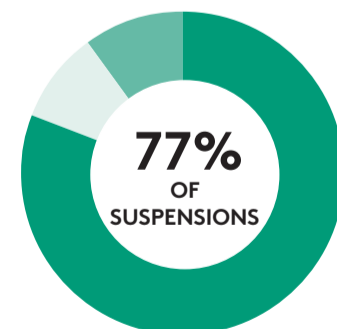
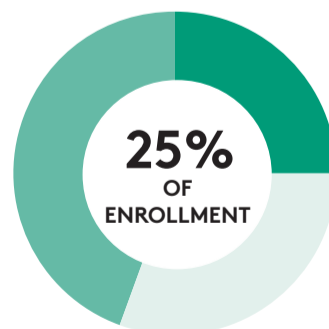
At CADRE 20 schools, **Boys** are suspended at a rate that is **2.1** times that of girls.

2.1



### #4 The full force and acceleration of school pushout happens in middle school

At CADRE 20 schools, **Middle school students** make up just **25%** of school enrollment but make up **77%** of suspensions.



At CADRE 20 schools, **Middle schoolers** are suspended at a rate that is **9.7** times higher than elementary school and high school students.

9.7



# Q: Has SWPBIS been implemented with rigor and fidelity in South LA schools?

## #5 SWPBIS has not been implemented with rigor and fidelity in South LA schools

Rigor and Fidelity to SWPBIS Implementation: CADRE Parent Legend



**EXCELLENT Implementation**

The Evidence Binder included overwhelming evidence/documentation demonstrating that the full range of SWPBIS practices, strategies and activities systematically implemented with active, meaningful, and consistent participation from parents

**PROMISING Implementation**

The Evidence Binder provided substantial evidence or documentation demonstrating that some or many SWPBIS practices, strategies, and activities are implemented with active, meaningful, and consistent participation and input from parents

**LIMITED Implementation**

The Evidence Binder provided limited or inconsistent evidence or documentation to validate that SWPBIS practices, strategies, or activities are implemented, either with or without participation and input from parents

**INSUFFICIENT Implementation**

The Evidence Binder provided virtually no evidence or documentation to verify that SWPBIS practices, strategies, or activities are implemented, either with or without participation and input from parents



**SOUTH LA SCHOOLS**

**75%**

Limited or Insufficient



**93%**

Limited or Insufficient



**94%**

Limited or Insufficient



**CADRE SCHOOLS**

**63%**

Limited or Insufficient



**73%**

Limited or Insufficient



**62%**

Limited or Insufficient



# REIMAGINING PARENT PARTICIPATION IN SWPBIS: REVISITING THE STORIES OF DAMON AND EVELYN

## Q: What would have happened to Evelyn and Damon if SWPBIS had been used to fully partner with parents at their schools?

LAUSD's Tiers of intervention as reimagined by CADRE

### DAMON'S STORY



Damon is in the **6th grade**. Damon's mother Kim has been working hard to get Damon into therapy and any other supportive services for the last year, but she often feels that she is running around to different appointments without any positive result for her son.

**TIER 1**  
Universal/  
Prevention

Damon's advisory teacher makes calls to all parents and discusses if there are important things all teachers should know about students. Kim shares her concerns and advisory teacher connects her with a counselor so they can create a plan to secure appropriate services and set up plans with teachers if there are challenges.

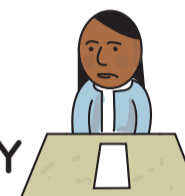
**TIER 2**  
Targeted

Before services have been worked out, Damon gets into fight with another student. Counselor immediately calls Kim and asks her to come to school so they can meet with teacher and Damon. Teacher and Counselor ask Kim and Damon to come up with a consequence. Kim and Damon decide that Damon will stay after school the next day to help the teacher with class clean up. Kim and Damon dialogue directly with other student and family to address cause of fight.

**TIER 3**  
Intensive

Kim and Counselor review communication between all teachers and create check-in plans with trusted staff so that Damon has several outlets of support if he's having a hard day. Kim and staff make plan that staff will first call Kim and work to resolve the issue together so that law enforcement never has to be called.

### EVELYN'S STORY



Evelyn is in the **4th grade**. She is generally very quiet in class and avoids participating or speaking during class discussions.

