

CONNECTICUT
VOICES
FOR CHILDREN

School Discipline in Connecticut, 2008-2013

Governor's Youth and Urban Violence Commission

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Introducing Connecticut Voices for Children

Mission

All Connecticut children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Methods

Research, Data, and Fiscal Analysis

Public Policy

Advocacy and Public Education

Core Issues

Healthy Child Development

Universal High-Quality Education

Equity and Opportunity

Strategic Investment

School Discipline & the Commission

- An expulsion or suspension leads to an increase likelihood of subsequent sanctions, including school-based arrests.
- A school-based arrest is one vivid entrance point into the juvenile justice system.
- Entrance into the juvenile justice system leads to long-term harm:
 - Youth Violence
 - Adult Incarceration
 - Dropping out of school
 - Decreased academic achievement
 - Reliance on state-funded programs
 - Decreased lifetime earnings
- Children of color are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system.

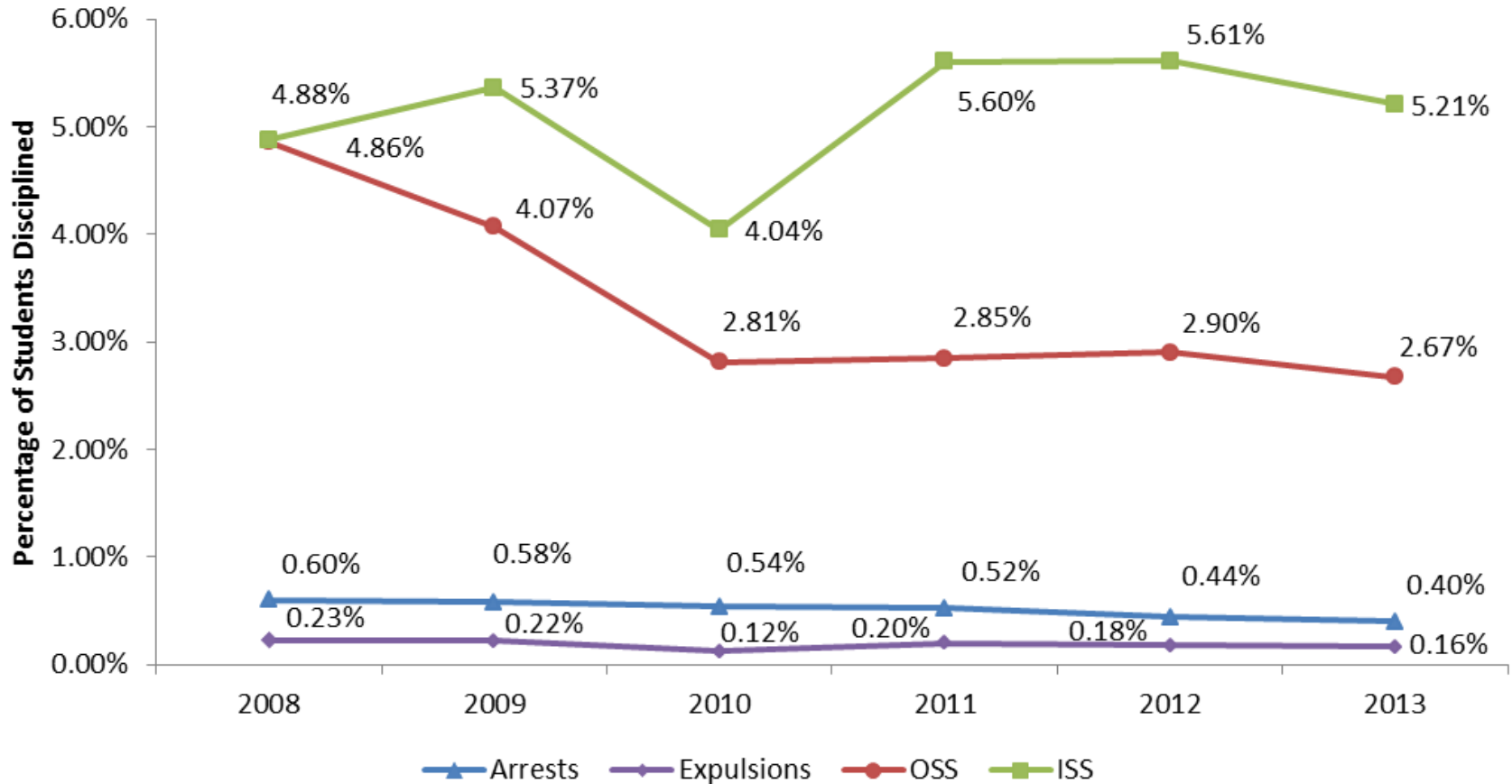
Our Research

- Why?
 - Conversations across the state about reducing unnecessary school discipline practices.
 - Research showing that exclusionary discipline doesn't work.
- School discipline: school-based arrests, expulsions, and suspensions (out-of-school and in-school)
- Examined the number of students disciplined, who is being disciplined, and the reasons why students were excluded from the classroom.

