



NAME

National Association for Multicultural Education

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NAME urges honoring Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline Guidelines

[The National Association for Multicultural Education](#) urges the [Federal Commission on School Safety](#) chaired by Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to abandon its recommendation that the Department of Education rescind a 2014 Obama administration policy addressing racial disparities in school discipline. Racial discrimination is an undisputed fact of life in the United States, and it overflows into America's public, private and charter schools. It feeds America's [school to prison pipeline](#) with students of color, enduring harsher discipline in schools than their white peers, facing a disproportionate amount of suspensions and expulsions as well as school related arrests and referrals to law enforcement. The Obama administration's ["Dear Colleague Letter on the Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline"](#) points that out and offers school officials guidance to try to ensure that discipline when needed is meted out fairly and equitably.

Abandoning the Obama era guidance on discipline would take schools in the wrong direction, leaving students of color and LGBTQIA students increasingly vulnerable to more severe treatment at the hands of the racist, classists, ableist, zero tolerance policies that were just beginning to be eradicated.

[As a social justice and equity organization](#), NAME knows it is particularly reprehensible that the federal commission targeted the policy on nondiscrimination in school discipline when the commission's creation in March 2018 by President Donald Trump was to determine ways to make schools, students and teachers safer in the aftermath of a series of school shootings nationwide. By abandoning the policy on racial disparities in school discipline, the commission makes it appear that the discipline guidance somehow was responsible for the eruption of gun violence in schools. Nothing could be further from the truth.

NAME understands that with young [people of color now constituting the majority of students](#) in public schools, it is imperative that our young people, our families and our communities are assured that our children will be safe in classrooms, won't face discriminatory actions by people in power and will receive a good quality education. We will continue to struggle to enable all students to be lifelong learners and for schools to prepare them to be college and career ready. The country benefits greatly when young people are able to reach their potential as solid, taxpaying, community-oriented citizens.

NAME knows the Federal Commission on School Safety's recommendation to eliminate the Obama administration policy on racial disparities in discipline puts students in harm's way. Reach out to your representatives to let them know you support maintaining the 2014 policy to ensure fair and equitable disciplinary practices in schools.