



What's Happening

August 2015

# Suspension, expulsion, and achievement of English learner students in six Oregon districts

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Education Northwest

## Key findings

- In 2011/12 English learner students were suspended or expelled at a similar rate as non-English learner students in elementary school but at a higher rate than non-English learner students in middle school and high school.
- Averaged across all grades, aggression and insubordination/disruption were the most common reasons why both English learner students and non-English learner students were suspended or expelled.
- The average English learner student who was suspended lost 1.9 school days in elementary school, 3.5 days in middle school, and 4.9 days in high school; the average non-English learner student who was suspended lost 2.3 days in elementary school, 3.3 days in middle school, and 4.1 days in high school.
- On average, English learner students who were suspended or expelled had lower achievement on state assessments in reading and math than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled.

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## Summary

The relatively high rates of suspension and expulsion among some groups of students are a cause for growing concern in public education. Disciplinary actions that take students out of the classroom can make it more difficult for them to stay on track to graduate. This is true particularly for English learner students, who typically have lower scores on state assessments and higher dropout rates than non-English learner students.

This study looks at suspension and expulsion rates among English learner students in six Oregon districts. It was conducted in collaboration with the Oregon Leadership Network, a partnership of 23 districts, the Oregon Department of Education, and other agencies that have worked together for more than a decade in pursuit of better education outcomes for all Oregon students (Education Northwest, n.d.).

Currently, few studies correlate the achievement of English learner students to the discipline they receive. This study is important and timely because it describes discipline rates and reasons for discipline of English learner students and because it adds to knowledge about the interaction of discipline and achievement for English learner students—a large, growing, and diverse population in the Oregon Leadership Network alliance districts and in many districts in Oregon and across the nation.

Among the key findings:

- In 2011/12 English learner students were suspended or expelled at a similar rate as non-English learner students in elementary school but at a higher rate than non-English learner students in middle school and high school.
- Averaged across all grades, aggression and insubordination/disruption were the most common reasons why both English learner students and non-English learner students were suspended or expelled.
- The average English learner student who was suspended lost 1.9 school days in elementary school, 3.5 days in middle school, and 4.9 days in high school; the average non-English learner student who was suspended lost 2.3 days in elementary school, 3.3 days in middle school, and 4.1 days in high school.
- On average, English learner students who were suspended or expelled had lower achievement on state assessments in reading and math than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled.

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## Why this study?

Losing classroom instructional time for any reason could be especially challenging for students who face barriers to learning, such as students in special education, students who begin school relatively unprepared to learn, and students with limited proficiency in English. English learner students in Oregon schools achieve at substantially lower levels on state assessments in reading and math than their non-English learner student peers and graduate from high school at lower rates (Oregon Department of Education, 2014a, 2014b). These concerns led the Oregon Leadership Network, a partnership of 23 school districts, the Oregon Department of Education, and other agencies, to collaborate with Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest in studying exclusionary discipline (suspension and expulsion) that removes English learner students from regular classroom instruction in six districts in the network. These districts serve approximately 18,000 English learner students, who constitute 13 percent of all students enrolled in these districts and a third of all English learner students in Oregon's public schools. The Oregon Leadership Network will use the study results to examine discipline practices for English learner students and to assess needs for additional academic and nonacademic support for these students.

*The results of this study can be used to examine discipline practices for English learner students and to assess needs for additional academic and nonacademic support for these students*

The study addressed three concerns about the experiences of English learner students in schools:

- Whenever English learner students lose instructional time, they may lose more ground academically than their English-proficient peers. As a result, the network wanted accurate information about how many English learner students are suspended or expelled and the amount of instructional time they lose because of these penalties (see box 1 for definitions of key terms).
- English learner students are diverse and might require different kinds and amounts of support. Consequently, it is important to know how suspension and expulsion rates, reasons for suspension and expulsion, and instructional days lost to suspension vary by English learner students' gender, race/ethnicity, and participation in special education.
- If English learner students who were suspended or expelled were found to achieve at lower levels on the Oregon state assessment than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled, further investigation into the reason would be appropriate.

Comparing the proportions of English learner students and non-English learner students suspended or expelled over the course of a school year focuses attention on differences in students' experience in school. In addition, examining the number and type of infractions for which students were suspended or expelled, instructional time lost as a result, and achievement trends for students receiving discipline is important for several reasons:

- Each suspension or expulsion carries personal consequences for the student and requires school staff to deal with the administrative details of the discipline process.
- Knowing the frequency and type of infractions committed by English learner students and non-English learner students can guide districts and schools in focusing their efforts to improve student behavior.
- Connecting information about how many school days English learner students lost because of suspension and how English learner students who were suspended or expelled achieved on state assessments will help districts and schools understand the potential consequences associated with this kind of discipline for students' opportunity to learn.

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## Box 1. Key terms

**Average total length of suspension.** The average number of instructional days suspended among students receiving at least one suspension. It is calculated as the number of school days suspended summed over all suspended students among English learner students and non-English learner students separately in each grade span divided by the total number of students in each group who were suspended. Days lost to expulsion are not included (see appendix C). This statistic shows the average number of instruction days lost across the entire year—not the average length of an individual suspension.

**Discretionary offense.** An offense for which school administrators have discretion in disciplining students. Examples include defiance, truancy, disruptive behavior, disrespect, and fighting. Contrast with mandatory offense.

**English learner students.** Students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses. The Oregon Department of Education uses the term “English learner” to identify students with limited proficiency in English.

**Exclusionary discipline.** Discipline imposed by school administrators that removes a student from classroom instruction or school. This study reports results for in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion.

**Expulsion.** Discipline that removes a student from school for the remainder of the school year or longer.

**In-school suspension.** Temporary removal of a student from his or her regular classroom or classrooms for disciplinary purposes. The student remains under the direct supervision of school personnel (the suspended student is in the same location as school personnel assigned to the student’s supervision).

**Mandatory offense.** An offense for which federal or state policy requires expulsion of the student (for example, weapons violations). Contrast with discretionary offense.

**Offense category.** The primary offense that resulted in exclusionary discipline. See table B3 in appendix B for a list of offense categories and their descriptions.

**Out-of-school suspension.** Temporary removal of a student from his or her regular school to another setting (for example, home or a behavior center) for disciplinary purposes. For students in special education this includes removals in which no special education services are provided because the removal is less than 10 days cumulatively, as well as removals in which the student continues to receive special education services according to an individualized education program.

**Source:** Adapted from Burke and Nishioka (2014) and Great Schools Partnership (n.d.).

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## Earlier study of exclusionary discipline in participating Oregon districts

REL Northwest conducted an earlier study of student suspension and expulsion during the 2011/12 school year in the same six Oregon districts (Burke & Nishioka, 2014). That study examined suspension and expulsion rates disaggregated by school level and by students’ gender, race/ethnicity, and eligibility for special education. However, results were not reported for English learner students. Major findings from the earlier study are given in box 2.

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## Box 2. Findings from an earlier study of exclusionary discipline in six Oregon districts, 2011/12

The following findings refer to all students in the study sample:

- During the 2011/12 school year 6.4 percent of students were suspended or expelled. The most common reasons were physical and verbal aggression and insubordination and disruption.
- Suspension and expulsion rates were highest in middle school and lowest in elementary school.
- Suspension and expulsion rates were higher for boys than for girls, higher for racial/ethnic minority students than for White students, and higher for students in special education than for students not in special education.
- Nearly 40 percent of students who were suspended received more than one suspension.
- Among students receiving at least one suspension, the average number of days of suspension was 3.3.

