



## Be Your Child's Best Advocate



Early exposure to the criminal justice system can set young people on a descending trajectory, significantly limiting their access to opportunities. Today, many schools are making the switch toward restorative practices.

When charged with assault, students are removed from the classroom and lose valuable instructional time. Being removed from their academic and social environment can make students feel even more isolated and contribute to academic gaps. Students charged with assault are often labeled as “problem students” or “discipline issues”, and that stigma can carry over year to year adversely affecting their academic opportunities and sense of belonging at the school.

### **Pflugerville ISD Assault Charge Data**

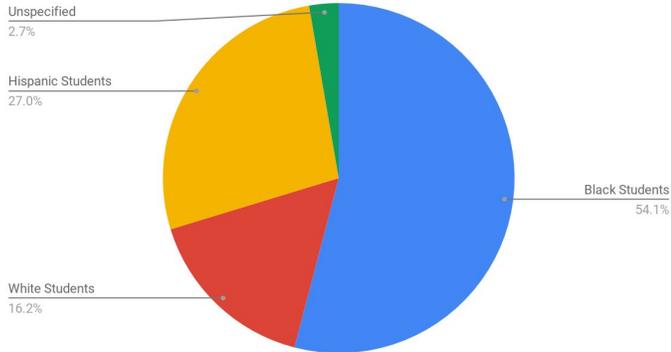
#### **2016-2017 School Year**

During the 2016-2017 school year, over half (54%) of the assault charges filed in the Pflugerville School District were against Black children. A startling fact when you consider that Black students make up only 16.8% of the District's student body. According to the data obtained from Pflugerville ISD Police and enrollment demographic data from Texas Education Agency, 37 total assault charges were filed against Pflugerville ISD children. Based on these figures, Black students were roughly 3.3 times more likely to be charged with assault than White students and twice as likely as Hispanic students. Fourteen of these assault charges were filed by Pflugerville ISD staff against its students.

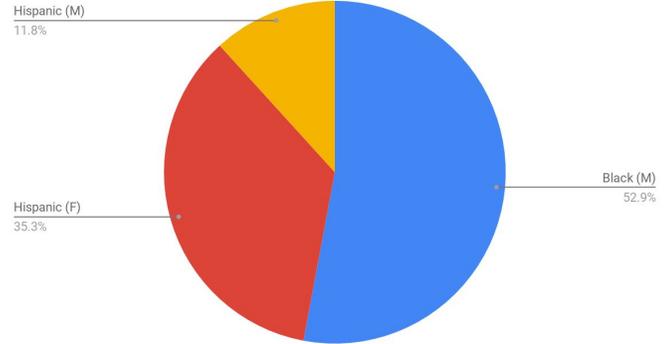
### 2017-2018 School Year

In response to the disparity, the district worked to address the issues internally and community groups partnered with the PFISD Police Department to explore ways to address the high number of assault charges. As a result, during the 2017-2018 school year, the number of assault charges decreased in certain schools, **but the disproportionality among student groups by ethnicity increased** (Figure 2).

2016-2017 PFISD School Assault Data



2017 - 2018 PFISD School Assault Data



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### Know The Policy & Get Legal Help Fast

If a child has been accused of assault on a school campus, he or she is likely to be removed to an alternative learning facility, often referred to as a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP). If a student is removed, the student is entitled to a removal process including a conference within three (3) days of the student's removal. The conference is intended to consider any mitigating factors, to ensure that the child is treated fairly, and to confirm removal is proper. Should the student and their parents not agree with the results of the Conference, they may appeal the decision to the school board. Connecting with an attorney to defend your child is a best practice!

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<sup>1</sup> 2017-2018 Data provided by Pflugerville ISD Police Department

### **What Can I Do as a Parent?** **Educate, Connect, Communicate**

Know the rules! First day packets are overwhelming. Don't just sign and return the Student Code of Conduct acknowledgement form that you receive. Make the time to go online to review the campus rules with your child. You may also request a hard copy of the student code of conduct from your child's campus.

Your child's school needs and values your partnership. Here are some ways you can open and maintain the lines of communication with the school:

- **Sign up** for the Parent Information portal. This allows you to check attendance and grades to see what assignments are missing, and to email teachers directly from the portal.
- **Attend** open house or parent events, if your family schedule allows.
- **Subscribe!** Keep current with what is happening at the school not only for your child's grades but also for any new rules and decisions that are being made.
- **Communicate!** Meet your child's teachers and open up lines of communication with them. Learn the teachers' individual classroom management systems. The moment you have a concern or compliment about academics or discipline, reach out to them.
- **Contact** your campus counselor or social worker to discuss school resources, your child's needs, and to facilitate scheduling meetings with teachers and administrators. Don't wait for a significant discipline situation to occur. Staff is available to help you and your child.
- **Advocate!** Every parent can request a meeting with their child and a teacher or administrator. Meeting with school staff also helps hold students, teachers, and administrators accountable for following protocol and school-wide procedures.
- **Report!** Frequently incidents of physical confrontation are a "final straw" event. If you are not comfortable personally reaching out to campus staff, you can use [Anonymous Alerts](#) to report bullying, threats, and safety concern.

Working together, we can make a difference.

**Contributors:** Black Pflugerville Student Advocates, MEASURE & Pflugerville ISD