



Parent
Leadership
Institute
THE REMIX!

By Karen Scott Greene, Esq.



Parent Leadership Institute

Program Overview

PLI is a seven-month long program of workshops and training sessions that allowed the participants to deep dive into educational policies on the national, state and local levels and provide participants with a toolbox for advocating in their communities.

We collaborated as teams to research school discipline and budgeting and attended district and local school council meetings.



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BENEFITS

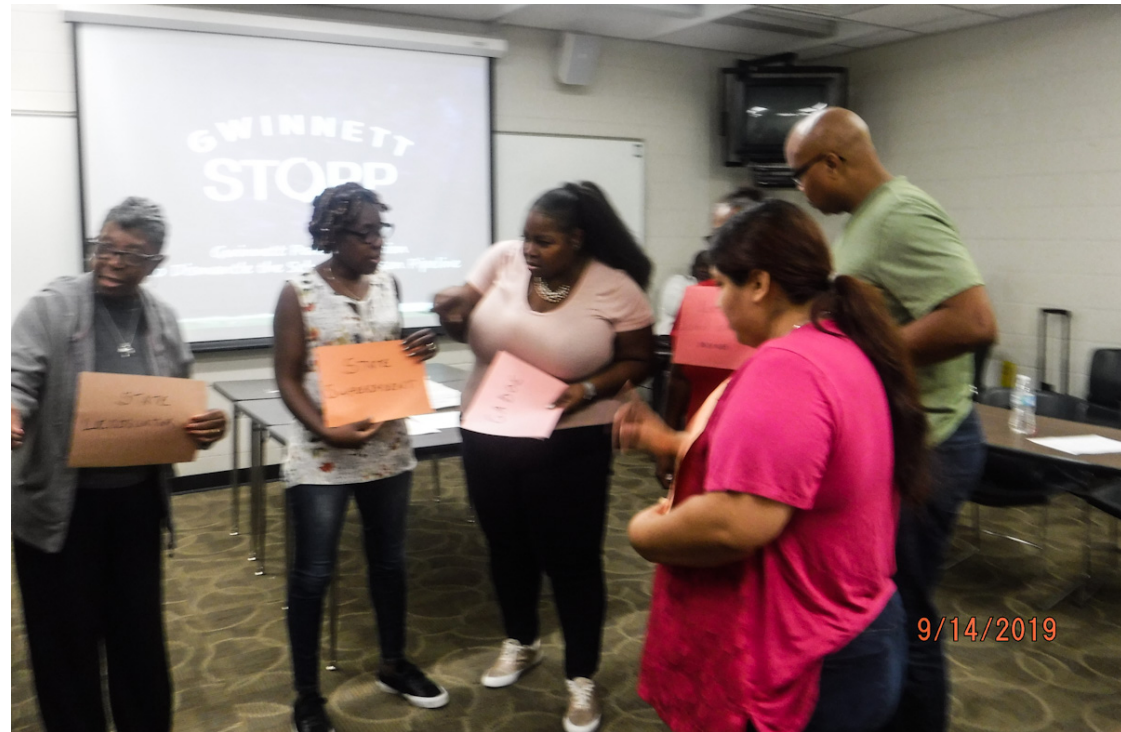
How I benefitted from PLI-

1. Ability to scrutinize educational funding and examine how schools use funding to serve or (NOT) serve our children;
2. Provided with a tool box for developing strategies to make change happen;
3. Examined school disciplinary rules at the district and local school level; see the connection of how vague policies are weaponized against children to push them out of school;
4. Learned how to research and evaluate local, state and national plans and policies.

As a child advocate this program has changed how I will handle school disciplinary issues for my clients:

Examine the district and the school's disciplinary policies to determine if there is a disproportionate impact on student's of color; look for creative and alternative resources for disciplinary actions.

