



Support HB4208: School Discipline Reform Breaking the school to prison pipeline

Current school discipline too often relies on out of school suspensions, expulsions, and the utilization of law enforcement personnel for routine disciplinary matters. These policies disproportionately impact students of color without contributing to safety or school productivity.

This bill seeks to achieve two goals:

1. Require districts with the highest rates of suspensions, expulsions, or impact on students of color to submit and report progress on reduction plans to the State Board of Education.
2. Incentivize a reduced reliance on law enforcement by creating a grant program that matches dollars shifted from school law enforcement personnel to other approaches including increased clinicians and restorative justice programs.

What does the bill specify?

- **Plans for change:** Schools falling in the top 20% for 3 consecutive years for one or more of 3 metrics already in statute:
 - Ratio of out of school suspensions and expulsions to total enrollment.
 - Ratio of students of color involved in suspensions and expulsions compared to their population.

These schools must create a plan to reduce those metrics and report annually to the State Board of Education on progress until no longer in the top 20% for 3 consecutive years.

- **Grant program:** Empowers the State Board of Education to create a grant program, subject to appropriations, to which districts may apply for matching funds transferred from law enforcement personnel to promising alternative practices including: increased clinicians, staff training, and/or wrap around services. In accepting applications the State Board of Education will create a rating for each district consisting of the following:
 - Arrest rates, 40%
 - Ratio of students to law enforcement personnel, 20%
 - Strength of proposal, 40%

Why is this important?

- **An issue of civil rights:** Current policy disproportionately impacts students of color and creates a cycle of incarceration which instead of achieving the goal of creating equality through education creates pervasive and pernicious negative outcomes.
- **Research based:** By preferencing those programs which have shown promise in creating more effective outcomes this bill creates the best chance for real change.
- **District driven:** Rather than creating a one-size-fits-all approach to implementation, this bill recognizes that different districts may require different solutions. It allows individual districts to own their plans for change, increasing buy-in and the likelihood for positive outcomes.