Source: Burke & Nishioka, 2014.

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### New Oregon legislation concerning school discipline

In 2013 Oregon H.B. 2192 amended the state school discipline code. The revised code allows school administrators substantial discretion in assessing school safety and gives school boards broad authority to suspend or expel students. At the same time, it narrows the use of expulsion and sets a priority on keeping students in school and attending class. In addition, it requires discipline policies to incorporate research-based approaches for reducing student misbehavior and promoting positive behavior. Furthermore, discipline policies must consider a student's age and past behavior prior to assigning suspension or expulsion. Finally, the amended code requires school administrators to impose discipline without bias.

REL Northwest's earlier study of student discipline did not report discipline rates, reasons for discipline, or discipline consequences for English learner students. This report fills that information gap by examining rates of suspension and expulsion for English learner students, reasons for such disciplinary action, and how these actions are associated with English learner students' achievement on state assessments in reading and math. Results from this study (as well as from the earlier study) will provide a baseline for districts to assess their progress as they adapt their discipline policies and practices to the new Oregon student discipline requirements. Connections between this study and previous research are discussed in appendix A.

### What the study examined

This study addressed four research questions:

- Were English learner students suspended or expelled at similar rates as non-English learner students?
- Were English learner students suspended or expelled for similar reasons as non-English learner students?
- Did English learner students lose similar numbers of instructional days because of suspensions as non-English learner students?

*This report examines rates of suspension and expulsion for English learner students, reasons for such disciplinary action, and how these actions are associated with English learner students' achievement on state assessments in reading and math*



- Did English learner students who were suspended or expelled achieve proficiency on state assessments in reading and math at similar rates as English learner students who were not suspended or expelled?

An overview of data and methodology used in the study is given in box 3; additional details are in appendix B.

### **What the study found**

The study found that English learner students and non-English learner students were suspended and expelled at a similar rate in elementary school but that English learner students faced a higher rate of suspension and expulsion in middle school and high school. This pattern held for most student demographic designations.

Averaged across all grades, aggression and insubordination/disruption were the most common reasons why both English learner students and non-English learner students were suspended or expelled.

Averaged across all grade spans, English learner students and non-English learner students who received one or more suspensions were suspended for an average total of 3.3 instructional days in the school year. However, average total length of suspension and differences between English learner students and non-English learner students varied across grade spans by gender, race/ethnicity, and eligibility for special education.

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### **Box 3. Data and methods**

**Data sources.** This study used 2011/12 data from Oregon Department of Education databases. The cumulative average daily membership database is a student-level data collection that includes enrollment, demographic characteristics, special program status, and district and school information for all students enrolled in Oregon public schools. The discipline incidents database includes information for each disciplinary incident that resulted in an administrative action of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion. The assessment database contains results of state assessments in reading and math at the student level. The LEP [limited English proficient] database identifies English learner students.

**Participating districts.** The study sample covered six Oregon Leadership Network districts in the Portland metropolitan area that together have the most diverse student population in the state. The six districts enroll approximately 143,000 students, representing 77 percent of K–12 students in the two-county area and 24 percent of K–12 students in Oregon. In 2011/12, 47 percent of students in these districts were racial/ethnic minority students and 15 percent were in special education. Characteristics of students in the participating districts are presented in tables B1 and B2 in appendix B.

**Analysis methods.** Descriptive statistics were calculated for all students by grade span (K–5 elementary school, 6–8 middle school, and 9–12 high school) and by student gender, race/ethnicity, eligibility for special education, and status as an English learner student. Data sources and methods are described in more detail in appendix B.

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On average, English learner students who were suspended or expelled had lower achievement on state assessments in reading and math than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled.

**English learner students were suspended or expelled at a similar rate as non-English learner students in elementary school but at a higher rate in middle school and high school**

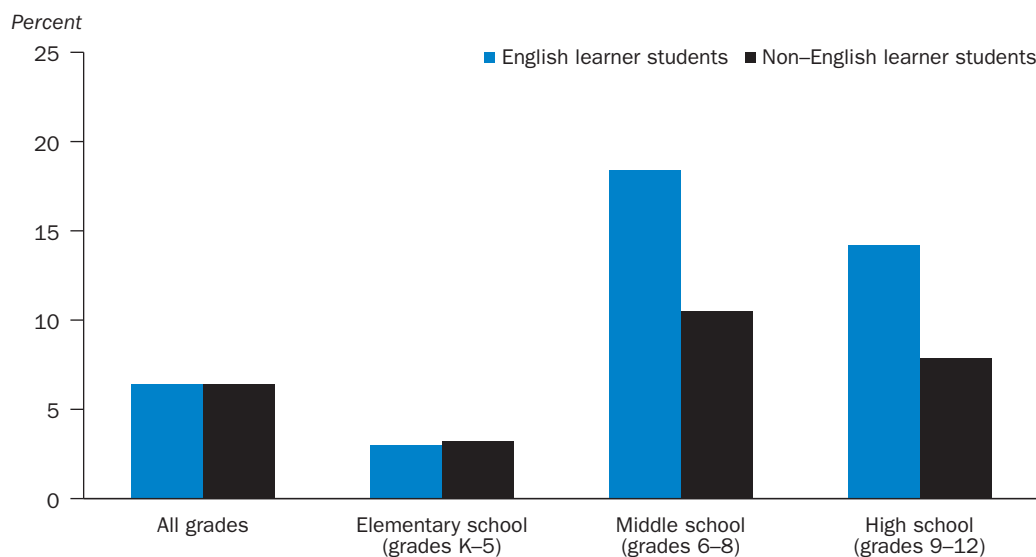
**Grade span.** Differences in suspension and expulsion rates between English learner students and non-English learner students were much larger in middle school and high school than in elementary school, when rates were almost identical. Similar percentages of both groups were suspended or expelled in elementary school (3 percent), whereas a larger percentage of English learner students than of non-English learner students were suspended or expelled in middle school (18 percent versus 11 percent) and in high school (14 percent versus 8 percent; figure 1).

**Gender.** In middle school and high school, male and female English learner students were suspended or expelled approximately twice as often as their non-English learner student peers (figure 2). In elementary school, both male and female English learner students were suspended or expelled at a lower rate than their non-English learner student counterparts.

In elementary school, 5 percent of male English learner students and 1 percent of female English learner students were suspended or expelled, rates very similar to those for non-English learner students of the same gender. Male English learner students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than female English learner students in middle school (24 percent to 11 percent) and in high school (19 percent to 9 percent). At both school levels, English learner students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than non-English learner students of the same gender.