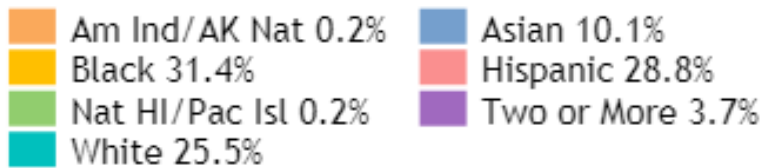
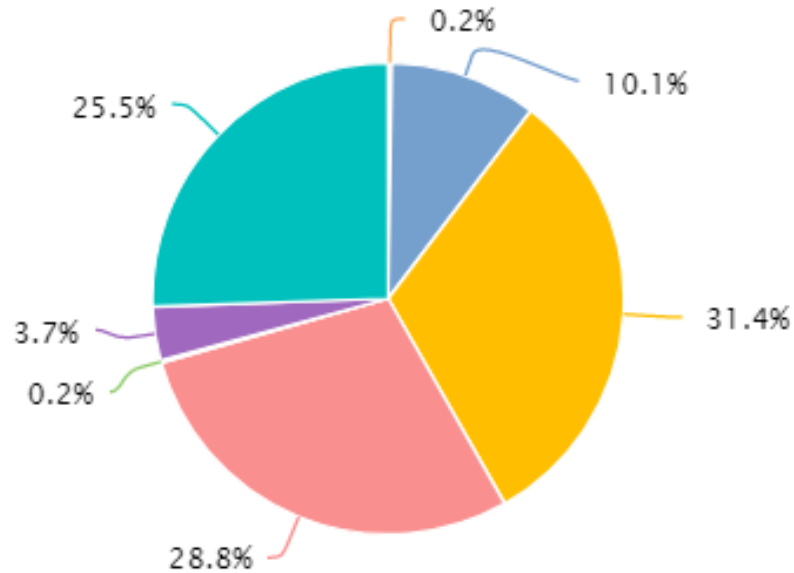
How will I use the resources and knowledge gained in PLI?



Discipline Data for Gwinnett County

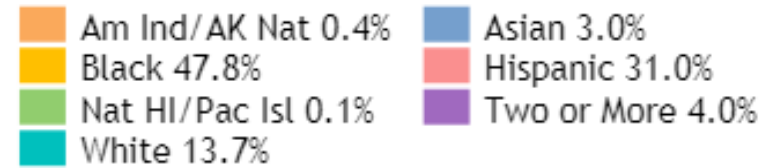
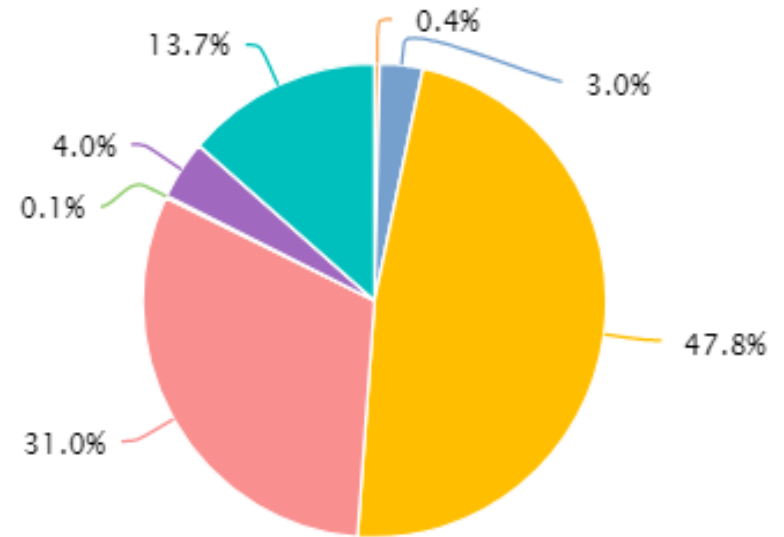
District Enrollment

n=175,958



In-School Suspensions

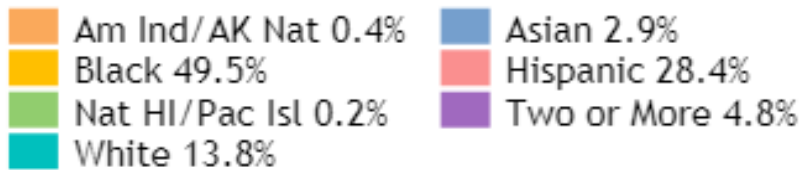
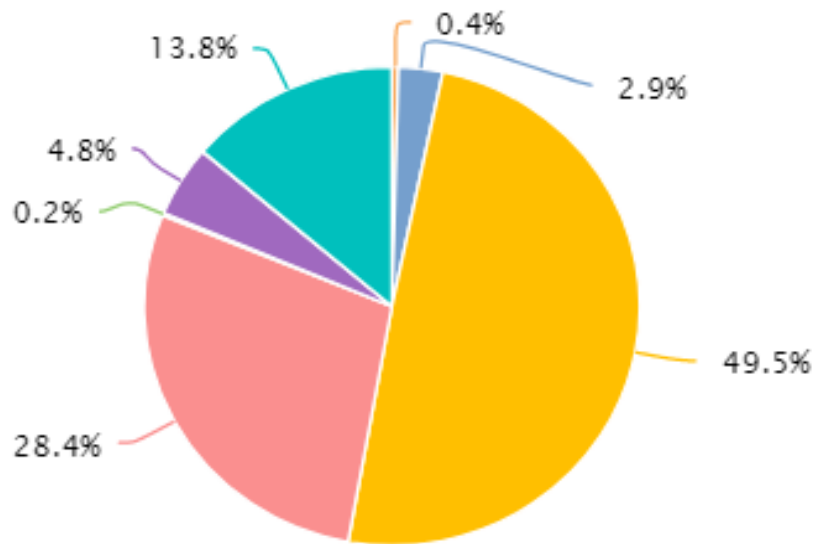
n=15,237