Major Findings

- Since 2008, the number of students arrested, expelled, and suspended in Connecticut has **decreased notably**.
- Despite the overall reduction in exclusionary school discipline, **too many students are pushed out of school for “School Policy Violations,”** behaviors that could be more effectively addressed in the classroom.
- Schools continue to arrest, expel, and suspend **minority students, special education students, and students from poorer districts** at rates disproportionate to their representation in the student population.

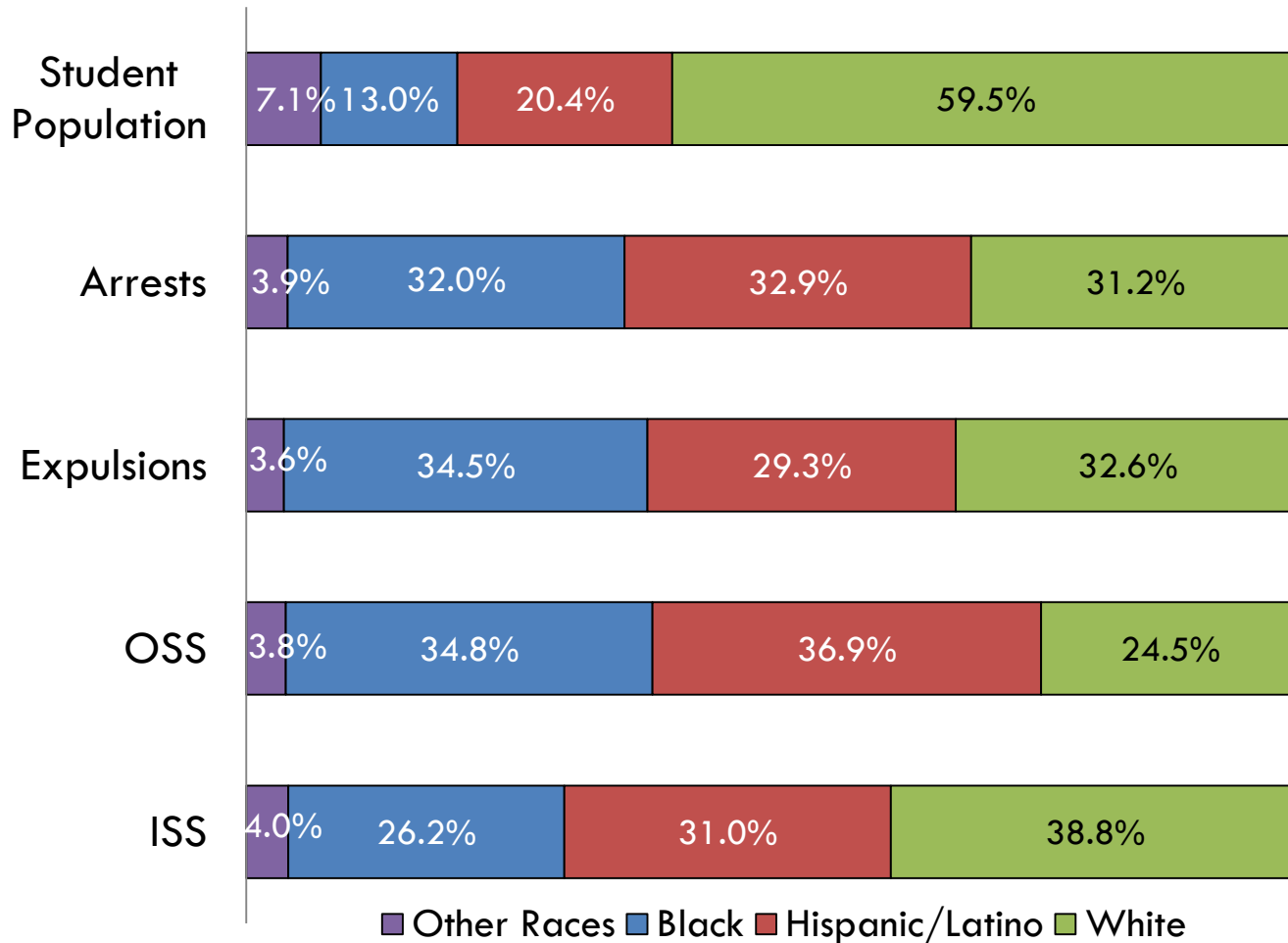
Percentage of Students Disciplined, 2008-2013



