

Shocking Suspension Rate of Black and Hispanic Students Comes Under Fire

The Castle Hill Interfaith Council (IC) leveled sharp criticism at the Castle Hill Independent School District over recently released state discipline data showing that African American, Hispanic, and non-English-speaking students are being disciplined at rates that range from two to four times higher than rates for white students at its 25 campuses.

IC President Reverend James Anderson and the IC executive council are demanding a meeting with the district superintendent and an investigation into what Reverend Anderson calls “discriminatory and racist practices.” He notes that long-term suspensions are often given to non-white students for minor infractions (e.g., tardiness, dress code violations, classroom disruption), citing a recent example of a 12-year-old black student’s five-day suspension for “inappropriate behavior” after being found with a cell phone in class.

“Unforgiving disciplinary policies are cutting short the futures of countless African American

students across the entire nation,” says an attorney for the Southern Poverty Law Center. “If school districts truly want to provide a quality education to all their students, they will reform these discriminatory policies.”

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) national policy platform also states that LULAC will fight against harsh discipline practices and zero tolerance policies that remove students from the classroom and keep them from learning.

The Castle Hill IC began investigating suspension cases after being contacted by members of their respective congregations who have children in the Castle Hill schools. District officials told the local media that they are currently gathering data and examining the allegations.