Evelyn's teacher makes calls to all parents at the beginning of the year finds out the best way to reach parents and confirm what friend or relative can be back up support if parent is unreachable. Evelyn's mother doesn't feel comfortable sharing that the family is homeless but does share several of Evelyn's strengths (she's a talented artist) and contact info for other support people in Evelyn's family.

When Evelyn is first sent to office and counselor confirms that she doesn't need nurse, counselor asks Evelyn what is going on. Evelyn is reluctant to share, so counselor asks Evelyn if there's another teacher at school who she trusts and would be willing to talk to about any concerns. Evelyn says she'd love to talk to her second grade teacher and when she does, she shares what's been happening with her family. Evelyn's second grade teacher calls her mom and makes a plan to all meet to identify supportive services for family and make a plan if Evelyn is having a hard day or hasn't slept well the night before. Evelyn's current teacher participates in the plan.

Evelyn's mother is invited to join SWPBIS team and work with other parents whose children are having challenges at school and who have had challenges with staff.

# THE THREE TIERS OF SWPBIS: AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF PARENT PARTICIPATION



## TIER 3 Intensive

- Scale up RJ process if there are ongoing challenges of relationships on campus and ensure those impacted create resolution agreements (no pre-determined consequences).
- In lieu of traditional expulsion recommendations/referral to law enforcement, collaborative team plans created with families to address root causes of behavior.
- Parent prevention of law enforcement involvement in school discipline.
- Parents evaluate wraparound services referrals and threat assessments.

## TIER 2 Targeted

- Parents are trained to help facilitate/lead Restorative Justice circles when there are conflicts on campus. Parent leaders are utilized in informal mediation/conflict resolution opportunities. Parents able to identify staff who need support and implement parent-to-parent and parent-to-teacher coaching.
- In SWPBIS team meetings, parents are able to prevent/interrupt harm.
- Parents are able to access/analyze data with training.
- Parents monitor and review school disciplinary incidents, especially those where law enforcement is involved in incident.
- Restorative Justice harm circles used to repair any harm in community: between staff and students, staff/staff, staff/parents, parents/parents. The entire school community understands that the RJ process is accessible to them.

## TIER 1 Universal/ Prevention

- Parents co-facilitate/lead school climate and culture work through the SWPBIS team. In schools with Black and Latino student populations, all SWPBIS teams have both Black and Latino parents on teams.
- SWPBIS team reviews Equity and Health indicators.
- Any parents whose students experience disciplinary consequences (ODRs, suspensions, any law enforcement referral) invited to participate in team.
- Simultaneous interpretation at all SWPBIS team meetings and related trainings.
- Parent trainings in implicit bias, SWPBIS, Restorative Justice, Social-Emotional Learning, trauma-informed practices.
- Parent volunteer/service opportunities on campus offer meaningful opportunities for leadership, development of expertise, and opportunity to inform school practices.
- Parent-to-Parent dialogues and Parent-Staff dialogues part of everyday practice at schools.
- Parents can opt-in to universal testing for special needs and gifted and talented programs.



# A CULTURE OF DIGNITY IN SOUTH LA SCHOOLS

CADRE parent leaders monitor SWPBIS implementation in South LA schools because we are interested in systemic change and improving schools' relationship to and understanding of families. This means: 1) POWER DYNAMICS are equalized in South LA school climates so that SWPBIS is

the baseline operating norm of all schools regardless of who is principal and 2) ACCOUNTABILITY is based on data over time that shows where improvements must be made so that discrimination does not happen, families are respected and served, and equity has a chance.

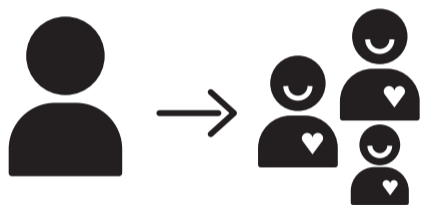


# LOVING THE PARENTS

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIGNITY AND JUSTICE IN SOUTH LA SCHOOLS

South LA parents envision schools that demonstrate dignity and respect for all parents and students; schools that love their students by also loving the parents of those students; schools that recognize parents as community assets, leaders for social change, and the true owners of public education; schools that understand that true reform cannot begin until parents are invited and allowed to

have a seat at the decision-making table—and that truly transforming schools requires equal power sharing with parents who hold schools accountable for stemming social and racial injustice at every turn. From the living room to the boardroom, South LA parents continue to push for the human right to dignity, education, inclusion, and participation and challenge LAUSD to:



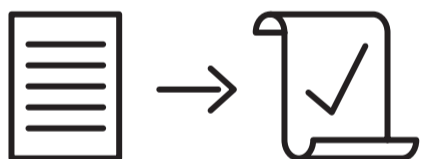
### Humanize Parents & Parenting

Reject the historical negative bias of Black and Latino parents at the root of negative perceptions of our children



### End Discipline Disparities

Go beyond and leverage the SWPBIS mandate to create system-changing responses to eradicate: Race Based Discipline Disparities, Gender Based Discipline Disparities and Grade Level Based Discipline Disparities



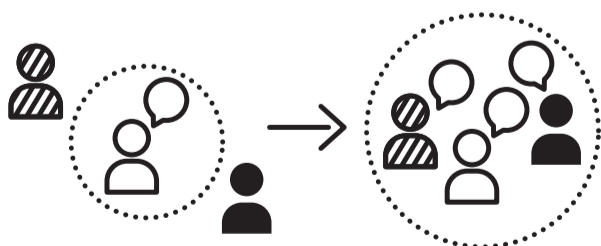
### Make Basic Parent Rights Real

Overcome the race-based and cultural biases preventing Black and Latino parents' knowledge and experience from being central to South LA schools' problem-solving



### Redesign South LA School Culture

Parent participation is centered in the implementation of SWPBIS in order to drive the transformative, humanizing, and racial justice potential of SWPBIS



### Live Up to the Parent Inclusion Mandate

Change practices of all SWPBIS Teams at all South LA schools so that Black and Latino parents are respectfully and culturally part of implementation

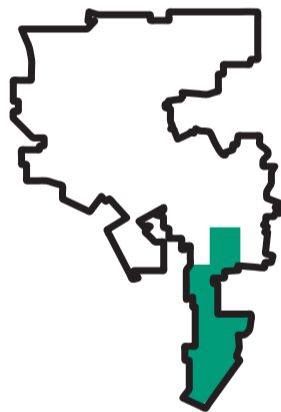
# TO SUPPORT THE KIDS

## DEMAND IMMEDIATE INVESTMENT IN POWERFUL PARENT PARTICIPATION



### SCHOOL-SITE LEVEL

Monthly SWPBIS Team Meetings at all South LA schools transformed into data-based oversight, accountability, and restorative justice-based solution taskforces with both Black and Latino parent leadership that is trained and inclusive of families who have experienced harsh and discriminatory discipline despite SWPBIS and the School Climate Bill of Rights being LAUSD policy



### LOCAL DISTRICT LEVEL

Quarterly Local District data-based community hearings and restorative circles on SWPBIS implementation, discipline disparities, and school climate that are accessible to parents and students experiencing harsh and discriminatory discipline, and the community advocates who are supporting them