Nearly 1 in 10 Arrests for “School Policy Violations”

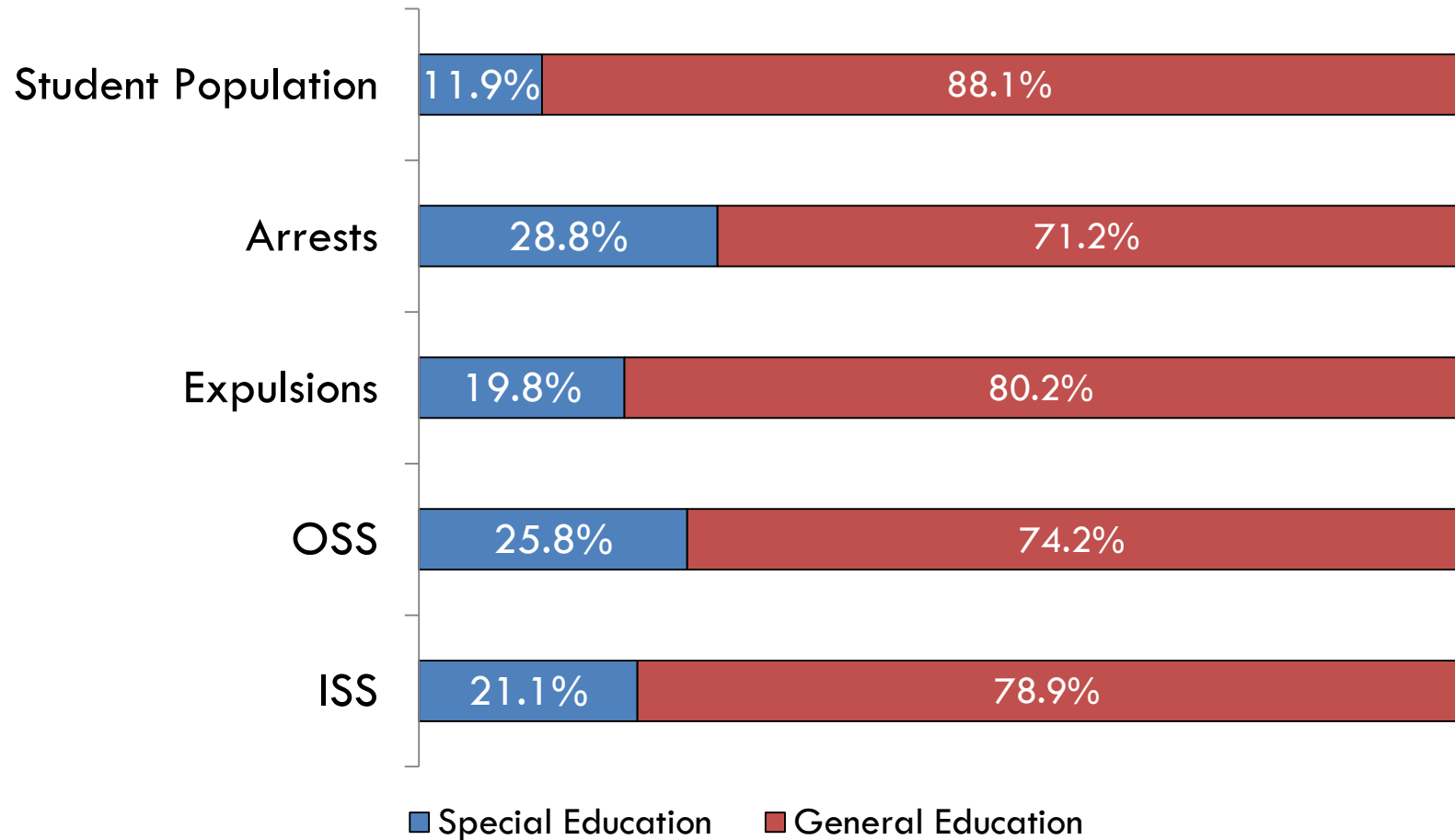
<u>Reason for Arrest</u>	2013
Fighting/Battery	32.7%
Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco	16.9%
Physical/Verbal Confrontation/Conduct Unbecoming	15.1%
School Policy Violations	8.9%
Personally Threatening Behavior	8.1%
Weapons	6.3%
Theft/Theft Related Behaviors	6.1%
Violent Crimes Against Persons	2.6%
Property Damage	1.8%
Sexually Related Behavior	1.6%