*Similar percentages of English learner students and non-English learner students were suspended or expelled in elementary school, whereas a larger percentage of English learner students than of non-English learner students were suspended or expelled in middle school and in high school*

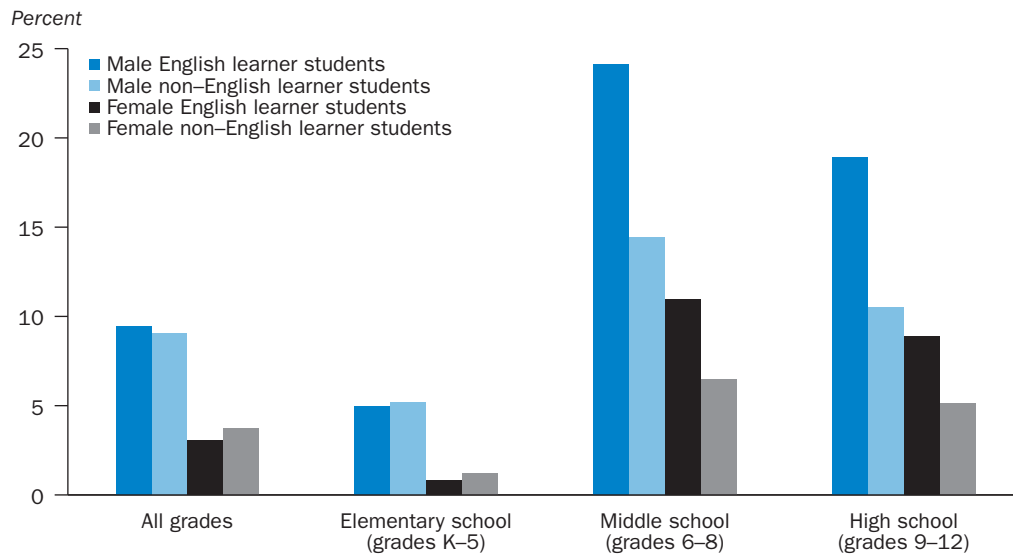
**Figure 1. In middle school and high school, a higher percentage of English learner students than of non-English learner students was suspended or expelled, 2011/12**



**Note:** Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

**Figure 2. In middle school and high school, male and female English learner students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than their non-English learner student peers; within both groups, male students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than female students, 2011/12**



*In middle school and high school, male and female English learner students were suspended or expelled approximately twice as often as their non-English learner student peers*

**Note:** Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

**Race/ethnicity.** Asian English learner students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than Asian non-English learner students at each grade span. Black English learner students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than Black non-English learner students in middle school but at lower rates in elementary school and high school. Hispanic and White English learner students were suspended or expelled at a lower rate than non-English learner students of the same race/ethnicity in elementary school and at higher rates in middle school and high school (table 1).

**Special education.** In middle school and high school, English learner students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than non-English learner students regardless of special education status. However, in elementary school, English learner students in special education were suspended or expelled at a lower rate than non-English learner students in special education.

Among English learner students in special education, 5 percent were suspended or expelled in elementary school, 23 percent in middle school, and 20 percent in high school; among non-English learner students in special education 8 percent were suspended or expelled in elementary school, 15 percent in middle school, and 11 percent in high school (figure 3).

Among English learner students not in special education, 3 percent were suspended or expelled in elementary school, 16 percent in middle school, and 13 percent in high school; among non-English learner students not in special education, 2 percent were suspended or expelled in elementary school, 9 percent in middle school, and 7 percent in high school.

**Suspension type.** Averaged across all grades, English learner students and non-English learner students were suspended at nearly identical rates (table 2). English learner students

**Table 1. In middle school and high school, English learner students were suspended or expelled at a higher rate than non-English learner students within most racial/ethnic groups, 2011/12 (percent of students)**

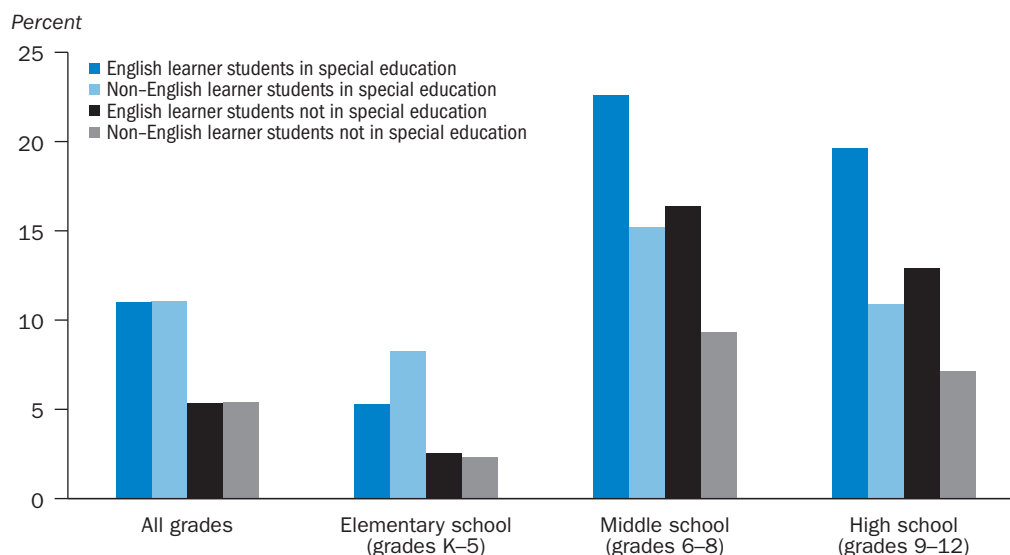
Race/ethnicity and English learner status	All grades	Elementary school (grades K-5)	Middle school (grades 6-8)	High school (grades 9-12)
<b>Asian</b>				
English learner students	2.2	1.3	5.3	2.9
Non-English learner students	2.0	0.9	3.0	2.4
<b>Black</b>				
English learner students	10.7	5.7	26.0	11.1
Non-English learner students	16.2	10.3	24.3	17.5
<b>Hispanic</b>				
English learner students	7.2	3.2	20.8	19.1
Non-English learner students	9.8	3.8	15.0	12.0
<b>Multiracial/other race</b>				
English learner students	4.8	a	a	a
Non-English learner students	7.0	a	a	a
<b>White</b>				
English learner students	5.5	2.5	16.1	13.3
Non-English learner students	5.0	2.7	8.2	6.2

**Note:** Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**a.** Value not reported to protect student confidentiality because of small sample size.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

**Figure 3. In middle school and high school, among both students in special education and students not in special education, a higher percentage of English learner students than of non-English learner students was suspended or expelled, 2011/12**



**Note:** Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

**Table 2. In middle school and high school, English learner students received both in-school and out-of-school suspension at higher rates than non-English learner students, 2011/12 (percent of students)**

Type of suspension	All grades	Elementary school (grades K–5)	Middle school (grades 6–8)	High school (grades 9–12)
Students receiving any suspension				
English learner students	6.4	3.0	18.4	13.8
Non-English learner students	6.3	3.2	10.4	7.6
Students receiving in-school suspension				
English learner students	3.1	1.4	11.4	3.9
Non-English learner students	2.5	1.3	5.6	2.0
Students receiving out-of-school suspension				
English learner students	4.3	1.9	11.2	11.3
Non-English learner students	4.7	2.4	6.9	6.3

**Note:** Suspensions are reported separately from expulsions because expulsion is mandatory for many of offenses, while administrators have much more discretion in assigning suspensions. Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author’s analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

*Averaged across all grades, a similar percentage of English learner students and non-English learner students was suspended more than once, but differences between these students emerged in middle school and high school*

were suspended at a slightly lower rate than non-English learner students in elementary school (3.0 percent versus 3.2 percent) but at higher rates in middle school (18 percent versus 10 percent) and high school (14 percent versus 8 percent). When in-school and out-of-school suspensions were considered separately, across all grades, English learner students received in-school suspension at a higher rate and out-of-school suspension at a lower rate than non-English learner students. In elementary school, English learner students and non-English learner students received in-school suspension at a very similar rate, but English learner students received out-of-school suspension at a lower rate than non-English learner students. In middle school and high school, English learner students received both types of suspension at a higher rate than non-English learner students.

