



# AN OVERVIEW OF EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE PRACTICES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office for Civil Rights

Civil Rights Data Collection

June 2021

# About the Civil Rights Data Collection of the Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

- **The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) covers nearly every public school (pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) in the 50 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico.** This includes charter schools, alternative schools, juvenile justice facilities, and special education facilities. The CRDC collects school district data also.
- **It measures factors that impact education equity and opportunity for students,** including student access to courses, programs, resources, instructional and other staff — and school climate factors, such as student discipline.
- **Its purpose is to monitor how schools are meeting their responsibility to provide equal educational opportunities to students** regardless of race/ethnicity, limited English proficiency, sex, or disability.
- **It is part of OCR's overall strategy for administering and enforcing civil rights statutes** that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, and disability.
- **This presentation summarizes exclusionary school discipline data from the 2017-18 CRDC, the most recent biennial collection.**

# CRDC Data Snapshot: Student Enrollment in 2017-18

In 2017-18, **50.9 million students** attended public schools.

**Boys:** 26,171,327 (51.4%)

**Girls:** 24,750,697 (48.6%)

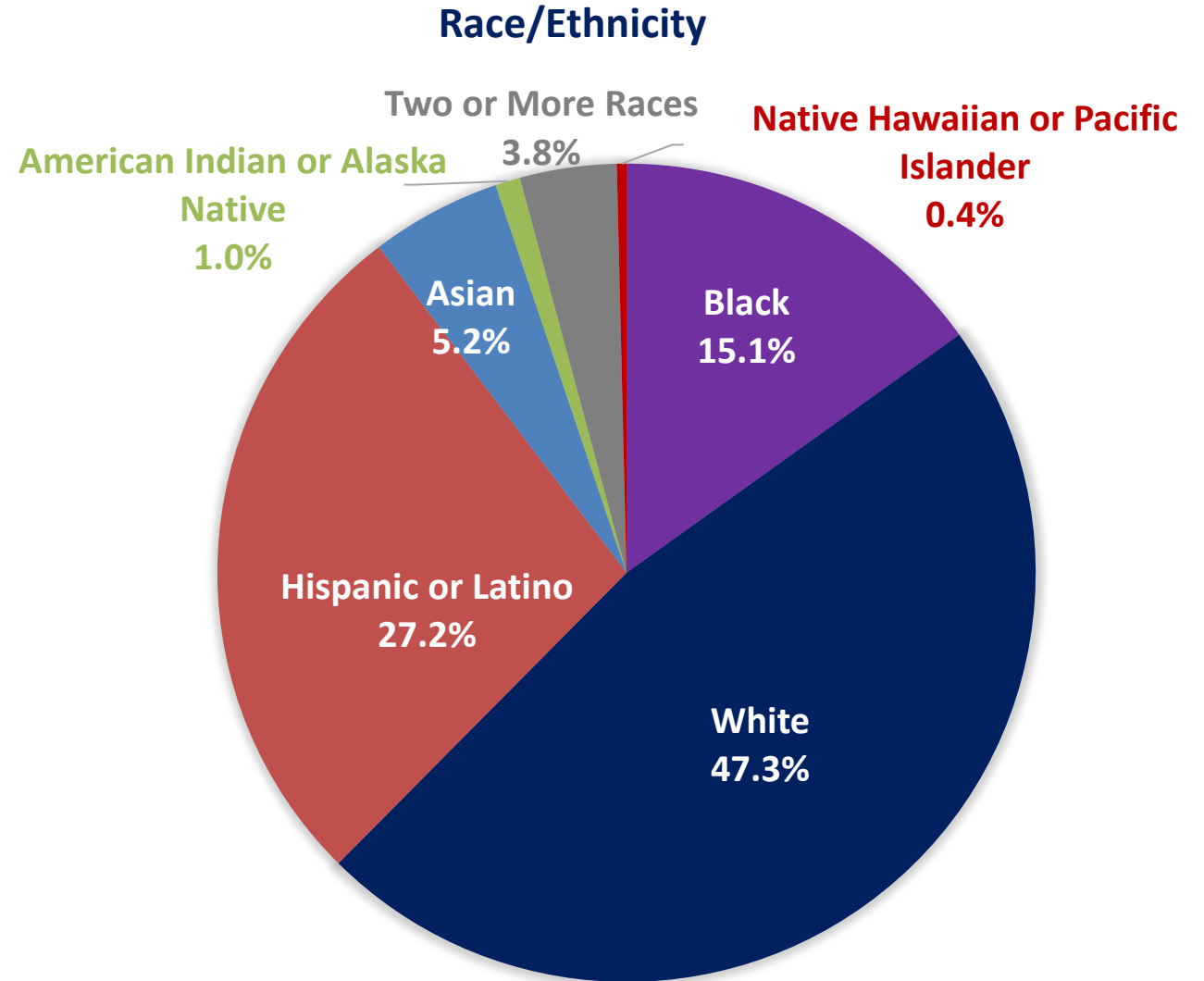
**Students with Disabilities\*:** 8,108,190 (15.9%)

**English Learners:** 5,296,940 (10.4%)

**Number of school districts:** 17,604

**Numbers of schools:** 97,632

\*"Students with Disabilities" include students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and students served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.



# Change in Exclusionary Discipline Practices from 2015-16 to 2017-18

Expulsions without Educational Services	-18%	↓
Expulsions Under Zero Tolerance Policies*	-13%	↓
One or More In-School Suspensions	-3%	↓
One or More Out-of-School Suspensions	-2%	↓
School-Related Arrests	5%	↑
Expulsions with Educational Services	7%	↑
Referrals to Law Enforcement	12%	↑
<b>OVERALL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>↓</b>

From the 2015–16 to 2017–18 school year, there was an overall 2% decline in the use of exclusionary discipline practices in public schools in the U.S.

However, three types of discipline practices increased: 1) school-related arrests; 2) expulsions with educational services; and 3) referrals to law enforcement.

Sources: U.S. Education Department, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2017-18 State and National Estimations, released June 2021, available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/estimations/2017-2018>.  
U.S. Education Department, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2015-16 State and National Estimations, available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/estimations/2015-2016>.

\*A zero-tolerance policy requires mandatory expulsion of any student who commits one or more specified offenses (e.g., offenses involving guns or other weapons, or violent offenses).