Discipline Data for Gwinnett County

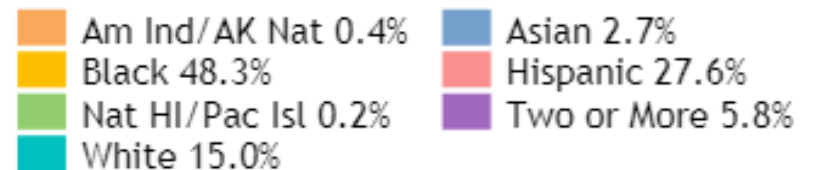
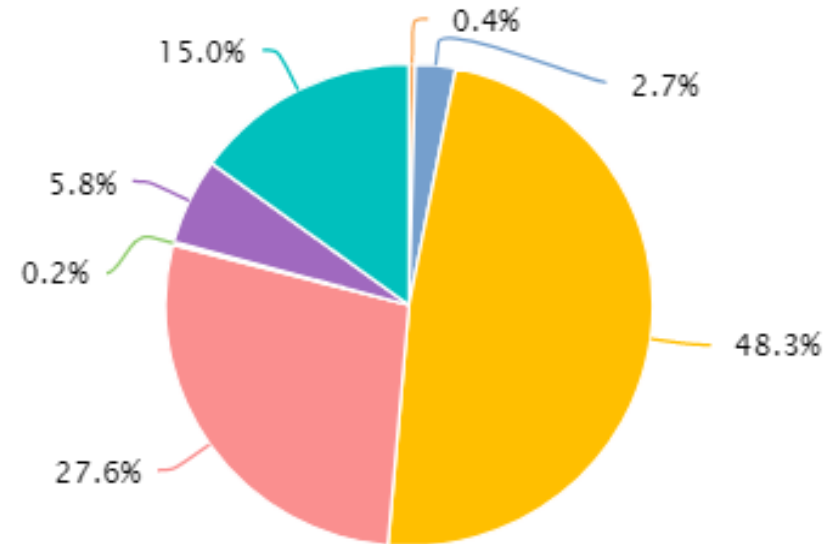
Out-of-School Suspensions

n=10,425



Expulsions

n=973



Victor Hugo's 19th century remark, "He who opens a school door closes a prison," still holds true today.



- ❑ Dropouts are 3.5 times more likely to be arrested than high school graduates.
- ❑ Nationally, 68 percent of all males in prison do not have a high school diploma.
- ❑ Many so-called dropouts who end up in jail are actually push-outs. Under the guise of zero tolerance, initiated after Columbine, students are often asked to leave school as a first response rather than a last resort. Discriminatory practices are common.
- ❑ In 2011-2012, black youth represented 16 percent of the juvenile population, but 34 percent of the students expelled from U.S. schools. Black students are three times more likely than whites to be suspended. The majority of teens in the juvenile justice system engaged in non-violent crimes such as truancy or disruptive behavior.



If we can keep them in school, chances are greater that we can keep them out of jail.

Juvenile incarceration decreases the likelihood of high school graduation by 13 percent. Additionally, those who are incarcerated as juveniles are 15 percent more likely to be incarcerated as adults for violent crimes, and 14 percent more likely to be incarcerated as adults for property crimes, a concept known as recidivism. The probability of incarceration increases with childhood experiences with the juvenile justice system, often times with minor crimes, such as property crimes.

According to a report by The Hamilton Project, there is nearly a 70 percent chance that an African-American man without his high school diploma will be imprisoned by his mid-thirties. There is a 16.6 percent unemployment rate for African-Americans without a high school diploma, showing that men in this demographic have about the same chance of being incarcerated than being employed.





PLI is beneficial to ending the school to prison pipeline. It trains parents and community partners how to advocate, research and examine policies to determine how are impacting our youth.

The PLI graduates will then take this information to our communities, administrators, school boards and legislators to push for policies and laws that help our children stay and school, graduate and be successful.





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References:

1. “Schools v. prisons: Education's the way to cut prison population,” op-ed by Deborah Stipek, [Print](#), May 16, 2014, [San Jose Mercury News](#)
2. Office of Civil Rights Data, <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/Page?t=d&eid=28916&syk=8&pid=2278>
3. “High School Dropouts More Likely to Go to Prison,” [Izza Choudhry](#), Opinion Editor March 19, 2018