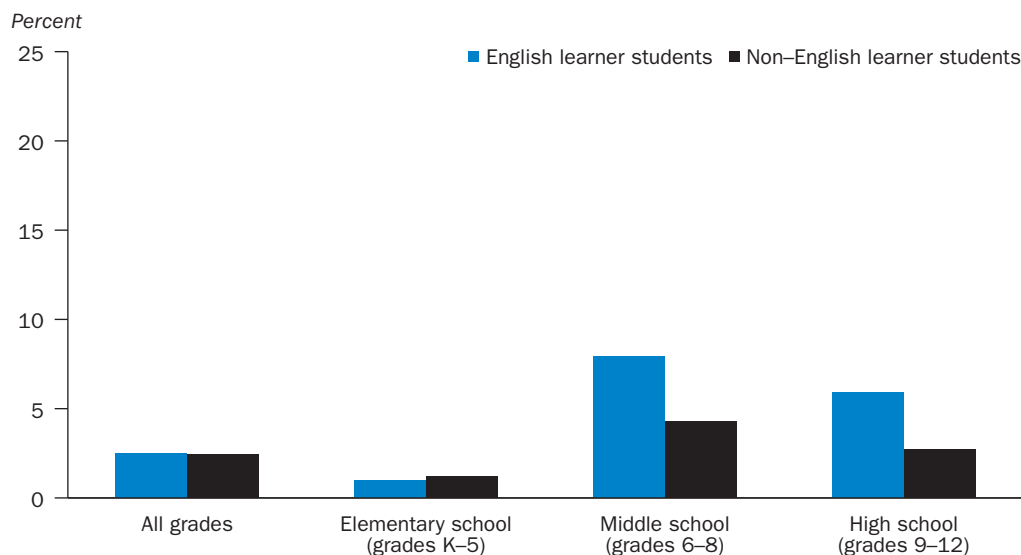
**Multiple suspensions.** Averaged across all grades, a similar percentage of English learner students and non-English learner students was suspended more than once, but differences between these students emerged in middle school and high school.

In elementary school, a similar percentage of English learner students and non-English learner students was suspended more than once (figure 4). However, in middle school and high school, the percentage of English learner students receiving multiple suspensions was twice as large as the percentage of non-English learner students.

**Averaged across all grades, aggression and insubordination/disruption were the most common reasons why both English learner students and non-English learner students were suspended or expelled**

Aggression and insubordination/disruption were the most common offenses leading to suspension or expulsion, whereas offenses involving tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, property-related offenses, and criminal offenses were generally less common. There were a few clear differences between English learner students and non-English learner students regarding the reasons for suspension or expulsion. In elementary school, English learner students were suspended or expelled at a slightly lower rate than non-English learner students

**Figure 4. In middle school and high school, the percentage of students receiving more than one suspension during the year was twice as high for English learner students as for non-English learner students, 2011/12**



**Note:** The percentage of English learner students and non-English learner students receiving multiple suspensions is the number of students in each group receiving multiple suspensions in each grade span divided by the number of students in the group in the same grade span, multiplied by 100. Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

*In middle school and high school, English learner students were suspended or expelled at higher rates than non-English learner students for offenses in all categories; rates were twice as high for aggression and insubordination/disruption*

for aggression or insubordination/disruption (table 3). In middle school and high school, English learner students were suspended or expelled at rates up to twice as high as those for non-English learner students, both for aggression and insubordination/disruption.

In middle school and high school, English learner students were suspended or expelled at higher rates than non-English learner students for offenses in all categories, though the differences were small for some offenses at some grade levels (for example, among middle school students, 1.0 percent of English learner students and 0.8 percent of non-English learner students were suspended for tobacco, alcohol, and drugs).

**Across all grade spans, English learner students and non-English learner students who received one or more suspensions were suspended an average of 3.3 instructional days; however, there were notable variations between English learner students and non-English learner students across grade spans by gender, race/ethnicity, and eligibility for special education**

**Grade span.** English learner students who received one or more suspensions during the 2011/12 school year were suspended for an average of 1.9 days in elementary school, 3.5 days in middle school, and 4.9 days in high school (see table C1 in appendix C). The average total length of suspension for students receiving at least one suspension was slightly lower for English learner students (1.9 days) than for non-English learner students (2.3 days) in elementary school, slightly higher in middle school (3.5 days versus 3.3 days), and higher in high school (4.9 days versus 4.1 days).

**Table 3. Percentages of English learner students and non-English learner students suspended or expelled by offense type, 2011/12 (percent of students)**

Offense	All grades	Elementary school (grades K-5)	Middle school (grades 6-8)	High school (grades 9-12)
<b>Aggression, physical and verbal</b>				
English learner students	3.3	1.8	10.4	4.4
Non-English learner students	3.0	2.0	5.7	2.6
<b>Insubordination/disruption</b>				
English learner students	2.7	0.9	8.4	7.5
Non-English learner students	2.9	1.3	4.9	3.6
<b>Property-related</b>				
English learner students	1.5	0.7	5.2	2.6
Non-English learner students	1.6	0.8	3.0	1.6
<b>Tobacco, alcohol, and drugs</b>				
English learner students	0.5	a	1.0	2.9
Non-English learner students	0.8	a	0.8	1.9
<b>Criminal offense</b>				
English learner students	0.8	0.5	2.4	0.7
Non-English learner students	0.8	0.6	1.2	0.6

**Note:** Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**a.** Values for tobacco, alcohol, and drugs for elementary school were less than 0.04 percent.

**Source:** Author’s analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

*English learner students who received one or more suspensions during the 2011/12 school year were suspended for an average of 1.9 days in elementary school, 3.5 days in middle school, and 4.9 days in high school*

**Gender.** Female English learner students who received at least one suspension in 2011/12 had an average total length of suspension that was slightly shorter than that of female non-English learner students in elementary school and middle school but that was slightly longer in high school (3.7 days versus 3.5 days; see table C2 in appendix C). Male English learner students had an average total length of suspension that was slightly shorter than that of male non-English learner students in elementary school (2.0 days versus 2.3 days) and slightly longer in middle school (3.6 days versus 3.3 days). In high school, male English learner students were suspended for an average of slightly more than one day longer (5.5 days) than male non-English learner students (4.3 days).

**Race/ethnicity.** Among Asian, Black, and Hispanic students, when averaged across all grades, English learner students had a lower average total length of suspension than non-English learner students of the same race/ethnicity (see table C3 in appendix C). In contrast, among multiracial students and White students, English learner students had a higher average total length of suspension than their non-English learner student peers.

- Among Asian students, English learner students had a lower average total length of suspension than non-English learner students in elementary school and middle school but a higher average total in high school (4.4 days versus 4.0 days).
- The same pattern was observed for Black English learner students and Black non-English learner students; in high school, the average total length of suspension was 5.0 days for English learner students and 4.0 days for non-English learner students.
- Hispanic English learner students had a higher average total length of suspension than Hispanic non-English learner students at each grade span (1.9 days versus 1.7 days in elementary school, 3.6 days versus 3.3 days in middle school, and 4.9 days versus 4.2 days in high school).

- Among White students, English learner students and non-English learner students had a similar average total length of suspension in elementary school, but English learner students had a higher average total than non-English learner students in middle school (3.5 days versus 3.2 days) and high school (5.3 days versus 3.9 days).

**Special education.** Among students in special education, English learner students had a slightly lower average total length of suspension than non-English learner students in elementary school (2.3 days versus 2.7 days) and middle school (3.6 days versus 3.8 days) but a higher average total in high school (4.7 days versus 4.1 days; see table C4 in appendix C).