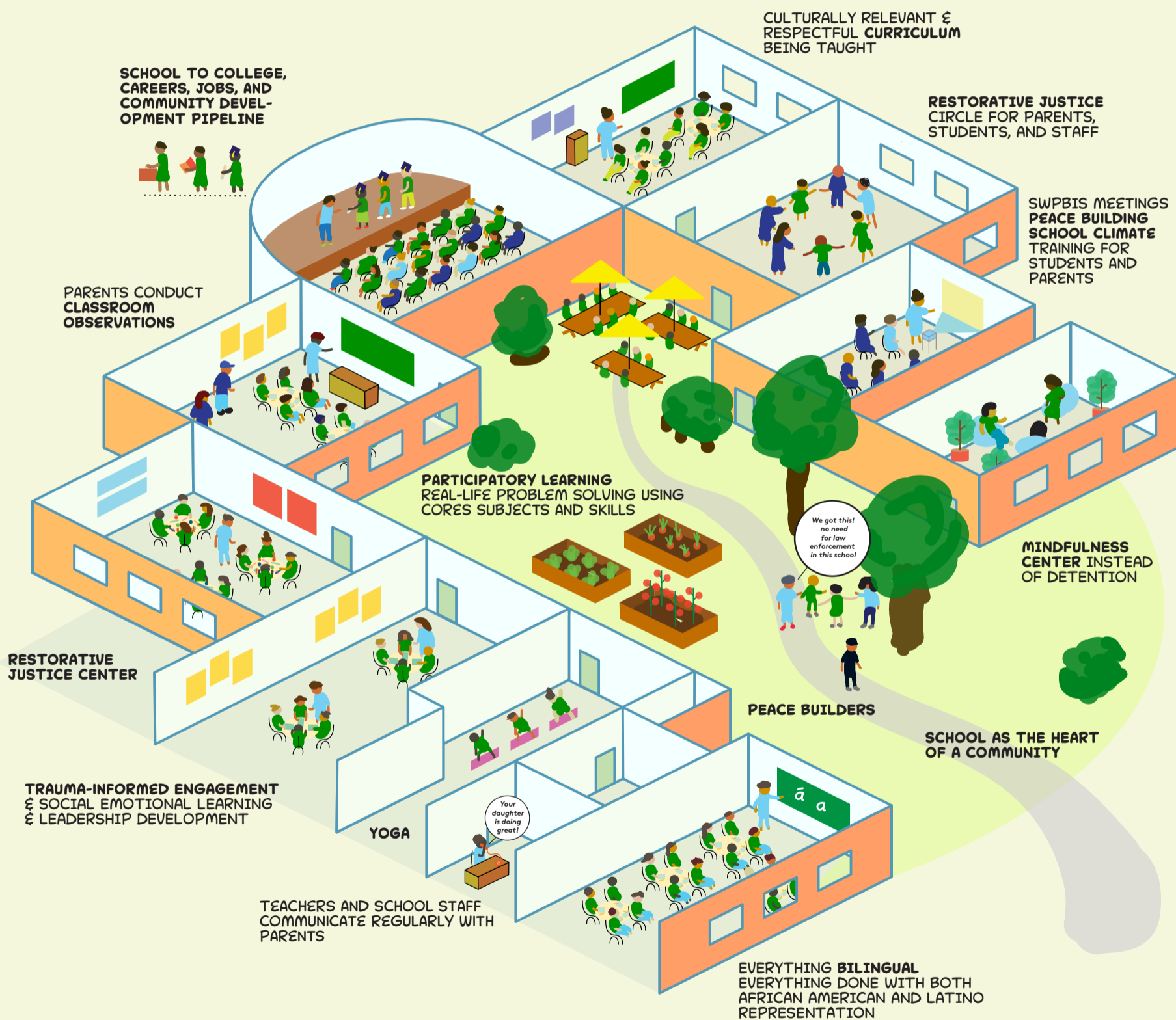
### DISTRICT LEVEL

Semi-annual District-wide data-based hearing on SWPBIS implementation, discipline disparities, and school climate that is accessible to parents and students and the community advocates who support them

Training and coaching for all stakeholder groups listed with roles and responsibilities in the SWPBIS Discipline Foundation Policy on reducing race, gender, and grade-level based discipline disparities comprehensively across the entire learning environment and by applying practice, evaluation, and course correction throughout the academic year

# THE FUTURE OF SOUTH LA SCHOOL CULTURE:

PARENTS ARE RESPECTED AND INVITED IN TO HELP CREATE SOLUTIONS



# CALL TO ACTION

*We have shared what we believe is a path towards dignity and justice in our schools.*

*Our monitoring questions show our persistence.*

*Our recommendations reflect our values.*

*Our demands point to where we believe the greatest shifts in implementation of SWPBIS can happen — including PARENTS, hearing from them what is still not working and which biases are still not being addressed, and working in solidarity to eliminate race, gender, and grade level based discipline disparities.*

*This is restorative. Repairing past harms in school discipline. Preventing new ones.*

*One thing is clear: transformation and shifting power will be necessary. There is a first-step and role for everyone who lives, grows up, raises children, teaches, operates schools, organizes, makes decisions and tells stories affecting families in South LA, including but not limited to:*

**PARENTS/COMMUNITY RESIDENTS:** Expect and request information about your school's efforts to improve school climate, including discipline data, your own child's discipline record, and whether there are race, gender, or grade-level disparities. Become informed and empowered about your rights, how other parents are organizing in your community to create dignified and just climates in schools, and the value of being in solidarity with other parents and with our most marginalized young people. Have courageous conversations and listen with empathy to build with other parents. Believe you have knowledge to share that can help solve problems.