# DISCIPLINE OF PRE-SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN 2017-18

# CRDC Data Snapshot: Pre-School Student Enrollment in 2017-18

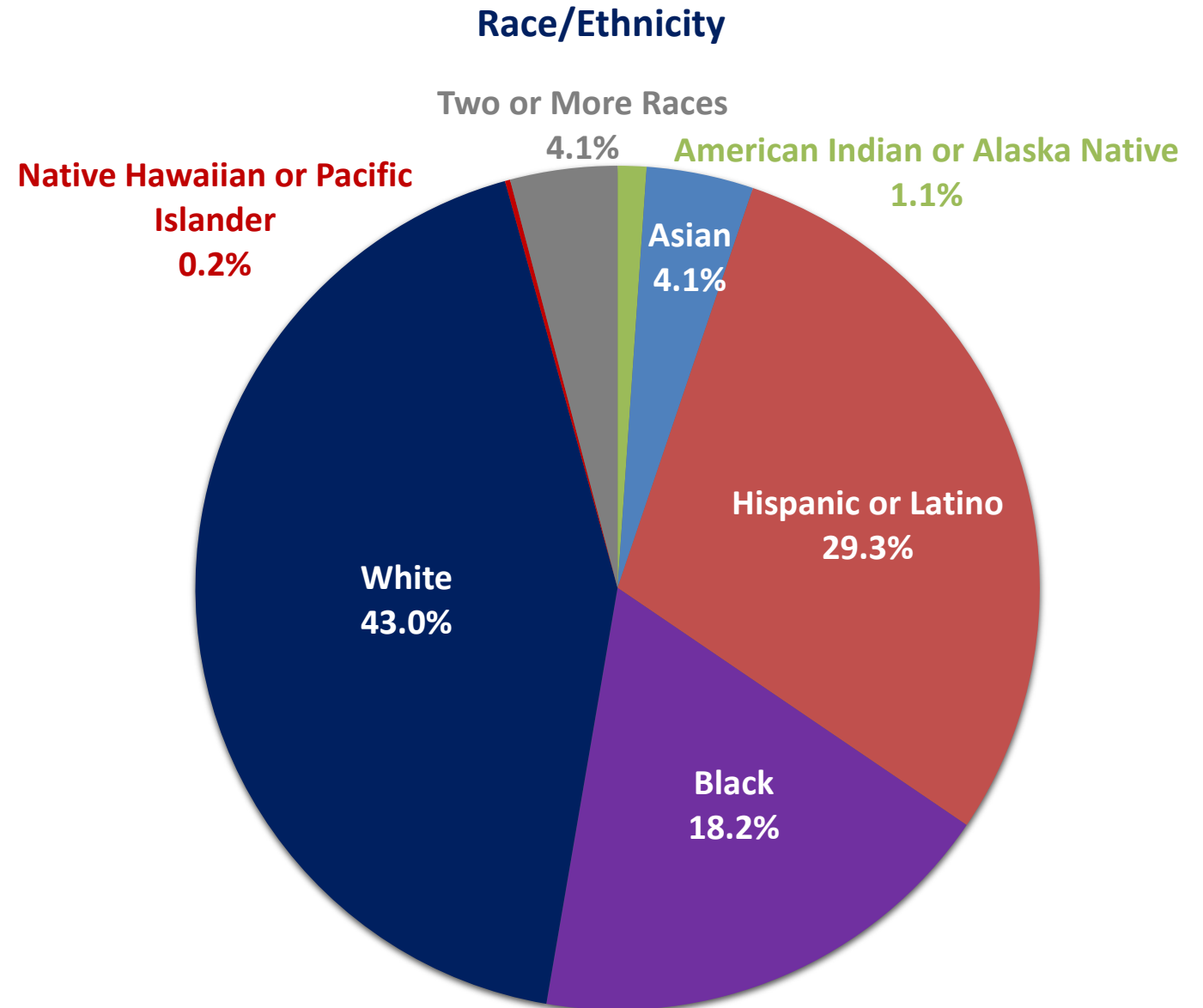
In 2017-18, **1.5 million students** were enrolled in Pre-School.

**Boys:** 784,901 (54.1%)

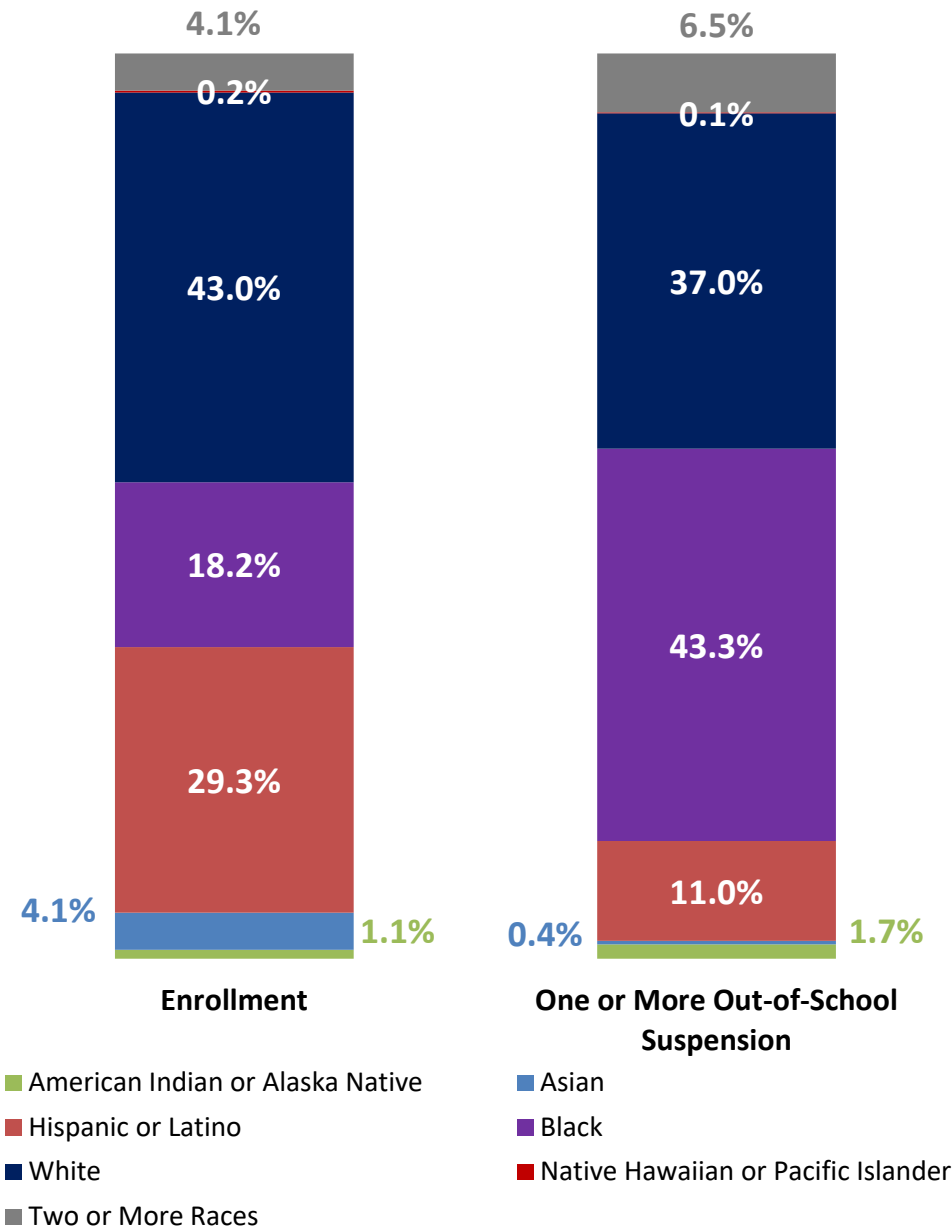
**Girls:** 665,717 (45.9%)