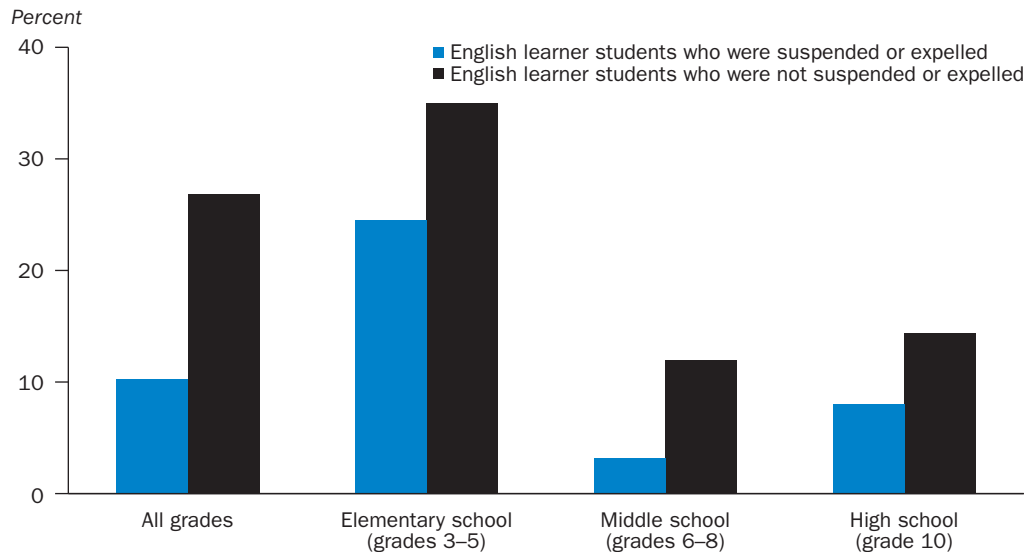
Among students not in special education, English learner students had a lower average total length of suspension than non-English learner students in elementary school (1.8 days versus 1.9 days) but a higher average total in middle school (3.3 days versus 3.1 days) and high school (5.0 days versus 4.0 days).

**On average, English learner students who were suspended or expelled had lower achievement on state assessments in reading and math than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled**

Averaged across all tested grades and for each grade span, English learner students who were suspended or expelled during the school year achieved proficiency in reading and math at substantially lower rates than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled (figures 5 and 6).

*Among students in special education, English learner students had a slightly lower average total length of suspension than non-English learner students in elementary school and middle school but a higher average total in high school*

**Figure 5. English learner students who were suspended or expelled met standards for proficiency on state assessments in reading at substantially lower rates than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled, 2011/12**

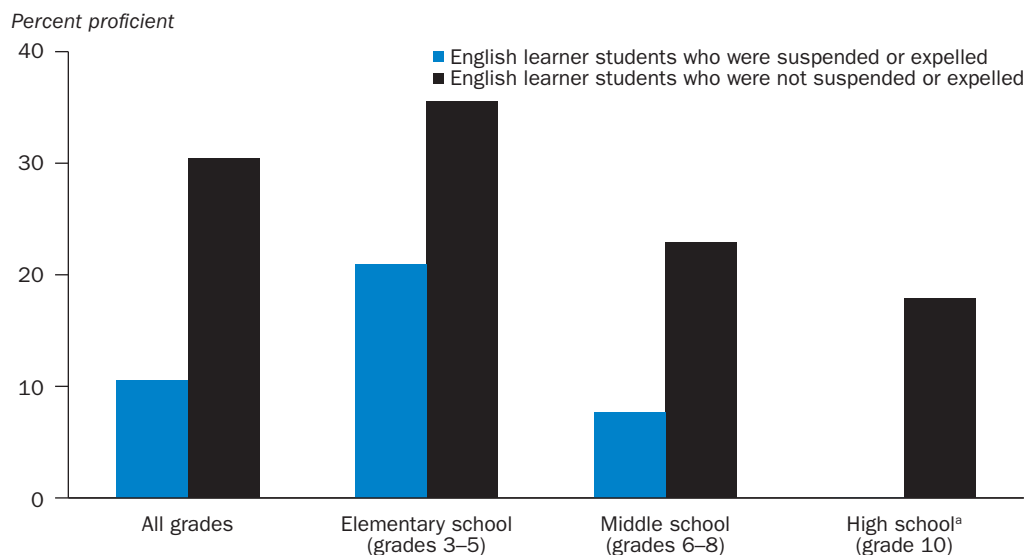


**Note:** State assessments are conducted only in grades 3-8 and grade 10. Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database, discipline incidents database, and assessment database.



**Figure 6. English learner students who were suspended or expelled met standards for proficiency on state assessments in math at substantially lower rates than English learner students who were not suspended or expelled, 2011/12**



**Note:** State assessments are conducted only in grades 3–8 and grade 10. Sample sizes for English learner students and non–English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**a.** Percent proficient is not shown for English learner students who were suspended or expelled to protect student confidentiality because of small sample size.

**Source:** Author’s analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education database cumulative average daily membership database, discipline incidents database, and assessment database.

*In elementary school, 21 percent of English learner students who were suspended or expelled met the state standard for proficiency in math, compared with 35 percent of those who were not. In middle school, 8 percent of English learner students who were suspended or expelled met the standard, compared with 23 percent of those who were not.*

In elementary school, 25 percent of English learner students who were suspended or expelled met the state standard for proficiency in reading, compared with 35 percent of those who were not. In middle school, 3 percent of English learner students who were suspended or expelled met the standard, compared with 12 percent of those who were not. In high school, 8 percent of English learner students who were suspended or expelled met the standard, compared with 14 percent of those who were not (see figure 5).

In elementary school, 21 percent of English learner students who were suspended or expelled met the state standard for proficiency in math, compared with 35 percent of those who were not. In middle school, 8 percent of English learner students who were suspended or expelled met the standard, compared with 23 percent of those who were not (see figure 6).

### Implications of the study findings

Oregon’s revised code for student discipline requires districts to consider students’ age and past behavior when assigning discipline and to give priority to keeping students in the classroom rather than automatically suspending or expelling them for specified offenses. The revised code also requires schools to assign discipline without bias.

Results from this study provide a baseline that districts can use to assess their progress in responding to the new state requirements. In addition, districts can use the findings to examine their own current policies and practices. For example, Oregon Leadership Network districts plan to use the findings to revise how they analyze and report discipline

data, in order to better understand the long-term impact of certain disciplinary actions on students with different characteristics. Finally, this study provides an example of how districts can analyze the relationship between disciplinary actions and student achievement on state assessments, as well as other outcomes.

### **Limitations of the study**

The study examined rates of suspension and expulsion and the consequences of these actions for English learner students in six Oregon districts for the 2011/12 school year. The study was descriptive; it was not designed to test hypotheses about the causes and consequences of suspension and expulsion for either English learner students or non-English learner students. In addition, the districts participating in the study were not selected randomly from the population of Oregon districts. Consequently, the results do not generalize beyond the districts in the study.

***Results from this study provide a baseline that districts can use to assess their progress in responding to the new state requirements***

## **Appendix A. Connections to previous research**

This appendix describes some of the previous research on suspension and expulsion, or discipline more generally, related to English learner students. A summary of research in this area is provided in Burke and Nishioka (2014).

