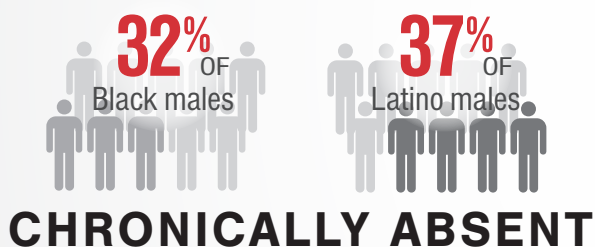
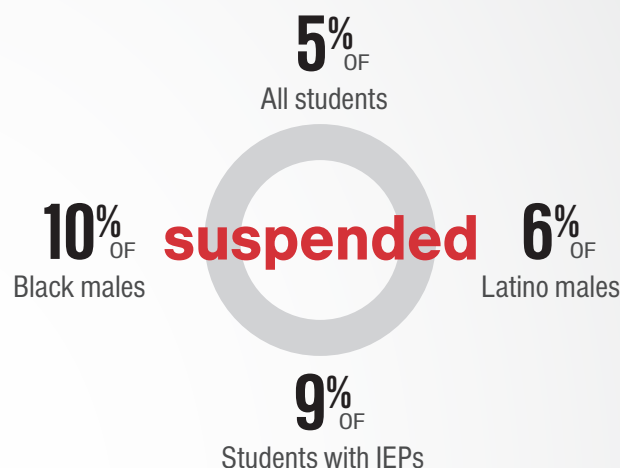


# DISMANTLING THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

The School to Prison pipeline refers to the policies and practices that push our nation's schoolchildren, especially our most at-risk children, out of classrooms and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. In this brief, the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy, in partnership with the Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative and the Boston Public Schools describes this critical issue. All data highlighted below is Boston Public Schools (BPS) data.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

School disciplinary policies disproportionately affect students of color, and students with disabilities. This gap has been increasing for nearly 30 years. Nationally, students of color are suspended or expelled at three times the rate of white students and represent a higher proportion of school-related arrests. In 2012, students of color in Massachusetts were suspended at disproportionately higher rates compared to white students, with some sub-groups outpacing national averages.



Students with IEPs who have been diagnosed with **emotional impairment**

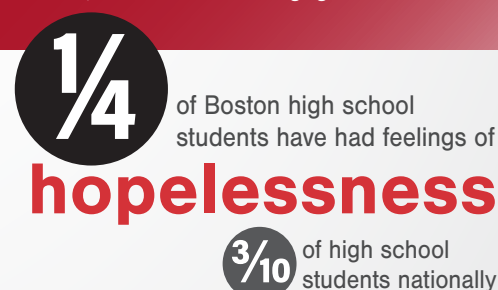
17% OF  
Black males  
with IEPs

11% OF  
Latino males  
with IEPs

12% OF  
All students  
with IEPs

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Suspended or expelled students are more likely to disengage from school, be held back or drop out, and they are significantly more likely to be involved in the juvenile justice system. Once in the juvenile justice system, students are less likely to complete a high school credential or continue their education after high school. High school dropouts are also more likely to become incarcerated. A multi-generational effect exists as children with a parent in prison are more likely to experience trauma, emotional difficulties, and low school engagement.



American Civil Liberties Union. (n.d.). *Locating the School-to-Prison Pipeline*. New York, NY. Retrieved from <https://www.aclu.org/fact-sheet/what-school-prison-pipeline>.

Fabelo, T., Thompson, M. D., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks, M. P. I., & Booth, E. (2011). *Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement*. Retrieved from <https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-murphey>

Murphey, D., & Cooper, P. M. (2015). *Parents behind bars: What happens to their children?* Retrieved from [childtrends.org](http://childtrends.org)

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. (2014). *Civil Rights Data Collection Data Snapshot: School Discipline* (Vol. 1). Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-discipline-snapshot.pdf>

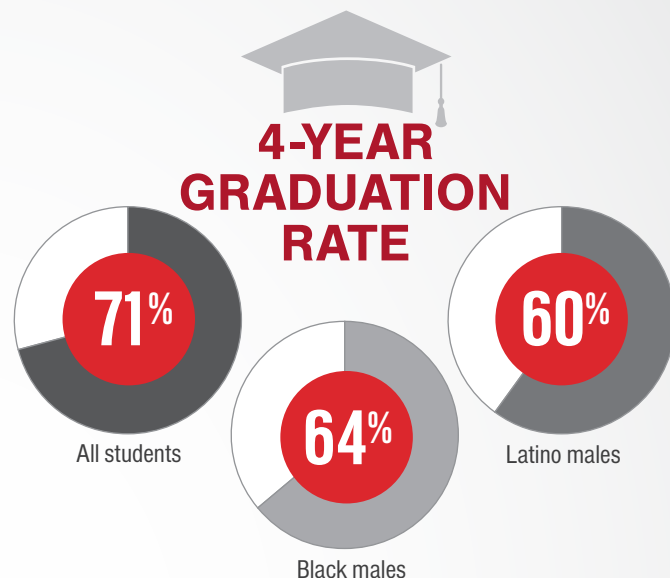
All of the data reference the Boston Public Schools 2014-15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

[renniecenter.org/topics/DismantlingPipeline.html](http://renniecenter.org/topics/DismantlingPipeline.html)

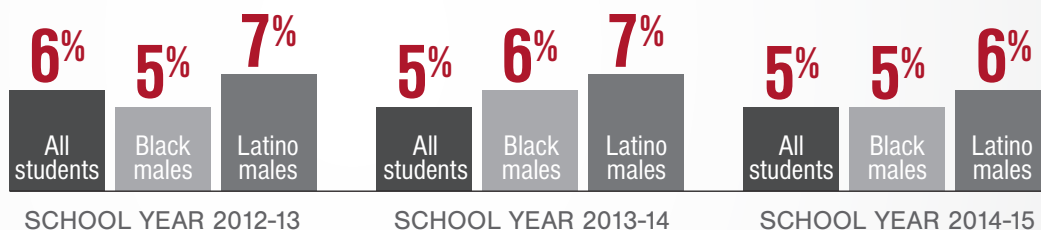
# DISMANTLING THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

## WHERE HAS BOSTON BEEN ON THIS ISSUE?

Over the past decade, cross-sector coalitions have worked with BPS to introduce dropout outreach strategies and new program options for earning a high school diploma. These had a positive impact on dropout and graduation rates, nearly halving the annual dropout rate since 2005. However, challenges remain. Recent changes in state discipline policy (Chapter 222) require due process and educational options for suspended/expelled students. Currently, BPS is working with students and advocates to revise its code of conduct, focusing on positive and proactive disciplinary practices.



## dropout rates



## HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

BPS has articulated a number of school culture and student engagement priorities:

- Create a district-wide culture that promotes safe, healthy and welcoming school environments, including supportive interventions for ALL students and social emotional learning in schools.
- Increase the number of schools implementing positive behavioral intervention supports, such as restorative justice.
- Expand the number and variety of alternative education programs and practices, while continuing outreach strategies that have proven effective with opportunity youth.

### PROJECT PARTNERS

