



Equity in the Early Years

Business Leaders Overview

What is the problem?

Preschool students are more likely to be expelled than students in any other grade. In fact, preschoolers are being expelled at rates more than three times higher than students in K-12 schools. Every day, 250 preschoolers are suspended or expelled. Black students represent 18% of preschool enrollment, and 42% of preschooler suspension. White preschoolers make up 43% of enrollment, and only 26% of school suspension. Black students are suspended and expelled at three times a greater rate than white students. Suspension and expulsion in the early years, may interfere or delay the process of identifying and addressing underlying issues for young students, including undiagnosed mental health, behavioral issues or a disability.

Why should suspension and expulsion in early education matter to you and how does it relate to the business community?

The high rate of suspension and expulsion in early education is directly linked to high rates of academic failure, drop outs, and incarcerations. It directly effects the future workforce, and to be more specific, it severely hinders a diverse workforce and our economic future. Businesses that cultivate a diverse workforce reap the benefits of increased productivity and creativity and gain the reputation of an employer that hires talented people without regard to race, ethnicity or gender. Understanding the advantages of workforce diversity helps establish an organization with a competitive edge.

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The goals of this campaign are as follows:

- Raise awareness about the inequities surrounding suspension and expulsion in Early Education
- Educate, encourage and empower Parents to share information about the Campaign, with friends, family, and the Community
- Highlight the need for funds for Professional Development for Teachers, Providers, and mental health consultants' in Early Education

What can you do to take action?

- Send letters to your colleagues in the business community as well as elected officials to enlist their support in reducing and eliminating suspension and expulsion of our youngest citizens from birth to five.
- Design forums on preschool suspension and expulsion for business leaders to educate and engage them in this critical initiative.
- Sponsor equity training for early education teachers and providers.
- Advocate for funds for professional development for teachers/providers, recruitment and retention of teachers of color in classrooms as well as mental health consultants in early childhood settings.
- Visit <https://www.earlycareandlearning.org/nys-elan-nbcdi.html> to download the toolkit, and to join the email list to stay updated on news.
- 'LIKE' the Early Care & Learning Council's page on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/earlycareandlearning/>
- Post on social media. Check out our toolkit for sample Tweets, and Facebook posts.

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