**STUDENTS IN SCHOOL OR OUT OF SCHOOL/PUSHED OUT:** Expect and request information about your school's efforts to improve school climate, including discipline data, your own discipline record, and whether there are race, gender, or grade-level disparities. Become empowered about your rights, how other students are organizing in your community to create dignified and just climates in schools, and the value of being in solidarity with other youth and parents. Have courageous conversations and listen with empathy to build with other youth, parents, and elders. Believe you have knowledge to share that can help solve problems.

**EDUCATORS:** Expect and request information about your school's efforts to improve school climate, including discipline data, your student discipline records, and whether there are race, gender, or grade-level disparities. Become empowered about your opportunities to implement positive, restorative, non-punitive, non-exclusionary classroom management and behavior support. Practice solidarity with parents. Find out parents' stories before you rush to judgement. Welcome parents' critical inquiry rather than be defensive to it. Examine and interrupt your implicit and explicit biases. Share decision-making about addressing student behaviors with parents so that authentic parent partnerships are possible.

**SCHOOL & LOCAL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS/NON-PROFIT SCHOOL OPERATORS:** Hold your SWPBIS Team meetings monthly. Open them up to all parents. Review discipline data each month. Be transparent about challenges, persistent disparities, and who is still not benefiting from SWPBIS and Restorative Justice. Consider SWPBIS meetings to be an opportunity to build powerful relationships with your most marginalized families. Go beyond reducing suspensions. Ensure that students are not pushed out in other ways. Practice solidarity with parents, and expect your staff to do so as well. Welcome parents' critical

inquiry rather than be defensive to it. Examine and interrupt your implicit and explicit biases. Share decision-making about addressing student behaviors with parents so that authentic parent partnerships are possible.

**PARAPROFESSIONALS:** Expect and request information about your school's efforts to improve school climate, including discipline data, and whether there are race, gender, or grade-level disparities. Become empowered about your opportunities to implement positive, restorative, non-punitive, non-exclusionary paraprofessional assessments and services. Practice solidarity with parents. Find out parents' stories before you rush to judgement. Welcome parents' critical inquiry rather than be defensive to it. Examine and interrupt your implicit and explicit biases. Share decision-making about addressing student behaviors with parents so that authentic parent partnerships are possible.

**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS/POLICY MAKERS:** Consider SWPBIS hearings to be an opportunity to build powerful relationships with your most marginalized families. Prioritize the hearings about SWPBIS implementation - make them twice a year instead of only once a year. Invite parents, students, pushed out youth, and community groups to present their perspectives on implementation. Go beyond celebrating reductions in suspensions. Ensure that students are not pushed out in other ways. Use your leverage to address SWPBIS implementation gaps. Include and budget for oversight and monitoring of SWPBIS implementation. Examine and interrupt your implicit and explicit biases.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS/ADVOCATES:** Learn about how you can intersect with the work and organizing to transform school climates to address many of the same disparities for our most marginalized families. Connect the school-to-prison pipeline to your work so as to consider and prevent unintended consequences. Recognize the need to practice solidarity with parents if you do not already.

**MEDIA:** Be respectful in your reporting about South LA families. Include parents' stories of not just individual resilience, but collective organizing and collaboration between parents. Examine sensationalism that pits parents against each other, especially positive versus negative stereotypes, and African American versus Latino/a/x dynamics that only fuel community discord and make it more difficult for parents to be involved in their schools and work with other parents.

# SOURCES FOR THE REPORT

The journey of our parent-led and participatory analysis and monitoring, in close partnership with researchers and attorneys, began in 2003 — this report is not without precedent. We invite you to see in more detail how we got here, as well as reference the LAUSD policy documents referred to in this report.