**Students with Disabilities:** 329,515 (22.7%)

**English Learners:** 162,573 (11.2%)



# Suspensions among Pre-School Students in 2017-18



In 2017-18, 2,822 pre-school students received one or more out-of-school suspensions.

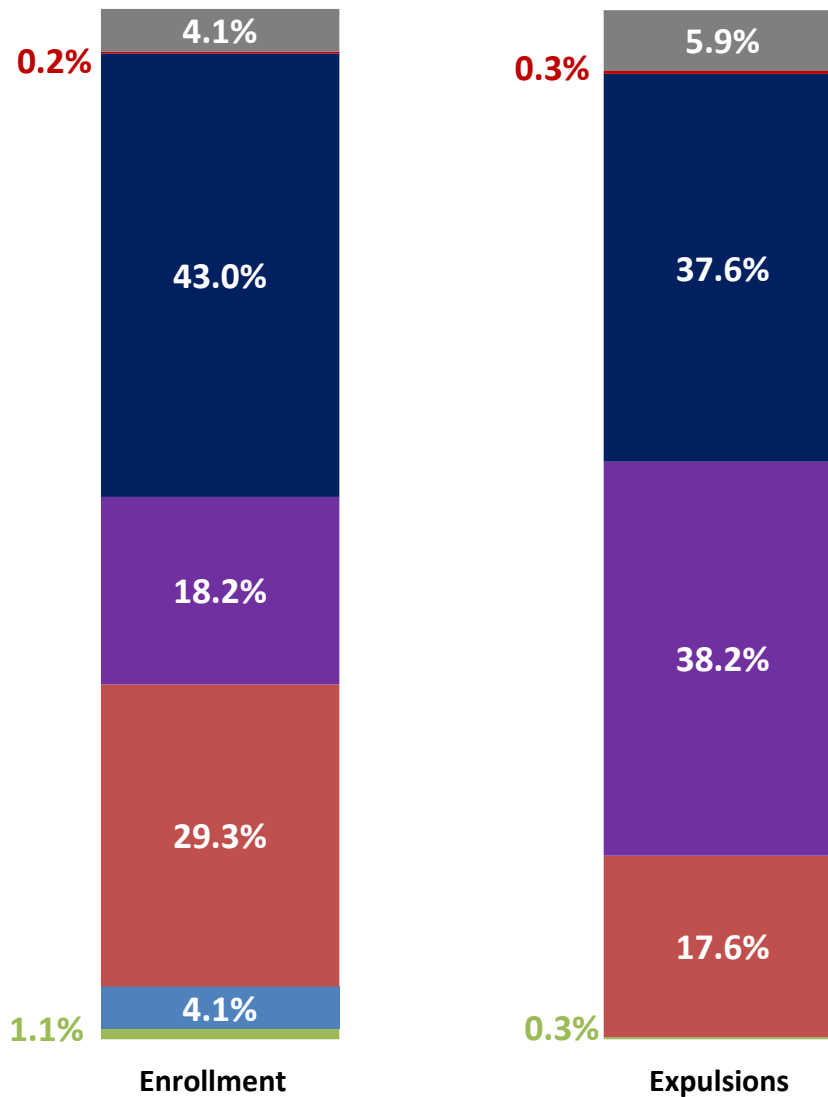
Black pre-school students accounted for 18.2% of total pre-school enrollment but received 43.3% of one or more out of school suspensions.

Multiracial pre-school students accounted for 4.1% of total pre-school enrollment but received 6.5% of one or more out of school suspensions.

American Indian or Alaska Native pre-school students accounted for 1.1% of total pre-school enrollment but received 1.7% of one or more out of school suspensions.

Source: U.S. Education Department, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2017-18 State and National Estimations, released June 2021, available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/estimations/2017-2018>.

# Expulsions among Pre-School Students in 2017-18



Black pre-school students were expelled at rates that were more than twice their share (38.2%) of total pre-school enrollment (18.2%).

Pre-school students who were served under IDEA accounted for 22.7% of total pre-school enrollment but accounted for 56.9% of pre-school students who were expelled.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black
- White
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Two or More Races