Students of Color Disproportionately Excluded from the Classroom



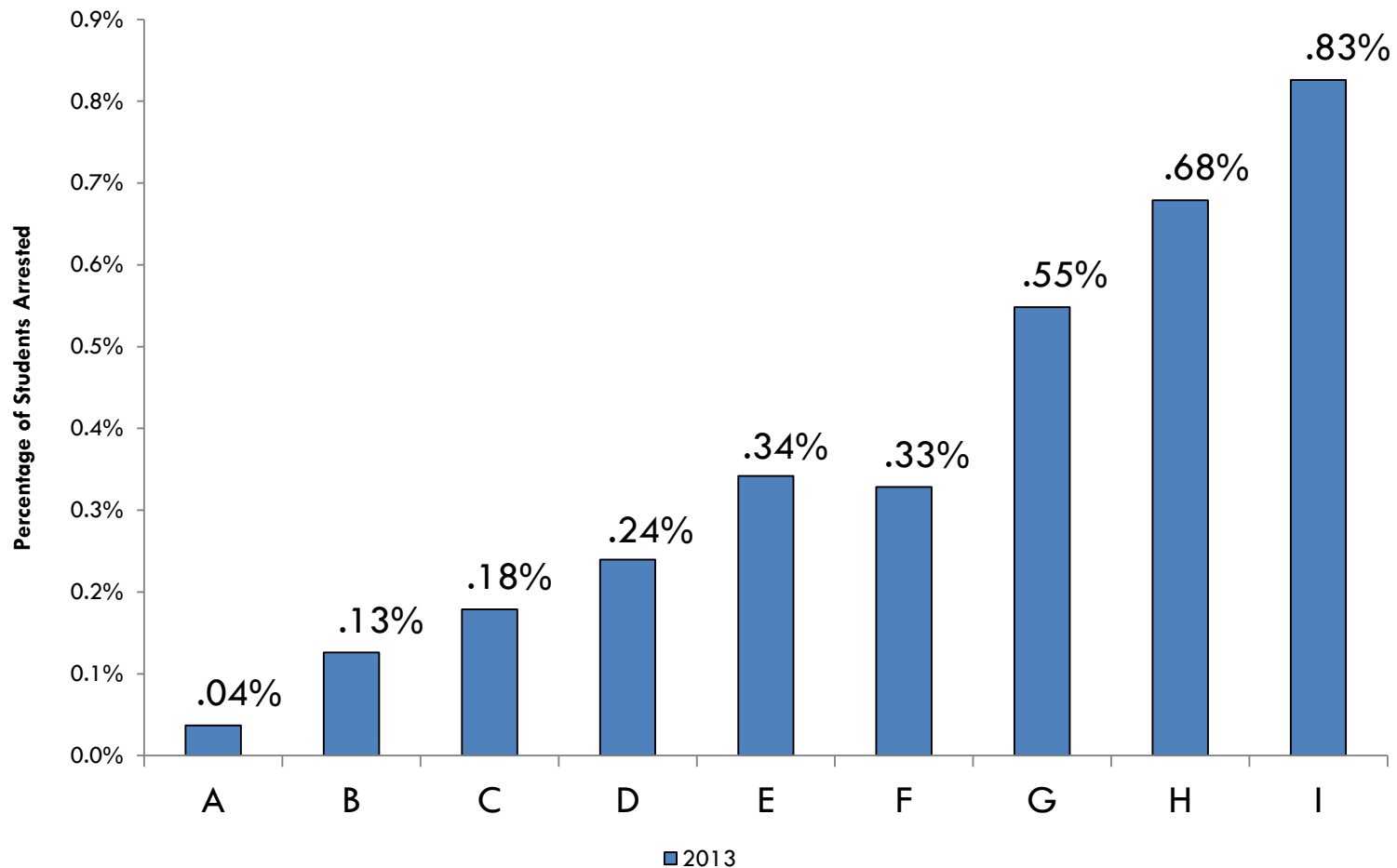
In 2013, Black students were **almost 5 times more likely** to be arrested than white students, and Hispanic/Latino students were **over 3 times more likely** to be arrested.

Special Ed. Students Disproportionately Excluded from the Classroom



In 2013, special education students were **3 times more likely** to be arrested than regular education students.