### **Suspension and expulsion**

Students may be suspended or expelled for offenses ranging from lesser infractions—such as refusing to follow directions or violating school rules—to serious threats to school safety (Dinkes, Kemp, & Baum, 2009; Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2011). Types of exclusionary discipline include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and for students in special education, temporary placement in alternative instruction. Suspension is the most common exclusionary discipline. Nationally, more than 3 million students (approximately 6 percent of the public school enrollment) were suspended during the 2009/10 school year (Losen & Gillespie, 2012).

### **Percentage of students receiving exclusionary discipline**

The use of exclusionary discipline in U.S. schools has increased over the past four decades. In 2009/10 across the nation 2.4 percent of elementary school students and 11.3 percent of secondary school students were suspended, up from 0.9 percent and 8 percent in 1972/73 (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

### **Suspensions of English learner students**

National data on suspension and expulsion of English learner students are surprisingly sparse. Existing data do not indicate that English learner students as a group experience suspension and expulsion at a higher rate than non-English learner students. For example, in 2000/01 nationwide 4 percent of English learner students and 7 percent of all students received out-of-school suspension; a very small percentage (0.2 percent of all students and 0.1 percent of English learner students) was expelled (Hopstock & Stephenson, 2003). In three cohorts of students from an unnamed state, 28 percent of English learner students and 30 percent of non-English learner students were suspended during the period studied (Kim, 2011). A particularly notable finding from national data is the increase in the suspension rate for English learner students from elementary school to middle school. Data from 26,000 middle and high schools participating in the Civil Rights Data Collection for 2009/10 revealed that the suspension rate for English learner students increased from 1.2 percent in elementary school to 11.6 percent in middle school; the increase for all students was from 2.4 percent to 11.3 percent (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

### **Reasons why students are suspended or expelled**

The most common reasons why students are suspended or expelled include aggressive behavior in elementary school, disrespect in middle school, and tardiness or skipping school in high school (Kaufman et al., 2010; Spaulding et al., 2010).

To date there has been no comprehensive national survey of reasons why English learner students are suspended or expelled. A Texas study, however, provides context. In 1,500

Texas high schools, students with limited proficiency in English were 9 percent less likely to be suspended or expelled than students proficient in English after student-level factors such as race, economic disadvantage, attendance, and scores on state tests and for school-level factors such as average achievement, percentage economically disadvantaged, attendance rate, and diversity of the student body were controlled for (Fabelo et al., 2011).

In addition, considerable evidence from other research suggests that perception of student behavior and responses to student behavior by school staff members may be contributing to differences in suspension and expulsion received by racial/ethnic minority students. For example, differences between White and racial/ethnic minority students who were suspended or expelled may not be because of differences in rates of misbehavior (Dinkes, Cataldi, & Lin-Kelly, 2007; Fenning & Rose, 2007; Losen & Skiba, 2010; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; McFadden, Marsh, Price, & Hwang, 1992; Rocque, 2010; Shaw & Braden, 1990; Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). A higher percentage of Hispanic students than of White students was suspended or expelled despite similar rates of reported misbehavior (Peguero & Shekarkhar, 2011). In addition, in 21 Maryland elementary schools Black students were more likely to be referred to the school office after teacher ratings of student behavior were controlled for (Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan, & Leaf, 2010). These findings suggest that districts and schools should examine the perceptions and responses of staff members to student behavior and misbehavior and evaluate the need for professional development designed to reduce the frequency at which teachers refer students to the school office for discipline.

#### **Average number of school days suspended among students receiving at least one suspension**

Out-of-school suspensions are often relatively brief on a per incident basis. For example, in a large-scale study of Texas students, on average, each out-of-school suspension covered two instructional days (Fabelo et al., 2011). However, students who receive repeated out-of-school suspensions in a single school year might lose a substantial amount of instructional time. In addition, in the Texas sample, Black students and students in special education were more likely than White students and students not in special education to be removed from their classrooms for disciplinary reasons. This means that, in general, Black students and students in special education lost more instructional days because of suspension than White students and students not in special education.

#### **Differences in level of achievement**

English learner students and non-English learner students in Oregon have substantially different levels of achievement. For example, on the Oregon state assessment for 2011/12, the percentage of English learner students meeting the standard for proficiency in reading ranged from 9 percent at grade 6 to 40 percent at grade 4. The percentage proficient in math ranged from 19 percent at grade 6 to 41 percent at grade 4. English learner students met the standard for proficiency at a rate that was 34–60 percentage points lower in reading and 25–46 percentage points lower in math compared with all students (Oregon Department of Education, 2012b). In addition, gaps in proficiency rates between English learner students and all students were smaller at the lower grade levels and larger at the upper grade levels.

## **Appendix B. Data sources and methodology**

This appendix describes the data sources and details the study methodology.

### **Data**

The study uses 2011/12 data from three Oregon Department of Education databases:

1. *Cumulative average daily membership*: includes enrollment, demographic characteristics, special program status, and district and school information for all students enrolled in Oregon public schools.
2. *Discipline incidents*: includes information by student for each discipline incident that resulted in administrative actions of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion. Each discipline incident record includes a unique student identification number, student race/ethnicity, and special education status information found in the cumulative average daily membership collection, as well as the student's school and district, the date of the incident, the type of primary offense, the administrative action taken, and the number of suspension days.
3. *Assessment*: includes results on whether a student met state standards for proficiency on state assessments in reading and math.

The state has instituted quality-control procedures for its data collections. For example, the state provides training in data-entry procedures, online manuals, and ongoing technical assistance to ensure consistency in data entry and collection, as needed (Mahoney, 2012, n.d.). To ensure accuracy of student demographic data, any inconsistency between student data in the cumulative average daily membership and the discipline incidents collections automatically generates an error report. The operator must correct the error before continuing. Some data elements were used to answer the research questions and others were used only for file matching, file cleaning, and data quality control.

The six districts that are the subject of the study are located in two Oregon counties that together have the most diverse student population in the state. Two districts are in Multnomah County, and four are in Washington County. Collectively, the six districts enroll 143,176 students, representing 77 percent of all K–12 students in the two-county area and 24 percent of all K–12 students in Oregon. The distribution of students by race/ethnicity in each district is presented in table B1. Additional characteristics of the student sample, including characteristics of English learner students by gender, grade level, race/ethnicity, and eligibility for special education, are presented in table B2.

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest complied with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations protecting the privacy of study participants, including the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. All parties to this project agreed that all personally identifiable information exchanged would be protected, stored, disposed of, and otherwise kept confidential, as required by applicable federal and state

**Table B1. Size, race/ethnicity, and English learner composition of student populations in participating Oregon districts, 2011/12 (percent unless otherwise indicated)**

District	Number of students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multiracial/other race	English learner
Portland	48,840	1.3	7.9	12.2	15.8	55.4	7.4	10.2
Reynolds	12,325	0.9	6.9	7.6	36.4	41.8	6.3	26.5
Hillsboro	21,824	0.8	6.7	2.1	34.3	51.7	4.4	15.0
Forest Grove	6,196	0.5	1.1	0.8	47.6	47.2	2.7	19.9
Tigard-Tualatin	13,176	0.6	6.3	1.8	23.0	62.5	5.8	12.2
Beaverton	40,815	0.6	13.2	2.9	23.5	52.1	7.7	15.4
Total	143,176	0.9	8.7	6.2	24.6	53.0	6.6	14.4

**Note:** Percentages may not sum to 100 across categories of race/ethnicity because of rounding.

**Source:** Author's analysis of Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database.

laws. REL Northwest used the following procedures to ensure that personally identifiable information was protected:

- Data were transferred from the Oregon Department of Education to Education Northwest, the administrator of REL Northwest, by means of the department's file drop system.
- Access to the study data was limited to REL Northwest researchers who were trained and authorized to de-identify the data. After procedures to de-identify the data to the extent practicable, student-level data were placed in password-protected network folders for use by researchers, research assistants, and information technology staff assigned to the study. When staff members were added or changed, notice was given to the Oregon Department of Education and résumés were provided for any professional researchers who were added.
- All staff members involved in this project were trained to use the network. Research and information technology staff needing access to the secured, password-protected project folders with personally identifiable information were trained and given specific written directions on the use and protection of personally identifiable information before being given access to study data. Per Oregon Department of Education requirements, researchers using the department's data were required to read and sign its individual nondisclosure form.
- In creating reports, REL Northwest complied with Oregon Department of Education rules for data suppression to ensure student confidentiality in data tables and graphic displays. For reporting discipline and state assessment results, Oregon requires suppression of data if five or fewer students are represented (Mahoney, n.d.; Oregon Department of Education, 2012b).

The variables for this study fall into the categories of discipline information, which includes types of discipline received, offense categories, and days suspended; student background characteristics, which includes gender, grade span, race/ethnicity, and participation in special education; and achievement on state assessments in reading and math (box B1).

**Offense categories.** To calculate the percentage of students receiving discipline by offense category, the primary infraction for each discipline incident was first classified as one of six offense categories (table B3), which are aligned with how the Oregon Department of Education analyzes and reports district discipline data. The categories are consistent with

**Table B2. Number of students by background characteristics, grade span, and gender, 2011/12**

Background characteristic	All students			Elementary school (grades K–5)			Middle school (grades 6–8)			High school (grades 9–12)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All students	73,522	69,654	143,176	35,180	33,554	68,734	16,230	15,476	31,706	22,112	20,624	42,736
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>												
American Indian	601	638	1,239	223	297	520	129	124	253	239	217	456
Asian	6,216	6,244	12,460	2,969	2,984	5,953	1,376	1,336	2,712	1,871	1,924	3,795
Black	4,558	4,280	8,838	1,933	1,874	3,807	1,072	968	2,040	1,553	1,438	2,291
Hispanic	18,085	17,169	35,254	9,223	8,771	17,994	3,958	3,816	7,774	4,904	4,582	9,486
Multiracial/ other race	4,830	4,610	9,440	2,603	2,442	5,045	1,075	1,043	2,118	1,152	1,125	2,277
White	39,232	36,713	75,945	18,219	17,186	35,405	8,620	8,189	16,809	12,393	11,338	23,731
<b>Special education status</b>												
Not in special education	59,317	62,463	121,780	28,449	30,266	58,715	12,849	13,690	26,539	18,019	18,507	36,526
In special education	14,205	7,191	21,396	6,731	3,288	10,019	3,381	1,786	5,167	4,093	2,117	6,210
<b>Non-English learner students</b>												
Non-English learner students	63,880	61,085	124,965	28,052	27,079	55,131	14,878	14,417	29,295	20,950	19,589	40,539
<b>English learner students</b>												
English learner students	9,642	8,569	18,211	7,128	6,475	13,603	1,352	1,059	2,411	1,162	1,035	2,197
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>												
American Indian	28	25	53	23	24	47	a	a	a	a	a	a
Asian	1,638	1,347	2,985	1,120	935	2,055	236	160	396	282	252	534
Black	456	459	915	269	271	540	87	76	163	100	112	212
Hispanic	6,801	6,066	12,867	5,180	4,725	9,905	938	731	1,669	683	610	1,293
Multiracial/ other race	50	44	94	43	35	78	a	a	a	a	a	a
White	669	628	1,297	493	485	978	87	85	172	89	58	147
<b>Special education status</b>												
Not in special education	7,667	7,510	15,177	5,794	5,809	11,603	917	796	1,713	956	905	1,861
In special education	1,975	1,059	3,034	1,334	666	2,000	435	263	698	206	130	336

a. Value not reported to protect student confidentiality because of small sample size.

Source: Author's analysis of Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database.

previous research that examined offense types by school level (Kaufman et al., 2010; Skiba et al., 2011) as well as with research that examined whether types of discipline offenses identify students at risk for persistent problems with aggressive behaviors (Loeber & Hay, 1997; Tobin & Sugai, 1996).

**Student race/ethnicity.** Consistent with Oregon and federal practices for reporting race/ethnicity, students with Hispanic/Latino ethnicity were categorized as Hispanic regardless of their racial subgroup (Oregon Department of Education, 2012a).

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## Box B1. Discipline variables, student background variables, and achievement variables

### Discipline information

**Offense categories:** Physical and verbal aggression; insubordination/disruption; property-related; tobacco, alcohol, and drug; criminal offense (see table B3).

**Discipline action type:** In-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion.

**Suspension days:** 0.5 = half day or less, 1 = more than half day to full day.

### Student background characteristics

**Gender:** Female, male.

**Grade span:** Elementary school (K–5), middle school (6–8), high school (9–12).

**Race/ethnicity:** Asian (includes Asian/Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander), American Indian (includes American Indian/Alaskan Native), Black (includes Black/African American), Hispanic (includes Hispanic/Latino), Multiracial/other race (includes students identified as multiracial or other race/ethnicity), White.

**Special education status:** In special education, not in special education.

### Achievement on state assessments in reading and math

**Scaled scores:** As part of the process of scoring the state assessment and to standardize reported scores, students' raw scores were converted to scale scores. As part of the standard-setting process, scaled score cutpoints were identified for categorizing student achievement into proficiency levels (described below).

**Proficiency level:** Very low, low, nearly meets, meets, or exceeds. Students whose proficiency levels were meets or exceeds proficiency were identified as having met the standard for proficiency. Students with other proficiency levels were identified as not having met the standard for proficiency.

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**Table B3. Offense categories and descriptions of infractions that could result in suspension or expulsion**

Offense category	Infraction	Description of infraction
Aggression, physical <sup>a</sup>	Fighting (mutual altercation)	Mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence, where there is no major injury.
	Physical altercation, minor (pushing, shoving)	Confrontation, tussle, or physical aggression that does not result in injury.
	School threat (threat of destruction or harm)	Any threat (verbal, written, or electronic) by a person to bomb or use other substances or devices for the purpose of exploding, burning, or causing damage to a school building or school property, or to harm students or staff.
	Sexual offenses, other (lewd behavior, indecent exposure)	Sexual intercourse, sexual contact, or other behavior intended to result in sexual gratification without force or threat of force.
Aggression, verbal <sup>a</sup>	Harassment, nonsexual (verbal, or psychological)	Repeatedly annoying or attacking a student or group of students or other personnel, which creates an intimidating or hostile educational or work environment.
	Sexual harassment	Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment.
	Threat/intimidation (causing fear of harm)	Verbal, written, or electronic action that immediately creates fear of harm, without displaying a weapon and without subjecting the victim to an actual physical attack.
Insubordination/ disruption	Insubordination (disobedience)	Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request, or other situations in which a student is disobedient.
	Obscene behavior	Language or actions (written, oral, physical, or electronic) in violation of community or school standards.
	Violation of school rules (disobeying school policy)	Misbehavior not captured elsewhere, including dress code violations, running in the halls, possession of contraband, cheating, lying to authorities, and falsifying records.
Property	Burglary/breaking and entering (stealing property/unlawful entry)	Unlawful entry or attempted entry into a building or other structure with the intent to commit a crime.
	Theft (stealing personal or other property)	The unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity (for example, the school) without threat, violence, or bodily harm, including electronic theft of data.
	Trespassing (unlawful or unauthorized presence)	To enter or remain on a public school campus or school board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry.
	Vandalism (damage to school or personal property)	Willful destruction or defacement of school or personal property.
Tobacco, alcohol, and drugs	Alcohol	Violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or consumption of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol.
	Drugs excluding alcohol and tobacco (illegal drug possession, sale, use/under the influence)	Unlawful use, cultivation, sale, solicitation, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug (for example, Demerol, morphine) or narcotic substance.
	Inappropriate use of medication (prescription or over the counter)	Use, possession, or distribution of any prescription or over-the-counter medication, (for example, aspirin, cough syrups, caffeine pills, nasal sprays) in violation of school policy.
	Tobacco (possession or use)	Possession, use, distribution, or sale of tobacco products.