# Discipline of Pre-School Students by Race/Ethnicity and Sex in 2017-18

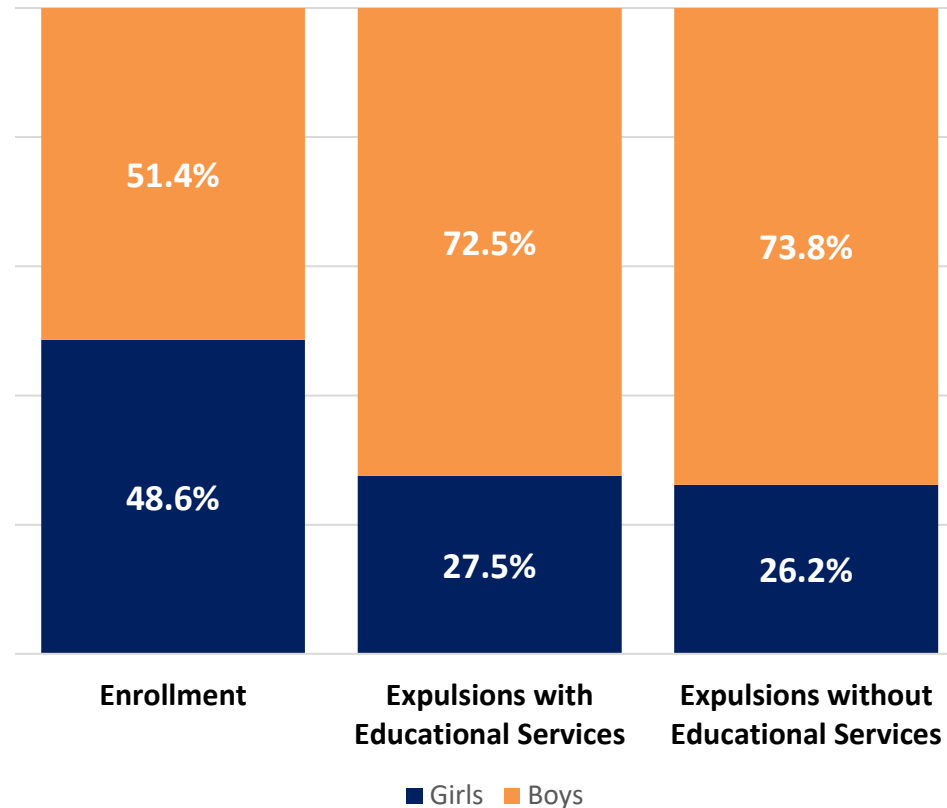
Race/Ethnicity	Boys			Girls		
	Enrollment	One or More Out-of-School Suspensions	Expulsions	Enrollment	One or More Out-of-School Suspensions	Expulsions
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6%	1.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%	0.0%
Asian	2.3%	0.4%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	15.5%	9.5%	16.3%	13.8%	1.5%	1.3%
Black	9.6%	34.2%	30.4%	8.6%	9.1%	7.8%
White	23.8%	32.1%	33.0%	19.2%	4.9%	4.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Two or More Races	2.2%	5.2%	4.6%	1.9%	1.3%	1.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54.1%</b>	<b>83.0%</b>	<b>85.0%</b>	<b>45.9%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>

Pre-school boys were suspended and expelled much more often than pre-school girls. Black pre-school boys received both suspensions (34.2%) and expulsions (30.4%) at rates that were more than three times their share of total pre-school enrollment (9.6%). White pre-school boys accounted for 23.8% of total pre-school enrollment and received 32.1% of one or more out-of-school suspensions and 33.0% of expulsions. Latino or Hispanic boys accounted for 15.5% of pre-school enrollment but received 16.3% of expulsions.

Black pre-school girls were the only group across all races and ethnicities for girls where a disparity was observed. Black pre-school girls accounted for 8.6% of total pre-school enrollment but received 9.1% of one or more out-of-school suspensions.

# EXPULSIONS IN K-12 SCHOOLS IN 2017-18

# School Expulsions by Sex in 2017-18

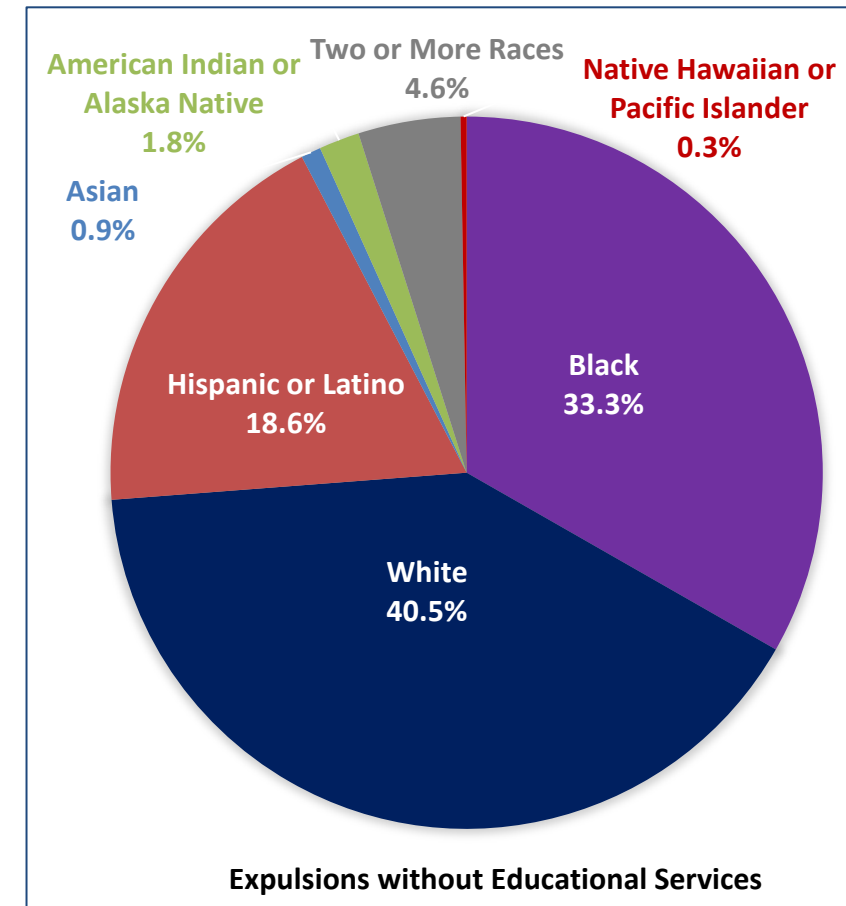
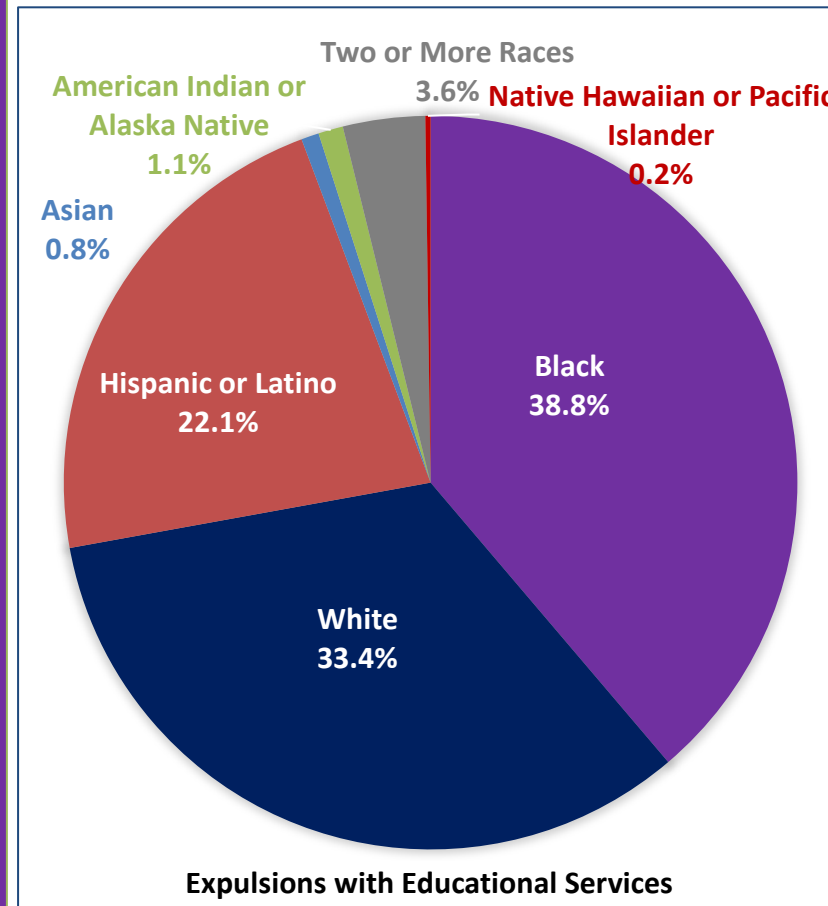