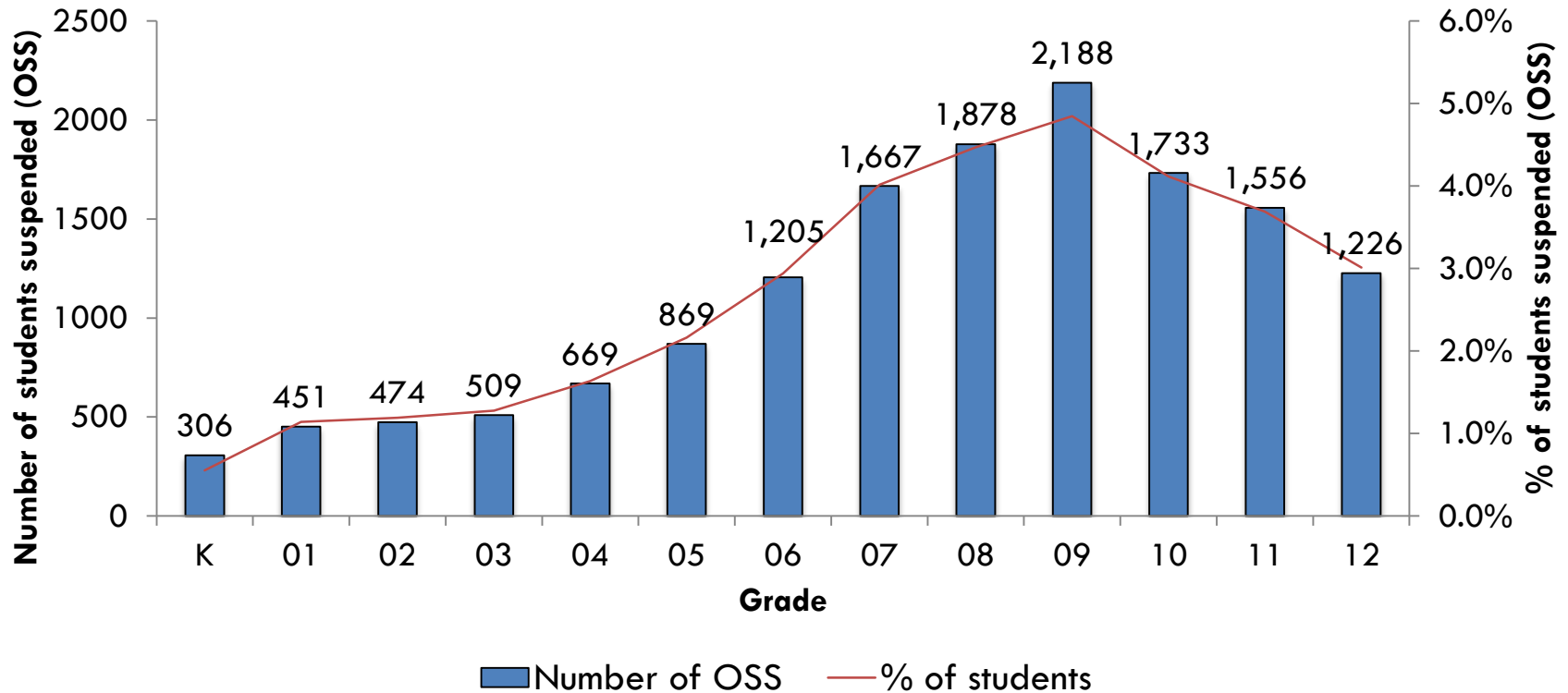
Students from Poorer Districts Disproportionately Excluded from the Classroom



In 2013, students from the poorest districts were **nearly 23 times more likely** to be arrested than students from wealthier districts.