## Previous CADRE Reports & Publications

(all available at <http://www.cadre-la.org/core/our-library>)

- “We Interrupt This Crisis — With Our Side of the Story: Relationships between South Los Angeles Parents and Schools”, October 2004
- “Bringing a Human Rights Vision to Public Schools: A Training Manual for Organizers”, Spring 2007
- “A Parent-Led Victory in the Fight to End Pushout in Los Angeles Schools”, Summer 2007
- “Redefining Dignity in Our Schools: A Shadow Report on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) Implementation in South Los Angeles, 2007 – 2010”, June 2010 – *FULL LENGTH REPORT (includes data tables)*
- “Redefining Dignity in Our Schools: A Shadow Report on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) Implementation in South Los Angeles, 2007 – 2010”, June 2010 – *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*
- “Demanding Dignity in Our Schools: Calling for Full Implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in LAUSD South LA Schools - Review of LAUSD Discipline Data 2009-10 through 2011-12 school years and South LA Schools SWPBS Implementation in the 2011-12 school year”, November 2012
- “#Meet the Moment - An Appreciative Community Engagement and Inquiry to Eradicate Discipline Disparities in South Los Angeles Schools” (a PASSAGE-LA project with the Annenberg Institute for School Reform), October 2015

## Los Angeles Unified School District Documents

- “Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Support”, Bulletin 3638.0, March 27, 2007 (replaced with Bulletin 6231 on February 14, 2014 - please see below; this 2007 version is available at [http://www.cadre-la.org/core/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/3603\\_DisciplineFoundationPolicy\\_FINAL022207.pdf](http://www.cadre-la.org/core/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/3603_DisciplineFoundationPolicy_FINAL022207.pdf))
- Item 59 - Ms. Garcia - “2013 School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights” Resolution Adopted as Amended, Regular Meeting Stamped Order of Business, May 14, 2013, Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District (can be found via search at <http://laschoolboard.org/ArchiveMaterials>)
- School Climate Bill of Rights-Elementary (can be found at <https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/12813>)
- School Climate Bill of Rights-Secondary (can be found at <https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/12814>)
- “Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support”, Bulletin 6231.0, February 14, 2014, (can be found at <https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/11926>)

## References

- “Building a Multi-Ethnic, Inclusive & Antiracist Organization-Tools for Liberation Packet for Anti-Racist Activists, Allies, & Critical Thinkers” Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence (2005),
- “The Hidden Costs of California’s Harsh Discipline and the Localized Economic Benefits From Suspending Fewer High School Students” Rumberger & Losen; The Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the UCLA Civil Rights Project (2017).

## Information Analyzed for This Report

- Public Records Act (PRA) Request submitted March 2016 and data received on a rolling basis August-October 2016, regarding evidence of implementation from 111 schools regarding key categories of SWPBS from January to December 2015:
  - Evidence of Data-based decision making: copies of school-level data shared at SWPBS meetings and documentation of that data reviewed by team members and used to inform disciplinary interventions and revise implementation efforts, copy of school-site’s tiered disciplinary intervention plan/matrix, MISIS interventions by school-site
  - Evidence that parents are active participants in SWPBS teams: evidence of parent participation, evidence of action steps by team members, including parents, in between meetings, evidence of SWPBS implementation being shared in all school-site meetings convened by and for parents, evidence that SWPBS efforts are communicated to families through multiple venues
  - Evidence of team based implementation: information that all stakeholders are part of SWPBS team, documentation of regular monthly meetings, documentation that each team member knows their role and responsibility on the team, agenda, minutes, sign-in sheets, and action plans memorialized from each meeting
- LASPD Calls for Service for 2015-2016 school year received from LASPD
- Parent Perception Surveys of SWPBS implementation from 102 parent respondents, representing 107 South LA schools, 57% Latino, 36% Black, 6% Other, 1% Asian Pacific Islander (completed October-December 2016)
- Parent Focus Group regarding schools’ perceptions of parents, fidelity to the School Climate Bill of Rights, and parent inclusion in discipline and behavior matters (November 2016)
- Longitudinal discipline data:
  - District wide discipline data pulled from both CDE DataQuest and LAUSD PRA responses. CDE hasn’t released most recent years of discipline data so it is not included in this report
  - CADRE20 (20 schools in which CADRE parents are active) suspension data reviewed from 2005-06 to 2015-2016 (most recent year received through LAUSD PRA Responses)
  - MISIS intervention data for 111 schools January-December 2015
  - Student-level discipline data, fully redacted, for CADRE20 schools for 2015-2016 (received through LAUSD PRA Response)
- Restorative Justice implementation data (also received through LAUSD PRA Response):
  - Information regarding whether school has an RJ Teacher Adviser
  - Number of teachers trained, number of teachers implementing community building circles and how often circles occur per week
  - Number of harm circles held and whether they were held as an alternative to suspension
  - Documentation of Restorative Practices training offered to parents, and all documentation regarding including parents in RJ implementation at school site

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Carlene Davis** for incredible stewardship, deep listening, and nimble, graceful facilitation in bringing out the wisdom of CADRE parent leaders, and working closely with CADRE and Public Counsel staff to build our collective capacity throughout the development of this report.