In 2017-18, boys were expelled disproportionately compared to girls. Of all expulsions from school, boys received 72.5% of expulsions with educational services and 73.8% of expulsions without educational services.

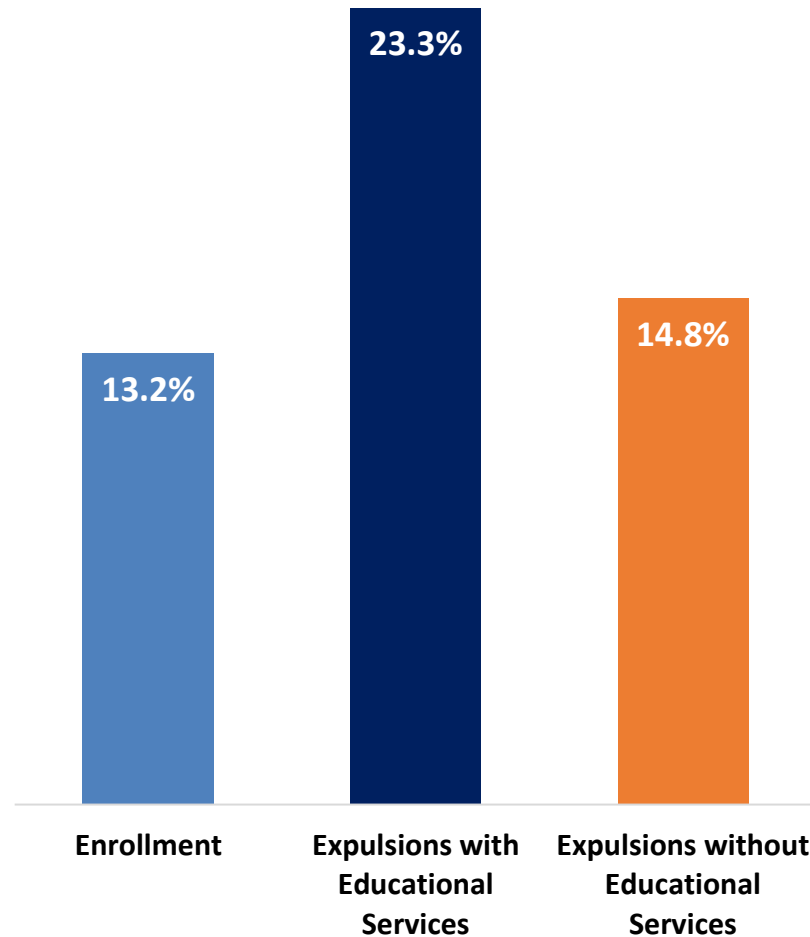
# School Expulsions by Race/Ethnicity in 2017-18

Black students, who accounted for 15.1% of total student enrollment, were expelled at rates that were more than twice their share of total student enrollment—38.8% of expulsions with educational services and 33.3% of expulsions without educational services.

American Indian or Alaska Native students were expelled at rates (1.1% and 1.8%) that were higher than their share of total student enrollment (1.0%).



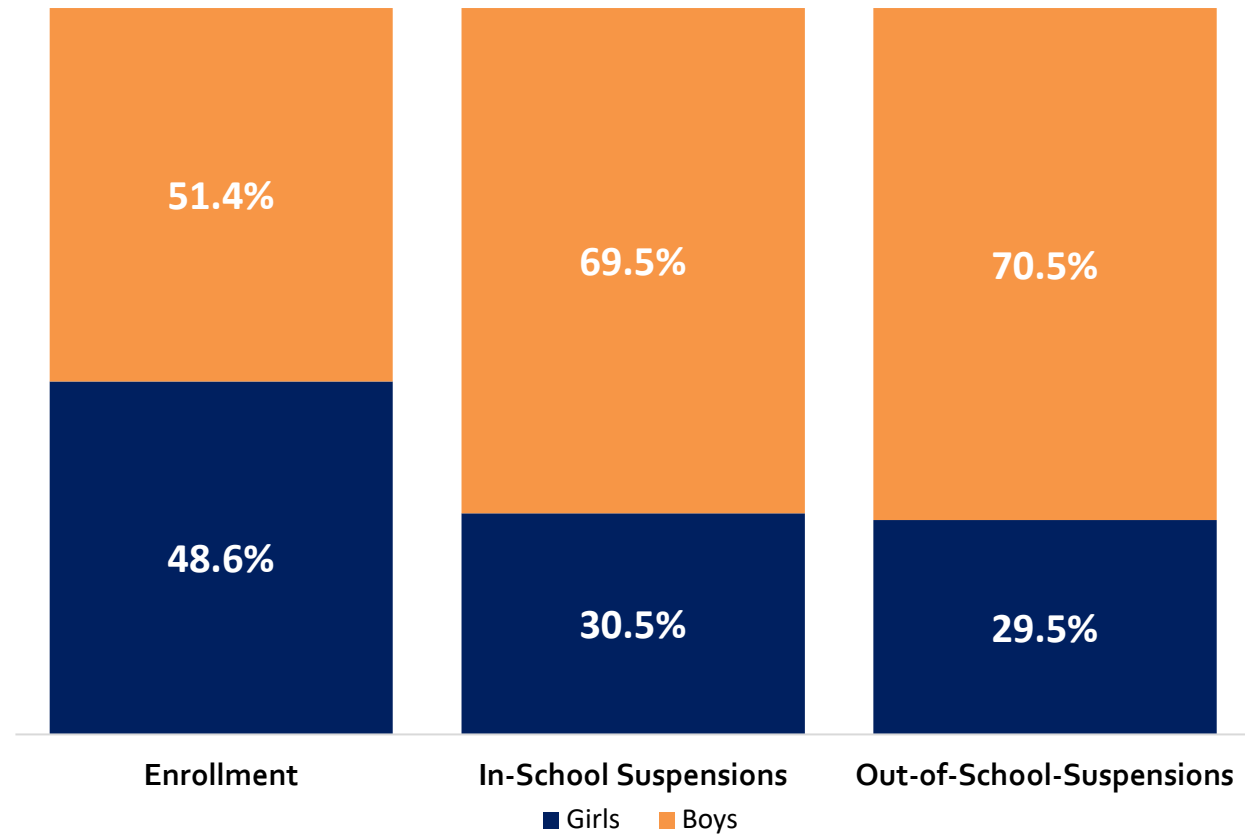
# School Expulsions among Students Served Under IDEA in 2017-18



In 2017-18, students with disabilities served under IDEA represented 13.2% of the total student enrollment and received 23.3% of all expulsions with educational services and 14.8% of expulsions without education services.