Exclusionary Discipline Used Against our Youngest Students

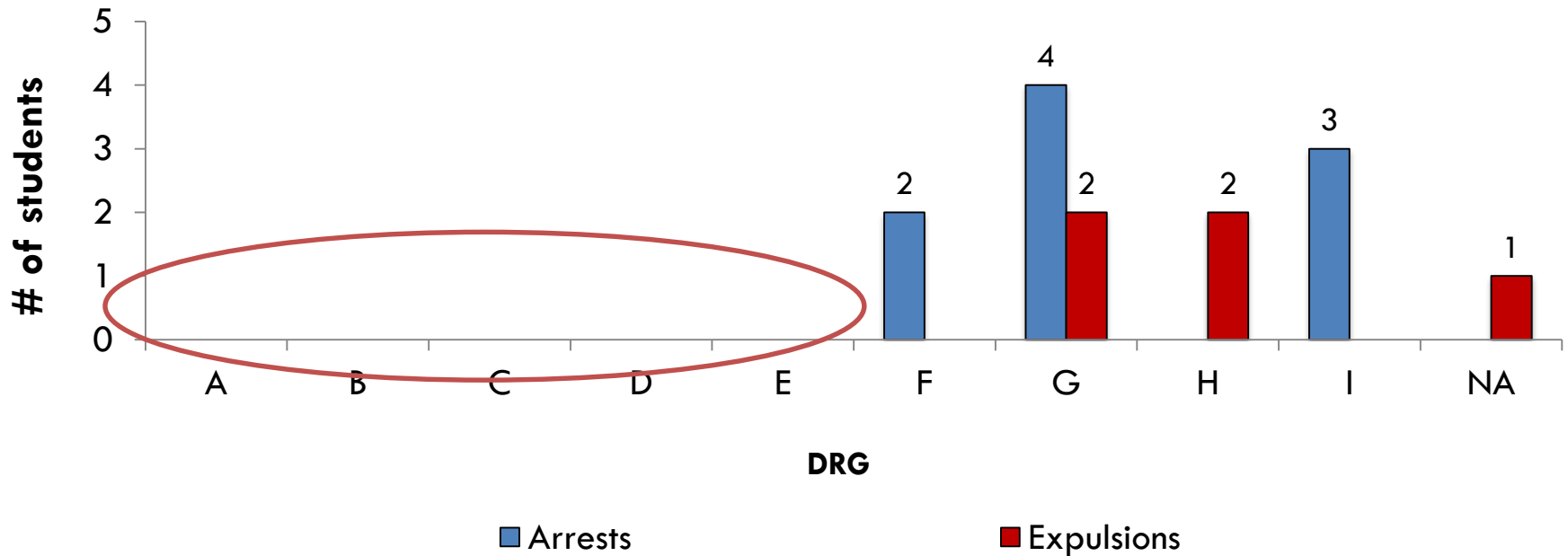
Number and percentage of students receiving out-of-school suspensions (OSS), by grade (2012-2013)



In 2013, **1,321** students in K-2 were suspended out-of-school.

Socioeconomic Disparities Play Out in K-3 discipline

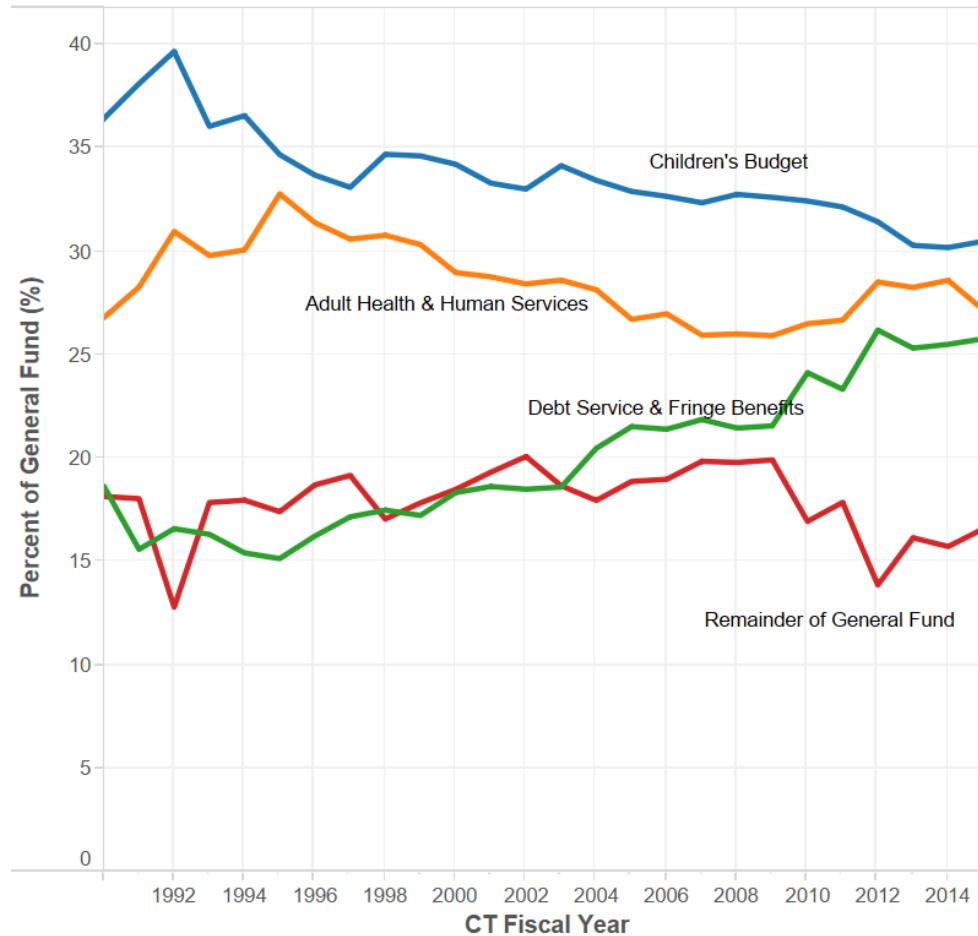
Number of K-3 Students Arrested and Expelled, by DRG (2013)