**The CADRE Parent Leaders on Shadow Report Development Committee** for tirelessly dedicating 6-8 hours every month for over 1 1/2 years to think critically, take this stand, and courageously tell a different story with this report:

Leticia Arevalo  
Roslyn Broadnax  
Enrique Casas  
Emilia Elias  
Nancy Flores  
Yvonne Green  
Maria Gurubel  
Ana Hernandez  
Genesis Herrera  
Latanya Hull  
Maria Jurado  
Edward Madison  
Silvia Mendez  
Maria Moreno  
Ester Ordonez  
Blanca Quintuña  
Elizabeth Rabadon  
Olga Ramirez  
Anton Rankin  
Martie Reddic  
RL Roberts

**CADRE Staff** for carrying on the legacy of CADRE's commitment to supporting South LA parents as leaders: Maisie Chin, Executive Director/Co-Founder; Carlos Valle, Senior Associate Director; Maria Villamil, Director of Organizing & Practice; Edgar Ibarria, Lead Organizer; Alonzo Warren, Community Organizer; and Barbara Penn, Childcare Provider.

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## ABOUT CADRE

Community Asset Development Re-defining Education (CADRE) is an independent, community-based, organizing and social justice-driven parent membership organization in South Los Angeles founded in 2001. CADRE is led by Black/African American and Latino parents and caregivers whose children attend local schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). We build power to win systemic change – through new policies and challenging existing ones as part of a movement towards educational and racial justice.

Our mission is to solidify and advance parent leadership to ensure that all children are rightfully educated regardless of where they live. CADRE challenges schools' beliefs and practices that criminalize children and parents and violate their human rights to a quality education, dignity,

and participation in our current public education system.

We reach for our mission through parent organizing. For CADRE, parent organizing includes: building a membership base and core leaders; leadership development and capacity building; political education; an on-going systemic change campaign based on parent monitoring and holding schools accountable for human and civil rights; participatory action research; individual advocacy; working in coalitions and building a movement; and last but not least, healing, transformation, and building collective solidarity among parents. All of this is done with the deep participation of our parent leaders through the centering of their lives as parents of color, raising families of color, in historically disenfranchised South LA.

We have matured from our South LA living-room roots to become a trusted parent organization locally, statewide, and nationally. Through our Human Right to Education Campaign, CADRE has won policy changes in 2007, 2013, and 2014 that have led to historic reductions in suspensions in LAUSD and to new approaches to positive, restorative school discipline and climate. CADRE also co-founded the national Dignity in Schools Campaign, along with its Los Angeles and California-based chapters.

Our vision is that schools will respect and cultivate the humanity, collective spirit and resilience of Black and Latino families, and contribute to a shared vision of South LA as a unified community that has power and self-determination.

[www.cadre-la.org](http://www.cadre-la.org)



## ABOUT PUBLIC COUNSEL LAW CENTER

Public Counsel is proud to be the country's largest pro bono law firm. Our staff work closely with volunteer attorneys and law students to assist over 30,000 children, youth, families, and community organizations every year. Founded in 1970, Public Counsel is the public interest law firm of the LA County and Beverly Hills Bar Associations as well as the Southern California affiliate of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

Public Counsel's Statewide Education Rights Project has partnered with CADRE since 2008. Our project believes that racial equity in our schools will only be achieved if communities most impacted by educational injustice lead radical, necessary reform. We partner with community organizations across the state to provide legal support to local and statewide campaigns to transform school climate and discipline. We leverage

these policy efforts, impact litigation and targeted direct service representation to disrupt the school to prison pipeline and ensure that students of color and their parents are offered opportunities to thrive and partner in schools, rather than being pushed out and unfairly criminalized.

[www.fixschooldiscipline.org](http://www.fixschooldiscipline.org)  
[www.publiccounsel.org](http://www.publiccounsel.org)