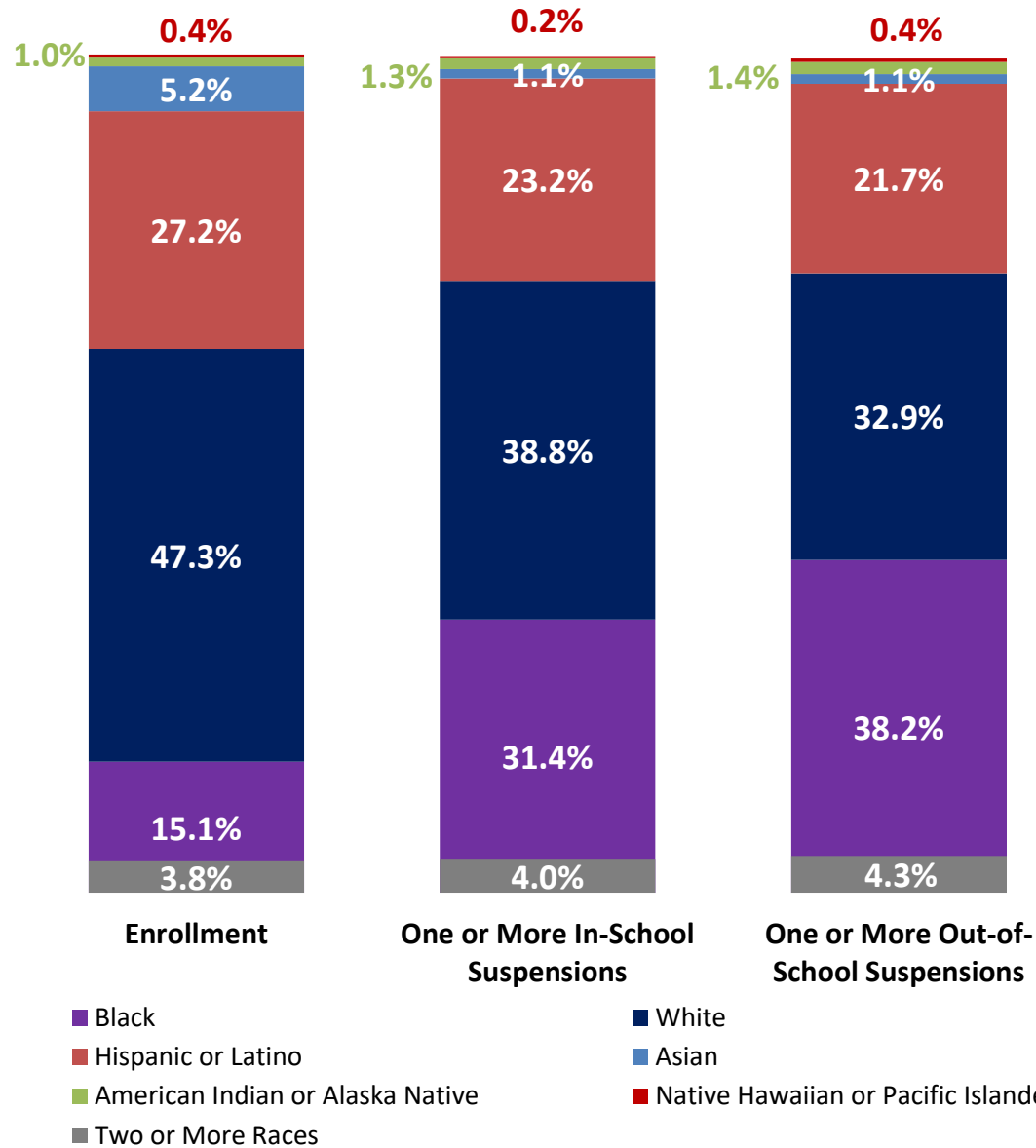
# SUSPENSIONS IN K-12 SCHOOLS IN 2017-18

# School Suspensions by Sex in 2017-18



In 2017-18, boys accounted for 51.4% of total student enrollment but received 69.5% of in-school suspensions and 70.5% of out-of-school suspensions.

# School Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity in 2017-18



In 2017-18, Black students received one or more in-school suspensions (31.4%) and one or more out-of-school suspensions (38.2%) at rates that were more than twice their share of total student enrollment (15.1%).

American Indian or Alaska Native students were slightly overrepresented as well.



# School Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity and Sex in 2017-18

Race/Ethnicity	BOYS			GIRLS		
	Enrollment	One or More In School Suspensions	One or More Out-of-School Suspensions	Enrollment	One or More In School Suspensions	One or More Out-of-School Suspensions
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native</b>	0.5%	0.9%	1.0%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%
<b>Asian</b>	2.6%	0.8%	0.9%	2.5%	0.2%	0.2%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	13.9%	15.8%	15.3%	13.3%	7.4%	6.4%
<b>Black</b>	7.7%	20.1%	24.9%	7.4%	11.2%	13.3%
<b>White</b>	24.4%	28.7%	24.9%	22.9%	10.2%	7.9%
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</b>	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
<b>Two or More Races</b>	1.9%	2.7%	3.0%	1.9%	1.3%	1.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>48.6%</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	<b>29.7%</b>

Black girls were the only group across all races/ethnicities for girls where a disparity was observed. Black girls received in-school suspensions (11.2%) and out-of-school suspensions (13.3%) at rates almost two times their share of total student enrollment (7.4%).

Black boys received both in-school suspensions (20.1%) and out-of-school suspensions (24.9%) suspensions at rates more than three times their share of total student enrollment (7.7%)—the largest disparity across all race/ethnicity and sex groupings. White boys experienced higher rates of in-schools suspensions (28.7%) relative to their share of total student enrollment (24.4%). American Indian or Alaska Native and multiracial boys also experienced disparities in school suspensions.