In 2013, the poorest districts had **all** of the state's K-3 arrests and **all** of the state's K-3 expulsions

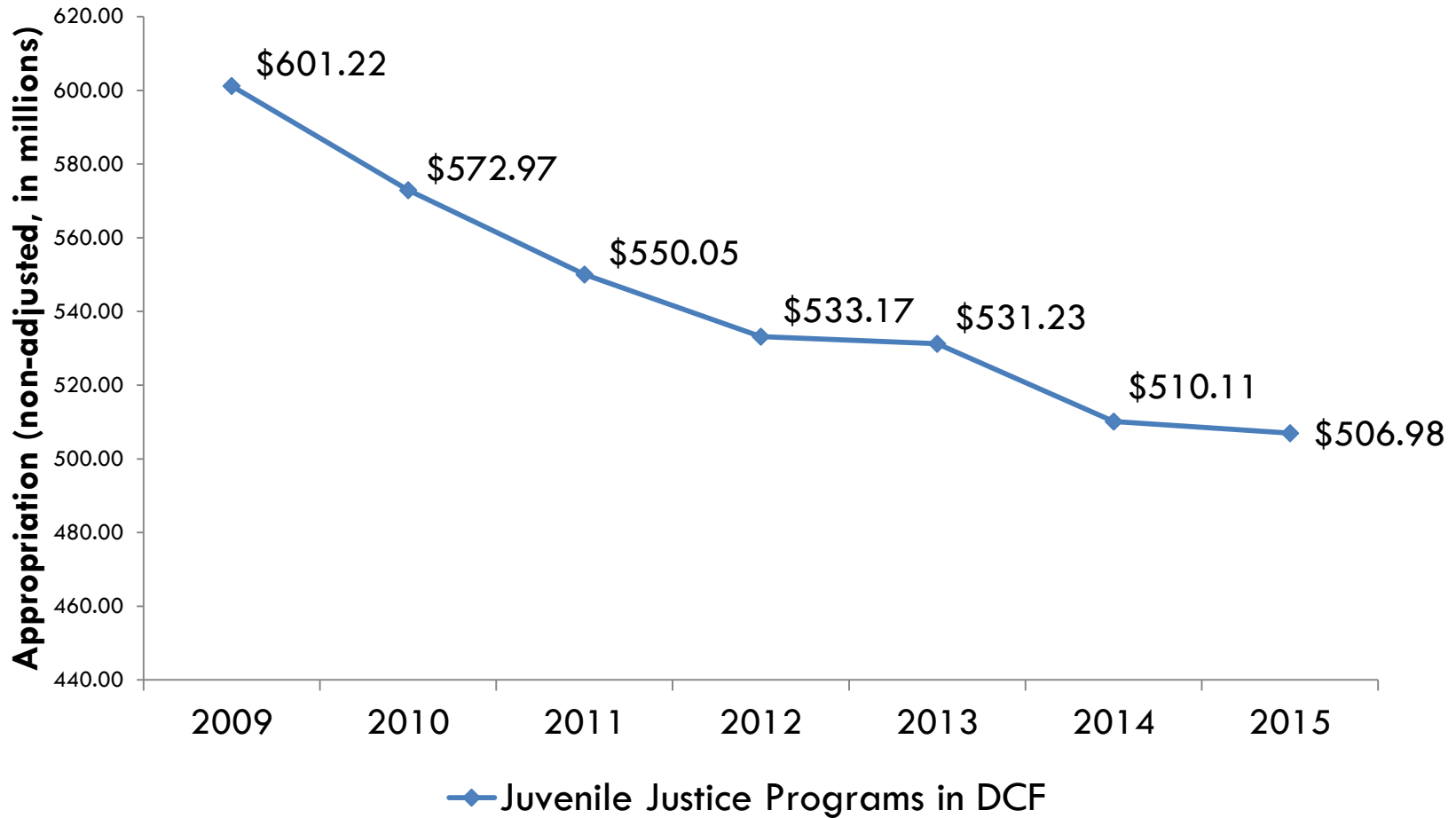
Connecticut's Declining Investment in Children