*(continued)*

**Table B3. Offense categories and descriptions of infractions that could result in suspension or expulsion (continued)**

Offense category	Infraction	Description of infraction
Criminal offense	Arrested for manufacture or delivery of a controlled substance	Manufacture or delivery of a controlled substance.
	Arson (setting a fire)	To unlawfully and intentionally damage, or attempt to damage, any school or personal property by fire or incendiary device.
	Battery (physical attack/harm)	Touching or striking of another person against his or her will or intentionally causing bodily harm to an individual.
	Kidnapping (abduction)	Unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will, or of a minor without the consent of his/her custodial parent(s) or legal guardian. This category includes hostage taking.
	Other offenses (for example, forgery, extortion)	Any significant incident resulting in disciplinary action not classified previously such as bribery, fraud, embezzlement, forgery, resisting arrest, gambling, extortion, or dealing in stolen property.
	Other violent criminal offense (for example, coercion, hate/bias crime)	Other violent criminal offenses not classified previously but meeting Oregon's definition of a "persistently dangerous" offense.
	Robbery (taking of things by force)	The taking of, or attempt to take, anything of value that is owned by another person or organization under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.
	Sexual battery (sexual assault)	Oral, anal, or vaginal penetration forcibly or against the person's will or where the victim is incapable of giving consent. Includes rape, fondling, indecent liberties, child molestation, and sodomy.
	Weapons possession (firearms and other weapons)	Possession of an instrument or object to inflict harm on another person.

a. Districts report verbal and physical aggression to the state as separate reasons for discipline. In the study results reported for aggression include both types of aggression.

Source: Mahoney, 2012.

## Methodology

Descriptive statistics were calculated concerning the types of offenses that resulted in suspension or expulsion, how frequently students with different background characteristics were suspended or expelled, and the length of time students were removed from their classroom or school because they received either in-school or out-of-school suspension. In addition, the percentage of students meeting state standards for proficiency in reading and math and means and standard deviations of scale scores were calculated and reported. The methods for calculating these statistics are described below.

$$\text{Percentage of students receiving exclusionary discipline} = \frac{\text{Number of students who received exclusionary discipline}}{\text{Total number of students}} \times 100.$$

$$\text{Average number of school days suspended among students receiving at least one suspension} = \frac{\text{Total suspension days for all suspended students}}{\text{Total number of students suspended}}.$$

$$\text{Percentage of students meeting standard for proficiency on state assessment} = \frac{\text{Number of students with proficiency level of meets or exceeds}}{\text{Total number of students}} \times 100.$$

## Appendix C. Supporting tables on number of instructional days lost to suspension

The following information supports the discussion of the findings concerning the number of instructional days lost to suspension. Days lost to expulsion are not included because expulsion is mandatory for a number of offenses, and districts requesting the study wished to focus on suspension, where administrators have greater discretion in assigning consequences.

**Table C1. Average total length of suspension for English learner students and non-English learner students experiencing at least one suspension, for all grades and grade spans, 2011/12 (days)**

English learner status	All grades	Elementary school (grades K–5)	Middle school (grades 6–8)	High school (grades 9–12)
English learner students	3.3	1.9	3.5	4.9
Non-English learner students	3.3	2.3	3.3	4.1

**Note:** Average total length of suspension is the number of school days suspended among students receiving at least one suspension summed over all suspended students among English learner students and non-English learner students separately in each grade span divided by the total number of students in each group who were suspended. Days lost to expulsion are not included. Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

**Table C2. Average total length of suspension for male and female English learner students and non-English learner students experiencing at least one suspension, for all grades and grade spans, 2011/12 (days)**

Gender and English learner status	All grades	Elementary school (grades K–5)	Middle school (grades 6–8)	High school (grades 9–12)
<b>Female</b>				
English learner students	3.0	1.7	3.0	3.7
Non-English learner students	3.2	2.0	3.3	3.5
<b>Male</b>				
English learner students	3.4	2.0	3.6	5.5
Non-English learner students	3.4	2.3	3.3	4.3

**Note:** Average total length of suspension is the number of school days suspended among students receiving at least one suspension summed over all suspended students among English learner students and non-English learner students separately in each grade span divided by the total number of students in each group who were suspended. Days lost to expulsion are not included. Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

**Table C3. Average total length of suspension for English learner students and non-English learner students by race/ethnicity, for all grades and grade spans, 2011/12 (days)**

Race/ethnicity and English learner status	All grades	Elementary school (grades K-5)	Middle school (grades 6-8)	High school (grades 9-12)
<b>Asian</b>				
English learner students	2.3	1.6	1.8	4.4
Non-English learner students	3.0	1.8	2.5	4.0
<b>Black</b>				
English learner students	3.2	2.7	2.8	5.0
Non-English learner students	3.6	3.0	3.6	4.0
<b>Hispanic</b>				
English learner students	3.4	1.9	3.6	4.9
Non-English learner students	3.5	1.7	3.3	4.2
<b>Multiracial/other race</b>				
English learner students	3.5	a	a	a
Non-English learner students	3.3	a	a	a
<b>White</b>				
English learner students	3.5	2.2	3.5	5.3
Non-English learner students	3.2	2.2	3.2	3.9

**Note:** Average total length of suspension is the number of school days suspended among students receiving at least one suspension summed over all suspended students among English learner students and non-English learner students separately in each grade span divided by the total number of students in each group who were suspended. Days lost to expulsion are not included. Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

a. Value not reported to protect student confidentiality because of small sample size.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

**Table C4. Average total length of suspension for English learner and non-English learner students by participation in special education, for all grades and grade spans, 2011/12 (days)**

Special education and English learner status	All grades	Elementary school (grades K-5)	Middle school (grades 6-8)	High school (grades 9-12)
<b>In special education</b>				
English learner students	3.5	2.3	3.6	4.7
Non-English learner students	3.6	2.7	3.8	4.1
<b>Not in special education</b>				
English learner students	3.2	1.8	3.3	5.0
Non-English learner students	3.2	1.9	3.1	4.0

**Note:** Average total length of suspension is the number of school days suspended among students receiving at least one suspension summed over all suspended students among English learner students and non-English learner students separately in each grade span divided by the total number of students in each group who were suspended. Days lost to expulsion are not included. Sample sizes for English learner students and non-English learner students are given in table B2 in appendix B.

**Source:** Author's analysis of data from the Oregon Department of Education cumulative average daily membership database and discipline incidents database.

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