# School Suspensions among Students with Disabilities Served under IDEA in 2017-18

Students with disabilities served under IDEA represented 13.2% of total student enrollment but received 20.5% of one or more in-school suspensions and 24.5% of one or more out-of-school suspensions.

Disparities worsen when the data are disaggregated by race. Black students served under IDEA accounted for 2.3% of total student enrollment but received 6.2% of one or more in-school suspensions and 8.8% of one or more out-of-school suspensions.

# SCHOOL DAYS MISSED DUE TO OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS IN 2017-18



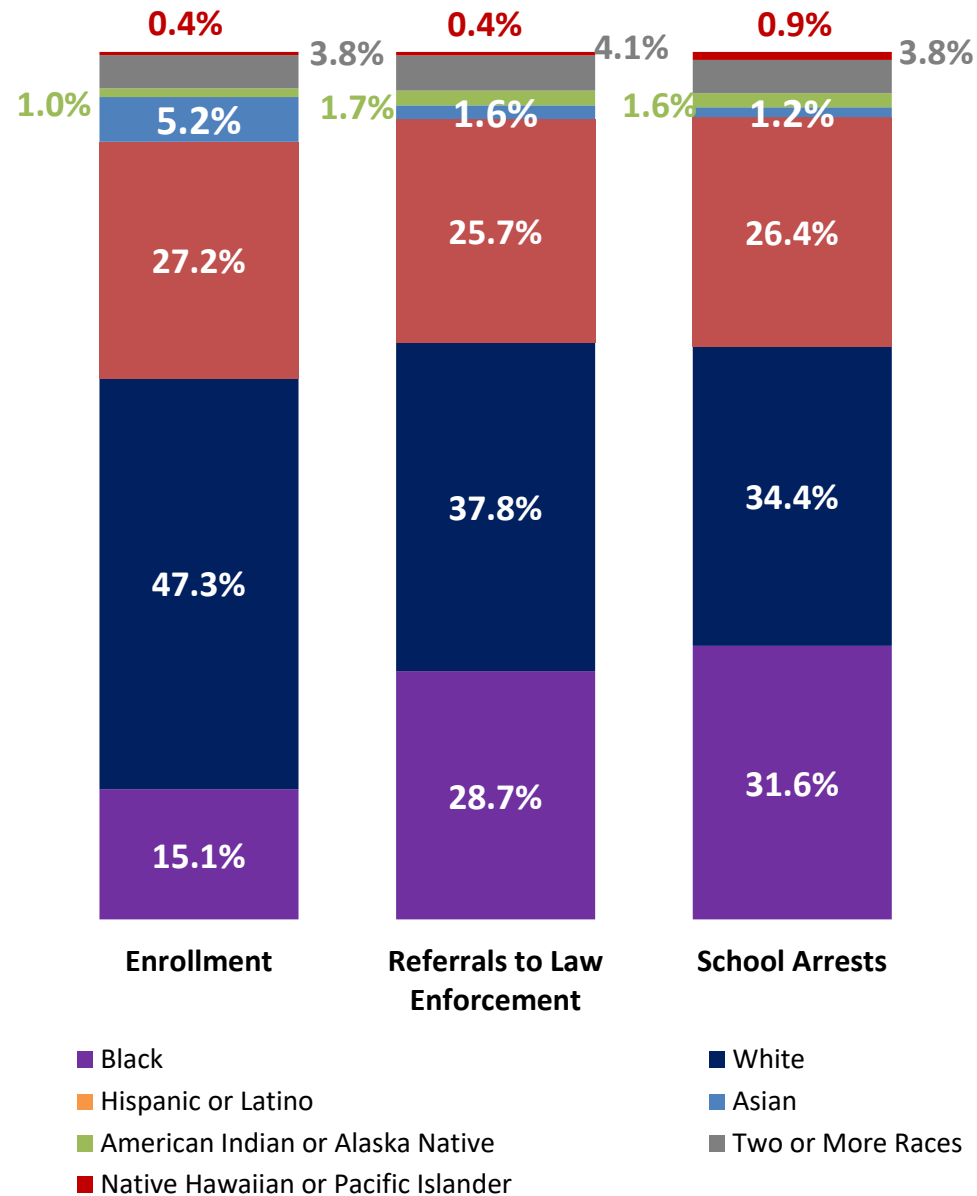
# 11,205,797

The total number of school days  
that all students missed due to  
out-of-school suspensions.

# REFERRALS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, SCHOOL-RELATED ARRESTS, AND TRANSFERS TO ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS IN K-12 SCHOOLS IN 2017-18

# School-Related Arrests and Referrals to Law Enforcement in 2017-18\*

\*A referral to law enforcement includes situations where a school official reports a student to a law enforcement agency or official, including a school police unit, for an incident that occurs on school grounds, during school-related events, or while taking school transportation, regardless of whether official action is taken. Citations, tickets, court referrals, and school-related arrests are considered referrals to law enforcement.