Overall Children's Budget Spending FY 1990-2015

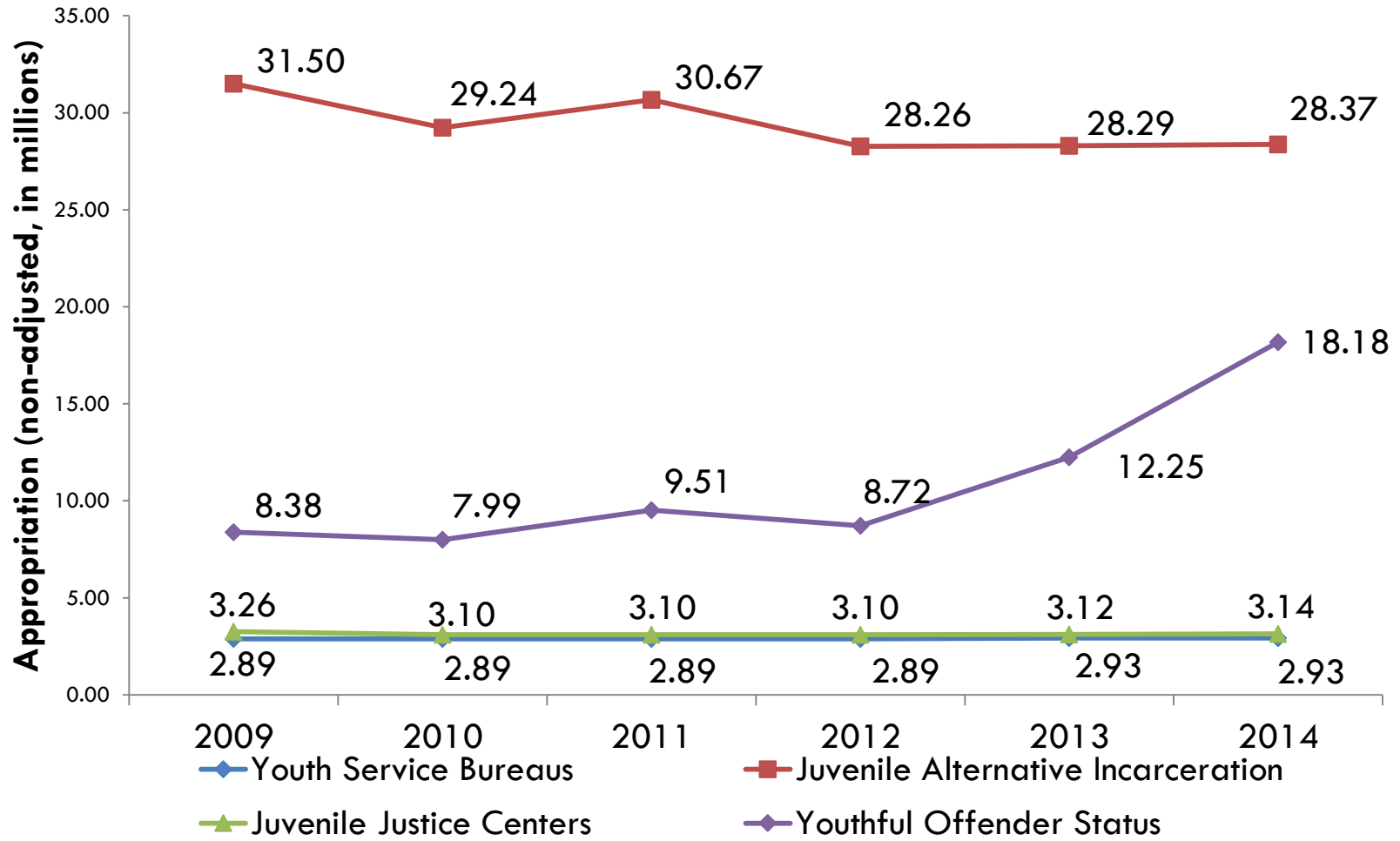


Program Color Key	Programs Selected	Type of Amount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Children's Budget ■ Adult Health & Human Services ■ Debt Service & Fringe Benefits ■ Remainder of General Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$ (not inflation-adjusted) ● % of General Fund

Declining Spending on Juvenile Justice Programs in DCF



Spending on Juvenile Justice Programs



Recommendations

1. Ensure schools, police, and the community work together to keep students in class:

- Implement memoranda of agreement between schools and police
- Promote police and educator training
- Establish and support community collaborates/Local Interagency Service Teams across the state

Recommendations

2. Implement preventive strategies and alternative disciplinary measures that take into account racial and other disparities and ensure those excluded from school are provided equal opportunities:

- Conduct ongoing conversations with educators about disciplinary disparities and biases
- Promote restorative practices and empower students to develop shared behavioral expectations
- Provide high-quality alternative educational settings and support services for students who must be removed from school
- Expand and utilize Juvenile Review Boards (JRBs) and ensure access to behavioral and mental health services

Questions?

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