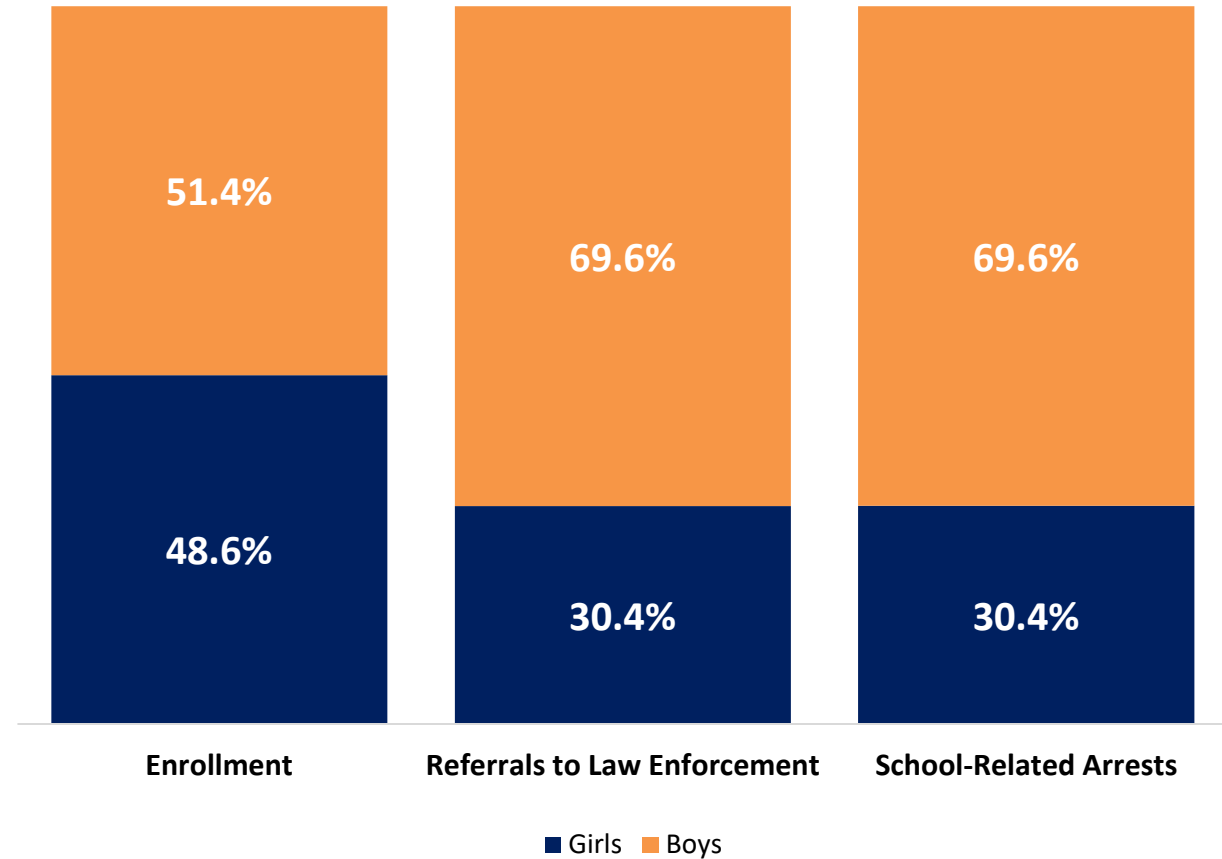


In 2017-18, Black students accounted for 28.7% of all students referred to law enforcement and 31.6% of all students arrested at school or during a school-related activity—twice their share of total student enrollment of 15.1%.

Similar patterns of disparities were observed for Black students served under IDEA who accounted for 2.3% of total student enrollment, but 8.4% of students referred to law enforcement and 9.1% of students who were arrested.

Source: U.S. Education Department, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2017-18 State and National Estimations, released June 2021, available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/estimations/2017-2018>.

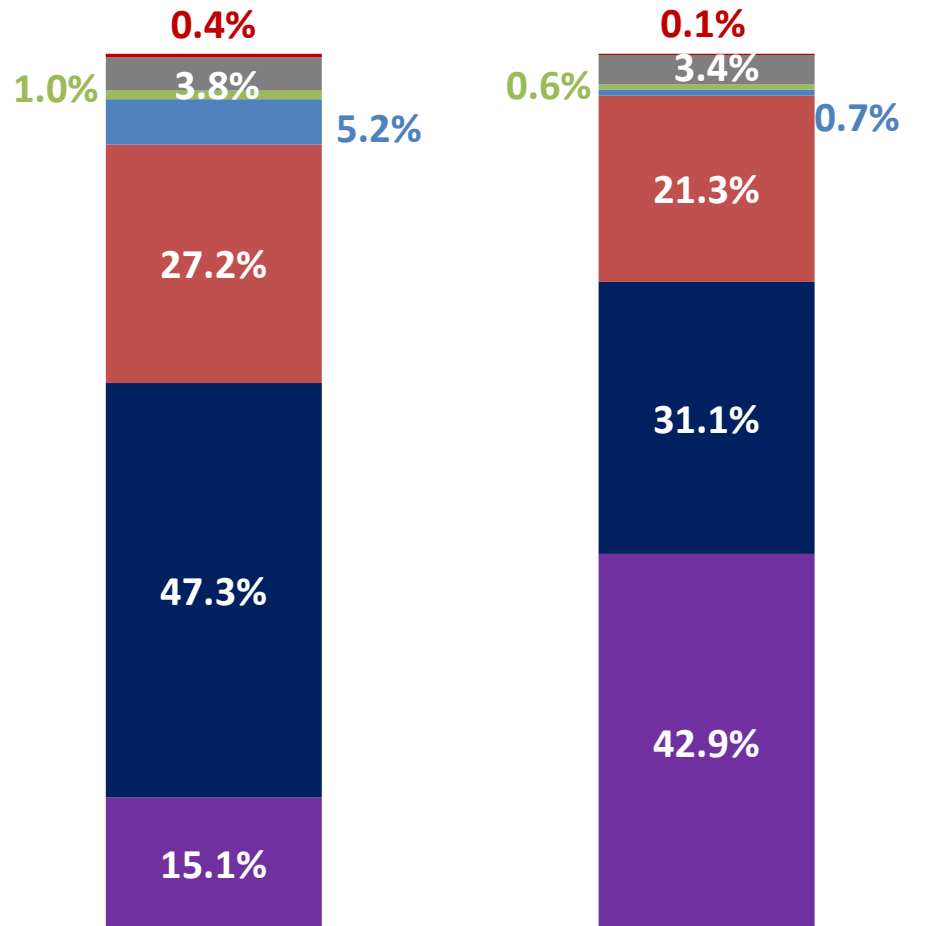
# School-Related Arrests and Referrals to Law Enforcement by Sex in 2017-18



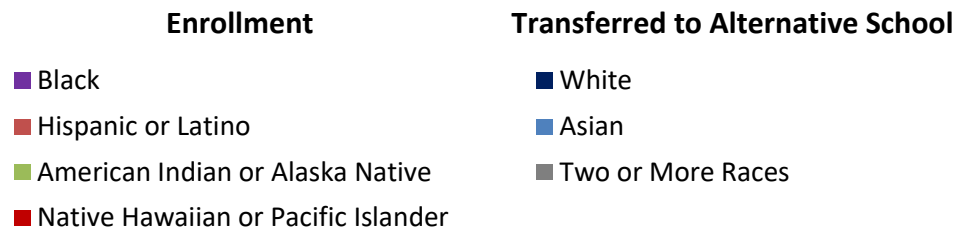
In 2017-18, boys were 51.4% of student enrollment, but 69.6% of referrals to law enforcement and school arrests.

# Transfers to Alternative Schools in 2017-18\*

\* An **alternative school** is a public elementary or secondary school that addresses the needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school program, such as certain types of academic difficulties, discipline problems, or both.



In 2017-18, Black students accounted for 15.1% of the total student enrollment but 42.9% of all transfers to alternative schools.



Source: U.S. Education Department, Office for Civil Rights, 2017-18 Civil Rights Data Collection, released October 2020, updated May 2021, available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov>.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CRDC

Visit OCR's website at  
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/data.html>

and

<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/>

With CRDC questions contact:

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